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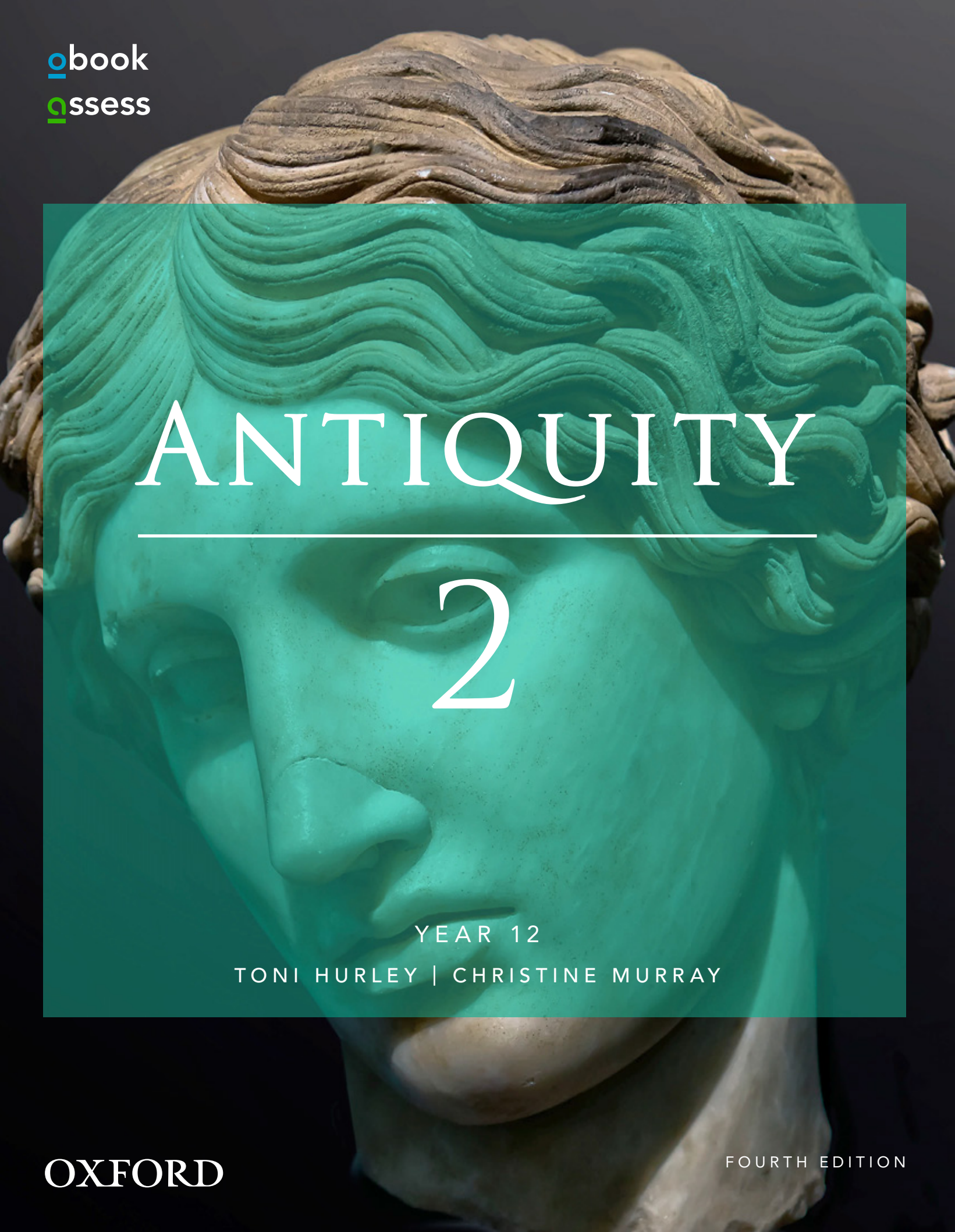

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Using Antiquity

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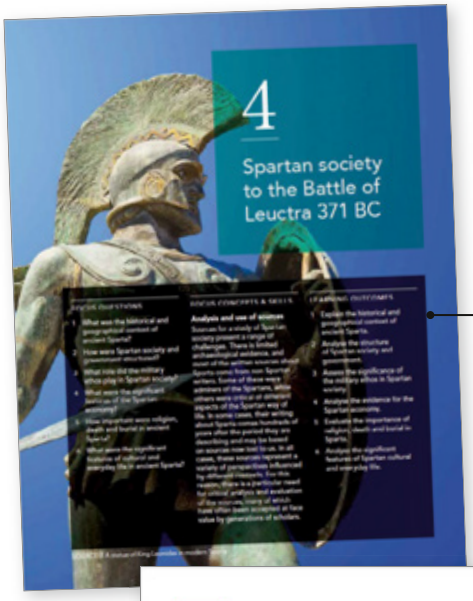
Key enhancements:

- All content has been explicitly aligned to the new Ancient History Stage 6 syllabus (Year 12).
- Subject experts Toni Hurley and Christine Murray have developed trusted, in-depth and appropriately levelled content.
- Unambiguous language is used throughout the book, with visuals on every spread to engage students and support learning.
- obook assess provides comprehensive student and teacher digital support including answers to every question in the book, assessment and exam preparation support, videos and more.



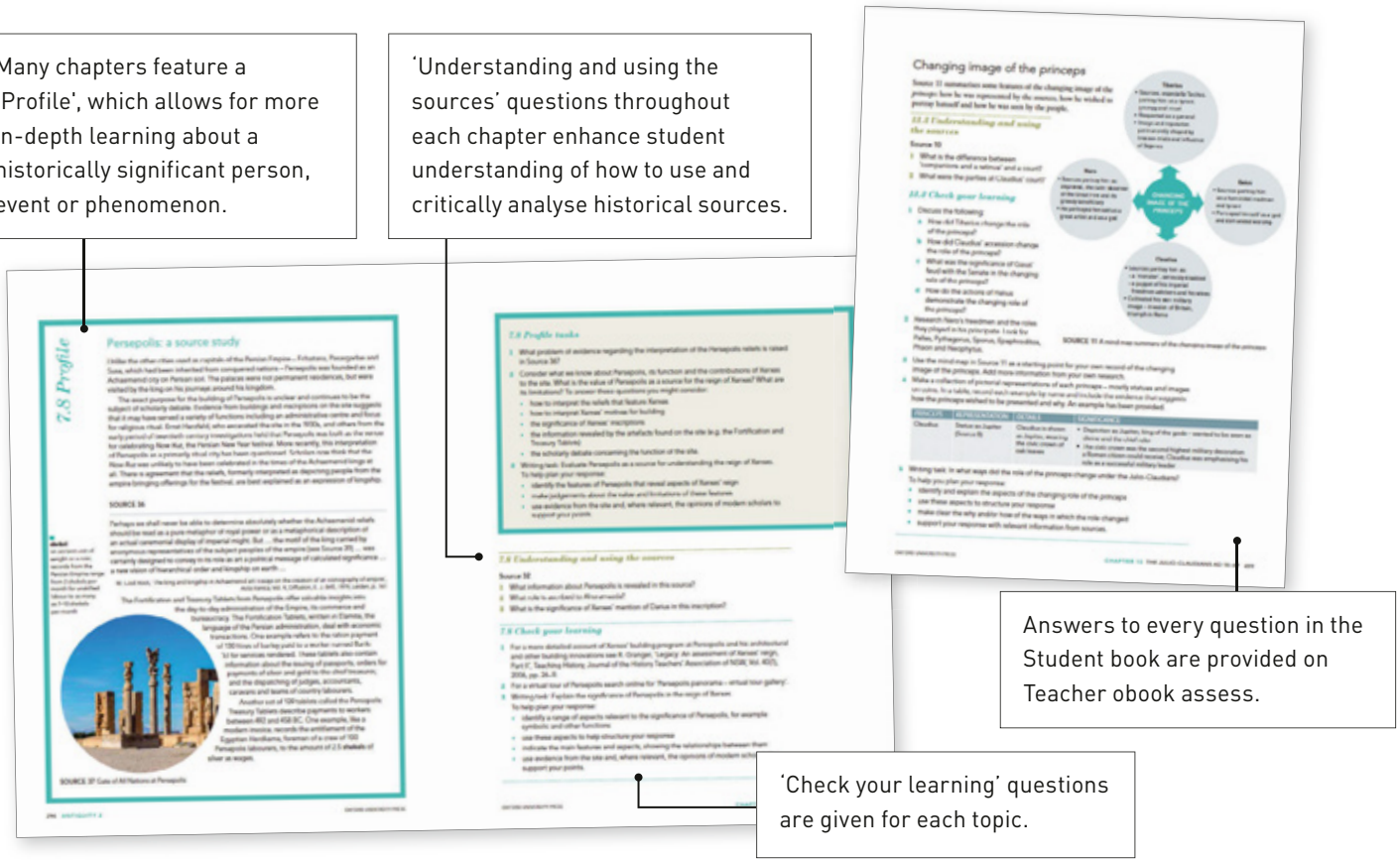
'Focus questions', 'Focus concepts & skills', and 'Learning outcomes' are clearly stated at the beginning of each chapter to guide teachers and students through the content.

Content includes the latest scientific developments, up-to-date case studies, maps and rich visual and written source material.

Margin glossary definitions help students easily find the meaning of unfamiliar words and assist with their understanding.

Many chapters feature a 'Profile', which allows for more in-depth learning about a historically significant person, event or phenomenon.

'Understanding and using the sources' questions throughout each chapter enhance student understanding of how to use and critically analyse historical sources.



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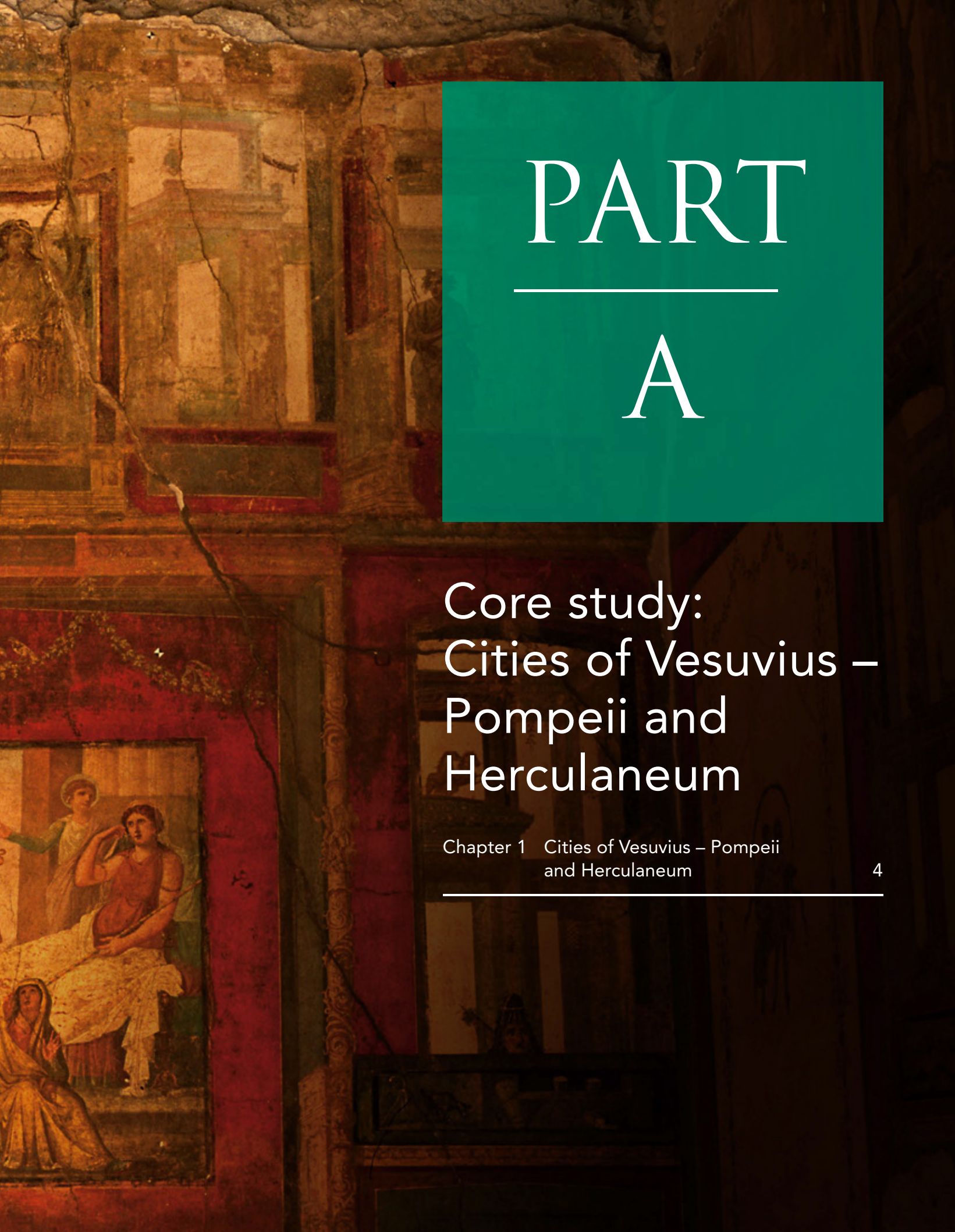
Wall paintings in the House of the Vettii

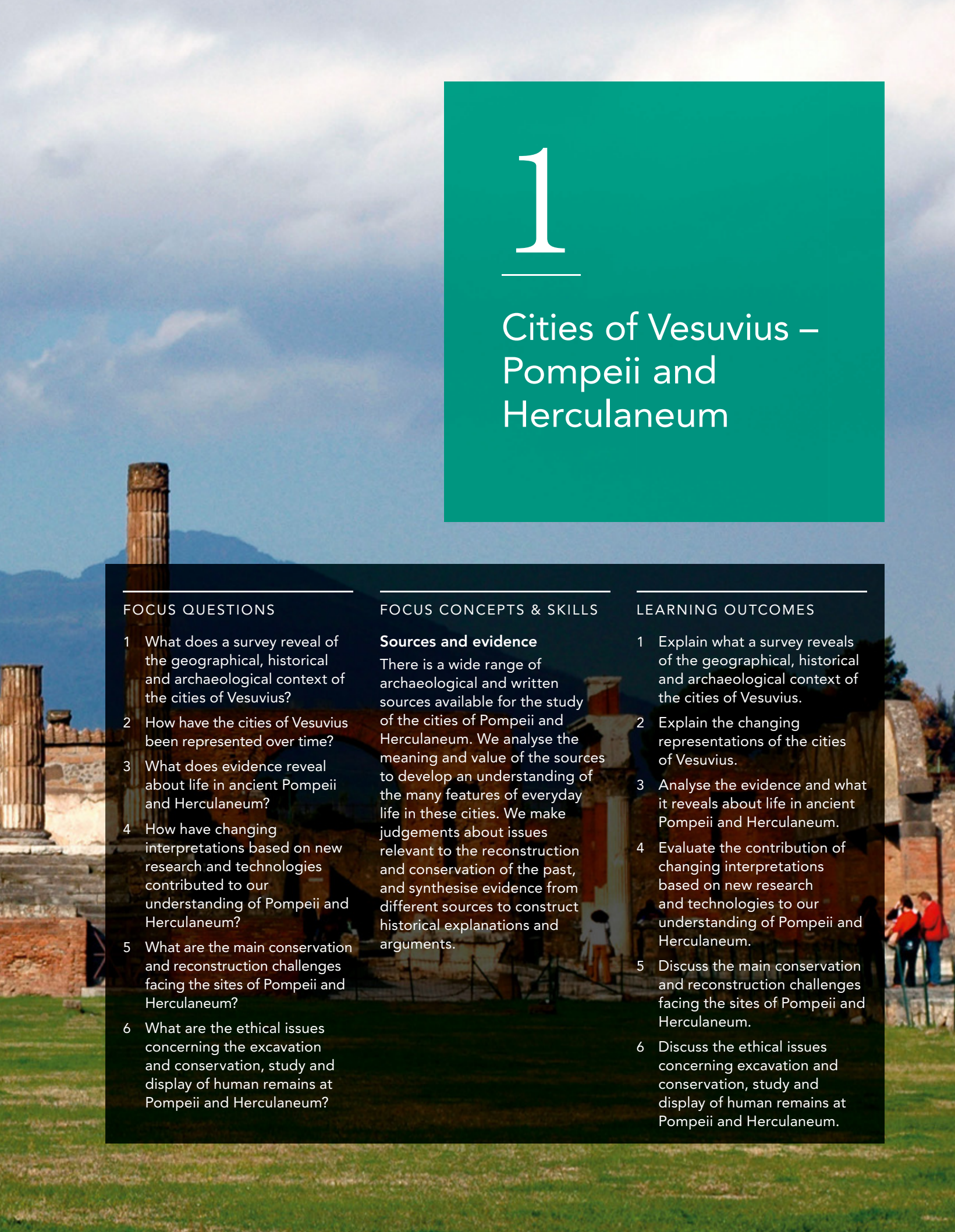


PART A

Core study: Cities of Vesuvius – Pompeii and Herculaneum

Chapter 1 Cities of Vesuvius – Pompeii and Herculaneum 4

SOURCE 1 Ruins of Pompeii with Mount Vesuvius in the background



1

Cities of Vesuvius – Pompeii and Herculaneum

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. What does a survey reveal of the geographical, historical and archaeological context of the cities of Vesuvius?
2. How have the cities of Vesuvius been represented over time?
3. What does evidence reveal about life in ancient Pompeii and Herculaneum?
4. How have changing interpretations based on new research and technologies contributed to our understanding of Pompeii and Herculaneum?
5. What are the main conservation and reconstruction challenges facing the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum?
6. What are the ethical issues concerning the excavation and conservation, study and display of human remains at Pompeii and Herculaneum?

FOCUS CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Sources and evidence

There is a wide range of archaeological and written sources available for the study of the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. We analyse the meaning and value of the sources to develop an understanding of the many features of everyday life in these cities. We make judgements about issues relevant to the reconstruction and conservation of the past, and synthesise evidence from different sources to construct historical explanations and arguments.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Explain what a survey reveals of the geographical, historical and archaeological context of the cities of Vesuvius.
2. Explain the changing representations of the cities of Vesuvius.
3. Analyse the evidence and what it reveals about life in ancient Pompeii and Herculaneum.
4. Evaluate the contribution of changing interpretations based on new research and technologies to our understanding of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
5. Discuss the main conservation and reconstruction challenges facing the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
6. Discuss the ethical issues concerning excavation and conservation, study and display of human remains at Pompeii and Herculaneum.

1.1 Survey of Pompeii and Herculaneum

Pompeii and Herculaneum, the cities of Vesuvius, are perhaps the best known archaeological sites in the world. A knowledge of its geographical setting is fundamental to understanding the eruption of AD 79 and its impact on the two cities.

Geographical setting and natural features of Campania

Pompeii was built on a volcanic plateau covering an area of over 66 hectares. This plateau was located between the Sarno River in the south and the fertile slopes of Mount Vesuvius to the north. Pompeii was strategically important because it lay on the only route linking north and south, and connected the seaside area with the fertile agricultural region of the inland.

THE REGION OF CAMPANIA

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 2 The location of Pompeii, Herculaneum and other sites mentioned in ancient sources

Sources 3, 4 and 5 comment on or describe the geographical setting and natural features of Campania.

SOURCE 3

The city is in a pleasant bay, some distance from the open sea, and bounded by the shores of Surrentum and Stabiae on one side and of Herculaneum on the other; the shores meet there.

Seneca, *Naturales Quaestiones*, VI, 1.1
(trans. T.H. Corcoran, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1972)

SOURCE 4

Next comes Campania, a region blessed by fortune. From this bay onwards, you find vine-growing hills and a noble tipple of wine famed throughout the world. Over this area the gods of wine and grain fought their hardest or so tradition tells us. The territories for Setine wine and Caecuban [highly regarded wines] begin here; beyond these lie Falernum and Calenum. Then come the Massic mountains, and those of Gauranum and Surrentum. There lie spread the fields of Leborinum with their fine harvest of grain. These shores are watered by warm springs; they are famed beyond any other for their shellfish and their fine fish. Nowhere do olives produce more oil – the production strives to match the demands of human pleasure.

Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 3.60
(trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1940)

SOURCE 5

This is Vesuvius, shaded yesterday with green vines, here had its far famed grapes filled the dripping vats. These ridges Bacchus loved more than the hills of Nyssa, on this mount of late the satyrs set afoot their dances. This was the haunt of Venus, more pleasant to her than Lacedaemon [Sparta]; this place [Herculaneum] was made glorious by the name of Hercules.

Martial, *Epigrams*, IV, 44
(trans. D.R. Shackleton Bailey, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1993)

SOURCE 6 'Bacchus and Mount Vesuvius', a wall painting from a household shrine in the House of the Centenary at Pompeii

Plans of Pompeii and Herculaneum

The town of Pompeii is small by Roman standards, covering an area of 66 hectares surrounded by defensive walls. It is irregularly shaped and built on terrain that slopes from 10 metres up to 40 metres above sea level. Over time, four main areas were developed: the Forum, the ***insulae*** or blocks fronting the Via Stabiana, Region VI and the eastern area. The earliest areas that were developed were those around the Forum and the Via Stabiana *insulae*, and these were heavily influenced by the Greek principles of urban planning. The grid pattern, developed in other early Roman towns, was not as precisely applied in Pompeii. The Greek influence can be seen in the regular layout of the streets and roads that divided the town into *insulae*. These blocks varied in size from 850 square metres to 5500 square metres. Some of the blocks contained only one house, while others contained a dozen or more houses. Herculaneum followed the classical layout of Greek towns with narrow straight streets that divide the town into *insulae*.

***insula* (*pl. insulae*)** a multi-storeyed apartment or tenement block with taverns, shops and businesses on the ground floor and living space on the higher floors; the name also refers to a block of various buildings at Pompeii surrounded on four side by streets

Important features of both towns include the following:

- *Walls*: Throughout its early history, Pompeii was surrounded by a series of defensive stone walls with 12 towers and 8 gateways leading into the town. When Pompeii became a Roman colony, defensive walls lost their importance and some sections were demolished to make way for housing. Herculaneum had a sea wall, with large vaulted chambers for boats.
- *Gates*: City gates were positioned at the end of the main thoroughfares. The most impressive examples of gateways in Pompeii are the Marine Gate and the Herculaneum Gate.

- *Streets and roads*: Pompeii demonstrates Roman skill in road making. Roman paving techniques used polygonal blocks of basalt and raised footpaths on either side of the roads. Kerbing was made of basalt or **tufa**. Stepping stones were provided for pedestrians while still giving access to wheeled traffic (see Source 8). In this way people could cross the roads without stepping in sewage and waste. Deep grooves in the roads can still be seen, indicating the volume of ancient traffic. The streets in Herculaneum had less traffic and more efficient drainage and sewerage systems.

tufa
volcanic ash hardened with water

The Romans had different names for different types of streets; for example, 'via' is a main highway from the city gate. In Pompeii, the Via dell'Abbondanza is one of the principal roads or *decumani* running the length of the town. *Decumani* were roads running from east to west, while the *cardines* ran north to south and met at right angles. Shrines and water fountains (*nymphaea*) were often placed at these crossroads.

aedile
a magistrate whose duties included maintenance of town infrastructure

The Romans legislated that streets had to be a minimum of 5 metres wide. In Pompeii, most streets conformed to this law. In Herculaneum, however, some streets were only 2.5 metres wide, while others were 7 metres. The main street in Herculaneum was used as its Forum. Posts were often erected as barriers at the entrance to roads to prevent access. The magistrates responsible for the maintenance of streets and roads were the **aediles**.

SOURCE 7 A streetscape in Herculaneum

Reading the plans

Archaeologist Giuseppe Fiorelli introduced a system to locate houses and buildings on plans of the area. He divided Pompeii into nine regions and numbered each separate block or *insula* within a region. Each doorway in an *insula* was also given a number. According to this system, the House of Julia Felix became II, 4, 2; that is, located in region II, *insula* 4, doorway 2. Herculaneum was treated in a similar way, but its smaller size removed the need to divide the town into regions.

SOURCE 8 A road in Pompeii showing its stepping stones

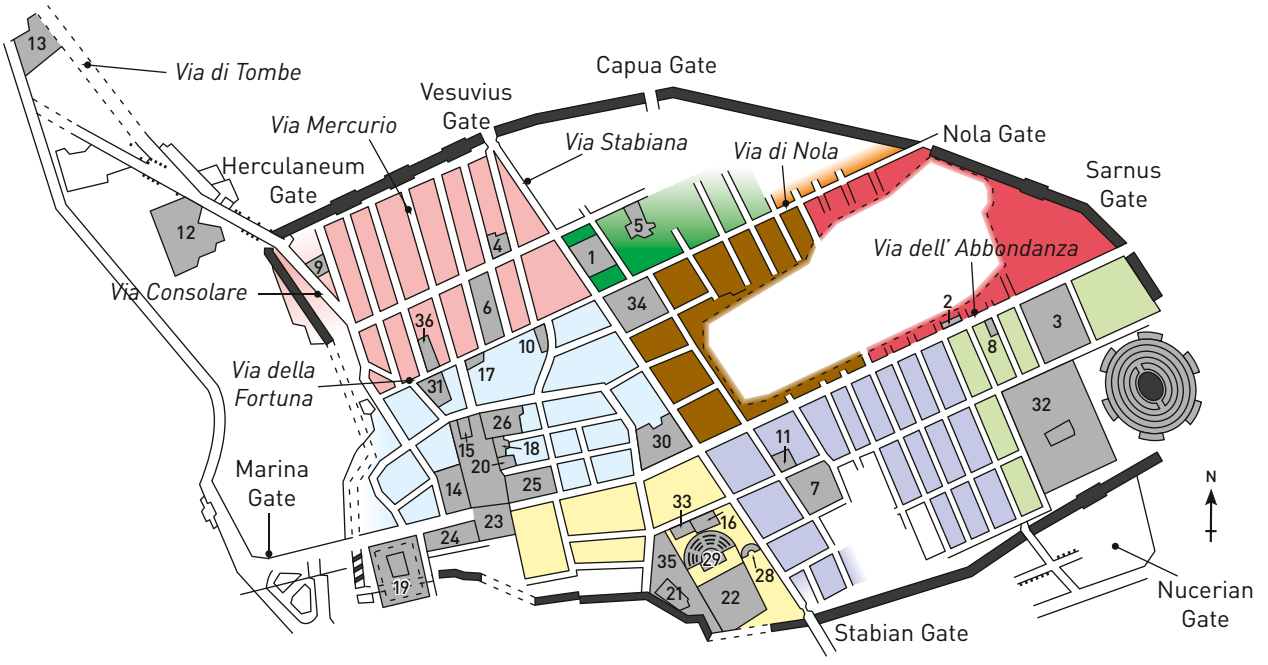
1.1 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 4–6

1. Using Pliny's description, list the natural resources of the region.
2. According to Martial, why was Mount Vesuvius important to the people of Pompeii?
3. How does the wall painting in Source 6 illustrate the written description in Source 5?

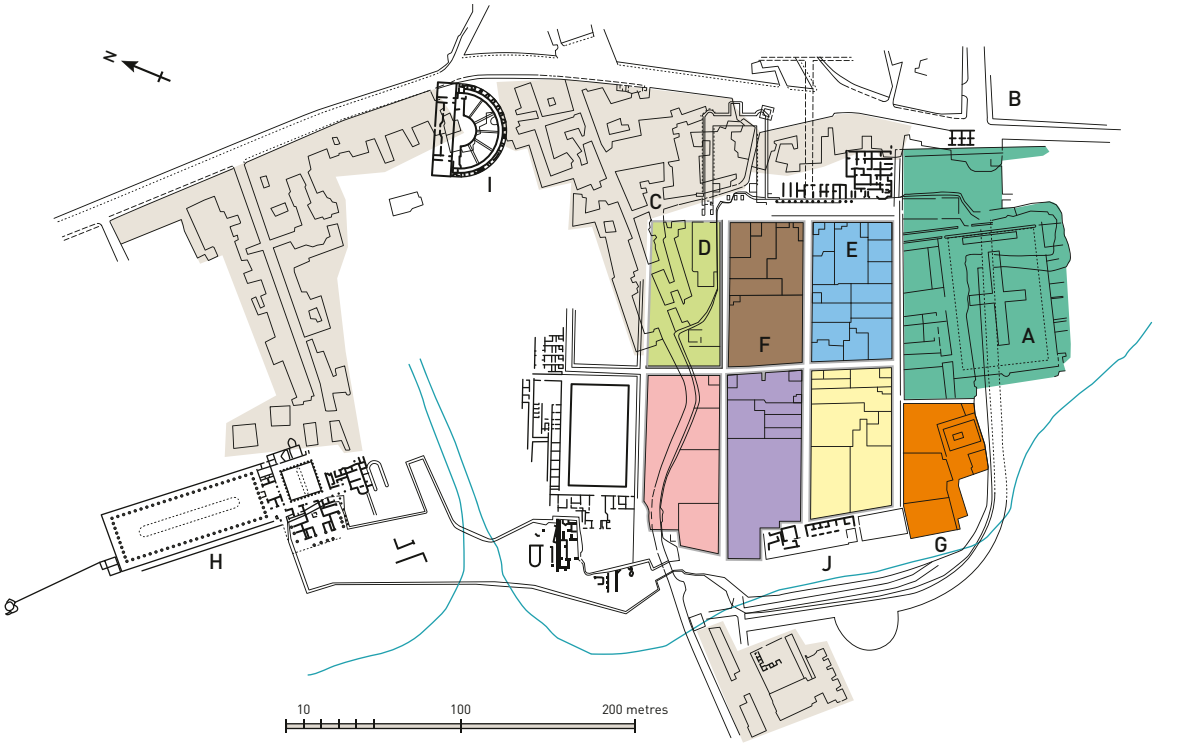
1.1 Check your learning

1. How does Pompeii demonstrate Roman skill in road making?
2. What were the advantages of Fiorelli's system of locating houses and buildings?



1	House of Caecilius Jucundus	10	House of the Ancient Hunt	19	Temple of Venus	28	Small theatre	Region I	Region VI
2	House of the Moralist	11	House of L.C. Secundus	20	Temple of Vespasian	29	Large theatre	Region II	Region VII
3	House of Julia Felix	12	Villa of Cicero	21	Doric Temple	30	Stabian Baths	Region III	Region VIII
4	House of the Vettii	13	Villa of the Mysteries	22	Gladiators' Barracks	31	Forum Baths	Region IV	Region IX
5	House of the Silver Wedding	14	Temple of Apollo	23	Forum	32	Great Palaestra	Region V	
6	House of the Faun	15	Temple of Jupiter	24	Basilica	33	Small Palaestra		
7	House of Menander	16	Temple of Isis	25	Building of Eumachia	34	Central Baths		
8	House of Octavius Quarto	17	Temple of Fortuna Augusta	26	*Macellum*	35	Triangular Forum		
9	House of the Surgeon	18	Temple of Lares	27	Amphitheatre	36	House of the Tragic Poet		

SOURCE 9 A plan of Pompeii



Archaeological area	A Palaestra	F Forum Baths	Insula orientalis I	Insula IV
Coastline in 79 AD	B Tombs	G Suburban Baths	Insula orientalis II	Insula V
Modern Town	C Forum	H Villa of the Papyri	Insula II	Insula VI
	D Basilica	I Theatre	Insula III	Insula VII
	E College of the Augustales	J Beachfront (boatshed under adjacent terrace)		

SOURCE 10 A plan of Herculaneum

1.2

The eruption of AD 79 and its impact

The region of Campania was an unstable volcanic area prone to earth tremors, fluctuating watertable levels and thermal springs. Just 40 kilometres from Herculaneum were the Phlegraean Fields, an area known for hot mineral springs. Mount Vesuvius had not erupted in living memory, so when the top of the mountain exploded on 24 August AD 79, no one realised that it was the beginning of a disaster of catastrophic proportions. The statistics are sobering:

- A cloud of volcanic gas, ash and stones rose to heights of up to 30 kilometres.
- Molten rock and pumice ejected at a rate of 1.5 million tonnes per second.
- The thermal energy released was 100 000 times greater than the atomic bomb that destroyed Hiroshima.
- Possibly thousands of people died.
- The settlements of Pompeii, Herculaneum, Oplontis and Stabiae were completely buried.

The people of Pompeii and Herculaneum apparently did not connect earthquakes and tremors with volcanic activity from Vesuvius. On 5 February AD 62, a violent earthquake severely damaged both Pompeii and Herculaneum. A subsequent earthquake was recorded in AD 64 by the Roman writers Suetonius and Tacitus. Another warning sign was that the water supply had been interrupted in Pompeii by seismic activity.

stratigraphic relating to the order or arrangement of strata or layers, in this case the layers of volcanic ash deposited on Pompeii

strata (*s.* stratum) the layers of material built up or deposited at a site

pyroclastic surge a low-density turbulent cloud of hot ash and rock that billows over the ground travelling at incredibly high speeds of up to 300 km per hour

pyroclastic flow a dense, hot, dry avalanche of ground-hugging molten rock, pumice and gas that moves more slowly than a surge, reaching up to 50 km per hour

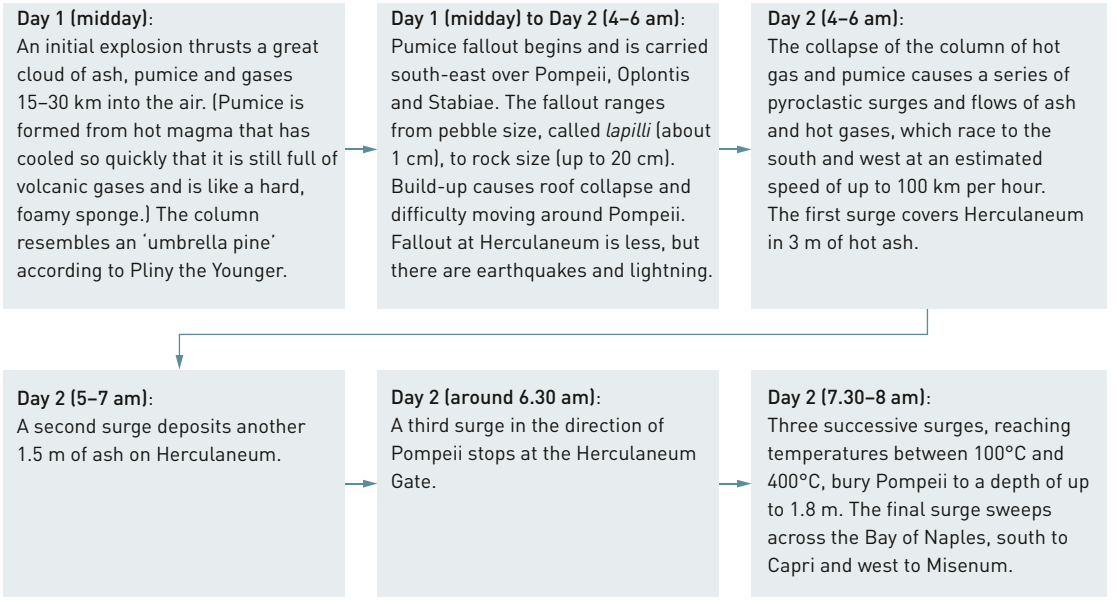
nuées ardentes French for 'burning clouds', these are white-hot clouds of gas, ash and lava fragments ejected from a volcano, typically as part of a pyroclastic flow

Phases in the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79

Vulcanologists have made a close study of Mount Vesuvius, including detailed **stratigraphic** analysis, and have established the main phases of the eruption as it occurred in AD 79. Thin black layers in the geological **strata** have been identified as **pyroclastic surges**. A pyroclastic surge is a low-density, turbulent cloud of hot ash and rock that billows over the terrain, barely touching the ground. It travels at incredibly high speeds (up to 300 kilometres per hour). **Pyroclastic flows** occurred in conjunction with the surges. A pyroclastic flow is a much denser, hotter, dry avalanche of ground-hugging molten rock, pumice and gases that moves more slowly than a surge, up to 50 kilometres per hour. The term **nuées ardentes** is also used to describe the surges that destroyed Pompeii. The eruption of Vesuvius is unique because there were six layers in the strata, indicating that there were six pyroclastic surges. The discovery of this geological data has led scholars to revise their initial theories about how the inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum died. Source 11 summarises the main phases of the eruption.

The destruction of Herculaneum

Herculaneum lay directly under Mount Vesuvius, only 7 kilometres from its peak, and was situated on a promontory between two streams that flowed down the slopes of the mountain. It suffered a different, more horrific, fate than Pompeii. The people of Herculaneum would certainly have been terrified by the initial explosion, shock waves and earth tremors in the first stage of the eruption. Because Herculaneum was upwind of the fallout, the pumice fall in the first few hours was moderately light. However, in the next and most destructive phase of the eruption, Herculaneum bore the full brunt of the succession of pyroclastic surges. The first surge, arriving no more than 5 minutes after the collapse of the eruption column, dumped



SOURCE 11 The main phases of the eruption of Vesuvius

3 metres of hot ash on the town. The following five surges and flows destroyed buildings and carbonised timber and other organic matter. In this final phase, the city was buried up to a depth of 23 metres and the coastline was extended by about 400 metres.

What happened at Pompeii?

Its distance from the volcano meant that Pompeii escaped the first two surges, and the third stopped at the Herculaneum Gate. The fourth surge, reaching temperatures of up to 400°C, possibly accompanied by toxic gases, penetrated the whole town. Two more surges destroyed most of the structures that were still above the pumice layer. The amount of ash deposited varied from about 1.8 metres in the north, to about 60 centimetres in the south.

Pliny the Younger's eyewitness account

Pliny the Younger, aged 17, was staying at Misenum (30 kilometres from Pompeii) with his uncle Pliny the Elder, the admiral of the fleet. When the eruption occurred, Pliny the Elder sailed to Stabiae, 5 kilometres south of Pompeii, to offer assistance. He stayed there overnight at the house of his friend, Pomponianus. Pliny the Younger decided to stay behind to study and subsequently was able to give an eyewitness account of the eruption.

Historians usually value contemporary accounts of an event. Pliny's account of the Vesuvian eruption is detailed, graphic and remarkably objective. It is also the only written source we have for this cataclysmic event. However, there are some issues that need to be raised about the reliability of Pliny's account:

- He wrote his description in the form of two letters to his friend Tacitus (a Roman historian) about 25 years after the event.
- There appears to be some exaggeration of Pliny the Elder's role in the events during the eruption.
- A significant omission is Pliny the Younger's failure to mention the year of the eruption.

In Source 12, Pliny the Younger gives an account of his first view of the erupting volcano.

SOURCE 12

My uncle was stationed at Misenum in active command of the fleet … The ninth day before the Kalends of September [24 August] in the early afternoon, my mother drew his attention to a cloud of unusual size and appearance … He called for his shoes and climbed up to a place that would give him the best view of the phenomenon. It was not clear at that distance from which mountain the cloud was rising [it was afterwards known to be Vesuvius]. Its general appearance can best be expressed as being like a pine rather than any other tree, for it rose to a great height on a sort of trunk and then split off into branches, I imagine because it was thrust upwards by the first blast and then left unsupported as the pressure subsided, or else it was borne down by its own weight so that it spread out and gradually dispersed. In places it looked white, elsewhere blotched and dirty, according to the amount of soil and ashes it carried with it.

Pliny the Younger, *Letters and Panegyricus*, Vol. 1, Book VI, xvi, 4–7
(Loeb Classical Library, William Heinemann, London, 1969)

Pliny the Elder set out with his fleet of warships on his rescue mission to Stabiae. Despite the hot ash and pumice that had begun to fall, he crossed the Gulf of Naples, taking note of aspects of the eruption as he went. At Stabiae he made further observations of the progress of the eruption. Unfortunately, while there, he succumbed to the smoke and fumes accompanying the eruption and died on the beach. Back at Misenum, Pliny the Younger joined the crowd trying to flee the town. He records the unaccountable movement of the ground, the receding of the sea and the fiery cloud hanging above the volcano. He also describes what happened when the fleeing inhabitants were overcome by the cloud spreading out from the volcano.

Date of eruption contested

The traditional date of the eruption is 24 August AD 79. This is based on an 11th-century summary of the work of Cassius Dio, a Roman writer in the 3rd century AD. Dio's work is flawed because of many factual errors, yet he does at least provide a year. Pliny the Younger's account (see Source 12) appears to give the date; that is, the ninth day before the Kalends of September, or 24 August. However, more than a dozen versions of his text give dates ranging from August to November. Recently, debate has arisen with some scholars favouring autumn for the eruption rather than the summer of that year.

Arguments in favour of a summer date include:

- the discovery of the leaves of deciduous trees
- evidence of summer-flowering herbs found at Villa A at Oplontis
- evidence of summer-ripening broad beans found at the House of the Chaste Lovers at Pompeii
- the fact that the last batch of ***garum*** from Pompeii was made with a type of fish that was plentiful in July (i.e. summer).

garum
thick, salty fish sauce

Arguments in favour of an autumn date cite the discovery of late autumn-ripening fruits such as pomegranates.

The most convincing evidence is the hoard of coins found in the House of the Golden Bracelet in 1974, which contained a silver denarius of Titus recording his seventh consulship. This dates the coin to AD 79. The reverse of the coin records Titus' acclamation as **imperator**

imperator
a Latin word originally meaning commander, but later incorporated into the titles of the emperor

for the 15th time. Other **epigraphic** evidence points to this happening no earlier than September of that year. According to this evidence, the eruption of Vesuvius is most likely to have taken place in the autumn of AD 79, that is, later the same year.

epigraphic / epigraphical the study of inscriptions on stone or metal

How did people die at Pompeii and Herculaneum?

The initial reaction of the people to the eruption determined their fate. Those who took to their heels to escape the city when the volcano first exploded might well have survived, provided they reached a safe distance. Those who chose to stay inside their homes or other buildings sealed their fate. At Pompeii, at least 600 people perished when the roofs collapsed under the weight of the pumice and rock that rained down during the eruption. Those who abandoned the buildings and climbed out onto the roofs were caught in the fourth pyroclastic surge, the one that overwhelmed the city. Some of these people died of asphyxiation, others of **thermal shock**. The majority of the population probably managed to escape the city, but they could well have died in the surrounding countryside, not realising how far they had to go to escape the surges and flows.

thermal shock a large and rapid change in temperature that can have dangerous effects on living organisms

It was a different story at Herculaneum. Until recently it had been assumed that nearly all the inhabitants had escaped because few skeletal remains had been found. However, in 1982, remains were discovered of 300 people who had been sheltering on the beach or in structures, perhaps boathouses, in the area. It was initially thought that they died from suffocation caused by the volcanic ash. Italian scholars now believe that these people were killed by thermal or **fulminant shock** (see Source 13).

fulminant shock a cause of death associated with intense heat

SOURCE 13 Skeletons of victims of the eruption were discovered in the boathouses at Herculaneum.

SOURCE 14

For at least two centuries suffocation was believed to have killed the inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum assuming as 'smoking gun' evidence, the self-protective posture of victims at death, as apparently testified by hundreds of plaster casts. In 1997–98, new excavations at Herculaneum were based on a multidisciplinary approach aimed to identify the causes of death through the effects of the pyroclastic surge on both body and bones of victims … The overall evidence showed that a 500°C hot surge caused the instant death of the Herculaneum residents as a result of fulminant shock. They were killed in less than a fraction of a second, before they had time to display a defensive reaction. Their hands and feet underwent thermally induced contraction in about one second, and the positions of their bodies were fixed by the sudden deflation of the ash bed occurring over the next few seconds. Their soft tissues were vaporized, their skulls exploded, and their bones and teeth broke. The temperature then fell over a few minutes causing the ash bed to cool and harden, thus preserving the skeletons as 'frozen' in their life-like original stance.

P. Petrone, M. Niola, P. di Lorenzo, V. Graziano, M. Paternóster & C. Buccelli, 'A new forensic approach to past mass disasters: the human victims of Vesuvius', *Austin Journal of Forensic Science and Criminology*, October 2014

1.2 Understanding and using the sources

Source 12

1 What were the first signs of the eruption that Pliny the Younger noted?

2 What did Pliny the Younger compare the eruption to? Why?

3 What information does Pliny the Younger give about the beginning of the eruption?

4 How do you think Pliny the Younger knew the details of what happened at this time? How does this affect the reliability of his 'eyewitness' account?

Sources 13 & 14

5 Why were victims at Pompeii and Herculaneum originally thought to have died from suffocation?

6 What was the effect of a pyroclastic surge on the bodies and bones of victims?

1.2 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What has stratigraphic analysis shown about the stages of the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79?
   - **b** Explain the difference between pyroclastic surges and flows.
   - **c** Explain the different causes of death in Pompeii and Herculaneum.
   - **d** Does the evidence support a summer or autumn date for the eruption of Vesuvius? How?

2 Summarise the differences between the impact of the eruption on Pompeii and Herculaneum and their inhabitants by copying and completing the table.

IMPACT OF ERUPTION	POMPEII	HERCULANEUM
Impact on the site		
Cause of death of inhabitants		

1.3 Early discoveries and the changing nature of excavations in the 19th and 20th centuries

After the eruption of AD 79, the cities of Vesuvius lay buried for over a thousand years. People living in Resina, a village that had grown up on the site of Herculaneum, sometimes uncovered artefacts and caught glimpses of buried ruins. In 1709, a well shaft was sunk into what would be revealed as the theatre at Herculaneum. A period of treasure hunting when finds were given to the Austrian king who ruled the area. An engineer, Rocque Joaquin de Alcubierre,

SOURCE 15 An overview of 19th- and 20th-century excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum

ARCHAEOLOGIST	TIME WORKING AT POMPEII/ HERCULANEUM	ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHOD USED OR DEVELOPED	CONTRIBUTION
Giuseppe Fiorelli	19th century Directed Pompeii excavation 1863–1875	• Pioneered the study of stratigraphy of the site • Initiated a system of top-down excavation of houses, preserving finds more effectively and enabling restoration of buildings and their interiors	• Wrote a three-volume work entitled *History of Pompeian Antiques* (1860–64) • Studied materials and building methods • Initiated the technique of making plaster casts of victims • Instituted the system of *regiones*, *insulae* and *domus*
August Mau	19th and 20th centuries		• Created the 'four-style' system for categorising frescoes, which is still used today
Vittorio Spinazzola	1910–1924	• Focused on the southern region of the city, including the amphitheatre and Via dell'Abbondanza • Was interested in discovering how the town was planned rather than simply excavating the site	• Discovered many commercial enterprises, such as the Fullery of Stephanus, inns and shops
Amedeo Maiuri	1924–1961 Chief archaeologist of Pompeii	• Pioneered excavation below the destruction level • Destroyed the destruction level to investigate life before the eruption	• Has advanced knowledge of pre-eruption Pompeii
Alfonso De Franciscis	1964 Became director of excavations	• Emphasised restoration of uncovered buildings	• Uncovered the House of C. Julius Polybius, the town house of M. Fabius Rufus and the Villa at Oplontis
Baldassare Conticello	1984	• Undertook extensive and systematic restoration of buildings in Regio I and II	• Excavated the House of the Chaste Lovers
Pietro Giovanni Guzzo	1994 Became director of excavations	• Faced management and financial problems related to excavations and restoration	• Excavated outside the Porta Stabia and in Murecine, where the Hospitium dei Sulpici has been uncovered

SOURCE 16 A poster for the 2014 film *Pompeii*, directed by Paul W.S. Anderson

was put in charge of digging a series of tunnels underneath and through Herculaneum. The theatre, the Villa of the Papyri, the palaestra, shops and houses were all explored at this time. Karl Weber, Alcubierre's assistant, approached the excavations systematically, devising a method of excavating whole rooms with particular attention to context. This inspired modern archaeology's emphasis on context and provenance. Source 15 summarises the changing nature of excavations in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Representations of Pompeii and Herculaneum over time

The drama and tragedy of the events at Pompeii and Herculaneum in AD 79 have inspired artists and writers over time. Pliny the Younger's written account is the first known representation that provides us with our most detailed primary evidence. From the 18th century onwards, European artists have produced engravings and paintings that portray elements of his account. For example, Karl Briullov's 1830 masterpiece, *The Last Days of Pompeii*, which was famous in its day, depicts the terrified inhabitants cowering beneath a sky filled with fire and smoke, or trying to rescue those crushed by falling masonry. The painting can be seen today in the Russian Museum in Saint Petersburg. Some artists have depicted Pompeii and Herculaneum as ruins, while others have concentrated on representing the archaeological excavations being conducted there. Pompeii has been depicted many times in television and film productions (see Source 16, for example).

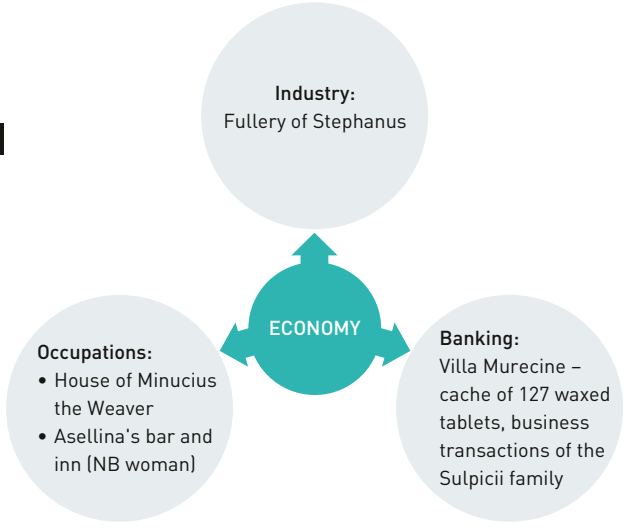
1.3 Check your learning

1. Choose one 19th- and one 20th-century archaeologist from Source 15. Find out more details about their methods and contributions to our understanding of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
2. Find representations of Pompeii and Herculaneum in popular culture, including art, literature, film and museum exhibitions. Where you can, share your findings with your fellow students. You might look for:
   - artists – Paul Alfred de Curzon, William Hamilton, Jacob Philipp Hackert, Sir Edward John Poynter
   - writers – Théophile Gautier, Stendhal, François Mazoir, Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Robert Harris
   - films – *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1935, 1959 and 1984 versions), *Pompeii* (2014), *Pompeii: The Last Day* (2003), *Doctor Who* 'The Fires of Pompeii' (2008)
   - museum exhibitions – *Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum* (British Museum, 2013).
3. Discuss the different ways in which Pompeii and Herculaneum have been represented. How can you account for the differences?

1.4 Investigating and interpreting the sources for Pompeii and Herculaneum

The various parts of Pompeii, Herculaneum and the other towns buried during the AD 79 eruption reveal information about different aspects of life in these places. This chapter will look at all the aspects of life in Pompeii and Herculaneum that you need to know about. A useful technique for using this chapter is to keep a table or mind map for each aspect, in which you record the sites that give relevant information about that aspect and the main features of the information. This will help you to remember the sources to use in writing an answer on a particular aspect. It will also reinforce that everything we know comes from conclusions drawn from the sources. Source 17 gives two templates you could use.

a



b

ASPECT	SITE	INFORMATION REVEALED
Economy	*Macellum*	Evidence of fish market (bones and scales) found in drain beneath circular structure

SOURCE 17 Templates for recording sources: (a) a mind map; (b) a table

1.4 Profile

The Forum of Pompeii

The Forum, the centre of public life in Pompeii, was a large rectangular space measuring 137 metres by 47 metres surrounded by public buildings. This was where the majority of political, administrative, legal, commercial, religious and social activities took place. These included:

- the election of magistrates
- religious ceremonies
- the announcement of local edicts and the latest news from Rome
- trade in goods such as grain, cloth and wool
- regulation of weights and measures by aediles
- markets
- the hire of lawyers and doctors
- business conducted by patrons who were followed by their entourage of clients
- gladiatorial games (until the large amphitheatre was built).

Pompeii was planned with the Forum as its central focus. It was located at a crossroads with access by two staircases from the Via Marina or the Via dell'Abbondanza. It was originally a marketplace, but after the Second Punic War (3rd century BC), population and trade increased and the Forum was rebuilt. Monuments were built on the east, west and south sides of the Forum, while a two-storeyed colonnade with **Doric columns** decorated the south side. The area was paved in grey tufa. An interesting feature of Pompeian paving was that the magistrates responsible for the work had their names inscribed in lead. In the Augustan period, **travertine** stone replaced the paving of tufa slabs.

Doric column
a type of ancient Greek column featuring a smooth or fluted column and a smooth, round capital

travertine
a type of marble used for building

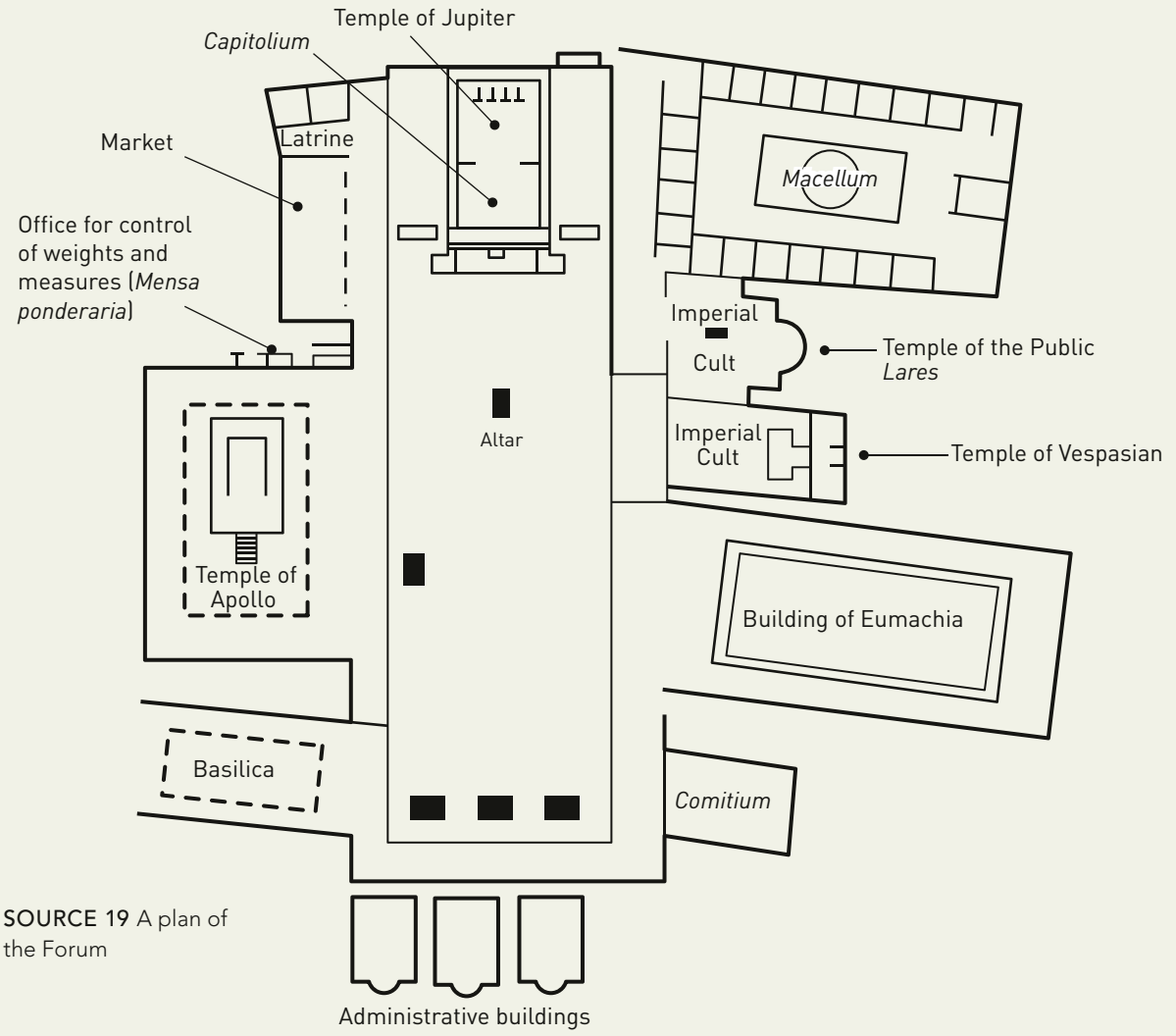
Features of the Forum at Pompeii include the following:

- The north side of the Forum was dominated by the temple to Jupiter, Juno and Minerva.
- The south side was the location of government buildings, sometimes referred to as the Hall of *Duumviri*, the *Curia* and the Hall of *Aediles*.
- The west side featured the Basilica, the *suggestum* (a platform where political candidates gave speeches and canvassed support for elections), the *Mensa ponderaria* (where officials supervised the accuracy of weights and measures used in the markets), the Temple of Apollo and the cereals market or *forum holitorium*.
- The east side featured the *macellum* (a meat and fish market), the Temple of the Public *Lares*, the Temple of Vespasian and the Building of Eumachia (these replaced the shops on the east side of the Forum during the imperial period), and the *Comitium* (where the people's assembly met).
- Statues – in its early history, the open area of the Forum contained equestrian statues, i.e. statues of prominent local officials on horseback. From the time of Augustus, imperial monuments replaced these statues. A statue of Augustus stood in the centre of the space.

Hellenistic
relating to Greek and Mediterranean history between 323 and 31 BC

There was a strong **Hellenistic** influence on the Forum until Pompeii became a Roman colony. It then underwent a change to reflect the needs of the veterans and the new inhabitants. The Forum was badly damaged by the AD 62 earthquake, and by AD 79 only a little restoration work had been undertaken. Some work had been done on the Temple of Vespasian and the Temple of the Public *Lares*.

SOURCE 18
The Forum at Pompeii today



SOURCE 19 A plan of the Forum

SOURCE 20 A relief from the house of Caecilius Jucundus, showing buildings on the north side of the Forum during the AD 62 earthquake – it shows the Temple of Jupiter leaning to one side

1.4 Profile tasks

1. The most elaborate structure in the Forum was the Basilica. Research the Basilica's architecture and function. What evidence is available?
2. The Forum at Herculaneum has been tentatively identified. Find out where it was and what we know about it.

1.5 The economy

The economies of Pompeii and Herculaneum were complex, comprising trade, commerce, industries and occupations, as well as agriculture. Something of the economic spirit of ancient Pompeii is captured in a piece of graffito that reads 'All hail, profit!' People of all classes appear to have agreed with this sentiment and involved themselves in the economy. Economic activities took place all over Pompeii and Herculaneum with little or no attempt made to restrict them to particular areas.

The role of the Forum in the economy

tholos
a circular-shaped building from the ancient world

The Forum was the centre of public life in Pompeii. The Forum of Herculaneum would have played the same role. Several parts of the Forum of Pompeii had specific commercial purposes as summarised in Source 21.

SOURCE 21 Commercial features of the Forum

PART OF THE FORUM	DESCRIPTION	ROLE IN THE ECONOMY
Mensa ponderaria – table of official weights and measures	• A bench with nine holes of varying sizes for different measured amounts	• Used by officials to supervise the accuracy of weights and measures used in the markets
Macellum	• A rectangular courtyard with a circular building or **tholos** in the centre • Market stalls and shops on the north and south sides	• A meat and fish market – fish bones found in drains beneath the tholos are evidence for the latter
Forum holitorium	• Located on the west side of the Forum	• A warehouse market for cereals and pulses
Building of Eumachia	• A large brick building with marble features • Features a statue of Eumachia	• Possibly used as a wool market or for sales of other commodities

Trade

Strabo tells us that Pompeii was the port for the towns of Nuceria and Nola, making it a trading centre, mostly for agricultural produce. There are implications for the size and nature of the port and the scale of trading activity that took place there based on whether it was a sea port, as was once thought, or a river port according to more recent theories. Evidence exists to support both theories, indicating that Pompeii played an important role in the economy of the Campanian region. It is clear, however, that Herculaneum was a relatively small place with an economy that served local needs.

SOURCE 22 The *Mensa ponderaria* from the Forum at Pompeii

Imports to and exports from Pompeii can tell us about trade as well as about the inhabitants. Source 23 gives a summary of these activities.

IMPORTS
- Tableware (terra sigillata) from Puteoli
- Tableware from northern Italy, southern Gaul and Cyprus (a chest containing a large number of unused bowls and lamps was found in a house in Region 8)
- Wine from Kos, Crete, Rhodes, Turkey, Sicily, Palestine and central Italy
- Olive oil from Libya and Spain
- *Garum* from Spain

→ **POMPEII** →

EXPORTS
- *Garum*
- Wine (Pompeian wine has been found in the United Kingdom)

SOURCE 23 Pompeii imports and exports

Commerce

There is substantial evidence of commerce in Pompeii. Shops were plentiful and many were located in the front rooms of the houses that lined the main thoroughfares. The relative lack of material remains found in these shops makes it difficult to determine what was sold in them. Shops that have been identified include:

- a mason's shop – from a wall painting depicting masons' tools (the owner's name was Diogenes)
- a carpenter's shop – from a wall painting depicting carpenters' tools.

In 2016, the French School at Rome excavated a shop outside the Herculaneum Gate at Pompeii. It had a staircase and furnace, so archaeologists think it may have been a place that manufactured bronze objects. Four skeletons of people trapped in the building at the time of the eruption were found in the shop as well.

SOURCE 24 A storage room with wine **amphorae**, part of a wine and cereals shop attached to the House of the Neptune Mosaic in Herculaneum

Markets played an important role in the commerce of the city. The *macellum* and *forum holitorium* have been mentioned in Source 21. Not all shops or markets had permanent locations, however. Evidence from the *praedia* or estate of Julia Felix (see 1.8 Profile) makes it clear that there were temporary stalls where vendors sold goods such as shoes, cloth, metal vessels, fruit and vegetables. Such stalls are likely to have been set up in the Forum or in the surrounds of the amphitheatre. The latter would have sold refreshments to the spectators.

Bars and inns were also plentiful in Pompeii and were frequently located on main roads and near the gates. The many ***thermopolia*** acted as bars (see Source 46). The *dolia*, or large terracotta pots embedded in the counters of these establishments, used to be identified as containers for food and drink. Scholars now consider this to be unlikely due to the difficulties involved with cleaning them. Their purpose was more likely to be the storage of dried food such as nuts, grains, dried fruits and vegetables. The carbonised remains of nuts in a *dolium* from Herculaneum are seen as evidence for this. Such establishments clearly served the many needs of the inhabitants for food and drink. The bar run by Asellina is a

amphora (*pl.* amphorae) a two-handled pottery storage jar with an oval body tapering to a point at the base

***thermopolium* (*pl. thermopolia*)** food stall

good example of a nearly complete *thermopolium*. Buildings identified as inns have been found near the Nuceria Gate and the Forum. They consist of courtyards and upper floor rooms. Other inns no doubt existed but are hard to identify without specific evidence.

Industry

Industry played an important role in the economies of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Agriculture, wine and olive oil production were predominant. Another industry at Pompeii was cloth manufacture. Urine as a source of ammonia was used as part of the process and the fullers left large jars outside their establishments where people could make deposits that were then used in the bleaching process (e.g. the Fullery of Stephanus). Tanners, goldsmiths and silversmiths and dye-makers also used urine in their work.

Occupations

Evidence from both Pompeii and Herculaneum indicates the varied occupations of the population. Pompeii had a large community of artisans that included artists, metalworkers, potters and glassblowers. There were tradesmen, wealthy merchants, manufacturers and service industries employing bakers, innkeepers, bath attendants and brothel keepers. Artwork often depicted *putti*, or cupids, engaged in the various crafts and occupations of the townspeople. In some Pompeian houses, the **peristyle** operated as a manufacturing workshop. For example, in the house of M. Terentius Eudoxus, there was a weaving workshop, run by male and female slaves.

peristyle
a row of columns enclosing a court or other space, or the space surrounded by these columns

cache
valuable items concealed in a hiding place

Banking and money lending

A major source for this aspect of the economy is the **cache** of 127 waxed writing tablets that was found at the Villa Murecine in 1959. These tablets were the business transactions of the Sulpicii family, a family of bankers and money lenders. The tablets appear to have been written between AD 26 and AD 62, and refer to commercial transactions that took place in the nearby port of Puteoli. The tablets are small in size and contain details of loans, IOUs and receipts. Tablet 60 records the details of a loan to a woman.

SOURCE 25 The interior of the *macellum* showing the remains of the tholos

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

SOURCE 26 Tablet 60 from Villa Murecine Cache

Accounts of Titinia Anthracis. Paid out to Euplia of Milo, daughter of Theodorus, 1600 **sesterces**, with the authority of her tutor, Epichares of Athens, son of Aphrodisius. She requested and received that money in cash from the chest at the creditor's home. Received money from the chest: 1600 sesterces. As he was questioned by Titinia Anthracis, Epichares of Athens, son of Aphrodisius, declared that on behalf of Euplia of Milo, daughter of Theodorus, he would stand surety for the repayment of those 1600 sesterces, which are written above.

On the 13th day before the kalends of April [20 March AD 43], under the **consuls** Sextus Palpellius Hister and Lucius Pedanius Secundus.

In J. Andreau, *Banking and Business in the Roman World*, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 33

sesterce
a bronze or silver Roman coin valued at a quarter of a denarius; also referred to as a 'sestertius'

consul
one of two annually elected chief magistrates in the Roman political system

1.5 Understanding and using the sources

Source 26

1. Who is the borrower? From whom are they borrowing?
2. Who is Epichares and what is his role in the transaction?
3. What other information about Pompeii can historians gain from this document?

1.5 Check your learning

1. Considering that wine, oil, *garum* and tablewares were produced locally, why would the people from Pompeii import these items?
2. Why did the Pompeians import more goods than they exported?
3. Research Asellina's bar. Besides the information it reveals about the economy, what does it tell us about the role of women in Pompeii?
4. Research the various aspects of industry and production at Pompeii and Herculaneum and summarise what you learn in a table like the one below. You could do this task in groups. Aspects include vineyards, farms (*villae rusticae*), flower gardens, orchards, olive oil production, *garum* production, cloth manufacture, bakeries and perfume manufacture.

ASPECT	DETAILS	EVIDENCE

5. Find pictures of the wall paintings from the House of the Vettii that depict *putti* at work. What occupations are represented? What do these paintings reveal about the nature of the work involved? How reliable are they as evidence of occupations in Pompeii?
6. Using sources from this chapter and your own knowledge, write a response to the following: 'Interpret what the sources reveal of the types of economic activity that were conducted in Pompeii and Herculaneum.'
   To help you plan your response:
   - identify the main types of economic activity that took place in Pompeii and Herculaneum
   - use these to structure your answer
   - draw meaning from a range of sources about the types of economic activity identified.

1.6 Social structure

The population of Pompeii before the eruption has been variously estimated at somewhere between 10 000 and 20 000 people, about 40 per cent of whom were slaves. The people of Pompeii and Herculaneum were born into particular social classes and had limited social mobility; that is, they could not easily change their social status by moving from one class to another. Source 27 summarises the features and rights of men, women and slaves in Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Men in Pompeii and Herculaneum

Freeborn men were the elite of Pompeii and Herculaneum. They owned the local land and also engaged in business within the town. They were the members of the *ordo decurionum* or town council and, as such, controlled public monies, buildings and spaces, and religion. Their privileges included the best seats in the theatre and amphitheatre, most statues and the best tombs.

Freedmen or *liberti* were male slaves who had been set free by their owners. Once free, many went into business for themselves and became wealthy in their own right. They were denied political office, however, and could only achieve influence by joining the priesthood of a cult. The most influential was the cult of the emperor, and an *Augustalis*, or priest of the emperor, was an office to aspire to (see 1.12 Religion). An interesting example of a freedman seeking political influence through his freeborn son comes from the rebuilding of the Temple of Isis following the earthquake in AD 62. This was done in the name of Numerius Popidius Celsinis, the freedman's 6-year-old child. Apparently the rebuilding of the temple was to ensure the son's admission to the *ordo decurionum*.

FREEBORN MEN (SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ELITE)
- Had full legal rights
- Could hold political office
- Included wealthy landowners and businessmen
- Could be members of the town council
- Controlled public finances, spaces and religion
- Had privileged seats in the amphitheatre and theatre
- Received honorary statues and tombs

FREEBORN WOMEN
- Could not hold formal political office
- Were under legal control of fathers or husbands
- Could own property
- Conducted businesses
- Constructed buildings and tombs
- Held priesthoods
- Supported electoral candidates
- Received honorary statues and tombs
- Ran the household
- Brought up children

FREEDMEN (*LIBERTI*)
- Men freed from slavery
- Often worked for former masters
- Many became wealthy and influential
- Voted in elections
- Owned businesses
- Participated in some religious cults
- Could become an *Augustalis* (priest of the cult of the emperor)
- Could not hold formal political office

FREEDWOMEN
- Women freed from slavery
- Could not hold formal political office
- Some worked for former masters

SLAVES
- Approximately 40 per cent of the population of Pompeii
- Little evidence of their lives remains
- Few houses had separate slave quarters
- Domestic work common
- Few tombstones attributed to slaves

SOURCE 27 The social structure of Pompeii

Women in Pompeii and Herculaneum

As with men, women in Pompeii and Herculaneum came from different social groups and had varying resources. From inscriptions we learn that there were rich women who were able to own property in their own right and manage their affairs without supervision by a male relative. They could also be priestesses of cults and support male candidates for political office.

SOURCE 28 Prominent women of Pompeii

WOMAN	INFORMATION	EVIDENCE
Poppaea Sabina	• Married to the emperor Nero • Her family owned the House of Menander and the House of the Gilded Cupids	• Owned a villa in Oplontis
Eumachia	• Her family owned brickmaking works and vineyards	• Constructed the Eumachia building, a large public building in the Forum • Dedicated this in her own name and in the name of her son, Marcus Numistrius Fronto
Umbricia Januaria	• Possibly a freed slave as suggested by her name (it suggests she was born in January)	• Wooden and wax tablets detailing the financial transactions of the banker Caecilius Jucundus mention her • Operated a business for her former master
Taedia Secunda	• Canvassed votes for her grandson	• Electoral campaign posters or ***programmata*** from Pompeii

Women and work

From the evidence of graffiti and inscriptions, we can also gain an insight into the lives of less wealthy women. Women named Valeria Hedone and Asellina were tavern owners; Statia and Petronia worked in a bakery; Amaryllis and Specula worked in the cloth trade. Other women worked as vegetable sellers, weavers, doctors and moneylenders.

There were also the lower-class poor women and slaves who worked as household servants, cooks, cleaners, **wet nurses** and prostitutes. Funerary monuments testify to the fact that some Pompeian women were important enough to have been honoured by a funeral at public expense. One such woman was the priestess Mamia. Another woman, Veia Barchilla, erected and paid for a large tomb to commemorate the life of her husband.

SOURCE 29 The statue of Eumachia in Pompeii

programmata
public notices advertising candidates in forthcoming elections

wet nurse
a woman employed to suckle another woman's child

Slaves

Despite the fact that slaves comprised up to 40 per cent of Pompeii's population, there is little evidence of them in the archaeological record. We do know that some slaves were owned by Pompeii's town council. A few houses had areas that can be identified as specifically for slaves, for example the House of Menander and the House of the Centenary. In other cases they probably shared their owner's living spaces. Very few tomb inscriptions record that the tomb owner was a slave. Probably the majority of slaves were buried in the tombs of their masters or in unmarked graves. One slave named Conviva is known from her tomb inscription that records her death at the age of 20.

1.6 Check your learning

1 Find evidence for each of the men listed below and record it in a table using the following headings: Name, Social status, Relevant career details, Evidence. Some men are mentioned in this chapter; others can be found online.

Appius Claudius Pulcher
Gaius Calventius Quietus
Gaius Muniatus Faustus
Numerius Popidius Ampliatus
Marcus Tullius
Marcus Numistrius Fronto
Marcus Holconius Rufus
Marcus Nonius Balbus
Lucius Caecilius Jucundus

2 Discuss the following in groups and share your answers:

- **a** How could freedmen become wealthy and influential?
- **b** What privileges did freeborn women have?
- **c** Why would Eumachia have dedicated her building in the Forum in her son's name?
- **d** Why would Umbricia Januaria have been running a business for her former master, Caecilius Jucundus?
- **e** List the different types of evidence that tell us about the lives of women. What are the limitations of such evidence?
- **f** Suggest reasons why there is so little evidence for slavery in Pompeii and Herculaneum.

3 Find out more about the building of Eumachia in the Forum. For example, what were its dimensions? What was it used for? Note that its function is contested. What other evidence has been found concerning Eumachia? Read the online article 'Civil Forum of Pompeii. The Eumachia building' by Annamaria De Santis.

4 What do the wall paintings and frescoes reveal about women and their lifestyle in Pompeii and Herculaneum?

5 Read the chapter 'The Women of Pompeii', in E. Fantham et al., *Women in the Classical World: Image and Text*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1994, pp. 330–44.

1.7 Local political life

guilds associations of craftsmen or merchants

Pompeii, like all Roman colonies, had a constitution. The city of Pompeii was divided into *vici* or wards, which served as voting districts. There were magistrates responsible for the maintenance of public infrastructure. Pompeii was governed by a group of wealthy municipal aristocrats who made up the *ordo decurionum* or town council. As well as the magistrates, trade **guilds**, for example fullers, bankers and religious associations, could exercise some political influence. Source 30 summarises the political institutions at Pompeii.

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Comitium
- The people's assembly
- Included all adult male citizens, including freedmen
- Elected magistrates and voted honours

Magistracy
- *Duumviri* (two) – senior magistrates for 1 year
- Aediles (two) – junior magistrates for 1 year, responsible for the judicial system, public works, administration, municipal cults, games and public entertainment, the markets
- *Quinquennial duumviri* – responsible for revising the *ordo decurionum* every 5 years
- Necessary qualifications: male, freeborn, over 25 years of age, the required wealth, unblemished character

Ordo decurionum
- Made laws, carried out by the magistrates
- Members called *decuriones*
- New members admitted every 5 years
- Lifetime membership
- Membership usually about 100

SOURCE 30 Political life in Pompeii

SOURCE 31 A statue of Marcus Nonius Balbus, donated by the inhabitants, from outside the theatre at Herculaneum

Political life in Herculaneum

The political organisation of Herculaneum was similar to that of Pompeii. It was also run by two annually elected *duumviri*. Its aediles, like those at Pompeii, supervised the markets and public works. One inscription mentions an official called a quaestor, who would have managed the town's finances. Men who rose in prominence during the Augustan period are known for their generosity to Herculaneum. They paid for public buildings and gave dinners for the *decuriones* and the *Augustales*. In return they were elected to public office and had buildings named in their honour. A well-known example is Marcus Nonius Balbus, a Roman Senator who became governor of Crete and Cyrene. As a great benefactor of the town, he was commemorated by several inscriptions and statues at Herculaneum, as well as a building named for him, the Basilica Noniana.

Sources for political life

Most of our knowledge of Pompeii's political organisation is drawn from the epigraphic sources such as *programmata* or election slogans. These *programmata* indicate that the people of Pompeii enthusiastically participated in the elections.

Building inscriptions also provide us with information. Two very generous *duumviri*, Valgus and Porcius, built a small theatre for the use of the Pompeians. It was part of the expectation of people in public office that they build facilities for the people at their own expense. Source 32 provides information about these building inscriptions.

SOURCE 32

INSCRIPTIONS FROM THE POMPEIAN FORUM

A Marcus Holconius Rufus, *duumvir* with judicial authority for the third time, and Gaius Egnatius Postumus, *duumvir* with judicial authority for the second time, in accordance with a decree of the decurions purchased for 3000 sesterces the right to shut out light and cause to be constructed a wall belonging to the colony of Pompeii to the height of the tiles.

B Marcus Porcius the son of Marcus, Lucius Sextilius the son of Lucius, Gnaeus Cornelius the son Gnaeus and Aulus Cornelius the son of Aulus, the board of four, by decree of the decurions let the contract.

SOURCE 33 Graffiti, mostly electoral posters from AD 79, on the façade of Asellina's tavern in Pompeii

C Lucius Sepunius Sandilianus the son of Lucius, and Marcus Herrenius Epidianus the son of Aulus, *duumviri* with judicial authority, caused [this sundial] to be erected at their own expense.

In R. Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, Routledge, London, 1996, p. 33

Patron–client relationship

One feature of life that was common to all levels of society in Pompeii and Herculaneum was the relationship of client and patron. This was a relationship based on mutual obligation. Elite freeborn families acted as patrons to those in the lower class. It was the responsibility of the client to support his patron at political elections and carry out any services that might be required. In return, the patron might assist his client in legal matters, support his candidacy for political office, influence business transactions in his favour or give him a loan or a free meal.

An example of the patron–client relationship in Pompeii was that between Eumachia and the guild of fullers. The statue of Eumachia in Source 29 was erected in her honour by the fullers' guild.

1.7 Understanding and using the sources

Source 32

1 According to inscription A, why was the wall built?
2 In inscription B, what do you think is meant by 'let the contract'?
3 In inscription C, what have the *duumviri* given permission to be built? Why do they emphasise that it was 'at their own expense'?
4 What do these inscriptions reveal about the roles played by *decuriones*?
5 What do we learn about the tenure of office (i.e. length of time in office) of the *duumviri* from these inscriptions?

1.7 Check your learning

1 Gravediggers, innkeepers, actors, auctioneers and gladiators were ineligible to be *decuriones*. Why do you think this would have been the case?
2 Find examples online of election slogans and propaganda from Pompeii and explain what they reveal about the people of Pompeii. An excellent selection of inscriptions and written sources on Pompeii may also be found in A. Cooley & M. Cooley, *Pompeii and Herculaneum: A Sourcebook*, Routledge, London, 2013.
3 Find out more about patronage in Pompeii. You could read the article 'Whose Forum? Imperial and Elite Patronage in the Forum of Pompeii' by Joseph Frankl (2013).
4 Why would the fullers' guild have dedicated a statue to Eumachia?

1.8 Everyday life: Housing

The artefacts left behind by the people of Pompeii and Herculaneum give us much information about their everyday lives. Everyday life includes aspects related to provision for basic physical needs such as housing, food, clothing, water and sanitation. Beyond that, there are the many leisure pursuits, including sports and public entertainments.

The houses that have been excavated at Pompeii and Herculaneum are valuable archaeological sources on Roman domestic life, and give us an idea of the development and changes that took place in housing and urban life. Although the houses vary in size and levels of wealth, they generally show a regular plan and systematic use of space. The wealthy inhabitants constructed elaborate, multi-roomed dwellings. The poorer residents, such as the shopkeepers and craftsmen, lived in one-room apartments or in a cramped space at the rear of the business premises, or on the floor above.

In the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, the people of Pompeii used limestone, a dark grey Vesuvius lava stone, yellow and grey tufa, and rubble and brick as the main building materials. A combination of lava blocks and grey tufa laid in a lattice pattern was used after 80 BC. After AD 62, the Pompeians seem to have used whatever building materials were available.

Housing styles

Four main styles of housing have been identified in Pompeii and Herculaneum:

- the *domus* or atrium house (e.g. House of Menander)
- the atrium–peristyle house (e.g. House of the Vettii)
- *insulae* or apartment/lodging houses (e.g. House of the Trellis)
- villas (e.g. Villa of the Mysteries).

The *domus* or atrium house

The most common form of housing in Pompeii was the *domus* or atrium house. It was usually single-storeyed, while the excavations at Herculaneum have uncovered houses of this type that had two storeys. They were generally owned by members of the senatorial and equestrian classes or local aristocracy. Source 34 summarises the main features of a *domus* or atrium house.

The atrium–peristyle house

By the 1st century AD, the peristyle had become the centrepiece of wealthy homes. Alterations to the House of the Vettii at this time meant that a visitor passed straight from the entry and atrium to the peristyle. The peristyle gave access to the dining room and living rooms.

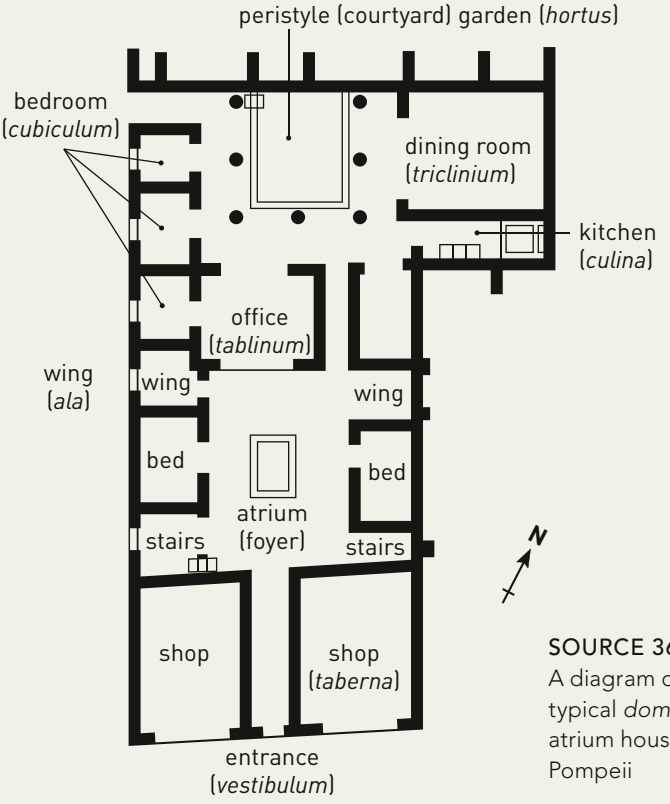
Insulae or apartment/lodging houses

Insulae consisted of multi-storeyed apartments or tenements. Their facilities varied from spacious apartments with a number of rooms to tiny cubicles suitable only for sleeping. More examples of multi-storeyed buildings have been found at Herculaneum than at Pompeii. The House of the Trellis at Herculaneum housed two families, one on each of its two floors. It appears to have been cheaply built of wood and plaster, and had an outside staircase for access to the upper floor.

SOURCE 34 Main features of a *domus* or atrium house

FEATURE	DETAILS
Entrance	• Through doorways, often placed between shops • Shops rented out to merchants
Atrium	• The religious and social centre of a Roman house • Clients waited here to pay their respects (*salutatio*) to the master of the house (or patron) • Featured portrait busts of prominent ancestors • The *lararium* (shrine of the household gods) was located here
Compluvium	• A rectangular hole in the roof • Provided lighting for the interior of the house • The inward-sloping roof was designed to catch the maximum amount of rainwater
Impluvium	• A large pool sunk into the atrium floor • The water was channelled into a cistern beneath the atrium floor
Triclinium	• The dining room • Many houses had two dining rooms: a winter dining room that was inside and a summer dining room that was located in the garden or opened onto the garden
Peristyle	• An open courtyard garden generally surrounded by colonnades • Featured ornamental plants and statues, and often fountains, pools, murals and running water
Decorative elements	• Floor tiles or mosaics • Murals or painted scenes on walls

SOURCE 35 A house from Pompeii showing the mosaic-tiled entrance, the atrium with the *impluvium*, and the peristyle beyond



SOURCE 36 A diagram of a typical *domus* or atrium house at Pompeii

SOURCE 37 The peristyle from the House of the Vettii at Pompeii

Villas

Villas were large, luxurious, multi-roomed dwellings located on the outskirts of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Villas were also built on the coast by the wealthy citizens of Rome, who used them as holiday homes. Stabiae, for example, had many seaside villas and was the location of the villa belonging to Pliny the Elder's friend, Pomponianus.

1.8 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 34–37

1. What evidence is there of public and private areas in an atrium house?
2. Why was the peristyle an important feature of wealthy homes?

1.8 Check your learning

1. Research the House of Menander, the House of the Vettii, the House of the Trellis and the Villa of Mysteries. Record the main features of each and what they reveal about housing in Pompeii and Herculaneum.
2. Find out about the roles houses played in the lives of the wealthy men of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Search online for 'patron–client relationship in Pompeii houses'.
3. Research the four styles of Pompeian mural painting described by August Mau. Identify the key features of each style and find examples of each.

1.8 Profile

Villa of the Papyri and the *praedia* of Julia Felix

Two of the better-known dwellings from the cities of Vesuvius are the Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum and the extensive complex of Julia Felix at Pompeii. Both provide evidence of the lifestyles of the wealthy citizens of these towns.

Villa of the Papyri, Herculaneum

The Villa of the Papyri was first uncovered in 1735 by Karl Weber who drew a detailed floor plan of the building. The villa, built in the 1st century BC, takes its modern name from the ancient library discovered there in 1752. Shelves around the room held approximately 1800 blackened, carbonised, cylindrical papyrus scrolls. The villa followed the usual layout of an atrium–peristyle house, but on a much grander scale. The atrium served as the formal entrance and gave access to other parts of the house. The reception rooms and the living quarters were arranged around the porticoes and terraces. This provided sunshine and light to the interior rooms and sea views.

herm
a rectangular, tapered stone base supporting a carved head or bust

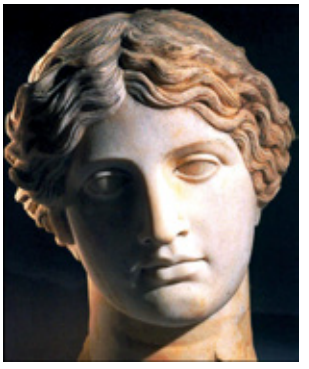
The magnificence of the villa is reflected in the water features, the pools and the fountains. The *impluvium* in the atrium displays the ornate use of statues and waterworks. In the adjoining peristyle was another pool with 10 columns on either side. Between each column was a shell from which streams of water flowed into the pool. The main peristyle, a huge area the size of a small town forum, featured another pool. This was a huge fish pond as large as the imperial baths in Rome (6.5 metres long and 7 metres wide). Around this pool in the garden were many beautiful statues. Nearby was a small rotunda that concealed an aqueduct and hydraulic pump, bringing water to all these waterworks.

SOURCE 38 A replica of the Villa of the Papyri, including the peristyle garden and statues, at the J. Paul Getty Museum in California

Another feature of the Villa of the Papyri attesting to the wealth of the owner was the large number of important artworks, busts and statues in marble and bronze, most of which were found in very good condition. Some of the more famous pieces include:

- a copy of the head of Doryphorus the Lance Bearer adapted as a **herm** – the original was by the famous 5th-century Greek sculptor Polyclitus
- a copy of the head of an Amazon, also a herm – the original was by Phidias, the most famous 5th-century Greek sculptor
- a portrait bust in bronze of Scipio Africanus, showing him as bald and with a tattooed scalp
- 'The Resting Hermes', a bronze sculpted perhaps by Lysippos, who worked for Alexander the Great.

In 1970, the American millionaire J. Paul Getty used the Weber architectural floor plan as the model for the J. Paul Getty Museum in



SOURCE 39 The head of an Amazon from the Villa of the Papyri in Herculaneum

SOURCE 40 Modern excavation taking place at the Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum

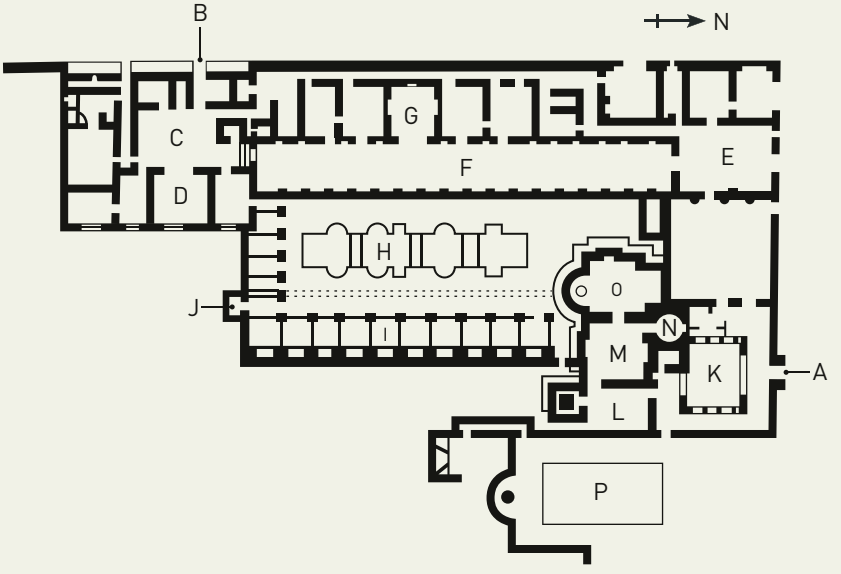
Malibu, California. Completed in 1974, the museum was built to house Getty's collection of Greek and Roman antiquities.

The *praedia* of Julia Felix

The House of Julia Felix is sometimes referred to as the *praedia* or estate of Julia Felix. Julia Felix was a wealthy heiress, daughter of Spurius Felix and owner of a large establishment made of two *insulae* joined together. The property is one of the largest in Pompeii and is famous for its magnificent decoration and attractive orchards and gardens, which occupy most of the space. It is situated on the Via dell'Abbondanza and appears to have been reconstructed after the earthquake of AD 62.

As well as private quarters, the property contained a bathing establishment, shops and apartments, as proved by an inscription found when the house was first excavated advertising these premises. The private bathing facility was elaborate and intended for the elite of Pompeii. It had the usual features, including a cloakroom, a dressing room with a cold tub, a warm bath, a vaulted circular area probably used like a sauna, a hot bath and open-air baths. It also featured a waiting room and a service hatch that enabled the bathers to purchase a snack from the nearby tavern.

A Entrance with inscription
B Entrance to the private port
C Atrium
D *Tablinum*
E Atrium with paintings of the Forum
F Portico
G *Triclinium*
H *Euripus*
I Pergola
J The *sacellum* of Isis
K The Baths portico
L *Apodyterium*
M *Tepidarium*
N *Laconicum*
O *Calidarium*
P *Natatio*



SOURCE 41 A diagram of the *praedia* of Julia Felix

Artwork and other decoration

The frescoes painted on walls throughout the house depict scenes of everyday Pompeian life and luxury items enjoyed by the household. These paintings, representing the **Fourth Style** of Pompeian art, are beautifully executed. A well-known painting depicts a young woman with a writing tablet and stylus. These implied her literacy and therefore her high status and perhaps her value as a wife.

Another feature of this house was the large grotto-style dining room with fountains. Its walls were decorated with scenes of the Egyptian Nile and the ceiling was covered with stones to give the appearance of a cave or grotto. The peristyle or garden was lined with statues and marble walkways and contained a series of linked water channels. Some scholars consider that this was intended to represent a branch of the Nile Delta. The garden also contained a small shrine to the Egyptian goddess Isis, and an open-air dining room. Because of the Isis shrine, it is thought that Julia Felix may have been a priestess of the Isis cult.

Fourth Style one of the four styles of Pompeian art described by August Mau; characterised by the painting of framed scenes, often featuring human figures and architectural motifs

SOURCE 42 A portrait of a young woman with a writing tablet, from the House of Julia Felix

SOURCE 43 A garden feature at the House of Julia Felix

1.8 Profile tasks

1. What are the significant features of the Villa of the Papyri?
2. What do its statues reveal about society in Pompeii and Herculaneum?
3. Find out more about the famous library of the Villa and the scientific methods used to read the carbonised scrolls. Read the online *Nature* article 'X-rays reveal words in Vesuvius-baked scrolls'.
4. Compare the *praedia* of Julia Felix with a typical Pompeian house. What are the similarities and differences? Check the meanings of the Latin terms in Source 41.
5. What does the *praedia* tell us about wealthy women in Pompeii and their roles?
6. Create a table to record what the *praedia* reveals about life in Pompeii. Use the headings 'Aspect of life' and 'Information revealed'. Cover these topics: Housing, Art, Commerce, Religion, Role of women.

1.9 Everyday life: Food and dining

Evidence of food and drink consumed in Pompeii and Herculaneum is found both within and outside the walls of the cities. Archaeological evidence enables us to identify the foods that were available to the population, who apparently had a varied diet. Seeds and pips from foods such as dates, figs and olives have been preserved in the volcanic ash. Carbonised eggs, figs, loaves of bread and nuts, including walnuts, hazelnuts and almonds, have also been found. Animal bones from sheep, pigs and cattle attest to the consumption of meat. Evidence for the presence of seafood in the population's diet comes from fish bones and the shells of scallops, cockles, sea urchins and cuttlefish.

SOURCE 44 Grape pips, fig pips, fish bones and sea urchin shells found in latrine pits

A team from Oxford University has been investigating remains from latrine pits and sewers at Pompeii. As latrines were usually in the kitchen, they were used to dispose of both human excrement and food scraps. So far, mineralised seeds, small bones and marine shell fragments have been found. Oxford University has also been working at Herculaneum on the city's sewers as part of the Herculaneum Conservation Project. In 2011, archaeologists reported that they had retrieved 750 large bags of human excrement from one previously unexcavated sewer. As well as many artefacts that had obviously been lost in the sewer, examination revealed grape pips, fig pips, fish bones and sea urchin shells.

A team from the University of Cincinnati examined an area of 20 shops that served food and drink at the Porta Stabia, a busy gate on the southern side of Pompeii. In 2014, these archaeologists reported evidence of not only the expected foodstuffs such as grains, fruits, nuts, olives, lentils, fish and (chicken) eggs, but also dietary items that were more exotic.

SOURCE 45

The Cincinnati team found, in the remnants even of businesses that would have served the lower classes, evidence of salted fish that would have come from Spain. Via a drain from a property in the center of the plot, they also discovered evidence of shellfish not native to Italy. They found mineralized remnants, as well, of sea urchin. And also! The butchered leg joint of a giraffe.

'That the bone represents the height of exotic food,' [said] Steven Ellis, an associate professor of classics who led the research, … 'is underscored by the fact that this is thought to be the only giraffe bone ever recorded from an archaeological excavation in Roman Italy.'

M. Garber, 'How did people in ancient Pompeii end up eating giraffes?', *The Atlantic*, 3 January 2014

Professor Wilhelmina Jashemski, an archaeologist specialising in the gardens of Pompeii, discovered that many houses had spaces for the cultivation of figs, olives, cherries and other fruits and vegetables. Evidence for viticulture (grape growing) within Pompeii and hence for the drinking of wine came from her discovery of a vineyard within the walls. Artworks including frescoes and mosaics that feature foods such as fruit, fish, poultry and game also provide information about diet at Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Garum

The Romans loved spicy, strong flavourings in their food. A favourite was a thick, salty fish sauce called *garum*. This was made of a fermented mixture of small fish such as sprats and anchovies combined with the entrails of larger fish such as mackerel. A lighter, strained version of this sauce was called *liquamen*. Pompeii was famous for its *garum* and the name of a prominent manufacturer is known, one Aulus Umbricius Scaurus. A large number of labels found on *garum* containers in Pompeii and throughout Campania record his name. Excavation at Pompeii has uncovered stalls that sold takeaway foods doused in this fish sauce.

SOURCE 46 A well-preserved *thermopolium* from Herculaneum

Dining in Pompeii and Herculaneum

Wall paintings suggest that banquets were popular in Pompeii and Herculaneum. These depict people eating and drinking, being helped by slaves to remove outer clothing and even vomiting. The houses of the wealthy had a specific dining room called a *triclinium*, where these parties probably took place. An outdoor *triclinium* was found in the House of the Moralist at Pompeii, which featured three stone couches that were painted red and a marble-topped table. A bronze brazier and various serving and eating vessels were found nearby. In ordinary homes, meals could have been taken in a variety of locations, both inside and outside.

The inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum also ate 'fast food'. Australian archaeologist Dr Penelope Allison, who excavated the *insula* of the Menander at Pompeii, thinks that their busy lives probably left little time for long meals at the dinner table. She thinks that the large numbers of small barbeques for grilling found in the houses she studied means that people were eating 'on the go'. Ready-cooked food was also available at the many *thermopolia* or food stalls found in both Pompeii and Herculaneum.

1.9 Understanding and using the sources

Source 45

1. List the imported foods found by the Cincinnati team.
2. Why was the discovery of the giraffe bone significant?

1.9 Check your learning

1. Find out more about the University of Cincinnati's work at Porta Stabia. Read the online article 'No scrounging for scraps: UC research uncovers the diets of the middle and lower class in Pompeii'.
2. Investigate the work of Wilhelmina Jashemski at Pompeii. Search online for 'Evidence of food plants of Ancient Pompeii' and 'Archaeological evidence for plants in ancient Vesuvian gardens'.
3. Research the recent archaeological discoveries made at the Villa Murecine. What do they reveal about food and dining in Pompeii?
4. Research the Pompeii Food and Drink Project. What further information can you find about food and drink in Pompeii?
5. Writing task: Explain what sources reveal about food and dining in Pompeii and Herculaneum.

   To help you plan your response:

   - identify the main features of food and dining that you wish to write about
   - keep your introduction to one sentence that addresses the question and previews the features you have identified
   - make observations about features of food and dining and illustrate them with specific information from the sources
   - explain the relationship between the sources and conclusions you draw – be careful to avoid a source-by-source description.

1.10 Everyday life: Clothing, health and water supply

Further aspects of everyday life in Pompeii and Herculaneum concerned clothing, health, baths, water supply and sanitation.

Clothing

Most evidence for clothing in Pompeii and Herculaneum comes from artistic representations; there is very little evidence in the archaeological record. Although statues of highly ranked men, such as Marcus Nonius Balbus from Herculaneum, show them wearing the toga, the national garment of Rome, it is unlikely that they were worn all the time. The toga was a very heavy woollen garment that was difficult to put on without assistance and greatly restricted the wearer's mobility. It was a garment for formal occasions, as seen in a fresco from a building outside of Pompeii where men are shown engaged in a religious procession. Men of rank as well as those of the equestrian class more commonly wore a knee-length, belted tunic. The width of the purple stripes on the front and back indicated the rank of the wearer. Working men and slaves wore a similar tunic, which was usually made of coarser, darker wool. These would be pulled higher over their belts to shorten them for ease of movement.

SOURCE 47 'Primavera', or 'Spring', a fresco in the Third Pompeian style from the Villa Arianna in Stabiae

Women of rank are depicted wearing a *stola*, a long, sleeveless tunic, usually suspended at the shoulders from short straps. This was worn on top of another tunic. The wearing of this garment, which was a symbol of marriage, enabled a woman to publicly proclaim her modesty and respect for tradition. This was accentuated by the cloak or *palla*, which she wore over her head when outdoors.

Health

The main evidence for the health of the residents of Pompeii and Herculaneum comes from the remains of the people themselves. Dr Estelle Lazer, an archaeologist and physical anthropologist from Sydney University, has studied the pathology of human remains at Pompeii. Her examination of human remains, including about

300 skulls, indicates that the people were generally well nourished. The average height was 167 centimetres for men and 155 centimetres for women. The wear and decay of their teeth was probably caused by particles of the basalt grindstones used in making flour. Dr Lazer also found evidence for an age-related condition called hyperostosis frontalis interna (HFI), a thickening of the frontal bone of the skull, usually associated with post-menopausal women. Its symptoms include obesity, diabetes and headaches, which might have affected about 12 per cent of the female population – a normal distribution in most populations.

Other studies on the human remains from Pompeii reveal that tuberculosis and malaria were common diseases. Death rates from these diseases were higher in wealthy areas of town, where water features in gardens provided breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Investigations of the remains of a group of people who tried to escape the eruption show that one in five were infected with brucellosis or Malta fever, a disease caused by eating contaminated milk products.

Surgical instruments have been found in several locations in Pompeii. Despite their presence, remains have been found where fractures have healed without the bones being reset. In Source 48, Dr Penelope Allison expresses her opinion on the likely source of most medical intervention in Pompeii.

SOURCE 48

'We believe that whenever we find medical instruments, they belonged to doctors. But I think that a lot more high-level first aid went on within households,' Allison said. 'We have found surgical instruments in domestic contexts, and I think someone in the house was responsible for sewing up injured people.'

P. Allison, cited in H. Whipps, 'Secrets of ancient Pompeii households revealed in ruins', *Live Science*, 31 May 2007

1.10 Understanding and using the sources

Source 48

1 Who might have been responsible for first aid in a Pompeian household? Why?

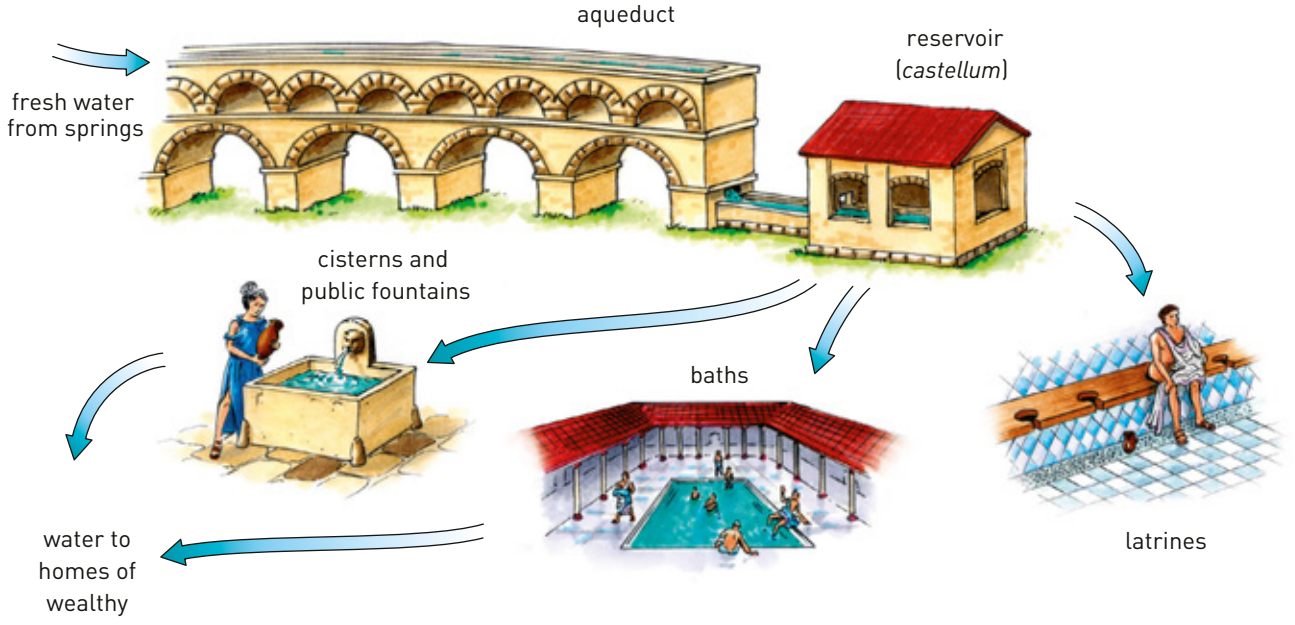
1.10a Check your learning

1 Find pictures of statues and frescoes from Pompeii and Herculaneum. See if you can identify the garments the people are wearing.
2 Is it possible to distinguish social classes from the garments depicted?
3 How reliable are statues and frescoes as evidence of everyday clothing as worn in Pompeii and Herculaneum?
4 Research the House of the Surgeons and the medical instruments that have been found there. What do they reveal of medical practices?
5 Find out more about the villa that has been excavated at Boscoreale, as well as the Villa Regina, Villa of Publius Fannius Synistor, Villa della Pisanella and Villa del fondo Ippolito Zurlo. What information do they provide about everyday life?

Water supply

One of the major prerequisites for any city is a regular water supply. The early inhabitants of Pompeii relied on water from the Sarno River, deep wells and rain-collecting cisterns for their water supply.

At the time of Augustus, the imperial aqueduct at Misenum had a branch built to supply Pompeii (Serinum aqueduct). Water from this channel flowed into a main tank or water tower (*castellum aquae*) near the Vesuvian Gate. From the *castellum*, it was siphoned off into three main pipes that fed different areas of the city. The sloping terrain aided the water pressure that dispersed the water to various tanks all over Pompeii. Fourteen of these secondary tanks have been uncovered. Many private homes in Pompeii were connected directly to this source of fresh, running water.



SOURCE 49 A diagram of the water supply at Pompeii

One of the three pipes supplied the 42 public fountains (*nymphaea*), found all over Pompeii. We have evidence of three fountains at Herculaneum. They were usually located at crossroads; obviously the supply of water was more important than traffic movement because in some places the fountains obstructed the roadway. It is likely that most people in Pompeii lived within easy walking distance of a fountain. These public fountains provided a continuous supply of fresh water as there was an overflow system. The excess water ran down the streets and helped wash away the rubbish. The fountains were quadrangular stone basins often decorated with **gargoyles**. Water flowed through lead pipes, but the Pompeians were unaware of the health hazard. Another feature was the use of a technology called *castellum plumbeum,* a complex water pressure system that functioned with the water towers to regulate water pressure throughout the town.

gargoyle
a carving of an ugly human or animal head or figure projecting from the gutter of a building, acting as a spout

Baths and bathing

hypocaust
an ancient Roman heating system whereby air heated by furnaces was directed into hollow spaces beneath the floors of buildings

Although the Romans are credited with being the first to build bathing complexes, their origins lie in Greek culture and in that of the Samnites of Campania. In fact, Pompeii already had two public baths before the first one was built in Rome. For the Romans, bathing was also a social and leisure activity, not just a matter of hygiene. Many houses, even those belonging to the wealthier citizens, did not have bathrooms – instead people frequented the public bathing complexes. In every colony or military settlement, one of the first buildings to be constructed was the public baths and this building was always a communal centre, just as important as the Forum.

SOURCE 50 A *nymphaeum* at Herculaneum

Baths at Pompeii

Pompeii had four main public baths. They were the Forum Baths, the Stabian Baths, the Central Baths and the Amphitheatre Baths. The Stabian Baths were the oldest and largest baths in Pompeii and date from as early as the 4th century BC. They had the earliest known **hypocaust**, which was installed in the 1st century BC. Floors and rooms were heated by hot air circulated via pipes and flues located beneath. Vents allowed smoke and soot to escape. Special clogs were worn by the bathers to protect their feet from the heat of the floors.

In the 1st century BC, the *duumviri* G. Iulius and P. Annius, according to an inscription, reconstructed the *palaestra* and the porticoes, and added a *laconicum* or sauna and a *destrictarium* or scraping room. In the Augustan period a new wing was added, the *palaestra* extended and a swimming pool added. At this time the baths were decorated with fine Fourth-Style frescoes, multicoloured **stucco bas reliefs**, mosaic floors and marble fittings. The earthquake of AD 62 severely damaged these baths and some areas were not in use at the time of the eruption. Excavations of the Stabian Baths, begun in the 1850s, revealed that looters had raided these baths in the years following the AD 79 eruption.

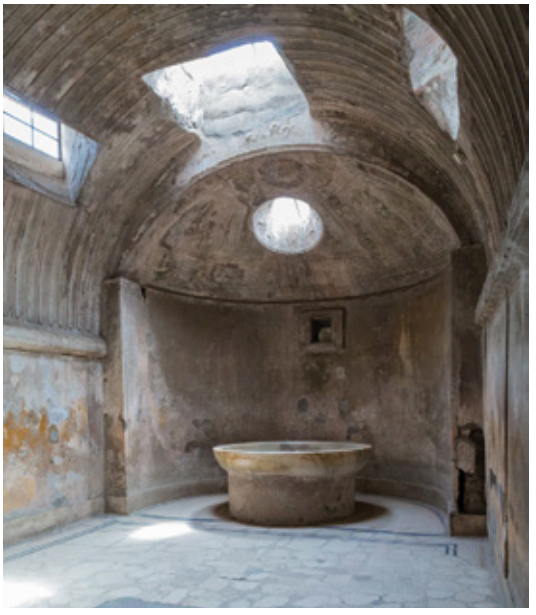
stucco bas relief
a render applied wet to a sculpture in low relief, in which the forms project slightly from the background

Baths at Herculaneum

Herculaneum had two bathing complexes: the Forum Baths and the Suburban Baths. The Forum Baths were built between 30 and 10 BC and follow the standard Roman design of baths. The floor of the *tepidarium* (warm bath) features a mosaic in the design of a huge **Triton** with serpents entwined around his legs, surrounded by frolicking dolphins.

Triton
a Greek god, messenger of the sea, son of Neptune and Amphitrite

The Suburban Baths were located outside the town walls, near the sea. The baths themselves are in a very good state of preservation, but have been difficult to excavate due to the dense volcanic rock and the lowered water table. Damage has been done to the site not only by the eruption, but also by tunnellers in the early days of excavation.



SOURCE 51 The *caldarium*, or hot bathing room, of the Forum Baths at Pompeii

SOURCE 52 The floor mosaic of the *tepidarium* in the Forum Baths at Herculaneum

Sanitation

Pompeii was noisy, dirty, smelly and generally unhygienic, with rubbish in the streets. Like most Roman towns, it had public latrines. To dispose of the waste matter from these, the Romans devised a system that involved water running continuously through a drainage channel that moved the waste matter along. A large public latrine with seating for 20 people has been found in the north-west corner of the Forum at Pompeii. There was a small anteroom and then the main toilet area containing seats. Roman toilets were communal with no private cubicles. People sat side by side on benches above the flowing channel. There was no toilet paper, only a sponge on a stick. Public latrines were also located at the baths and the *palaestra*.

Some private homes in Pompeii and Herculaneum, such as the House of the Painted Capitals, had latrines. These were often located near the kitchen area and were flushed by hand or connected to the house's water supply from the aqueduct. The waste matter drained away to cesspits beneath the roadway or to the sewerage system. Private toilets were usually only for one or two people; however, some houses in Herculaneum catered for up to six users.

1.10b Check your learning

1. Find out some details of the function of each of the four main public baths mentioned and the activities conducted there. Were the facilities the same or different for men and women?
2. Find some pictures of Roman latrines. The public ones at Pompeii are not in very good condition, but those at Ephesus and Ostia are very well preserved. You should also be able to find some pictures of Pompeian latrines that were adjacent to kitchens.
3. Writing tasks: Choose one or more of the following and write responses.
   - **a** Describe the clothing worn by the people of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
   - **b** Describe the health of the population of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
   - **c** What do the baths in Pompeii and Herculaneum reveal about everyday life?
   - **d** What evidence do we have for water supply and sanitation in Pompeii and Herculaneum?

1.11 Leisure activities

Various leisure activities were enjoyed by all ranks of society in Pompeii and Herculaneum. People could go to the theatre, attend gladiatorial games and beast fights in the amphitheatre, work out in the *palaestra* or gym, go to the baths and, of course, spend time in the many bars and taverns.

Theatres

proscenium
the stage area of an ancient Greek or Roman theatre

Pompeii had two theatres: the Large Theatre and the smaller Odeion. The Large Theatre was constructed on the Greek model with semicircular, tiered seating that had a capacity of up to 5000. The building dates to the 2nd century BC, with additions made during the reign of Augustus by Marcus Holconius Rufus, a local official. The **proscenium** and stage building were begun after the AD 62 earthquake. The lower tiers were clad in marble and reserved for the elite members of society.

The Odeion was a covered structure of smaller capacity. As with the Large Theatre, the seating was arranged and decorated according to social status. Because it was roofed, the acoustics were good and well suited for the poetry readings and concerts that were held there.

The theatre at Herculaneum was a freestanding structure of 19 rows of tiered seating with a seating capacity of about 2000. The well-known local identity Marcus Nonius Balbus is commemorated in inscriptions and statues along with statues of gods and imperial and local figures.

SOURCE 53 A mosaic from Pompeii depicting an actor wearing a comic mask

Several different types of entertainment, including plays, farces and pantomimes, were held at the theatres at Pompeii and Herculaneum. Pantomimes – stories told with mime and music – were a popular attraction. The Games of Apollo at Pompeii included pantomimes, which were held at either the Forum or the Large Theatre. Greek drama, including comedies and tragedies, was also popular. Inscriptions from Pompeii and Herculaneum refer to groups of players touring around the Campanian region.

The *palaestra*

The men from Pompeii and Herculaneum spent some of their leisure time at the *palaestra*. The *palaestra* at Pompeii was an exercise ground for the military and for youth organisations promoted by the emperor. It was a spacious, open-air arena measuring 141 metres by 107 metres, bounded on three sides by graceful colonnades and shaded by plane trees. In the centre was a rectangular swimming pool fed with fresh water from the nearby aqueduct.

At Herculaneum, the *palaestra* was slightly smaller than the one at Pompeii, covering a total area of 120 metres by 80 metres. It was also surrounded by colonnades on three sides, the fourth being a covered walkway. In the centre was an ornamental, cross-shaped pool featuring a fountain in the shape of a serpent with five heads. A swimming pool was located in front of the covered walkway. Umbrella pines provided shade on hot summer days.

Gladiatorial games

Gladiatorial games were one of the most popular forms of entertainment in Pompeii. They featured combats between pairs of gladiators and between men and animals. Gladiators were usually slaves or convicted criminals. In Pompeii they trained at the *palaestra* next to the amphitheatre and in the gladiators' barracks, which were located some distance from the amphitheatre in the portico of the Large Theatre. Archaeologists found 18 human skeletons here as well as that of a horse.

Another major find was the gladiatorial equipment found in 1766–67 in the gladiators' barracks. There were 15 complete helmets, six single **greaves**, five pairs of greaves, three shoulder guards and a small round shield. Many of these items are lavishly embossed and it is thought that they were used in ceremonial parades rather than as fighting equipment.

greave
armour worn to protect the lower leg

Gladiators, like modern sports stars, were extremely popular in Pompeii, particularly with women. For example, the Thracian Celadus is referred to as the 'heart-throb of the girls'. Some of the inscriptions tell us the results of the games: 'Auctus of the Julian school has won 50 times' and 'Nobilior was victorious 11 times and Bebrix 15 times'.

The amphitheatre

The amphitheatre (or *spectacula*) in Pompeii, found in the south-east area of the town, is the oldest surviving amphitheatre in the Roman world. It measures 135 by 104 metres and had 35 rows of seating with a total capacity of about 24 000 spectators. Seats were numbered and the local dignitaries sat in the front rows.

SOURCE 54 The amphitheatre at Pompeii

An unusual feature was the entrance staircases situated on the outside of the building. There were probably canopies to shade the spectators, as the remains of stone rings used for the poles have been found along the top of the building. The amphitheatre was made from local stone and featured a parapet that separated the seats from the main arena. This was decorated with frescoes of gladiatorial combat, which unfortunately have been lost. The amphitheatre was restored after the earthquake of AD 62.

The following sources provide information on the events held in the amphitheatre. These often lasted a week and were paid for by the elected magistrates.

SOURCE 55

Aulus Clodius Flaccus [*duumvir*] … In return for his second *duumvirate* … at the games of Apollo [he presented] in the Forum a procession, bulls, bull fighters and their fleet footed helpers, and boxers fighting in bands; on the next day in the Amphitheatre [he presented] by himself 30 pairs of athletes and five pairs of gladiators, and with his colleague [he presented] 35 pairs of gladiators and a hunt with bulls, bullfighters, boars, bears and other hunt variations.

A. Cooley & M. Cooley, *Pompeii: A Sourcebook*, Routledge, London, 2004, p. 48

SOURCE 56

There will be a hunt, athletes, sprinklings, awnings. Good fortune to Maius, leader of the colony.

Cooley & Cooley, 2004, p. 54

Other leisure activities

Remains at Pompeii and Herculaneum reveal some of the other pastimes of the inhabitants. A popular pastime for men was cockfighting. This involved rival roosters pitted against each other in a fight to the death. A mosaic depicting such a fight has been found, which shows two roosters attacking each other in front of a table that bears the purse waiting to be awarded to the winning owner.

A scene depicting women (or goddesses) playing with *tali* or knucklebones has been found at Herculaneum. It is a sketch in red lead on marble and is signed by Alexander the Athenian. The game was played with pieces of bone from goats or sheep, or made from bronze or terracotta. It resembles the modern game of jacks, but could also be a dice-like game with the numbers on the different sides of the knucklebones.

1.11 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 55 & 56

1. Who built the amphitheatre and why?
2. What does this tell us about the role of the *duumviri*?
3. What do the seating arrangements at the amphitheatre reveal about the social structure of Pompeii?
4. Why would the advertisement (Source 56) from the Forum Baths mention 'sprinklings' and 'awnings' as a feature of the games?

SOURCE 57 The cockfight mosaic from Pompeii

1.11 Check your learning

1. Investigate the Pompeii amphitheatre using Google Earth. Note what is left of the features mentioned in the sources. Also look at the adjacent *palaestra* and the remains of the gladiators' barracks next to the Large Theatre.
2. Find out about the riot that occurred in the amphitheatre in AD 59. What was the result and how do we know about it? You can start with Tacitus, *Annals*, 14.17.
3. View the BBC documentary *Pompeii: Life and Death in a Roman Town* by Mary Beard.
4. Writing task: Explain what the sources reveal about leisure activities in Pompeii and Herculaneum.

   To help you plan your response:

   - identify the main leisure activities of the people of Pompeii and Herculaneum
   - use them to structure your response
   - use specific sources to illustrate your explanation
   - explain the relationship between the sources and the conclusions you draw – be careful to avoid a source-by-source description.

1.12 Religion

The people of Pompeii and Herculaneum followed Roman religious beliefs and practices. There were, however, some local differences. Pompeii had particular gods that were favoured, such as Venus, the patron goddess. Wall paintings and statues of her are numerous in Pompeii. Hercules, the mythical founder of Herculaneum, is depicted in statuettes and wall paintings in *lararium* shrines like the one from the House of the Silver Wedding. Sources – including temples, statues, wall paintings and inscriptions – can be found for Apollo, Diana, Bacchus, Jupiter and Juno, Mars, Mercury, Minerva and Neptune.

Worship took the form of offerings, sacrifices, festivals, games and rituals. Divination, telling the will of the gods from signs and omens, was a major part of religion at Pompeii. This included reading the entrails of sacrificed animals. Evidence of sacrifice from the temple of Vespasian in the Forum shows a priest, his head covered by a toga, pouring a libation or liquid offering to the god. The sacrificial bull is led to an altar, accompanied by flute players and two young men carrying the implements for the sacrifice.

Household gods

The domestic hearth or fireplace was the centre of the household and it was here that the *paterfamilias*, the head of the Roman family, celebrated the religious practices connected with the family and the household. Vesta, goddess of the hearth, was worshipped along with:

- the *lares* – household deities who protected the family. They were headed by the family spirit or *lar familiaris*. *Lares* had their own shrine in a cupboard. Any food dropped at a meal was offered to them.
- the *genius* – the god of the male line of descent. The god was worshipped on the birthday of the *paterfamilias*. Sometimes the genius was represented as a snake.
- the *penates* – the gods of the larder or food store. Their statuettes were placed on the table at mealtimes.

Every home also had its own shrine or *lararium*, usually located in the atrium where the whole family carried out daily worship. Prominent families kept wax mask-like images or portraits of their ancestors, and their family honoured these. Source 58 provides details of worship of the household gods at Pompeii.

SOURCE 58

Small pits containing high concentrations of cremated bones and carbonised plant remains were found in the gardens of VI 16, 27 and V 1, 18 and also the two peristyle gardens of I 9, 11–12 (House of Amarantus). The bones include parts of piglets and the heads and feet of cocks. The carbonised remains include stone-pine cones, figs, dates, grapes and hazel nuts. Other items include a piece of poppy-seed bread or pastry. These remains have been interpreted as offerings to the *Lares* (household gods). Several classical authors refer to such offerings and they are depicted on wall paintings at *lararia* in Pompeii but these are the first occasions such remains have been found in the ground.

University of Oxford, School of Archaeology, Research, 'Pompeii: The environmental archaeology of Pompeii and Herculaneum', 2018

SOURCE 59 A *lararium* or household shrine fresco in the atrium of a tavern on the Via dell'Abbondanza, Pompeii

Temples

There were numerous temples and sanctuaries at Pompeii, but the temples at Herculaneum are yet to be excavated. Temples were regarded as the homes for gods and goddesses, and featured a *cella* (chamber) to contain the statue of the deity, which stood before an altar. Most temples were dedicated to public cults, including the cult of the emperor, enabling the people to demonstrate their loyalty to Rome. The temples, then, served an important political function.

Imperial cult

From the time of Augustus onwards, the imperial cult became especially prominent in provincial cities and towns such as Pompeii and Herculaneum. It gave citizens opportunities to publicise their loyalty to the emperor as well as to move upwards socially. For example, in Pompeii and Herculaneum, membership of the *Augustales*, or priests of the imperial cult, became a way for wealthy freedmen to advance when other public office was denied them.

Two temples at Pompeii are specifically related to the imperial cult:

- the Temple of Fortuna Augusta, built opposite the Forum Baths by the *duumvir* Marcus Tullius – it was dedicated to the worship of the emperor and Fortuna Augusta, the goddess of abundance.

SOURCE 60 The main temples in Pompeii

TEMPLE	DETAILS
Temple of Jupiter (Capitolium)	• Located in the Forum • Dedicated to Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, the Capitoline Triad • As the centre for state religion, the temple had a large number of priests
Temple of Vespasian	• Located on the east side of the Forum • The centre of the imperial cult at Pompeii
Temple of the Public *Lares*	• Located on the east side of the Forum • The town *lares* were worshipped and important statues were displayed
Temple of Venus	• Located near the Marine Gate • A marble temple dedicated to Venus Pompeiana, the patron goddess of Pompeii. At its establishment as a colony, Pompeii had been named *Colonia Veneria* in her honour • The upkeep of this temple was paid for out of the public purse
Temple of Fortuna Augusta	• Located near the Forum • Dedicated to the worship of the emperor and the goddess of abundance, Fortuna
Temple of Apollo	• Located beside the Forum • Associated with Venus as the patron deity of the city
Temple of Jupiter Melichios	• There is ongoing debate whether this temple is the Roman version of the Greek Zeus Melichios, a god of farmers and agriculture
Temple of Isis	• Located in the theatre and gymnasium district of Pompeii • Reflects a mixture of Egyptian, Greek and Roman architectural features (e.g. Greek Corinthian columns) • Contained a platform for the statues of Isis and Osiris, as well as wall paintings and murals of Egyptian landscapes

SOURCE 61 The Temple of Augustus at Herculaneum

- the Temple of Vespasian, built in the Forum – despite its name, this temple is now thought to date from the reign of Augustus, earlier in the 1st century AD. An inscription suggests that it was paid for by the public priestess, Mamia.

At Herculaneum, a building has been identified as the Hall of the *Augustales*.

1.12 Understanding and using the sources

Source 58

1 List the items found in the gardens.
2 What do they reveal about the types of offerings made to the *lares*?

1.12 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following in groups and share your responses:
   a What were the main features of temples and religious ritual in Pompeii?
   b What is known about household cults and their significance?
   c Why were the *Augustales* significant?
2 Research the Roman gods worshipped by the people of Pompeii and Herculaneum, then complete a table to record the information using the following headings: God/Goddess, Symbol, Responsibility, Evidence in Pompeii/Herculaneum.

1.13 Foreign cults and religions

Excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum have revealed a society that was tolerant of the worship of foreign gods and the practices of imported cults. These tended to have a more personal focus with the promise of an afterlife.

SOURCE 62 The Temple of Isis showing the remains of its Corinthian columns and the stairway access from the front

Foreign cults

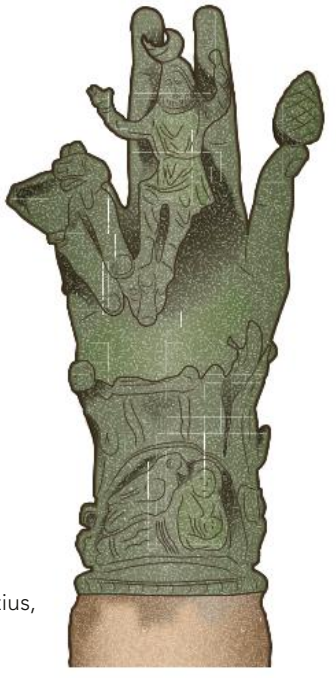
Cult of Isis

The cult of Isis appeared in Pompeii about 100 BC and was popular with women, freed slaves and, later, with the upper classes. Isis was a mother goddess who promoted fertility, healed the sick and offered her followers immortality. The cult had its own full-time priests operating from the Temple of Isis. Two daily ceremonies were conducted by the temple priests, who wore white linen robes and a headband decorated with the Egyptian symbol of the **uraeus** or cobra. The first ceremony was held before sunrise and commemorated the re-birth of Osiris, the husband of Isis. The second ceremony was held in the afternoon to give thanks to Isis with the blessing of the sacred Nile water. These ceremonies were popular because they were accompanied by chanting, burning of incense and playing of music – cymbals and the rattle or sistrum. A wall painting showing the priests of Isis performing a religious ceremony was found at Herculaneum.

uraeus
a protective device on the front of a pharaoh's headdress in the form of a cobra

Cult of Sabazius

This cult centred on the Thracian fertility god Sabazius, who was equated with the Graeco–Roman god Dionysus/Bacchus. In 1954, a shrine to this god was unearthed, consisting of a simple stone altar with two terracotta vases that probably contained offerings. In storerooms nearby were found bronze lamps and statues of hands with the god Sabazius shown in the palm and other symbols such as a serpent on the fingers of the hands. Historians have pieced together the rituals of the cult from the writings of Clement of Alexandria (2nd century AD) who was known to worship this god.



SOURCE 63 An illustration of the Hand of Sabazius, a sacred symbol of the god Sabazius, which was found at Pompeii

Cult of Lakshmi

In 1938 at the House of the Four Styles in Pompeii, archaeologist Amedeo Maiuri (see Source 15) unearthed an ivory statuette of the Hindu goddess Lakshmi, goddess of beauty, fertility and wealth. Her worship could have come to Pompeii through trade links.

Foreign religions

Archaeologists have found evidence that may indicate the presence of early Judaism and Christianity in Pompeii and Herculaneum. Some evidence suggests that Jews lived in Pompeii. The biblical names Mary and Martha have been found on walls, and inscriptions on some amphorae suggest the presence of Jews.

Evidence for Christians is restricted to a faded inscription bearing the word 'Christian' and an impression of a cross on a wall in Herculaneum. This has been interpreted as evidence for either a Christian shrine or maybe just a cross-shaped bracket supporting a cupboard.

Tombs

Our main sources of information about death and burial at Pompeii are the tombs and their inscriptions in the necropoleis or cemeteries located outside the city gates. Burial inside the gates was forbidden. Unfortunately, the tombs of Herculaneum's residents have not yet been excavated.

Most of the funerary monuments in Pompeii are found on the Street of the Tombs leading from the Herculaneum Gate and the Nucerian Way and near other gateways. The tombs are of various types, indicating that the rich and poor were interred close together. The rich had imposing sepulchral monuments demonstrating their important place in the public life of Pompeii. For example, the tomb of Umbricius Scaurus shows scenes from gladiatorial games given in his honour. The tomb of Faustus and his wife, Nevoleia Tyche, was decorated with a scene of a funeral ceremony and a ship lowering its sails. These tombs were decorated in a variety of styles showing Greek–Hellenistic and Roman–Italic influences.

SOURCE 64 The Street of the Tombs, the main street of the necropolis at the Herculaneum Gate of Pompeii

Inscriptions on the monuments give us the name and rank of the person and provide us with vital information about their lives, public works and activities. See Source 65 for a selection of tomb inscriptions. It should be remembered, though, that the inscriptions are evidence of how the tomb owners wanted to be remembered, not necessarily of what they were really like. Another problem with evidence from tombs is that very few children or slaves are represented, while there is much representation of freedmen and women.

SOURCE 65

1 To Septumia, daughter of Lucius. Granted by decree of the town councillors a burial place and 2000 sesterces for the funeral. Antistia Prima, daughter of Publius, her daughter, built (this monument).
2 To Marcus Obellius Firmus, son of Marcus, *aedile*, *duumvir* with judicial power. The town councillors decreed him a burial place and 5000 sesterces for his funeral; the inhabitants of the country district decreed him 30 pounds of frankincense, and a shield, and their attendants 1000 sesterces for perfumes and a shield.
3 To Gnaius Alleius Eros, freedman of Maius, appointed as *Augustalis*, free of charge, to whom the *Augustales* and inhabitants of the country district decreed 1000 sesterces for his funeral rites. Lived 22 years.
4 Helle, slave girl, lived 4 years.
5 Lucius Manlius Saturninus, son of Quartus, of the Romilian tribe, Ateste his hometown, bodyguard, performed military service for 5 years, lived for 24 years. His brother set this up.

A. Cooley & M. Cooley, *Pompeii: A Sourcebook*, Routledge, London, 2004, pp. 140, 141, 143, 153, 156

1.13 Understanding and using the sources

Source 65

1 Who paid for each of these tombs?
2 Why would the town council pay for the tombs and funerals of some citizens?
3 What roles could women play in providing for the dead?
4 What is frankincense? What does the gift of '30 pounds of frankincense' suggest about the tomb owner?

1.13 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   a What do the discoveries of foreign cults tell us about the religious attitudes and practices of the residents of Pompeii?
   b What do burials reveal about social class in Pompeii?
   c Why are there a lot of tombs of freedmen and women in Pompeii's cemeteries?
2 Research the foreign cults of Pompeii. Record the information you find in a table using these headings: God/Goddess, Origin, Responsibility, Evidence in Pompeii/Herculaneum. Include in your research: Isis, Osiris, Sarapis, Harpocrates, Anubis, Lakshmi, Sabazius.
3 Writing task: Explain what sources reveal about religion in Pompeii and Herculaneum.
   To help you plan your response:
   - identify the main features of religion – Roman cults, foreign cults, household gods, temples, tombs
   - structure your answer around these features
   - refer to specific sources and what they reveal about these features
   - explain the relationship between the sources and conclusions you draw – be careful to avoid a source-by-source description.

1.14 Influence of Greek and Egyptian cultures

Pompeii and Herculaneum were cosmopolitan cities that reflected the influence of foreign cultures in their art, architecture and religion. The extensive influence of the Greek and Egyptian cultures can be seen in many artefacts from both cities. Sources 66 and 67 sum up these influences.

GREEK INFLUENCES

Art
- Statues – many were copies of Greek originals (e.g. statue of Doryphoros, a copy of a statue by Polyclete)
- Mosaics (the Alexander Mosaic from the House of the Faun in Pompeii depicting Alexander the Great and the Persian king, Darius at the Battle of Issus, a copy of a Hellenistic painting by Philoxenos of Eretria)
- Many murals depict characters and scenes from Greek myths

Architecture
- Theatre – features of the Large Theatre reflect Hellenistic design:
  - the horseshoe-shaped terraces
  - the colonnaded ***quadriporticus***
  - Doric columns
- *Palaestrae* – large open colonnaded spaces reflect Greek design
- Many buildings feature Greek architectural elements:
  - Doric, Ionic and Corinthian columns
  - peristyle (e.g. the House of the Faun)
  - colonnades

Religion
- Herculaneum probably named for the Greek god Herakles, the Roman Hercules
- Images of Hercules found at Pompeii (statuette in the Temple of Isis)
- Images of Hercules found at Herculaneum (in a public fountain, house and wineshop)
- Demeter, Apollo – evidence for worship of these Greek gods
- Sanctuary to Dionysus found near the amphitheatre
- Villa of the Mysteries – contains murals thought to depict initiation rites into the cult of Dionysus

quadriporticus
a rectangular area surrounded on all sides by a colonnade or covered walkway

SOURCE 66 Greek influences

Architecture
- Garden art – the water feature in the *praedia* of Julia Felix represents a Delta branch of the Nile

EGYPTIAN INFLUENCES

Art
- Nile scenes in mosaics (threshold mosaic from the House of the Faun depicting crocodiles, hippopotamus and ibis)
- Wall paintings with Egyptian **motifs** (the Temple of Isis has Egyptian-style landscapes and scenes from Egyptian mythology)

Religion
- The cult of Isis – the goddess was represented in statues, paintings and in household shrines
- The Temple of Isis was the centre of the cult
- Egyptian gods are depicted on shrines (the household shrine to Isis from the House of the Golden Cupids features Anubis, Harpocrates, Isis and Sarapis)
- The cults of Isis and Sarapis were popular because they offered the possibility of an afterlife

motif
a decorative image or design, usually repeated to form a pattern

SOURCE 67 Egyptian influences

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SOURCE 68 A wall mosaic in the House of Neptune and Amphitrite in Herculaneum depicting Neptune (the Greek god Poseidon) and his sea-goddess wife, Amphitrite

1.14 Check your learning

1. Research the Greek gods Herakles, Demeter, Apollo and Dionysus. Who was Ariadne? Why were these gods worshipped at Pompeii and Herculaneum?
2. Find further examples of Greek and Egyptian influences at Pompeii and Herculaneum from your study of this chapter.
3. Writing task: Explain what sources reveal about the influence of Greek and Egyptian cultures in Pompeii and Herculaneum.

   To help you plan your response:

   - identify the main features of Greek and Egyptian cultures – art, architecture and religion
   - structure your answer around these features
   - refer to specific sources and what they reveal about these features
   - explain the relationship between the sources and conclusions you draw – be careful to avoid a source-by-source description.

SOURCE 69 Dionysus and Ariadne from the House of the Capitals at Pompeii

1.15 Reconstructing and conserving the past

Today, modern archaeologists and researchers are continuing the investigation of Pompeii and Herculaneum using a wide range of new methods and technologies. In many cases traditional interpretations are being challenged by new discoveries and fresh insights. These changing interpretations are evidence of the important concept of contestability in History.

A significant focus of this study involves an understanding of the sites today and the challenges they face. Despite their recognition as World Heritage sites, the long-term survival of Pompeii and Herculaneum is not guaranteed. Urgent issues include the need for protection and conservation of the sites. To accomplish these objectives, effective site management is crucial to tackle the problems of site degradation by natural and human agency, and to coordinate the work of a multitude of national and international bodies that have vested interests in the sites.

Changing interpretations: Impact of new research

Anyone who attempts to study Pompeii and Herculaneum will encounter differing interpretations of the evidence. Archaeologists and historians have frequently taken different perspectives on many issues. Today, these differences can come about because of new research and analysis, as well as the use of a range of new technologies.

The following are some examples of the contested issues facing students of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Housing and social status

It was once believed that examination of a Pompeian house and its decoration would indicate the social status of its owner. However, more recent archaeological studies, such as the examination of 127 houses by Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, suggest that the artefacts found in these houses do not necessarily indicate the wealth of the owners. He suggests that the artefacts could have either been inherited or accumulated over time.

Population estimates

Traditionally, it was thought that by estimating the number of people who occupied a house you could calculate the population of Pompeii. Wallace-Hadrill argues that this is inaccurate because the number of people varied from one household to the next and that houses ranged from single-person dwellings to villas with dozens of people.

Commerce and trade

Earlier studies took the view that Pompeii was a trading city and that its wealth derived from external trade, particularly in textiles. This view is now questioned and it is considered more likely that Pompeii was a 'consumer city', where the wealthy elite consumed the manufactured goods and agricultural products rather than trading them.

Impact of AD 62 earthquake

It was once thought that the eruption of Vesuvius took the entire population of Pompeii by surprise. However, this view is challenged by Dr Penelope Allison, who believes that the people of Pompeii were aware of the impending eruption and that the rich and wealthy had long departed, probably soon after the earthquake. Dr Allison has studied 30 excavated houses in Pompeii. Her study suggests there was an ongoing deterioration and not a sudden, abrupt departure of the inhabitants. She believes that the poorer members of the population may have squatted in the abandoned villas for some years.

New technologies

Exciting investigations of the remains from Pompeii and Herculaneum are taking place using some of the very latest technologies. Some of these are explained below.

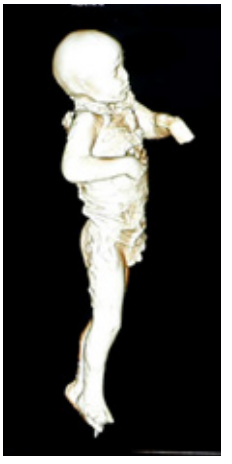
Villa of the Papyri scrolls

Conventional X-ray techniques have been unable to distinguish the ink used by the ancient writers from the papyrus fibres of the scrolls found in the villa at Herculaneum. However, recently, scientists have been able to virtually unroll and read the scrolls using a technique called X-ray phase-contrast tomography. This reveals the tiny differences in thickness of the papyrus where ink has been applied and enables the creation of a digital reproduction that can be manipulated in the same way as 3D images of the body. It is early days for the technique and, so far, only small portions of text have been read.

Plaster casts

The plaster casts of victims of Vesuvius are familiar to all who study the site. Since 2015, however, 86 casts have been scanned using computerised axial tomography (CAT) machines, also known as CT scanners, to produce 3D models of the victims. This technique has enabled further study of the health of the Pompeians who were caught in the ash fall phase of the eruption. The scans have revealed that many victims suffered severe head injuries, possibly as a result of being caught beneath their collapsing homes. Archaeologists are working to restore the existing plaster casts that are now very old. In the past, other plaster-free methods have been tried to preserve the remains, for example the resin cast of the Lady of Oplontis made in 1994; however, this technique is difficult to use and expensive. Plaster continues to be the best medium for cast-making, but care is necessary with its use to preserve the brittle bones that remain in the voids.

SOURCE 70 A member of the scientific team places the plaster cast of a young victim into the CAT machine for scanning. Hand-held scanners are used for casts that are too fragile to fit into the machine.



SOURCE 71 The resulting scan resembles 3D scans taken during pregnancy.

Via dell'Abbondanza Project

Archaeologists have used state-of-the-art equipment to create photo mosaics of the entire 900 metres of the Via dell'Abbondanza. This records the current condition of its façades, and will assist scholars studying the ancient street as well as conservators.

Digital photography and 3D imaging

A team from the University of Texas has created a fully navigable 3D model and reconstruction of the Villa of Poppaea at Oplontis in what is called the Oplontis Project. This model accurately records the condition of the villa and provides a digital version of the villa for further study. A further example of the use of 3D technology is the reconstruction of the House of Caecilius Iucundus in Pompeii by researchers at Lund University in Sweden.

1.15 Check your learning

1 The table lists some historians and issues that are subject to changing interpretations. Do some research and copy and complete the table. Take note of the role of new technologies.

HISTORIAN	ISSUE	DETAILS
Alison Cooley	Impact of the AD 62 earthquake	
Estelle Lazer	Health of residents of Pompeii; age and gender composition of the victims	
Penelope Allison	Room use in Pompeian houses	
Andrew Wallace-Hadrill	Number of brothels in Pompeii	
Willem Jongman	Textile manufacture in Pompeii	
Wilhelmina Jashemski	Types of crops, fruits and plants grown at Pompeii	

The following resources should help you:

- Alison Cooley, *Pompeii and Herculaneum: A Sourcebook*
- Estelle Lazer, 'Skeletal analysis reveals Pompeii myths are getting long in the tooth'
- Penelope Allison, 'Rethinking Pompeii'
- Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, *Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum*
- Willem Jongman, *The Economy and Society of Pompeii*
- Wilhelmina Jashemski, *The Gardens of Pompeii: Herculaneum and the Villas Destroyed by Vesuvius* (book); 'Archaeological evidence for plants in ancient Vesuvian gardens' (article).

2 Research the use of new technologies at Pompeii and Herculaneum using the resources listed below. Report on your findings via PowerPoint or similar illustrated presentation.

- Villa of the Papyri scrolls: 'New X-ray technique reveals snippets of ancient scrolls charred by Mount Vesuvius'
- Plaster casts from Pompeii: 'Revealed – what's inside the Pompeii mummies'
- 3D technology at Pompeii: 'Researchers reconstruct beautiful house in Pompeii by using 3-D technology'
- You can add further examples of new technology by reading 'What's new in Pompeii' by Joanne Berry and Sarah Court.

1.16 Issues of conservation and reconstruction

Since the site of Pompeii was first discovered in 1748, it has been the pioneer, or victim, of every trend in the science of archaeology and excavation. It has given birth to new methods of exploration and conservation, for example Giuseppe Fiorelli's plaster casts. The site has also been exposed to damage caused by the elements, a myriad of tourists, mismanagement, corruption and lack of funding.

In the late 20th century, it became increasingly clear to all – archaeologists, tourists, governments and academics – that Pompeii and Herculaneum were in dire need of conservation and preservation. Between the 1970s and 1990s, a number of projects were undertaken to address the issues of the deterioration of Pompeii and Herculaneum, for example:

- a project by international scholars to record the most notable houses in Pompeii and their decorative features
- a computer database set up to record all the findings at the sites
- a re-examination of the early excavation reports and a re-evaluation of some of the buildings in Pompeii
- an emphasis by the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei (the Italian authorities responsible for the site) on the need to preserve the site rather than conduct further excavation.

World Heritage listing

In 1997, Pompeii and Herculaneum, along with Torre Annunziata (Oplontis), were inscribed on the World Heritage List. Part of the justification for the listing was that these archaeological areas 'provide a complete and vivid picture of society and daily life at a specific moment in the past that is without parallel anywhere in the world'. In 2000, ICOMOS, the International Council on Monuments and Sites, reported its concerns for these World Heritage sites:

- physical and climatic influences in the form of humidity and changes of temperature
- the extreme decay of the famous Pompeian decorative paintings
- the use of unsuitable conservation materials, such as liquid glass, resin varnish and wax coatings
- inadequate roofing
- the use of unsuitable building materials for restoration (e.g. concrete)
- general neglect and vegetation (e.g. weeds breaking up the walls)
- microbiological infestation from algae, fungi and lichen.

This report emphasised that since inscription, little had been done to save the sites. Since 2000, however, Herculaneum has received considerable attention and assistance in the form of the Herculaneum Conservation Project, which has become a model for best practice.

Herculaneum Conservation Project

David Packard, a philanthropist and president of the Packard Humanities Institute, established the Herculaneum Conservation Project in 2001. Its aim was to support the local heritage authority, the Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Pompei, in its conservation of the site. Since then, the two groups, supported by the British School at Rome, have addressed some of the most pressing problems. These include:

- deterioration of plaster and wall paintings
- water damage
- animal damage, for example pigeon droppings and birds pecking at carbonised wooden structures
- weed infestation.

The Project's aims and objectives are given in Source 72.

SOURCE 72

The overall aim of the Herculaneum Conservation Project is to support the Soprintendenza to safeguard and conserve, to enhance, and to advance the knowledge, understanding and public appreciation of the ancient site of Herculaneum and its artefacts. Its main objectives are:

> to slow down the rate of decay across the entire site so that it can be maintained in future on a sustainable basis;
> to test and implement long-term conservation strategies that are appropriate for Herculaneum and potentially applicable to other, similar sites;
> to provide a basis of knowledge and documentation of Herculaneum so as to facilitate its future management;
> to acquire new archaeological knowledge about Herculaneum derived as an integral element of the activities devoted to its preservation;
> to conserve, document, publish and improve access to the artefacts found in excavations at Herculaneum;
> to promote greater knowledge of and discussion about Herculaneum among the scientific community, the local population and the general public.

British School at Rome, Herculaneum Conservation Project

SOURCE 73 Conservation work on a mosaic in the House of Neptune and Amphitrite being carried out by the Herculaneum Conservation Project

Herculaneum today

Since 2002, when its conservation was considered to be worse than that in a war zone, Herculaneum has undergone a remarkable turnaround. In 2012, the director-general of UNESCO praised the work that had been done on this site, identifying Herculaneum as a model of best practice. This has largely been the result of work done by the Herculaneum Conservation Project.

Conservation remains the central aim of the project. A database of all excavation information and photographs has been created to be used in future consolidation and protection of the remains. Current work has revealed a second-floor latrine in the apartment block at Insula Orientalis II, the first one to be found this far above ground level. Other new discoveries to come from conservation projects include the layout of the Basilica Noniana and a beautiful statue head of an Amazon (see Source 39). Essential drainage works have led to the reopening of the sewer beneath Insula Orientalis II and the discovery of the wooden roof of the House of Telephus, which has now been reconstructed.

21st-century developments at Pompeii

While much progress has been made at Herculaneum, the situation at Pompeii has been less encouraging. Some developments have made worldwide headlines in recent times, for example the collapse of the Schola Armaturarum, or House of the Gladiators, in 2010. This brought allegations of neglect, lack of maintenance and inadequate conservation. The next few years brought further collapses following heavy rain.

In 2013, a joint ICOMOS–UNESCO reactive monitoring mission reported a number of issues, including the need for improved drainage to prevent damage by waterlogging of the ground, the need for visitor management and the lack of access to large parts of the site at Pompeii. It stopped short of recommending that Pompeii and Herculaneum be placed on the List of World Heritage in Danger because of significant progress in the ordinary maintenance program and the drafting of a new management plan. A partnership between the European Union (EU) and the Italian government to spend €105 million on the conservation and management of the site by December 2015 was another factor, as well as the development of the Great Pompeii Project (see Source 74).

A possible long-term solution: The Pompeii Sustainable Preservation Project (PSPP)

What happens after 2019 when the funding from the Great Pompeii Project runs out? An international consortium of research institutions, including the Soprintendenza Pompei, the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft and the Technical University of Munich, Germany, has been inspired by the success of the Herculaneum Conservation Project (HCP). Recognising the HCP as best practice, the consortium launched a 10-year project in 2012 that will study long-term, sustainable conservation and restoration strategies at Pompeii. Unlike the Great Pompeii Project, which relies on funding from the EU and the Italian government, the PSPP is based on private fundraising. It requires €10 million to carry out superior quality research and conservation, so the consortium has put out an international call for sponsors. The first phase of the project, the documentation and restoration of monuments in the Porta Nocera necropolis, will last 5 years and will cost €6 million.

SOURCE 74 A summary of ICOMOS–UNESCO reports and responses since 2013

2013	The Great Pompeii Project • This project was initiated by the Italian government to develop an urgent program of conservation, maintenance and restoration aimed at the protection of Pompeii. • It was expected to be concluded in 2015 and was considered crucial to the site's survival, particularly in light of the collapses at the site. • Funding of €105 million from the European Regional Development Fund and the Italian government were integral to the success of the project. • The aims were to: – consolidate the structures of the site starting with those at most risk – construct a drainage system to remove stormwater – consolidate and restore decorated surfaces and masonry – strengthen the video-surveillance system – protect buildings from weather exposure to increase areas available for visiting.
2015	• The UNESCO delegation praised Italy for its conservation efforts at Pompeii for the first time. • It recognised the considerable efforts being made to adopt the World Heritage Committee's recommendations and as a result extended the Great Pompeii Project until the end of 2016. • The mission considered that there was no longer any question of placing the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. • It emphasised that the Italian government should ensure that adequate resources were available for the foreseeable future to deal with the ongoing needs of conservation and visitor management.
2017	World Heritage Report • The continuation of the Great Pompeii Project is ensured until the end of 2019 with further EU funding of €45 million, as well as €40 million from the Italian government and €75 million from the Special Superintendency of Pompeii. • Conservation interventions for all buildings at risk in Pompeii are completed or ongoing, or will start soon. • Restoration works at Schola Armaturarum have begun. • Conservation of the Nola Gate is yet to be completed. • Risk mitigation relating to the excavation faces in the Regiones I, III, IV, V, VIII and IX is nearly complete. • The Management Plan is complete.

1.16 Understanding and using the sources

Source 72

1 What are the conservation and preservation priorities of the Herculaneum Conservation Project?

Source 74

2 What was the significance of the partnership between the EU and the Italian government in 2013?

3 Why was the Great Pompeii Project considered crucial to the site's survival?

4 What was significant about the visit of the UNESCO delegation in 2015?

5 Why would the World Heritage Committee be pleased with the 2017 report?

1.16 Check your learning

1. View *Herculaneum Conservation Project – The Video*. Take note of the results of the last 10 years' work at the site.
2. Use the websites of the Herculaneum Conservation Project or the British School at Rome to find information about what they do.
3. Find out more about the Pompeii Sustainable Preservation Project. How can it make a lasting contribution to the preservation and conservation of Pompeii?
4. In groups, find out more about some of the projects, national and international, operating in Pompeii, Herculaneum and the surrounding area. Search for 'Pompeii Projects – Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei' online. You can also look specifically for the following projects:
   - Oplontis Project
   - Anglo-American Project in Pompeii (preservation)
   - Restoring Ancient Stabiae Project
   - Pompeii Forum Project
   - Pompeii Archaeological Research Project: Porta Stabia
   - Kress Pompeii Conservation Project
   - Pompeii bakeries (project 'Pistrina')
   - Pompeii Quadriporticus Project.

   Record your findings in a table like the one below.

PROJECT AND SITE	ITALIAN/INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE	FOCUS OF RESEARCH	CONTRIBUTION TO UNDERSTANDING/ CONSERVATION OF POMPEII/HERCULANEUM

5. Writing task: Assess Italian and international contributions to the conservation of the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

   To help you plan your response:
   - identify some Italian and international contributions to the conservation of the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum
   - use them to structure your answer
   - make judgements about the relative success of these contributions
   - refer to specific evidence from Pompeii and Herculaneum to illustrate your description.

1.17 Ethical issues

Initially, ethical concerns in archaeology focused on the need to preserve sites from destruction through vandalism, looting and poor excavation practices. Some of the guiding principles that archaeologists work under today are relevant for Pompeii and Herculaneum. These include:

- stewardship and accountability to society
- public education and outreach
- public reporting and publication standards
- records and preservation of collections and artefacts.

Excavation and conservation

Today, archaeological ethics hold that archaeologists should make it a primary goal to identify, protect and conserve archaeological resources. The methods used for conservation and restoration are governed by an international code of ethics known as the Venice Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites.

Archaeological ethics require archaeologists to focus on the excavation and conservation of endangered sites rather than sites that are not under threat. Conservation is considered desirable so that future archaeologists will have a database to work from. This is highly relevant for Pompeii and Herculaneum. In 1999, Pietro Giovanni Guzzo, the then superintendent at Pompeii, declared a **moratorium** on all further excavations of both Pompeii and Herculaneum. This ushered in a period of debate among historians and archaeologists on whether to focus on conservation or excavation. In Pompeii, 44 of the 66 hectares of urban area are visible, and it has been generally agreed that the other 22 hectares must be left unexcavated to preserve them for the future.

moratorium
a temporary prohibition of an activity

Some **classicists**, however, have argued for continuing excavations in the hope of finding more texts revealing ancient Roman life. The Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum is at the centre of the debate because it could contain more of the carbonised rolls already discovered. We have already seen the scientific breakthroughs made in reading these. The debate was renewed in 2016 when a group of British, American and French scholars called for excavation of the Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum to be resumed. They wrote to the *Times* newspaper, insisting that the excavation of the Villa had to be completed. Source 75 contains extracts from the case made for excavation by Robert Fowler, Professor of Greek at the University of Bristol, and the rebuttal by Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, director of the Herculaneum Conservation Project.

classicist
a person who studies the classics, i.e. ancient Greek and Roman language, literature, art, architecture or culture

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SOURCE 75

ON FURTHER EXCAVATION OF THE VILLA OF THE PAPYRI

For: Robert Fowler

The Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum contains the only library to have survived intact from the ancient Greco-Roman world … The library would have contained many other books both Greek and Latin. The rest of it is most probably in the southeast corner of the villa, which the early tunnelers failed to reach. The lost works waiting to be found there stagger the imagination.

The villa was rediscovered and partially excavated in the 1990s. The excavation must be finished. Counter-arguments are familiar. Resources are desperately scarce, people say, and should be used for pressing emergencies (Pompeii is falling down), not for digging up new things that only add to the burden of conservation. The trouble is, this argument will always be advanced. It amounts to an argument for never excavating.

Meanwhile, the volcano may erupt again and put the villa effectively beyond reach … One need not exhume the whole building … The 1990s revealed previously unknown lower levels, offering good reason in themselves for further exploration. But the library makes this building unique. Posterity will not forgive us if we squander this chance. The excavation must proceed.

Against: Andrew Wallace-Hadrill

It is hard not to share the enthusiasm of the group of specialists who have renewed their pleas to resume excavation of the Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum …

Fourteen years ago, I argued in this newspaper that continued excavation was not a priority compared with conservation. Is the time right now? A decade's heroic work by the Packard Humanities Institute has addressed many of the existing problems of conservation on the main site at Herculaneum, but the villa may be regarded as a case apart.

Is there an imminent threat to the site of the villa? Volcanic eruption can scarcely do more damage to what lies buried: it is the parts exposed that are most at risk. And the problem is precisely that by exposing them in part, the risks have been greatly increased. The steep embankment around the trench is not stable: the edges constantly crumble and do damage to the protective shelter …

There is a strong case for urgent work to stop the embankment crumbling and the flow of water further damaging the lower floors. This might reveal further papyri. It would certainly reveal finds of great interest. But the logic that drives any modern excavation must be preservation, not the pursuit of a dream.

'Further exploration at Herculaneum could "stagger the imagination"', *The Art Newspaper*, 20 May 2016

The final word for the moment comes from the World Heritage site's management plan of 2017. According to this document, there are no plans to excavate further at this time. Lack of staff already prevents a significant proportion of the sites already excavated from being visited. Any excavation will be limited to the completion of sites already partially uncovered.

Study and display of human remains

One of the most important ethical issues confronting archaeologists is the handling and disposition of human remains discovered during excavation. Human remains and the artefacts found with them connect us to the past, and how they are studied has ethical implications. The remains from Pompeii and Herculaneum have been treated in various ways depending on when they were uncovered.

tableau (*pl.* tableaux) a scene usually presented on a stage by silent and motionless costumed people

The first skeletons found in Pompeii were only considered important in that they were associated with the tragic events that had happened in the past. Many were used to create **tableaux** in the rooms of houses that had been discovered to entertain important visitors. Because they were not considered important in any other way, they were not recorded and eventually were stored in a jumble of disarticulated bones.

The majority of skeletons from Herculaneum were discovered in 1982 on the beach and in adjoining vaults. Initially, 139 of these were studied by Sarah Bisel, a physical anthropologist and classical archaeologist, but those remaining were left in situ for tourists to look at. They eventually began to disintegrate and became overgrown with weeds. Excavation resumed in 2009 and the remaining skeletons have been scientifically studied by Estelle Lazer, an Australian archaeologist and physical anthropologist from Sydney University, among others.

In Pompeii, many victims' remains were revealed when Giuseppe Fiorelli pioneered the technique of making casts. The decomposition of victims' bodies within the solidified ash created voids. These were filled with Plaster of Paris to produce casts of the victims at the moment of death. These casts can be found in a variety of locations at Pompeii. Some are displayed in a special area named the 'Garden of the Fugitives', while others are in glass cases or lying in workshops surrounded by a variety of artefacts and tools.

In 2015, 86 casts were scanned to produce 3D models of the victims, in preparation for an exhibition at Pompeii and the National Archaeological Museum of Naples. Source 76 is a report on preparation for the exhibition.

SOURCE 76

'Until now they had never been surveyed, out of a sense of ethics with which these human remains were always treated. No statues of plaster or bronze, but real people who should be treated with respect,' said Massimo Osanna, the archaeological superintendent of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Stabiae, who wanted an exhibit of just human victims.

… Osanna explained that these remains were restored and studied for scientific and archaeological purposes … the restorations are taking place as part of the Grande Progetto Pompei (Great Pompeii Project) in which archaeologists, restorers, radiologists, engineers and an anthropologist are studying the genetic and anthropological profiles of the victims to better identify them and understand their way of life. The researchers' findings will be published and made into a documentary …

'Casts of 86 Pompeii victims go on show', *ANSA.it Arts Culture & Style*, 22 May 2015

In 2016, a team led by Estelle Lazer used the 3D scanning techniques to investigate the skeletal remains within the plaster casts. Their finds challenge the previous claim that the people from Pompeii had excellent teeth. This investigation has found evidence of tooth decay and gum disease, as well as evidence of wear from a diet that included bread made from stone-ground flour. Dr Lazer's team has also found that the casts were not always made in expected ways.

SOURCE 77

The techniques used for producing the casts in the 19th and early 20th centuries were not well documented and we have found that a number of the earlier casts were almost devoid of skeletal material but were reinforced with metal rods and brackets. This was totally unexpected and has provided us with new information about how the casts were actually made.

E. Lazer, 'Skeletal analysis reveals Pompeii myths are getting long in the tooth', University of Sydney, 18 August 2016

1.17 Understanding and using the sources

Source 75

1 List the arguments put forward by Robert Fowler for resuming the excavation of the Villa of the Papyri.
2 What arguments does Andrew Wallace-Hadrill advance in reply?
3 Who do you think has the stronger case? Why?

Source 76

4 What is Massimo Osanna's ethical position on the plaster casts from Pompeii?
5 What is the justification for the restorations taking place as part of Great Pompeii Project?
6 Why is it important that the researchers know how the plaster casts were made?

Source 77

7 What has Estelle Lazer discovered about the making of the original plaster casts?

1.17 Check your learning

1 Look up the Venice Charter (ICOMOS International). What are the ethical practices governing conservation and restoration methods? You will find these in Articles 4–13.
2 Look back at the objectives of the Herculaneum Conservation Project. How do they reflect the ethical concerns of archaeologists?
3 Find out more about the treatment and display of the human remains from Pompeii. Search online for 'analysis of Pompeii plaster casts'.
4 Research what has been discovered from the remains at Herculaneum. A good source is E. Lazer, 'Victims of the cataclysm', in P. Foss & J. Dobbins (eds), *The World of Pompeii*, Routledge, 2009.
5 Summarise this topic by copying and completing the following table:

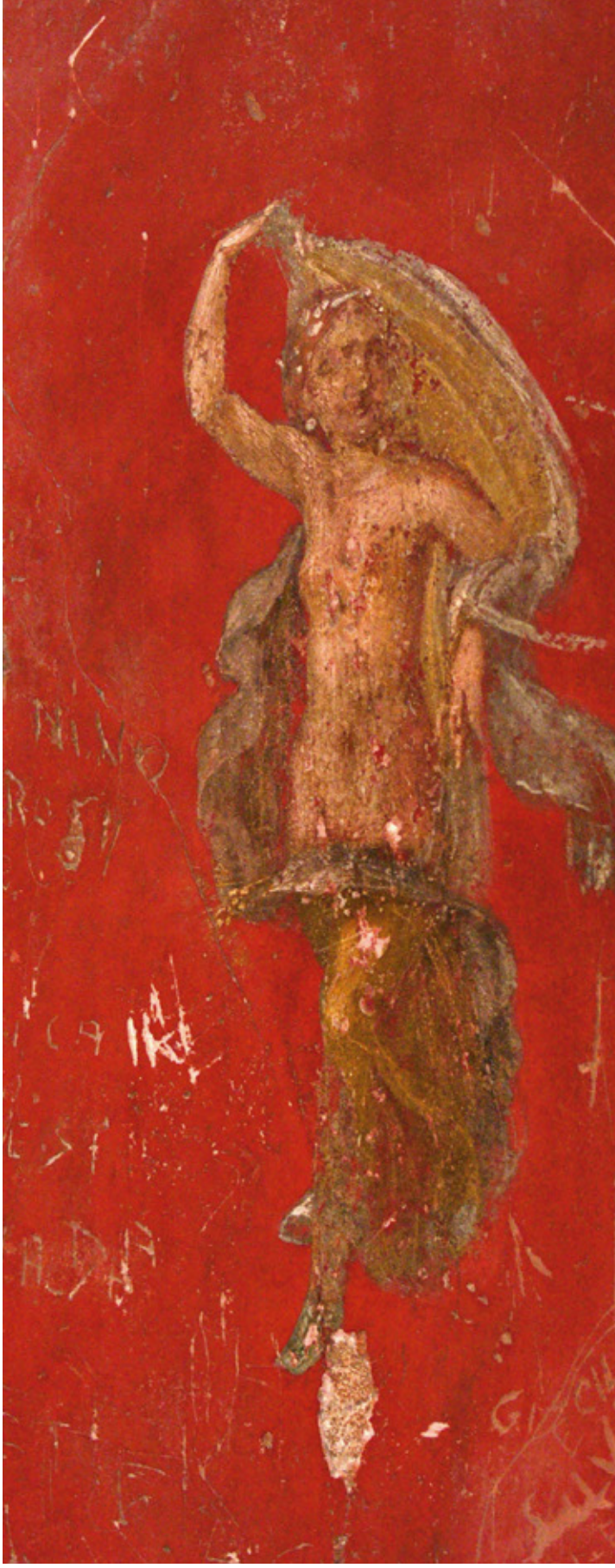
	POMPEII	HERCULANEUM
Discovery		
Storage		
Treatment		
Display		
Change over time		

6 Writing task: How has the understanding of ethical issues related to the study and display of human remains in Pompeii and Herculaneum changed over time?
To help you plan your response:
- identify some ethical issues related to the study and display of human remains in Pompeii and Herculaneum
- use them to structure your answer
- show the relationship between the change in understanding of these issues and different periods of time
- refer to specific evidence from Pompeii and Herculaneum.

1.18 Value and impact of tourism: Problems and solutions

Today Pompeii is one of the most popular tourist sites in the world. It attracts approximately 3 million people every year. Herculaneum is also very popular, although it attracts about half the visitors to Pompeii. Despite the economic gain since the 1997 law which directed that all money from tourists go to the conservation of the sites, tourism still has a negative impact at Pompeii and Herculaneum. Unfortunately tourism and conservation tend to be mutually unfriendly. Overcrowding and deliberate and accidental damaging behaviours contribute to the degradation of sites. Visitors can often be seen sitting, standing or leaning on walls, splashing water on mosaics, touching frescoes and walls, and even writing graffiti on them. Enforcement of the rules and regulations by custodians is frequently minimal. Warnings to visitors against damaging walls with their backpacks or taking flash photographs are not always given.

A recently identified problem stems from the large numbers of tourists from cruise ships who all tend to follow the same route around Pompeii because of their limited time. In 2016, the entrance steps of the Temple of Apollo were found to be wearing down due to large visitor numbers. A suggested solution, to divert visitors to other nearby sites such as Herculaneum and Oplontis, is already part of the management plan outlined in the World Heritage Report of 2017. This plan aims to initiate a sustainable tourism system for the area that will enhance the experiences of visitors and encourage the cooperation of the local residents, who are stakeholders, in



SOURCE 78 Modern graffiti on a fresco in the Fullonica of Stephanus. This is an example of deliberate damage made possible by inadequate or non-existent security.

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the conservation of the World Heritage site. Part of this system will set visitor quotas for overused parts of the site and set themed itineraries for visitors on rotation, to ensure coverage of the whole site.

SOURCE 79

Such a method, involving a programmed rotation of themed itineraries to go with the annual rotation of visit areas, offers significant positive implications in terms of:

- *educational effectiveness*, increased thanks to less congested sites and to visits directed to 'minor' sites and attractions;
- *greater visitor numbers*, due not only to an increase in visits to minor sites and the spreading of visits throughout the day and throughout the year, but also to the marketing policies that the management of itineraries would allow to implement;
- *increased protection*, as a direct consequence of being able to carry out a 'programmed maintenance' for all itineraries.

This organisation of tourist routes will be all the more necessary as it is the only possible way to coordinate tourist flows and the restoration and extraordinary maintenance work of the *insulae* and *regiones* as envisaged by the Great Pompeii Project.

UNESCO SITE N. 829. Archaeological Areas of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata, MANAGEMENT PLAN, pp. 145–6

SOURCE 80 Massive numbers of tourists annually pack Pompeii's streets, causing unintentional damage to the site.

SOURCE 81 A mind map of tourism

1.18 Understanding and using the sources

Source 79

1. List what the UNESCO site management plan identifies as 'positive implications' of the rotation of themed itineraries and visit areas.
2. What roles will the 'minor sites' play?
3. How will there be increased protection for the site?
4. Why is the organisation of tourist routes especially necessary?

1.18 Check your learning

1. Read the article 'Presenting Pompeii: Steps towards reconciling conservation and tourism at an ancient site' by Alia Wallace.
2. In groups, discuss how you would manage tourism at Pompeii and Herculaneum.
   a. What are some of the issues you would have to deal with?
   b. Suggest strategies for dealing with these issues.
   c. What sort of education program would you institute to address some of the problems associated with visitor behaviour?
   d. How would you ensure that visitors respect the site and still get maximum satisfaction from their visit?
   e. What would you do about the volume of visitors?
3. Create a mind map like the one in Source 81 to sum up the value, impact, problems and solutions of tourism at the cities of Vesuvius.
4. Writing task: Discuss the value and impact of tourism at Pompeii and Herculaneum. How might the problems posed by tourism be addressed?
   To help you plan your response:
   - identify some aspects of the impact of tourism on Pompeii and Herculaneum
   - use these aspects to structure your response
   - provide details to illustrate your explanation.

Chapter conclusion

Using the range of archaeological and written sources available, it has been possible to construct a historical explanation of life in Pompeii and Herculaneum. Starting with the eruption of AD 79 and its impact, we have gone on to analyse the sources to develop an understanding of everyday life in these cities. We have synthesised evidence to construct a picture of the economy, social structure and political life in the towns, as well as of housing, food and dining, religion and other features. The artefacts and structures of the towns have provided evidence about the influence of foreign cultures. As one of the most researched and studied archaeological sites in the world, the cities of Vesuvius have benefited from new discoveries and interpretations based on the use of emerging technologies. They have also enabled judgements to be made about the issues surrounding the reconstruction and conservation of this World Heritage site.

obook assess

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare students for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

The ‘Ladies in Blue Fresco’ from the Bronze Age Palace of Knossos, Crete

PART B

Ancient societies

Chapter 2 New Kingdom Egypt society to the death of Amenhotep III (obook-only chapter) 74

Chapter 3 Bronze Age – Minoan Crete 75

Chapter 4 Spartan society to the Battle of Leuctra 371 BC 127

SOURCE 1 A banqueting scene from the Tomb of Nakht, a New Kingdom noble

2

New Kingdom Egypt society to the death of Amenhotep III

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1 What was the historical and geographical context of New Kingdom Egypt?
2 How was New Kingdom society structured?
3 What roles were played by the pharaoh and religious, administrative and military elites?
4 What were the significant features of the New Kingdom economy?
5 How important were religion, death and burial in New Kingdom Egypt?
6 What were the significant features of cultural and everyday life?

FOCUS CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Analysis and use of sources

Our understanding of Egyptian society in the New Kingdom comes from a variety of archaeological and written sources. We have the temples and tombs built by pharaohs and commoners, together with their reliefs and inscriptions. We have artefacts, including tomb goods, wall paintings and inscriptions, tomb biographies and papyrus documents. These sources need interpretation and analysis to provide evidence of Egyptian life in this period. Our analysis requires asking questions about the creator of the source, its purpose and its value for the investigation being undertaken. At the same time we must be aware of the gaps and silences in the evidence. Whose voices are not heard and why?

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1 Explain the historical and geographical context of New Kingdom Egypt.
2 Analyse the structure of New Kingdom society.
3 Assess the significance of the pharaoh and religious, administrative and military elites.
4 Analyse the evidence for the economy in the New Kingdom.
5 Evaluate the importance of religion, death and burial in New Kingdom Egypt.
6 Describe the significant features of cultural and everyday life.

2.1 Historical context

The **New Kingdom** is so called because it began with the reunification of the Two Lands – Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt – after a long period of division. The earlier periods of unification known as the Old and Middle Kingdoms had been significant times of stability and achievement. Each had been followed by a period of unrest and division between north and south. The New Kingdom was ushered in after a successful war led by the Theban princes against the Hyksos people, who had occupied the Nile delta area of Egypt for over 100 years. The Theban princes established the Eighteenth Dynasty, a new period of pharaonic rule.

The period of approximately 200 years from the founding of the Eighteenth Dynasty to the end of the reign of Amenhotep III was a period of important development both in domestic and foreign affairs. The pharaohs of this new dynasty consolidated their position with a range of political, military and religious policies that stimulated growth and stability.

Some key developments that shaped the period were the increasing influence of the state cult of the god Amun-Re, with whom the pharaoh identified himself and his achievements. The large-scale pharaonic building programs in honour of Amun stimulated economic development, as did the creation of an Egyptian Empire under the leadership of warrior pharaohs. **Booty** and **tribute** flowed into Egypt as a result of military conquest. Egypt also developed trading and diplomatic relations with neighbouring countries, and Egyptian society became more cosmopolitan as a result.

The New Kingdom was a time of cultural innovation in a wide range of arts and crafts. This was an age when size mattered, as seen, for example, in the monumental architecture and sculpture of the temples of Karnak, Luxor and the **mortuary temples** of pharaohs such as Hatshepsut and Amenhotep III. Egyptian jewellers, sculptors, painters and other craftsmen produced works of exquisite beauty.

New Kingdom
the period of ancient Egyptian history between the 16th century BC and the 11th century BC, comprising the Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties

booty
spoils of war, including goods and people captured from the defeated enemy

tribute
money or valuables paid to a state or ruler to acknowledge submission

mortuary temple
a religious building dedicated to the funerary cult of a deceased person

Old Kingdom
the period of ancient Egyptian history that occurred in the 3rd millenium BC, comprising the Third to the Sixth Dynasties

Middle Kingdom
the period of ancient Egyptian history between c. 2050 BC and c. 1650 BC, comprising the Eleventh, Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasties

SOURCE 2 An overview of Egyptian history from the Early Dynastic Period to the New Kingdom

PERIOD (BC)	DYNASTIES	SOME KEY DEVELOPMENTS
Early Dynastic Period (c. 3000 – c. 2686)	1–2	• Unification of Upper and Lower Egypt • Foundations of dynastic Egypt established
Old Kingdom (c. 2600 – c. 2100)	3–6	• Age of the Pyramids • Major achievements in the arts and architecture
First Intermediate Period (c. 2160 – c. 2025)	7–10	• Breakdown of centralised rule • A period of division and unrest
Middle Kingdom (c. 2125 – c. 1773)	11–12	• Egypt reunited; conquest of Lower Nubia • A golden age in art, architecture and literature
Second Intermediate Period (c. 1773 – c. 1550)	13–17	• Another period of turmoil and division • Hyksos occupation of Lower Egypt
New Kingdom (c. 1550 – c. 1069)	18–20	• Expulsion of Hyksos in wars led by Theban princes • Reunification of Upper and Lower Egypt • Growth of Amun cult; extensive building programs • Development of an empire in Nubia and Syria–Palestine

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Geographical environment

Egypt is located in the north-east of the African continent in what is known as the Near East. In ancient times the Near East included Egypt and its neighbours: to the west, Libya, and to the north-east, Palestine, Syria, Babylonia, Naharin (land of the Mitanni), Assyria and Anatolia.

The Mediterranean formed Egypt's northern border, while the Red Sea was its eastern boundary. The Western Desert formed a natural barrier between Egypt and Libya. In the south, the First **Cataract** at Aswan formed another natural border between Egypt and Nubia.

cataract
section of the Nile River where huge granite outcrops force the water into a narrow channel, making navigation difficult

Because of the security provided by its natural borders, early Egyptian civilisation developed in relative isolation from foreign influences. Some sources from this time indicate that Egyptians felt a certain degree of xenophobia (fear of foreigners). This became less pronounced during the period of empire building in the New Kingdom when Egyptians saw the benefits to be gained through conquest, trade and cultural contacts.

The most prominent feature of Egypt's geography is the Nile River, which flows north from its sources in the lakes and mountains of central Africa. It flows through Egypt to the Nile Delta where it meets the Mediterranean Sea, which Egyptians called 'the Great Green'. From ports on the Mediterranean coast, Egypt joined the trading network that supplied valuable raw materials. During the flood season, navigation of the Nile became difficult due to the rapids formed as the river forced its way through the granite outcrops of the First Cataract at Aswan.

EGYPT, EARLY NEW KINGDOM

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 3 Egypt and her neighbours in the early New Kingdom

The Nile Valley

The Nile Valley refers to the narrow, cultivated strip of land on either side of the river. The Egyptians called this *Kmt* (pronounced 'kemet'), meaning the 'black land' – black for the silt, the rich fertile soil deposited by the annual inundation or flood.

Beyond the black land lay the desert regions of sand dunes and rocky wastelands. The Egyptians called this desert *Dsrt* (pronounced 'deshret'), the 'red land' – representing all that was barren and hostile.

The Egyptians identified two distinct areas:

- Lower Egypt – northern Egypt, which included the rich lands of the Nile Delta and the Old Kingdom capital of Memphis with its nearby cemeteries of Saqqara and Giza
- Upper Egypt – the region south of Memphis to the southern border at Aswan, which included the New Kingdom capital at Thebes, and the royal cemetery known as the Valley of the Kings.

geopolitical relating to politics as influenced by geographical factors

This **geopolitical** division was a significant feature of the Egyptian world view. Upper and Lower Egypt were always referred to as the 'Two Lands' and from unification onwards, the pharaoh was known as the Lord of the Two Lands, King of Upper and Lower Egypt.

The Nile was important for the range of its resources and the activities it sustained. These included:

- irrigation for crop growing
- a means of transport
- water for drinking, bathing and washing
- a source of food – fish, birds and game
- animal husbandry
- mud for making bricks, a major building material
- papyrus, for boats and writing materials
- leisure pursuits such as fishing and fowling.

Natural resources of Egypt and its neighbours

Egypt had a wide variety of natural resources, including minerals and ores, stone and rock, and food resources. Within its own borders were rich deposits of gold that had been mined from earliest times. Many of the precious and semi-precious stones were highly valued for royal jewellery.

The oases to the west provided valuable raw materials and were also valuable sources of food. Of special importance was the natron used in mummification and religious ritual, which was sourced from Wadi el Natrun to the west of the delta.

Empire building and foreign trade provided important resources. High on the list of prized foreign commodities was timber from the cedar forests of Byblos. (Egypt had virtually no timber suitable for building.) Precious metals and stones, incense and other exotic goods were obtained from countries both near and far. Hatshepsut organised a famous trading expedition to the land of Punt (perhaps modern-day Somalia) during her reign.

Stone and rock
- Granite – Aswan
- Limestone – Tura
- Sandstone – Nile Valley
- Basalt – Fayum
- Flint (chert)
- Diorite – Nubia
- Graywacke

Minerals and ores
- Gold – Wadi Hammamat, deserts near Edfu, Nubia
- Copper, iron and lead – Eastern Desert
- Galena
- Haematite
- Carnelian and amethyst – Aswan
- Turquoise – Sinai
- Natron – Wadi el Natrun
- Salt

RESOURCES

Food
- Grapes (wine) and dates – Dakhla, Siwa and Kharga oases
- Figs, pomegranates, *dom* (palm nuts)
- Honey
- Grains (barley, wheat)
- Vegetables (onions, garlic, peas, lentils, beans radishes, lettuce)
- Oils (sesame, castor, flax)
- Fish
- Cattle, oxen, pigs
- Hares, gazelle
- Ducks, hens, wildfowl

The Nile
- Agriculture
- Water source
- Transport
- Animal husbandry
- Fishing and fowling

Resources of neighbours
- Timber – Byblos (modern-day Lebanon)
- Pottery, jewellery, copper ingots – Crete and Aegean
- Gold, ebony, myrrh, precious stones, panther skins, ostrich feathers – Nubia
- Lapis lazuli – Afghanistan
- Myrrh trees, panther skins, exotic animals – Punt

SOURCE 4 Resources of Egypt and her neighbours in the New Kingdom

2.1a Check your learning

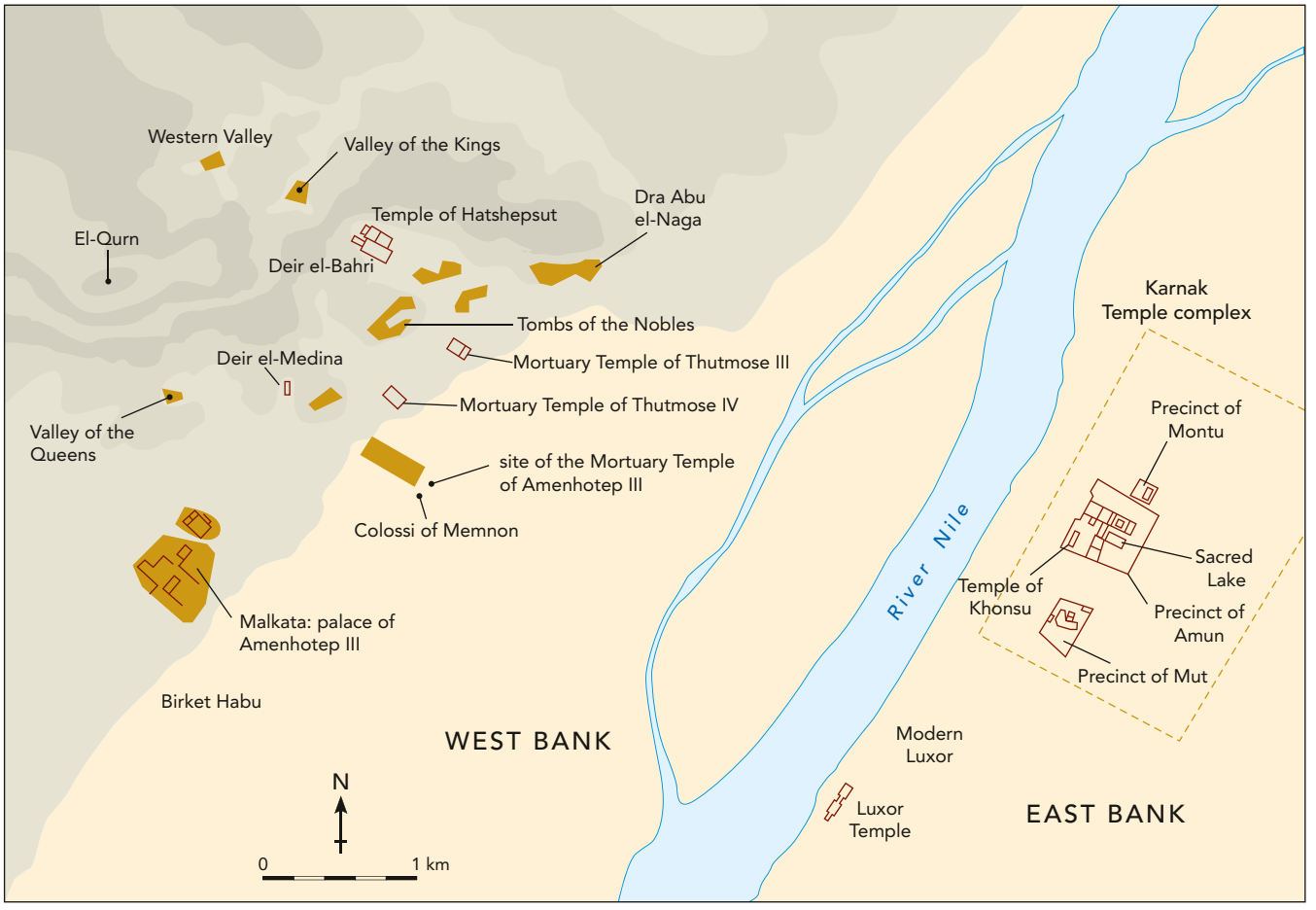
1. What are the significant developments of Egypt in this period as outlined above?
2. How does Egypt's geographical context at the beginning of the New Kingdom account for its xenophobia?
3. Find out how the Egyptians explained the phenomenon of the annual flood. Who was Hapi?
4. Explain the significance of the geopolitical division of Egypt into Lower and Upper Egypt.
5. What resources were native to Egypt? What resources were imported? (See Source 4.)
6. What does the nature of imported resources suggest about economic development in this period?

SOURCE 5 A glass flask with applied thread decoration, from the Malkata Palace of Amenhotep III, an example of the fine craftsmanship of the New Kingdom

Significant sites: Thebes

To the ancient Egyptians, the east bank of the Nile, where the sun rose each day, was for the living. Here were located the royal palaces, the temples of the gods and the villages of the people. The west bank, the place of the setting sun, was largely the domain of the dead. The Egyptians called the west bank 'the beautiful West'.

THEBES



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 6 Thebes in the time of Amenhotep III

East bank

On the east bank of the Nile at Thebes were located the two great temples of Amun, one at Karnak and the other at Luxor. Karnak was called *Ipet-isut*, meaning 'most favoured of places'. Luxor, just 2 kilometres distant, was called *Ipet-resyt*, 'private chambers to the south'. The Luxor temple dates mostly from the reign of Amenhotep III, who wanted to honour Amun with a new temple, largely of his own design.

West bank

The west bank was the site of the pharaohs' mortuary temples built to maintain the cult of the dead pharaoh in his afterlife. An outstanding example is the mortuary temple built by Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri. The pharaohs' tombs were not far away in the Valley of the Kings. Other members of the royal family were buried in the nearby Valley of the Queens, while members of the Egyptian nobility built their tombs in the hillsides surrounding the valley.

A short distance from the valley, the village of Deir el-Medina housed the workers who constructed the pharaohs' tombs. The village was founded in the reign of Amenhotep I and was only a small settlement at this time. To the south-west of the valley, Amenhotep III built his palace at a site now known as Malkata. Very little of this once magnificent structure has survived.

The Valley of the Kings

The Valley of the Kings was the New Kingdom royal **necropolis**. It contained the pharaohs' rock-cut tombs that were hollowed out of the limestone cliffs. Thutmose I is thought to have been the first pharaoh to construct a tomb for himself in the valley, which consisted of two main sections – an eastern and a western valley. It offered seclusion and some protection for the funerary monuments of a dynasty devoted to Amun, 'the hidden one'.

necropolis
a cemetery; from Greek, literally meaning 'city of the dead'

SOURCE 7 The entrance to the Valley of the Kings

Malkata

Amenhotep III built a huge palace complex on the west bank of Thebes. It covered an area of 30 000 square metres (30 hectares). Its main purpose was to serve as the setting for the celebration of the king's ***Heb-Sed***, his festival of renewal. The modern name of the site el-Malqata means 'the place where things are picked up'. This is a reference to the large numbers of **faience** (a powdered quartz glaze) and blue-painted pottery found all over the site.

Excavations by the University of Pennsylvania in the 1970s and later by Waseda University in Tokyo have focused on the king's palace. These have revealed a variety of artefacts and rooms with exquisitely decorated plaster floors, walls and ceilings. Many feature naturalistic scenes of plants and animals, and decorative borders of rosettes and running spirals. These show the influence of Egypt's cultural and trading contacts with the Aegean Minoan civilisation of the period.

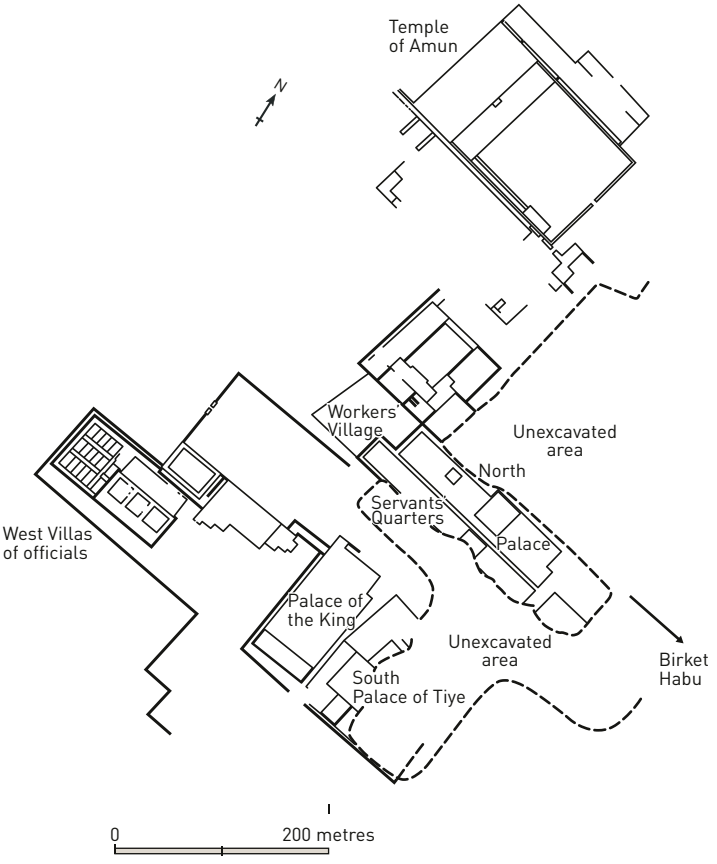
Heb-Sed
an ancient Egyptian ceremony celebrating the continued rule of a pharaoh; the name is taken from the name of an Egyptian wolf god, one of whose names was Wepwawet or Heb–Sed

faience
a material made from powdered quartz, usually covered with a transparent blue or green glaze

Excavations of the site of Malkata have revealed the following main areas:

- the palace of the king – the private residence of the king and the 'House of Nebmaatre, the Dazzling Sun Disc', containing festival halls for the pharaoh's *Sed* festival rituals
- the queen's apartments – a separate residence to the south for Queen Tiye
- officials' apartments – villas for top-ranking members of the administration
- Amun temple – for the king's private worship
- workers' village – to house the craftsmen who built and decorated the complex
- Birket Habu – an artificial harbour providing access to the Nile.

motif
a decorative image or design, usually repeated to form a pattern



SOURCE 8 A plan of Malkata

SOURCE 9 A partially restored section of a ceiling painting from the antechamber of the king's bedroom at the palace of Malkata. The **motif** consists of a pattern of rosette-filled running spirals alternating with ox skulls.

2.1b Check your learning

1. Enter 'Theban Mapping Project' into your browser to learn more about the Valley of the Kings.
2. Find out more about the magnificent palace of Amenhotep III at Malkata. Useful resources include:
   - J. Fletcher, *Amenhotep III: Egypt's Sun King*, Duncan Baird Publishers, 2000
   - WordPress 'Egyptian Monuments' website (Luxor West Bank Monuments)
   - Waseda University, Tokyo, Institute of Egyptology website (Malkata Palace).

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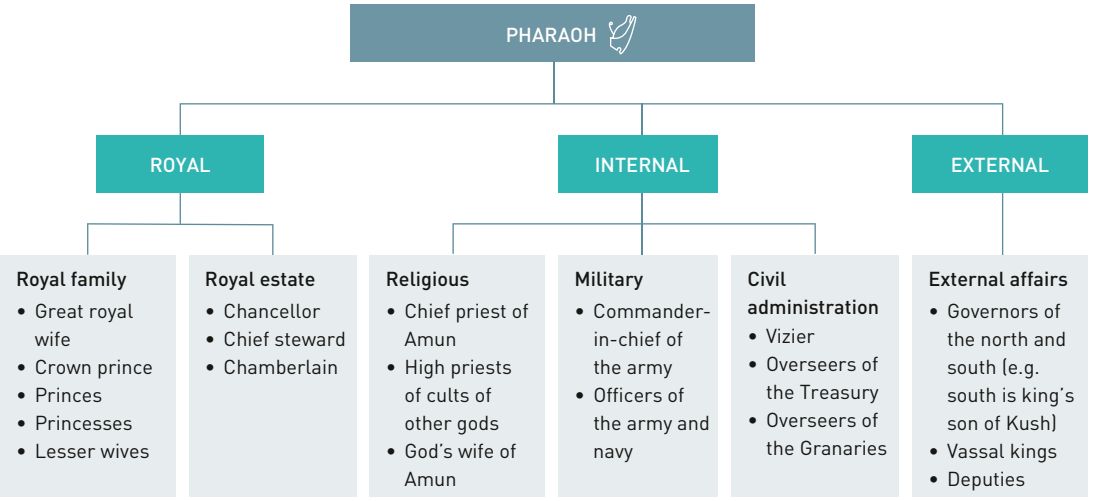
2.2 Social structure and political organisation

The political organisation of New Kingdom Egypt can be considered in three broad categories: royal, internal and external (see Source 10).



SOURCE 10 Royal, religious, military and civil elites of New Kingdom Egypt

Royal

The royal domain included the royal family and the administration of its affairs in the royal estate. The royal family included the pharaoh himself, the queen mother, the great royal wife and the crown prince. There were also lesser wives, princes and princesses. Also included were the sons of commoners who were educated at the king's expense. These 'children of the *kap*' (nursery) were destined to be the next generation of officials.

The personal possessions of the king and royal family were extensive and formed a branch of the government known as 'the royal estate'. They included vast areas of state agricultural land. The crops and livestock they produced provided both the food supply and payment for members of the pharaonic administration. The royal estate was managed by officials including:

- the chancellor, a personal confidant of the king and carrier of the king's seal
- the chief steward, who was responsible for the upkeep of provisions for the court
- the chamberlain, who served as chief butler to the king.

Internal

vizier
a chief minister and king's deputy in ancient Egypt

The internal organisation included religious administration, the military and civil service headed by officials, such as **viziers** and overseers. All of these officials were directly responsible to the king and so enjoyed very high status.

The religious administration was an important sector of Egyptian government during the New Kingdom. There were many cults in Egypt for the worship of different gods. These were administered by an overseer of prophets of all the gods of Upper and Lower Egypt, a position held by the Chief Priest of Amun, also called the 'First Prophet of Amun', the state cult.

The temples, especially those of the Amun cult, were endowed by the pharaoh with huge estates. These estates provided the produce necessary for the daily religious offerings to the gods and the maintenance of large staffs of priests, officials, scribes, craftsmen and many others. The 'Second Prophet of Amun' had responsibility for temple property. He managed the estates and workshops where the gifts and booty dedicated to the god were stored. He also supervised the work of numerous lesser officials such as overseers and scribes.

The military administration had a strict hierarchical organisation headed by the pharaoh, who was advised by a council made up of the vizier and the most senior military officers. The main divisions of the army were the infantry and the chariotry; other units also had their own hierarchy of officers. The vital role played by the military in both the creation and maintenance of the empire meant that army leaders enjoyed high status and influence. As with other departments of the government, the military relied on scribes to keep records of weapons and equipment, campaigns, casualties, booty and prisoners.

The civil administration was responsible for the internal government of Egypt. The most important officials were the viziers of the north and the south. Answerable to them were the overseers of important departments such as the treasury and the granaries. The Overseer of the Treasury was responsible for all taxation, which was paid in grain and cattle. This was stored in temple and state granaries for redistribution in the form of wages to state officials and workers. The Overseer of the Granaries supervised a large network of scribes who kept detailed records of the intake, storage and distribution of grain and other supplies. Other civil service officials controlled the **judiciary** and the police. At the local level of district, town and village were provincial governors or **nomarchs**, town mayors and lesser officials.

judiciary
the part of a country's government that is responsible for its legal system

nomarch
a governor in charge of an Egyptian nome, a district of Egypt

vassal
a person or country in a subordinate position to a superior power

garrison
troops stationed in a fortress or town to defend it

External

The external administration handled Egyptian foreign affairs in Syria–Palestine and Nubia. In Syria–Palestine, this was carried out by the governors of the north, who worked alongside local **vassal** kings or princes. Vassals were left in charge of their own affairs on condition that they took an oath of loyalty to the pharaoh, kept the peace and paid annual tribute to Egypt. Other administrators were the **garrison** commanders, in charge of Egyptian troops stationed at key forts.

Egypt's Nubian affairs were administered by the Viceroy of Nubia, called the 'king's son of Kush'. Nubia was divided into two regions: Wawat in the north and Kush in the south. Each was administered by a deputy and, below them, mayors of Egyptian colonies and local Nubian chieftains. Because the control of the Nubian goldmines was important to Egypt, colonies of Egyptian settlers were established to protect Egypt's interests.

Roles and images of the pharaoh

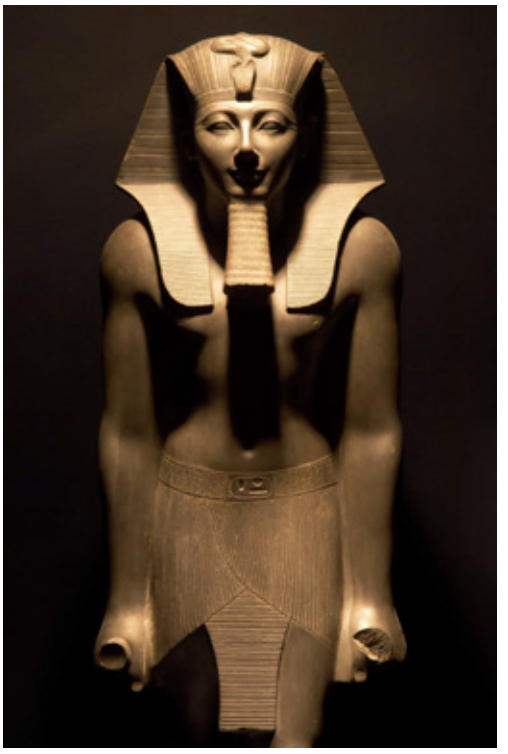
> *What is the king of Upper and Lower Egypt? … He is a god by whose dealings one lives, the father and mother of all men …*
>
> (an inscription from the tomb of Rekhmire, Egyptian vizier during the reign of Thutmose III)

The word 'pharaoh' is the Greek form of the ancient Egyptian term *per-aa*, which means 'great house'. It originally referred to the palace of the king rather than to the king himself. The Egyptian pharaoh exercised absolute power over his subjects. He had both earthly and divine roles as provider and protector of his people who revered him as a king and a representative of the gods. With this power came great responsibility. At all times, the pharaoh's main role was to uphold ***ma'at***, the order of the universe of which Egypt was part.

As supreme authority in the land, all aspects of Egyptian life were the pharaoh's responsibility. As chief priest of all the religious cults, he made daily offerings to the gods in their temples. These rituals were often delegated to the high priests of the gods and their attendants. The pharaoh was also chief judge and supreme commander of the army.

The authority of the king was shown by his regalia or kingly dress. A king could be recognised by his headdress, the symbols of authority he carried and other accoutrements, such as his false beard, kilt, tail and weapons. A number of representations of the king became standard features of pharaonic iconography (the way the king was depicted in reliefs and statues). Pharaohs were traditionally depicted as physically perfect specimens regardless of their age or actual state of health. Source 12, a statue of Thutmose III, is a good example both of the ideal of physical perfection and of the sculptor's skill in expressing it.

The expansion of the Egyptian Empire in this period saw the development of royal military images known as 'warrior pharaoh' iconography. Such images typically show the pharaoh smiting the enemy with a mace or attacking his enemies in his war chariot. Another military image of the pharaoh was the sphinx, shown either in a seated pose or trampling enemies underfoot.



SOURCE 12 Thutmose III, the **quintessential** New Kingdom pharaoh

REGALIA AND IMAGES OF THE PHARAOH

Iconography
- Sphinx
- Smiting the enemy
- King in chariot
- Offering to the gods
- Coronation in the presence of the gods

Accoutrements
- Crook and flail
- *Khepesh*
- False beard
- *Uraeus*
- *Was* sceptre
- Kilt

Crowns and headdresses
- Red crown (*deshret*)
- White crown (*hedjet*)
- Double crown (*pschent*)
- Blue crown (*khepresh*)
- *Nemes*
- *Atef* crown

SOURCE 11 Regalia and images of the pharaoh in the New Kingdom

ma'at
the ancient Egyptian concept of truth, order, harmony and justice

quintessential
representing the most perfect or typical example of a quality or class

The concept of *ma'at*

According to the Egyptian creation myth, the world was in a state of continual tension between order and chaos. The primary duty of the pharaoh was to maintain *ma'at*, the harmony of the universe, and protect Egypt from the forces of chaos. The concept of *ma'at* also embodied truth and justice. As well as being an abstract concept, *ma'at* was personified as a goddess, usually depicted wearing an ostrich feather on her head. She controlled the cycle of the seasons and the stars and, most importantly, the relationships between the Egyptian people and their gods.

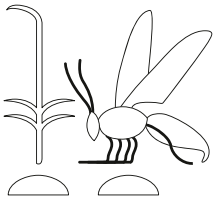
During the Eighteenth Dynasty, the pharaoh's authority as ruler was linked to the goddess Ma'at whose title, 'Daughter of Re', complemented the pharaonic title 'Son of Re'. Evidence of this can be seen in reliefs of the pharaoh offering images of Ma'at to the gods. Many New Kingdom pharaohs added the epithet 'beloved of Ma'at' to their kingly titles.

The royal titulary

Evidence for the role of the pharaoh and his link to the gods can be found in the royal titulary: the five great names or titles carried by all pharaohs. In addition to his personal name received at birth, a pharaoh acquired four other titles on his accession. Every royal inscription began with a section that listed the king's titles and epithets. The epithets the king chose often signalled the priorities for his reign.

The five great names of the pharaoh were:

- *Horus* – the first name, which identifies the pharaoh as the earthly manifestation of the falcon god, Horus
- *Nebty* – meaning 'Beloved of the Two Ladies'. The two ladies are Nekhbet, the vulture goddess representing Upper Egypt, and Wadjet, the cobra goddess representing Lower Egypt
- *Horus of Gold* – Horus is represented by a falcon standing on the hieroglyphic sign for gold. This symbolises the divine and eternal nature of the king
- *nswt bity* – meaning 'He of the Sedge and the Bee', represented by a sedge reed, symbol of Upper Egypt, and a bee, symbol of Lower Egypt (see Source 13). This refers to the king's rule over both Upper and Lower Egypt
- *Son of Re* – the fifth name emphasises the link between the king and the sun god. This is the personal or family name of the pharaoh.



SOURCE 13
The nswt bity name

The vizier: The king's deputy

The most important member of the government below the pharaoh was the vizier. He supervised the work of other officials, acted as the king's deputy and was responsible for all the main departments of government. All major officials reported directly to the vizier. They included overseers or managers of the treasury, the granary, state building projects, provincial governors and town mayors.

During the New Kingdom, the administration of the state became increasingly complex. For this reason the office of the vizier was split into two: one controlled the north and the other, based in Thebes, controlled the south. Important evidence about the role of the vizier comes from texts called *The Installation of the Vizier* and *The Duties of the Vizier*. An example is from the tomb of Rekhmire, vizier of Thutmose III. Source 14 contains sections of this text describing the vizier's duties.

SOURCE 14

… the vizier is to enter to greet the monarch – life, prosperity and health to him – and the state of the land may be reported to him [the king] daily in his palace …

It is he who dispatches every official of the royal domain and who sends to nomarchs [district governors] and heads of divisions … They are to report to him all that has happened in their zones at the beginning of each four-monthly season, and they are to bring to him the official scribes attached to them and their council.

It is he who sees that soldiers mobilise and move as an escort of the monarch when he sails north or south …

It is he who sends out men to cut down sycamores, following a decision of the royal domain. It is he who sends out the councillors of the **nome** to make irrigation canals throughout

nome
one of 42 administrative districts of ancient Egypt: 22 in Upper Egypt and 20 in Lower Egypt

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the entire land. It is he who dispatches mayors and heads of divisions for summer tillage [cultivation] …

Report is to be made to him of the state of the southern fortress and of the arrest of anyone who attempts a raid … It is he who is to take measures against the plunderer of any nome and it is he who is to judge him …

It is he who hears all law cases … It is he who opens the House of Gold in conjunction with the high treasurer. It is he who inspects the tribute of Byblos [modern Lebanon] … It is he who makes inventories of all oxen … It is he who inspects the water supply on the first of every ten-day period …

[Report is to be made to him of] the ascent of Sirius and the slackening of the Nile …

Report is to be made to him of all that ought to be reported …

N. de G. Davies, *The Tomb of Rekhmire at Thebes*, Plantin Press, New York, 1943

2.2 Understanding and using the sources

Source 14

1 List the duties of the vizier that relate to taxation and revenue, agriculture, communication and government appointments, and law and order.

2 Why would matters relating to irrigation and water supply be under the vizier's control?

2.2 Check your learning

1 Source 11 lists important features of New Kingdom royal regalia and iconography. Find a picture of each item in each of the three categories and explain its significance in the New Kingdom. A useful resource is 'The Crowns of Egypt, Part II: Specific Crowns' on the Tour Egypt website.

2 Identify the items of pharaonic regalia on the statue of Thutmose III in Source 12.

3 Writing task: Explain the role of the pharaoh in New Kingdom society.

To help plan your response:

- identify a range of roles of the pharaoh in New Kingdom society
- use them to help structure your response
- indicate the main features of each role
- indicate clearly the relationship between the features
- use relevant sources to support your points.

4 Find more information on the following officials and record your findings in a table, using these column headings: Name, Position, Pharaoh served, Career details.

- Viziers: Rekhmire, Ramose
- Viceroy of Kush: Merymose
- Chief priests of Amun: Hapuseneb, Menkheperre'sonb
- Crown prince: Amenhotep III
- Chancellor: Nehesi
- Generals: Djehuty, Amenemhab

For more detailed information on the duties of the vizier, search online for 'Osirisnet tombs of the nobles at Luxor' and select 'Rekhmire – TT 100' (i.e. Theban Tomb 100).

2.3 Nature and role of the army

In New Kingdom Egypt, the army was a professional standing force. It served as a focus for the growing nationalism stimulated by victories in the war of liberation over the Hyksos. Later, as Egypt began to develop an empire, the army won further victories over the 'wretched Kush' and the 'miserable Asiatics', the terms used by the Egyptians to describe their enemies. The army provided an important career path for men of ambition and talent.

Composition of the army

In the early Eighteenth Dynasty, the army consisted of two divisions, each commanded by a general. Infantry contingents comprised units of spearsmen and archers. There were also chariotry divisions led by the pharaoh himself. An elite infantry corps, known as the 'braves of the king', formed the spearhead of infantry attacks. The army was organised into the following sections:

- division – approximately 5000 soldiers
- host – approximately 500 soldiers
- company – 250 soldiers
- platoon – 50 soldiers
- squad – 10 soldiers.

As the Egyptian army conquered neighbouring regions, it incorporated foreign troops as auxiliaries, for example the Nubian archers and units from Syria–Palestine. Conquered regions were controlled by garrison troops stationed at strategically located forts. These soldiers policed the local area, collecting tribute and quelling any local rebellion. Thutmose III established a number of such fortified garrisons in Palestine to assist in his administration of this region.

Naval contingents were used largely for transport and communications. Thutmose III's campaign to Naharin carried prefabricated boats for transporting his soldiers across the Euphrates River.

A soldier's life

Source 15 is an excerpt from the tomb biography of the soldier Ahmose, son of Ebana. Many officials of this period commemorated their successes and honours in inscriptions on the walls of their tombs. Ahmose began his military career during the reign of King Ahmose, the pharaoh who expelled the Hyksos. He went on to serve the next two pharaohs, Amenhotep I and Thutmose I, finishing his career as a highly decorated officer.

SOURCE 15

... Then, I conveyed the king, Akheperkare [Thutmose I] the justified when he sailed south to Kenthennofer [a region in Nubia], to crush rebellion throughout the lands, to repel the intruders from the desert regions. I was brave in his presence in the bad water, in the towing of the ship over the cataract. Thereupon I was made Crew Commander.

Then his majesty was informed that the Nubian … [text damaged]. At this his majesty became enraged like a leopard. His majesty shot and his first arrow pierced the chest of that foe. Then those enemies turned to flee, helpless before his Uraeus [the serpent of the pharaoh's crown] a slaughter was made among them; their people were brought off as living captives. His majesty journeyed north, all foreign lands in his grasp, and that wretched Nubian bowman [was hanged] head downwards at the bow of his majesty's ship 'Falcon'. They landed at Ipet-sut [Karnak].

After this, [his majesty] proceeded to Retenu [Palestine and Syria] to vent his wrath [seek revenge] throughout the lands. When his majesty reached Naharin [the land of the Mitanni], he found that foe marshalling troops. Then his majesty made a great slaughter of them. Countless were the living captives which his majesty brought back from his victories. Now, I was at the head of our troops and his majesty saw my valour. I brought a chariot, its horse and him who was on it as a living captive, and took them to his majesty … I was presented with gold once again.

I have grown old, I have reached old age. Favoured as before, and loved by my lord, I rest in the tomb that I myself made.

M. Lichtheim, 'Tomb biography of Ahmose, son of Ebana', *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Vol. II: The New Kingdom*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1976, p. 14

Weaponry and armour

The Egyptian infantryman was equipped with long-range and short-range weapons. The most important long-range weapon was the bow. The earlier 'self bow', made of a wooden rod narrowed at either end, was superseded by the composite bow introduced by the Hyksos. This weapon was made of two convex sections joined at the centre and had a greater range than the self bow. Other long-range weapons included spears, lances and boomerangs. For hand-to-hand combat, the soldier carried battleaxes, sticks, clubs, flint daggers and *khepesh* daggers used for cutting, stabbing and slashing. Protective shields were made of wood covered with animal hide.

Technological innovation

The adoption of Hyksos military technology changed the nature of the New Kingdom army. An important example was the horse-drawn chariot, a light wooden vehicle manned by a driver and a warrior. The new elite chariot corps gave the army mobility both in battle and in the pursuit of a routed enemy. The chariot quickly became a distinctive symbol of the warrior pharaoh.

SOURCE 16 New Kingdom weapons and armour: (a) New Kingdom soldier carrying a shield, spear and battleaxe; (b) throwing sticks; (c) battleaxe; (d) chariot; (e) helmet; (f) armour; (g) axe head detail; (h) *khepesh* daggers; (i) copper spear and halberd blade; (j) self bow and composite bow

The Egyptians also adopted the Canaanite *khepesh* or scimitar, a curved sword. Temple reliefs frequently depicted pharaohs wielding it against their enemies. Body armour, such as linen or leather corselets reinforced with metal scales, was also used in this period. Some troops in the New Kingdom wore Asiatic-style helmets made of leather or bronze.

Military campaigning

SOURCE 17 The main features of New Kingdom military campaigns

2.3 Understanding and using the sources

Source 15

1 How was Ahmose, son of Ebana rewarded for his bravery?
2 Which of Egypt's enemies are referred to in his biography?
3 What does this source reveal of the way Egyptians treated their enemies?
4 What are the strengths and limitations of Ahmose's biography as a source for historians investigating the role of the army in New Kingdom Egypt?

2.3 Check your learning

1 New Kingdom pharaohs such as Ahmose, Thutmose I and Thutmose III have left records of their campaigns. Research the campaigns of one of these pharaohs. Find details of how these campaigns were carried out, using some of the headings in Source 17.
2 Writing task: Explain the nature and role of the army in the New Kingdom.

To help plan your response:

- use the headings from this section to identify a range of characteristic features of the army and its roles, and to structure your response
- indicate clearly how each of these features relates to New Kingdom military activities
- use relevant sources to support your points.

2.4 Roles and status of women and workers

A woman's role and status in New Kingdom Egypt depended on that of her husband or close male relative. This was true for both royal and non-royal women. Our major sources of evidence for their status are the tombs of their male relatives in which the women play supportive roles in ensuring the afterlife of the tomb owner. While some royal women had their own tombs, this was rarely, if ever, the case for other women – they were buried in the tombs of their male relatives.

Roles of royal women

Royal women carried out important dynastic, religious and political roles in Egyptian society. Their dynastic role was to maintain the royal family's line of succession by providing heirs. Royal mothers, wives and daughters derived their status from their relationship with the pharaoh. Kings had many wives, and royal families were large. The most important royal women were queens, the wives or mothers of the pharaoh.

Queens were sometimes the sister or the half-sister of the pharaoh. However, non-royal women, for example Tiye, occasionally became royal wives. The families of such women were probably prominent members of the official class or, if not, were likely to become so on the elevation of their female relatives. Tiye's parents, Yuya and Thuya, were given the great honour of burial in the Valley of the Kings. Source 18 describes the different types of queens.

SOURCE 18 Titles and roles of New Kingdom queens

QUEEN	DESCRIPTION OF ROLE	EXAMPLES IN THIS PERIOD
Queen regnant	Reigned as king – adopted kingly titles and ruled as a pharaoh	Hatshepsut – she acted initially as regent for her stepson, Thutmose III, before assuming full pharaonic titles and ruling jointly with him as co-regent
Great royal wife	Chief consort of the king: • took precedence over other wives • often depicted on monuments next to the king	Ahmose-Nefertari – great royal wife of Ahmose I Ahmose – great royal wife of Thutmose I Tiye – great royal wife of Amenhotep III
King's mother	Held a position of importance in the royal household: • often depicted on monuments and in reliefs alongside the king • traditionally acted as regent for a king who was too young to rule in his own right • became the most important woman in the **harem** after her son became king	Ahhotep II – regent for her son Ahmose Hatshepsut – regent for her stepson Thutmose III
King's wives	Other women who were married to the king (i.e. daughters of the king or commoners); some were foreign women married to the king for diplomatic reasons	Mutnefret – non-royal wife of Thutmose II Gilukhepa – Mitanni princess married to Amenhotep III

harem
an establishment housing the pharaoh's secondary wives, both Egyptian and foreign, their servants and children

SOURCE 19 The vulture headdress

Religious role

The religious role of the queen as consort was to provide the female principle that complemented the pharaoh's relationship to male gods. For example, she was the Hathor to his Horus; she was 'Daughter of Re' complementing his role as 'Son of Re'. The regalia worn by queens demonstrate their links to important female deities. For example, the vulture headdress shown in Source 19, represented the goddess Nekhbet, the patron deity of Upper Egypt, and was worn by great royal wives.

God's wife of Amun

In the early New Kingdom, the title 'god's wife of Amun' was an important title held by female members of the royal family. It carried both political and religious significance. Holders of the title could claim special lands and prerogatives that gave them significant authority in the cult. Queen Ahmose-Nefertari, a very important queen of this period, sometimes used the title 'god's wife' as her only title, indicating its important status. Hatshepsut's role as 'god's wife of Amun' gave her the influence with the Amun cult that assisted her elevation to the kingship.

The duties of the 'god's wife of Amun' included important rituals enacted within the Temple of Karnak, the major precinct of Amun. Such rituals included offering food to the gods and leading priests in purification rites associated with the sacred lake.

Political role

The full extent of the political role of queens is unclear. Traditionally, the wife of the dead king acted as regent for the new pharaoh when he was too young to rule in his own right. Some Egyptian queens played an active role in diplomacy. For example, Queen Tiye, great royal wife of Amenhotep III, corresponded with Tushratta, King of the Mitanni, during the reigns of her husband and son.

Lesser wives

Some women of the royal household had the status of queens. Other women, known as concubines, often bore children to the pharaoh and sometimes their sons even became pharaoh. For example, Thutmose III was the son of Isis, a concubine of Thutmose I. Still other wives were foreign princesses whose diplomatic marriage to the king cemented relations between Egypt and neighbouring powers. Amenhotep III married several foreign princesses as part of his foreign policy. Interestingly, Egyptian princesses were never sent away as brides for foreign rulers. This demonstrated Egypt's superiority over its neighbours.

Role and status of non-royal women

Non-royal women were made up of two main groups – the upper class or nobility and commoners. Women of the upper class did not generally take part in the same sorts of activities as their male relatives, but were expected to remain at home and manage domestic affairs. Reliefs from tombs indicate that these activities included weaving, caring for animals and producing craft items, as well as baking, brewing and cooking. Servants were available to women of this class. Bringing up children occupied a large amount of their time, but these women had the advantage of **wet nurses** and nannies.

wet nurse
a woman employed to suckle another woman's child

Upper-class women also served in the temples, mostly of goddesses such as Hathor, Isis and Sekhmet, as priestesses or musicians. The title 'Chantress of Amun' was well known in the New Kingdom. They also worked in funerary temples, preparing sacrifices for the dead. We do not know for certain whether these women were literate. Letters exist that were written by women to both men and other women, but we do not know whether they were written by scribes or by the women themselves. Other evidence, such as the presence of a scribal palette beneath the chair of the tomb owner's wife in some tomb reliefs, is open to interpretation.

Mistress of the house

There is very little information available on the lives of women of the lower classes. They were usually referred to as 'mistress of the house', a title carrying little more meaning than 'Mrs' or 'housewife'. Daily life scenes in Eighteenth Dynasty tomb paintings sometimes show ordinary women whose function was to help the deceased, usually a male of the upper classes. Women of this class were most probably occupied with household tasks such as child rearing, preparing food, weaving cloth and a variety of other physical tasks. They also worked in the fields, either on a regular basis, or at least during times of harvest or when extra labour was required. Women of this class could work outside their homes as servants. Some Egyptian women of the New Kingdom were slaves, known only to us through documents that record their sale or purchase.

Scribes, artisans and agricultural workers

Skilled and unskilled workers made up the majority of the Egyptian population. The highest ranking members of this class were the scribes, the literate members of society. The scribal class included secretaries and clerks who kept records relating to taxation and state administration. Other skilled workers included artists and craftsmen such as sculptors, carpenters and jewellers, the most highly skilled of whom were employed in the pharaoh's workshops.

Information about skilled workers comes from the remains of the village of Deir el-Medina which housed the workers who built the pharaohs' tombs in the Valley of the Kings. Other evidence comes from scenes in the private tombs of the Eighteenth Dynasty, when it was the fashion to depict a variety of daily activities as part of the tomb decoration.

The majority of the Egyptian population were unskilled workers, occupied mainly in agriculture – the mainstay of the Egyptian economy. Agricultural labourers, both male and female, worked on royal and noble estates tilling the soil and producing crops. Other unskilled labourers included animal herders and fishermen, as well as the servants of the nobility. They prepared food and wine for banquets, performed as musicians, singers and dancers, and waited on their superiors. Temple servants carried out similar duties in the cults of the various gods.

SOURCE 20 Jewellery making in a Theban workshop from the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Sobekhotep. Craftsmen are making beads to be threaded onto an ornamental collar. Strings of completed beads can be seen above the table, while completed collars are shown in the top **register** at right.

register
a band of decoration containing inscriptions and paintings; the wall paintings of Egyptian tombs were usually executed in registers

2.4 Check your learning

1. Investigate the significance of the sacred lake at Karnak and the rituals associated with the god's wife of Amun. Enter 'Karnan Temple sacred lake – discovering ancient Egypt' in your browser.
2. Investigate the following topics about the lives and roles of New Kingdom women and children:
   - childhood and adolescence
   - family life
   - courtship and marriage
   - pregnancy and childbirth
   - economic status
   - legal rights.
3. Amenhotep, son of Hapu was an important official during the reign of Amenhotep III. Find out about the many roles he performed during his career.

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2.5 The economy

The Egyptian economy depended on agriculture. Agricultural land belonged to the pharaoh and was distributed in the form of land grants to private individuals and religious cults. Private ownership of land and private enterprise were virtually non-existent. The royal and temple estates were therefore central to the economy. Officials, including overseers and scribes, managed these estates on behalf of the government.

Importance of the Nile

The Nile was crucial to the development of the economy. Agriculture depended on the Nile's annual flood or inundation and food production was always the most important economic activity. The fertile land that bordered the Nile also supported large herds and flocks of livestock. The Nile was also the highway and main means of transport of goods between towns and villages.

Agriculture

Egypt was famous for its multiple annual harvests. Herodotus, the ancient Greek historian and traveller, noting the bounty provided by the annual inundation, wrote 'Egypt is the gift of the Nile'. After each year's inundation, government officials re-established the old boundaries that had been swept away; they created new dykes and measured areas of land for the next planting season. The main activities of the agricultural cycle are shown in Source 21.

SOURCE 21 The agricultural cycle

SEASON	ACTIVITIES	MONTHS
Akhet – inundation	• Workers relieved from field work • Work done on temples and other state building	July–October
Peret – springtime, the 'Season of Coming Forth'	• Ploughing and sowing of crops • Emergence of plants in the main growing season • Repair and maintenance of dykes and boundary markers	November–February
Shemu – harvest	• Harvesting, threshing and winnowing of grain • Storage of grain	March–June

The main crops were grain, including barley and different kinds of wheat such as emmer, einkorp and spelt, which were used in the production of bread and beer, the staples of the Egyptian diet. The Egyptians also produced a variety of fruit and vegetables, including onions, garlic, lentils, beans, peas, radishes, lettuce, cabbage and cucumbers. Fruits included dates, figs, pomegranates, melons and grapes. Sound evidence for the annual agricultural cycle are the scenes found in the tombs of the officials responsible for the administration of the economy. These scenes depict the stages in crop production, especially harvesting and threshing.

The silt deposited each year by the Nile was extremely fertile – nevertheless, irrigation by hand was necessary. For this purpose, New Kingdom Egyptians developed the shaduf, a simple mechanism to transfer water from the Nile to the fields under cultivation.

SOURCE 22 A scene of agriculture and trade from the Eighteenth Dynasty Theban tomb of Khaemwese

SOURCE 23 An Egyptian man using a shaduf at the Pharaonic Village, a living history museum in Cairo, Egypt

Animal husbandry

Livestock, an important part of economic life, supplied meat, milk, hides and dung for cooking fuel. Oxen were used for ploughing and threshing. Herdsmen and shepherds pastured their animals in the marshes of the Nile. Domesticated animals raised for food included pigs, sheep and goats.

Transport and trade

The Nile was the main highway of ancient Egypt. Sail boats, like the one shown in the lower register of Source 22, plied their trade up and down the river, transporting grain and other local goods. Ports such as the one at Malkata were busy centres of trade. Markets for small traders were set up at the quays and landing places where trading boats docked. Official trade was conducted by male traders called *shuty*, who were employed either by temples or officials to sell surplus goods in exchange for whatever goods their employers required. Nile barges were used to transport heavy building stone, such as blocks of limestone and granite from distant quarries. For example, Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri features a scene of the transportation of a pair of **obelisks** from Aswan to Thebes.

obelisk
a tapering, four-sided monolithic shaft of stone, with a pyramid-shaped capstone called a pyramidion; sacred symbol of the sun god Re

Economic exchange

The main form of economic exchange involved a sophisticated barter system that used a scale of value based on metal weights. The main standard used for small transactions was copper, and the basic unit was one *deben* (equivalent to 93.3 grams). The value of any exchangeable commodity was expressed as a number of copper *deben*. For example, one coffin was valued at 25.5 *deben*, and in purchasing it the buyer would have tendered goods, such as goats and pigs, to this value. Egypt's economy depended on the distribution of raw materials and produce,

including imported goods and locally produced commodities such as barley, emmer, cattle, wine and linen. These goods were redistributed by the royal storehouses as wages to officials, priests, artisans and those not directly involved in food production.

Taxation

Agricultural and other produce was carefully measured, counted and recorded by scribes. Government granaries where the grain was stored were essential to the economy. In the absence of a money currency, agricultural yield formed the basis of the taxation system. Tax collection was conducted by treasury officials accompanied by scribes and policemen carrying sticks. Tax was calculated on the height of the annual inundation. In addition to agricultural produce, officials assessed trees, ponds, canals, herds, flocks and the yield from hunting and fishing. Tomb scenes often depict the assessment of produce and collection of taxes by scribes. Sometimes we see farmers being beaten for tax evasion.

Impact of empire

Egypt's economy benefited significantly from empire building. The conquest of Nubia ensured regular supplies of gold, ebony, semi-precious stones and other goods; while victories in Syria–Palestine opened up sources of timber, raw materials and other luxury items. The short-term benefits of military victory came in the form of booty, but in the longer term, the tribute and trade that developed in the aftermath of conquest made the most sustained economic contribution.

Booty

Egyptian military scribes kept careful inventories of the plundered goods taken back to Egypt after successful campaigns. Pharaohs proudly included lists of such booty on victory **stelae** and temple pylons to advertise their success. The following extract from the ***Annals*** of Thutmose III records some of the booty taken after the surrender of Megiddo, the first of more than 17 campaigns into Syria–Palestine conducted by the king over a 20-year period.

stela (*pl.* stelae)
an upright slab of stone or sometimes wood bearing inscriptions, reliefs or paintings; often placed in temples and tombs

annals
a record of events, usually year by year

SOURCE 24

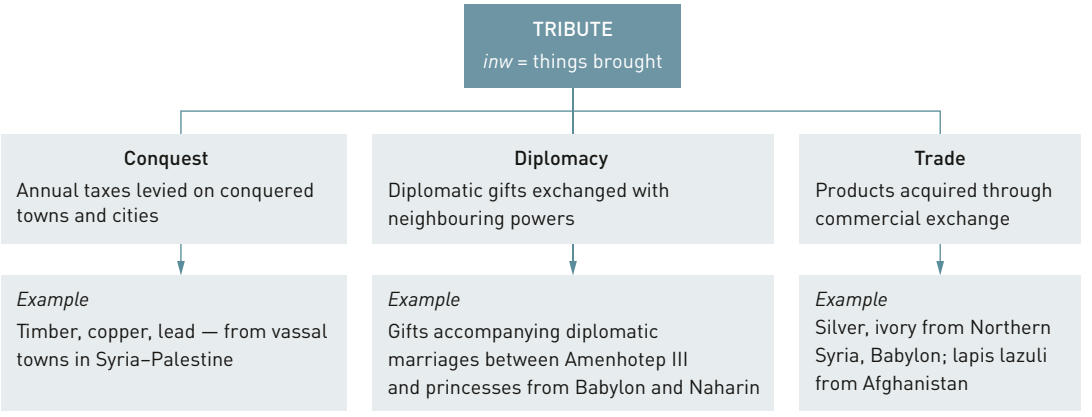
[List of the booty that his majesty's army brought from the town of] Megiddo. Living prisoners: 340. Hands [severed from slain enemy]: 83. Horses: 2041. Foals: 191. Stallions: 6. Colts: –. One chariot of that foe worked in gold, with a [pole] of gold. One fine chariot of the prince of [Megiddo], worked in gold. [Chariots of the allied princes: 30]. Chariots of his wretched army: 892. Total: 924. One fine bronze coat of mail belonging to that enemy … Bows: 502. Poles of *mry*-wood worked with silver from the tent of that enemy: 7. Cows: 1929. Goats: 2000. Sheep: 20500.

M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Vol. II: The New Kingdom*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1976, pp. 33–4

Horses were first introduced into Egypt in the New Kingdom, so the horses and chariots listed in the *Annals* of Thutmose III were particularly prized. Other booty recorded includes moringa-tree oil for cooking and cosmetics, olive and sesame oil, honey, Syrian wine and incense, and fir resin from Palestine.

Tribute

All the goods that came to Egypt from foreign countries were referred to simply as *inw*, meaning 'things brought'. The Egyptians did not always distinguish between goods that came as a result of conquest, diplomacy or trade. Conquered towns became vassals of Egypt, and were required to pay an annual tribute or tax. This was a portion of their annual produce such as grain, livestock or manufactured goods. The supervision of the tribute collection was the responsibility of special commissioners, accompanied by the Egyptian army. Source 25 summarises the key features of tribute.



SOURCE 25
Features of tribute in New Kingdom Egypt

SOURCE 26
A scene from the Tomb of Rekhmire showing Minoan tribute bearers

The Egyptians developed diplomatic relationships with their neighbours as the empire grew. The rulers of the Mitanni and the Babylonians recognised Egypt's influence in the region and exchanged gifts of gold and other valuables with the pharaohs. The Egyptians portrayed such gifts as tribute. Peaceful trading missions often followed conquest and diplomacy. Many scenes in the tombs of important officials show rows of men bearing goods to be presented to the pharaoh or his officials. An example is the tribute scene in the tomb of Rekhmire, vizier of Thutmose III. It shows Minoans, whom the Egyptians called Keftiu people, from the island of Crete, dressed in their typical kilts and carrying distinctive Minoan pottery vessels.

Foreign trade

Egypt's foreign trade was also conducted through the barter system, usually as royal missions on behalf of the king or the great cult temples. Merchants and traders followed in the footsteps of the soldiers, and new and exotic goods made their way into Egypt from places as far away as Afghanistan and Babylon. One well-known example of a royal trading mission was the

expedition to Punt during the reign of Hatshepsut. Her ships returned from Punt laden with exotic goods such as incense trees, gold, ebony, elephant tusks and panther skins. Further evidence of international trade comes from a statue base from the time of Amenhotep III. It records the route taken by one of his ships, which called at both Minoan and Mycenaean ports, in Crete and mainland Greece.

Occupations

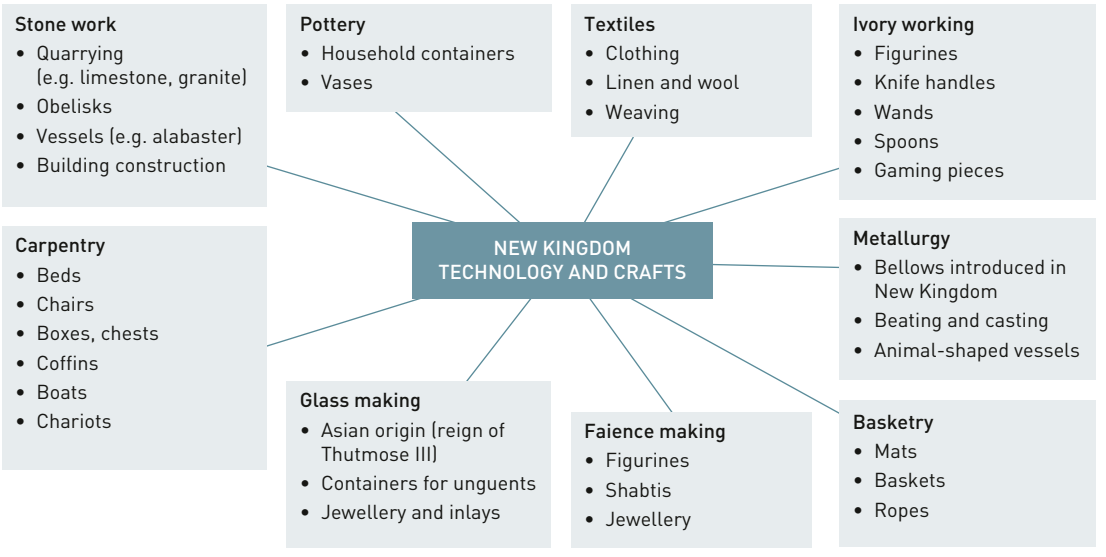
Many of the occupations of New Kingdom Egyptian have already been referred to in this chapter; for example, in 2.2 Social structure and political organisation. Many occupations can also be seen in the various tomb scenes throughout this chapter. The variety of New Kingdom occupations includes:

- *agriculture and domestic* – farmers, herdsmen, fishermen, gardeners, water carriers, servants, dancers, singers, musicians, hairdressers
- *arts and crafts* – artists and painters, sculptors, jewellers, stone vessel makers, potters, glassworkers, carpenters and cabinetmakers, spinners and weavers, smelters, metal beaters and metal founders
- *administration, state, religion* – viziers, overseers, stewards, nomarchs, mayors, scribes, soldiers, sailors, priests and priestesses.

Technology and crafts

New Kingdom artisans and craftsmen mastered a range of skills to produce items of exquisite workmanship. Royal workshops employed artisans working in wood, stone and metal who produced a variety of goods, including furniture, statuary, vessels and jewellery. The finest goods were used in equipping and decorating palaces and tombs. Others were traded both locally and abroad.

The ancient Egyptians were masters of architectural design and construction engineering. The size, scale and precision of monuments, such as the Temple of Karnak, are still marvelled at today by engineering experts, particularly considering the simple tools the ancient engineers had at their disposal.



shabti
a small statuette included in Egyptian funeral goods that was believed to work for the deceased in the afterlife

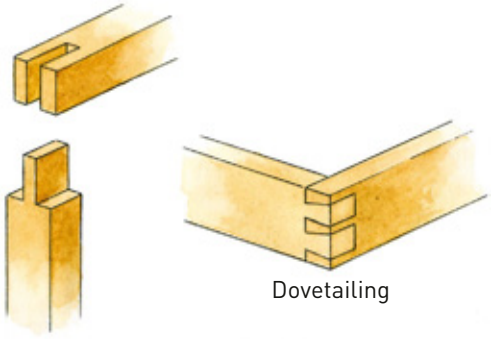
unguents
oils or ointments

SOURCE 27 New Kingdom technology and crafts

joinery
the wooden parts of a building, such as stairs, doors and window frames, viewed collectively

Egyptian carpenters produced examples of fine **joinery**. For example, a chair belonging to Sitamun, daughter of Amenhotep III, and made of cedar obtained from Lebanon (Source 28), shows the use of dovetailing and mortise-and-tenon joints (Source 29). Today, such materials and techniques are rare, being found only in very expensive items – staples, glue and chipboard have replaced them.

SOURCE 28 Sitamun's chair



Mortise-and-tenon joint

SOURCE 29 A mortise-and-tenon joint and an example of dovetailing

2.5 Understanding and using the sources

Source 21

1 What were the busiest seasons of the year for agricultural workers? What did they do during the annual Inundation?

Source 22

2 Describe the agricultural and trading activities that are being conducted in each of the registers in this scene.

Source 24

3 Why were the severed hands of the enemy collected and counted as booty after the Battle of Megiddo?

4 Apart from prisoners and livestock collected, why was the other booty collected prized enough to be listed in the *Annals* of Thutmose II

Source 26

5 Using Source 26, identify the goods depicted in the tomb of Rekhmire. (Note that copper was traded in the form of pillow-shaped ingots.) What is the last tribute bearer carrying over his shoulder? What would this have been used to make?

2.5 Check your learning

1 Explain the Egyptian system of taxation.

2 How were wages, goods and services paid for in New Kingdom Egypt?

3 Which occupations are depicted in Sources 20, 22 and 48? What evidence about the occupations can be gained from these sources?

4 Choose one or more of the crafts and industries listed in Source 27. Research:

- the tools, materials and techniques used
- the nature and function of the objects produced
- how the craft or industry you have chosen contributed to the New Kingdom Egyptian economy.

Choose relevant images to illustrate your findings.

Useful resources:

- P. Nicholson & I. Shaw (eds), *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*, Cambridge University Press, London, 2000
- Canadian Museum of History website: 'Egyptian civilization: Daily life – Trades and crafts'
- UCLA website: 'Digital Karnak: Construction methods and building materials'

5 Writing task: Explain the main features of the New Kingdom economy.

2.6 Religion

New Kingdom Egyptian religion attempted to explain the mysteries of life and the cosmos in terms of the many gods and goddesses of the Egyptian pantheon. Chief among these were the great cycles of birth and death, night and day, and the seasons of the year. At the centre of their belief system stood the sun god, Amun-Re, whose daily passage across the sky dictated the ebb and flow of their lives.

anthropomorphic displaying animals, gods and objects with human features

Gods and goddesses

The gods and goddesses can be considered in three main categories – state gods, local gods and personal gods. In the New Kingdom, Amun-Re was the state god, who was associated with the pharaoh and the political fortunes of Egypt. At the next level were the local gods associated with particular regions or towns. Many Egyptian gods were **anthropomorphic**; that is, depicted with a mixture of human and animal features. For example, Horus, who was identified with the living pharaoh, had the head of a hawk and a human body.

Personal gods were worshipped by ordinary Egyptians. These gods were responsible for important aspects of daily life such as health, pregnancy and childbirth. One of the most popular of these was the dwarf god Bes, worshipped as a protector of the family and of women in childbirth. His grotesque facial features and protruding tongue were believed to ward off evil.

SOURCE 30 The god Horus, displaying anthropomorphic features (i.e. the head of a hawk and a human body), holds two symbols of pharaonic power – in his left hand is the long staff or *was* sceptre, and in the right is the *ankh*, representing life.

Cults and priesthoods

Each major god was associated with a cult temple that was the centre of their worship. Here, priests carried out the rituals for the maintenance of their cults. Pharaohs set aside land that was used to support these cults. Some cults and their priesthoods became very wealthy through the cultivation of this land or from trade or mining activities conducted on their behalf.

The cult of Amun-Re

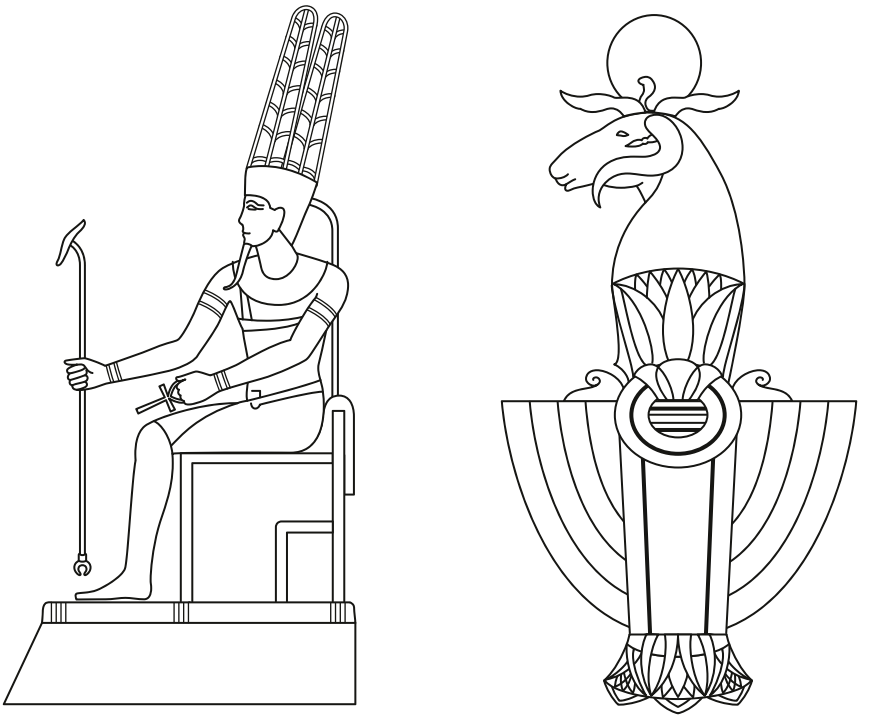
Amun-Re was the most important god in the New Kingdom. As chief god of the state religion, he legitimised the rule of the pharaoh. Amun-Re was a syncretism, or merging, of the gods Amun – the 'hidden one', patron god of Thebes – and of Re – the sun god. While usually depicted as a human figure, he is sometimes shown with a ram's head, wearing a crown containing two feathers. Each feather is divided vertically into two sections, representing the dualism of balanced opposites, such as Upper and Lower Egypt (see Source 32). The ram was Amun-Re's sacred animal, and represented the creative power or fertility of the god. *Woserhat*, the magnificent festival boat of Amun, had a ram's head at its prow and stern.

The worship of Amun-Re centred on his temple at Karnak. It was the setting for the pomp and pageantry associated with important religious festivals such as *Opet* and the Beautiful Feast of the Valley. Because Amun-Re was the chief state god, his cult enjoyed higher status than other cults and his priesthood became a powerful elite during the New Kingdom.

SOURCE 31 The god Bes

The cult worship of Amun-Re focused on the daily temple rituals that were accompanied by specific prayer formulas and chanting. These included:

- burning incense outside the god's shrine
- opening the shrine by breaking the sacred seal
- bowing in front of the image, kissing the ground and singing hymns
- offering incense and scented oil
- washing and dressing the cult statue in the *nemes*, crook, flail, *was* sceptre, necklace and collar
- offering oil and eye paint
- offering food and drink.



SOURCE 32 A crowned Amun (left) and the ram of Amun

mummiform coffin a human-shaped coffin with a face resembling the deceased person contained within

canopic chest a wooden case containing jars in which the ancient Egyptians preserved the interior organs of a deceased person, usually for burial with the mummy

The cult of Osiris

Osiris was initially a corn god of fertility and agriculture. After his murder and dismemberment at the hands of his brother Seth, he became the king of the Underworld, the chief god of the dead. His special cult centre was at Abydos. By the New Kingdom, both king and commoner identified themselves with Osiris in death. The name of a deceased person was always prefaced by the name 'Osiris'; this is similar to our use of the term 'the late' to refer to a dead person.

Features of the cult of Osiris included important New Kingdom burial practices, such as mummification, the funeral (including the Opening of the Mouth ceremony), the **mummiform coffin**, the **canopic chest** and grave goods such as shabtis. (Funerary practices are discussed later in 2.9 Funerary customs.)

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Priests: Servants of the gods

Priests were servants of the gods in their temples. Gods were believed to dwell in their cult statues, housed in the temples. Priests conducted daily rituals similar to those carried out by the Amun priests. Each cult had a high priest, or 'First Prophet', whose duties were delegated to him by the pharaoh. Only the pharaoh and high priest were allowed into the innermost sanctuary of the temple where the god's statue was housed.

The 'Second Prophet' was in charge of the agricultural estates and herds of livestock that belonged to the temples and provided for the upkeep of the gods and the temple staff. Many priests managed temple produce and property and carried out trade on behalf of the temple; others supervised the workshops and the education of young scribes. Egyptian priests were not necessarily deeply educated in religious teachings and did not minister to the pastoral needs of congregations of worshippers as modern clergy do. In fact, the temple was not a place for public worship at all. Ordinary Egyptians were allowed only into the outer courtyards of the temple on special days during the year.

Only the higher-ranking members of the priesthoods were full-time priests. The lower ranks, called *wab* priests, worked part-time, usually in rotating four-month shifts. Herodotus tells us that during their period of service, all priests had to be ritually pure. This meant that they had to keep their heads and bodies shaved, wash twice a day and twice a night, and wear only the finest linen robes. They also had to be circumcised and abstain from sexual intercourse during their service. There was no restriction on marriage for Egyptian priests, and celibacy outside priestly service was not required.

2.6a Check your learning

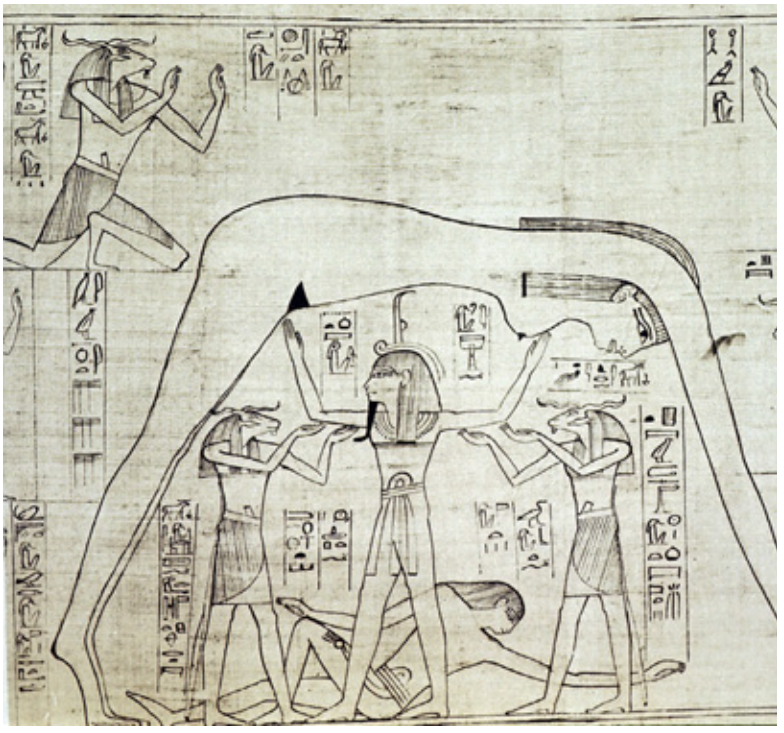
1 The following is a list of prominent New Kingdom Egypt gods and goddesses: Hathor, Isis, Osiris, Thoth, Sobek, Khons, Montu, Pakhet, Sekhmet, Ptah, Khnum, Min, Heket, Taweret, Anubis, Nekhbet, Wadjet, Mut, Neith, Selket, Nephthys, Seth. Research these gods and goddesses and use the information you find to complete a table like the one below. Hathor has been done for you. Include an image of the god in the Description column.

A useful starting point is the website 'Ancient Egypt: The Mythology and Egyptian Myths' (select 'the Gods').

NAME	DESCRIPTION	FUNCTION	LOCALITY
Hathor	Cow-headed goddess	Goddess of love, beauty, female sexuality, motherhood	Dendera

Myths and legends

Egyptian myths and legends give us an insight into the ancient Egyptians' understanding of the natural world and their place in it. They also explained the lives of the gods and their relationships with humans. The Egyptians told many different stories about the creation of the world. Each version of the creation story originated from a major locality and was associated with the local god. The best known of these is the one from Heliopolis, the centre of the



SOURCE 33 A scene illustrating part of the Heliopolitan creation myth from a Late New Kingdom papyrus

worship of the sun god Re. The Heliopolitan creation myth goes as follows:

In the beginning the waters of Nun covered the whole earth. Atum-Re was the first god. He created himself, on the primeval (first) mound that emerged from the waters. Atum-Re proceeded to create his own children. First he sneezed Shu, the air, then spat out Shu's sister, Tefnut, the moisture. Shu and Tefnut became the parents of Geb, the Earth god, and Nut, the sky goddess. Shu placed himself between Geb and Nut separating the earth from the sky. Nut lowered herself again at night and she and Geb became the parents of four children: Isis, goddess of motherhood; Osiris, god of vegetation and resurrection; Seth, god of the desert and of chaos; and Nephthys, the protector goddess. These nine gods formed the Heliopolitan Ennead. Horus was the child of the union between Osiris and his sister-wife Isis.

The myth of Osiris

The myth of Osiris involves many of the gods of the Ennead. It became an essential aspect of funerary belief and practice, including mummification, rebirth and continued existence in the afterlife. The main elements of the myth include:

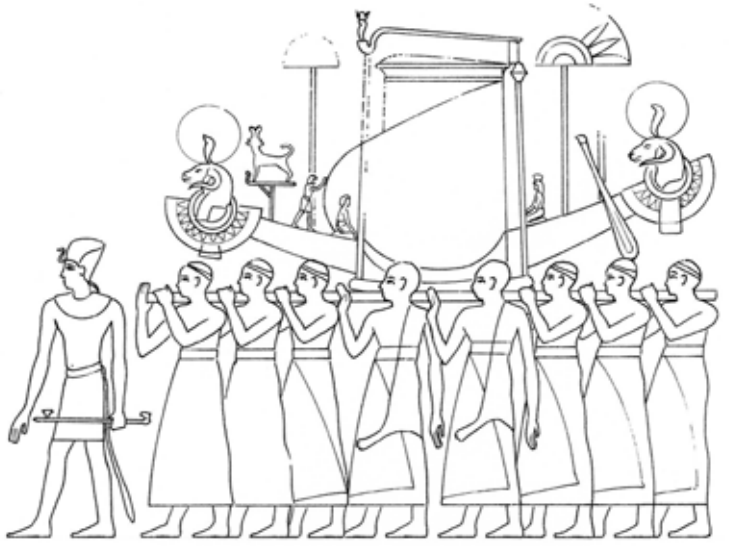
- deception of Osiris by Seth
- sealing of Osiris in a casket and Nile journey to Byblos
- rescue by Isis
- murder of Osiris by Seth
- dismemberment and scattering of his body parts
- rediscovery and reassembly of Osiris by Isis and Nephthys
- resurrection of Osiris; Isis conceives Horus and hides in a papyrus thicket awaiting his birth
- descent of Osiris to underworld and status as chief god of the afterlife.

2.6b Check your learning

1. Which members of the Ennead are depicted in Source 33?
2. Using the account of the Heliopolitan creation myth, construct a family tree of the Heliopolitan Ennead.
3. Read an account of the Osiris myth and construct a sequence chart of the major elements of the myth, using headings based on the bulleted list above. Add relevant details from your reading for each element.

2.7 Festivals

Religious festivals throughout the Egyptian calendar celebrated special events in the cults of different gods. Two of the better known annual festivals were associated with Amun-Re and the pharaoh: the *Opet* festival: and the Beautiful Feast of the Valley. Both were celebrated at Thebes from the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Another important festival linked to the concept of kingship was the *Heb-Sed*.



SOURCE 34 Priests carry the barque of Amun in a scene of the *Opet* festival from Luxor Temple.

The *Opet* festival

The major festival of the Theban calendar was the *Opet* festival, which revolved around the fertility of Amun-Re and the similar sexual potency of the pharaoh. The festival began in the second month of the flood season (*akhet*) and lasted up to four weeks. Scenes of *Opet* are featured on the colonnade of the Luxor Temple built by Amenhotep III.

The main event in this festival was a ritual procession in which the cult statue of Amun-Re, accompanied by the pharaoh, high priest and important officials, was transported in a royal barge from Karnak Temple to Luxor Temple, about two kilometres away. At Luxor Temple the king proceeded with the statue to the birth room, where a ritual – probably involving some form of sacred marriage or union of the god and his consort – was performed. This ritual confirmed the king's continued favour with the gods and ensured the stability and prosperity of the land for another year.

The *Opet* festival was an annual holiday and a time of great rejoicing for the people of Thebes. They would have thronged the processional routes to witness the spectacle in eager anticipation of their share of the lavish food and drink offered to the gods and later redistributed to the people.

The Beautiful Feast of the Valley

The Beautiful Feast of the Valley festival involved an annual procession in which the cult statues of the Theban holy family – Amun, Mut and Khons – were carried across the Nile to visit the mortuary temples of the deceased rulers on the western bank. This festival also provided an opportunity for families to visit the tombs of their loved ones and carry out various rituals associated with the dead. The festival began at Karnak Temple on the east bank and ended in the necropolis that contained the rock-cut tombs of the dead. Families brought food and drink offerings to place in the tombs of their relatives to ensure their continued existence in the afterlife. Festivities also included drinking and eating near the tombs in the company of deceased relatives. As with the *Opet* festival, this was a time of holiday and celebration.

The *Heb-Sed*

The *Heb-Sed* or Jubilee festival was an important festival of kingship which ensured that the pharaoh was still capable of performing his ritual role. During this ritual the king 'died' and was reborn, going through a second coronation. Some of the rites of this festival were celebrated twice, symbolising the pharaoh's rule over both Upper and Lower Egypt. These ceremonies symbolically regenerated the king's powers and renewed his relationship with the gods. This festival was usually held after 30 years of a pharaoh's reign and repeated periodically until his death. However, many pharaohs, who had shorter reigns, are known to have celebrated *Heb-Seds*.

The *Heb-Seds* of Amenhotep III

Amenhotep III, who reigned for 40 years, celebrated three *Heb-Seds*: in years 30, 34 and 37. Many pharaohs celebrated their *Heb-Sed*s with major building programs. The palace complex of Malkata in western Thebes was specially built by Amenhotep III for his first *Heb-Sed* in year 30. Source 35 is a scene from this first *Heb-Sed*. Amenhotep III is shown raising the *djed* pillar, a symbol of stability and strength – the *Djed* Pillar represents the backbone of Osiris. He is followed by Queen Tiye, who in turn is followed by 16 princesses shaking sistrums – musical instruments used in religious rituals.

SOURCE 35 A reconstructed scene from the *Heb-Sed* of Amenhotep III, as depicted in the tomb of his official Kheruef

2.7 Check your learning

1 Writing task: Explain the significance of festivals in New Kingdom Egypt.
To help you plan your response:
- identify the main festivals in the New Kingdom
- use these to structure your response
- provide details of each festival, making their significance clearly evident
- use specific evidence to support your answer.

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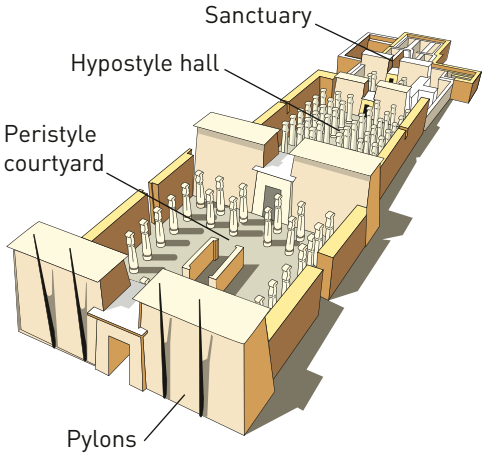
2.8 New Kingdom temples: Architecture and function

In the New Kingdom, temples were built as houses for the gods to dwell in rather than places of public worship in the modern sense. Two types of temples were common: cult temples for the gods and mortuary temples for the cults of the dead pharaohs.

The typical New Kingdom temple, such as the Temple of Karnak, was designed so that the floor rose gradually and the ceiling was lowered in height as one approached the sanctuary. The purpose of this was to emphasise the symbolic function of the temple as a **microcosm** of the universe. The entrance featured a pair of pylons often decorated with reliefs showing the king as a warrior pharaoh. One then proceeded through a peristyle courtyard to a hypostyle hall representing the papyrus swamp at the beginning of creation. This led to the sanctuary of Amun, 'the hidden one', symbolic of the primeval mound from which the universe had been created. The relief decoration on the outer walls featured events in the public life of the pharaoh, while the reliefs inside the temple dealt with his relationship with the gods.

microcosm
a place regarded as representing in miniature form the characteristics of something much larger



SOURCE 36 A typical New Kingdom temple (with roof removed to show the interior structure)

Apart from their obvious religious function, both kinds of temples played an important role in the economy of Egypt. Temples had their own officials, workers, lands, herds, trading ships, mining concessions and extensive storehouses where grain and other commodities were kept and distributed as wages and rations.

As well as storing resources from agriculture and trade, temples were also repositories for the booty and tribute gathered from the empire. The wealth that flowed into Egypt from the empire was used to finance the huge building programs of the pharaohs. This included the use of valuable building materials such as cedar, granite, diorite, semi-precious stones and alabaster for decoration and furnishings.

Cult temples

From the time of Hatshepsut, the cult temples of Karnak and Luxor on the east bank and the mortuary temples of the west bank, provided the setting for the great religious festivals of the period.

Karnak Temple

The temple of Karnak at Thebes is a huge complex of religious buildings covering over 100 hectares. Even today, it is the largest religious complex anywhere in the world. Karnak was where the major rituals of Amun's cult were conducted. The Egyptians called it *Ipet-isut* ('the most favoured of places').

New Kingdom pharaohs erected shrines, pylons, obelisks and other structures within the temple to express their devotion to Amun. They also sometimes demolished the structures of their predecessors and reused the material for their own building projects. Much of this building activity was financed from the revenue of successful foreign campaigns and imperial tribute. The temple also became the storehouse of plundered booty delivered to the god as thank-offerings for victories won in Amun's name.

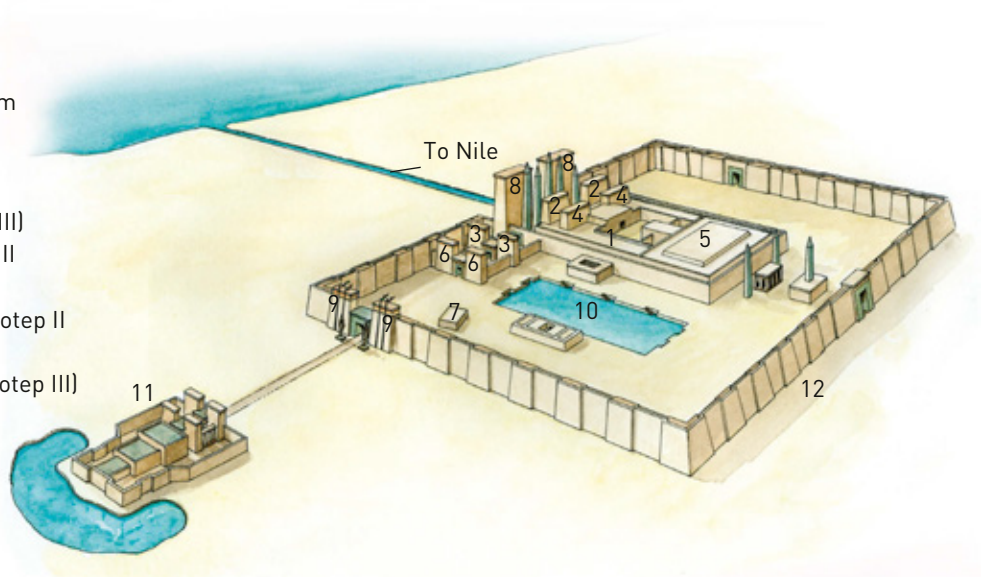
Karnak Temple contained three major sacred precincts dedicated to the gods Amun-Re, his consort Mut and a local warrior god named Montu. Smaller temples were dedicated to Ptah, Opet and Khons, the latter being the son of Amun-Re and Mut.

pylon
large processional gateway in a temple

The main temple, dedicated to Amun-Re, was built on two axes, each consisting of a succession of processional gateways called '**pylons**', and courtyards interspersed with obelisks, chapels, shrines, including barque shrines, statues, stelae and altars. At the heart of the temple stood the sanctuary containing a golden statue of the god – the focus of the daily offerings to Amun.

The oldest part of the temple built by Thutmose I is located in the centre. Later pharaohs extended the temple by adding pylons and other buildings in front of these structures so that each new pair of pylons created a new and even grander processional entrance to all that lay beyond. A large sacred lake, the focus of important daily rituals, was situated behind the sanctuary. By the end of the reign of Amenhotep III, the main entrance from the Nile River was through the third pylon (8 on the plan in Source 37). In later periods, other pharaohs erected structures in front of these buildings. For example, the Great Hypostyle Hall, for which Karnak is famous, was built by kings of the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Dynasties.

1 Remains of Middle Kingdom structures
2 Pylon 4 (Thutmose I)
3 Pylon 8 (Hatshepsut)
4 Pylons 5 and 6 (Thutmose III)
5 Festival Hall of Thutmose III
6 Pylon 7 (Thutmose III)
7 *Heb-Sed* Temple of Amenhotep II
8 Pylon 3 (Amenhotep III)
9 Pylon 10 (begun by Amenhotep III)
10 Sacred Lake
11 Temple of Mut
12 Temenos wall



SOURCE 37 An artist's reconstruction of the Karnak Temple complex at the end of the reign of Amenhotep III

Luxor Temple

The temple at Luxor is largely the work of Amenhotep III, the greatest builder-pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Built around earlier Middle Kingdom remains, the temple, like Karnak, was dedicated to Amun. It was the focus of the *Opet* festival and therefore played a special role in maintaining the king's relationship with Amun.

Unlike Karnak Temple, which was oriented on an east–west axis facing the Nile River, Luxor Temple was oriented on a north–south axis to align it with Karnak Temple and thus provide a grand setting for the annual procession of *Opet*, in which the statue of the god Amun journeyed from his shrine in Karnak to Luxor. It was Hatshepsut who began the processional way linking the two temples of Karnak and Luxor. Amenhotep III later added a row of ram-headed sphinxes on either side of the avenue.

The main features of Luxor Temple at the end of the reign of Amenhotep III can be seen in the plan in Source 38.

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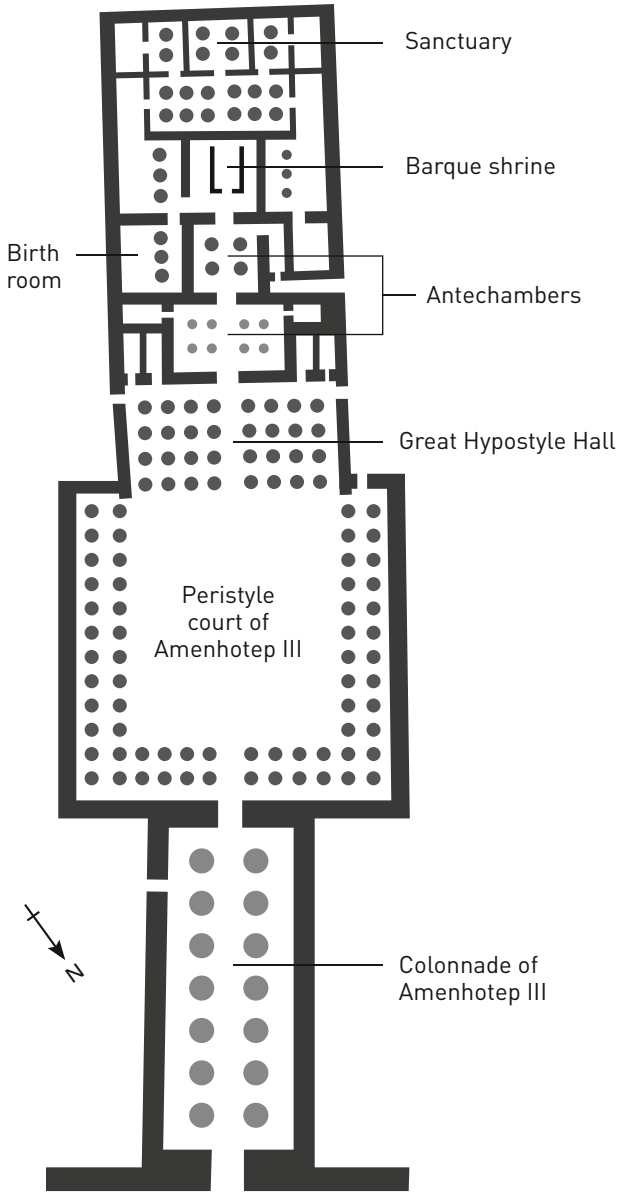

SOURCE 38 A plan of Luxor Temple

SOURCE 39 Main features of Luxor Temple

FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Colonnade	A 50-metre-long grand processional way with seven pairs of columns with large open papyrus capitals
Peristyle court	A large open-air courtyard surrounded by a double row of graceful columns with closed-bud papyrus capitals
Great Hypostyle Hall	Thirty-two bud columns grouped in four rows of eight On either side are chapels dedicated to Mut and Khons
Antechambers	Small pillared halls containing reliefs of Amenhotep making offerings to Amun
Birth room	A very important room decorated with scenes of the divine conception and birth of Amenhotep III and his presentation to the gods This room is believed to have been an important focus of the rituals involving the renewal of the king's reign during the *Opet* festival
Barque shrine	A small chamber used as a resting place for the sacred barque that carried the statues of the gods from temple to temple during the *Opet* festival
Sanctuary	The 'holy of holies' that contained the statue of the god Amun

Mortuary temples

The 'Houses of Millions of Years', as the mortuary temples of New Kingdom pharaohs were called, were located on the plain at the western edge of the Nile at the entrance to the Valley of the Kings. As well as a tomb in the valley, kings built elaborate temples for their afterlife cults. Each temple had a staff of mortuary priests, as well as land and other resources to provide for the daily offerings needed to sustain the king's *ka*. The architecture of these

SOURCE 40 These two colossal quartzite sandstone statues of Amenhotep III marked the entrance to his mortuary temple. They stand 18 metres high and weigh an estimated 720 tonnes each.

temples followed a similar pattern to the great state temples of Karnak and Luxor with pylons, colonnaded courtyards and hypostyle halls leading to the sanctuary at the innermost part of the temple. While Hatshepsut incorporated some traditional features in her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri, she also introduced some dramatic innovations, to produce a temple unlike any other of the time. (See 5.8 Building program.)

One of the most magnificent mortuary temples of the New Kingdom belonged to Amenhotep III; it was the largest temple of its kind ever built. All that has survived are two colossal statues (the Colossi of Memnon) of the king at the entrance (see Source 40). Source 41 is an extract from Amenhotep's building stela, describing features of the temple complex.

SOURCE 41

electrum
a naturally occurring alloy of gold and silver with some trace elements (e.g. copper)

… an eternal, everlasting fortress of fine white sandstone, wrought with gold throughout; its floor is adorned with silver, all its portals with **electrum**; it is made very wide and large, and established forever; and adorned with this very great monument. It is numerous in royal statues, of elephantine granite, of costly gritstone, of every splendid costly stone, established as everlasting works. Their stature shines more than the heavens, their rays are in the faces [of men] like the sun, when he shines early in the morning …

Its storehouse is filled with male and female slaves, with the children of the princes of all the countries of the captivity of his majesty. Its storehouses contain all good things, whose number is not known. It is surrounded with settlements of Syrians, colonised with children of princes, its cattle are like the sand of the shore, they make up millions.

J. H. Breasted (ed. and trans.), *Ancient Records of Egypt, Vol. 2: The Eighteenth Dynasty*, Histories and Mysteries of Man, London, 1988

2.8 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 36–38

1 List the main architectural features of New Kingdom temples.

Source 39

2 Why did Amenhotep III include a birth room in his temple at Luxor?

3 How was the Luxor Temple used in the rituals associated with the *Opet* festival?

Source 41

4 What resources were used in the construction of Amenhotep III's mortuary temple?

5 What evidence of Egypt's empire building can be found in this source?

6 What does Source 41 reveal about the role and importance of mortuary temples?

2.8 Check your learning

1 Explain the symbolic features of New Kingdom temples.

2 Explain the different functions of a cult temple and a mortuary temple.

3 Writing task: Explain the significance of temples in the New Kingdom.

To help you plan your response:

- identify the main roles of New Kingdom temples (cult and mortuary)
- use these to structure your response
- provide details of the roles of each type of temple, giving specific examples
- make the significance of these temples clearly evident.

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2.9

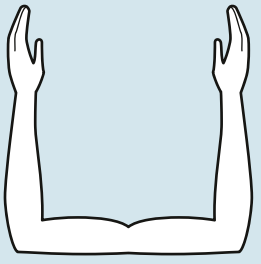
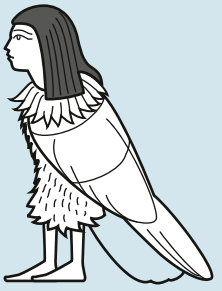
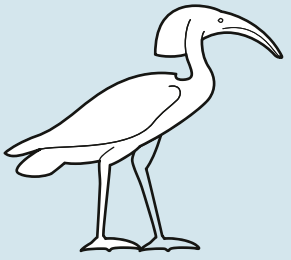
Funerary customs

Belief in an afterlife was central to all Egyptian funerary practices for both royals and non-royals during the New Kingdom. The nature and quality of the provisions for the afterlife depended on the ability to pay – and was therefore determined by one's social class. During the Old Kingdom, the afterlife was a royal privilege only, but in the New Kingdom the afterlife became available to all who could afford it. This has been referred to as the 'democratisation' of the afterlife. The most elaborate preparations were made by royalty and the nobility. However, members of all levels of New Kingdom society wanted to have a 'house of eternity' in which they could make 'a goodly burial'. These preparations guaranteed a resting place for their spirit for all time and a place for their mortuary cult to be maintained by their relatives.

Afterlife concepts

Ancient Egyptians believed that people had several parts to their personalities. The ones that relate to the afterlife are the *ka*, the *ba* and the *akh*.

SOURCE 42 Egyptian afterlife concepts

EGYPTIAN SYMBOL	CONCEPT	MEANING
	*ka*	An individual's creative life force, a 'double' that caused the body to live. At death, the deceased's *ka* continued to live, but it needed to return to the body to ensure its survival. This was why mummification was so important. Like the body in life, the *ka*, in death, required food and drink for its sustenance.
	*ba*	An individual's personality also included the *ba*, or spirit force or power. Unlike the *ka*, which was restricted to the tomb, the *ba* was free to roam far away during the daytime, returning at night to dwell in the mummy.
	*akh*	The fully resurrected form of the deceased in the afterlife. The *akh* is close to our idea of a 'spirit' or a 'ghost'. Egyptians believed that the *akh* could have an influence – either positive or negative – beyond the tomb.

Osirian burial

Osiris' status as the god of resurrection rose significantly with the democratisation of religion. By the New Kingdom, not only the pharaoh became identified with Osiris on his death but his subjects did as well. This had important implications for funerary practice. The key elements of an Osirian burial that ensured resurrection and eternal life included:

- mummification – based on the belief that preservation of the body and its resemblance to Osiris was necessary for survival in the afterlife
- correct funerary equipment, including a tomb, a canopic chest or shrine and funerary goods, such as shabtis
- a funeral with the appropriate ritual – including the Opening of the Mouth ceremony.

2.9 Profile

Mummification

Over a long period of time, the Egyptians perfected the art of mummification. Removal of the internal organs or viscera, and desiccation or drying with natron had been standard practice since Old Kingdom times. The preserved viscera were wrapped and placed in canopic jars and placed in the tomb, often in a canopic chest. Preservation of the entire body (including its internal organs) was necessary for the afterlife. A New Kingdom innovation, which considerably improved preservation, was the removal of the brain.

Although no contemporary Egyptian account of the process of mummification survives, we have some knowledge from written evidence from the classical authors Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, some wall scenes from tombs and the mummies themselves.

The mummification process was accompanied by religious rituals, including the recitation of prayers. Embalming priests representing Anubis, the god of mummification, carried out these rituals.

SOURCE 43

HERODOTUS ON MUMMIFICATION

The mode of embalming, according to the most perfect process, is the following: They take first a crooked piece of iron, and with it draw out the brain through the nostrils, thus getting rid of a portion, while the skull is cleared of the rest by rinsing with drugs; next they make a cut along the flank with a sharp Ethiopian stone, and take out the whole contents of the abdomen, which they then cleanse, washing it thoroughly with palm wine, and again frequently with an infusion of pounded aromatics. After this they fill the cavity with the purest bruised myrrh, with cassia, and every other sort of spice except **frankincense**, and sew up the opening. Then the body is placed in natrum [natron] for seventy days, and covered entirely over. After the expiration of that space of time, which must not be exceeded, the body is washed, and wrapped round, from head to foot, with bandages of fine linen cloth, smeared over with gum, which is used generally by the Egyptians in the place of glue, and in this state it is given back to the relations, who enclose it in a wooden case which they have had made for the purpose, shaped into the figure of a man. Then fastening the case, they place it in a sepulchral chamber, upright against the wall. Such is the most costly way of embalming the dead.

frankincense an aromatic gum resin from certain trees, used chiefly for burning incense in religious rituals

If persons wish to avoid expense, and choose the second process, the following is the method pursued: Syringes are filled with oil made from the cedar-tree, which is then, without any incision or disembowelling, injected into the abdomen. The passage by which it might be likely to return is stopped, and the body laid in natrum the prescribed number of days. At the end of the time the cedar-oil is allowed to make its escape; and such is its power that it brings with it the whole stomach and intestines in a liquid state. The natrum meanwhile has dissolved the flesh, and so nothing is left of the dead body but the skin and the bones. It is returned in this condition to the relatives, without any further trouble being bestowed upon it.

The third method of embalming, which is practised in the case of the poorer classes, is to clear out the intestines with a purge, and let the body lie in natrum the seventy days, after which it is at once given to those who come to fetch it away.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, 2.86–88 (trans. G. Rawlinson, Everyman's Library, London, 1910)

SOURCE 44 A mummification scene from a New Kingdom tomb showing a priest dressed as the god Anubis, performing the mummification ritual

2.9 Profile tasks

1. What evidence is there in Herodotus' account that a person's wealth and status influenced the quality of mummification available to them?
2. Why was the most expensive method the best means of ensuring the preservation of the body?
3. Use Source 43 to construct a sequence chart of the main steps in the mummification process.
4. What part of the mummification process is depicted in Source 44?
5. Research the mummification process and find out about the following:
   - Why were internal organs removed in the mummification process?
   - Which internal organs (viscera) were removed and how were they treated?
   - Which gods protected the various organs?
   - Why was it important to preserve the viscera?
6. What other information about the mummification process is provided by Diodorus Siculus? Search online for 'Diodorus and mummification in Egypt'.
7. Considering that both Herodotus and Diodorus were writing hundreds of years after the New Kingdom period, what questions do we need to ask about the value of these sources for a historian investigating New Kingdom practices?

Funerary texts

Our knowledge of the Egyptian afterlife comes mostly from the funerary texts of the New Kingdom. These texts reveal that the afterlife for both king and commoner was a place full of dangers that had to be overcome, mostly by magic. The text that described the afterlife journey of the king was called the *Amduat* ('What is in the Netherworld'). The text that gave details of the afterlife of commoners was called the *Book of the Dead* (the 'Chapters of Coming Forth by Day').

The king's afterlife: The *Amduat*

The goal of the king's journey was to join the gods and become one with them. His afterlife involved both Solar and Osirian beliefs in which the king became both Re and Osiris. In the Solar belief, the king's journey from death to rebirth paralleled the nightly journey of the sun, which was born again each day. This belief is strongly represented in the *Amduat*. Here the deceased king assisted the barque of the sun to navigate the *duat*, or underworld, during the 12 hours of the night. The barque could be caught in the reeds and sandbanks, and the justified dead were needed to help push it free. More dangerous, though, were the forces of evil, which could attack the barque in an attempt to prevent the sun's reappearance. Prominent in the crew were Horus and Seth, but the dead pharaoh was also a crew member. Finally, the king would be reborn as Re in his morning form of the scarab beetle (*Kheper*). *Amduat* scenes depicting this nightly journey adorned the walls of royal tombs only.

In the Osirian belief, the dead king became one with Osiris, the chief deity of the Underworld. The Osirian elements of burial included the mummification process itself, the mummiform coffins, the funeral mask, the shabtis and the canopic equipment. Although the Solar and Osirian beliefs, indicating the pharaoh's rebirth as two gods, might appear contradictory to us, it is important to understand that Egyptian religion accepted many conflicting concepts.

SOURCE 45 Chapter 125, the 'Judgement of the Dead' from the *Book of the Dead*, shows the 'Weighing of the Heart.'

The afterlife of commoners: The *Book of the Dead*

For ordinary Egyptians, the main goal of the afterlife was to pass the important 'Judgement of the Dead', which involved the 'Weighing of the Heart'. Once this test was passed, the deceased was declared *ma'at kheru* or 'true of voice'. He was then admitted to the realm of Osiris, called the 'Fields of Yaru', or the 'Fields of Reeds', an Egyptian version of paradise. Vignettes from Chapter 110 of the *Book of the Dead* show the crops of emmer, barley and flax being harvested, trees laden with fruit, and grain stacked in heaps. The cultivation of this paradise was the responsibility of the deceased.

2.9a Check your learning

1 The following are all components of the 'Judgement of the Dead' scene depicted in Source 45. Read an account of the 'Weighing of the Heart'. Make a copy of the scene and label it with the following:

- 'Hall of Two Truths'
- Ammit the 'Devourer'
- the heart of the deceased
- the scales
- the feather of *ma'at*
- Anubis, Thoth
- Isis, Nephthys, Selket, Neith
- 42 assessor gods
- the deceased and his wife
- the *ba*.

2 Writing task: What do the *Amduat* and the *Book of the Dead* reveal about New Kingdom afterlife beliefs?

To help you plan your response:

- Explain the main difference between what the *Amduat* and the *Book of the Dead* reveal, for example evidence of social class distinction (royal and non-royal beliefs).
- Identify in more detail the main elements of the *Amduat* and explain what they reveal about the afterlife beliefs of New Kingdom pharaohs. Support your explanation with specific evidence.
- Repeat this process for the *Book of the Dead*.

Equipping the tomb for the afterlife

The tomb was known as 'the house of the *ka*' and needed to be equipped with provisions for the *ka*'s use in the afterlife. The most important of these were food and drink and other necessities of daily life such as clothing, jewellery, precious ointments and other personal belongings. Shabti figures, small figurines made of faience, wood or stone were also placed in the tomb; they were servants of the dead and could carry out agricultural work in Osiris' fields in the place of their masters. Shabtis were usually equipped with implements for such work; for example, picks, hoes and **adzes** that were inscribed with magic spells.

adze
a tool similar to an axe, with an arched blade at right angles to the handle

The funeral

The funeral usually began with a procession of mourners who accompanied the mummy on its journey across the Nile to 'the beautiful west'. On arrival at the west bank, the mummy, lying in a boat-shaped bier, was dragged to the tomb by oxen. A priest walked in front of the bier, sprinkling milk and burning incense, while the kites or *dryt*, two female mourners representing Isis and Nephthys, the widow and sister of Osiris, attended the mummy, wailing and beating their breasts.

Behind the bier came a sled bearing the canopic chest containing the viscera of the deceased. The rest of the procession followed carrying food and drink for the funeral banquet. Other mourners carried the possessions of the deceased to be placed in the tomb. There were also *muu* dancers wearing distinctive tall, white headdresses and the lector priest, who read the beatification prayers, which would ensure that the deceased became an *akh*, or justified spirit.

'Opening of the Mouth' ceremony

The most important ritual that guaranteed the deceased's entry into the afterlife was the 'Opening of the Mouth' ceremony. This was performed on the mummy at the entrance to the tomb. The *sem*-priest, wearing the panther skin, used a variety of ritual implements, including the adze, to touch the eyes, ears and mouth of the mummy. This magically restored all its faculties and bodily functions for use in the afterlife. The mummy was then placed in its nest of coffins, surrounded by grave goods and food offerings. The final step in the process was to seal the tomb.

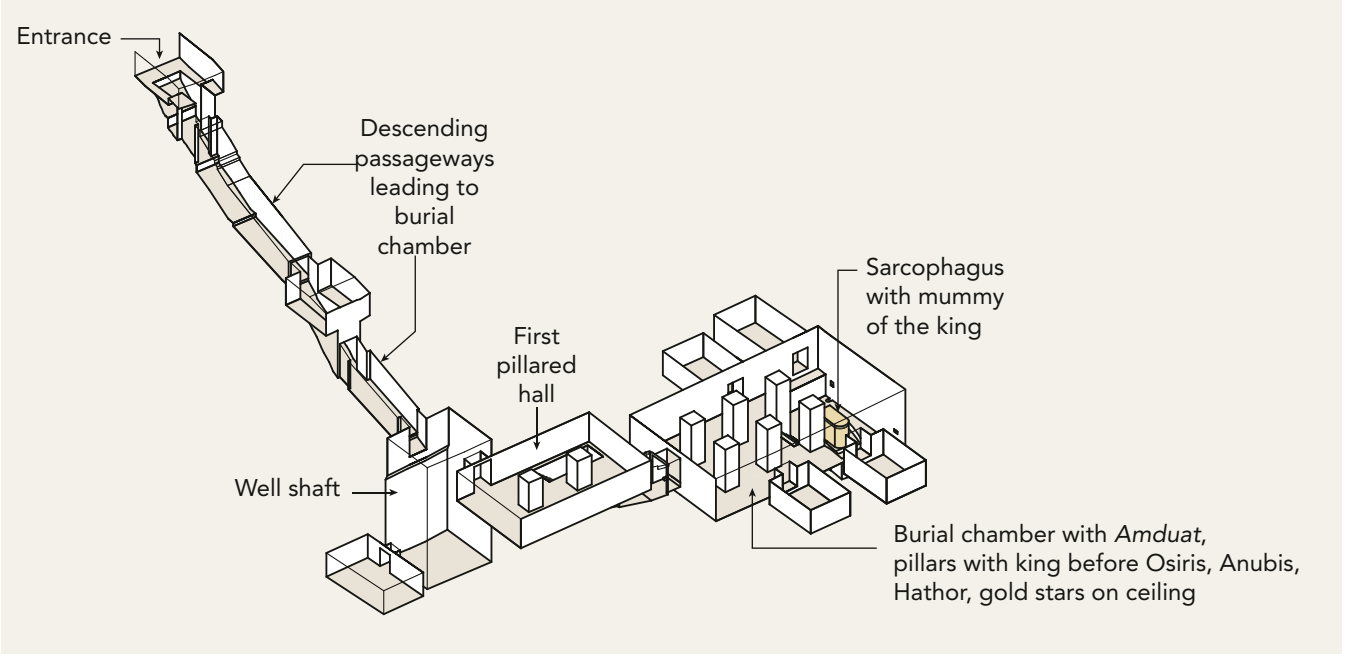
Tombs

Egyptians made elaborate preparations for their afterlife, the most important of which was the tomb itself, 'the house of the *ka*'. In the Eighteenth Dynasty, the main cemetery at Thebes was on the west bank of the Nile. Pharaohs and some other members of the royal family were buried in the royal necropolis known as the Valley of the Kings. Commoners were buried in the surrounding hillsides.

Royal tombs

The tombs of New Kingdom pharaohs were rock-cut tombs hollowed out of the limestone cliffs. The Eighteenth Dynasty royal tombs, for example the tomb of Amenhotep II, had a curved or bent axis. The main architectural elements included:

- a series of passageways and staircases leading down to a burial chamber
- a well shaft, to deter robbers or to carry away flood waters
- pillared halls
- side chambers leading off some passageways for the storage of grave goods
- a burial chamber containing the mummy of the king in its sarcophagus.



SOURCE 46 A plan of the tomb of Amenhotep II

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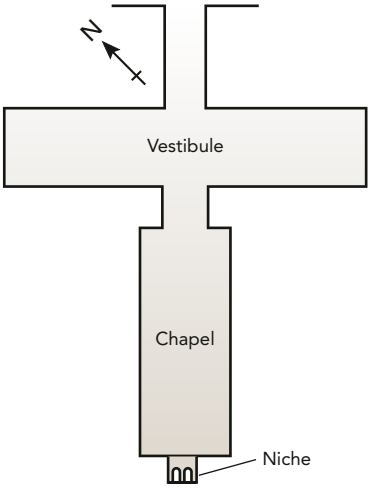
Decorative features such as the funerary texts, including the *Amduat*, were painted on the tomb walls. Depictions of the king in the company of the gods were also popular.

Non-royal tombs

The tombs of non-royal people, for example government officials, were also rock-cut. However, they had different structural features and were on a much smaller scale than royal tombs. A typical non-royal tomb was a T-shaped structure consisting of an entrance courtyard that led into a vestibule. A short corridor connected the vestibule with the chapel, which usually had a small niche in the rear wall for a statue of the deceased. A shaft descended from inside (or sometimes outside) the chapel to the burial chamber below. An example of such a tomb of the Eighteenth Dynasty is that of Menna (TT69, or Theban Tomb No. 69), who was a 'Scribe of the Fields of the Lord of the Two Lands of Upper and Lower Egypt', as well as field overseer of Amun during the reigns of Amenhotep II and Thutmose IV.

Wall paintings depicted daily life occupations and activities, including scenes of agriculture and craftsmen at work. The decorative program of these tombs also commonly featured the funeral and various scenes of a symbolic nature, including banquets, fishing and fowling and hunting in the desert.



SOURCE 47 A plan of the tomb of Menna, an Eighteenth Dynasty official

SOURCE 48 A scene from the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Menna. Scribes with their styluses and palettes are shown measuring and recording the harvest in preparation for tax assessment.

2.9b Check your learning

1 Compare the tombs of royalty and non-royalty by investigating the architectural and decorative features of at least one other royal and one non-royal Eighteenth Dynasty tomb. Record your findings in a table like the one below.

- Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs: Ahmose; Amenhotep I, II, III; Thutmose I, II, III, IV; Hatshepsut
- Eighteenth Dynasty non-royals: Most noblemen are identified by the pharaoh they served. Some well-known ones from this period include Sennefer (mayor of Thebes), Rekhmire, Kheruef, Nakht and Khaemhat.

FEATURE	ROYAL TOMB (NAME OF PHARAOH)	NON-ROYAL TOMB (NAME, TITLES, OCCUPATION, PHARAOH SERVED)
Brief details of tomb owner		
Tomb shape/structure		
Other architectural features		
Funerary texts		
Subjects of wall paintings		

2 Writing task: Using the sources in this section, explain the funerary beliefs and practices of New Kingdom non-royal Egyptians.

To help you plan your response:

- identify a range of relevant features of funerary beliefs and practices
- use these to help structure your response
- indicate the main characteristics of each feature
- indicate clearly the relationship between the beliefs and the practices
- make specific reference to the sources provided to support your explanation.

SOURCE 49 The Valley of the Kings contains 63 known tombs and was used as a necropolis for almost 500 years.

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2.10 Cultural life

New Kingdom Egypt was an age of rapid development in the visual arts. Much of this was the result of contacts with foreign lands through conquest and trade. This gave Egypt access to an abundance of precious materials and new ideas, as well as a market for the luxury goods that her artisans produced. By the time of Amenhotep III, Egypt was experiencing a 'golden age'. Egyptian artists and craftsmen created artefacts ranging from tiny amulets to colossal sculptures. This text has already mentioned the range of natural resources available to the Egyptian artisans. In addition to natural materials, artists also worked with ceramics such as faience and glass.

SOURCE 50 Two Eighteenth Dynasty glass perfume flasks and an eye paint container. They were decorated by impressing different coloured glass rods against the preheated vessel.

Sculpture

New Kingdom sculpture developed from the severe forms of the Old and Middle Kingdoms. In the new style that emerged, statues of pharaohs and nobles were rendered with grace and sensitivity. This style first appeared in the reigns of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III (see Source 12) and reached its maturity during the reign of Amenhotep III. In statuary this was an age when big was beautiful. Consider, for example, the spectacular pair of quartzite sandstone statues of Amenhotep III (see Source 40) at the entrance to his mortuary temple.

New Kingdom sculpture was functional rather than decorative. Statues were mainly placed in temples, where their purpose was to receive offerings, and in tombs, where they provided a dwelling place for the *ka* of the deceased. New types of statuary that were introduced in this period included **stelophorous** and **naophorous** forms. In the stelophorous form, the image, usually a male, is combined with a stela that is inscribed with a hymn to the sun god. Such statues were often placed over the entrance of Theban nobles' tombs. In the naophorous form, the image (always male, but often in the form of a block statue) is combined with a shrine or naos. Notable examples of these kinds are the statues of Senenmut, Steward of Queen Hatshepsut and tutor of her daughter, who is frequently shown with him.

stelophorous statue
a statue type where the figure holds a stela or inscribed stone slab

naophorous statue
a block statue image of a male figure combined with a shrine

To create a three-dimensional statue, artists started with a block of stone on which guidelines were drawn on each side. The sculptors chiselled along the guidelines until the figure began to emerge. Rarely was the figure freed completely from the stone block. The Egyptians did not carve out the spaces between the arms and torso or between the legs. The lower part of seated figures usually remained attached to the seat, supported at the back by a vertical slab. A practical advantage of this was that the statues were less prone to breakage. Aesthetically, it gave them their distinctive Egyptian poise and character.

Wall painting

New Kingdom wall painting found in royal and non-royal tombs was also essentially functional, designed to serve the tomb owner in the afterlife. The Theban tombs of noblemen contain a rich variety of scenes of work and daily life (see Sources 22, 48 and 52). There are also detailed scenes of craftsmen at work fashioning a dazzling array of luxury items from sculptures to finely wrought jewellery (see Source 20). Funerary ritual scenes include the funeral procession and the 'Opening of the Mouth' ceremony. One of the most popular themes in Theban tombs shows the deceased hunting – either fowling and fishing in the papyrus marshes or chasing game in the desert. Many of these scenes had an important symbolic function in the afterlife of the deceased (see Source 52). New Kingdom draftsmen and artists followed well-established artistic conventions. These are outlined in Source 51.

SOURCE 51 The artistic features and conventions of New Kingdom wall painting

FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Balance and symmetry	• Balanced forms and compositions • Clear outlines • Simplified shapes • Scenes with figures were arranged in horizontal rows called registers; which were used to create order and clarity
Proportion	• Achieved by use of horizontal and vertical guidelines on the surface of the wall • Proportions of the human figure were related to the width of the palm of the hand – 18 palms constituted the traditional canon for wall painting • Guidelines also helped to arrange rows and groups of figures in a unified manner The unmistakeable order and uniformity characteristic of Egyptian wall paintings were achieved by the use of such measured proportions and relationships
Perspectives	To draw on a two-dimensional surface, artists used different points of view: • Shoulders are seen from the front; this is called **frontality** • Torso and hips are presented in three-quarter view, showing head, arms and legs in profile • An almond-shaped eye is drawn as if looking directly at the viewer • Depth of field is indicated by overlapping of figures or placement above figures in foreground • Flat features, such as pools or water, are painted from above so that birds and fish within can be clearly seen
Scale	• Size is an important indication of status • The tomb owner is usually the largest figure, to emphasise his status • Wives, family members, servants, natural and architectural details are usually shown in smaller scale • Men posed with the left foot forward; women with their feet together
Naturalism	• Flora and fauna were keenly observed – some species of animals can be identified today • Muscle definition and bone structure indicate that artists had a good understanding of human anatomy

frontality
the depiction of the front view of figures or objects in a work of art

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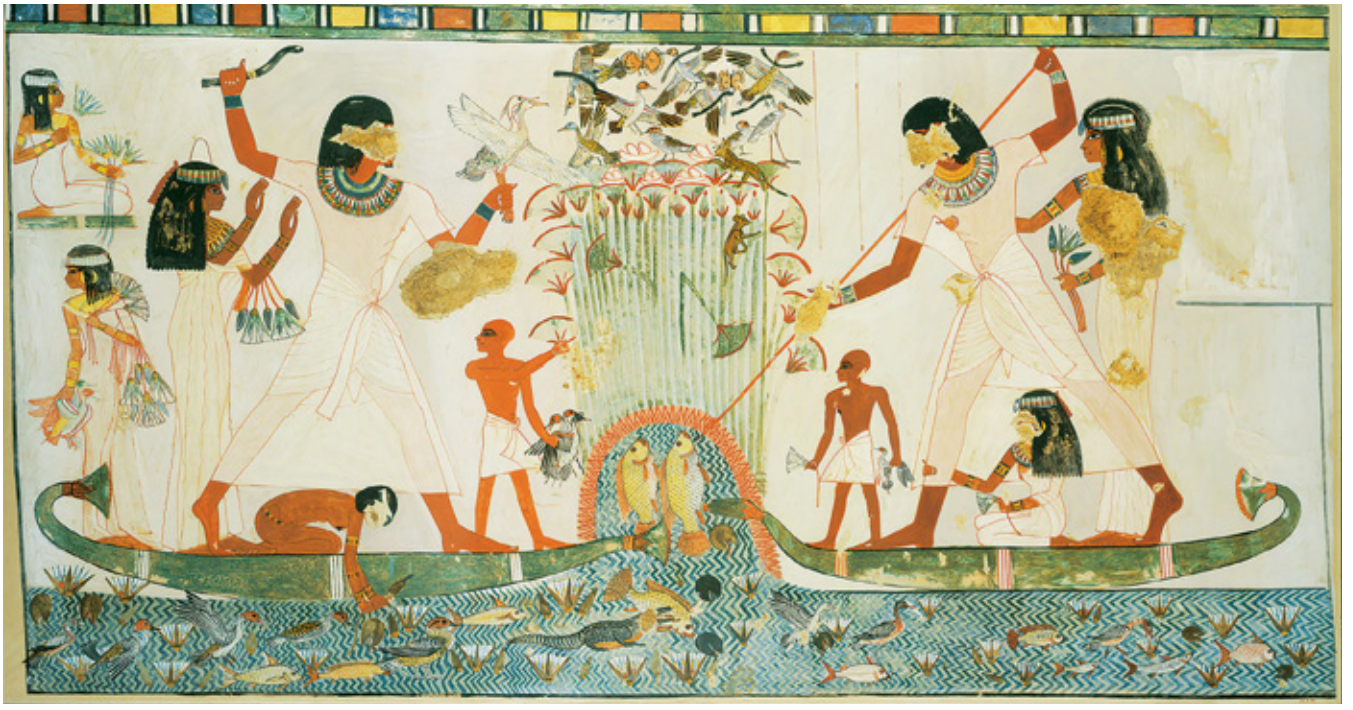
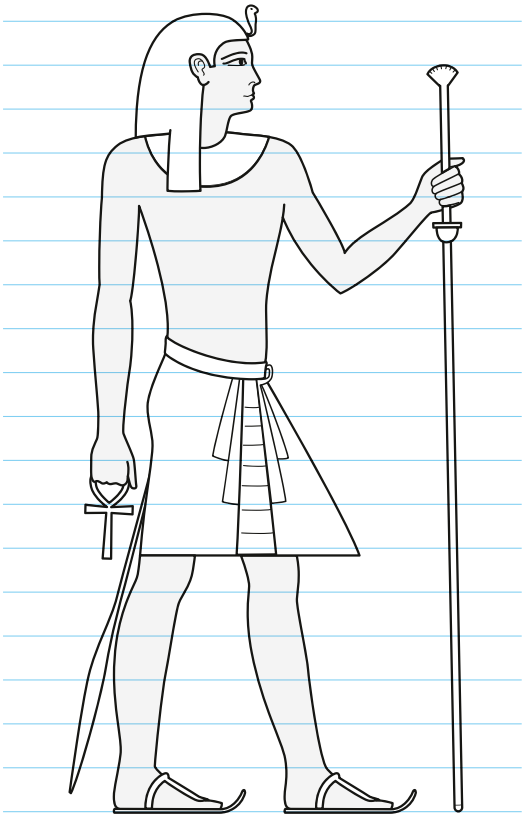


SOURCE 52 A scene from the tomb of Menna, depicting the popular theme of fishing and fowling in the marshes

Jewellery

Ancient Egyptians of both sexes wore jewellery in a variety of styles and colours. The most common items of jewellery were necklaces such as pectorals and collars, bracelets, rings, earrings and amulets. Amulets were charms believed to contain magical, protective qualities. Some amulets depicted body parts (e.g. the heart amulet), animals and sacred objects. Others portrayed popular household deities, such as Bes and Taweret. Some of the best known New Kingdom amulets were based on abstract hieroglyphic concepts such as the *ankh* (life), *djed* pillar (stability), *tyet* (knot of Isis), *was* sceptre and *wedjet* eye.

The most popular metal for jewellery was gold; silver was more expensive and less common since it had to be imported. Precious and semi-precious stones used in jewellery included carnelian, turquoise, agate, garnet and lapis lazuli. Cheaper, mass-produced imitations of these included glass and faience.



SOURCE 53 The traditional canon of 18 hands per figure can be clearly seen in this diagram – also shown are the elements of frontality and profile

2.10 Understanding and using the sources

Source 52

1 Identify the various artistic techniques used by New Kingdom artists in this tomb painting.

2.10 Check your learning

1 Find an example of a New Kingdom statue. Make notes about it using these headings: Identity, Type, Location, Purpose, Artistic features.

2 Find examples of stelophorous and naophorous statues and identify their distinctive features.

3 Find other examples of wall paintings found in New Kingdom tombs. Identify the artistic conventions mentioned in Source 51.

4 Find examples of the various items of jewellery and amulets mentioned in the text.

5 Writing task: Outline the main features of New Kingdom wall painting.

To help you plan your response:

- identify the main features of New Kingdom wall painting
- use these to help structure your response
- indicate the main elements of each feature.

6 Writing task: Explain what the sources in this chapter and others you have found reveal about artistic developments in the New Kingdom.

To help you plan your response:

- identify the relevant categories of New Kingdom art
- use these to structure your response
- show how the sources reveal features of New Kingdom art
- use specific evidence to support your explanation.

SOURCE 54 This stone heart scarab belonged to Hatnofer, the mother of Senenmut, an important official of Hatshepshut's reign.

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2.11 Writing and literature

The Egyptian hieroglyphic symbol (pronounced 'sesh') is the sign for the word 'scribe' (it also stood for the verb 'to write' and the noun 'writer'). In Source 55, the three parts of the symbol are a brush (left), a small water pot (centre) and a holder for two ink blocks – one red, one black (right). The curve between the water pot and the ink blocks indicates that the scribe carried his tools over his shoulder

SOURCE 55 The hieroglyphic symbol shown above, (pronounced 'sesh'), represented the words 'scribe', 'write' and 'writer'.

The scripts used during the New Kingdom period were:

- *hieroglyphs* – used for monumental and ornamental inscriptions, especially in temples and funerary buildings; a highly decorative script that required great skill in execution
- *hieratic script* – used in administrative and literary texts and for everyday purposes such as letters, commercial transactions and legal documents; it was even more simplified than the cursive hieroglyphic script and could therefore be written more quickly.

New Kingdom literary genres

New Kingdom literature provides valuable information about cultural life and reflects the important developments of the period. The major literary genres of the period include the following:

- royal inscriptions (e.g. *Annals* of Thutmose III)
- tomb biographies (e.g. Ahmose, son of Ebana)
- religious texts, such as prayers and hymns (e.g. offering prayer to Amun)
- funerary texts (e.g. the *Book of the Dead* and the *Amduat*)
- love poetry (e.g. poems from Papyrus Chester Beatty I)
- scribal texts (e.g. 'Be a Scribe' from Papyrus Lansing)
- wisdom literature (e.g. the *Instruction of Ani*).

Royal inscriptions, tomb biographies, and religious and funerary texts have been examined in this and other chapters of this book. See Chapters 5 and 9 for examples of these (check the index for page references).

Love poetry

The genre of love poetry appears to have originated in the New Kingdom. Some scholars have suggested that its appearance at this time may be attributed to the more cosmopolitan atmosphere of the New Kingdom, when Egypt was exposed to new peoples and exotic ideas from abroad.

ostraca (s. ostracon) broken pieces of pottery with drawings or writing on them

Love poems were written in hieratic script on papyri and **ostraca**. Some of the collections of poems are called 'songs', which suggests that they were intended to be recited, perhaps to the musical accompaniment of harps. Songs would have been performed as part of the entertainment at banquets hosted by members of the nobility. Many such scenes feature in the tomb paintings of New Kingdom officials.

The poems are monologues written in the first person by a young man or woman and are addressed to the speaker's own heart. Each poem contains several stanzas, which often alternate between the male and the female speaker. The young lovers refer to each other as 'brother' and

'sister', common terms of affection. The poems deal with the theme of longing for the loved one, or they offer a catalogue of the lover's physical charms. They are written in a style that has both simplicity and elegance. Some poems are joyful recollections of moments – sometimes forbidden ones – spent in each other's company. The example in Source 56 is from the Papyrus Chester Beatty collection.

SOURCE 56

BE STILL MY HEART!

Be still my heart!
My heart flutters hastily,
When I think of my love for you;
It lets me not act sensibly,
It leaps from its place.
It lets me not put on a dress,
Nor wrap my scarf around me;
I put no paint upon my eyes,
I'm not even anointed.
'Don't wait, go there', says it to me,
As often as I think of him;
Why do you play the fool?
Sit still, the brother comes to you,
And many eyes as well!
Let not the people say of me:
'A woman fallen through love!'
Be steady when you think of him,
My heart, do not flutter!

In M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Vol. II: The New Kingdom*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1976, pp. 182–3

Scribal texts

Only a small elite was able to read and write in New Kingdom Egypt. Because writing was essential to Egyptian administration and economic organisation, all officials began their career with a scribal education. Young male scribal apprentices were taught to read and write in schools attached to various departments of the administration, such as the 'House of Life' in a temple, or, if they were very privileged, at the royal court itself. Their scribal education consisted of copying out written exercises and learning long passages by heart.

Source 57 is an example of a scribal text in which a teacher offers advice to a young scribe.

SOURCE 57

BE A SCRIBE

The scribe of the army and commander of the cattle of house of Amun, Nebmare-nakht, speaks to the scribe Wenemdiamum, as follows: Set your sight on being a scribe; a fine profession that suits you. You call for one; a thousand answer you. You stride freely on the road. You will not be like a hired ox. You are in front of others.

I spend the day instructing you. You do not listen! Your heart is like an [empty] room. My teachings are not in it. Take their [meaning] to yourself! … You follow the path of pleasure; you make friends with revellers. You have made your home in the brewery, as one who thirsts for beer … You hold the writings in contempt. You visit the whore. Do not do these things! What are they for? They are of no use. Take note of it!

Furthermore. Look I instruct you to make you sound; to make you hold the palette freely. To make you become one whom the king trusts; to make you gain entrance to the treasury and the granary. To make you receive the ship-load at the gate of the granary. To make you issue the offerings on feast days. You are dressed in fine clothes; you own horses. Your boat is on the river; you are supplied with attendants. You stride about inspecting. A mansion is built in your town. You have a powerful office, given you by the king. Male and female slaves are about you. Those who are in the fields grasp your hand, on plots that you have made. Look, I make you into a staff of life! Put the writings in your heart, and you will be protected from all kinds of toil. You will become a worthy official.

In M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Vol. II: The New Kingdom*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1976, p. 171

Wisdom literature

The main purpose of wisdom or 'instruction literature' was to teach moral values and a code of conduct for living a happy, prosperous and ethical life. These texts emphasised the development of qualities such as humility, patience and trust in the gods, rather than worldly success and material wealth. One wisdom text dating to this period is the *Instruction of Ani*. Ani was a scribe in the palace of Queen Ahmose-Nefertari, wife of King Ahmose, founder of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Although this text is preserved in a papyrus from a much later dynasty, it is believed to have been written in the Eighteenth Dynasty. Source 58 is an extract from the long *Instruction of Ani*, in which he gives advice in the standard form of a father to his son.

SOURCE 58

THE INSTRUCTION OF ANI

Take a wife while you're young.
That she make a son for you;
She should bear for you while you're youthful,
It is proper to make people.
Happy the man whose people are many,
He is saluted on account of his progeny.
Observe the feast of your god,
And repeat its season,
God is angry if it is neglected …
…
Don't indulge in drinking beer,
Lest you utter evil speech …
Do not control your wife in her house,
When you know she is efficient:
Don't say to her: 'Where is it? Get it!'
When she has put it in the right place …

In M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Vol. II: The New Kingdom*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1976, pp. 136–43

2.11 Understanding and using the sources

Source 56

1 What features of love are expressed in this poem?
2 What typical New Kingdom Egyptian images or allusions are used?
3 To what extent does this poem reflect the 'simplicity and elegance' that characterise this literary genre?

Source 57

4 What administrative offices does Nebmare-nakht hold?
5 List the advantages of being a scribe that Nebmare-nakht points out to Wenemdiamum.
6 What evidence suggests that Wenemdiamum is a reluctant student?
7 Explain the significance of gaining entrance to the treasury and the granary.

Source 58

8 List the main instructions of this text. What do they reveal about Egyptian ethical values in the New Kingdom?
9 What examples of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour are indicated in these instructions?
10 What values, attitudes and behaviours referred to in the *Instruction of Ani* are still relevant today?

2.11 Check your learning

1 Read for yourself the complete texts of some of the literary compositions referred to in this section. A useful source is M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Vol. II: The New Kingdom*, University of California Press, 1976.
2 Write your own love poem in New Kingdom Egyptian style. Illustrate it with appropriate Egyptian motifs and share it with your friends.
3 Writing task: Outline the main features of New Kingdom writing and literature.

   To help you plan your response:

   - identify the main features of writing and literature
   - use them to help structure your response
   - indicate the main elements of each feature, using specific examples.

SOURCE 59 Nile River at sunset

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2.12 Everyday life

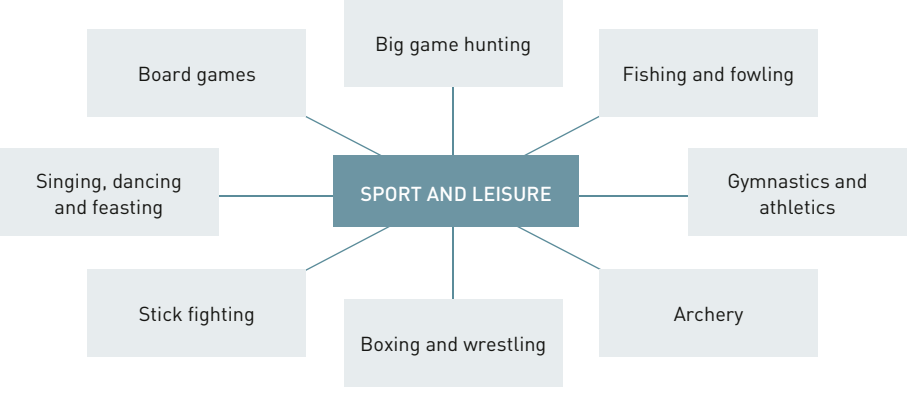
In the highly stratified society of the New Kingdom, social position was very important. With few exceptions, it determined a person's occupation and all other aspects of their lives. Members of the pharaoh's court enjoyed a life of relative ease and luxury. Unfortunately, we have very little evidence of life at the king's court. Most palaces were made of mudbrick and, although richly decorated and furnished (as evidence from Malkata suggests), they were not built to last as were the great temples and tombs of the land. However, we do have some evidence of the kinds of luxury that royalty enjoyed, from what has survived of tomb furniture and other grave goods. Unfortunately, all the royal tombs of this period have been thoroughly plundered.

We are fortunate to have a great deal more evidence for the lives of the wealthy, those members of the upper levels of the administration who represented the tip of the Egyptian social pyramid. Those who could afford it spared no expense in equipping their tombs for an eternity of happiness and plenty in the hereafter. Our evidence, therefore, comes almost entirely from the tombs of the wealthy elite. The scenes of their lives that adorn the walls of their tombs offer the richest evidence. Their tombs were also equipped with furniture, clothing and personal belongings but, like the royal tombs, looting by grave robbers over the centuries has left little material evidence.

Evidence for the everyday living conditions of the great mass of the working class – the peasants and labourers – is almost entirely lacking. We see them depicted at work, and sometimes at play, in the tombs of the nobles for whom they worked. But these tombs are designed to show the wealth and status of the tomb owner, so while we have evidence of their occupations, the material conditions of their lives, their attitudes and feelings can only be guessed at.

Leisure activities

Most evidence for New Kingdom leisure pursuits comes from daily life scenes in the tombs of nobility. Source 60 shows the variety of sporting and leisure activities New Kingdom people engaged in.



SOURCE 60 New Kingdom leisure activities

Hunting and fishing

Hunting was certainly the sport of kings and courtiers. New Kingdom tomb paintings depict bird hunts in the marshes of the delta and the remaining marshlands of Upper Egypt (see Source 52). The best time for hunting was at the end of the floods, when the water was still high enough to allow small boats, made of papyrus reeds, to be rowed up to the hidden nesting places.

Fishing was another popular New Kingdom sport. Anglers are known to have fished with rods while sitting in armchairs around their garden pools. Hippopotamus hunting is also shown in New Kingdom Theban tombs, although this animal had long disappeared from the area. This alerts us to the need for care in interpreting tomb scenes of daily life as many were intended to be symbolic; in this case, indicating the tomb owner's ability to master evil and danger.

New Kingdom pharaohs were fond of hunting and liked to advertise their physical prowess. This was also part of the warrior pharaoh iconography that depicted them as superb specimens of manhood. Thutmose III engaged in elephant hunting while campaigning in Syria. Thutmose IV regularly hunted lions in the desert near Giza. Amenhotep II, who fancied himself as a great athlete, boasted of his prowess in shooting arrows through copper targets. Amenhotep III advertised his love of hunting wild bulls and lions in two scarabs issued to commemorate his success – they record the killing of 96 bulls that had been driven into a walled enclosure for the hunt, as well as 102 lions in other hunts.

Other leisure activities

Gymnastics and athletic games appear to have been favoured leisure pursuits. Young men were trained in archery, boxing, wrestling and fighting with sticks.

Board games were also popular in the New Kingdom. Senet is the best known of these. It was played on a board of wood, stone, clay, bone or faience, or even on a grid cut into the ground. Other board games included taw or 'twenty squares', played by two people facing each other and *mehen* or the 'snake game', which could be played by up to six people who moved dog-, lion- and ball-shaped pieces. Unfortunately, the rules of these games remain a mystery.

SOURCE 61 An Eighteenth Dynasty ebony and ivory Senet game board and playing pieces

For the ordinary Egyptian citizen, leisure activities probably took place in the evenings after work, on days off and on the many public holidays of the calendar, for example, festivals such as *Opet*, the Beautiful Feast of the Valley or the pharaoh's *Sed* festival. Some leisure time was probably spent in inns, beer houses and brothels. Some of these activities are referred to in the *Instruction of Ani* (Source 58).

Tomb scenes also feature banquets with large numbers of guests. Fashionable ladies are shown with cones of scented fat on their heads, being attended by servant girls and entertained by singers, musicians and dancers.

The Egyptian diet

Tomb scenes provide a wealth of evidence about the variety of food in the Egyptian diet. Egyptians enjoyed a healthy diet thanks to the fertility of the soil caused by the annual inundation of the Nile. The staples of their diet were bread (made from barley and emmer), beer and fish. The large number of Egyptian words for bread-related products indicates its

importance. It was baked in various shapes, including animal and human shapes. Honey, sesame seeds, dates and fruit were added to bread for greater variety.

Egyptians of all classes were great beer drinkers and had a large variety of beers from which to choose. Beer was made from yeast, flour, water and malted barley. Its alcoholic content was very high, which might account for references to drunkenness in the wisdom texts. Wine was also a popular drink, but restricted to those who could afford it. The best grapes – and wines – came from the delta and desert oases. Other beverages included milk, which was also made into butter and cheese.

Fish was a major source of protein and was sometimes used to pay wages and taxes. Scenes in tombs and temples reveal the large variety of species available to the Egyptians. Meat was eaten only by the wealthy and usually on special occasions such as banquets and festival days. Egyptians were fond of game in their diet and this included ducks, geese, pigeon and quail, which were hunted with nets and throwing sticks in the marshes (see Source 52).

Many Egyptians grew a variety of vegetables in their garden plots. Onions, garlic and leeks were staples. In addition, they grew lettuce, cucumbers, radishes, lentils and various peas. Fruits cultivated included dates, figs, pomegranates, melons and grapes.

SOURCE 62 New Kingdom female attire

Clothing

Clothing was an important indicator of social rank. The wealthy could afford the finest quality materials and accessories. Both men and women wore garments made of finely woven white linen. As the Eighteenth Dynasty progressed, the simple short linen kilts for men and traditional long, close-fitting dresses with shoulder straps for women gave way to garments that were more elaborate in design. For example, women wore a finely pleated semi-transparent garment that was wrapped around the body and tied with a sash beneath the bust. Both men and women wore wigs of human hair woven into intricate designs. Both sexes wore simple, open-toed sandals woven from palm leaves and grass.

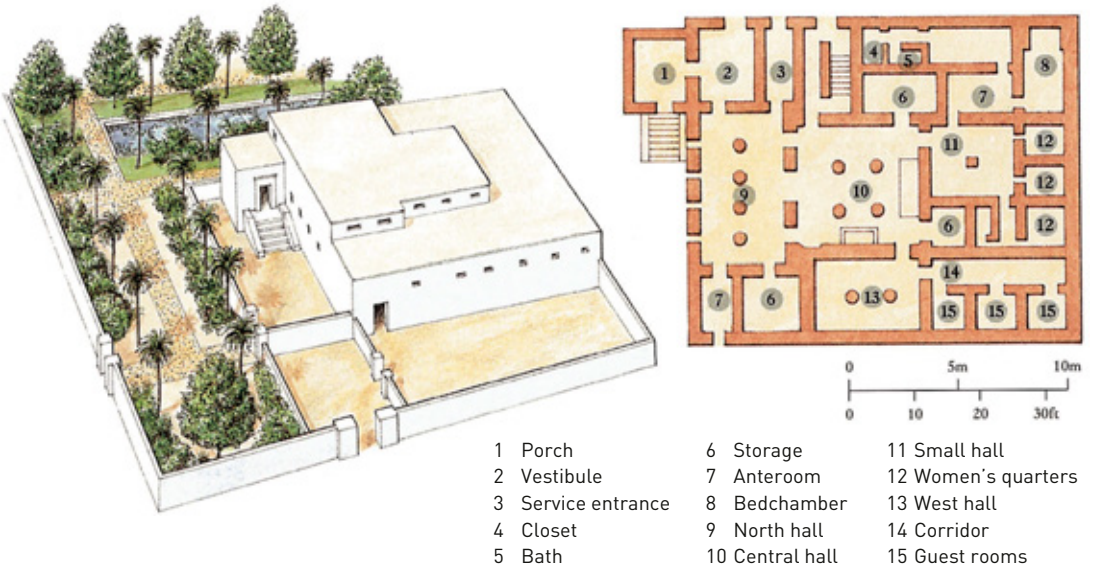
Ordinary working men and women wore simpler garments as necessitated by their working lives. Men working in the fields are shown bare-chested, wearing simple loincloths. The evidence of clothing that has survived from a later period suggests that everyday clothing was simpler and more functional than the clothing shown in many tomb paintings – which, no doubt, reflected how they wanted to be dressed for the afterlife, in their 'Sunday best'.

Housing

The houses of the wealthy, particularly the villas on country estates, were built of white-plastered, sun-dried mudbrick. A typical villa was set in a high-walled garden containing trees, exotic plants, a well and a pool or pond. Lighting was provided by small windows located near the ceiling, no doubt to minimise the effects of the hot Egyptian sun. Winter heat was supplied by small, portable braziers, on which charcoal was burned.

Those officials who lived in the towns had dwellings similar to that of Djehutinefer, royal scribe and treasurer under Amenhotep II. This house is depicted in his Theban tomb and has three storeys, a large number of pillared rooms, servants' quarters and grain silos on the roof. The ground floor was used for spinning, weaving and grinding corn; the residential quarters were on the upper storeys.

The town houses of even wealthier Egyptians had reception rooms, bathrooms and toilets. Bathroom floors and walls were covered with stone slabs. A typical worker's house, on the other hand, had two to four rooms, a walled yard of packed earth where cooking was done and cellars for storage. Additional living space and storage were located on the flat roof that was accessed by an open staircase.



1 Porch
2 Vestibule
3 Service entrance
4 Closet
5 Bath
6 Storage
7 Anteroom
8 Bedchamber
9 North hall
10 Central hall
11 Small hall
12 Women's quarters
13 West hall
14 Corridor
15 Guest rooms

SOURCE 63 An artist's reconstruction of a typical villa of a member of the Egyptian elite – the floor plan shows the internal arrangement of rooms.

SOURCE 64 An Eighteenth Dynasty gable-topped chest and linens, c.1550–1295 BC, from the tomb of Hatnofer and Ramose, western Thebes (whitewashed wood, linen; 44 cm high)

Furniture

Furnishings for houses included chairs, inlaid stools, beds and headrests. Chests were used for storing personal effects (the Egyptians did not use wardrobes). Quality was dictated by social status, as for most other aspects of daily life. Local timbers such as acacia and sycamore were commonly used. Only the wealthiest Egyptians could afford quality imported timbers such as cedar from Byblos and ebony from Nubia. Some New Kingdom furniture is shown in Sources 64 and 65. See also Sources 28 and 29.

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Health of New Kingdom Egyptians

Studies carried out on the skeletal remains of New Kingdom Egyptians have revealed some interesting information about the health of the people of this period. Between 1971 and 1974, the Czech Egyptologist and **palaeopathologist** Eugen Strouhal examined lung tissue samples from over 150 mummies and found traces of pneumonia and tuberculosis, as well as very fine particles of desert sand. A study of other bodily organs showed that New Kingdom Egyptians suffered from a number of parasitic diseases such as those caused by bilharzia, tape worms and thread worms. Other diseases found in the study included smallpox and poliomyelitis, and more than 30 cases of spinal tuberculosis. Male skeletons revealed a much higher incidence of bone fractures than female skeletons.

SOURCE 65 An Eighteenth Dynasty basket and toilet articles, early co-reign of Thutmose III and Hatshepsut, c.1479–1473 BC, from western Thebes (halfa grass and linen cord, Egyptian alabaster, linen, linen cord, ebony, boxwood, cypress; basket without cover 12.8 cm high)

Another study carried out by an Egyptian archaeologist, Dr Alaaeldin Shaheen, discovered the presence of amoeboid cysts. These and the other parasitic diseases mentioned above were particularly prevalent in rural areas, especially as a result of people eating unwashed fruit and vegetables and going barefoot through water.

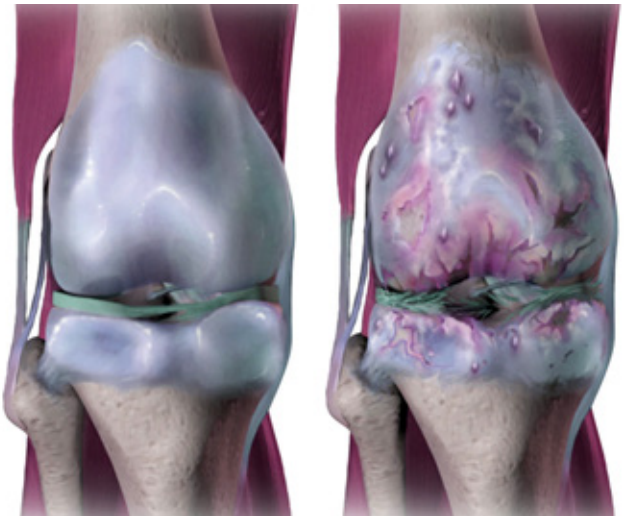
palaeopathology study of ancient diseases

In 2015 Anne Austin, a specialist in **osteoarchaeology** from Stanford University in the United States, conducted a detailed study of human remains of the New Kingdom villagers of Deir el-Medina. This village was established in the early New Kingdom by the pharaoh Amenhotep I and his great royal wife, Ahmose-Nefertari; it housed the workers who built and decorated the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings on the west bank at Thebes.

osteoarchaeology study of ancient bones

In one mummy, Austin discovered evidence of osteomyelitis – inflammation in the bone due to blood-borne infection. She also found evidence of osteoarthritis in knee and ankle joints – no doubt largely the result of the daily hard climb from the village to work in the Valley of the Kings. Skeletal remains from other New Kingdom cemeteries of ordinary Egyptians did not exhibit the same high incidence of arthritis.

Ancient Egyptians generally had a shorter life expectancy than people in the 21st century. Infant mortality was high. New Kingdom women often gave birth to many children and a high number of pregnancies could be fatal. Women often died from complications even after giving birth, such as puerperal fever.



SOURCE 66 Left, a normal knee joint; right, evidence of osteoarthritis in the joint

Several studies have been carried out over the years on Egyptian mummies in various museum collections. A well-known study dating to the 1970s is the Manchester Mummy Project at Manchester University in the United Kingdom. Occasionally, other evidence of health and medical practices in Ancient Egypt comes from depictions of medical conditions and practices in reliefs. For example, a wall painting in the tomb of the worker Ipwy, at Deir el-Medina, shows a range of occupational injuries and their treatment, such as a foot injury caused by a dropped mallet, the removal of a foreign body from the eye and the treatment of a dislocated shoulder. However, most information can be found in the various medical papyri that reveal that the ancient Egyptians had developed a wide knowledge and understanding both of the causes of a variety of diseases and of treatment methods, based sometimes on magic spells but often including surgical procedures. Some of these papyri include: the Kahun Papyrus, the Edwin Papyrus, the Ebers Papyrus, the Hearst Papyrus, the Berlin Papyrus and the Chester Beatty Medical Papyrus.

2.12 Check your learning

1. Find images of men and women in the clothing of the New Kingdom and label them using the information given in this section.
2. Find other examples of New Kingdom housing and furniture. What evidence do they provide of the lifestyle of New Kingdom Egyptians?
3. Find evidence for other aspects of everyday life in New Kingdom Egypt, such as cosmetics and make-up, body painting and tattoos, hairstyles, personal hygiene, pregnancy and childbirth, health and medicine.
4. Writing task: What does the evidence reveal about everyday life in New Kingdom Egypt?
   To help you plan your response:
   - identify the main aspects of everyday life
   - use these to help structure your response
   - indicate the key sources of evidence for these aspects
   - using specific sources, explain what these reveal about the relevant aspects of everyday life.
5. Carry out some research on bilharzia and other medical conditions mentioned here. What are their symptoms? How were they contracted? Are any of these conditions still around today?
6. Read more about Anne Austin's study of the New Kingdom Deir el-Medina human remains. Search online for 'Stanford archaeologist leads the first detailed study of human remains at the ancient Egyptian site of Deir el-Medina'.
7. Investigate one or more of the ancient Egyptian medical papyri referred to in this section. What additional information do they provide about health and medical practices?
8. Writing task: What does a study of the evidence from human remains reveal about the health of New Kingdom Egyptians?

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Chapter conclusion

In this chapter we have looked at Egyptian society in the New Kingdom through the great variety of available sources. Our study of temples, tombs and other sources has revealed much about Egyptian social structure, religious beliefs and practices, as well as technology, the economy and the range of occupations of the New Kingdom Egyptians. We note that these sources tend to reveal most evidence about the lives of elite Egyptians. Pharaohs, royalty and nobility have left the clearest traces of their lives, while the great mass of the population, the ordinary Egyptians, are revealed largely through their relationships with their superiors. What is clear are the gaps in the evidence. We know little about the living conditions of the peasants who appear in the tomb scenes, and we know nothing from these sources of their thoughts and aspirations. However, the literature of this period offers some tantalising glimpses of individuals, their emotions and their values, not available from other sources.

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare students for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

3

Bronze Age – Minoan Crete

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1 What have sources revealed about the significant sites in Minoan society?
2 What is known about different groups and their roles in Minoan society?
3 What are the differing interpretations of the identity of the ruler and the nature of government in Minoan society?
4 What have sources revealed about the nature and significance of the Minoan economy?
5 What have sources revealed about the nature and role of religious and funerary beliefs and rituals?
6 What are the significant cultural and technological achievements of Minoan civilisation?

FOCUS CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Analysis and use of sources

We know the Minoans largely through their material remains. There are no written sources for them except for the Linear A script, which has yet to be entirely deciphered. For this reason the sources have many interpretations that are often contested. Almost everything we think we know about the Minoans is a construct. We can draw only tentative conclusions based on limited evidence. We know about their buildings, their artefacts and their tombs, but we do not know what they thought, or felt. We do not even have one name of one person from the Minoan period! Careful analysis and interpretation of sources are therefore essential for an understanding of this enigmatic civilisation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1 Explain the significance of Minoan palaces and other sites in Minoan society.
2 Evaluate the roles of different groups in shaping Minoan society.
3 Discuss and evaluate differing interpretations of the identity of the ruler and the nature of government in Minoan society.
4 Assess the significance of the economy in Minoan society.
5 Analyse and interpret different types of sources for evidence of Minoan religious and funerary beliefs and rituals.
6 Evaluate the cultural and technological achievements of Minoan civilisation.

SOURCE 1 A detail from the 'Bull-leaping Fresco', c. 1450 BC, Knossos

3.1 Historical context

Aegean Bronze Age the Bronze Age period of the civilisations that arose around the Aegean Sea, c. 3000–1050 BC

During the **Aegean Bronze Age** there emerged on the Mediterranean island of Crete a complex, sophisticated culture characterised by impressive palace structures such as Knossos, Phaestos, Malia and Zakros. Arthur Evans, the British archaeologist who excavated the site of Knossos at the beginning of the 20th century, named this civilisation Minoan, after Minos, the legendary king who appears in Homer's *Odyssey*.

Source 2 identifies some key developments in the Minoan period and the terminology used by archaeologists. Note that there are different terms used to identify key periods based on palace construction. This chapter will use 'First Palace', 'Second Palace', 'Third Palace' period terminology.

The palaces of the First Palace period were destroyed around 1700 BC in a series of earthquakes. In the Second Palace period, the palaces were rebuilt and extended. In the following 200 years, Minoan civilisation reached its height with the development of widespread trading networks within the Mediterranean world.

The causes of the decline of the Minoan civilisation are still being debated by scholars, but they are most likely the effect of a series of natural disasters culminating in another wave of earthquakes dating to around 1450 BC. There is some evidence of warfare. After this time, Mycenaeans from the Greek mainland to the north occupied Knossos, rebuilt it and took over its old trading networks. Knossos appears to have thrived until a major destruction of the palace complex around 1380 BC. Knossos ceased to be an inhabited centre and influence in the Aegean; Khania became the most important centre in Crete. Following the final collapse of Bronze Age civilisation in the Aegean region, the Minoans were all but lost to history, until rediscovered by Arthur Evans in the 20th century.

AEGEAN BRONZE AGE	ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATING	TIME SPAN AND KEY DEVELOPMENTS	PERIOD
Early Bronze (3000–1900 BC)	Early Minoan I Early Minoan II Early Minoan III Middle Minoan IA	3000–1900 BC • Growth of population • Development of centres of commerce, arts and crafts • Development of local elites	Prepalatial period
Middle Bronze (1900–1600 BC)	Middle Minoan IB Middle Minoan II	1900–1700 BC • Construction of first palaces at Knossos, Phaestos and Malia • Earthquake destroys first palaces c. 1700 BC	First Palace period (Protopalatial period)
Late Bronze (1600–1200 BC)	Middle Minoan IIIA Middle Minoan IIIB Late Minoan IA Late Minoan IB	1700–1450 BC • Rebuilding of palaces • High point of Minoan civilisation • Massive earthquakes and fires destroy all palaces c. 1450 BC	Second Palace period (Neopalatial or New Palace period)
	Late Minoan II Late Minoan IIIA1 Late Minoan IIIA2 Late Minoan IIIB	1450–1200 BC • Arrival of the Mycenaeans • Reconstruction and occupation of Knossos • Eventual destruction of Knossos	Third Palace period (Final Palatial period)
End of Aegean Bronze Age	Late Minoan IIIC	1200–1100 BC • Widespread collapse of Bronze Age Mediterranean civilisations	Postpalatial period

SOURCE 2 A timeline of Mediterranean Bronze Age civilisation

Geographical setting and natural features

'There is a land called Crete in the middle of the wine-dark sea, a lovely country and fertile, surrounded by sea, and there are many people in it …' So wrote Homer, in his *Odyssey*, referring to the fertility of the Cretan plains and the temperate Mediterranean climate of short, mild winters and dry, warm summers.

Crete is the fifth largest island in the Mediterranean. It measures about 260 kilometres from east to west, and between 12 and 58 kilometres from north to south at its narrowest and widest points. Its landscape varies from tall, rugged mountains to gentle slopes and plains, the Mesara and the Lasithi. The major mountain ranges are the White Mountains of Western Crete and the Dikte Mountains, which form a central spine. The highest peak of the Dikte Mountains stands at 2148 metres. Crete is also known for its many limestone caves, such as Psychro, Arkalochori and Idaean, which in ancient times were used for shelter, burials, refuge and religious ritual.

Crete's location in the centre of the eastern Mediterranean at the crossroads of Africa, Asia and Europe made it ideally suited to develop trading contacts with near neighbours and the wider Mediterranean world. Other local Bronze Age cultures of the same period were the **Cycladic** culture of the islands to the north of Crete, including the island of Thera, and the **Helladic** culture of mainland Greece, centred on the site of Mycenae.

Cycladic
relating to the Bronze Age civilisation of the Cycladic Islands, c. 3000–1050 BC

Helladic
relating to the Bronze Age cultures of mainland Greece, c. 3000–1050 BC

AEGEAN AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 3 The Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean region during the Bronze Age

Resources of Minoan Crete

Source 4 summarises the wealth of resources that were available to the Minoans. The main resources that were not available included metals and stone for making cutting tools. This made imports of copper, tin and arsenic necessary, as well as obsidian (black volcanic glass) for blades. We know that Minoan goldsmiths used gold and silver, which must have been imported, as was ivory from hippopotami and elephants.

juniper
an evergreen shrub or small tree that bears purple, berry-like cones

murex
a carnivorous sea snail, commonly called 'murex' or 'rock snail'

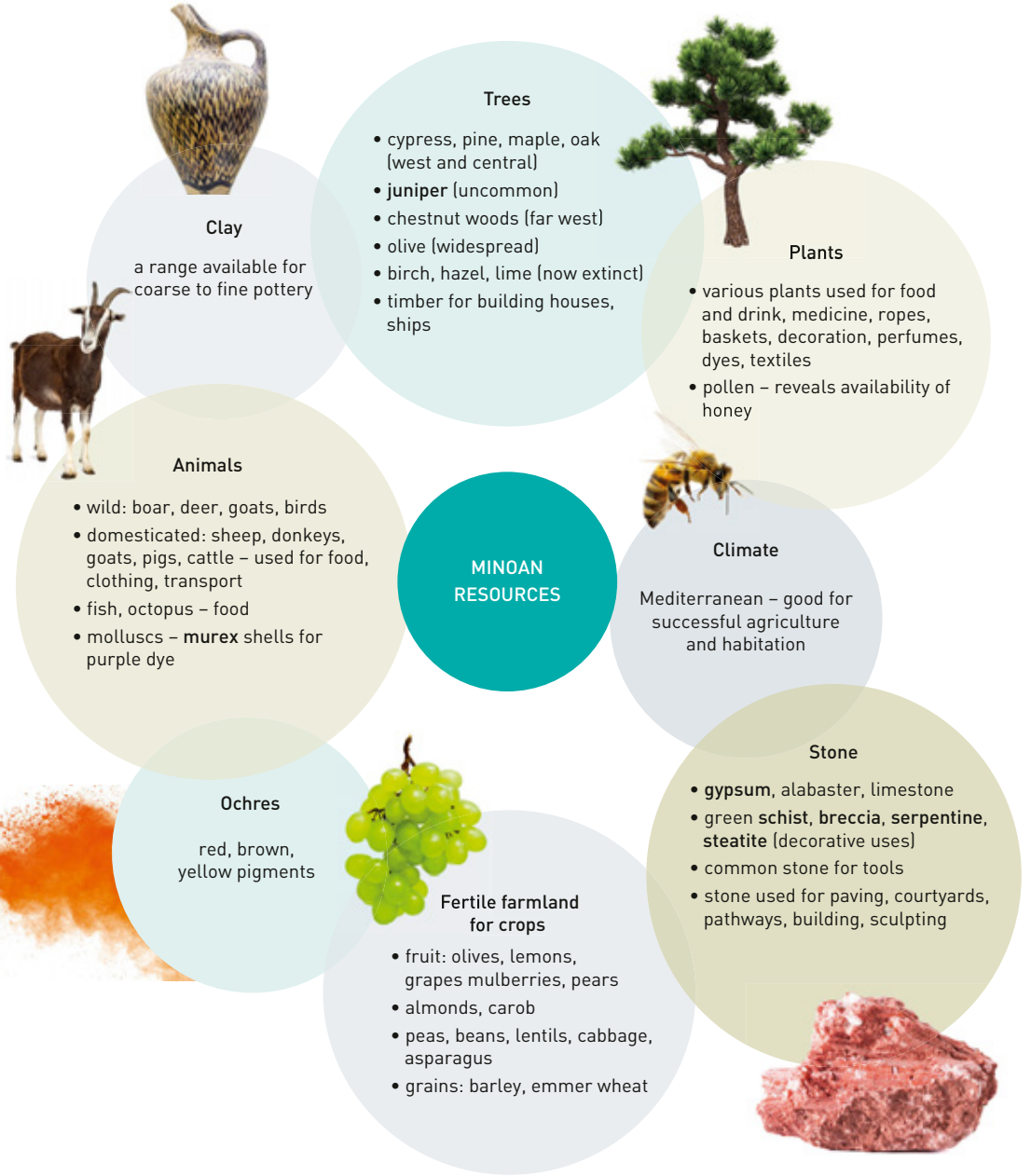
gypsum
a soft white substance that looks like chalk and is used to make plaster

schist
a coarse-grained metamorphic rock that can be split into thin, irregular pla[illegible]

breccia
rock composed of angular fragments of older rocks melded together

serpentine
a dark-green stone

steatite
a greyish-green talc or soapstone



SOURCE 4 Resources of Minoan Crete

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

3.1 Understanding and using the sources

Source 2

1 What social, cultural and technological conditions would have been necessary for the construction of the first palaces in Minoan Crete?
2 What event of the Second Palace period might have contributed to the Mycenaean occupation of Knossos?

Source 3

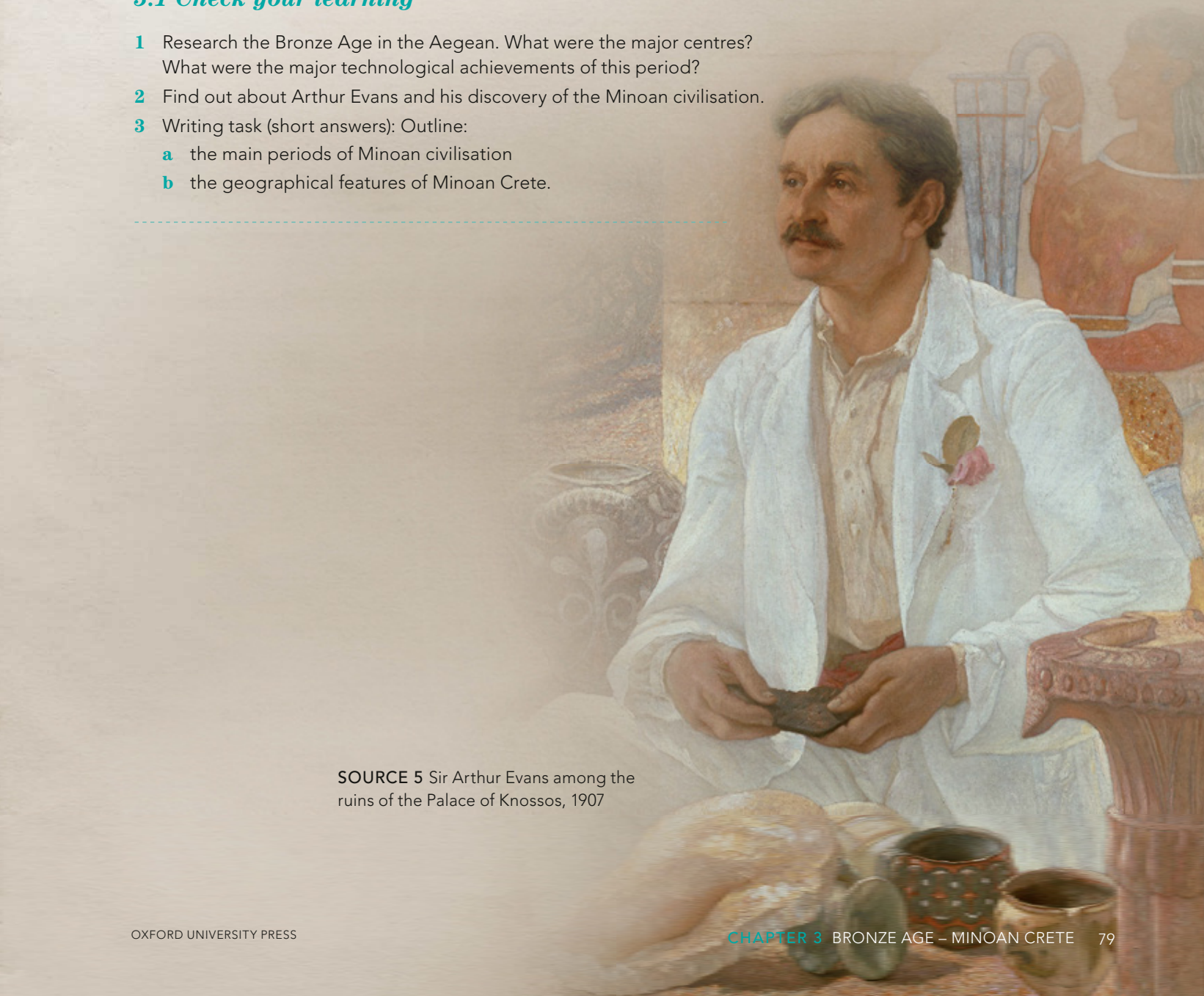
3 Identify Crete's neighbours to the north and south.
4 Why was Crete ideally situated to benefit from Mediterranean trade?

Source 4

5 Which of Crete's natural resources would have been used for the construction of palaces?
6 What do Crete's natural resources indicate about the Minoan diet?

3.1 Check your learning

1 Research the Bronze Age in the Aegean. What were the major centres? What were the major technological achievements of this period?
2 Find out about Arthur Evans and his discovery of the Minoan civilisation.
3 Writing task (short answers): Outline:
   a the main periods of Minoan civilisation
   b the geographical features of Minoan Crete.



SOURCE 5 Sir Arthur Evans among the ruins of the Palace of Knossos, 1907

3.2 Significant Minoan sites

The most significant sites for your study of Minoan society include the 'palace' sites of Knossos, Phaestos, Malia and Zakros. Two other important sites are the town of Gournia in eastern Crete and the small site of Agia Triada in the south, near Phaestos. The 'palace' sites are impressive structures, varying in size from the largest at Knossos to the smallest at Zakros. They are multi-purpose complexes that share similar architectural features.

A significant issue concerns the term 'palace' itself, coined by Arthur Evans to refer to Knossos and subsequently used to describe similar sites. The term 'palace' is generally used to denote the dwelling of a monarch, such as a king or queen. However, despite the prevalence of this terminology, be aware that the evidence for such a person is inconclusive (see 3.3 Social structure). You will meet other terms used by scholars, including, 'court complexes' and 'temples'.

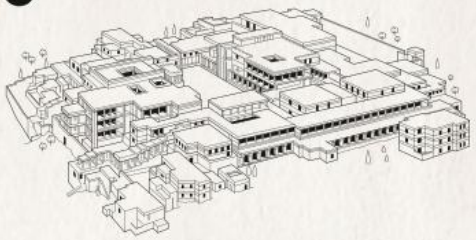
In recent years, a number of other significant Minoan sites have been discovered, some with palace structures. These include Arkhanes, Palaikastro, Petras and Galatas.

MINOAN CRETE

SOURCE 6 Significant sites of Minoan Crete and their location

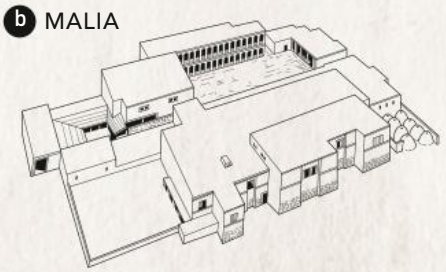
Oxford University Press

a KNOSSOS



- largest palace site
- evidence of three phases of palace construction
- centre of Bronze Age Minoan culture
- important economic and religious hub
- discovered and excavated by Arthur Evans in early 20th century

b MALIA



- third largest of Minoan palace sites
- evidence of two phases of construction
- excavation begun by Joseph Chatzidakis in 1915 and continued by the French Archaeological School
- coastal location and large storage capacity suggest important economic role

3.2 Understanding and using the sources

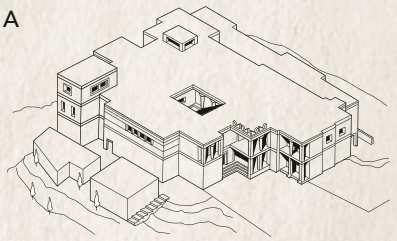
Source 6

1 What do the significant sites appear to have in common?
2 How is Gournia different from the other sites?

3.2 Check your learning

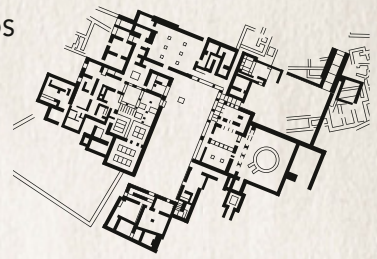
1 Why is the use of the term 'palace' problematic?
2 What are the theories around the purpose of and relationship between the significant sites?
3 Research the more recently excavated sites of Arkhanes, Palaikastro, Petras and Galatas. What features qualify them to be identified as palaces? Search online for 'Minoan Crete – Galatas palace'.
4 Take a virtual tour of Minoan sites. Search online for 'Archaeological sites of the Aegean Minoans'.
5 Create a table with the headings 'Name of site' and 'Significant features' and use it to record information about each of the significant sites as you study this chapter.

c GOURNIA



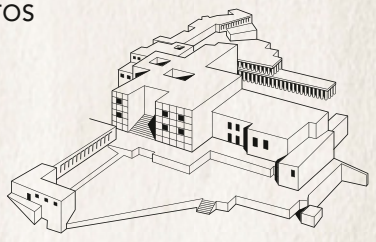
- coastal town close to port of Zakros
- important economic role as centre of production and trade
- houses, cobbled streets, central court, palace
- evidence of harbour complex: ship shed, fortification walls
- excavation begun by Harriet Boyd in 1901

d ZAKROS



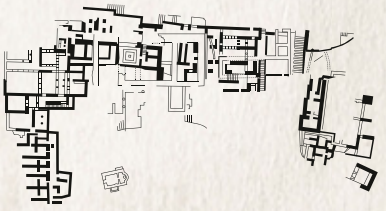
- smallest Minoan palace, surrounded by town
- important east coast location for Mediterranean trade
- administrative, manufacturing and commercial centre
- large archive of Linear A tablets (see 3.15 Minoan writing)
- main excavation by Nicholas Platon in 1960s

e PHAESTOS



- second largest Minoan palace
- elevated location with commanding view of Messara plain and nearby port of Kommos
- more evidence of First Palace structures than at other palaces
- renowned for well-preserved monumental staircase entrance to palace
- excavation by Frederico Halbherr in 1900–04

f AGIA TRIADA

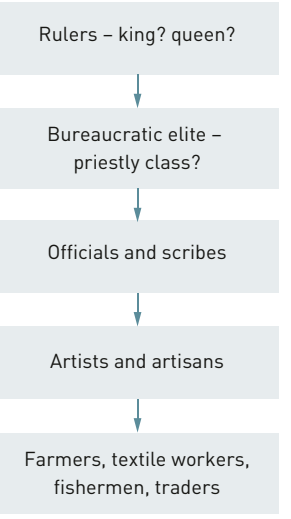


- located 4 kilometres west of Phaestos
- remains of small town, L-shaped 'Royal Villa', magazines and workshops
- largest Linear A archive on Crete
- excavated by Frederico Halbherr in 1902

3.3 Social structure

In the absence of written evidence about Minoan social structure, we have to rely on indirect evidence to reach some understanding about the nature of society and the relationships between individuals and groups. Bronze Age societies were generally hierarchical in nature, and from the available sources it would appear that Minoan society followed this pattern. Based on the evidence of the palace structures, we assume that there was a ruler at the head of Minoan society. The sophistication and complexity of the palace administration, particularly the management of economic resources, presupposes the existence of a bureaucratic elite, which may have included a priestly class. Aegean scholar Philip Betancourt argues that the evidence of substantial economic and social development indicates that Crete would have required strong central leadership, most probably exercised by a king.

The great majority of Minoan people were clearly involved in food production and the manufacture of a wide range of crafts for both local consumption and for export. As in other Bronze Age societies, the roles and status of women were no doubt determined by their relationships to their male relatives.



SOURCE 7 The social structure of Minoan Crete

Political organisation

The limited evidence available makes it very difficult to reach any conclusion about the nature of political power and political structures in Minoan times. The discovery of a number of palace sites on Crete has given rise to debate about the function of the palace sites, including their relationships to their local areas and with each other. It has been argued that Knossos was the central political authority, with the other palaces as satellites. Another interpretation suggests that other significant sites were regional centres, politically independent of Knossos, but clearly sharing economic and cultural ties both with Knossos and each other. The consensus is that there was a ruler and ruling class of some kind. Typical power structures of other Bronze Age civilisations were headed by a ruler, usually a king.

fresco
painting on wet plaster on walls or ceilings

seal
a small, intricately carved stone, used to indicate ownership or for adornment

bezel
the slightly convex oval face of a gold ring, typically engraved or stamped for use as a seal

Issues relating to gender and identity of the ruler(s)

The identity of the Minoan ruler has been much contested in academic circles. A number of theories have suggested that the ruler was a king or a queen, a priest-king or a priestess-queen. The evidence on which these theories are based comes from artefacts such as **frescoes**, **seals** and ring **bezels**, and architectural features of the palaces. Several important issues are apparent:

- the role of Arthur Evans and his interpretation of Minoan kingship
- the uncertainty about the gender of the ruler
- the reliability of the legends naming Minos as king
- the reliability of the archaeological evidence that suggests a king.

Arthur Evans and the priest-king

From as early as 1903, Arthur Evans stated his belief that the ruler of Minoan Crete was a priest-king. His excavation of Knossos had been directed by a search for Minos – for tangible evidence of his existence. His designation of the ruler as a priest-king was based on the religious features of Knossos, its sacred wall paintings and symbols. For him, the 'Prince of the Lilies Fresco' (see Source 9), from the south wing of Knossos, embodied the priest-king.

SOURCE 8

We have here surely, the representative on Earth of the Minoan Mother Goddess, a Priest-King after the order of Minos. In other words, we here recognise Minos himself in one of his mortal incarnations.

Sir A. Evans, *The Palace of Minos: A Comparative Account of the Successive Stages of the Early Cretan Civilization as Illustrated by the Discoveries at Knossos*, Vol. II, Part II, Macmillan, London, 1928, p. 779

Once Evans had made this step, it was very easy for him to see Minos, the priest-king in many other parts of Knossos and the artefacts found there, which he named accordingly:

- the Throne Room
- the Royal Villa
- the King's and Queen's Megarons
- the Royal Gaming Board.

So pervasive has Evans' influence been, that his views on Minoan kingship, as well as on many other aspects of Minoan culture, are still widely accepted by Minoan scholars.

What is the nature of the evidence?

Iconographic and architectural evidence for a Minoan ruler is not plentiful. What exists is contested and open to interpretation. Source 10 contains a few of the main sources and information about them.

SOURCE 9 The reconstructed North entrance to the Palace of Knossos.

SOURCE 10 Sources for a Minoan ruler

SOURCE	INFORMATION
a 'Prince of the Lilies Fresco' from the Palace of Knossos, Second Palace period, c. 1650–1450 BC	• This is a restoration by Swiss artist Émile Gilliéron of relief fresco fragments found in the south wing of Knossos in 1901. • The fresco is a composite: the original fragments, a small piece of the head and crown, part of the torso and a piece of thigh, probably belonged to different frescoes. • The headdress of lilies and peacock feathers was likely to have been worn by a sphinx. • The face is a creation of the restorer. • The torso and legs possibly belong to females as the skin is painted white (males were usually shown red). • The legs walk in the opposite direction from the direction in which the torso is facing. • The hairstyle is not consistent with other representations of Minoan men. • The torso and head face in different directions.
b The Throne Room from the Palace of Knossos, c. 1450 BC	This room is located on the west side of the Central Court at Knossos, at basement level. It features: • a large alabaster chair, called the 'Throne of Minos' by Evans • adjacent benches • a **lustral basin** opposite the throne and benches • restored frescoes of **griffins** and lilies, possibly Mycenaean decoration.
c The Chieftain Cup from Agia Triada, Second Palace period, c. 1550–1450 BC	• This is a footed conical goblet carved from steatite, measuring 11.5 centimetres high and with a diameter of 9.9 centimetres at the widest part. • The figure at right has long, loose hair; wears jewellery (three necklaces, armbands and bracelets), a **loincloth**, a **codpiece** and mid-calf boots; carries a dagger at the waist; and holds a staff or sceptre in his right hand. • The figure at left has shorter hair with a fringe; wears a necklace and bracelet, a loincloth and codpiece, and mid-calf boots; and holds a long sword in his right hand and a long-handled object with a crescent-shaped end in his left (a scabbard?). • Three male figures carry large bell-shaped objects, marked like animal skins.

lustral basin
a sunken room accessed by a short flight of steps, possibly for ritual use

griffin
a mythical creature with the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion

loincloth
a garment, made of a single piece of cloth, worn around the hips and covering the groin

codpiece
a bag covering the male genitals

Was the Minoan ruler male or female?

The scarcity of evidence makes it very difficult to identify the Minoan ruler, and the numerous interpretations of the evidence make it even harder to determine whether the ruler was male or female.

Source 11 summarises some modern interpretations of the evidence for the gender of the Minoan ruler.

SOURCE 11 Interpretations of the evidence for the gender of the Minoan ruler

ARCHAEOLOGIST/ SCHOLAR	INTERPRETATION
Ellen Davis, Aegean art historian	• Rejected Evans' views, but agreed that a king was a necessity. • Claimed that Minoan architecture and art did not focus on the king.
Helen Waterhouse, archaeologist	• Theorised that the predominance of females in ritual scenes meant that priestesses wielded much of the authority normally thought to belong to a king. • Favoured the idea of a **theocratic** state run by priestesses, maybe in conjunction with a male hierarchy.
Robert Koehl, archaeologist	• Proposed the idea of a number of 'priest-chiefs', subordinate to a 'priest-king', who had authority over palatial and non-palatial communities.
Paul Rehak, archaeologist	• Concluded from a study that the majority of seated figures in Aegean art of the Late Bronze Age are women, so the concept of an enthroned figure related to a woman. • Also concluded that all males shown with a staff or sceptre are standing rather than enthroned.
Helga Reusch, scholar	• Proposed that the griffins flanking the throne in the Throne Room fresco indicate that the throne belonged to a goddess who was represented by a priestess. Later followers of her theory proposed a ritual re-enactment took place.

3.3 Understanding and using the sources

theocratic
relating to a form of government in which a deity is recognised as the supreme ruler

Source 8

1 What three points does Evans make about the Minoan ruler?

Source 10

2 How far can we trust the restoration of the 'Prince of the Lilies Fresco'? Why?
3 What is the value of this source as evidence of a male Minoan ruler?
4 What is the justification for identifying the chair in the Throne Room as a throne?
5 What does the presence of the lustral basin suggest about the purpose of the room?
6 What is the significance of the griffins fresco in the Throne Room?
7 Identify any feature of the Chieftain Cup that one could justify using as evidence of a Minoan king. Why?
8 Compare the figure at right in Source 10c with the male figure in Source 27c ('Master Impression') and the female figure in Source 26c ('Mistress of Animals'). What do they have in common? Suggest reasons for this.

Source 11

9 Consider the views summarised in light of the evidence. Which one do you support? Why?

3.3 Check your learning

1 Some scholars believe that the staff in Minoan art is an emblem of either kingship or queenship, or the authority of the person holding it. How does this influence your understanding of the sources you have been studying?
2 Discuss the following:
   a What features of the 'Master Impression' and the 'Mistress of Animals' seal impressions would lead to their interpretation as depicting the Minoan ruler?
   b What do you think are the most significant of the issues that have been raised in this section regarding the Minoan ruler? Why? Consider those raised at the beginning and add any more that appear appropriate.
3 Writing task: Outline the issues relating to gender and identity of the Minoan ruler(s).

3.4 The Minoan people

The people of Minoan Crete included the men and women who lived and worked in the palaces as well as those in the wider society who were involved in a range of occupations.

Palace elite

The palace elite consisted of the ruler and members of the religious and economic administration.

Bureaucracy

The archives of Linear A tablets and, later in the Third Palace period, Linear B tablets (see 3.15 Minoan writing), found at Knossos and some other sites, suggest the presence of a **bureaucracy**. How this bureaucracy was structured is unknown. It must have operated primarily in the palaces where records were kept of goods coming into and going out of the palaces. There would have been roles for overseers who supervised the collection, storage, local distribution and overseas export of these goods. These people possibly enjoyed a privileged position by virtue of their important role in palace administration. It is unlikely that many people could write at all, so scribes would have been responsible for record keeping.

Linear A tablets have also been found in villas and houses. An example is the collection of copper **ingots** and Linear A tablets found in House A at Agia Triada. Perhaps this house belonged to a member of the bureaucracy.

bureaucracy
a system of administration through government officials

ingot
metal cast into a convenient shape for storage or transportation

Priests and priestesses

Regardless of the identity or nature of Minoan deities, it seems fairly clear that there was a priestly class of men and women, who were involved in the organisation of their cults. They are identifiable by their dress and appearance, the items they are associated with and their activities.

libation
a liquid offering such as wine, oil or water that is poured onto a religious object (e.g. an altar)

SOURCE 12 The restored 'Camp-stool Fresco' from Knossos, c. 1400–1375 BC, has been interpreted as depicting a ritual feast, based on the vessels being used.

The following priestly activities can be identified from the sources:

- participating in processions
- making offerings
- pouring **libations**
- performing sacrifices
- dancing, alone or in groups
- engaging in ceremonial drinking and eating
- participating in **epiphany** rituals.

Sources 12, 13 and 14 can be used as evidence of some of the roles of priests and priestesses.

SOURCE 13 One side of the Harvester Vase, a steatite **rhyton** from Agia Triada, c. 1450 BC, shows what has been interpreted as a procession of agricultural workers. They are led by an older, long-haired man identified as a priest, by his fringed cloak with a pine-cone pattern.

Roles and status of women

Much has been written about the prominence of women in Minoan society. A study of the available pictorial sources, particularly frescoes and rings, certainly suggests that some women occupied positions of high status in society, maybe linked to their roles. These could be the women we see depicted in the 'Grandstand Fresco', some of whom can be seen in Source 34 sitting adjacent to the Tripartite shrine. It could be significant that these women are shown as entire figures, while the men at this gathering are shown only as faces.

However, the conclusions that we can draw about the status of women depend to a large extent on how these sources are interpreted. For example, the female figure in Source 14 clearly enjoys a high status. Leaving aside the problems associated with this source due to the high percentage of reconstruction, it remains impossible to decisively identify the female as a goddess, a priestess, or a priestess representing a goddess, or even a queen. Similarly, the women in the 'Camp-stool Fresco' (see Source 12) also appear to have high status, but again we do not know who they are. If, as is suggested, they are priestesses, then priestly roles and high rank seem to have gone together.

epiphany
a ritual associated with Minoan religious practice that is designed to summon the deity to the presence of the worshippers

rhyton (*pl.* rhyta)
a type of jug, often conical in shape, but sometimes in the form of an animal head, made of pottery or stone and used for pouring liquid offerings

All Minoan women cannot have enjoyed the same high status as those depicted in frescoes and on rings. We know almost nothing about ordinary women. Many were workers in the textile industries. Linear B evidence from the Third Palace period of Mycenaean occupation at Knossos reveals more than 500 female textile workers there. The tablets refer to them as 'slaves' or 'servants', so these were low-status women.

SOURCE 14 The highly reconstructed 'Procession Fresco' from the Palace of Knossos. Most of this detail of young men worshipping a high-status female, has been deduced from the small, original band of fresco along the bottom.

Craftsmen and agricultural workers

Archaeological sources indicate the presence of many craftsmen and artisans, who worked in both palaces and towns. The artefacts they produced make it clear that they were highly skilled workers. As agriculture was the

mainstay of the Minoan economy, those who worked in this area made substantial contributions to Minoan life. There is evidence for farmers, animal herders, labourers and fishermen. Source 15 summarises the workers in both crafts and agriculture. For more detail, see 3.5 The economy.

SOURCE 15 Minoan craftsmen and agricultural workers

CRAFTSMEN/ARTISANS	AGRICULTURAL WORKERS
• Stonemasons • Metalworkers – gold, bronze • Glass and **faience** makers • Gem cutters – engraved stone seals • Ivory carvers • Sculptors – stone vases • Potters • Jewellers • Builders – carpenters, plumbers, plasterers, tilers • Fresco painters • Purple dye makers • Textile workers • Olive oil makers	• Farmers and animal herders (sheep, cattle, pigs) • Lived in clusters of houses in small communities • Labourers – worked on larger farms and quarries • Fishermen – widespread, specialised fishing at Zakro for purple dye industry

faience
a material made from powdered quartz, usually covered with a transparent blue or green glaze

3.4 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 12–14

1 Explain how Source 12 can be interpreted as a ritual feast.
2 Suggest reasons for the participation of a priest in a procession of agricultural workers in Source 13.
3 Explain how the female in Source 14 could be interpreted as a priestess.

3.4 Check your learning

1 The following sources from this chapter can be used as evidence of the roles of priests and priestesses.

- Source 10b Throne Room
- Source 12 'Camp-stool Fresco'
- Source 13 Harvester Vase
- Source 14 'Procession Fresco'
- Source 31 Bull's-head rhyton
- Source 33 Peak Sanctuary rhyton
- Source 37 Agia Triada Sarcophagus
- Source 39 'Sacred Grove Fresco'
- Source 40 Isopata Ring

Draw up a table and record the name of each source and the information it reveals. One has been started for you. Research any sources that you would like more information on.

NAME OF SOURCE	INFORMATION REVEALED ABOUT ROLES OF PRIESTS AND PRIESTESSES
Source 37 Agia Triada Sarcophagus	• Females are shown walking in procession. • A male plays music. • A female with a rhyton carries out a ritual at an altar.

2 Writing tasks:
   a Describe the activities of priests and priestesses.
   b Explain the role and status of women in Minoan society.

3.5 The economy

The Minoan economy, like that of other Bronze Age societies, was based on agriculture. Major economic development occurred with the rise of the palaces. Palaces and towns played important roles in the development of agriculture, industry and crafts.

Palace economy

According to the traditional view, the Minoans developed a palace economy; that is, a system in which the palaces collected all the products of their surrounding regions, stored them and then redistributed them to the populace as needed. This theory is based on the sudden appearance of palaces across Crete in the First Palace period, containing extensive storage magazines, as well as the apparent lack of any other market system. This evidence suggested that agricultural surplus could support a large population of administrators, craftsmen and religious personnel. Some scholars amended the theory, suggesting that the gathering and redistribution occurred in the villas, and was carried out by regional elites under the control of the palaces.

Many scholars now find it difficult to accept the traditional view at all, based on new interpretations of the sources, particularly discounting the assumption that Linear B evidence (see 3.15 Minoan writing) of the Third Palace period is valid for the time before the Mycenaean occupation. It has been argued that even though palaces had storage facilities and might have collected and distributed commodities, they did not necessarily exercise complete control of the whole economy. Kostis Christakis from the University of Crete argues that the excavation record does not reveal an economic system based on redistribution, where the produce of the good years was kept and handed out to the community when needed. He estimates that the Palace of Knossos, supporting a local population of approximately 15 000 people, had a storage capacity capable of feeding only 750 to 1000 people for a year. As a result, he gives a different explanation.

SOURCE 16

The scale of storage within palaces suggests that palatial authorities were concerned with the production and accumulation of staples to serve the needs of a limited number of individuals. Stored wealth sustained elite and dependent craftsmen and labourers, financed state enterprises, and provided food for large-scale ceremonial events to project political and social power and reaffirm social status. Political authorities, therefore, developed a complex exchange network for the mobilization of wealth to the elite.

K. Christakis, 'Redistribution and political economies in Bronze Age Crete', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 115 (2011), p. 203

Importance of agriculture

Archaeological evidence reveals that in all periods, agriculture and raising stock underpinned the Minoan economy. The production of olive oil and wine date from the Prepalatial period, when installations for producing these foodstuffs were located inside settlements and production was for the whole community. Models of clay tubs used for the pressing of grapes have been found in tombs from this time.

Animal husbandry was central to the economy from early times. Evidence comes from representations of milking animals on seal impressions found at Khania. This came under the control of the palaces in later times. Linear B evidence indicates that in the Third Palace period, flocks of more than 100 000 sheep and goats were controlled from Knossos.

Role of towns

Towns were significant settlements on Crete, particularly in the Second Palace period. They are recognised by:

- their mostly regular street plans dividing blocks of structures
- houses of varying sizes, mostly multi-roomed and two-storeyed
- a public square or important building
- alleyways that give access to the interiors of blocks
- drainage channels or pipes from individual buildings to the main channels.

Oliver Dickinson comments on the roles of towns in Source 17.

SOURCE 17

The towns are all likely to have functioned as 'central places' for their regions … but some may have been primarily ports, like Psiera, Mochlos and Zakro, and the greatest may be argued to have been the capitals of extensive territories and to have had lesser towns dependent on them.

O. Dickinson, *The Aegean Bronze Age*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, p. 65

SOURCE 18 The Minoan town of Gournia

Gournia

Gournia, on the north-east coast of Crete, covered approximately 4 hectares in the Second Palatial period and had a population of about 1400 people. About 50 well-preserved houses have been excavated, situated along cobblestone streets. These streets either followed the contours of the site, or cut across them, providing for ascent and descent. None were suitable for wheeled traffic. The plans of the houses at Gournia vary depending on the shape of the block they are built on, but most had similar sets of rooms. These included a vestibule, a hall or general living space, storage and work areas, as well as residential rooms on the second floor.

Gournia appears to have been a regional production centre of bronze tools and weapons, judging from the artefacts discovered there. Among these were saws, chisels, needles, fishing hooks, hammers, domestic objects, and pottery and stone vases. The inhabitants worked mainly in agriculture, stockbreeding, fishing, building, textile weaving and pottery. A large, palatial building was probably the administrative centre of the town, and its size suggests it had a role in the administration of the region. Nearby was a public court and shrine. Gournia seems to have been a trade centre with overseas connections to other parts of the Aegean and Near East. Evidence comes from Gournia's harbour complex, which consisted of a wharf, a ship shed, fortifications, a cobbled street and terracing.

Zakros

The town of Zakros is situated in the bottom of a steep-sided valley on the east coast of Crete and surrounds the palace that was built after the establishment of the town. Zakros shows evidence of sophisticated town planning with a complex network of stone-paved roads. Housing blocks contained two to four houses, many of which had multiple rooms and two or sometimes three storeys. They featured storage rooms – large rooms with benches and central supports. Both olive oil and wine presses have been found in the town, the large quantity of the latter suggesting that the palace was supplied by the town. It is also thought that the town wine was exported to the islands of the Cyclades to the north.

In light of the evidence for many crafts and industries at the palace of Zakros, such as stone and ivory carving, it is not unlikely that many of the craftsmen and artisans lived in the town and worked at the palace. House A in the town has been a major source of **sealings**, or seal impressions, leading to its interpretation as a customs house. Its role would have been to monitor the movement of goods inland after their arrival in the port. One particular seal engraver has been identified by archaeologist Judith Weingarten as the 'Zakro Master' due to his characteristic style. Examples of his work have been found at Agia Triada, Knossos, Katsamba and Sklavokambos. As these seals were used to secure documents and containers, we have evidence of dealings between these sites at various levels.

sealing
an impression left in clay from the application of a carved stone seal; also known as a seal impression

3.5 Understanding and using the sources

Source 17

1 What functions does Dickinson suggest for Minoan towns?

3.5 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** Why is the presence of model tubs in Prepalatial tombs significant?
   - **b** What does the discovery of sets of craftsmen's tools at Knossos, Malia, Zakro and also at Agia Triada suggest?
   - **c** What is suggested by the presence of murex remains at Knossos and Malia in the First Palace Period?
   - **d** What was the economic role of Gournia?
2 Writing task: What roles did the towns of Gournia and Zakros play in the Minoan economy?

3.6

Trade and economic exchange

Crete occupied a strategic position in the Mediterranean Sea, being roughly equidistant from southern Italy, Egypt and the coast of the **Levant**. Moreover, a short island-hop to the north-east linked Crete to Asia Minor. The Aegean was linked to long-distance maritime trading networks that extended from Sardinia in the west to the Levant in the east and Egypt to the south. The Minoans were able to use these networks to import and export goods and products, which included their art and artists. Source 19 illustrates Crete's trading relationships with its Mediterranean neighbours.

Levant
the lands bordering the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea

MINOAN TRADE

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 19 Minoan trading partners in the Mediterranean

Concept of thalassocracy

thalassocracy
the government of a nation having control over large expanses of the seas; a maritime empire

Thucydides
an ancient Greek historian who wrote *History of the Peloponnesian War*, c. 460–400 BC

The First Palace period is the period when the Minoans are considered to have exercised their maximum influence in the Aegean region. This has been referred to as a **thalassocracy** or maritime empire. This term was used by **Thucydides** in the 5th century BC, who wrote about Minos, his navy and his colonisation of the Cyclades, installing his sons as governors of the islands. The existence of a Minoan thalassocracy has been a matter of debate for some decades since Arthur Evans' acceptance of the concept was first questioned. Archaeological evidence indicates that there were settlements of Minoans in the Late Bronze Age at Kastri on Kythera and possibly at Trianda on Rhodes. There is

also evidence of strong Minoan influence at Ayia Irini, Phylakopi and especially at Akrotiri on Thera where Linear A texts (see 3.15 Minoan writing) have been found. However, there is no evidence that any of these sites were subjected to Minoan rule as part of a maritime empire.

Occupations, crafts and industry

Excavations have revealed a wide range of tools, which provide evidence of the different specialist craftsmen who worked in Crete throughout the Bronze Age. Sets of these tools have been found at Knossos, Malia, Zakros and also at Agia Triada. For example, the South Workshop Quarter at Zakros has produced bronze tools and raw materials such as a piece of rock crystal showing where pinheads of varying size had been removed. The Lapidary's workshop at Malia has produced raw materials, finished and unfinished artefacts and tools, and is thought to have belonged to a chain of workshops.

Source 20 summarises some of the Minoan craftsmen and the specialist tools that have been found.

SOURCE 20 Craftsmen and some of their tools

CRAFT	TOOLS
Metalworkers	Hammers, axes (single and double), anvils, nails, moulds used for casting metal objects
Stone carvers	Chisels, hollow drills, stone wedges (to keep the artefact steady while being worked)
Tanners and leather workers	**Scudding knives**, scrapers
Stonemasons and carpenters	Large two-handled saws
Seal engravers	**Bow drills**, **awls**, **burins**
Potters	Potter's wheel (Knossos)

Evidence exists for production of some artefacts and materials on an industrial scale. The production of pottery, bronze and carved stone is considered in this category.

Pottery industry

The earliest Minoan pottery is thought to have been made by women as a type of cottage industry. From the First Palace period onwards, the potters are considered to have been mainly gifted male artists, who lived and worked in the palaces. The introduction of the potter's wheel in this period revolutionised the pottery industry and there was a development of uniform styles that changed from generation to generation. The various types of pottery vessels were crafted for local use, including storage of perishables and other products such as grain, oil, wine and textiles. They were also produced for trade. Luxury vessels such as Kamares ware or Marine-style vases have been found throughout Crete and the Aegean region, indicating the importance of the pottery industry to the Minoan economy.

Bronze-making industry

The furnaces found at Phaestos and Zakros, the metallurgy workshop at Chrysokamino and the remains of **slag** at Malia are evidence of the importance of the smelting of metal on Crete, particularly bronze-making. The site of Chrysokamino was used from early times until its

scudding knife
a semi-circular knife used to remove the 'scud' (i.e. fat, lime salts, wool pigments etc.) from skins in the process of making leather

bow drill
a prehistoric drilling tool worked by a bow and string

awl
a small pointed tool used for piercing holes in materials such as leather

burin
a stone tool with a head like a chisel

slag
stony waste matter separated from metals during the smelting or refining of ore

abandonment after 1400 BC, for firing copper minerals imported from other regions of the Aegean like Kythnos in the Cycladic islands or Lavrio on the Greek mainland. Its coastal location in north-eastern Crete allowed for the utilisation of strong winds to heat the coals continuously at high temperature and remove fumes. From c. 1500 BC workers at the furnace replaced arsenic with tin as an additive to the molten copper, resulting in the production of high-quality bronze.

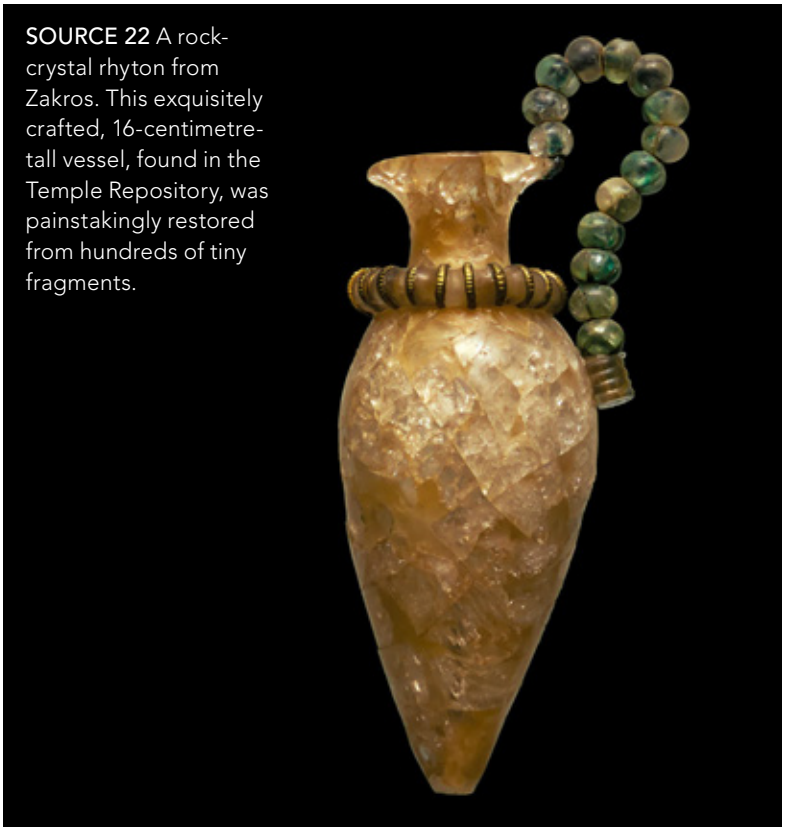
Stone-carving industry

Minoan craftsmen clearly excelled at stone carving, attested by the many examples of their work that have been found, for example the 50 or more exceptional stone vases recovered from the treasury of the palace at Zakros. These were all produced using advanced technology (see Sources 22 and 33). Lefteris Platon, specialist in prehistoric archaeology, comments on the relationship between this industry and the palaces in Source 21.

SOURCE 21

The fact that creations very similar to those from Zakros have been found not only at Knossos but also at other sites in Crete makes it likely that all the outstanding works were fashioned by a limited number of artists, whose prowess had been acknowledged – and then appropriately exploited – by the rulers of the palaces.

L. Platon, 'Shepherds and farmers, craftsmen and artists', *From the Land of the Labyrinth: Minoan Crete, 3000–1100 BC*, Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, New York, 2008, p. 65



SOURCE 22 A rock-crystal rhyton from Zakros. This exquisitely crafted, 16-centimetre-tall vessel, found in the Temple Repository, was painstakingly restored from hundreds of tiny fragments.

Purple dye industry

Evidence suggests that the purple dye industry, which produced the 'royal purple', so highly prized in the ancient world, began on Crete. The raw material for the production of the purple dye was a liquid, obtained directly from the glands of the murex mollusc. Each murex shell produced only a few drops of the liquid, which was then boiled in salt water and left to ferment to create the dye. Hundreds of murex molluscs were needed to produce usable quantities of dye. A large surface deposit of crushed murex shells was found on the hill of Kastri at Palaikastro in eastern Crete, suggesting it was a site of purple dye production. Murex remains have also been found on the nearby island of Kouphonisi, as well as at the First Palace period levels of Kastri on the Aegean island of Kythera, and at the palaces of Knossos and Malia.

Technology

The technological achievements of the Minoans can be seen clearly in their arts and crafts. Highly sophisticated technology can also be observed in the development of Minoan architecture, which featured multi-storeyed structures and monumental staircases. It can be seen in their development of plumbing and drainage systems that were far ahead of their time. Source 23 summarises features of the Minoans' use of technology.

SOURCE 23 Minoan technology

TECHNOLOGY	DETAILS	USE
Building materials	• Houses – rubble masonry, mudbrick, timber, stone, earth and clay	• Staircases – wood, some stone • Walls – stone foundations with mud mortar strengthened with timbers, or mud mortar and small stones
	• Palaces – same materials as above used differently, with the addition of stone (limestone, coloured and variegated stones, gypsum), lime plaster, **stucco** and cement	• Ground-floor walls – rubble in mud mortar strengthened with vertical timbers • Upper floors – mudbrick strengthened with vertical timbers • **Orthostats** used in First Palace period for important **façades** • Timber – roof beams, door and window frames, round columns (wider at the top than at the bottom, set on stone bases), decoration • Stone – thresholds, floor paving, staircases, benches, square pillars on square **plinths**, decoration
Techniques and construction	• Pier-and-door partition or **polythyron**	• A device for supporting the ceilings of large rooms; enabled circulation and control of large numbers of people
	• 'Minoan Hall'	• Provided space for large groups of people
	• Lustral basin or sunken chamber (*adyton*)	• Ritual use
	• Monumental staircases	• Provided access to structures (Phaestos); supported multi-level structures using columns and space (Knossos)
	• Columns	• Provided structural support; **colonnades**
	• Light wells	• Provided illumination (the central court acts as a very large light well)
Ashlar masonry	• **Dressed blocks** of stone laid in regular **courses**	• Used in significant areas, e.g. façades of courts, light wells, entrances
Drainage and water supply	• Open stone-lined channels	• Present from the first palaces at Knossos and Phaestos; kept water off staircases, courts
	• Terracotta piping	• Captured storm water from roofs, paved courts and light wells
	• Reservoirs	• Water cistern and fountain at Zakros • Circular reservoirs with descending steps at Arkhanes and Knossos
	• Toilets (seats installed over channels)	• Sewage flushed away with run-off water

stucco
a fine plaster used for decoration of interior walls, floors and benches

orthostat
a rectangular stone block built into the lower portion of a wall so that it seems to 'stand upright' rather than lie on its side

façade
the front of a building that faces onto a street or open space

plinth
a square slab at the base of a column

polythyron (*pl.* polythyra)
meaning 'many doors'; a large room with pier-and-door partitions

colonnade
a row of columns

dressed block
stone that has been worked to a desired shape, with smooth faces ready for installation

course
a continuous row of masonry such as brick or stone

SOURCE 24 Drainage channels at Agia Triada

3.6 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 19–21

1. List the imports and exports, their origins and destinations.
2. What is the significance of Crete's geographical position?
3. What important observation about Minoan craftsmanship and technology does Platon make in Source 21?

3.6 Check your learning

1. Recreate the mind map at right to make notes on the Minoan economy, using the headings given, information from this chapter and your own research.
2. What is the nature of the debate regarding a Minoan thalassocracy? What kind of archaeological evidence would be required to indicate a Minoan maritime empire?
3. Why did the introduction of the potter's wheel revolutionise the pottery industry?
4. Research the bow drill and its importance in the craft of seal engraving.
5. Why was bronze-making such an important industry?

6. Revisit the Aegean Minoan 3D GIS Project using Google Earth to have a look at the places the Minoans traded with and had influence over. Search online for 'Archaeological sites of the Aegean Minoans'.
7. Writing task (extended response): With reference to Source 19 and other sources, what do sources reveal about Minoan economic activity?

3.7 Religion

It is extremely difficult to determine the nature of a religion when the only evidence available consists of unidentified artefacts. Imagine trying to work out what Christianity or Islam are about, without the written texts that are available to us. Fortunately, many of the existing artefacts have been found in contexts that enable us to identify them as cult objects, either associated with the rituals of worship or offerings made by followers of the cult. Context can also enable us to determine the function of some ritual objects.

monotheistic relating to a religion in which one god is worshipped

polytheistic relating to a religion in which many gods are worshipped

Arthur Evans developed a model of Minoan religion in the 1920s that has been very influential. He proposed that Minoan religion was essentially **monotheistic**, centred on a goddess of fertility – a mother or earth goddess. The annual death and rebirth of her young consort symbolised the agricultural cycle of the death and regrowth of plants. Several archaeologists still subscribe to his theories. Other archaeologists follow Martin Nilsson, who, writing in the 1950s, argued that Minoan religion was **polytheistic**.

It is sometimes possible to identify sacred sites and symbols, and even rituals from the archaeological sources. However, determining the belief system in which these things were significant remains almost impossible. All we can do is draw possible conclusions.

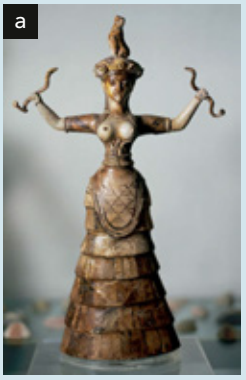
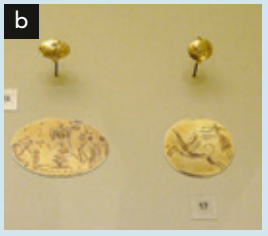
Nature and identity of deities

The most difficult challenge in understanding Minoan religion is to identify the Minoan deities. For example, the discovery of female figurines from the early Prepalatial period in caves, tombs and the settlement of Myrtos led archaeologists to conclude that Minoan religion was preoccupied with fertility. Many of these figurines had pierced breasts enabling milk to pour through them when they were used as ritual vessels. Whether these vessels represented actual goddesses is impossible to determine.

There are many artefacts from later periods that appear to depict goddesses, so it has been argued that a female deity or deities were central to Minoan religion. Some artefacts that can be used to discuss female divinity are described in Source 26.

SOURCE 25 One of the faience statuettes found at Knossos, commonly referred to as Snake Goddess figurines

SOURCE 26 Sources for female divinity

ARTEFACT	DESCRIPTION
a  The Snake Goddess figurine from the Temple **Repositories** at Knossos	• This figurine is identified as an image of the so-called 'Snake Goddess'. She stands 35 centimetres high and holds two snakes in her outstretched hands. She is dressed in flounced skirts with a tightly fitting bodice that exposes her breasts. • Another figurine found with her has snakes entwined around her arms, waist and headdress (see previous page). • The context in which these figurines were found, in a ritual area adjacent to the Throne Room at Knossos, suggests religious significance.
b  Two gold rings from the Phourni cemetery at Arkhanes, Second Palace period, c. 1600–1500 BC	These gold ring bezels depict female figures in religious contexts. • Left: The female is accompanied by two male figures. One embraces a rock, the other pulls the branches off a tree growing from a structure that has been identified as a shrine. The female figure is dressed in a similar fashion to the figurine in (a). • Right: The female figure hovers behind a griffin.
c A seal impression of the so-called 'Mistress of Animals' from Knossos	This seal impression depicts a female figure standing on top of what appears to be a mountain. She is flanked by two **rampant** lionesses. On the left of the bezel is a structure, possibly a shrine topped with what are known as 'horns of consecration' (see 3.8 Religious symbols). The female figure holds out a staff towards a male figure, who is shown in what is thought to be a pose of worship or salute.

repository
a place, room or container where things can be deposited or stored

rampant
a heraldic term describing an animal represented in profile, standing on its hind feet with its forefeet in the air and tail raised

libation formulae
religious inscriptions on cups, ladles and other vessels used in the offerings of oil and other liquids

Linear A and Linear B evidence for Minoan religion

The only textual evidence we have for Minoan religion comes from the Linear A and Linear B tablets (see 3.15 Minoan writing). Linear A, though largely undeciphered, has been found in some religious contexts, most importantly in **libation formulae**. Linear B tablets, found on Crete at Knossos and Khania, can be read but mostly reflect the concerns of the Mycenaean administration in the later period of the Mycenaean occupation. However, linguistic evidence for six Minoan deities has been identified in the Linear B tablets from Knossos. The evidence comes from a group of tablets that record offerings of oil to gods, religious sanctuaries and religious personnel. The authors of an extensive study, 'The Minoan Goddess(es): Textual Evidence for Minoan Religion', Joann Gulizio and Dimitri Nakassis, have identified what they consider to be the names of six Minoan divinities; that is, deities that are not mentioned on the Linear B tablets from mainland Greece. These names are *pa-de, qe-ra-si-ja, pi-pi-tu-na*, *mba?-ti, si-ja-ma-to* and *pa-sa-ja*. Moreover, they argue that the word *pa-si-te-o-i*, which appears in the offering formulae, is used to mean something like 'to all the gods not specifically stated'. Arguments for some of these deity names being solely Minoan include:

- *pi-pi-tu-na* – the linguistic features of the word added to the fact that this deity is only honoured at Knossos

- *pa-de* – the linguistic features of the word and the fact that this name is found on eight different tablets at Knossos and a wider variety of tablets than any other name. The palace officials seem to have given offerings to this deity from the earliest recorded tablets
- *si-ja-ma-to* – the linguistic features of this name suggest that it belonged to a male deity.

Male divinity

Perhaps because of the abundant representations of female figures in artefacts associated with religion, male divinity has received less attention. As with female figures, we need to ask whether the males depicted on artefacts are gods or priests or worshippers. The ways in which some are depicted suggest that they represent male deities. Source 27 shows some of these. Males are also shown on ring bezels hovering in the air, armed or unarmed, sometimes with **figure-of-eight shields**. These might depict male deities, the names or responsibilities of which are not available to us.

figure-of-eight shield
a large shield made of bull's hide in the shape of a figure of eight

SOURCE 27 Sources for male divinity

ARTEFACT	DESCRIPTION
a A Minoan gold pendant from the Aegina treasure in the British Museum	This gold pendant found on the island of Aegina, dated to between 1850 and 1550 BC, is thought to be of Minoan craftsmanship. It shows a male figure standing among lotus flowers and grasping two geese by their necks. This pose is considered to identify him as a deity, usually called the 'Master of Animals'. His dress and the **stylised** bull's horns he stands in show the Minoan **iconography** of the artefact, while the lotuses and the **frontality** of the figure's stance indicate a clear Egyptian influence.
b The Palaikastro *Kouros* found in the town of Palaikastro, c. 1480–1425 BC	The Palaikastro *Kouros* is an ivory, gold, stone and rock crystal figurine from the 15th century BC. It was found at Palaikastro, in what has been interpreted as a town sanctuary. The excavators think it is linked to finds from a later period associated with **Zeus**. His arms are in the usual Minoan worshipper pose, with hands clenched at chest height. Evidence of **tangs** on the feet indicate that it was originally displayed on a stand.
c The 'Master Impression': a seal impression found at Kasteli, Khania, Second Palace period, c. 1450 BC	This seal impression, dating to c. 1450 BC, depicts a male figure with a staff standing on top of a multi-storeyed building located on a beachfront. The building features horns of consecration on the roof. It was found at Khania in north-western Crete.

stylised
represented with an emphasis on a particular style, especially one in which there are only a few simple details

iconography
the study and interpretation of the visual images and symbols used in a work of art

frontality
the representation of the front view of figures or objects in a work of art

Zeus
the king of the gods in Greek mythology

tangs
projections designed to hold an object firmly in a base

SOURCE 28 The lid of the Mochlos *pyxis* or box, made of elephant ivory, found in 2010 at Mochlos. A figure interpreted as a goddess sits beneath a tree shrine with a lily in her left hand. A procession of two men and two women approach her.

3.7 Understanding and using the sources

Source 26

1 What features of the figurine in (a) suggest that she could be a goddess?
2 What is the possible significance of the snakes?
3 Apart from representing a goddess, how else could the figurine be interpreted? Consider the context in which it was found.
4 What features of the ring bezel in (b) suggest that the female figure could be a goddess?
5 What features of (c) justify interpreting the female figure as a 'Mistress of Animals'?

Source 27

6 What features of (a) justify interpreting the male figure as a 'Master of Animals'?
7 What evidence suggests that the figurine in (b) represents a deity?
8 Why might the male figure in (c) be identified as a god?
9 How else could the male figure in (c) be interpreted? Why?

3.7 Check your learning

1 What evidence do the Linear A and B tablets provide about Minoan religion?
2 What problems do the Linear A and Linear B tablets raise?
3 What have Joann Gulizio and Dimitri Nakassis discovered about Minoan deities from their study of the linguistic features of Linear B? Why is their contribution significant?
4 Read Joann Gulizio and Dimitri Nakassis' paper, 'The Minoan goddess(es): textual evidence for Minoan religion'. Search online for *KE-RA-ME-JA: Studies Presented to Cynthia W. Shelmerdine*, on Google Books.
5 Find images of the female figurines from Myrtos. What is your opinion of their religious significance? Search online for 'Goddess of Myrtos'.
6 Do some reading about the 'Mistress of Animals' and the 'Snake Goddesses'. Be prepared to find a lot of material related to modern paganism and mother goddess worship. Use your source analysis skills to decide which interpretations are valid and which cannot be supported by the evidence.

3.8 Religious symbols

The most dominant symbols associated with Minoan religion include the *labrys* and the horns of consecration. The bull, along with other creatures such as snakes and birds, as well as trees and rocks, featured prominently as religious motifs.

ubiquitous
appearing or found everywhere

votive offering
an object deposited in a sacred place for religious purposes

peak sanctuary
a religious site situated on a high mountain ridge

motif
a decorative image or design, usually repeated to form a pattern

larnax (*pl.* larnakes)
a small closed coffin or box used as a container for human remains

Labrys

The double-headed axe, both as a symbol and as an actual artefact, is **ubiquitous** in Crete. There is no evidence, however, that the word *labrys* was ever used by Minoans to refer to such an axe. It does not occur in Linear A inscriptions. As with many things to do with the Minoans, the word *labrys* has taken on legitimacy through use. Examples of double axes found in religious settings include:

- huge bronze double axes from Nirou Khani
- **votive offerings** in precious metals such as gold and bronze, many from **peak sanctuaries** and caves, for example Arkalochori cave
- double axes represented in frescoes, vases, ring bezels, usually set in the top of stone bases or between horns of consecration
- double axes scratched into pillars and pots (see Source 35).

SOURCE 29 Minoan double axes in the Heraklion Archaeological Museum

SOURCE 30 South Propylon or entrance to Knossos and the nearby horns of consecration

Horns of consecration

'Horns of consecration' is the term coined by Arthur Evans to describe several types of what appear to be stylised bull's horns. It has been suggested that they could also symbolise the crescent moon, or rising sun. The main types are:

- architectural – huge stone or terracotta objects found on rooflines or associated with outdoor religious places and altars
- stands (supports) for other cult equipment – these include double axes, rhyta and tree branches
- artistic representations – used as **motifs** on frescoes, vases, seals and **larnakes**
- small models – used as votive offerings.

SOURCE 31 A bull's-head rhyton made of serpentine, found in the Little Palace at Knossos

The bull

The bull occupied a special place in Minoan culture. Bull motifs abound in art: on vases, as rhyton shapes, in frescoes, on seals and in statuary. They appear to have had a central role in religion, judging from the many times they appear in symbols, myths, cult equipment, as participants in ritual and as votive offerings. The reason for the bull's popularity is unknown, but it might have been associated with his strength, power and fertility.

Bull sports or bull-leaping, activities known to us from frescoes and figurines, have been interpreted at length by several scholars. The locations where these activities took place, what they involved, the sex of the participants and the significance of bull-leaping have all been contested. Considering the bull's role in a variety of cult activities, it seems fair to conclude that bull-leaping, while clearly providing entertainment for the spectators, was essentially related to the bull cult.

Snakes

Snakes were features of many ancient religions and also figured prominently in Minoan religion. They are most easily recognised in the 'Snake Goddess' figurines from Knossos (Sources 25 and 26a). The reasons for the importance of snakes could be:

- their ability to shed their skin and undergo renewal
- their usual habitat close to the earth
- the power of their venom.

These attributes made them powerful symbols of fertility. Snakes are depicted on figurines, gliding up staircases (Phaestos) and looped on snake tubes or stands such as those found at Gournia.

Trees

The presence of trees in many cultic scenes, particularly on ring bezels, suggests that trees had religious significance for the Minoans. Ecstatic dancing, described in 3.10 Religious rituals, seems to have sometimes involved the shaking of branches, as well as pulling them from trees. The Ring of Minos (see Source 32), depicts a scene featuring trees. Two figures, one male and one female, appear to be pulling trees set in built structures. The scholar George Rethemiotakis thinks that this depicts tree worship, but archaeologist Peter Warren thinks the tree-pulling is designed to call the deity to the ritual scene. It has been suggested that 'tree-pulling' may have been associated with an epiphany, indicated by the presence of the floating deity at the top right of the bezel.

There might have been a relationship between tree worship and column worship. Scholar Gae Callender thinks that the veneration of columns began as a native Cretan practice. It could be that columns were worshipped indoors, for example in palace shrines and pillar crypts, while trees were worshipped at outdoor shrines.

SOURCE 32 The Ring of Minos, Heraklion Museum

Birds

Birds, mainly doves and ravens, are depicted in various religious contexts. Their significance is as yet undetermined. Contexts include:

- bird rhyta and models
- on ring bezels
- perched on double-axe stands, such as on the Agia Triada Sarcophagus
- on terracotta models, for example a tree with perching birds from Agia Triada
- on goddess figurines of the Third Palace period, for example from Karphi.

3.8 Check your learning

1 As you continue your study of Minoan society, keep a file of examples of the ways in which symbols are used in religion. You can create a table like the one below, using the examples given in the text. You could also include pictures of the examples you find. A couple have been modelled for you.

SYMBOL	NAME AND TYPE OF ARTEFACT	LOCATION
Bull	Bull's-head rhyton – cult equipment	Little Palace at Knossos Palace at Zakro
Snake	'Snake Goddess' figurine – cult statue	Temple repository at Knossos

2 Research bull-leaping and the contested issues involved. Jeremy McInerney's online article, 'Bulls and bull-leaping in the Minoan world' is a good starting point.

3 Find out more about the Ring of Minos and epiphanies. You can start by searching online for 'Minoan Epiphany – Ring of Minos – Epiphany Cycle'.

4 Writing tasks (short answers):

a What was the role of snakes in Minoan society?

b Outline the significance of trees in Minoan religion.

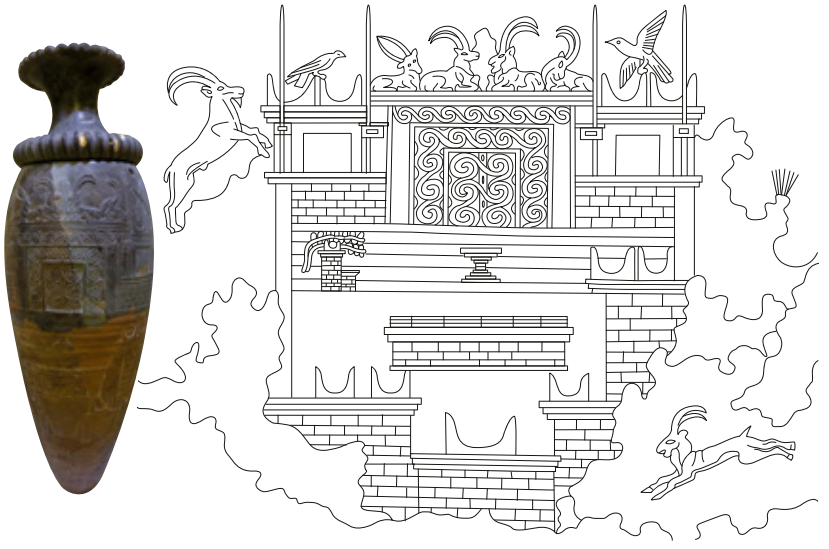
3.9

Religious places

Worship at natural sites that were some distance from settlements was a distinctive feature of Minoan religion. These included sites that were in the open air as well as in caves. Some scholars argue that these natural sites were the most important of all worship sites. Other sites where religious rituals took place were shrines within buildings, including palaces, villas, houses and tombs.

Peak sanctuaries

These important communal cult centres were located in high places with views of the surrounding countryside, but not always on the highest peaks of mountains. Peak sanctuaries flourished in the First Palace period, but by the Second Palace period their numbers had fallen from 25 to eight. They consisted of one or more rock terraces that might be surrounded by a wall. The rituals took place on a flat rock or cairn of stones. Examples of peak sanctuaries include those at Mount Juktas, Petsophas and Atsipadhes. A stone vase found at Zakros bears a representation of a structure that is believed to be a peak sanctuary.



SOURCE 33
A representation of the peak sanctuary found on a stone rhyton from Zakros

Numerous votive offerings have been found at peak sanctuary sites. They include clay figurines of humans and animals, models of food, representations of body parts (such as heads, legs and torsos), beetles, birds and snakes. These appear to have been thrown into fires or placed in fissures between rocks. The reasons for making the offerings possibly included thanksgiving, or requests for protection, help or healing.

Cave shrines

Cave shrines were an important type of cult site that appeared at approximately the same time as peak sanctuaries. Ritual practices took place deep within the cave, some associated with **stalagmites** and stone offering places. Caves like the ones at Psychro, Kamares and Amnisos provide evidence of ritual practices such as the pouring of libations, drinking and feasting.

stalagmite
a column rising from the floor of a cave, formed of calcium salts deposited by dripping water

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Evidence for the varied offerings found in caves comes from:

- Arkalochori – a large number of metal offerings, including bronze, silver and gold double axes, bronze replicas of swords and copper ingots
- Kamares – a heap of grain
- Psychro – deposits of male and female bronze worshipper figurines, models of double axes, real and model weapons, sealstones and jewellery
- Kato Symi – bronze figurines, many stone vessels, libation tables and clay **chalices**.

chalice
a large cup or goblet

Palace shrines

Palaces featured shrines of different types that shared common elements; for example:

- access through an anteroom
- narrow benches against one or more walls
- central features such as hearths, sometimes sunk into the floor.

SOURCE 34 A section of the 'Grandstand Fresco' from Knossos, featuring what has been identified as the Tripartite Shrine on the west side of the Central Court

The Second Palace period has provided a wealth of material related to religious practice. As well as frescoes, sealstones and vases featuring religious motifs, many of the important buildings had complexes of rooms that have been identified as related to ritual and ceremony. Some scholars like Nanno Marinatos and Geraldine Gesell argue that during this period the elite took over access to ritual areas within the palaces. They believe that even though some rituals were performed for large audiences that would have gathered in the courts, they were still organised and carried out by the elite members of society. Examples of palace shrines include:

- the Throne Room complex at Knossos – artefacts found here, as well as the frescoes of griffins and palm trees and the lustral basin, indicate that this was an area used primarily for religious purposes
- tripartite shrines – these structures, consisting of three sections, one higher than the other two, columns and horns of consecration, have been identified at Knossos on the west side of the Central Court, at Vathypetro, and as motifs on rings and frescoes
- central and western courts – the central courts had cult rooms on their western sides. Rituals appear to have been held in the courts themselves as indicated by the presence of altars at Phaestos, Malia and Gournia, and the evidence from the 'Grandstand Fresco' (see Source 34). The western courts appear to have been the locations for more public rituals, perhaps even accessible to people from surrounding towns. The 'Sacred Grove Fresco' (see Source 39) appears to depict dancing associated with a ritual held in the West Court at Knossos. Nanno Marinatos believes that such rituals were associated with harvest and offering of grain, citing the granaries at Knossos and Phaestos as evidence.

SOURCE 35 A pillar from a pillar crypt at Knossos. The incised double axes are clearly visible, as is the channel around its base.

SOURCE 36 Steps leading down to the lustral basin in the Throne Room complex at Knossos

Pillar crypts

These were rectangular cult rooms usually located on the western side of the central court. They contained up to three square pillars, some with channels encircling their bases for the collection of liquid offerings. Several pillars were incised with double axe symbols. Stands for double axes have been found associated with pillar crypts, as well as bull's-head rhyta. These crypts also appear in tombs.

Lustral basins

These cult rooms were named by Arthur Evans. They are also referred to as *adyta* (*sing. adyton*). Found in most of the palaces and villas, they feature L-shaped staircases leading to sunken basins lined with gypsum, plaster or cement. Their ritual purpose is indicated by the artefacts found in them, for example rhyta, horns of consecration and bronze double axes. The plastered upper walls of *adyta* were sometimes decorated with frescoes depicting religious themes. The absence of drains in *adyta* suggests that any use of water in these areas was likely to have been poured from rhyta rather than used for bathing purposes.

3.9 Check your learning

1 What conclusions can be drawn from:
   - **a** the male and female bronze worshipper figurines, models of double axes, real and model weapons, sealstones and jewellery found in some caves?
   - **b** the hoard of metal objects found in the cave at Arkalochori?

2 Writing task. Outline the role of the following in Minoan society:
   - **a** palace shrines
   - **b** peak sanctuaries
   - **c** lustral basins
   - **d** pillar crypts.

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3.10 Religious rituals

The range of religious places previously described provides evidence of Minoan ritual activity. While it is possible to reconstruct what the ritual activities involved, we can only make educated guesses at why they were practised.

Sacrifice

There is ample evidence that the Minoans practised animal sacrifice. While votive offerings of clay bulls at peak sanctuaries suggest symbolic sacrifice, the painted sarcophagus found at Agia Triada depicts animal sacrifice for funerary purposes in some detail (see Source 37). Evidence that human sacrifice was practised comes from a First Palace period sanctuary excavated at Anemospilia, near Arkhanes, in 1991. One of the four human skeletons found inside the sanctuary, with a bronze dagger among the bones, belonged to an 18-year-old male who had been trussed in a similar fashion to the bull shown in Source 37. It is thought that an earthquake destroyed the sanctuary at the very moment of sacrifice. Further evidence of human sacrifice comes from a building at Knossos in which the remains of four children were found. The bones bore cuts indicating that the flesh had been removed with a knife. Other finds at the site suggest that the meat had most probably been cooked and eaten. In 2012, pieces of a young girl's skull dating from c. 1280 BC were found mixed with fragments of animal skulls in a dig at Khania, near ancient Kydonia. The skull had been broken in a manner consistent with animal sacrifice.

SOURCE 37 The Agia Triada Sarcophagus, c. 1600–1380 BC, depicts a trussed bull on an altar and two small animals beneath awaiting sacrifice.

SOURCE 38 The 'Cup-bearer' from the 'Procession Fresco', Knossos

Libations

The large number of rhyta found at many sites indicates the importance of libations as a Minoan religious ritual. A libation is a liquid offering, often of wine, honey, oil, water or milk, that is poured onto a religious object like an altar, into the channel surrounding a pillar, as in a pillar crypt, or directly onto the earth. The latter are likely to be for the dead or for gods associated with the earth, known as **chthonic** gods.

Minoan rhyta used for pouring libations come in a variety of shapes and media. Typical are the conical ones made from carved stone and often covered with gold leaf, which are represented in Source 38. They could also be animal shaped, for example lions and bulls (Source 31), and even in the shape of shells, like the carved **triton** shell found at Malia.

Processions

Several sources provide evidence of processions as common ritual practice:

- The 'Procession Fresco' from Knossos shows young men carrying rhyta into the palace (Source 38).
- The Agia Triada Sarcophagus (Source 37) depicts a funerary procession outside a tomb.
- The Harvester Vase from Agia Triada (Source 13) features a procession of male agricultural workers led by a priest shaking a **sistrum**.
- The raised causeways seen at Knossos, Malia and Phaestos, and depicted in the 'Sacred Grove Fresco' (Source 39), are thought to have been pathways for processions.

Dance

chthonic
relating to the deities and other beings that dwell beneath the earth

triton
a large mollusc that has a tall spiral shell

sistrum
an ancient percussion instrument designed to rattle when shaken

Dance seems to have played an important role in ritual practice. The 'Sacred Grove Fresco' (Source 39) shows a number of female dancers performing near what appears to be the Theatral Area at Knossos. This could have taken place in conjunction with the processions using the causeways. Several small clay models, like those found at Palaikastro and the ***tholos* tomb** at Kamilari, depict dancers, some performing in a circle. The contexts of these models indicate that the dancing was ritual in nature.

Dance of an **ecstatic** nature is depicted on several ring bezels, associated with the epiphany of the deity. Archaeologist Peter Warren believes that ecstatic dancing summoned the god from 'on high'. The deity was then welcomed with a gesture of salute by the priests or priestesses present. The Isopata Ring (Source 40) provides evidence for both ecstatic dance and epiphany. It depicts two dancers raising their arms in worship of a goddess appearing in the distance as a floating figure.

SOURCE 39 The reconstructed 'Sacred Grove Fresco' from Knossos

SOURCE 40 A bezel from the Isopata Ring, c. 1450 BC

3.10 Understanding and using the sources

Source 37

1 What religious symbols can be seen in the animal sacrifice scene on the Agia Triada Sarcophagus?

2 What is the importance of this artefact for our knowledge of religious symbols and rituals?

3.10 Check your learning

1 What conclusions can be drawn from:
   - a the presence of a priest in the procession depicted on the Harvester Vase from Agia Triada (see Source 13)?
   - b the construction of raised causeways as part of the palace architecture?
   - c clay models of dancers found in tombs?

2 Find out more about Minoan human sacrifice at the following places:
   - a Anemospilia (search online for 'Human sacrifice Anemospilia')
   - b Knossos (search for 'Aegean Prehistoric Archaeology, Lesson 15 Minoan Religion')
   - c Kydonia (search for 'Possible evidence of human sacrifice at Minoan Chania').

3 Find images of more Minoan ring bezels. Identify those that seem to depict epiphanies like the one on the Isopata Ring. Make sure that you record the names of the rings and the details of the depictions in your notes.

4 Writing tasks:
   - a What is known about ritual sacrifice in this period?
   - b What does evidence reveal about religious rituals in Minoan society?
   - c With reference to Source 40 (Isopata Ring) and other sources, what does the evidence reveal about religious people and sacred places in this period? (Write an extended response to this question.)

***tholos* tomb (*pl. tholoi*)**
a type of Minoan tomb that was usually round in shape with one short entrance, popular in the Prepalatial and First Palace periods

ecstatic
involving an experience of mystic self-transcendence, i.e. when a person overcomes the limits of the individual self by means of spiritual contemplation

3.11 Funerary customs and rituals

Neolithic
relating to the New Stone Age, which began about 10 000 years ago

inhumation
the act of burial

Communal burial was favoured by the Minoans from as early as the **Neolithic** period. The earliest burials were made in caves and rock shelters, then later in tombs. These were community tombs that continued in use over several generations. If a settlement was small it might have only one tomb to serve everyone. The Minoans practised **inhumation**, evidence of cremation being extremely rare. On each occasion the body was laid on the floor of the tomb after previous burials had been swept aside. It was placed either on its back or on its side in a contracted or foetal position, often with the head to the east. Grave goods were placed with the body, though the numbers and types changed over time. Stone vessels, weapons, gold, silver and bronze ornaments and seals have been found. The large number of clay, conical cups found in some tombs suggests ritual consumption of food and drink after burial. This is thought to have been for honouring the dead rather than for worship.

SOURCE 41 A Minoan bath-tub *larnax* from Agios Nikolaos, Crete

Larnax

A *larnax* was a type of coffin used from the early 14th century to the 12th century BC. Its appearance in tombs is thought to reflect the concentration of wealth in the hands of local elites. The earliest form was an open rectangular box, but later *larnakes* took the form of chests with pitched lids. Their use became almost universal in the postpalatial period when the bathtub shape was popular. ***Pithoi*** and pots were also used as *larnakes*, perhaps because they were readily available. Their size made them appropriate for the burial of children, but some have been found to contain just a skull. Others contained animal bones and shells as well as human remains.

***pithos* (*pl. pithoi*)**
a very large, wide-mouthed earthenware pot used by the Minoans for storing liquids and grain, and occasionally for the burial of the dead

Ossuary

An ossuary is a storage place for bones. It was once thought that these were structures specifically built for secondary burials; that is, of the bones that remained after the flesh had decomposed and been cleaned. Evidence of burning was thought to have taken place at this time, possibly for fumigation. Now it is suggested that ossuaries were rooms within tombs that had contained primary burials. The practice of sweeping older bones aside to make way for new burials led to the accumulation of great quantities of bones. Eventually, tombs could contain hundreds of skeletons. In some cemeteries, only the skulls were stored after the rest of the bones were discarded. Some bones from early inhumations bear evidence of ritual activity such as breaking and ritual positioning of skulls.

Tombs

Tombs in Prepalatial and First Palace periods were of two types: circular or *tholos* tombs, and rectangular or house tombs. Despite this architectural difference, the culture they reflected was the same: both grave goods and funerary rituals differed little.

corbelled
when each course of stones in a building projects inwards, forming a beehive shape

SOURCE 42 Minoan tomb types

TOMB TYPE AND DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
Rectangular or house tombs • A single building with square and rectangular rooms or a series of long, parallel corridors • Walls of stone slabs built on substantial foundations, wooden doors • Probably flat roofs, maybe of earth • New rooms added to accommodate changing needs • Located at Arkhanes, Mochlos, Gournia, Palaikastro (north and east) • Many built together, mostly out of sight of villages	a Mochlos Tomb VI
***Tholos* tombs** • Free-standing circular structures, 10+ metres wide • Common on Mesara plain and elsewhere in the south • Thick walls of rubble faced with unworked stone blocks, slightly **corbelled** • Entrance on the east through a low door, which had stone **doorjambs** and **lintels** • External rooms often added for extra burials • Roofs – domed, flat or covered with branches • Used over many centuries • Visible from settlements • Used by two to four nuclear families according to Branigan • Appear individually or in groups of two or three • Located at Mochlos, Arkhanes, Kamilari, Gypsadhes, Apesokari – over 90 *tholoi* identified	b *Tholos* Tomb B at Mesara
Chamber tombs • Appeared after 1450 BC • Smaller tombs containing fewer burials • Used by the elite • Were cut into a rocky hillside • Had an entrance passage and a rectangular chamber • Chamber tombs found at Arkhanes and Armeni	c Entry to a chamber tomb at the Late Minoan cemetery at Armeni, Rethymnon

3.11 Check your learning

1 What conclusions can be drawn from:
   - **a** the use of the foetal or contracted position for the inhumation of bodies?
   - **b** the long-term use of *larnakes* in burials?
   - **c** the storage of skulls in ossuaries after the rest of the bones were discarded?
   - **d** the appearance of chamber tombs after 1450 BC?

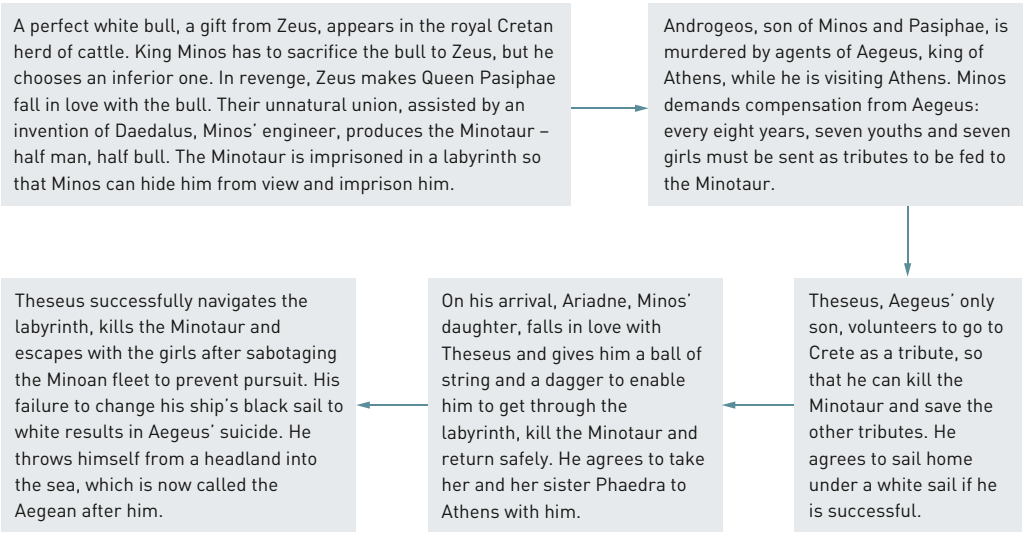
2 Research tombs and cemetaries, e.g. Mochlos, Phourni (Arkhanes), Isopata, Armeni, Apesokari cemeteries; Chrysolakkos tomb, tomb of the Double Axes, Temple tomb at Knossos.

doorjamb
the vertical post of a door frame

lintel
a horizontal support of timber or stone across the top of a door or window

3.12 Myths and legends relating to the Minoans

Some well-known Greek myths, including Theseus and the Minotaur and Icarus and Daedalus, relate to events that apparently took place on Crete, particularly at Knossos. Source 43 gives a summary of Theseus and the Minotaur.



SOURCE 43 Theseus and the Minotaur myth

Another myth takes up the story following Theseus' escape from Crete. It tells the tragic story of Daedalus, and his son, Icarus. Daedalus and Icarus are imprisoned in the labyrinth as punishment for providing the ball of string that Ariadne gave to Theseus to help him navigate his way out of the labyrinth. Minos' navy patrols the surrounding sea, so in order to escape, Daedalus makes two pairs of wings from wax and feathers, one for him and one for Icarus. Daedalus warns Icarus to follow him and not to fly too close to the sea, which would wet his wings, or too close to the sun, which would melt the wax. At first Icarus obeys, but then, he is so taken with the sensation of flying that he ignores his father's warning and flies so close to the sun that his wings melt. Without wings to keep him aloft, Icarus plummets into the sea, which now bears his name, the Icarian Sea. Daedalus reaches Sicily safely, where he goes on to achieve fame as a great inventor.

3.12 Check your learning

1. Read a more detailed version of the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur. Search online for 'Minotaur – Ancient History Encyclopedia'.
2. Watch some animated versions of the myths on YouTube.
3. Describe one significant legend associated with the Minoans.
4. Describe the main features of Minoan myths and legends.

3.13 Minoan art

The Minoans were renowned throughout the Mediterranean world for the quality and range of their arts and crafts. These included frescoes, figurines, pottery, seals and metalwork.

Frescoes

The First Palace period walls of Knossos and Phaestos were decorated with some painted plaster, but the use of frescoes became much more common in the Second Palace period, particularly at Knossos. The artists seems to have used a combination of techniques:

- *buon fresco* – the application of paint directly to wet plaster, so that it sinks in
- *fresco secco* – overpainting of details onto the dried plaster.

SOURCE 44 A reconstruction of a fresco depicting bull-leaping and grappling from Tell el-Dab'a, Egypt. It is now in the Archaeological Museum in Heraklion.

Hyksos
a Semitic people (i.e. speakers of Hebrew, Arabic or Aramaic) who ruled Egypt in the Second Intermediate period (c. 1782–c. 1570 BC) from the city of Avaris (modern Tell el Dab'a) in Lower Egypt

The designs were painted onto lime plaster, characteristic of Minoan frescoes, in colours that included black, white, red, yellow, blue and green. A few frescoes, for example the 'Prince of the Lilies Fresco', had low-relief plaster modelling before the paint was applied. The subjects are mostly drawn from nature and palace life, many in the latter category relating to the religious lives of the people. Minoan frescoes are noted for their naturalistic style, especially with birds and animals, and the way in which the painting fits the available space.

The fragmentary condition of the frescoes on discovery has necessitated their reconstruction, a process that has not always been successful. When done well, reconstruction enables us to understand aspects of Minoan life that would be obscure without them. For example, the discovery of thousands of fragments of what appear to be frescoes painted by Minoan artists in the Minoan style were found in the 1990s at Tell el-Dab'a in Egypt, the capital of the **Hyksos**. The reconstruction, shown in Source 44, provides previously unknown details of Minoan bull sports.

SOURCE 45
A Minoan bronze male figurine

Figurines

The main materials used for making figurines were ivory, faience and bronze.

Ivory from elephant tusks and hippopotamus teeth was imported to Crete and carved in palace workshops. Unworked ivory was found at Phaestos and Zakros. Probably the best example of ivory carving is the Palaikastro *Kouros* (see Source 27b), which features delicate details such as veins, fingernails and toenails.

The use of faience in Crete possibly shows an Egyptian influence. The best known faience objects are the 'Snake Goddess' figurines from the temple repositories at Knossos (see Source 26a). They are possibly the first examples of figurines fashioned in the round.

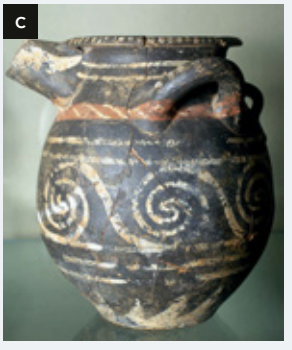
Bronze figurines were cast on Crete for several hundred years using the **lost-wax technique**. These bronzes are characterised by an intentionally rough surface. Men, women and animals were used as subjects, the men and women frequently in worshipping poses.

lost-wax technique a metal-casting method in which the figure is first moulded in wax and then covered in plaster; when the plaster is set, the wax is melted out and replaced by metal

Pottery

Pottery of various shapes, styles and decoration featured throughout the different stages of Minoan history. It served as a means for the expression of the Minoans' love of the natural world, the sea and its creatures, as well as the religion that occupied a place at the centre of their lives. The table in Source 46 summarises the key features of Minoan pottery.

SOURCE 46 Minoan pottery

PERIOD	STYLE, SHAPE	TECHNIQUES, PLACE OF PRODUCTION
Prepalatial period (EM II)	• Koumasa ware • Vasiliki ware • Spouted vessels a A terracotta side-spouted jug	• Potter's turntable used • Myrtos • Vasiliki
First Palace period (MMI, MMII)	• One-handled and conical cups b A terracotta one-handled cup • Kamares ware (named after the cave where large numbers of pots were found) c  A Kamares ware jar	• Potter's wheel (enabled mass production and thinner-walled vessels) • Uniformity of shapes/decoration indicates norms established by palace production, especially at Phaestos and Knossos • Phaestos renowned for eggshell-thin pots

PERIOD	STYLE, SHAPE	TECHNIQUES, PLACE OF PRODUCTION
Second Palace period (MMIII, LM1A)	• Introduction of large *pithoi* d *Pithoi* storage vessels from Knossos • Marine, floral, abstract, geometric styles f A Floral style vase from Phaestos • Introduction of **stirrup jar** shape • **Collared rhyton** common	• Expansion of agriculture/trade required larger pots for storage/ transport/trade • *Larnakes* first produced (see Source 41) • High point of pottery industry in both aesthetics and trade e A Marine style vase from Palaikastro
Third Palace period (LMII)	• Palace style g A Palace style vase from Knossos • Introduction of new forms, e.g. ***kylix***, ***alabastron***, **amphora**	• Distinct change reflected in Mycenaean occupation of Crete, centred on Knossos • Focus on function – for storage, trade h A Palace style storage vessel

stirrup jar
a pottery container for oil or wine featuring a spout and small handles on either side of the neck

collared rhyton
a pear-shaped ritual vessel with a beaded collar and narrow neck

kylix
a drinking cup with two looped handles and a shallow bowl fixed to a slender centre stem

alabastron
an elongated jar with a narrow neck, flat-rimmed mouth and rounded base, often requiring a stand and used for fragrant ointments

amphora (*pl.* amphorae)
a two-handled pottery storage jar with an oval body tapering to a point at the base

Seals

Seals first drew Arthur Evans to Crete. These carved stones were used to indicate ownership, for example when pressed into lumps of clay on the bindings of chests and on the stoppers of jars. Other uses included as amulets or charms and for their **aesthetic** value. Early seals were made for wearing and were in the shape of beads or pendants, while later ones were in the shape of three-sided prisms or lentoid (shaped like lentils), almond-shaped or rectangular. While early seals were carved from soft materials like bone, ivory and steatite, later ones were made from harder stones due to the introduction of the cutting wheel and tubular drill. These stones included rock crystal, jasper, carnelian, amethyst, chalcedony, agate and, later, green porphyry.

At their height in the Second Palace period, seals displayed the naturalism already noted in Minoan fresco painting and pottery. Subjects include bull-leaping, wild and domestic animals, and religious scenes.

aesthetic
concerned with beauty or the appreciation of beauty

SOURCE 47 A collection of hard-stone seals from Knossos

Metalwork

Minoan craftsmen also showed their artistic skill in working with metals, mostly gold, silver and bronze. Many examples of metalwork found throughout the Aegean region are thought to have been made on Crete, or made by travelling Minoan craftsmen.

Gold vessels, ornamental weapons and jewellery have been found from as early as the Prepalatial period. The well-known Bee Pendant from Malia (Source 48) and the pendant from the Aegina treasure (Source 27a) date to the early First Palace period when advanced techniques developed in Babylonia and Syria reached Crete. **Filigree** and **granulation** are both used on the Bee Pendant, while **embossing** is used on both pendants. Finger rings with oval bezels first appear in this period (see Sources 32 and 40).

Ornamental gold and bronze daggers dating to the **Late Bronze Age** have been found on the Greek mainland that are thought to be of Minoan craftsmanship. This is due to methods of decoration, the use of **niello**, and their style of decoration. While the use of niello appears to have originated in Asia Minor and therefore is not exclusively Minoan, the scenes on the daggers depicting lions and leopards that are moving rapidly reflect Minoan craftsmanship.

filigree
a metalwork technique used in jewellery, where gold or silver threads are twisted together and soldered to the surface of a metal object in an artistic arrangement

granulation
a jewellery manufacturing technique in which a surface is covered in tiny spheres or granules of gold

embossing
carving, moulding or stamping a design on an object, causing it to stand out in relief

Late Bronze Age
the latter part of the period when bronze was used for tools and weapons, c. 1600–1200 BC

niello
a black metallic alloy of silver, copper, lead and sulphur used to fill designs that have been engraved on the surface of a metal object

SOURCE 48 The Bee Pendant from the Chrysolakkos cemetery at Malia, First Palace period, c. 1800–1700 BC

Minoan craftsmen achieved this by showing them in what is known as a 'flying gallop' and this is characteristically Minoan.

Silver vessels exist in the Minoan archaeological record but are not plentiful. A set of silver cups from Knossos is a notable example. A number of silver vessels found elsewhere in the Aegean region are thought to be of Minoan craftsmanship.

3.13 Understanding and using the sources

Source 46

1. What are the key developments in Minoan pottery from the First Palace period to the end of the Minoan period?
2. What are the aesthetically pleasing features of the Kamares, marine and floral styles? Which one appeals to you the most and why?

3.13 Check your learning

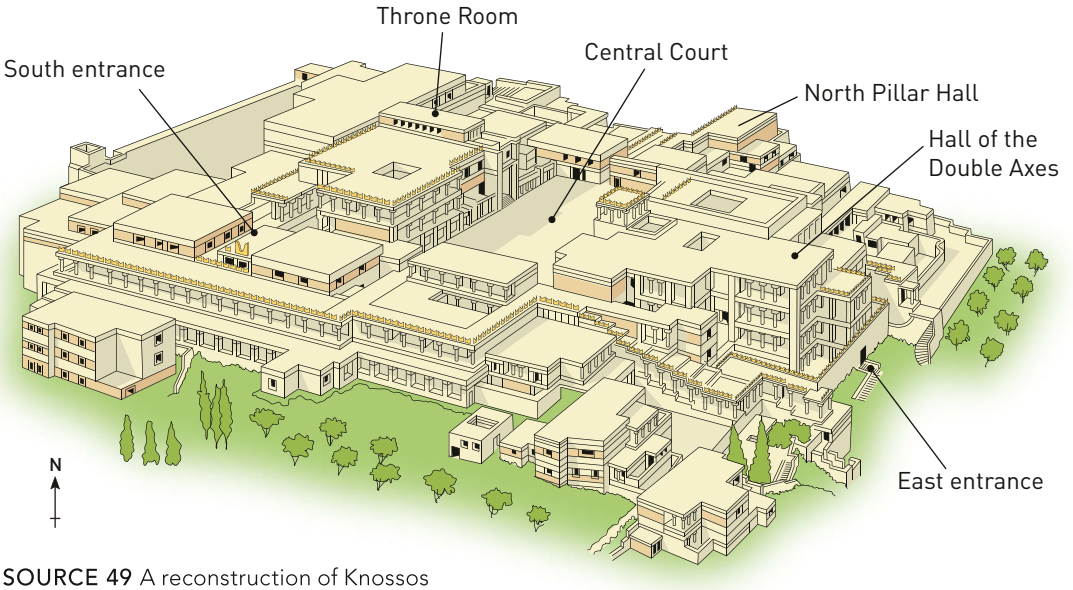
1. Make a collection of Minoan frescoes and note their origins, subjects and what they reveal about different aspects of Minoan art and life.
2. Read more about Minoan wall painting. Chapter 9 on Thera in your copy of *Antiquity 1* 4th edition contains details of the main techniques of Minoan wall painting. See Source 16, page 199.
3. Find pictures of pots from the different periods mentioned in Source 46 and arrange them in the correct sequence.
4. Writing task (extended response): What do sources reveal about Minoan art? In your answer, use Source 46, other sources and your own knowledge.

3.14 Architecture of palace complexes

Perhaps the most distinguishing feature of Minoan civilisation is the presence of multi-storeyed monumental structures that cover several thousand square metres and dominate their landscapes. They provide eloquent evidence of the advanced technology and engineering skill of the Minoans. The most characteristic feature of these palace complexes is the Central Court, which, as described by James Graham, 'provides the organising nucleus of the plan, at once dividing and uniting parts of the Palace.' In *The Palaces of Crete*, published in 1962, Graham was the first to compare the palace complexes and identify the key principles of Minoan architecture.

bothros
a hole or pit for pouring libations to the gods

tree altar
a religious structure bearing tree branches or palm fronds

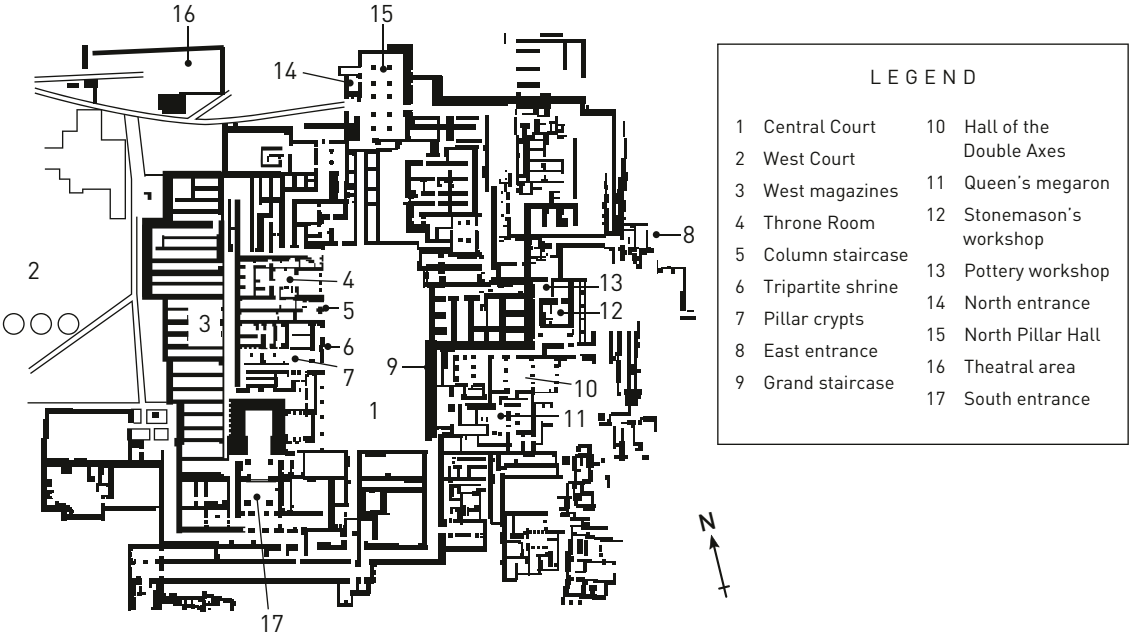


SOURCE 49 A reconstruction of Knossos

cambered
having a slightly arched surface

capital
the top part of a column

pier-and-door partition
a system of square piers and folding double doors that separated a large room into two smaller parts; this enabled flexibility in the admission of light and ventilation as well as control and facilitation of movement



SOURCE 50 A plan of Knossos

Common features also included east and west wings, often with large halls; storage areas, usually in the west wing; main and subsidiary entrances; and a colonnaded hall in the north wing. However, some individual features include the Throne Room at Knossos and the circular stone pools at Zakros. Source 51 summarises the main features of palace complexes.

3.14 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 49 & 50

1 How does Source 49 illustrate Graham's comment that the Central Court 'provides the organising nucleus of the plan, at once dividing and uniting parts of the Palace'?

2 Using Source 50, what are the main functions of the east and west wings of the Palace of Knossos?

3.14 Check your learning

1 Using your knowledge of Minoan society from your study of this chapter, suggest the kinds of activities that took place in the Central Court, the theatral area, the west magazines, the cult area and the east wing.

2 Find plans of the other main palace sites and note the chief similarities and differences between these and Knossos. Record your findings in a table like the one below.

PALACE	SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES
Phaestos		

3 Research some of the more recently excavated palaces, for example Arkhanes, Galatas, Khania and Petras. Add their distinguishing features to your table. You can find reliable information on all the palaces on Ian Swindale's website 'Minoan Crete: Bronze Age civilisation'.

SOURCE 51 Main features of palace complexes

FEATURE	DETAILS
Courts	Central courts: • rectangular, mostly paved (e.g. Phaestos, Malia) • acted as large light wells • space for religious activities (e.g. sacrifices, processions) • altars – Malia (***bothros***), Zakros (**tree altar**) • used by people from within the palaces West courts: • larger, irregular shapes • used by people from outside palace
Storage magazines	• All had greater capacity than needed by the palaces – *pithoi* used for storage • Contents (oil, grains, dried food) used for trade, wages • First palaces – *koulouras* used for storage
Religious areas	• Pillar rooms, lustral basins, bench shrines • Often on west side of palace
Frescoes	• Present in several palaces, also rich villas • Palace frescoes appear to show more people • More frescoes in palaces than elsewhere
Theatral areas	• Appear combined with or separate from central courts • Found at Knossos, Phaestos, Agia Triada, Gournia, Malia
Staircases	• Knossos: grand staircase, column staircase • Phaestos: monumental staircase at entrance (note: this is **cambered** to allow water run-off) • Malia: two staircases
Porticoes and colonnades	• Constructed of tapering columns of red- or black-painted wood, often upturned tree trunks, set on a base • Columns have simple, round, wooden **capitals** and were used to support ceilings, divide spaces and let in light and air
Light wells	• Large vertical air shafts running the full height of the building, providing light and ventilation to the surrounding rooms
Drainage/ water supply	• Open-cut channels and terracotta pipes used • Knossos: courts and light wells linked by drainage conduits exiting in the east • Water supply from hills; large circular reservoirs now covered over • Zakros: two water reservoirs
Domestic quarters	• adjoining rooms separated by **pier-and-door partitions** (*polythyra*) with a lightwell at one end • smaller private rooms with a nearby lustral basin and 'toilet' facility
Workrooms	• Foundries, kilns, dyers' rooms, evidence of stoneworkers • Loom weights indicate weaving on upper floors

3.15 Minoan writing

Our knowledge of Bronze Age literacy comes from Arthur Evans' study of seals and other inscribed objects. He named the script on the seals Hieroglyphic, now known as Cretan Hieroglyphic. His observations of scripts that used lines rather than pictures or symbols led him to identify two further types of writing: Linear A and Linear B.

It is possible that the Minoans' need to record commodities and their exchange led to the development of writing. Scholars think that the idea of writing might have come from Crete's Near Eastern neighbours, but that the scripts were invented on Crete. Minoans wrote on damp clay with a sharp implement. Examples of their writing have been found on tablets, seals and pots. Tablets were sun-dried and most of the examples we have were baked accidentally by fire.

SOURCE 52
A clay tablet with Linear A script from Knossos, c. 2500–1450 BC

Linear A

Linear A is a **syllabic** script that was used in the First Palace period, and appears first on documents at Phaestos. It continued in wide use until the end of the Second Palace period, c. 1450 BC. Evidence suggests that Linear A might have continued to be used after this time.

Linear A has been found on stone offering tables, pots, gold and silver hairpins, as well as sealings that would have been attached to commodities going out of and coming into important sites, including palaces and private houses. Some archives of tablets appear to have been in use at the time of preservation, for example at Zakros and Agia Triada, while others seem to have been in storage like those found in the Temple Repositories at Knossos or the West Magazines at Malia. Linear A was used widely on Crete and also throughout the Aegean. Tablet fragments, inscribed pots and other artefacts have been found at Phylakopi, Akrotiri and Kythera, as well as on the Greek mainland, and in Turkey and Israel.

Most Linear A documents consist of lists, thought to be of commodities, and numbers. Over 3000 numbers have been identified, as well as symbols to indicate fractions and weights. Some scholars suggest that what was inscribed on tablets was later transferred to papyrus or parchment documents and then stored, the clay tablets being subsequently disposed of or reused. However, there is no sound evidence for this practice.

As yet, Linear A has not been fully deciphered, despite theories existing about the meanings of specific words.

Linear B

Linear B, another syllabic script, was used on Crete after 1450 BC, when it is generally agreed that Mycenaeans were in control. Scholars largely agree that it was developed at Knossos in the early Third Palace period, possibly with the help of the Minoans themselves.

syllabic
relating to or based on syllables

pictorial ideogram
a simplified picture that by agreement or custom becomes a fixed pictorial symbol of an object or concept

SOURCE 53

Linear A … was clearly the main ancestor of Linear B [which has a] better text layout, a wider range of pictorial ideograms, and the use of weights and measures symbols, all of which may have enhanced its efficiency as an administrative tool.

O. Dickinson, *The Aegean Bronze Age*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, p. 194

Linear B tablets have been found in large numbers at Knossos and Khania on Crete, and at Pylos, Thebes and Mycenae on the Greek mainland. Linear B was deciphered in the 1950s by Michael Ventris, who concluded that the script was an archaic version of ancient Greek. With the help of classical scholar John Chadwick, many individual tablets were able to be deciphered.

The script has approximately 87 syllabic signs and over 100 ideograms, symbols that indicate specific objects or commodities. Like Linear A, Linear B appears in mainly administrative contexts. At least 66 different scribal hands have been identified in the tablets from Knossos, leading to suggestions that an organisation of professional scribes served the main palaces. Significantly, Linear B disappeared on Crete after the destruction of Knossos and Khania.

SOURCE 54
A clay tablet with inscriptions in Linear B from Knossos, c. 1405–1400 BC

The Phaestos Disc

The Phaestos Disc is a 15-centimetre terracotta disc stamped with hieroglyphic symbols arranged in a spiral pattern. The two sides of the disc contain 45 different signs, with a total of 241 symbols. These symbols are set between incised lines, separated into sets of two to seven. The Italian archaeologist Luigi Pernier discovered the disc in 1908 in a magazine in the palace of Phaestos. The authenticity of the disc, its meaning, function, origin and date have all been challenged. Some archaeologists consider it a fake.

Artefacts that appear to support the authenticity of the Phaestos Disc include:

- a gold signet ring from Knossos containing a Linear A inscription within a spiral
- a sealing that contains the only known repetition of the 'comb' symbol – sign 21
- the Arkalochori Axe, a bronze double axe bearing symbols in common with the Phaestos Disc.

The following theories have been put forward to explain the function of the Phaestos Disc:

- It is an ancient star chart – Leon Pomerance, 1976.
- It contains a prayer to a Minoan goddess – Gareth Owens, 2014.

SOURCE 55 The Phaestos Disc, c. 1700–1600 BC (First Palace period)

3.15 Understanding and using the sources

Source 53

1 In what ways did Linear B improve on Linear A?
2 How would these improvements have made Linear B a more useful administrative tool?

3.15 Check your learning

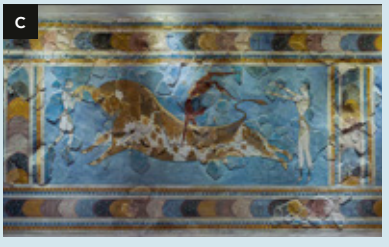
1 Discuss the following:
   a What conclusion can be drawn from (i) the wide use of Linear A both on Crete and also throughout the Aegean, (ii) the large numbers of Linear B tablets found at Knossos and Khania?
   b Why did Linear B disappear on Crete after the destruction of Knossos and Khania?
2 Research the explanations for the purpose of the Phaestos Disc. Search online for 'Phaestos Disc deciphered'. What is the most likely explanation based on the evidence?
3 Writing tasks:
   a Outline the significance of Linear A, Linear B and the Phaestos Disc.
   b Explain the problems of evidence associated with each of the above.

3.16 Leisure activities

A scan of websites on Minoan culture suggests that 'Cretan society seems to be the first "*leisure*" society in existence'. The difficulty with this description is that it makes assumptions based on very few sources. A major difficulty with interpretation is the need to distinguish between ritual and recreation. What appear to be leisure activities to us could have been associated with religious observance.

Source 56 presents three important artefacts that could reveal information about Minoan leisure activities.

SOURCE 56 Evidence for Minoan leisure activities

ARTEFACT	DESCRIPTION AND FINDSPOT
a The 'Draughtboard'	• Found in the Corridor of the Draughtboard in the east wing at Knossos (named by Evans) • Dates to the Second Palace period, 1700–1450 BC • Inlaid with ivory, blue glass paste and rock crystal; plated with gold and silver
b Conical stone rhyton	• Found at Agia Triada • Dates to the Second Palace period, 1550–1500 BC • Carved from black steatite, thought to have been covered in gold leaf originally • Four registers of decoration: upper and two lower registers depict boxing and maybe wrestling matches between men wearing helmets and gloves • Middle register has a scene of bull-leaping • Two registers have small columns with banners usually seen on façades of Minoan sanctuaries
c  Reconstructed 'Bull-leaping or Toreador Fresco'	• Found at Knossos, one of several similar frescoes from east wall • Dates to the Second Palace period, 1600–1450 BC • Depicts three people (two females and a male) engaged in bull sports of some sort • The following aspects are much contested: – that it actually happened – sealings, sealstones, rhyta and figurines appear to confirm that it took place – method of leaping over the bull – it appears the leaper vaults over the bull in an upside-down position; it is uncertain whether diving from above, leaping up from below, and the nature of assistance given is unclear – where it took place – the central courts (Evans) or areas outside of palaces, e.g. west courts.

Sports: leisure or ritual activities?

The scholar Lefteris Platon comments on the religious role of Minoan sports in Source 57.

SOURCE 57

Minoan iconography provides an appreciable number of athletics contests of various kinds, confirming prehistoric Crete's decisive contribution to creating the 'athletic ideal', as well as the close relationship between athletic activities and religious rituals, which is attested in the historical record. The inclusion of Minoan sports in the sphere of religion is supported by the fact that sports are represented on several vessels indisputably designated for ritual or ceremonial use, such as the 'Boxer Rhyton' from Haghia Triada … as well as by the presence of symbols or objects of religious significance in many representations of athletic contests. Also, some works depicting athletes and sports have been found in spaces in direct affinity with shrines, either in the open air or inside buildings.

L. Platon, 'Athletes and sports', *From the Land of the Labyrinth: Minoan Crete, 3000–1100 BC*, Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, New York, 2008, p. 96

3.16 Understanding and using the sources

Source 57

1. What is an 'athletic ideal'?
2. How has prehistoric – that is, Minoan – Crete contributed to the creation of an 'athletic ideal'?
3. What is the evidence for including Minoan sports in the sphere of religion?

3.16 Check your learning

1. Use the information about the artefacts and their findspots in Source 56 to draw conclusions about leisure activities during Minoan times. Record them in the table in a third column called 'Conclusions'. Be sure to point out when you think the activities might be associated with ritual and why.
2. Discuss the following:
   - a. Does the evidence suggest that Minoans were addicted to sports? Explain.
   - b. What is the significance of Evans' naming the artefact in Source 56a a 'draughtboard'? What else could it be?
   - c. From your knowledge of the central courts in the palaces you have studied, how likely is it that bull-leaping took place there?
   - d. What do the sources suggest about the leisure activities of the Minoans?
   - e. If sports are conducted for ritual purposes, does that prevent them being leisure activities?
3. Watch 'Incredible Spanish Bull Leapers (Recortadores)' on YouTube. Does this film help to explain what the Minoan artists were depicting in their frescoes and sculptures? How?
4. Writing task (short answer): Describe the main features of Minoan leisure activities.

3.17 Health as revealed by human remains

The predominance of artefacts from the palace sites and villas, associated with the elite class, could well have given the impression that Minoan society was a largely privileged one, with access to great wealth. However, a different picture has emerged with the excavation of archaeological and skeletal material from smaller urban centres removed from the palaces. Dr Robert Arnott, Director of the Centre for the History of Medicine of the University of Birmingham Medical School, a practising archaeologist and specialist in **paleodisease**, comments on this in Source 58.

paleodisease
disease known to have existed in the ancient past

dysentery
infection of the intestines resulting in severe diarrhoea

hookworm
a parasite of the intestines

tetanus
an often fatal infectious disease caused by a bacterium that enters the body through a puncture, cut or open wound

ulna
the thinner and longer of the two bones in the human forearm, on the side opposite to the thumb

SOURCE 58

… from the archaeological and skeletal evidence that has emerged from excavations in recent years, we now know that by the Late Bronze Age the reality for those who lived outside the palaces, often concentrated in small densely populated urban centres, was very different from the pictures of well dressed and nourished figures depicted in the wall-paintings at Knossos and elsewhere. In these towns, overcrowding, poor sanitation, and occasional contamination of drinking water, when combined with a meagre, unbalanced and often seasonal diet, would have taken their toll on the population and weakened resistance to diseases such as **dysentery**, **hookworm** and **tetanus**. Immunity to infection would gradually have begun to disappear, so even childhood diseases such as infant diarrhoea, diphtheria, whooping cough and scarlet fever would often have been fatal. Extended overseas trade contacts would probably have led to the introduction and spread of infectious organisms from overseas.

R. Arnott, 'Healing and medicine in the Aegean Bronze Age', *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, Vol. 89, May 1996, p. 265

Surveys of human remains from Crete have been carried out in the last few decades by archaeologists such as Photini McGeorge, which have revealed information about a range of Minoan health issues. Despite this, it must be remembered that these are only small samples of the population. These samples are often widely separated in time and can only reveal health problems that leave traces on bones. Source 59 summarises some of the findings.

SOURCE 59 Health issues revealed by human remains

EVIDENCE	SOURCE	CONCLUSIONS/INFORMATION REVEALED
Markings in tooth enamel	Third Palace period cemeteries	Malnutrition, not present in burials from earlier periods
Dental disease and tooth loss	Zakros burial enclosures	Consumption of a high carbohydrate diet
Successfully healed fractures of an **ulna** and a **humerus**	A cave ossuary at Agios Charalambos in eastern Crete, c. 2000 BC	Minoan skill in dealing with fractures
Healed rib fractures on a male skeleton	Khania	Minoan skill in dealing with fractures
Broken jaws that had healed and had teeth extracted	Very early cemetery sites, e.g. Sellopoulou at Knossos, Armenoi and Agios Charalambos	Skill in dentistry

EVIDENCE	SOURCE	CONCLUSIONS/INFORMATION REVEALED
Male and female skeletons	Third Palace period cemetery of Armenoi, near Rethymnon	• Women died earlier than men; the mean age of women was 27 and the mean age of men 30–31. • Many women died during peak childbearing years. • Half the children died in early infancy or before 5 years of age.
Results of a study of 4074 teeth and tooth sockets	Third Palace period cemetery of Armenoi, near Rethymnon	Dental **caries** and tooth loss before death are about twice as high as at Knossos in the First Palace period.
Human remains	Third Palace period cemetery of Armenoi, near Rethymnon	• Post-traumatic **arthritis** was common – hip, knee, ankle joints; some shoulders, elbows and vertebrae. • 13 cases of **osteoporosis** – 12 of these affected women between 23 and 50 years of age • Infectious diseases present include poliomyelitis, osteomyelitis, tuberculosis (15 cases) and brucellosis.
Fifteen cases of head injury	Agios Charalambos c. 2000–1700 BC (First Palace period)	• Some with multiple injuries • Lesions caused by sharp and blunt weapons and also by stones from slingshots • Three have evidence of **trephination** • One skull had had a large piece removed and the patient had survived

3.17 Understanding and using the sources

Source 58

1 What issue of evidence about Minoan health is raised by Arnott?
2 What factors would have weakened the population's resistance to diseases?
3 Why would childhood diseases have become fatal in contrast to modern times?
4 What roles would have been played by overseas trade contacts?

Source 59

5 What conclusions can be drawn from:
   a evidence of malnutrition in the Third Palace period?
   b the mean age and large number of female deaths during peak childbearing years?
   c the mortality rate of children?
   d the increased rate of dental caries and tooth loss in the Third Palace period?
   e the injuries caused by weapons at Agios Charalambos in the First Palace period?
   f the successful practice of trephination at Agios Charalambos?
6 Suggest reasons for the joint injuries that resulted in arthritis in the Armenoi population.

3.17 Check your learning

1 Most childhood illnesses leave no trace on the bones. Research the main diseases that kill children in developing nations today. This will give you an idea of the diseases that killed Minoan children.
2 Research the infectious diseases found at Armenoi: poliomyelitis, osteomyelitis, tuberculosis and brucellosis. If you can, identify possible causes of the diseases and suggest the impact these diseases would have had on the Minoan population.
3 Writing task: What do human remains reveal about the health of Bronze Age Minoans?

humerus
the long bone in the arm of humans extending from the shoulder to the elbow

caries
tooth decay or cavities

arthritis
a disease that causes painful inflammation and stiffness of the joints

osteoporosis
a bone disease that causes the body to make too little bone, resulting in weak bones, which often break easily from a fall

trephination
a surgical procedure in which a hole is drilled, cut or scraped into the skull by means of simple surgical tools

Chapter conclusion

The material remains left by the inhabitants of Bronze Age Crete enable us to draw many conclusions about their lives and culture. Some interpretations of the sources assert a knowledge of Minoan society that simply cannot be substantiated by the available sources. Substantial written sources are absent. This is most clearly evident in many studies of Minoan religion. Many of our conclusions, therefore, must remain tentative, based as they are on limited evidence. In terms of interpretation, the influence of Sir Arthur Evans has been pervasive. In more recent times, however, a new generation of Aegean Bronze Age scholars and archaeologists is conducting new analyses of the existing sources and often arriving at different conclusions.

obook

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning* and *Understanding and using the sources* question in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare students for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

4

Spartan society to the Battle of Leuctra 371 BC

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. What was the historical and geographical context of ancient Sparta?
2. How were Spartan society and government structured?
3. What role did the military ethos play in Spartan society?
4. What were the significant features of the Spartan economy?
5. How important were religion, death and burial in ancient Sparta?
6. What were the significant features of cultural and everyday life in ancient Sparta?

FOCUS CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Analysis and use of sources

Sources for a study of Spartan society present a range of challenges. There is limited archaeological evidence, and most of the written sources about Sparta come from non-Spartan writers. Some of these were admirers of the Spartans, while others were critical of different aspects of the Spartan way of life. In some cases, their writing about Sparta comes hundreds of years after the period they are describing and may be based on sources now lost to us. In all cases, these sources represent a variety of perspectives influenced by different contexts. For this reason, there is a particular need for critical analysis and evaluation of the sources, many of which have often been accepted at face value by generations of scholars.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Explain the historical and geographical context of ancient Sparta.
2. Analyse the structure of Spartan society and government.
3. Assess the significance of the military ethos in Spartan society.
4. Analyse the evidence for the Spartan economy.
5. Evaluate the importance of religion, death and burial in Sparta.
6. Analyse the significant features of Spartan cultural and everyday life.

SOURCE 1 A statue of King Leonidas in modern Sparta

4.1 Historical context

city-state
a sovereign *state*, consisting of a single *city* and its dependent territories

serfdom
slavery, bondage

Hellenic
relating to Greece; from Hellas, the Greek word for their country

The era of Spartan society discussed in this chapter spans a period from about 700 BC to 371 BC. Spartans are referred to in historical texts by a number of names – Spartans, Lakonians, Lakedaemonians, Peloponnesians and Dorians. The **city-state** (*polis)* was known as Sparta, located on the plain of Lakonia in the Peloponnese (the large peninsula of southern Greece). The name Lakedaemon referred to the broad political unit of Sparta and the areas in the Peloponnese that it controlled. Dorian referred to the Spartans' ethnic origins.

Between 900 and 750 BC, Sparta gradually gained control of the area of Lakonia. Throughout the Greek world, at this time, a great period of expansion and colonisation took place, chiefly due to land hunger. Sparta was not involved in widespread colonisation. Instead, to solve the need for land, Sparta attacked neighbouring Messenia and engaged in a series of wars, reducing its population to **serfdom**. Success in these wars enabled Sparta to double her agricultural resources, as Messenia was the major food-producing region in the Peloponnese.

At some point after the Messenian wars, the Spartans undertook a revolutionary reorganisation of their social and political systems. The state became geared to a militaristic way of life, and a new system of law and order, or *eunomia*, was established. Because of their military skill, the Spartans dominated the **Hellenic** world until 371 BC, when they were defeated at the Battle of Leuctra. After this time, Sparta continued to exist but in a very different form.

Geographical context

Sparta was well situated at 200 metres above sea level at the northern end of the alluvial plain of Lakonia. To the west of Sparta lay the Taygetus mountain range; the Parnon mountain range was situated on the eastern side and the Arcadian mountains on the northern side. These mountains formed a natural barrier to the valley of Sparta and limited communication with other regions. As a result, Sparta remained relatively isolated from its neighbours and other parts of Greece.

Ancient Sparta was set in a valley 12 kilometres wide and 22 kilometres long, formed by the Eurotas River. In addition to the Eurotas River, a number of streams flowing from Mount Taygetus ensured an ample water supply, while the fertile soil of the region provided for agricultural production. The Spartan climate was one of extremes: cold in winter and hot in summer. The mountain ranges remained snowcapped throughout the year.

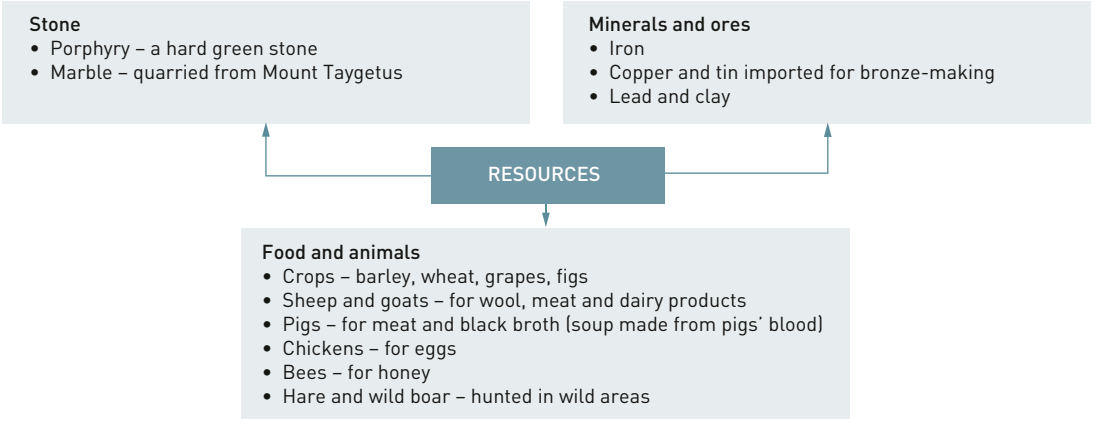
THE PELOPONNESE AND SPARTA

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 2 Sparta and her Peloponnesian neighbours. The buff-coloured regions of the smaller map shows Sparta and its immediate surrounds.

Natural resources

The Spartans were able to mine iron and lead, grow barley and olives, cultivate orchards and vineyards, and graze sheep. The lower wooded slopes of the mountains provided excellent hunting grounds and valuable timber. Gytheum, the Spartan port in the Lakonian Gulf, provided shellfish for dye to colour Spartan clothing. After the conquest of Messenia, its fertile land enabled the Spartans to increase agricultural production.



SOURCE 3 Natural resources of Sparta

SOURCE 4

Concerning the nature of the regions, both Laconia and Messenia, one should accept what Euripides [5th century BC Athenian playwright] says in the following passages: He says that Laconia has 'much arable land but is not easy to cultivate, for it is hollow, surrounded by mountains, rugged, and difficult for enemies to invade;' and that Messenia is 'a land of fair fruitage and watered by innumerable streams, abounding in pasturage for cattle and sheep, being neither very wintry in the blasts of winter nor yet made too hot by the chariot of Helios [the sun god];' and a little below, in speaking of the lots which the Heracleidae [sons of Heracles, founding fathers] cast for the country, he says that the first lot conferred 'lordships over the land of Laconia, a poor country,' and the second over Messenia, 'whose fertility is greater than words can express;' … Laconia is subject to earthquakes, and in fact some writers record that certain peaks of Taÿgetus have been broken away. And there are quarries of very costly marble – the old quarries of Taenarian marble on Taenarum; and recently some men have opened a large quarry in Taÿgetus …

Strabo, *Geography*, 8.5.6–7 (trans. H.L. Jones, Harvard University Press, 1917–1932)

Ancient sources on Sparta

Scholars generally acknowledge that Sparta underwent profound changes from c. 900 to 600 BC. Contemporary written sources for these changes, however, are virtually non-existent, while the archaeological evidence does not tell us how and why Spartan society changed so dramatically. Most of our evidence for Sparta comes from the 5th and 4th centuries BC. These include histories, such as those written by Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon, as well as the political observations of Plato and Aristotle, none of whom were Spartans. Source 5 introduces some of the key ancient writers on Sparta.

SOURCE 5 Ancient writers on Sparta

ANCIENT WRITER	DATES	ABOUT THE WRITER WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SPARTA
Tyrtaeus	Late 7th century BC	Spartan poet at the time of the Second Messenian War. Known for patriotic and militaristic poems. His work provides useful evidence of Spartan **martial ideology** and the dating of Sparta's wars against Messenia.
Alcman	Late 7th century BC	Spartan poet, contemporary of Tyrtaeus. Little is known about him; his poetry has survived only in fragments. Wrote lyric poetry to be sung and performed at Spartan festivals. Unlike Tyrtaeus, Alcman's poetry presents a culturally sophisticated Sparta interested in the good things in life.
Herodotus	c. 484 – c. 425 BC	Greek historian, author of *The Histories*, an account of the wars between Greece and Persia in the early 5th century BC. Travelled widely and gathered material from oral sources. Important source for Spartan history and traditions, especially Spartan kingship.
Thucydides	c. 460 – c. 400 BC	Athenian historian and general. His *History of the Peloponnesian War* recounts the late 5th century BC war between Athens and Sparta. His exile from Athens during the war enabled him to visit Sparta and familiarise himself with its customs.
Xenophon	c. 430 – 354 BC	Athenian soldier and historian. Served as a **mercenary** soldier under Spartan generals. Conservative in his views and an admirer of Sparta. Some of his works, e.g. *The Constitution (Politaea) of the Spartans*, display a pro-Spartan view.
Plato	429–347 BC	Greek philosopher. Influenced by pro-Spartan philosopher Socrates (c. 470–399 BC). Paid particular attention in his *Republic* and *Laws* to the Spartan system of government and education.
Aristotle	384–322 BC	Greek philosopher and scientist; pupil of Plato. His writings form the basis of Western philosophy. In his *Politics*, he analyses the Spartan form of government and its strengths and weaknesses.
Polybius	c. 200 – c. 118 BC	Roman historian. Wrote a history of the development of Rome as a great power. Compared the Roman and Spartan systems of government and praised Sparta's 'mixed constitution'.
Pausanias	c. AD 110 – c. 189	Greek geographer. Travelled widely and provided eyewitness observations of the places he visited. His *Description of Greece* is a valuable source enabling modern scholars to make links between classical literature and archaeology.
Plutarch	AD 46–120	Greek biographer. Lived during the period when Greece was a province of the Roman empire. Travelled widely and is known to have visited Sparta. His *Parallel Lives* (e.g. *Lycurgus*) are largely moral essays comparing the lives and noble deeds of famous Greeks and Romans.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Spartan mirage

The 'Spartan mirage' is a term first used by French scholar François Ollier in his 1930s book *Le Mirage Spartiate.* It refers to a long tradition of historical writing and other representations of Sparta that have perpetuated a range of stereotyped and distorted images or myths about the Spartans and their way of life. One particularly pervasive image, recognisable in modern popular culture in films such as *300,* depicts the Spartans as uncouth, uncultured and focused on their military way of life to the exclusion of all other interests and activities. We are also expected to believe that all Spartans, male and female, thought and felt alike.

Apart from the obvious myth that all change in Sparta's social and political system can be ascribed to the person of Lycurgus, traditional scholarship has also tended to present Spartan society of post-Lycurgan times as frozen in time, unchanged over hundreds of years. In reality it was more complex, nuanced and subject to the kinds of changes that all societies undergo over a long period of time. There is the standard myth too, of state ownership of all land and **helots**.

Modern scholarship is taking a close look at some of the myths of the Spartan mirage. A new generation of historians, applying new techniques and some new sources of evidence, is challenging some of these long-standing assumptions about Spartan society.

martial ideology
a system of ideas relating to warfare

mercenary
a professional soldier hired to serve in a foreign army

helots
the enslaved population of Sparta

4.1 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 2 & 4

1. Identify the main physical features of Sparta as shown in Source 2.
2. What geographical features limited Peloponnesian contact with the rest of Greece?
3. List the resources of Lakonia described by Euripides (in Source 4).
4. What problems were associated with cultivating the land?
5. What advantages did Messenia enjoy in comparison to Lakonia?

Source 5

6. Which writers were writing within the time period of Spartan society: 700–371 BC? What issue of evidence does this raise?
7. Which of the sources are Spartan? Why is this significant?
8. Considering that Plutarch is a major source for Spartan society, what questions need to be asked about his value as a source?

4.1 Check your learning

1. Why was the conquest of Messenia an important development in Sparta's early history?
2. Create a profile page for each of the writers introduced in Source 5. Research each further in relation to their writings on Sparta and add relevant information to your profile page.
3. Explain what you understand by the term 'Spartan mirage'.
4. For a very useful overview of modern scholarship on ancient Sparta and an examination of aspects of the Spartan mirage, search online for 'Transforming Sparta: new approaches to the study of Spartan society' by Stephen Hodkinson of Nottingham University.
5. Writing tasks:
   a. Outline the key features of Spartan geography and resources.
   b. Outline the key issues of evidence regarding sources for the study of Spartan society.

4.2 The issue of Lycurgus

According to ancient writers such as Herodotus and Aristotle, the new social and political organisation of Sparta that emerged in the aftermath of the Messenian Wars was the work of a lawgiver named Lycurgus. The reforms of the Spartan constitution and the establishment of the famous system of Spartan education, the *agoge*, with its focus on the development of the military **ethos**, are all attributed to Lycurgus and are recorded in detail in Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus*.

ethos
the set of attitudes and beliefs typical of an organisation or group of people

Lycurgus was believed to have been a historical figure who is supposed to have lived sometime between the 9th and the 7th centuries BC. According to tradition, he had sought the will of the gods by consulting the **Delphic Oracle**. He had then returned to Sparta and initiated a series of revolutionary changes that set Sparta on a course that was significantly different from other Greek states of this period. However, almost nothing historically accurate about Lycurgus can be established from the surviving sources. The scholar Nigel Kennell summarises the problem of Lycurgus in Source 6.

Delphic Oracle
the priestess of Apollo, in his sanctuary at Delphi; she uttered prophecies on behalf of Apollo, the god of prophecy

SOURCE 6

As a biographical subject, Lycurgus presented an almost insurmountable problem – he almost certainly did not exist. Even in antiquity debate accompanied almost every aspect of his life and activity, leading Plutarch to admit 'concerning Lycurgus the Lawgiver absolutely nothing can be said that is beyond dispute. His ancestry, his foreign travels, his death and above all his activity concerning the laws and the constitution, all are reported differently' … Plutarch could draw upon a rich but varied 'biographical' tradition that had developed since the Classical period, as historians and other writers elaborated and conjectured from meagre evidence when they did not simply invent plausible details. Thus the part of the [*Life of*] *Lycurgus* purporting to describe his life and political activity is outright fiction based on the work of these lost writers that would account for the received image of early Sparta.

N. Kennell, *Spartans: A New History*, Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, 2010, p. 16

Classical period
the period of Greek history from c. 500 to 323 BC

The Great *Rhetra*

The changes supposedly introduced by Lycurgus were in the form of a great *Rhetra* and probably date from the 7th century BC. A *Rhetra* is a pronouncement reflecting the oral tradition of the Spartans and their laws, often based on **oracles**. The Great *Rhetra* is significant because it was the foundation of the Spartan constitution.

oracle
a communication from a god indicating divine will; a prophecy

Our knowledge of the Great *Rhetra* comes from the writings of Herodotus, Plutarch and others. Plutarch may have used Aristotle's lost *Constitution of the Spartans* and, following Herodotus and Aristotle, believed that Lycurgus was responsible for the Great *Rhetra*. However, Tyrtaeus mentions that two kings consulted the Delphic Oracle and brought back the Great *Rhetra*. Scholars believe that this could refer to the early kings Polydorus and Theopompus.

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SOURCE 7

[Lycurgus] changed all the laws and made sure that these should not be transgressed. After this Lycurgus established military organisation, the divisions (*enomotiai*), companies of thirty (*triakades*) and **messes** (*syssitia*) as well as the **ephors** and elders. By these changes they became a well ordered state, and they dedicated a temple to Lycurgus when he died and revere him greatly. Living in a fertile country and with a numerous population of men, they immediately shot up and flourished.

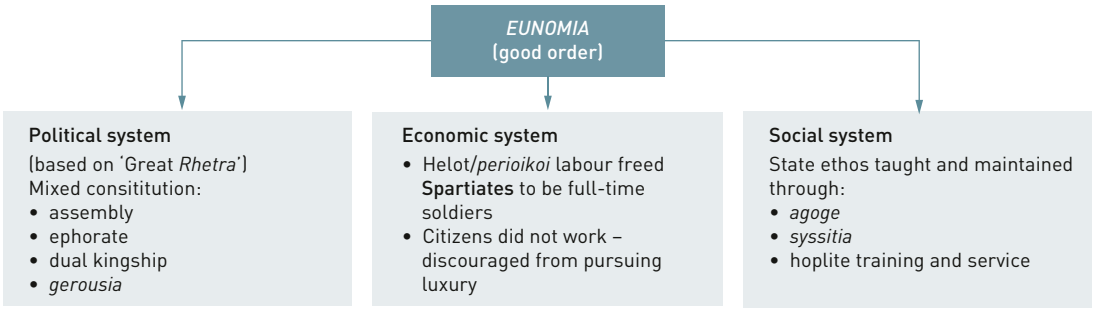
Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 1, 65 (trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972)

mess
a gathering of men in barracks to share meals and socialise

ephor
one of five annually elected magistrates in the Spartan government

Eunomia

The reforms attributed to Lycurgus encompassed all aspects of Spartan life: political, economic and social. The ideal underpinning all of these reforms was the Greek concept of *eunomia*, meaning good order and good government, emphasised by duty and obedience to the laws. It was this 'good order' that gave Sparta its relative stability and earned the admiration of many Greek writers, including Herodotus and Xenophon.



Spartiate
male citizen of Sparta

SOURCE 8
Eunomia and the Spartan system

4.2 Understanding and using the sources

Source 6

1 Why is Lycurgus a problem?
2 What does Plutarch admit are the contested issues concerning Lycurgus?
3 According to Kennell, where might Plutarch have found his information?

Source 7

4 What were some of the changes ascribed to Lycurgus?

Source 8

5 Summarise the main elements of the Spartan concept of *eunomia*.

4.2 Check your learning

1 Read Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus*.
2 Discuss the following:
   a Why are the changes ascribed to Lycurgus an unsatisfactory explanation of the development of Spartan society?
   b Given the historiographical problems associated with Lycurgus, suggest reasons why Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus* is still considered as a major source for Spartan society.

4.3 Spartan social structure

The earliest Greek communities were organised in the following groupings:

- the tribe – a large group of families claiming descent from a common ancestor
- the clan – a smaller group of families who were part of the tribe
- the *phratry* (meaning 'brotherhood') – another smaller grouping within the clan, structured according to religious purposes
- the household or *oikos* – the single family unit.

Tyrtaeus wrote that Sparta originally contained three main tribes: the Hylleis, Dymanes and Pamphyloi. When they took part in the ***Karneia***, they were divided into nine *phratriai*. It is believed that by the 7th century, Sparta was divided into five territorial ***obai***. Source 9 shows the main citizen (Spartiates) and non-citizen (inferiors, *perioikoi* and helots) groups in Spartan society.

Karneia
a religious festival of ancient Sparta

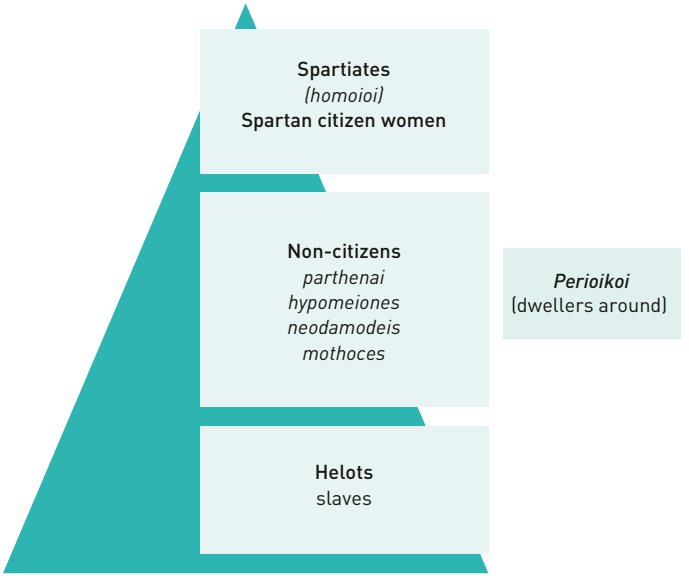
***oba* (*pl. obai*)**
a village

Spartiates

The male citizens of Sparta were known as Spartiates. They formed an elite in Spartan society and were a highly trained warrior class, holding all political power.

The main criteria for belonging to the citizen class of the Spartiates or exclusive *homoioi* were:

- ownership of a plot of public land (*kleros*)
- birth – a full Spartan peer with all the rights of citizenship had to be able to prove that he was descended from the earliest sons of Herakles or the conquerors
- membership in a military mess and the sharing of common meals (*syssitia*)
- successful completion of education and military training (*agoge*).



SOURCE 9 Spartan social structure

Spartiates and property: the *kleros*

The Spartiates were a privileged economic group who owned most of the land in the Eurotas valley and Messenia. Land controlled by the Spartans was divided into allotments. Each Spartiate held a portion of the land (*kleros*) and each had an equal vote in the assembly. Spartan citizens were obliged to devote their life to the state and were not allowed by law to engage in public activities such as trade. A Spartan could gain an estate either by being granted an allotment from the state or by receiving an inheritance from his father. An important consequence of this arrangement was that Spartiates had economic freedom. They did not have to concern themselves with earning a living, but could concentrate their energies on military life and the welfare of the state. According to Plutarch, Lycurgus instituted this system and made it a law that citizen estates were not to be divided.

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SOURCE 10

Lycurgus persuaded the citizens to pool all the land and then redistribute it afresh. Then they would all live on equal terms with one another, with the same amount of property to support each, and they would seek to be first only in merit. There would be no distinction or inequality between individuals except for what censure of bad conduct and praise of good would determine.

... Lycurgus distributed the rest of Lakonia to the *perioikoi* in 30000 lots, and divided the part subject to the city of Sparta into 9000. This was the number of lots for the Spartiates.

Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 8 (in *Plutarch on Sparta*, trans. R. Talbert, Penguin, London, 1988, pp. 16–17)

The *syssition*

An important requirement of being an 'equal' was that each Spartiate had to make a monthly contribution from the produce of his *kleros* to the *syssition*, the military mess. Failure to do so resulted in loss of citizenship. Spartan men shared communal meals in the military barracks. Plutarch relates that they would gather in groups of about 15, each man contributing barley meal, wine, cheese and figs, and a sum of money for fish or meat. *Syssitia* (plural) is the general name for the common meals; the Spartans also used the term *pheiditia*, which means 'gatherings of men'.

A seniority was observed within each *syssition*, so that the younger men might learn from their elders. A young man had to apply to join a particular mess. Young Spartiates were not distributed equally throughout the *syssitia*. This meant that some messes were more exclusive than others. At the messes the men shared not only meals, but also political discussions and stories of citizens' great deeds. In this way, the messes became another important avenue for the training and development of the young men.

SOURCE 11

Lycurgus then noticed that the Spartans just like the rest of the Greeks were living at home, and, realising that this was responsible for their taking most things too easily, brought the common messes out into the open, considering that this would reduce disobedience of orders to a minimum. He assigned them a ration of corn, so that they would neither be gorged nor hungry. But they get many additional foods supplied from hunting expeditions; and there are times when the rich also contribute wheaten bread instead; so the table is never bare until they separate and go to their quarters, but neither is it extravagantly supplied. He also put an end to the compulsory drinking of wine, which undoes both body and mind, and allowed each man to drink when he was thirsty, thinking that this would be the least harmful and most pleasurable way of drinking.

Xenophon, *The Constitution of the Spartans*, 5 (cited in M. Dillon & L. Garland, *Ancient Greece: Social and Historical Documents from Archaic Times to the Death of Socrates*, Routledge, London, 1994, pp. 164–5)

Perioikoi

Perioikoi means the 'dwellers around', and refers to the free inhabitants of the many communities scattered throughout Lakonia and Messenia and along the coastline of Sparta. These communities were **autonomous** but answerable to the greater state of Sparta. *Perioikoi* were not unique to Sparta; the term was also used to describe people in Argos, Elis and Crete. The *perioikoi* controlled their own communities, but they had no voice in the government or foreign policy of Sparta. Often, in texts, the general term 'Lakedaemonian' refers to both Spartans and *perioikoi*.

autonomous
having the freedom to act independently

There are a number of possible explanations for the origins of the *perioikoi*. The Athenian orator Isocrates noted that the land of Sparta had been divided among the three tribes, but that this was followed by dissension and fighting. The victors – the nobles – kept the richest lands and sent the defeated to outlying districts. The nobles then organised their own system of equals; those who had been driven out lost all rights to take part in government. Another ancient Greek writer, Ephorus, believed that the *perioikoi* emerged after the conquest of Lakonia. The two kings granted equal rights to all, but a later king, Agis, the son of Eurysthenes, reversed that decision and made the *perioikoi* inferior.

Archaeological evidence of *perioikoi*

Most of the Lakonian craftsmen were *perioikoi*. Archaeological evidence from *perioikoic* communities includes a number of bronze figurines, limestone and marble funerary reliefs, and a black-figure **krater** from Kalamata. The krater, found in the grave of a Celtic woman at Vix, in France, is believed to have been made in Lakonia.

krater
a large Greek vase for mixing water and wine

Treatment of the *perioikoi*

Spartan officials, including the ephors, were responsible for supervising the *perioikoi* and could put *perioikoi* to death without trial. *Perioikoic* communities were generally free to run their own affairs, the ephors becoming involved only if Spartan interests were at stake.

Duties of the *perioikoi*

In addition to their economic role in Spartan society (see 4.8 The economy), the *perioikoi* were required to provide **hoplites** for military service. Until about 465 BC, Spartans and *perioikoi* served separately. Herodotus, writing of the Persian Wars, tells us that the Spartans sent a force of 5000 troops to Plataea, and that 'with them went 5000 picked Lakedaemonian troops drawn from the outlying towns' (i.e. *perioikoi*). Later, Spartiates and *perioikoi* served together; at Sphacteria in 425 BC during the Peloponnesian War, 170 *perioikoi* served in the contingent. In 424 BC, a detachment of *perioikoi* was defeated when the Athenians attacked the Peloponnese. In the later 5th century and early 4th century, as Spartiate numbers declined, the proportion of *perioikoi* in the army increased. At the Battle of Coronea in 394 BC, during the Corinthian War, the majority of the force were *perioikoi* and *neodamodeis* (freed helots). By the 3rd century BC, it became necessary for King Agis to co-opt *perioikoi* to make up for the shortfall in Spartiate numbers. He gave allotments of land to 15 000 *perioikoi* and 4500 Spartiates.

hoplite
citizen soldier

The *perioikoi* appear to have served Sparta faithfully throughout its history, apart from one incident after the earthquake in the 460s BC. While the Spartans were recovering from this disaster, the helots raised a revolt, and Thucydides tells us that *perioikoi* from two Messenian towns joined in.

Inferiors

It was especially disgraceful for a Spartiate to lose citizenship rights. *Tresantes* (criminals or cowards) were deprived by a special decree of their rights to vote and hold office. They had to sit alone at festivals, were unable to marry, and had to wear special dress and go unshaven. Everyone in society had to avoid them. *Hypomeiones* (inferiors) were those who had lost their citizenship for failing to fulfil their obligations. Other inferior people in Spartan society were the *parthenai*, illegitimate offspring of Spartiates and helot women. *Mothoces* were sons of helots often adopted as playmates of Spartan boys. It is unclear how the *hypomeiones* and other outcast groups survived in Sparta.

The helots

The helots were the enslaved populations of Messenia and Lakonia. Helots worked for individual Spartiates on their estates and their tasks of the helots were mainly agricultural. They had to hand over half of their produce to their Spartiate masters. The remaining half was theirs to use. Tyrtaeus compared helots to 'asses exhausted under great loads: under painful necessity to bring their masters full half the fruit their ploughed land produced'. As well as restricted property rights, the helots also had some marriage rights, but they had no legal or political standing in the community.

When Spartiates went to war, they were accompanied by helots as aides or servants. Units of helots, such as lightly armed **slingers**, took part in skirmishes. On rare occasions helots could be rewarded with citizenship for deeds performed during military service.

slingers
lightly armed troops in ancient armies who fought using slingshots

The issue of state ownership of helots

Recent scholarship has suggested that it may be time for a change of view about the ownership of helots.

SOURCE 12

The traditional view is that helots were owned by the Spartan polis [city state], in contrast to **chattel** slaves in Athens and elsewhere, who were mostly owned by private individuals. Recent research, however, has pointed out that this view is based on the evidence of later sources … Fifth and fourth century sources, in contrast, typically present the helots as privately owned, although subject to a large degree of communal sharing and intervention. (Xenophon's *Constitution of the Spartans*, 6.3 is a key text here.) The fact that the Spartiates as a community, often treated the helots in collective terms – for example in the ephors' annual declaration of war … does not mean that *individual* helots were the collective *property* of the polis.

S. Hodkinson, 'Transforming Sparta: New Approaches to the Study of Spartan Society', *Ancient History: Resources for Teachers*, Vol. 41–44 (2011–14), pp. 12–13

chattel
a slave or an item of property

4.3 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 10 & 11

1 What was the purpose of the redistribution of land attributed to Lycurgus?
2 According to Xenophon, why was the *syssition* instituted?

Source 12

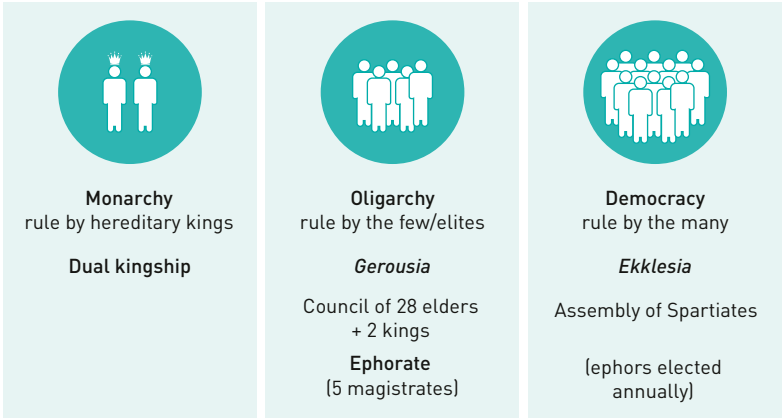
3 What traditional view about the helots does Hodkinson challenge? What arguments does he use to support his view?

4.3 Check your learning

1 What was the relationship between *kleros* and *syssition* in determining citizenship?
2 Who were the inferiors in Spartan society? How did people become inferiors?
3 What was the status and function of the *perioikoi* and the helots in Spartan society?
4 Read section 6.3 of Xenophon's *Constitution of the Spartans* referred to in Source 12. How does it support Hodkinson's argument about private ownership of helots? For an online version, go to 'The Polity of the Athenians and the Lacedaemonians, by Xenophon'.

4.4 Government

The Greek city-state of Sparta was governed by a system consisting of features of monarchy, oligarchy (government by the few) and democracy. This 'mixed' constitution was often admired by ancient writers such as Polybius who thought it combined the best features of government. The monarchical element was the dual kingship: two kings who performed military, judicial and religious functions. The oligarchic element was represented chiefly by the *gerousia*, a council of elders, which included the two kings. It carried out legislative and judicial functions. The democratic element of the constitution was the *ekklesia*, the assembly of Spartiates. The ephorate, consisting of five annually elected magistrates (ephors) supervised the kings and the legislative bodies. The ephorate can be considered as having elements of both democracy and oligarchy.



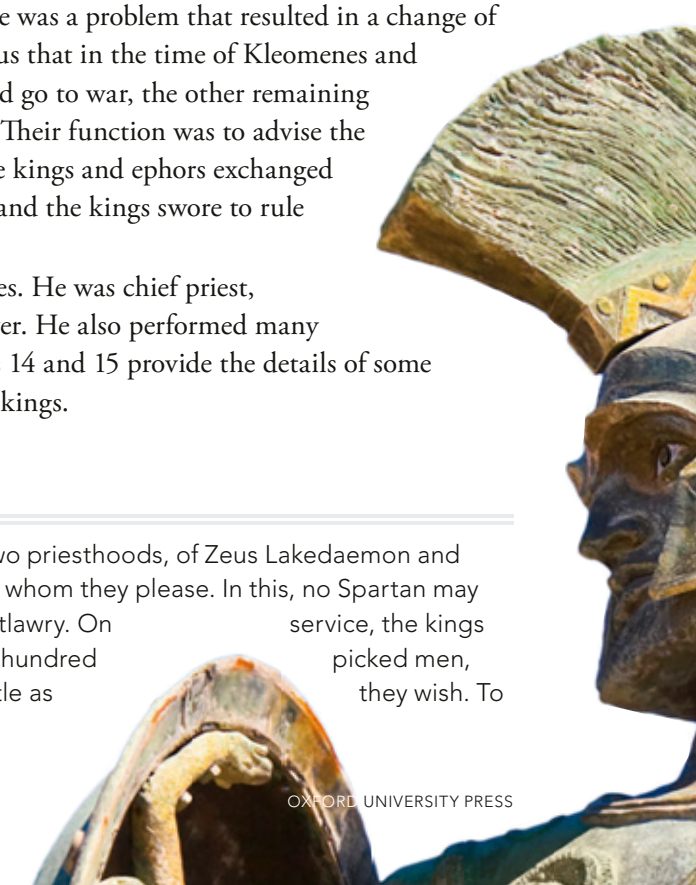
SOURCE 13 The Spartan system of government, a mixed constitution

Kings

The Spartans had two kings. They were drawn from two royal families, the Agiads and the Eurypontids, and claimed divine descent from the demigod Herakles. The dual kingship was one of the most ancient of Sparta's institutions and survived throughout its history, in contrast to other city-states in Greece, where monarchies were overthrown early.

Sparta's militarism required that the kings assert strong generalship. As kingship was hereditary, there was no retiring age, and the kings often led the troops and waged war even as elderly men. In early times, both kings led the armies to war, but at some point there was a problem that resulted in a change of policy. Herodotus (*The Histories*, Book 5, 75) tells us that in the time of Kleomenes and Demaratus it was decided that only one king would go to war, the other remaining in Sparta. Two ephors attended the king in battle. Their function was to advise the king, but also to check his power. Each month, the kings and ephors exchanged oaths. The ephors swore to maintain the kingship and the kings swore to rule according to the laws.

A Spartan king was expected to fulfil many roles. He was chief priest, commander-in-chief of the army, judge and lawgiver. He also performed many social duties. Herodotus and Xenophon in Sources 14 and 15 provide the details of some of the rights, obligations and privileges of Spartan kings.



SOURCE 14

prerogative
a right claimed by a particular person or group of people

The **prerogatives** of the Spartan kings are these: two priesthoods, of Zeus Lakedaemon and of Zeus Uranius, and the power of declaring war on whom they please. In this, no Spartan may attempt to oppose their decision, under pain of outlawry. On service, the kings go first and return last; they have a bodyguard of a hundred picked men, and they are allowed for their own use as many cattle as they wish. To

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them personally are allotted the skins and **chines** of all animals offered for sacrifice.

In peacetime their privileges are as follows: at all public religious celebrations they are the first to sit down at the dinner which follows the sacrifice; they are served first, each getting twice as much of every dish as anybody else. Theirs is the right to make the first ceremonial libation, and to them belong the hides of all animals offered in sacrifice. On the first and seventh days of every month each king is given a full-grown animal to offer in sacrifice in the temple of Apollo, also a bushel of barley-meal and a Lakonian quart of wine.

At all public games seats of honour are reserved for them. It is their duty to select and appoint the officials who see to the entertainment of foreign visitors, and each of them nominates two 'Pythians' – officials, that is, whose duty it is to visit Delphi when occasion arises, and who take their meals with the kings at the public expense …

They are responsible for the safe-keeping of all oracles (the 'Pythians' also have knowledge of them), and certain definite legal matters are left to their sole decision. These are as follows: first, if a girl inherits her father's estate and has not been betrothed by him to anybody, the kings decide who has the right to marry her; secondly, all matters connected with the public roads are in their hands; and, thirdly, anyone who wishes to adopt a child must do it in the king's presence.

They sit with the twenty-eight elders in the Council chamber, and, in the event of their absence from a meeting, those of the elders who are nearest of kin to them take over their privilege and cast two votes, in addition to their own.

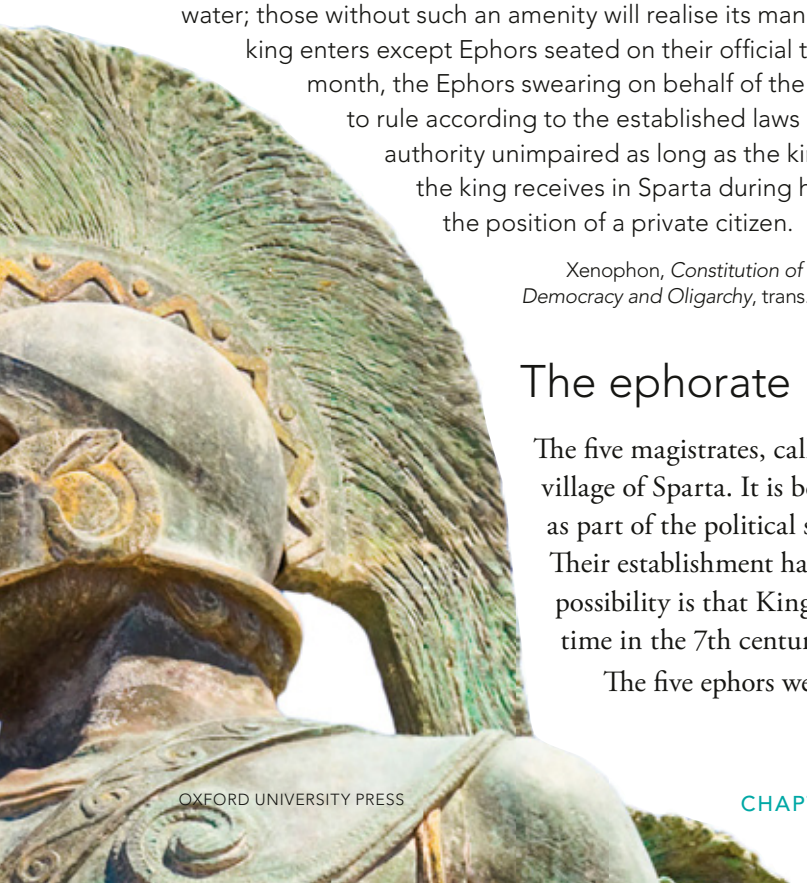
Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 6, 54–8 (trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972)

chine
a cut of meat across or along the backbone

SOURCE 15

He [Lycurgus] laid it down that the king should make all public sacrifices for the state because of his divine descent, and should lead the army on any foreign campaign. He granted the king the choice parts of the sacrificial victims, and set aside enough land in many of the surrounding cities to ensure that he was not without adequate means, and yet was not too rich. … They also received the right to take one pig from each litter, so that a king would never be without victims should he need to consult the gods. A spring near their houses provides a plentiful supply of water; those without such an amenity will realise its manifold uses. Everyone stands when the king enters except Ephors seated on their official thrones. Oaths are exchanged every month, the Ephors swearing on behalf of the city, the king for himself. The king swears to rule according to the established laws of the city, the city to maintain the royal authority unimpaired as long as the king keeps his oath. Such are the honours the king receives in Sparta during his lifetime; they do not greatly exceed the position of a private citizen.

Xenophon, *Constitution of the Spartans*, 15 (cited in *Aristotle and Xenophon on Democracy and Oligarchy*, trans. J.M. Moore, Chatto & Windus, London, 1975, p. 91)



The ephorate

The five magistrates, called ephors, came from each *oba* or village of Sparta. It is believed that the ephors were instituted as part of the political system very early in Spartan history. Their establishment has been attributed to Lycurgus. Another possibility is that King Theopompus introduced them some time in the 7th century BC.

The five ephors were elected annually from among the

Spartiates. Although the ephors could not be re-elected, they possessed significant power and exercised control over most aspects of Spartan life. They:

- were chief administrators and executives of the state
- advised the kings and kept a check on royal powers
- decided which units would be mobilised in times of war
- called meetings of the *gerousia* and the *ekklesia*
- received foreign ambassadors
- had charge of the training and education system – the *agoge*
- controlled other Spartan magistrates
- were responsible for most civil and criminal cases
- could arrest and imprison a king
- could banish foreigners from the state.

SOURCE 16

Ephors have the right to inflict punishments at will, to require immediate payment of fines, to depose magistrates during their term of office, to imprison them, and even to put them on trial for their lives. Since they have so much power, they do not always allow office-holders to complete their year of office as they see fit, as is done in other cities, but like **tyrants** … they punish an offender as soon as the offence is detected.

Xenophon, *Constitution of the Spartans*, 8
(cited in *Aristotle and Xenophon on Democracy and Oligarchy*, trans. J.M. Moore, Chatto & Windus, London, 1975, p. 84)

tyrant
an absolute ruler

SOURCE 17

… the ephorate … has supreme authority in the most important matters, but its members come from the whole people, so that frequently men who are extremely poor get onto this board, and their poverty used to make them open to bribery. And because the office is extremely powerful and equal to that of a tyrant, even the kings are compelled to curry favour with them, which has further harmed the constitution; for an aristocracy has turned into a democracy … They also have supreme jurisdiction in cases of importance, although being there by chance, and accordingly it would be better for them to decide them not on their own judgment but according to the written rules, that is the laws. The ephors' lifestyle, too, is not in accordance with the aims of the state; for it is excessively relaxed, while for the rest it is far too excessive in its **austerity,** with the result that they are unable to endure it but secretly evade the law and enjoy bodily pleasures.

Aristotle, *On the Spartan Constitution*
(cited in M. Dillon & L. Garland, *Ancient Greece*, Routledge, London, 1994, p. 163)

austerity
simplicity, even severity, of lifestyle as opposed to luxury and comforts

The *gerousia*

The council of elders, or *gerousia*, consisted of 28 members plus the two kings. It probably began early in Spartan history as an advisory group to the kings. It is uncertain why there were 28 members. The *gerousia* formed an aristocratic elite, based on age, and had considerable influence and prestige. Supposedly, any Spartan male could be considered for membership of the *gerousia* if he was over the age of 60, but in practice those chosen came from a small circle

of wealthy aristocratic families. Once chosen for the *gerousia*, a man held his office for life. The general assembly of Spartan citizens had the right to vote on state matters, but the *gerousia* and the kings could ignore the vote if it was not to their liking. The *gerousia*:

- prepared the business and agenda for the assembly
- had numerous judicial functions – in particular, it tried cases that involved the kings, and had the right to impose penalties of loss of citizenship rights, death or exile
- deliberated on public policy.

SOURCE 18

… whenever an elder died his place should be taken by the man over sixty whose merits were regarded as most outstanding … The selection was made in the following way. The assembly gathered, and picked men were shut up in a nearby building where they could neither see out nor be seen, but could only hear the shouts of those in the assembly. For in this instance as in others, it was by shouting that they decided between the competitors … Whoever was met with the most shouting, and the loudest, was the man declared elected.

Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 26
(in *Plutarch on Sparta*, trans. R. Talbert, Penguin, London, 1988, pp. 38–9)

SOURCE 19

One might suppose that as long as they are respectable men and sufficiently trained in manly virtue [the elders] would benefit the state, but it should be doubted whether they should possess for life supreme jurisdiction in cases of importance (for the mind, like the body, is subject to old age) … For those who have had a share in this office have manifestly been guilty of taking bribes and have been corrupt enough to give away a lot of public property. Accordingly it would be better if they were accountable; but now they are not.

Aristotle, *On the Spartan Constitution*
(cited in M. Dillon & L. Garland, *Ancient Greece*, Routledge, London, 1994, p. 163)

The *ekklesia*

The *ekklesia* (also referred to as the *apella*) was the assembly attended by those, over the age of 30, who held full citizenship. They met monthly, probably at the time of the full moon. The assembly:

- elected the ephors, elders of the *gerousia* and other magistrates
- was responsible for passing measures put before it, such as appointments of military commanders
- made decisions about peace and war, resolutions for problems regarding kingship and emancipation of helots
- voted by acclamation; it could not initiate legislation, and could only vote 'yes' or 'no'
- was presided over by the kings and *gerousia* and, in the 5th century, by the ephors.

Source 20, from Thucydides, describes the decision taken by the Spartan *ekklesia* to go to war against the Athenians in 431 BC. It illustrates the influence the ephors could exercise in meetings of the *ekklesia*.

SOURCE 20

[Sthenelaidas], in his capacity as ephor, put the question to the Spartan assembly. They make their decisions by acclamation [shouting] not by voting [that is, private ballot] and Sthenelaidas said at first that he could not decide on which side the acclamations were the louder. This was because he wanted to make them show their opinions openly and so make them all the more enthusiastic for war. He therefore said: 'Spartans, those of you who think that the treaty has been broken and that the Athenians are aggressors, get up and stand on one side. Those who do not think so, stand on the other side,' and he pointed out to them where they were to stand. They then rose to their feet and separated into two divisions. The great majority were of the opinion that the treaty had been broken.

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 1.87
(trans. R. Warner, Penguin Classics, Harmondsworth, 1974)

4.4 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 14–20

1. Using Sources 14 and 15, construct a table to record the roles of kings. Use these headings: Religious, Military, Legal/Judicial, Social.
2. What checks were there on the powers of the kings?
3. List the powers of the ephors. To what extent did they exercise more power than the other sections of government?
4. What is Aristotle's criticism of the ephorate?
5. How were the members of the *gerousia* chosen? What were the advantages and disadvantages of this system?
6. In Source 20, what is the significance of the Spartan *ekklesia* voting by acclamation rather than private ballot? How did the ephor influence the outcome of the vote on this occasion?

4.4 Check your learning

1. What attitudes did Xenophon, Plato and Aristotle have towards the Athenian democracy of their times? How did their experiences of this political system shape their views on Sparta's system of government?
2. According to these ancient writers, what were the strengths and weaknesses of the various organs of Spartan government?
3. Why does the ephorate have elements of both oligarchy and democracy?
4. Writing task: 'The real political leadership of Sparta rested with the elders and the ephors'. To what extent is this an accurate description of the government of Sparta?

   To help you plan your response:

   - interpret the statement and answer the question, indicating the extent to which you think it is an accurate description
   - briefly explain the leadership roles played by the elders and ephors
   - analyse the leadership exercised by these in comparison with the leadership roles of the kings and *ekklesia*
   - support your analysis with reference to relevant sources (ancient and/or modern)
   - make a judgement based on this analysis about the extent to which this statement is accurate (for example to a large extent, to some extent, etc.).

4.5 The Spartan army

Spartan society was aimed at producing a strong fighting force of soldiers who were willing to die for Sparta. The Spartan poet Tyrtaeus exhorted his countrymen as shown in Source 21 (see also Source 57).

SOURCE 21

Let us fight with courage for our country, and for our children
Let us die and never spare our lives.
Young men, remain beside each other and fight,
And do not begin shameful flight or fear,
But make your spirit great and brave in your heart,
And do not be faint-hearted when you fight with men …

Tyrtaeus, (cited in M. Dillon & L. Garland, *Ancient Greece*, Routledge, London, 1994, p .150)

In 669 BC, at the Battle of Hysiai, the Spartans were decisively defeated by their old enemies, the Argives. Perhaps in response to this humiliation the Spartans developed their militaristic state. Throughout the 6th century and into the beginning of the 5th century, the Spartan army was composed of all Spartiate citizens. Towards the end of the 5th century, non-Spartiates began to perform military duties.

The *agoge*

In order to become highly trained soldiers, Spartiates underwent a rigorous system of education and training known as the *agoge*. It was designed to instil qualities of patriotism, loyalty, obedience and comradeship.

At birth, Spartan boys were inspected by a government official. There was no place in Spartan society for the weak and deformed, so any child that failed this inspection was exposed and left to die at Apothetae on the slopes of Mount Taygetus. Until the age of seven, a child was raised by his mother at home, then lifelong service to the state began, and boys left home to live in the herds of boys (*agelai*) at the barracks.

Education was a state responsibility and a government official, the *paidonomos*, was in charge of the *agoge*. According to Xenophon, the *paidonomos* had to administer severe whippings to the disobedient. Plato believed that Spartans were educated 'not by persuasion but by violence'. They were taught physical and military exercises as well as the basics of reading and writing. The boys were hardened by exercising naked and barefoot. They did not engage in music, dancing or athletic competitions until the age of 10. Each stage of Spartan education took six years. The art of public speaking or oratory was forbidden, and anyone found practising it was punished by the ephors. The Spartans, however, enjoyed music, both vocal and instrumental. In keeping with the martial spirit of the society, they liked their music played loudly and strongly. The most commonly used instruments were the flute, lyre, harp and trumpet. The Spartans also enjoyed dance, which they used as a method for training soldiers. One of these dances, the Pyrrhic dance, was performed to flute music, and comprised a mock fight

SOURCE 22 Training and life of the Spartan soldier

AGE	TRAINING
Birth	• Ten days after birth, male children were examined by a council of elders to determine whether they would live or be exposed
0–7 years	• Under the supervision of their mother
7–12 years	• In the care of the state • Enrolled in an age group and went to live in a military barracks where they learnt military skills as well as reading and writing • Learnt to fend for themselves, obey orders, share responsibilities and get on with others • At age 10, they learnt music, dancing, athletics
12–18 years	• Continued to live in barracks and undergo military training • Learnt games of endurance and skill, and were taught how to steal • Discipline included going barefoot, exercising naked, having short hair, sleeping on beds of rushes • Clothing was limited to one garment and they were given minimum rations
18–23 years	• Enrolled as an *eiren*, or prefect/overseer – this was a stage similar to a modern cadet corps • Able to serve in the army but not in the front line • Able to marry
23–30 years	• Full-time soldier
30 years	• Citizen and soldier • Able to live at home although meals were taken in the barracks • Allowed to grow their hair

that boys learnt at 15. The *Gymnopaedia*, an important festival that included dancing and gymnastics, was celebrated as part of the *agoge* (see 4.10 Religion).

At age 18, Spartan youths entered the stage of their training as cadets or *eirenes*. As an *eiren,* a Spartan acted as a leader and role model for the younger boys. He had the responsibility of the whip and could dispense punishments. During this stage, the *eiren* applied for membership of the mess. At 23, he was a frontline soldier and at 30 he entered full citizenship. If a Spartan youth did not progress through each stage of the training, he was unable to claim full citizenship.

SOURCE 23

… as boys reached the age of seven, Lycurgus took charge of them all himself and distributed them into troops: here he accustomed them to live together and be brought up together, playing and learning as a group. The captaincy of the troop was conferred upon the boy who displayed the soundest judgment and the best fighting spirit. The others kept their eyes on him, responded to his instructions, and endured their punishments from him, so that altogether this training served as a practice in learning ready obedience …

The boys learnt to read and write no more than was necessary. Otherwise their whole education was aimed at developing smart obedience, perseverance under stress, and victory in battle. So as they grew older they intensified their physical training, and got into the habit of cropping their hair, going barefoot and exercising naked. From the age of twelve they never wore a tunic, and were given only one cloak a year. Their bodies were rough, and knew nothing of baths or oiling: only on a few days in the year did they experience such delights. They slept together by squadrons and troops on mattresses which they made up for themselves from the tips of reeds growing along the river Eurotas, broken off by hand without the help of any iron blade. During winter they added the so-called 'thistledown' and mixed it into the mattresses, since it was a substance thought to give out warmth.

Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 16
(in *Plutarch on Sparta*, trans. R. Talbert, Penguin, London, 1988, p. 28)

Composition of the army

The Spartan army was organised according to the age divisions specified in the *agoge*. Originally there were five divisions called *morai* drawn from the five tribal regions or *obai* of Sparta. This was later increased to six *morai*. The sources differ on exactly how many men comprised a *mora* – figures vary between 500 and 900. Source 24 shows how each *mora* was structured by a series of divisions. The basic unit was composed of groups of eight men.

SOURCE 24 Divisions of the Spartan army

DIVISION	CONSISTING OF	MODERN EQUIVALENT
Enomotia	4 files of 8 men	platoon
Pentekostys	4 *enomatiai*	company
Lochos	2 *pentekostyses*	battalion
Mora	4 *lochoi*	regiment

Another group within the Spartan army was composed of *hippeis* (knights). This was a picked group of 300 men whose main purpose seems to have been to guard the kings. References to this group can be found in Thucydides (Book 5, 72.4), and Herodotus (Book 8, 124.3). It is believed that this elite corps was chosen annually on the basis of the age classes.

Hoplites

The Spartans, like other ancient Greeks, relied on hoplite armies. A hoplite was a heavily armed infantryman, named after the shield he carried – the *hoplon*. This round, wooden shield was concave on the inside and faced with bronze on the outside. It was approximately 1 metre wide and weighed about 7 kilograms. A cumbersome weapon, the *hoplon* was difficult to hold up for long periods of time. It was held by passing the left forearm through a loop in the centre and gripping a handle on the far edge. Non-Spartan hoplites often dropped their shields if they fled the battlefield; however, Spartans saw this as a loss of honour.

The hoplite wore:

- a cloth tunic covered by a bronze breastplate, or cuirass
- a helmet made of thin bronze, often decorated with a crest of horsehair – though it protected most of the face, the helmet had no ear holes so the hoplite must have had difficulty hearing on the battlefield
- bronze greaves for protection of the lower leg.

Apart from his *hoplon*, the hoplite carried a long spear, almost 3 metres in length, used for thrusting not throwing, and an iron sword. Hoplites were trained to fight in formation, not as individuals. The standard formation was called a phalanx, a tight square, eight or more ranks deep with shields overlapping, each man's shield partly covering himself and the man beside him. This made it difficult for the enemy to break the formation.

SOURCE 25
A Spartan hoplite dressed for battle

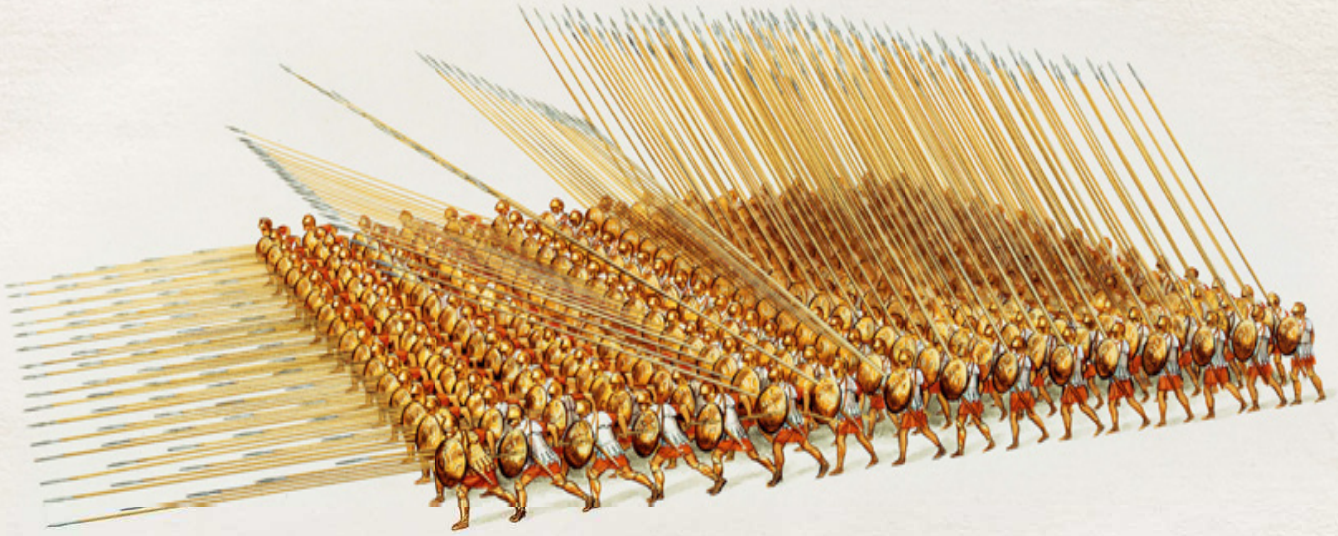
SOURCE 26

Regarding their equipment for battle, Lycurgus devised that they should have a crimson cloak and a bronze shield, thinking that the former has least in common with women's dress, and is most warlike; the latter can be very quickly polished and tarnishes very slowly. He also allowed those who had reached adulthood to wear their hair long, considering that they would thus appear taller, more noble, and more terrifying … When the enemy are close enough to see, a she-goat is sacrificed, and the law is that all flautists present are to play their flutes and no Spartan is to be without a garland; an order is also given to polish weapons. Young men are permitted to enter battle with their hair groomed [anointed with oil] and with a cheerful and glorious appearance.

Xenophon, *The Constitution of the Spartans*, 11.3
(cited in M. Dillon & L. Garland, *Ancient Greece*, Routledge, London, 1994, p. 153)

Military tactics

The success of the Spartan army depended largely on the discipline of the troops in phalanx formation. The aim was to break the opposition's line by deploying a group-and-shove technique. The Spartans were remarkably successful in this type of warfare. At Plataea in 479 BC during the Persian Wars, for example, they remained steady in their ranks under a heavy barrage of Persian arrows. The Spartans maintained their supremacy in warfare until the Battle of Leuctra in 371 BC.



SOURCE 27 The Greek phalanx in battle formation

4.5 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 21–26

1. What does Tyrtaeus' poem reveal of Spartan martial ideology?
2. What was the purpose of the *agoge*?
3. How was the Spartan hoplite equipped for war?
4. According to Xenophon, how did the Spartans prepare for battle?

4.5 Check your learning

1. Watch the online documentary film *Hoplite Spartan Phalanx: Historical Real Tactics* for a re-enactment of the phalanx formation.
2. Read Herodotus's account of the Battle of Thermopylae and the heroic stand of the famous 300 Spartans against the much larger Persian force in 479 BC (*Histories*, 7.201–233). What can be learnt about the Spartan military ethos and battle tactics from this account?
3. Research the Battle of Leuctra in 371 BC. How were the Spartans defeated?
4. Writing tasks:
   a. Describe the main steps in the training of Spartan soldiers in the *agoge*.
   b. Explain the main features of the Spartan military ethos. (See also 4.12 Culture: Writing and literature.)

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4.6 Control of the helots

Some ancient sources indicate that the Spartans feared the helots because the latter were so numerous. While helot numbers varied throughout Sparta's history, the helot population generally was much larger than the Spartan one. Herodotus tells us that helots outnumbered the Spartans seven to one at the Battle of Plataea during the Persian Wars in the early 5th century BC. The author of Source 28 was the Greek historian Myron of Priene, a city of Ionia. He wrote an account of the 7th century BC First Messenian War. The date of his work is uncertain, but is probably not earlier than the 3rd century BC.

SOURCE 28

They assign to the helots every shameful task leading to disgrace. For they ordained that each one of them must wear a dogskin cap and wrap himself in skins and receive a stipulated number of beatings every year regardless of any wrongdoing, so that they would never forget they were slaves. Moreover, if any exceeded the vigour proper to a slave's condition, they made death the penalty; and they allotted a punishment to those controlling them if they failed to rebuke those who were growing fat. And in giving land over to them they set them a portion which they were constantly to hand over.

Myron of Priene, (cited in P. Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia: A Regional History, 1300–362 BC*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1979, p. 354)

How real was the helot threat?

Was the helot system beneficial or detrimental to Spartan society? The ancient philosopher Plato commented that the most vexed problem in Greece was that of the helot system. He also remarked on the frequency of slave revolts in Messenia.

Scholars debate whether the main purpose of Sparta's militarism was indeed to keep the helots in check. For example, Stephen Hodkinson points out that ancient writers differed in their opinions about the helot threat. Thucydides emphasised Spartiate fear of the helots, but Hodkinson argues that this needs to be seen in the context of isolated historical incidents, for example the 'massacre' of helots (Source 29). By contrast, other ancient writers, including Herodotus and Xenophon, 'present the helots as just part of the scenery, undertaking a range of tasks for their masters in an apparently untroublesome way'. Hodkinson also refers to new archaeological evidence regarding patterns of helot settlement that indicate that Spartan control of helots was less concentrated in Lakonia than in more distant Messenia.

The *krypteia*

According to ancient sources the *krypteia* (secret police) played an important role in the control of helots. Plutarch says that, as part of their training, specially chosen bands of young men were sent out at night into the countryside to kill any helots they found there. Plato viewed the *krypteia* as a part of Spartan military training. Our information is limited. Was it an ongoing practice or a **rite of passage** for young Spartans?

rite of passage a ceremony or event marking an important stage in someone's life

SOURCE 29

Thucydides tells how those helots who had been singled out by the Spartiates for their bravery were first crowned as if they had been granted their freedom, and made a round of the sanctuaries of the gods; but then a little later they all vanished – over 2000 of them – and nobody either at the time itself or later was able to explain how they had been eliminated. Aristotle makes the further notable point that immediately upon taking up office the ephors would declare war on the helots, so that they could be killed without pollution.

Plutarch, *On Sparta*, (trans. R. Talbert, Penguin, London, 1988, p. 41)

4.6 Understanding and using the sources

Source 28

1 According to Myron of Priene, how were the helots treated by the Spartans?

2 What questions need to be asked about Myron of Priene in assessing the value of this source as evidence for the treatment of the helots?

3 In view of Spartan dependence on helot labour, how feasible is the kind of sustained brutal coercion of helots described in this source?

Source 29

4 If no one knows what happened to the 2000 helots who disappeared, how reliable is Thucydides' account of their 'massacre'?

4.6 Check your learning

1 Investigate the author of Source 28. What problems of evidence arise from your investigation?

2 The geographer and travel writer Pausanias (2nd century AD) quoted a verse from Tyrtaeus about the helots. Find out what he wrote by entering 'The contribution of the helots' in your browser. What is the value of this source for an understanding of the helot issue?

3 Read the complete account of Stephen Hodkinson's arguments about the nature of the helot threat in his article 'Transforming Sparta: New approaches to the study of Spartan society'.

4 For other recent research on the helots and *perioikoi*, read Nigel M. Kennell, *Spartans: A New History*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, Chapter 5, 'Helots and Perioeci'.

5 Discuss the following:

   a How would you account for the differing views of ancient writers on the treatment of the helots?

   b What were the advantages and disadvantages of the system of helotage for the Spartans?

6 Writing task: Using the sources cited here, discuss the role of helots in Spartan society. (Hint: 'Discuss' requires you to consider both positive and negative arguments.)

4.7 Spartan women

The first important point to note about Spartan women is that there are no surviving sources written by them. The sources that have survived concerning their lives were written by Greek men from other states. They tend either to criticise the women's behaviour or praise their physical attributes. Spartan women were encouraged to play an active role in their society. For this reason they often had more freedom than women in other Greek states of this period.

Roles of Spartan women

As elsewhere in Greek society, Spartan women's roles as wives and mothers were paramount, and like their Greek sisters, Spartan women performed a number of religious roles. However, the military focus of Spartan life meant that Spartan women often had different roles and responsibilities to women of other Greek cities. Such differences sometimes drew sharp criticism from male writers. Aristotle, in *The Politics* (Book 2.9), says that 'the licence of Spartan women had a negative impact on Sparta and was adverse to the happiness of the state'.

Wives and mothers

Xenophon, in his explanation of the Spartan constitution, noted that for female citizens, childbearing was the most important function: the Spartan woman was educated to be the mother of warriors.

The rearing of male children in Sparta was the concern of the state rather than the family. When a Spartan boy was born, the elders examined the baby and decided whether it would be exposed or allowed to live. Girls were left in the care of their mothers. Child-rearing practices in Sparta seem to have been valued. Spartan women in the Classical period achieved a great reputation as **wet nurses** and were highly sought after as nannies.

wet nurse
a woman employed to suckle another woman's child

The unswerving loyalty of Spartan mothers to the warrior ethos of the Spartan state is colourfully recounted by Plutarch in his 'Sayings of Spartan women'.

SOURCE 30

As a woman was burying her son, a worthless old crone came up to her and said: 'You poor woman, what a misfortune!' 'No, by the two gods, a piece of good fortune,' she replied, 'because I bore him so that he might die for Sparta, and that is what has happened.'

Plutarch, *On Sparta*, (trans. R. Talbert, Penguin, London, 1988, p. 160)

Religious roles

The most famous cult centre in Sparta was that of the goddess Artemis Orthia. This goddess was associated with childbirth, and large quantities of **votive offerings** have been found at the sanctuary. These offerings, it is thought, were brought by women who were barren, pregnant or had survived childbirth. The cult of Eileithyia, the goddess of childbirth, was an important cult for Spartan women.

votive offering
an object deposited in a sacred place for religious purposes

SOURCE 31 A modern representation of a Spartan mother. This painting by 18th-century French artist Jean-Jacques-François Le Barbier depicts a Spartan woman giving a shield to her son. It no doubt represents the famous 'saying' recorded by Plutarch, 'Son, either with this or on this'.

At festivals, Spartan women performed special religious dances, sometimes with the men and sometimes separately. Examples of these are the *Hyporchema* in honour of Apollo and the *Caryatid* in honour of Artemis at Caryae. At the famous *Hyakinthia* festival in honour of Apollo, women took part, riding on richly decorated carriages made of wickerwork (plaited twigs), while others drove chariots in a procession for racing.

Little is known of women's participation in burial customs and of how women themselves were buried. Lycurgus is credited with having laid down strict procedures relating to death and burial practices, one of them being that no inscriptions were to be placed on the tomb of a woman who had died 'in sacred office' (a priestess). Herodotus describes how, when a king of Sparta died, women walked through the streets beating cauldrons, perhaps to frighten away evil spirits. A man and a woman from each household were required to dress in mourning and express their grief.

SOURCE 32 An early 5th-century relief shows a Spartan girl involved in a religious rite. She is lifting her veil and pouring wine into a cup.

Women and land ownership in Sparta

Married Spartan women exercised much more control and influence in their society than did women in other parts of Greece. Although they took no part in the communal life of the men, and as non-citizens could not vote, they nevertheless played an important role in the management of their households and in the transfer of property. Wealth in Sparta revolved around land ownership. The land was owned and controlled by the upper-class Spartiate families, and marriage alliances ensured that property remained within this small group. At the beginning of the Classical period, a Spartan woman could inherit part of her family's estate. However, she did not own it, and it passed to her offspring. By the end of the Classical period, as Aristotle and Xenophon inform us, women did own and manage estates without male guardians. It is also believed that they owned their dowries. In the exceptional case of an orphaned heiress, it was the kings who decided whom they would marry (Herodotus, Book 6, 57.4). The change seems to have come about because the men were so often absent fighting wars: women had to manage the estates and affairs of their husbands. Towards the end of the Classical period, Aristotle noted that women in Sparta owned two-fifths of the land. Aristotle feared that this would lead to *gynaikokratia*: government by women.

SOURCE 33

This was exemplified among the Spartans in the days of their greatness; many things were managed by their women … And nearly two-fifths of the whole country are held by women; this owing to the number of heiresses and to the large dowries which are customary. It would surely have been better to have given no dowries at all, or, if any, but small or moderate ones.

Aristotle, *Politics*, Book 2.11 (cited in M. Lefkowitz & M. Fant, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*, 2nd edn, Duckworth, London, 1992, p. 40)

SOURCE 34

… the men of Sparta were always obedient to their wives, and allowed them to meddle in public affairs more than they themselves were allowed to meddle in domestic concerns.

Plutarch, *Life of Agis*, 7.3
(in *Plutarch on Sparta*, trans. R. Talbert, Penguin, London, 1988, p. 58)

The education of Spartan girls

The Spartan education system was controlled by the state. Young Spartan girls remained at home with their mothers, but they were still expected to be educated. It is assumed that, like the Spartan boys, the girls were taught the basics of reading and writing. Girls were organised into bands (similar to the boys) for team games and choral singing. Xenophon (Source 35) compared the upbringing of girls elsewhere in the Greek world with the system in Sparta.

SOURCE 35

In other cities … girls are expected to imitate the usual **sedentary** life of craftsmen, and to work their wool sitting quietly. How could one expect girls brought up in such a way to produce outstanding offspring? Lycurgus felt that slave girls were perfectly capable of producing garments, and that the most important job of free women was to bear children; he therefore decreed that women should take as much trouble over physical fitness as men. Moreover, he instituted contests of speed and strength for women parallel to those for men, on the grounds that if both parents were strong the offspring would be more sturdy.

sedentary
with limited physical activity

Xenophon, *The Constitution of the Spartans*, 1.3–4 (cited in *Aristotle and Xenophon on Democracy and Oligarchy*, trans. J.M. Moore, Chatto & Windus, London, 1975, p. 75)

In Source 36 an Athenian and a Spartan are comparing the education of women in their city-states. The Athenian speaker is describing the Spartan system.

SOURCE 36

You make your girls take part in athletics and you give them a compulsory education in the arts; when they grow up, though dispensed from working wool, they have to 'weave' themselves a pretty hard-working sort of life, which is by no means despicable or useless: they have to be tolerably efficient at running the home and managing the house and bringing up the children – they don't undertake military service. This means that even if some extreme emergency ever led to a battle for their state and the lives of their children, they wouldn't have the expertise …

the legislator should go the whole way and not stick at half measures; he mustn't just regulate the men and allow the women to live as they like and wallow in expensive luxury.

Plato, *Laws*, (cited in M. Lefkowitz & M. Fant, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*, 2nd edn, Duckworth, London, 1992, p. 48)

The following sources are from plays by the classical Athenian playwrights Aristophanes and Euripides. During the 5th century, there was a long-standing rivalry between Athens and Sparta. The plays were performed to large crowds of Athenian citizens during the annual drama festivals.

SOURCE 37

LYSISTRATA: Welcome, Lampito, my dear. How are things in Sparta? Darling, you look simply beautiful. What a colourful complexion! What strength! I reckon you could strangle a bull!

LAMPITO: You could do the same, my dear, with proper training. I practise rump-jumps every day.

LYSISTRATA: (prodding her) And such marvellous breasts too.

LAMPITO: (indignantly) I'd thank you not to treat me as though I'm some animal ready for sacrifice.

Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, (trans. A. Sommerstein, Penguin, London, 1973, p. 183)

SOURCE 38

No Spartan girl
Could grow up modest, even if she wanted to … they go out
With bare thighs and loose clothes, to wrestle and run races
Along with the young men.
I call it intolerable.

Euripides, *Andromache*, (trans. P. Vellacott, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1980, p. 165)

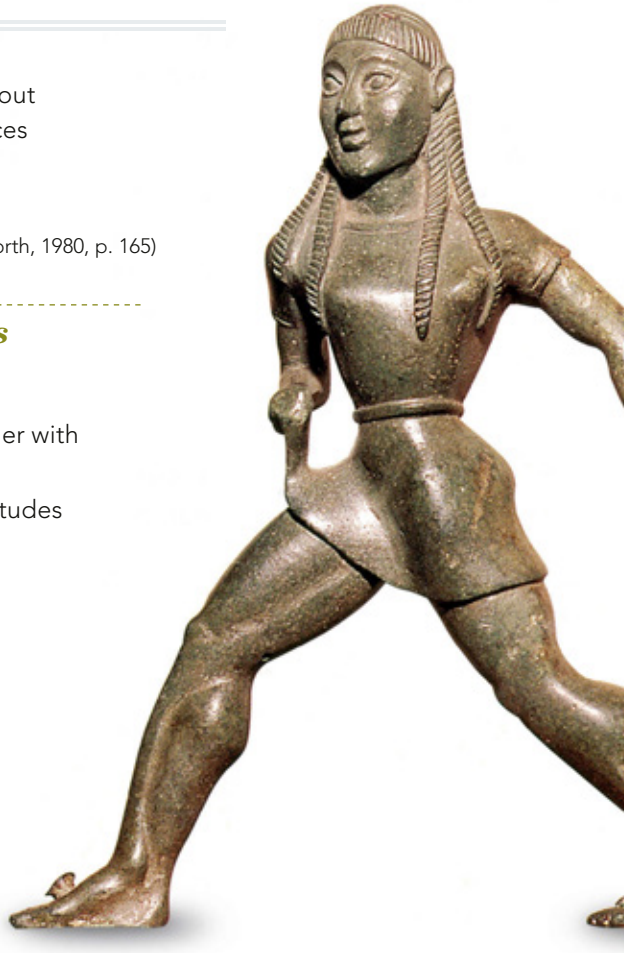
4.7 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 30 & 31

1. What does the saying recorded by Plutarch, 'Son, either with this or on this', mean?
2. What is the saying intended to suggest about the attitudes of Spartan mothers?
3. How does Source 31 perpetuate the Spartan mirage?

Source 33 & 34

4. What criticisms are made of Spartan women in these sources?
5. What do these sources indicate about the attitudes of the male writers?



SOURCE 39 A 6th-century bronze figurine from Sparta depicting an athletic Spartan girl in a short tunic

Sources 35 & 36

6 What was the purpose of the education of Spartan women?

7 How did their education differ from that of other Greek women?

8 How does the Athenian speaker in Source 36 contradict himself?

Sources 37 & 38

9 How do these sources show the differences between Athenian and Spartan women?

10 What attitudes to Spartan women are revealed in these extracts? What is the significance of them being extracts from plays?

4.7 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** If there are no extant female sources for Sparta, how can we account for Plutarch's 'Sayings of Spartan women'?
   - **b** What do the range of sources tell us about the lives of Spartan women?

2 Read the full text of Aristotle's disapproval of Spartan women in *The Politics*, Book 2.9. Search online for 'The Internet Classics Archive – Politics by Aristotle'.

3 How does Aristotle's background and context help to explain his disapproval of the freedom enjoyed by Spartan women?

4 Find more examples of the so-called 'Sayings of Spartan women'. Search online for 'Plutarch Sayings of Spartan Women – Vitruvianman'.

5 Read Sarah Pomeroy's analysis on the sources for Spartan women in *Spartan Women*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2002, pp. 139–70.

6 Writing tasks:
   - **a** Using the sources, explain the role and status of women in Spartan society.

     To help you plan your response:
     - identify aspects of the roles and status of Spartan women and use these to structure your response
     - indicate the main features of the roles and status within the context of Spartan society
     - use specific sources to support your points
     - refer to relevant problems of evidence.
   - **b** Evaluate ancient writers' views of Spartan women.

     To help you plan your response:
     - choose at least two writers who have written about Spartan women and briefly indicate their views about particular aspects of Spartan women's lives
     - analyse the views of the writers, drawing attention to their particular perspectives, and explain relevant problems of evidence
     - make a judgement about the value of these views for understanding Spartan women based on your analysis.

4.8 The economy

We have already considered the advantages Sparta enjoyed from its location and access to natural resources, especially after the addition of the fertile plains of Messenia (see Sources 2, 3 and 4). Unlike other Greek city-states such as Athens, which depended on importing grain from the Hellespont, Lakonia was self-sufficient in this vital commodity. Such economic independence guaranteed a degree of security and influence in the Peloponnese. Economic activity in Sparta was carried out by the helots in agriculture and by the *perioikoi* in industry and trade.

Land ownership: agriculture, *kleroi* and helots

An important element in the restructuring of Spartan society attributed to the reforms of Lycurgus was the redistribution of land among the Spartiate and *perioikoi* populations (see Source 10). These allotments of land, called *kleroi*, were farmed by the helots, and the agricultural produce of the *kleroi* was the basis of the Spartan economy. This system of land ownership and agricultural production underpinned the entire Spartan way of life, because it freed the male citizens to devote themselves to their military pursuits.

Land ownership: a contested issue

The question of land ownership in ancient Sparta is an issue of some controversy among scholars. It is concerned with the view, implied by the ancient sources, that there was equality among Spartiates in their ownership of land, which had been distributed and controlled by the state. Plutarch, in his *Life of Lycurgus*, states 'they would all live on equal terms with one another with the same amount of property to support each, and they would seek to be first only in merit'. However, there is conflicting evidence on this issue.

SOURCE 40

While some of the Spartan citizens have quite small properties, others have very large ones; hence the land has passed into the hands of a few. And this is due to faulty laws; for, although the legislator rightly holds up to shame the sale or purchase of an inheritance, he allows anybody who likes to give or bequeath it. Yet both practices lead to the same result. And nearly two-fifths of the whole country are held by women; this is owing to the number of heiresses and to the large dowries which are customary … indeed, at one time Sparta is said to have numbered not less than 10000 citizens … [But Lycurgus], wanting to have as many Spartans as he could, encouraged the citizens to have large families … Yet … if there were many children, the land being distributed as it is, many of them must necessarily fall into poverty.

Aristotle, *Politics*, Book 2.9 (cited in D. Kagan, *Problems in Ancient History*, Vol. 1, Macmillan, New York, 1971, pp. 209–10)

The scholar Douglas Kelly offers the following view about equality of property ownership.

SOURCE 41

[In the 5th and 4th century], Sparta did not have equality of property … there had been at some stage a distribution of land to enable some citizens to join or remain within the circle of privileged citizens: when this took place and how it took place is uncertain, but one thing is clear enough.

The land passed out in that original redivision or redivisions (if there was more than one) is far more likely to have belonged to outsiders and foreigners than to the great Spartiate landowners.

D. Kelly, 'Sparta: Some myths ancient and modern', *Hellenika*, Macquarie Ancient History Association, North Ryde, NSW, 1982, p. 16

Plutarch's view that land in Sparta was shared out in equal portions to all male citizens and was controlled is also contested by the modern scholar Stephen Hodkinson. He argues that the ownership of landed property in Sparta was never equal and became more unequal over time. The great divisions in Spartan society between the rich and the poor, he suggests, were due to the growth of privately owned estates. As Aristotle reveals, the land was divided through inheritance and bequests. Women also came to play a significant role in Spartan society because, as heiresses, they controlled many of the estates.

The widening gap between rich and poor caused severe social problems in Sparta in the 5th and 4th centuries. The number of Spartiates rapidly declined throughout the 5th century. Spartiates who lost their *kleroi* or were unable to contribute to the mess lost citizenship and became inferiors. In 398 BC, this group was involved in a plot, known as the conspiracy of Cinadon, to overthrow the government.

The economic role of the *perioikoi*

The *perioikoi* were chiefly engaged in mining, manufacture and commerce; moreover, all mineral and marine resources of Lakonia and Messenia were in *perioikoi* hands. The *perioikoi* procured the metals and manufactured the weapons that kept the Spartan military machine operating. Ancient writers such as Pliny and Herodotus mention the *perioikoi* as making shoes, purple garments, and objects of wood and iron. Gytheum was the main centre for the delivery of Spartan imports and exports. The fishermen, shipwrights and naval personnel at Gytheum were *perioikoi*.

Perioikoi shared in the land division, although it is not clear what percentage they were given. According to Plutarch, Lycurgus originally distributed 30 000 allotments to the *perioikoi*, but the shadowy nature of the Lycurgan reforms make it difficult to know whether this was a single handout or whether there were any further divisions.

4.8 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 40 & 41

1. What were the advantages and disadvantages of the Lycurgan system of land ownership?
2. According to Aristotle, why was land ownership so important to Spartans?
3. How does Kelly's view compare with the ancient sources?

4.8 Check your learning

1. Which view of Spartan land ownership does Hodkinson support?
2. What conclusion about the system of land ownership can you draw from the sources?
3. Read about the conspiracy of Cinadon in Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 3.3.5.
4. Writing tasks:
   - **a** Explain what ancient and modern sources reveal about land ownership in ancient Sparta.
   - **b** Explain the importance of the *perioikoi* to the Spartan economy.

4.9 Technology

The Spartan metalworking industry produced quality bronze weapons and armour for warfare. Bronze was also used to make a range of figurines, especially for religious purposes. In addition, pottery was an important industry in Sparta's early history; Lakonian pottery of this period was traded widely in the Mediterranean world.

SOURCE 42 A set of bronze armour, 7th to 5th centuries BC

SOURCE 43 A Spartan shield bearing the Greek letter L for *lambda*, the symbol of the Lacedaemonians

SOURCE 44 A bronze statuette of a Spartan warrior wrapped in his military cloak

Weapons and armour

Sparta had iron deposits but would have imported copper and tin, which it mixed with iron for bronze working. This industry had been practised in Lakonia and other Peloponnesian centres since the 8th century BC. The oldest technique of making bronze objects involved the casting of the molten alloy in a mould and then beating it out into thin sheeting with a hammer. Superior quality bronze sheeting had a tin content of about 10 per cent. By the 5th century BC, the new technique of 'indirect casting' was developed in which a clay model was used to produce a 'negative', thus making possible the mass production of cast objects.

The Spartan bronze industry produced a range of weapons and armour to equip its hoplite forces. Each soldier was fitted with the standard kit, including a bronze helmet, *hoplon* (shield), cuirass (breastplate), greaves to protect the lower legs, and a bronze-tipped spear and dagger.

Spartan bronze makers also produced small figurines and larger statues. Several bronze sculptors are known from ancient times. Pausanias, the ancient travel writer, visited Olympia and mentions a bronze statue of Zeus on a bronze base, about 5.5 metres high, which was the work of Telestas of Sparta who lived in the 6th century BC.

Pottery

The most famous pottery is that known as Laconian III, which is dated to the early 6th century BC. Its notable features included black figures painted on a yellow **slip** with elaborately incised detail and purple colouring.

slip
a mixture of clay, water and pigment used for decorating the surface of pottery

It is believed that this pottery was the work of one man, joined by others, but with the style dying out in the early 5th century BC. It proved to be very popular and was exported throughout the Greek world and found as far afield as Samos and Sicily. The best known example of this is the Arcesilas Kylix (a drinking cup) shown in Source 45.

The Lakonian painters and potters were obviously specialists in their craft. Archaeological evidence seems to suggest that they were not *perioikoi*, since a kiln and family graves of the owner have been found inside one area of the city. Small figurines, mould-made reliefs of baked clay (terracottas), have also been found at most religious sites. A quantity of clay masks, which are models of larger masks used in some ritual, was found at the Orthia sanctuary.

Economic exchange: the use of iron bars

Lycurgus was supposed to have introduced the use of iron bars as coinage. Examples of these iron bars or spits have been found at Lakonian sanctuaries.

Scholars generally agree that the idea that Sparta banned gold and silver coinage is a myth. It has been suggested that Spartans must always have used some Hellenic currency rather than the iron spits because they needed to pay for mercenaries and send embassies abroad. We do know that the Spartans did not mint coins until the 3rd century BC.

Trade

Spartan trade, carried out mostly by the *perioikoi,* was conducted through its port at Gytheum, 46 kilometres from Sparta on the Laconian coast. The waters here produced the shellfish and murex used in making purple dye. Phoenician and Syrian traders had first visited this area and it later became a central trading point, from which the Spartans traded their main exports: wool, wine, oil, pottery and bronzes.

a

b

SOURCE 45 (a) The Arcesilas Kylix, 20 cm high and 38 cm wide, shows King Arcesilas of Cyrene supervising the weighing and storage of some substance, probably wool, brought to him as tribute. The king, wearing a sun hat, sits under an awning from the pole of which hangs a large balance. Servants are shown weighing, tallying and storing the produce. (b) A side view of the Arcesilas Kylix

4.9 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 42–45

1 What evidence is there of Spartan achievements in technology and arts and crafts?

4.9 Check your learning

1 Find out about the ancient purple dye industry. Why was it important in ancient times?
2 Writing task: Explain the main features of the Spartan economy. (Hint: consider agriculture, industries, technology and trade.)

4.10 Religion

While the Greeks had temples, gods and sacrifices in common, various city-states often differed in the cults, festivals and rituals observed. In the ancient world, the Spartans were noted for their serious attitude to religion and their obedience to the gods. We know from Herodotus that a Spartan force arrived too late to help the Athenians at the Battle of Marathon in 490 BC because they were celebrating a religious festival. Herodotus also tells us that in 480 BC the Spartan king, Leonidas, leading a small army that included 300 Spartiates, confronted the might of Persia at Thermopylae. Only at the conclusion of the religious festival of the *Karneia*, according to Herodotus, would the Spartans 'march with all the troops at their disposal'.

SOURCE 46

The Spartans, though moved by the appeal, and willing to send help to Athens, were unable to send it promptly because they did not wish to break their law. It was the ninth day of the month, and they said they could not take the field until the moon was full.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 6, 106
(trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972)

SOURCE 47 The remains of the Temple of Artemis Orthia in modern day Sparta

Gods and goddesses

Particularly important to the Spartans were the mythical twin Spartan heroes, the Dioscuri ('youths of Zeus'): Castor and Polydeuces (later Romanised to Castor and Pollux). Thousands of votive offerings to the Dioscuri have been found, particularly at Amyclae. The Dioscuri were associated with young men and their pursuits of horsemanship, athletics and warfare. Other gods of importance in Sparta were Apollo Karneios, Apollo of Amyclae, Artemis Orthia, Athena Chalkioikos, Helen, Leucippides and Lycurgus.

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It is interesting to note that most of the Spartan gods were armed. At Amyclae there was a statue of Apollo with a spear in one hand and a bow in the other. There was also a statue of an armed Aphrodite.

Festivals

All major festivals in Sparta honoured Apollo as a young man. There were communal festivals in which everyone, including the king, had their own role to play.

The *Karneia*

The *Karneia* was a major festival on the Spartan calendar. It was celebrated in the holy month of *Karneios* (August/September) and took its name from Apollo *Karneios*, the god of the herd or the ram god. Archaeologists have unearthed coins depicting Apollo *Karneios* as a horned god; horns have also been found carved on a stone with the inscription 'to the *Karneios*'. A piece of written evidence also points to the cult of the horned god. A line from Theokritos, a 3rd-century BC Greek poet, tells of a shepherd fattening a ram to be sacrificed to Apollo at the *Karneia.*

SOURCE 48 A Dioscuri relief showing the two brothers standing on either side of two tall **amphorae**; on the **pediment** above the figures, two snakes support Leda's egg

amphora (*pl.* amphorae)
a two-handled pottery storage jar with an oval body tapering to a point at the base

pediment
a decorative architectural feature, usually a triangular shape placed above doors and windows

The origins of this festival are obscure. It was perhaps connected with the return of the sons of Herakles and the founding of Sparta. According to the 3rd-century BC Spartan writer Sosibius, it was reorganised during the 20th Olympiad (676–73 BC) and became a musical festival celebrating heroic deeds and great events. Terpander of Lesbos, a poet and musician, is believed to have instituted the musical contest held during the festival. Athletic contests and games also formed part of the *Karneia.* These were organised on military lines and had a close association with the *agoge.*

Two rituals are thought to have been performed at the *Karneia*. The first involved a procession with model rafts, perhaps symbolising the return of the sons of Herakles. The second ritual took the form of a race. A runner, wearing a garland of wool on his head, first prayed to the gods for his city-state, and then ran away. If he was caught, the omens for the city were good; if not, they were bad. Additionally, a feast was held under tent-like shelters. The exact groupings of the men within these tents has caused much speculation, but it is believed to have been based on tribes and *phratriai* (brotherhoods).

The *Hyakinthia*

This festival had its origins in a myth involving Hyakinthus, the son of Amyclas, a Spartan king. He was loved by Apollo and Zephyr, but since he preferred Apollo, Zephyr blew Apollo's discus at his head and killed him. Hyakinthus' blood became the flower that bears his name. Its petals are inscribed with the letters 'AI', signifying woe. (It is not, however, the flower that we now call the 'hyacinth'.)

The three-day festival of the *Hyakinthia* mourning the death of Hyakinthus was celebrated early in summer. Choirs of boys, accompanied by lyres and flutes, sang the praises of the god. This was the highlight of the festival. There were processions, dancers and chariot races;

sacrifices were held and feasts of meat, barley-cake, raw vegetables, broth, figs and nuts were consumed. In one ritual, sausages were fixed to a wall and old men chewed on them. Another unusual feature of the *Hyakinthia* was that elite Spartiates entertained the helots.

A vivid picture of the singing and dancing at such festivals is given in the play *Lysistrata*, by the Athenian dramatist Aristophanes. Here, reference is made to the Spartans' devotion to Apollo, Athena, Castor and Polydeuces, and Helen. Aristophanes evokes a scene of enthusiastic song and vigorous movement, a joyful outpouring of religious sentiment.

The *Gymnopaedia*

The *Gymnopaedia*, a five-day festival of dancing and gymnastics (one day for each *oba*), was closely linked to the Spartan training regime. This festival, held in honour of the slain at the ancient battle of Thyrea, included a battle of champions, and troops of young and old men sang of heroic deeds. It is believed that young boys participated in the morning, before it became too hot, while the men performed in the afternoon, and the old men in the evening. The group leaders wore elaborate headdresses made from either palm leaves or feathers. A grand parade was held at the end of the festival.

Religious practices

The king served as chief priest, but there must have been other priests who served on a daily basis, carrying out sacrifices and acting as caretakers at sanctuaries such as at Amyclae. A Spartiate could sacrifice and make offerings to the gods in his own home; he could also conduct his devotions at shrines.

Divination

The art of divination involves interpreting the will of the gods through means such as oracles (e.g. the Delphic Oracle), visions, dreams, and the behaviour of animals and birds.

The Spartans were closely associated with the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi in central Greece (Apollo was the god of prophecy). To this sanctuary came people from all over the Greek world seeking to know the will of the god. According to tradition, the priestess of Apollo, the Pythia, had sanctioned the dual kingship at Sparta. The *pithioi* were Spartan officials whose duty was to consult Delphi about matters concerning Sparta. They were appointed by the king, shared the king's tent and kept the Delphic responses as part of the state archives.

The king was associated with public divination. The ephors observed the heavens every 9 years (on a clear night) to determine whether or not a king should be deposed. The ephors also interpreted dreams while on official business.

Sacrifices

placate
to calm or soothe

Sacrifices were made to seek divine favour, thank or **placate** the gods. Xenophon tells the story of King Agesipolis who, while leading a Spartan army into the Argolid in 388–87 BC, interpreted an earthquake as a sign of encouragement from Poseidon. The experience prompted Agesipolis to offer a sacrifice of thanks to the god. Xenophon records an example of a king sacrificing to the gods in Source 49.

SOURCE 49

The king first sacrifices while still at home to Zeus the Leader and the gods associated with him … If he gets a good omen here, the fire-carrier takes fire from the altar and leads the way to the borders of the land. The king sacrifices there too to Zeus and Athena. When the sacrifices to both these gods produce good omens he crosses the borders of the land. And the fire from these sacrifices leads the way and is never put out, and all kinds of sacrificial animals follow.

Xenophon, *The Constitution of the Spartans*, 13.2
(cited in A. Powell (ed.), *Classical Sparta: Techniques behind her Success*, Routledge, London, 1988, p. 157)

Religious sites

Sparta possessed no town centre, and the major religious sites were situated on the outskirts of town:

- the Temple of Artemis Orthia was out of sight near the Eurotas River
- the Temple of Athena of the Bronze House stood in the north-eastern part of the acropolis, which was only a small raised incline
- the Menelaion was situated in the Parnon ranges looking across the Eurotas valley
- the Shrine of Apollo at Amyclae was approximately 6 kilometres from Sparta.

Source 52 (in 4.11 Culture: Art and architecture) compares the written evidence of Pausanias, the 2nd-century AD traveller, with evidence from archaeological sites. This provides some insight into Spartan religious artwork and devotional practices.

Theft of cheeses

An interesting ritual took place in the Temple of Artemis Orthia, which appeared to have been an initiation rite requiring physical endurance. It involved the stealing of cheeses. Both Xenophon and Pausanias mention it, although their versions differ in some details. According to Xenophon, boys had to **run a gauntlet** to steal cheeses from the temple altar and endure a whipping both on their way to the altar and on the way back. In Pausanias' version, the boys were whipped at the altar with a priestess holding the statue of Artemis Orthia. The priestess (speaking for the goddess) would complain if the boys were not being beaten hard enough, so that the whipping would increase often to the point of drawing blood.

run a gauntlet
a type of punishment, in which the offender has to run between two rows of people who strike with weapons

Funerary customs

Information on the funerary customs of ordinary Spartans is sparse, but they appear to have followed simple burial practices, burying the dead in pit graves. It was permitted for warriors to be buried on the battlefield with grave markers to show who was buried there. Women who died in childbirth were also permitted to have inscribed monuments.

The deceased's female relatives generally conducted the funerary rituals. These included laying out the body, the funeral procession and the burial itself. A strict period of 11 days was set for mourning. The twelfth day was marked by sacrifice to Demeter, which also marked the end of the formal grieving period.

Plutarch informs us that Lycurgus 'removed all superstition by not placing any ban on the burial of the dead within the city or on siting tombs close to temples'. The Spartans were encouraged to view death as 'familiar and normal' and were not afraid to touch a corpse or

walk between gravestones. Under the laws of Lycurgus, they did not put grave goods in with the dead and Spartan soldiers were simply wrapped in their red cloaks with olive leaves placed around them. In Source 50, Herodotus gives an account of the special ceremonies that were observed in the funeral rites of Spartan kings.

SOURCE 50

News of the [king's] death is carried by riders all over the country, and women go the rounds of the capital beating cauldrons. This is the signal for two people, one man and one woman, from every citizen's household to put on mourning – which they are compelled to do under penalty of a heavy fine … not only Spartans but a certain number of people from all over Lakonia are forced to attend the funeral. A huge crowd assembles, consisting of many thousands of people – Spartan citizens, country folk and serfs – and men and women together strike their foreheads with every sign of grief, wailing as if they could never stop and continually declaring that the king who has just died was the best they ever had. If a king is killed in war, they make a statue of him, and carry it to burial on a richly-draped bier. After a king's funeral there are no public meetings or elections for ten days, all of which are spent in mourning. When a new king comes to the throne on the death of his predecessor, he … remits … all debts owed by Spartan citizens either to the king or to the treasury.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 6, 59
(trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972)

4.10 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 46, 50 & 52

1. Considering the Spartans' dedication to their military obligations, what does their inability to wage war during religious festivals indicate about the role of religion in Spartan society? How important is the king's role?
2. What does the information about religious sites in Source 52 reveal about religious beliefs and practices?

4.10 Check your learning

1. Find out about the importance of the Dioscuri in Spartan mythology and religion. Who is Leda and what is the significance of the egg shown in Source 48?
2. Research each of the gods worshipped by the Spartans referred to in this section. Explain the significance of each in Spartan religion.
3. Create a table to summarise the information on Spartan festivals in this chapter. Use the following headings: Name of festival, God honoured, Description, Evidence.
4. Why were women who died in childbirth permitted to have inscribed monuments?
5. How is social status in ancient Sparta reflected in funerary rituals for royalty and non-royalty?
6. Using the information on religion, construct a diagram that summarises the importance of religion in Spartan society. Include categories such as gods, festivals, religious practices, religious sanctuaries and sites, and funerary practices.
7. Writing tasks. Use your completed diagram to structure your response to the following:
   a. Explain the main features of Spartan religion.
   b. To what extent is Sparta's military ethos reflected in religious practices?

4.11 Culture: Art and architecture

In the 7th and early 6th century BC, generally known as the Archaic period, Sparta and its region of Lakonia, like most Greek states, had an active cultural life.

Art

Sparta was a prominent artistic centre at this time and produced a range of arts and crafts including stone sculpture, vase painting, metalwork, ivory and bone carving. The works of Alcman and Tyrtaeus are evidence of Spartan interest in poetry and music. So the traditional representation of Sparta as an uncultured society is clearly inaccurate.

Excavations have revealed that Sparta, at this time, imported ivory and scarabs from Egypt, amber from northern Greece and gold from Lydia. The *perioikoi* were renowned for their skills in carving ivory and bone. Lakonian pottery was highly sought after and Spartan bronze workers produced some of the best work of the period.

We have the names of individual artists and craftsmen from written sources such as Pausanias' *Description of Greece*. Bathykles, a Greek craftsman from Magnesia, was the creator of the throne of Apollo in Apollo's precinct at Amyclae. Pausanias (Book 3, 18.6–19.5) says it was an imposing structure measuring 15 metres (see Source 52).

The decline in Sparta's production of carvings and pottery seems to have set in by the end of the 6th century. One explanation for this might be that while the rest of the Greek city-states started using coinage, Sparta did not. Another explanation points to the increase in the number of helots and *perioikoi* and the decrease in the number of Spartiates. For reasons that are still not entirely clear, the Spartans began to devote more attention to the military efficiency of the state, rather than to artistic pursuits.

SOURCE 51 A marble relief with heroes and worshippers. It dates to 540 BC and comes from Chrysapha, a village near Sparta.

Stone sculpture

An example of Lakonian sculpture can be seen in the hero marble grave relief in Source 51. It measures about 1 square metre and depicts the seated figures of a man and woman, the heroised dead, who are being honoured with offerings by their relatives.

Painted vases

The most popular shape of pottery produced in Lakonia was the *kylix* (drinking cup), an example of which is shown in the Arcesilas Cup (Source 45). Lakonian vases have been found all over mainland Greece and the Mediterranean world, especially in Italy, indicating production for export as well as domestic use. A number of early 6th-century BC Lakonian vase painters

SOURCE 52 Spartan religious sites

WRITTEN EVIDENCE FROM PAUSANIAS	ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE	
THE SANCTUARY OF ARTEMIS ORTHIA		
The place called the Lake Sanctuary is sacred to Standing Artemis … They used to slaughter a human sacrifice chosen by drawing lots; Lykourgos substituted the whipping of boys and the altar still gets its fill of human blood. The priestess with the idol stands beside them; the idol is small and light. Pausanias, *A Guide to Greece, Vol. 2: Southern Greece*, (trans. P. Levi, Penguin, London, 1979, pp. 56, 58)	• The British School of Archaeology discovered the foundations of an archaic temple of the 6th century BC. It measures 17 x 60 m and shows signs of repairs and alterations made as late as the 3rd century. • Remains of successive altars have been found, the earliest dating to the 9th century BC. • Excavations at the Temple uncovered many smaller finds, such as terracottas, ivory and bone carvings, bronzes and lead figurines.	A bone relief of Orthia, c. 650 BC
THE MENELAION		
The place called Therapne was named after Lelex's daughter; Menelaus' Shrine is there, and the story is that Menelaus and Helen are buried there. Pausanias, p. 69	• The Shrine of Helen and Menelaus is thought to belong to the prehistoric settlement at Therapne. • The remains of a temple of the 5th century BC and its precinct have been found. Cult objects found suggest that the peak of the hill was a place of worship.	Votive offerings from the Menelaion – an amphora and a crouching mouse
THE AMYKLAION		
The part of the throne where the god would sit is not a single continuous thing, but it has several seats with a space beside each of the statues; the middle part is extremely broad, and that is where the statue stands. I know no one who has measured this, but at a guess you could say it was forty-five feet … The base of the statue is shaped like an altar, and Hyakinthus is said to be buried in it, at the Hyakinthia, before Apollo's sacrifice, they pass through a bronze door to dedicate the offerings of a divine hero to Hyakinthus in this altar. Pausanias, pp. 66–7	• Archaeologists have found evidence of settlement at Amyclae from the earliest years of the Bronze Age. The precinct of Apollo is located on the acropolis at Amyclae. • Traces of the enclosure wall have been found. The temple is believed to have housed a colossal statue of Apollo. Coins have been found showing a likeness of this statue.	Bronze tripods were thank offerings to Apollo for victory in war.

have been identified. They include five painters: the Arcesilas Painter (565–555 BC), the Boreads Painter (575–565 BC), the Hunt Painter, the Naucratis Painter (575–550 BC) and the Rider Painter (550–530 BC). The images depicted on their vases are of animal scenes and daily life, and mythological subjects. Other common forms of painted vases that were produced include amphorae, *hydriai*, *lebetes*, *akaina* and *aryballoi*.

Bone and ivory carving

An archaeological discovery of over 200 ivory carvings at Orthia suggests a group of competent craftsmen working in Sparta over a period of at least three generations. It is believed that immigrant craftsmen brought the skill of carving in bone and ivory to Sparta from north Syria. The most popular subjects were small statuettes of crouching animals on a decorated rectangular base. Their purpose is not known, but they may have had some religious meaning.

Architecture

Sparta was a state of great power and influence in the ancient world, yet her town lacked major public buildings like those found in Athens. The town itself resembled little more than a group of rural villages.

Modern archaeological excavations have revealed some features of the buildings such as the temples and shrines of the most important cults that were on the outskirts of town. Many of the artefacts and remnants of buildings that have been recovered are now in the Sparta Museum. Pausanias, the 2nd-century AD travel writer, is also a useful source. His *Descriptions of Greece*, in several volumes, provide details of sites and buildings that have long since disappeared (see Source 52).

SOURCE 53
An ivory plaque showing Aristaios from the Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia

4.11 Understanding and using the sources

1. How does the archaeological evidence and the written evidence of Pausanias regarding sites (Source 52) contribute to our understanding of Spartan religion?
2. Who was Aristaios as shown in Source 53? Why is he represented in the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia?

4.11 Check your learning

1. What evidence do we have of Spartan arts and crafts?
2. What were the characteristic features of Lakonian pottery?
3. Research other painted vases produced in Lakonia: amphorae, *hydriai*, *lebetes*, *akaina* and *aryballoi*. Find examples of each and explain their function.
4. Read more about Spartan arts and crafts at the Metropolitan Museum website. Search online for 'Art and craft in archaic Sparta'.
5. Conduct some research on the three buildings featured in Source 52 and find additional information for each.

4.12 Culture: Writing and literature

Although the Spartans, for the greater part of their history, did not encourage literary pursuits, two Spartan writers of the early period, Alcman and Tyrtaeus, are important in providing some evidence of Sparta during their time. Other writings on Sparta, as already noted, are the work of non-Spartans.

Alcman

The lyric poet Alcman is thought to have lived in the last half of the 7th century BC. His origins are obscure. Some believe that he came from Sardis in Lydia; others that he was a freed slave or that he was Spartan born and bred. Alcman's poetry suggests a culturally sophisticated Sparta whose citizens were interested in love and beauty. His poems were written for choirs of youths and maidens to sing at the Spartan festivals, and are thought to date from the period after the Second Messenian War. He was a keen observer and lover of nature and wrote, in the local **Dorian** dialect, of legends and stories from Homer. His poetry is full of natural imagery, as exemplified in the description of Taygetus at night in Source 54.

Dorian
referring to the earliest inhabitants of the Peloponnese, ancestors of the Spartans

SOURCE 54

Now sleep the mountain peaks and the ravines, ridges and torrent streams, all creeping things that black night nourishes, wild upland beasts and the face of bees and monsters in the gulfs of the dark-gleaming sea; now sleep the tribes of long-winged birds.

Alcman, (cited in L. Fitzhardinge, *The Spartans*, Thames & Hudson, London, 1985, p. 131)

Alcman's most famous poems are the *Partheneia* or 'Maiden Songs'. They were poems sung by choirs of young girls. These poems (e.g. Source 55) contain expressions of love and longing exchanged between the members of the chorus and their leader. Fortunately a fragment of one of them still survives (Source 56). It contains 100 verses of a maiden song and was preserved in a collection of papyri discovered in a tomb in Saqqara in Egypt in the 1850s.

SOURCE 55

With how melting a glance does she look towards me, more tender than sleep or death; nor are such sweets idly proffered. But Astymeloisa answers me not, but wearing her garland like some bright star shooting across the sky or golden sprout or soft plume she strides with feet outstretched … grace sits on the maiden's tresses … Were she but to look at me … coming close to hold me with her soft hand, quickly would I become her supplicant.

supplicant
a person who asks humbly for favours

Alcman, (cited in Fitzhardinge, *The Spartans*, p. 132)

Tyrtaeus and *arete*

Specific evidence about Tyrtaeus' origins and life is lacking. However, it is generally accepted that he lived in Sparta during the second Messenian war (c. 650 BC), a period of lively musical and poetical activity in Sparta. His poetry was full of martial spirit designed to inspire the Spartan soldiers to perform heroic deeds on the field of battle (see Source 21, for example).

In his poetry, Tyrtaeus explored the concept of *arete*, the notion of excellence, of being the best person you can be, doing your best and achieving your full potential. It can be applied to many aspects of human behaviour, such as moral virtue, courage and ability. *Arete* was a popular theme in earlier Homeric times and is clearly demonstrated in the actions of both male and female characters in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

In the poetry of Tyrtaeus, *arete* had a particularly martial application and applied to excellence, bravery and accomplishment on the field of battle. Source 57 contains the beginning of his poem *Arete*.

SOURCE 56 Papyrus fragment containing one of Alcman's Maiden Songs

SOURCE 57

Rise up, warriors, take your stand at one another's sides,
your feet set wide and rooted like oaks in the ground.
Then bide your time, biting your lip, for you were born
from the blood of Heracles, unbeatable by mortal men,
and the god of gods has never turned his back on you …

So cast off whatever fears arise at the armored legions
they'll muster before you, hedge yourself round
with hollow shields, and learn to love death's ink-black
shadow as much as you love the light of dawn.

So that when the hour comes, the battle lines drawn,
you won't hang back beyond javelin and stone but,
marshaled into ranks, advance as one to engage your enemy
hand to hand.

Tyrtaeus, 'Arete'

Greek writers' views of Sparta

Non-Spartan Greek writers' sources that have been cited in this chapter are listed in Source 58. As you will have seen from your study of the background of these writers (see Source 5), and your reading and research on various issues throughout the chapter, their writings cover a period of several hundred years and represent a range of perspectives and opinions. Ancient writers did not routinely cite their sources, so it is often difficult to determine, as in the case of Plutarch, for example, where they got their information from. In using these sources, you need to consider also issues such as context, bias and reliability in order to make a judgement about the value of these sources for your study of ancient Sparta.

SOURCE 58 Greek writers on Sparta

WRITER	SOURCES	SUBJECTS IN ORDER OF SOURCES
Herodotus	7, 14, 46, 50	Great *Rhetra*, kings' prerogatives, religion, king's funeral
Thucydides	20	Ephors and *ekklesia*
Xenophon	11, 15, 16, 26, 35, 49, 63	Syssitia, king's privileges, ephorate, hoplites, girls' education, kings and religion, marriage customs
Aristotle	17, 19, 33, 40	Ephorate, *gerousia*, women and property, land ownership
Pausanias	52	Spartan religious sites
Plutarch	10, 18, 23, 29, 30, 31, 34, 61, 62	Land redistribution, *gerousia*, *agoge*, *massacre of helots*, 'Sayings of women', role of women, marriage, married life

4.12 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 54, 55 & 57

1 What impression does Alcman's poetry give us of Spartan values and everyday life?

2 Search online for a full copy of the poem 'Arete' by Tyrtaeus. How does this poem convey the concept of *arete* within the context of war?

4.12 Check your learning

1 Find out more information about Alcman's life and works. Why was his poetry significant?

2 What does the poetry of Alcman and Tyrtaeus reveal of change over time in Spartan society?

3 Use a table like the example below to collate and evaluate the views of ancient writers on Sparta listed in Source 58. Add additional sources from your own reading and research. Consider key topics for review, for example role of helots, role of women, Spartan government, education. You could create another table to summarise the views of modern scholars on these issues.

WRITER	VIEW ON _____	STRENGTHS	LIMITATIONS

4 Writing task: Use the completed activity above to write a response to the following: Evaluate the views of two ancient writers on Spartan society.

To help you plan your response:

- select two writers who have written about a specific aspect of society, for example government or women
- explain the views of each writer, making judgements about their value and reliability
- refer to specific evidence from the writers and the views of modern scholars where relevant to support your evaluation.

SOURCE 59 Sparta today with Mount Taygetus in the background

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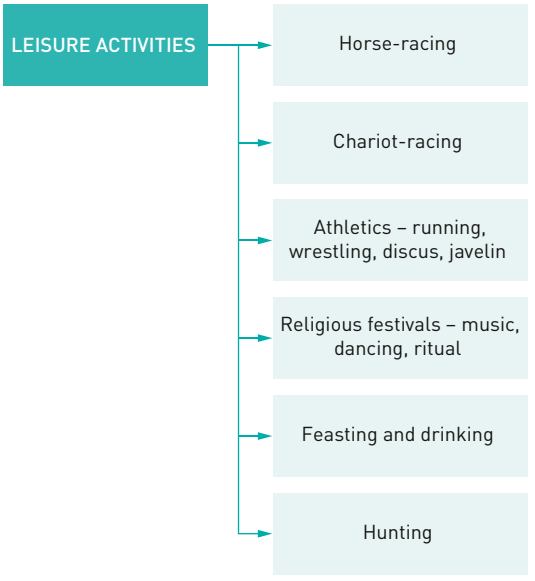
4.13 Everyday life

Sparta's focus on the military ethos shaped many aspects of everyday life for both men and women, and many of these have been considered in this chapter. The routines of daily life and details of domestic activities must often be inferred from indirect evidence. Leisure activities and marriage customs are considered in this section.



SOURCE 60 Spartan leisure activities

Leisure

While the focus of the lives of Sparta's citizens was on service to the state and maintenance of its military ethos, this did not mean that there was no time for leisure. Indeed, it is very likely that Spartan citizens had more leisure time than many citizens of other Greek city-states, because their work was largely done by the helot and *perioikoi* population. This was also true for Spartan women who had the task of raising children, sons till the age of seven and daughters until their marriage. Spartan wives and mothers were freed from much of the drudgery of household chores, which were carried out by helot women.

Archaeological evidence, especially scenes painted on pottery, and the written evidence of Greek writers provide many insights into the kind of leisure activities enjoyed by Spartan men and women. They range from physically active sports such as hunting and horse-racing to the feasting, singing and dancing of the many religious festivals of the Spartan calendar. Source 60 summarises these activities.

Marriage customs

The marriage customs of the Spartans were unlike those practised in other city-states. Whereas in Athens young girls were married in their early teens, Spartan girls, according to Plutarch, were married when 'they were ripe for it'; that is, when they were more physically mature (probably in their late teens). Spartans were expected to marry within their own social class. Plutarch tells the story of Lysander, who betrothed his daughters to several young men. When he died a poor man, the young men tried to back out of the arrangements. This story indicates that a form of betrothal took place in Sparta and that dowries and consideration of wealth were of some importance.

Marriage by capture, by which a man would choose a bride and carry her off, is thought to have been practised in Sparta. This might suggest a lack of choice on the girl's part; however, it is likely that Spartan mothers may have had some say in whom their daughters would marry. The actual 'capture' was probably a symbolic act. Two descriptions of such ceremonies survive. One source tells the improbable story of a young Spartan man and woman locked in a dark room together. In a groping blindman's-bluff procedure, the young man captures the girl and carries her home.

SOURCE 61

The so-called 'bridesmaid' took charge of the captured girl. She first shaved her head to the scalp, then dressed her in a man's cloak and sandals, and laid her down alone on a mattress in the dark. The bridegroom – who was not drunk and thus not impotent, but was sober as always – first had dinner in the messes, then would slip in, undo her belt, lift her and carry her to the bed. After spending only a short time with her, he would depart discreetly so as to sleep wherever he usually did along with the other young men.

Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15.3
(in *Plutarch on Sparta*, trans. R. Talbert, Penguin, London, 1988, pp. 25–6)

It is thought that a pre-nuptial wedding feast took place among the women only. Special cakes in the shape of breasts were eaten, and a hymn, Alcman's 'Partheneion', was sung. Married life for a young Spartan bride has been described as 'a trial marriage'. It is believed that the ceremony was kept secret until a child was produced. If the wife was barren, a new marriage contract could be arranged. In Source 62, Plutarch describes Spartan married life.

SOURCE 62

While spending the days with his contemporaries, and going to sleep with them, [a man] would warily visit his bride in secret, ashamed and apprehensive in case someone in the house might notice him. His bride at the same time devised schemes and helped to plan how they might meet each other unobserved at suitable moments. It was not just for a short period that young men would do this, but for long enough that some might even have children before they saw their own wives in daylight. Such intercourse was not only an exercise in self-control and moderation, but also meant that partners were fertile physically, always fresh for love, and ready for intercourse rather than being sated and pale from unrestricted sexual activity. Moreover some lingering glow of desire and affection was always left in both.

Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 15.3
(in *Plutarch on Sparta*, trans. R. Talbert, Penguin, London, 1988, p. 25)

SOURCE 63

Or again, in the case of a man who might not desire to live with a wife permanently, but yet might still be anxious to have children of his own worthy the name, the lawgiver laid down a law in his behalf. Such a one might select some woman, the wife of some man, well born herself and blest with fair offspring, and the sanction and consent of her husband first obtained, raise up children for himself through her.

Xenophon, *Constitution of the Spartans*, 1.8
(cited in D. Kagan, *Problems in Ancient History*, Vol. 1, Macmillan, New York, 1971, p. 194)

4.13 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 61, 62 & 63

1 What happened on the wedding night? Suggest possible explanations for these practices.
2 What do these sources reveal about attitudes to marriage and sexuality?

4.13 Check your learning

1 Find information in this chapter and from your own research on the various leisure activities included in Source 60. Include specific evidence of each where possible.

Chapter conclusion

Our knowledge of ancient Sparta is based primarily on written sources. The scarcity of archaeological sources, which can often be used to corroborate the literary sources, together with the fact that the written sources are non-Spartan, presents special challenges for those wishing to understand the Spartans on their own terms. This helps to explain the origin and persistence of the 'Spartan mirage', the distorted, often stereotyped images of the Spartans, their values, customs and way of life. The available sources therefore demand high standards of analysis and interpretation to arrive at a balanced and nuanced understanding of this fascinating ancient society.

obook assess

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

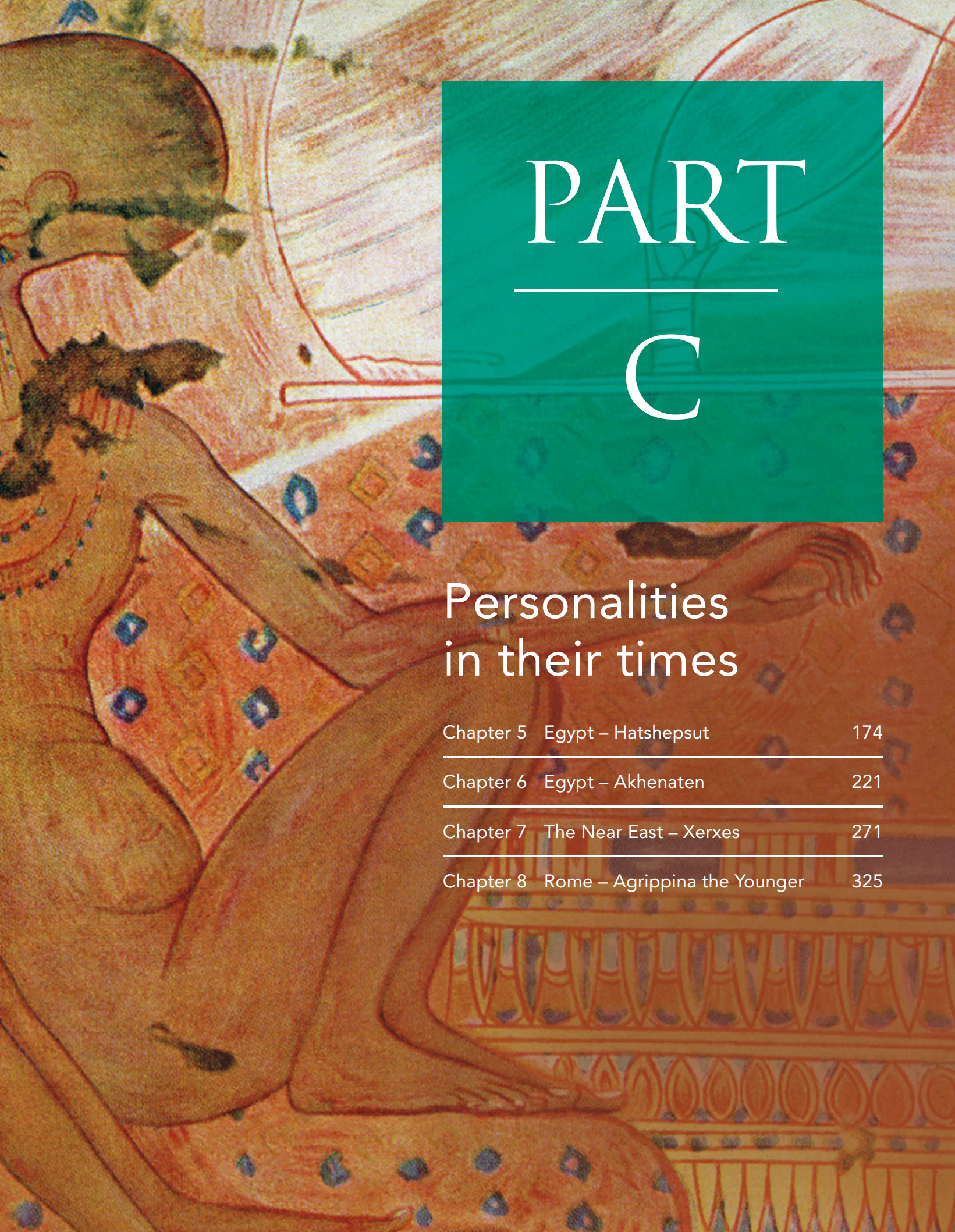
Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning* and *Understanding and using the sources* question in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare students for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

Neferneferure and Neferneferuaten Tasherit, daughters of the Eighteenth-Dynasty pharaoh Akhenaten and his great royal wife, Nefertiti



PART C

Personalities in their times

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5

Egypt – Hatshepsut

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1 Who was Hatshepsut and how did she rise to prominence?
2 How did Hatshepsut support her claim to the throne?
3 What were the key developments in internal and foreign policy in Hatshepsut's reign?
4 What was the significance of Hatshepsut's building program?
5 What was the nature of Hatshepsut's relationship with Thutmose III, the Amun priesthood, Senenmut and other officials of her reign?
6 How do ancient and modern sources contribute to our understanding and assessment of Hatshepsut?

FOCUS CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Continuity and change

In a conservative society such as ancient Egypt, the maintenance of established tradition was an important expectation of kingship. Hatshepsut, like her predecessors, honoured those traditions. At the same time, her reign marked a period of significant innovation and change in a number of important areas. A useful criterion by which to judge her success is to consider the extent to which she, as a female pharaoh – remarkable in itself – was able to negotiate the tension between continuity and change.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1 Explain Hatshepsut's background and rise to prominence.
2 Analyse the evidence for Hatshepsut's claim to the throne.
3 Analyse key developments in internal and foreign policy in Hatshepsut's reign.
4 Assess the significance of Hatshepsut's building program.
5 Analyse the nature of Hatshepsut's relationship with Thutmose III, the Amun priesthood, Senenmut and other officials of her reign.
6 Evaluate the contribution of ancient and modern sources to our understanding and assessment of Hatshepsut.

SOURCE 1 A statue of Hatshepsut from her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri

5.1 Historical context

Hatshepsut was the fifth pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty that had been established some 70 years before her time in the aftermath of the victory of her ancestor Ahmose in the wars against the Hyksos. After the expulsion of the Hyksos, the north and south of Egypt, known respectively as Lower and Upper Egypt, were once again reunited under King Ahmose. This reunification established the **New Kingdom** and set the scene for a period of important political, religious and economic development.

New Kingdom
the period of ancient Egyptian history between the 16th century BC and the 11th century BC, comprising the Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties

The pharaohs of this dynasty derived their authority from Amun-Re, chief god of Thebes, the inspiration and guardian of the dynasty's fortunes. A great program of building works in his honour became an important focus of each pharaoh's reign. The management of the resources and workforce needed for these ambitious building projects required a large and efficient bureaucracy of officials, most prominent of whom were the priests of Amun.

When Hatshepsut assumed the throne of the Two Lands, Egypt was enjoying a period of stability and growth. Hatshepsut was mindful of the legacy she inherited from her predecessors, but she was also an innovator who set her own stamp on New Kingdom Egypt, especially in the developing **ideology** of kingship and the **theology** of the state cult of Amun-Re.

ideology
a system of ideas and ideals

theology
the study of the nature of god and religious beliefs

In foreign affairs, she inherited the control of Nubia in the south and the exploitation of its rich resources. Egypt's interest in northern expansion into Syria–Palestine was clearly demonstrated in the reign of Hatshepsut's father, Thutmose I, but Egypt had not yet established a significant presence in this area.

Geography and topography of Egypt

Egypt was bounded in the north by the Mediterranean Sea and in the south by the First Cataract at Aswan, south of which lay Nubia. To the east and west of the Nile Valley were extensive desert regions forming natural boundaries. The Sinai Peninsula to the east of the Nile Delta was a natural barrier between Egypt and her Asian neighbours. In the Eighteenth Dynasty, Egypt's neighbours were Libya; Palestine; Syria; Babylonia; Naharin, land of the Mitanni; Hatti, land of the Hittites; and Assyria.

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Egypt's most prominent geographical feature is the river Nile, which was responsible for the growth and development of the country. It rises in the mountains and lakes of central Africa, before flowing north through Egypt to the Nile Delta where it empties into the Mediterranean Sea. In ancient times, the Nile flooded annually, ensuring the fertility of the surrounding land. The land adjacent to the river was *Kmt* (pronounced 'kemet'), meaning the 'black land', while the desert was *Dsrt* (pronounced 'deshret'), the 'red land'.

Natural resources of Egypt and its neighbours

Egypt had a wide variety of natural resources, including minerals and ores, stone and rock, and food resources. Within its own borders were rich deposits of gold that had been mined from earliest times. Many of the precious and semi-precious stones were highly valued for royal jewellery.

The oases to the west provided valuable raw materials and sources of food. Of special importance was the **natron** used in mummification and religious rituals, which was sourced from **Wadi** el-Natrun to the west of the Nile Delta.

High on the list of prized foreign commodities was timber from the cedar forests of Byblos. (Egypt had virtually no timber suitable for building.) Precious metals and stones, incense and other exotic goods were obtained from countries such as Nubia in the south and as far away as Afghanistan to the north. During her reign, Hatshepsut organised a famous trading expedition to the land of Punt, deep in Africa (perhaps present-day Somalia). Chapter 2 provides more information about the resources of Egypt and her neighbours in this period (see 2.1 Historical context).

EGYPT, EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 2 Egypt and its neighbours in the Eighteenth Dynasty

natron
a salt mixture used as a preservative in the embalming process

wadi
a dry river bed

Social, military and economic structures of the early New Kingdom

Early New Kingdom Egyptian society was a highly stratified and complex hierarchy, dominated by the pharaoh and his court. Chapter 2 provides details of these structures (see 2.2 Social structure and political organisation).

Although it was traditionally difficult to move up the social ladder, some men of exceptional ability were able to do so. For example, Senenmut, who served Hatshepsut, was a commoner whose highest rank was chief steward of Amun, an important member of the religious elite.

Women in Egyptian society

Women in Egyptian society derived their social status from their male relatives. For all women, the role of wife and mother was the traditional expectation. In general, they played no role in public life, but noble women could serve as members of religious cults. The highest-ranking woman was the 'king's great wife', and in the early New Kingdom she also exercised great influence in her role as 'god's wife of Amun'. Hatshepsut's role as god's wife of Amun may have been important in helping her to gain the throne.

Religious and military structures

Some of the most important people in the early New Kingdom belonged to the religious and military groups. The increasing prominence of the Amun cult guaranteed its members high status and wealth. Military men, responsible for the creation and maintenance of the empire were also a privileged elite.

Economic structures

vizier
a chief minister and king's deputy in ancient Egypt

Egypt's economy depended on the efficient production, storage and distribution of grain. This explains the importance of the **vizier** and the high-ranking members of the civil administration including overseers and treasurers. They were supported by a vast bureaucracy of officials. Pharaonic building programs employed workers from all ranks of society: overseers, architects, artists, scribes, stonemasons, carpenters, metalworkers, sculptors and many others.

The ordinary people

Below the skilled workers was the great mass of the population, the unskilled workers, especially the farmers, on whose labour the rest of Egypt depended. Other unskilled workers included fishermen, herders and other food producers. Below them again was the army of servants and slaves who waited on their masters.

5.1 Understanding and using the sources

Source 2

1 Find Upper and Lower Egypt on the map. Why are they referred to in this way?
2 Who were Egypt's most important neighbours in this period?

5.1 Check your learning

1 Visit modern-day Egypt on Google Earth and take a trip down the Nile!
2 What are the features of a cataract?
3 What were the key political, religious and economic features of early New Kingdom Egypt as mentioned in the first few paragraphs of this section?
4 Writing tasks: Outline:
   a the range of natural resources of New Kingdom Egypt and its neighbours in this period
   b the structure of Egyptian society in Hatshepsut's time.

5.2 Political and religious roles of the king and queen

ma'at
the ancient Egyptian concept of truth, order, harmony and justice

For the ancient Egyptians, the kingship represented the link between gods and mortals, expressed in the role of the pharaoh. The pharaoh was the highest authority in the land. As upholder of ***ma'at***, his role was to maintain order and stability against the forces of chaos. Pharaoh's chief queen, the great royal wife, was his political and religious female counterpart. Her primary role was to ensure the succession by providing heirs. She was also important in the political and religious life of Seventeenth and Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt. Source 3 briefly summarises their roles.

consort
the spouse of a reigning monarch

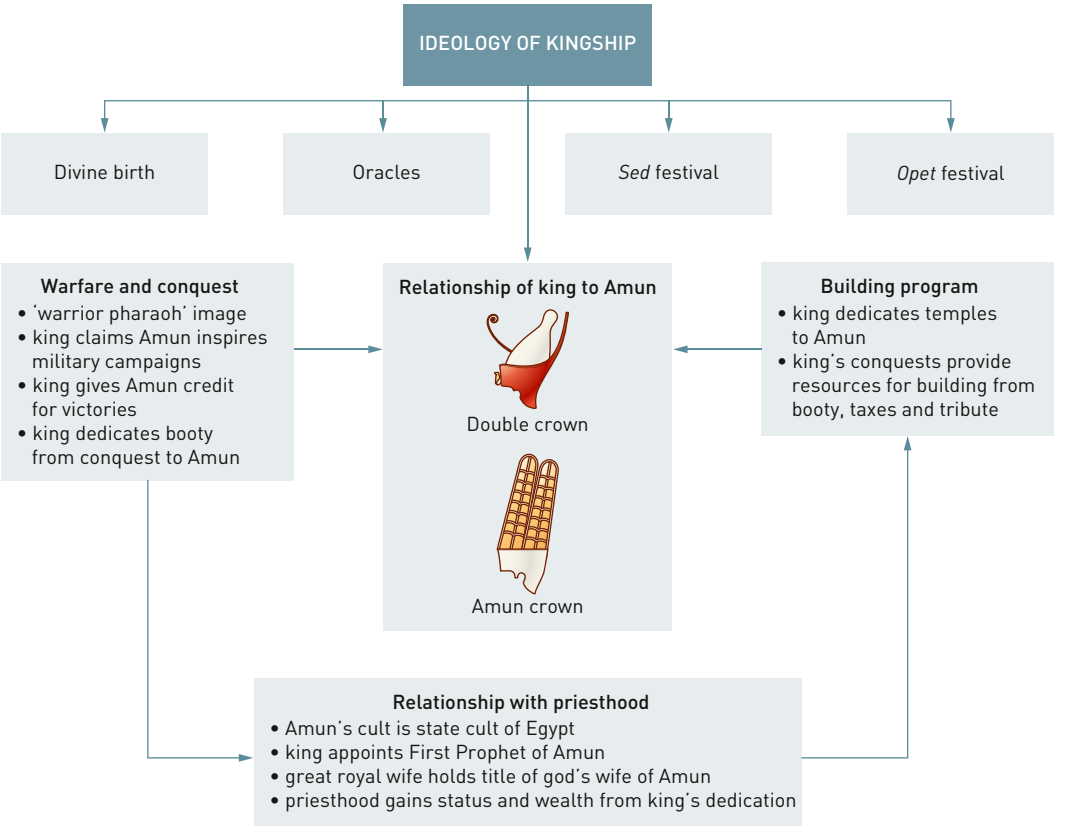
SOURCE 3 Political and religious roles of the king and queen

ROLE	KING	QUEEN
Political	• King of Upper and Lower Egypt • Absolute ruler • Upholder of *ma'at* • Commander-in-chief of the army • Warrior pharaoh	• Great royal wife, chief **consort** • Acts as regent for the king when necessary (e.g. Ahhotep II, regent for her son Ahmose, at the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty)
Religious	• Horus, god of kingship • Chief priest of Amun and other cults	• Hathor, female counterpart of Horus • God's wife of Amun (e.g. Ahmose-Nefertari), an important role in the Amun cult

Relationship of the king to Amun

The king was both the political and the religious head of state, with the god Amun as the chief god. Source 4 summarises features of the relationship between the king and Amun in the early New Kingdom. The reunification of Lower and Upper Egypt stimulated the promotion of the Theban cult of Amun to the most important position of state cult. The king as the major sponsor of this development was to have a unique relationship with the god. According to this ideology of kingship, the pharaoh derived his right to rule from Amun. Hatshepsut originated the concept of divine prophecies or oracles in which the god made known his choice of pharaoh. This divine right to rule was renewed at regular intervals by special kingship festivals such as the *Sed* and *Opet* festivals. Hatshepsut further developed this ideology with her emphasis on the concept of the 'divine birth' of the king.

Another important feature of the king's relationship to Amun in this period is the 'warrior pharaoh' image cultivated by the king. According to this, Amun was the direct inspiration for launching military campaigns. Therefore, both the victory and the spoils of war belonged to him. This booty was dedicated to Amun in his temples (especially Karnak), which were built with the rich resources of conquest and decorated with scenes of the king's victories. The priesthood of Amun, as the custodians of the cult, shared in the glory and the wealth of the king.



SOURCE 4 The relationship of the king to Amun

Religious beliefs and practices of the early New Kingdom

polytheistic relating to a religion in which many gods are worshipped

The state cult of Amun-Re was the main focus of formal religious practice in New Kingdom Egypt. However, Egypt was **polytheistic**, and a number of other gods, both male and female, were also worshipped. Important daily rituals, including offerings of food to their cult images, were conducted in the gods' houses or temples by the priests of their cult. The priests, the 'servants of the gods', were responsible for caring for the gods' needs and looking after their property, which could include large estates with their workers, as well as mining, trading and other interests. Annual religious festivals such as *Opet* were important for validating the pharaoh's rule and as occasions of holiday and celebration for the general populace.

The state religion that focused on the chief gods such as Amun-Re was primarily concerned with Egyptian kingship and the role of the king as upholder of *ma'at* and preserver of cosmic stability against the forces of chaos. Ordinary Egyptians worshipped a range of personal gods to protect themselves from the dangers and harms of everyday life. For these purposes, prayers, medicine and magic were all widely used.

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Afterlife beliefs

Egyptian belief in the afterlife gave rise to a number of special funerary practices. Great efforts were made to ensure the survival of the *ka*: the life force or spiritual double of the deceased. The *ka* needed the physical body of the deceased for its survival, hence the practice of mummification. The tomb was the 'house of the *ka*' and was equipped with grave goods and all the necessities for a happy afterlife.

5.2 Understanding and using the sources

Source 3

1 Why is the pharaoh known as the King of Upper and Lower Egypt?
2 Explain the political and religious roles of the king and the queen.

Source 4

3 Explain the key elements of the king's relationship with Amun.

SOURCE 5 The Theban Triad: Amun, Mut and Khons

5.2 Check your learning

1 Why was *ma'at* a significant concept of Egyptian kingship?
2 What role do the gods Horus and Hathor play in Egyptian religious belief and kingship?
3 Research early New Kingdom religious beliefs and practices, including:
   - the Theban Triad and other gods associated with Hatshepsut, for example Hathor, Min, Pakhet and Anubis
   - the relationship of the *Sed* and *Opet* festivals to the ideology of the kingship
   - the role of personal gods Bes and Tawaret in the lives of ordinary Egyptians
   - the afterlife (see Chapter 2):
     - the gods: Osiris and Anubis
     - beliefs: the concept of the *ka*
     - texts: the *Amduat* (or *The Book of What is in the Underworld*) and *the Book of the Dead* (or *The Chapters of Coming Forth by Day*)
     - tombs: tomb location, design and decoration.

5.3 Hatshepsut's family background

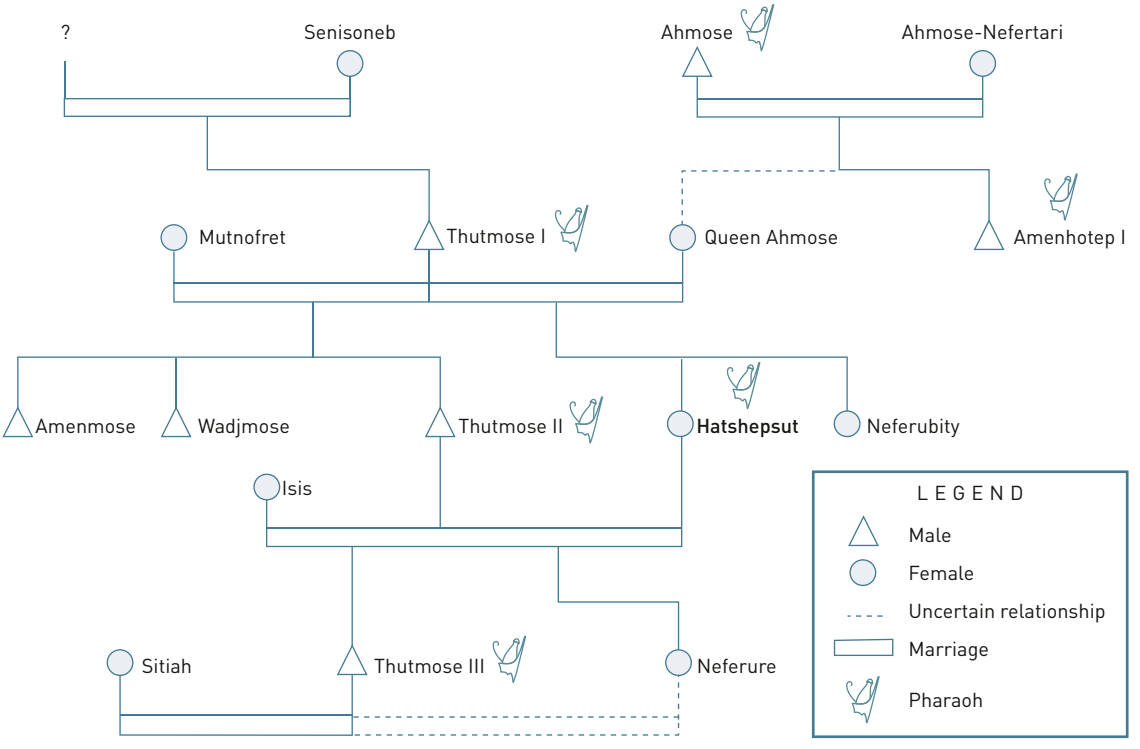
Hatshepsut was the third pharaoh of the Thutmosid Dynasty that began with her father, Thutmose I. Her mother was his great royal wife, Queen Ahmose, whose family connections are not entirely clear. It has been suggested that Ahmose was not of royal blood because she lacked the title 'king's daughter'. She may have been the sister of Thutmose I who married her to maintain the tradition of the previous pharaohs who married their own sisters to protect the royal bloodline. Alternatively, she may have been a princess of the Ahmosid family, as suggested by her name. If this is the case, then Thutmose, a commoner, could have secured the throne by marrying into the ruling Ahmosid family.

Hatshepsut had four known siblings: three brothers and a sister. Thutmose (later Thutmose II) was a younger half-brother by a minor queen, Mutnofret. She may also have been the mother of Amenmose and Wadjmose, both of whom died during their father Thutmose I's reign. Her sister, Neferubity, is known from scenes in Hatshepsut's Deir el-Bahri temple, where she is shown with her parents, Thutmose I and Queen Ahmose.

Marriage to Thutmose II

During her father's reign, Hatshepsut married her half-brother, Thutmose, who became the pharaoh Thutmose II when their father died. They had a daughter called Neferure. Thutmose II had other children by minor wives: possibly a daughter and a son, another Thutmose, whose mother was a **concubine** called Isis. He was destined to become Thutmose III on the death of his father.

concubine
a secondary wife, usually ranking lower than official wives in a King's household



SOURCE 6 The family tree of Hatshepsut

During her husband's reign, Hatshepsut was a conventional queen consort. A **stela** from this time shows her with her husband and mother, Queen Ahmose, standing in front of a statue of Amun-Re wearing the traditional regalia of the great royal wife. As the chief consort of the pharaoh, Hatshepsut played an important religious role as god's wife of Amun. This may well have been an important factor in her gaining the support necessary for her later elevation to the kingship.

Political and religious role of queens

Egyptian queens played an important role in the dynastic succession as either the mother or consort of the reigning king. In the early New Kingdom period, a number of queens, including Tetisheri, Ahhotep and Ahmose-Nefertari, had played significant roles in the establishment and consolidation of the new dynasty. They were important role models for Hatshepsut. Source 8 identifies the different roles of royal women. Be careful not to confuse the terms 'regent' and 'co-regent' – they are two very different roles that are important for an understanding of Hatshepsut's reign.

SOURCE 7 An illustration of a relief of Hatshepsut as the consort of Thutmose II from the Temple of Amun at Karnak. She is wearing the vulture cap, the traditional headdress of the great royal wife, representing Nekhbet, the female deity of Upper Egypt.

stela (*pl.* stelae)
an upright slab of stone or sometimes wood bearing inscriptions, reliefs or paintings; often placed in temples and tombs

harem
an establishment housing the pharaoh's secondary wives, both Egyptian and foreign, their servants and children

5.3 Understanding and using the sources

Source 6

1. Who were Hatshepsut's parents?
2. What were Hatshepsut's relationships with Thutmose II?
3. Why would Hatshepsut have been chosen as the regent of Thutmose III?
4. What is the significance for Hatshepsut of the possible relationship between Queen Ahmose and Amenhotep I?
5. Describe Hatshepsut's social status in terms of her relationships with Thutmose I and Thutmose II.

Source 8

6. Explain the difference between each of the following roles of royal women: regent, co-regent, queen regnant.

SOURCE 8 Roles of royal women

ROYAL WOMAN	DESCRIPTION/ROLE
Queen consort	Any of the wives of the reigning king
Great royal wife	The chief consort or principal wife of the king
King's mother	Held a position of importance in the royal household and was the chief ranking woman of the royal household after her son became king She traditionally acted as regent for a king who was too young to rule in his own right
Regent	The great royal wife and widow of a king, who managed the affairs of state for a new, young king until he was old enough to rule alone
Co-regent	Ruled as a king in partnership with another pharaoh
Queen regnant	Reigned as a king
Minor wife	Any other woman who was married to the king and formed part of the king's **harem**

5.3 Check your learning

1. Find out about the 2007 discovery of Hatshepsut's mummy and her missing tooth. What might DNA tests reveal about her relationship with the Ahmosid family? Search online for 'The Search for Hatshepsut and the Discovery of her Mummy'.

5.4 Hatshepsut's claim to the throne

Within seven years of the death of her husband, Thutmose II, Hatshepsut joined her nephew on the throne and was crowned as a pharaoh. She ruled with Thutmose III as his co-regent for the next 20 years. Hatshepsut may have felt that as the daughter of a pharaoh and a great royal wife – that is, with a royal bloodline from both parents – she had a stronger claim than Thutmose III, the son of a pharaoh by a concubine. In establishing herself as pharaoh, Hatshepsut claimed the throne on both political and religious grounds. The steps by which she became pharaoh are examined in the following section.

Hatshepsut as regent for Thutmose III

During the reign of her husband, Thutmose II, Hatshepsut performed the traditional duties of the great royal wife. When Thutmose II died, his son was crowned as Thutmose III. Because he was only a boy of about 9 years of age at the time, Hatshepsut became regent for the young king, managing the affairs of Egypt for him until he was old enough to rule alone. An inscription from the tomb of Ineni, a nobleman of her court, records her role as regent (see Source 9).

SOURCE 9

His son [Thutmose III] stood in his [that is, Thutmose II's] place as king of the Two Lands, having become ruler upon the throne of the one who begat him. His sister the Divine Consort, Hatshepsut, settled the [affairs] of the Two Lands by reason of her plans. Egypt was made to labor with bowed head for her, the excellent seed of the god, which came forth from him. The bow-rope of the South, the mooring-stake of the Southerners; the excellent stern-rope of the Northland is she; the mistress of command, whose plans are excellent, who satisfies the Two Regions, when she speaks.

J. H. Breasted (ed.), *Ancient Records of Egypt, Vol. 2: The Eighteenth Dynasty*, Histories & Mysteries of Man, London, 1988, pp. 142–3

Ineni's image of Hatshepsut as the ropes used for mooring boats on the Nile, while strange to modern ears, would have made perfect sense to the Egyptians of his day who were familiar with the practice of mooring a boat at both the bow and the stern against the fierce currents of the Nile. It is clear that the ship suggested in the image is the ship of the Egyptian state.

The role of regent was a traditional one carried out by Egyptian queens since earliest times. At the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty, this role had been performed by queens such as Tetisheri and Ahhotep. However, it is the next step that Hatshepsut took that has aroused controversy. At some time between year 2 and year 7 of the reign of Thutmose III (the evidence is inconclusive), Hatshepsut was crowned as pharaoh and so became a co-regent with Thutmose III.

Old Kingdom the period of ancient Egyptian history that occurred in the 3rd millennium BC, comprising the Third to the Sixth Dynasties

Middle Kingdom the period of significant development in ancient Egyptian history comprising the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties

Hatshepsut's Divine Birth and Coronation Inscriptions

As a female pharaoh, Hatshepsut was clearly breaking with the tradition of male rulers, although it should be noted that a royal woman had assumed the throne at least twice before in Egyptian history. One was Nitokret, who ruled at the end of the **Old Kingdom**; the other was Sobekneferu, who ruled during the **Middle Kingdom**. The Divine Birth and Coronation

Inscriptions on the north wall of the middle colonnade of her Deir el-Bahri temple are separated into two **registers**, one above the other, but they constituted a single thematic cycle in which Hatshepsut set out her claim to the throne.

The Divine Birth

The lower register contains the series of reliefs and inscriptions relating to Hatshepsut's divine birth. Of special importance is the role played by the god Amun in Hatshepsut's conception. Hatshepsut was keen to stress her religious claim as both the spiritual and physical daughter of the god. The sequence of main events in the divine birth is summarised in Source 10.

Source 12 is the scene from Deir el-Bahri depicting the sexual union of Queen Ahmose and Amun; this is discreetly conveyed by the god offering the *ankh*, the sign of life, to the queen's nostrils. (Note that the top left-hand portion of this scene has been lost.) The text accompanying this scene is in Source 11.

SOURCE 11

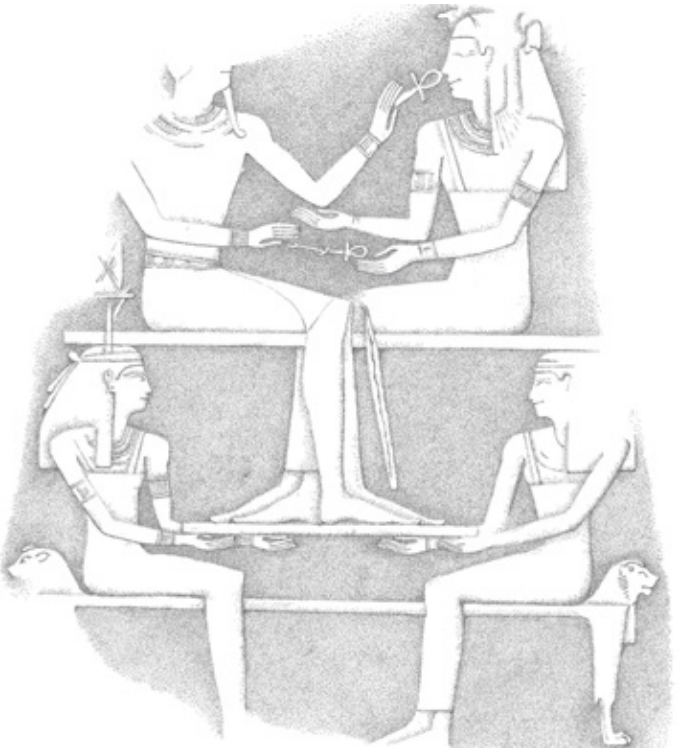
THE SEXUAL UNION OF QUEEN AHMOSE AND AMUN-RE

Words of the king's wife and king's mother Ahmose, in the presence of the majesty of this august [respected and impressive] god, Amon, Lord of Thebes: 'How great is your fame! It is splendid to see your front; you have united my majesty with your favours, your dew is in all my limbs.' After this, the majesty of this god did all that he desired with her.

Breasted, 1988, p. 80

SOURCE 10 The main scenes in the Divine Birth Reliefs and Inscriptions

SCENE	DETAIL
Prophecy of Amun	A council of the gods is held. Amun prophesises the birth of Hatshepsut and promises her great power.
Gods' announcement to Queen Ahmose	The god Thoth, together with Amun, announces to Queen Ahmose, Hatshepsut's mother, that she will give birth to a daughter who would be a future pharaoh.
The conception of Hatshepsut	The sexual union of Ahmose and Amun-Re, who takes the form of her husband Thutmose I. He offers the *ankh* to Ahmose's nostrils to signify that conception has taken place.
Khnum fashions Hatshepsut	The god Khnum sits at a potter's wheel and fashions two small male figures representing Hatshepsut and her *ka*.
Queen Ahmose is led to birthing chamber	Queen Ahmose is led by the gods Khnum and Heket into the birthing room in preparation for the birth of Hatshepsut.
Birth of Hatshepsut	Queen Ahmose, surrounded by gods, sits with the baby Hatshepsut on her knee.
Presentation to Amun	The goddess Hathor presents the child to her father, Amun.



SOURCE 12 The sexual union of Queen Ahmose and Amun-Re, denoting Hatshepsut's divine conception

register
a band of decoration containing inscriptions and paintings; the wall paintings of Egyptian tombs were usually executed in registers

Khnum
an ancient Egyptian god of fertility, associated with water and with procreation

5.4 Understanding and using the sources

Source 9

1 What is the evidence from Ineni's inscription that Thutmose III was crowned as pharaoh immediately following his father's death?
2 Explain what Ineni means when he describes Hatshepsut as 'the excellent seed of the god, which came forth from him'.
3 What is Ineni's opinion of conditions in Egypt under Hatshepsut's regency?
4 What are the strengths and limitations of Ineni's account? Consider the author, nature, origin and purpose of the source.

Sources 10, 11 & 12

5 What is the significance of Hatshepsut's claim to be the daughter of the god Amun?
6 What role did Thutmose I play in the Divine Birth sequence?
7 Why do you think Hatshepsut is depicted as a male in the Divine Birth sequence?

5.4 Check your learning

1 Find out about the roles played by the following gods in the Divine Birth: Thoth, Khnum, Heket and Hathor.

5.4 Profile

The Coronation Inscription: A source study

The Coronation Inscription in the register above the Divine Birth scenes is a natural continuation of the Divine Birth scenes and gives details of the revelation of young Hatshepsut's royal status and, ultimately, her coronation as pharaoh. The inscription consists of a number of sections in which Hatshepsut emphasises her political right to the throne because her father, Thutmose I, chose her as his heir. Source 13 is a summary of the sequence of scenes in the Coronation Inscription. Source 14 is an excerpt from the inscription.

SOURCE 13 The sequence of scenes in the Coronation Reliefs and Inscription

SCENE	DETAIL
1 Purification	Hatshepsut as a child stands before Amun and Khons who are pouring water over her.
2 Presentation to the gods	Amun holds the child Hatshepsut on his lap. He is surrounded by gods of the North (Lower Egypt) and South (Upper Egypt).
3 The northern journey	Hatshepsut and her father Thutmose I journey to the North and are received there by gods of North and South.
4 Coronation by Atum	Hatshepsut is led into the presence of Atum by the goddess Hathor for coronation.
5 Reception of crowns and names	A similar ceremony is held before Amun. Hatshepsut is presented with: • the Red Crown of Lower Egypt and the White Crown of Upper Egypt • her royal names.
6 Proclamation as king before Amun	Hatshepsut in kingly regalia stands before Amun. She wears the Double Crown of Upper and Lower Egypt.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

SCENE	DETAIL
7 Coronation before the court	Coronation before the Egyptian court at the command of Thutmose I.
8 Concluding ceremonies	Further purification rituals performed; the queen is led away by Horus. Her kingship is confirmed with the text 'Thou hast established thy dignity as king and appeared upon the Horus throne'.

SOURCE 14

ADDRESS OF THUTMOSE I TO THE COURT FROM THE CORONATION INSCRIPTION

Said his majesty before them: 'This is my daughter, Khnemet-Amun, Hatshepsut, who liveth, I have appointed [her] –; she is my successor upon my throne, she will sit upon my wonderful seat. She will command the people in every place of the palace; she will lead you; she will proclaim her word, you will be united under her command'.

J. H. Breasted (ed.), *Ancient Records of Egypt, Vol. 2: The Eighteenth Dynasty*, Histories & Mysteries of Man, London, 1988, p. 97

Modern sources

The legitimacy of Hatshepsut's accession as pharaoh has long been debated by historians. It continues to be perhaps the most controversial aspect of her reign. One of the issues in this debate concerns the reliability of the Coronation Inscription. A number of scholars have rejected this inscription as an accurate account of events, suggesting it was propaganda created by Hatshepsut to justify her accession.

SOURCE 15

It is clear that this entire coronation of Hatshepsut, like the supernatural birth, is an artificial creation, a fiction of later origin, prompted by political necessity …

Breasted, Vol. 2, 1988, p. 95

SOURCE 16

A long inscription at Deir el-Bahri invents a formal assembling of the court in which the old king [Thutmose I] announced his daughter's accession and at Karnak, a corresponding hieroglyphic records thanks Amun for having sanctioned [approved] the same auspicious [favourable] occurrence. That these claims are fictitious is apparent both on account of the intervening reign of Thutmose II and because in the early days of her rule, Hashepsowe [Hatshepsut] was still using only the title 'King's Great Wife.'

A. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1961, p. 186

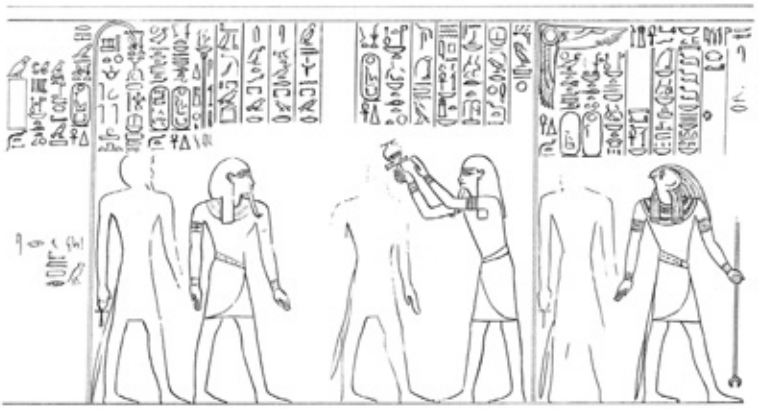
However, Dr Gae Callender has suggested that Hatshepsut's claim to have been chosen as her father's heir at some time during Thutmose I's reign, might well be accurate.

SOURCE 17

It is well known that Thutmose I was finally succeeded by Thutmose II, who in all likelihood was relatively young at his accession [being] referred to as 'falcon in the nest', an expression used for a very young king. Such being the case, one would expect him to have been born later in the reign of Thutmose I; his half-sister Hatshepsut, would therefore, in all likelihood, have been some years older than he. If this was the situation at the time of Thutmose I's death, then it is quite possible that Hatshepsut would have been named heir-apparent prior to her half-brother's birth. Once Thutmose II was born, however, the normal practice of male **primogeniture** would have prevailed and Hatshepsut's designation as heir would have been ruled out.

G. Callender, 'Problems in the reign of Hatshepsut', in *KMT, A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt*, Vol. 6, No. 4, Winter 1995–1996, p. 20

primogeniture the right of succession belonging to the firstborn child



SOURCE 18 A detail from the Coronation Relief showing the proclamation of the royal names of the pharaoh – here, Hatshepsut is being led into a hall called the 'Great House' by the Anmutef priest who represents one of the **nome** gods of Egypt; the text above the scene records the five names of the pharaoh.

nome one of 42 administrative districts of ancient Egypt: 22 in Upper Egypt and 20 in Lower Egypt

5.4 Profile tasks

Sources 13 & 14

1 Why does Hatshepsut claim, in her Coronation Inscription, that Thutmose I chose her as his successor?

Sources 15, 16 & 17

2 Research the Egyptologists Breasted, Gardiner and Callender. What information about their contexts helps explain their perspectives?

3 Explain each scholar's view of Hatshepsut's Coronation Inscription.

4 What is your assessment of the value and/or limitations of these scholars' views for an understanding of this issue?

5 Writing tasks: Using Source 14 and other sources, assess Hatshepsut's claim to the throne.

To help plan your response:

- briefly explain the basis of Hatshepsut's claim to the throne, using the source provided
- discuss the problems of evidence raised by other sources
- make judgements about the different interpretations and arguments in relation to Hatshepsut's claim to the throne presented in the sources
- use specific evidence to support your judgements.

5.5 The legality of Hatshepsut's accession

Despite historians' attempts to attribute motives for Hatshepsut's actions, there is no evidence to indicate what she was thinking. It is all speculation. What we do know is that Hatshepsut took the step of having herself crowned pharaoh of Egypt. The most contested issues here are the legality and timing of this event.

THE EVIDENCE FOR YEAR 2

An inscription dated to year 2 of an unnamed king's reign from a block of Hatshepsut's Red Chapel at Karnak Temple refers to the proclamation of an **oracle** predicting Hatshepsut's accession.

THE EVIDENCE FOR YEAR 7

Primary sources

Funerary amphorae found in the tomb of **Senenmut's** parents:

- one amphora is inscribed with the date 'year 7' and the name of Hatshepsut, with her 'God's Wife of Amun' title, and with no pharaonic title
- two more amphorae from this burial had seals stamped with the royal name *Ma'at-ka-re* but were undated

Secondary source

The argument of Gae Callender is that 'the general effect of these objects suggests that the queen had not become co-king with Thutmose III prior to year 7 and that the total collection could have been deposited – perhaps on different dates – sometime in the winter of Thutmose III's year 7'.

SOURCE 19 Evidence for the date of Hatshepsut's accession

titulary
the standard titles or naming convention taken by Egyptian kings

oracle
a communication from a god indicating divine will; a prophecy

amphora (*pl.* amphorae)
a two-handled pottery storage jar with an oval body tapering to a point at the base

Senenmut
a chief official of Hatshepsut

The timing of the accession

Historians agree that Hatshepsut transferred her title of 'god's wife of Amun' (one of the titles held by the great royal wife) to her daughter, Princess Neferure, and adopted the full **titulary** of a reigning monarch, some time between year 2 and year 7 of Thutmose III's reign. In some statues and reliefs from early in her reign she is depicted wearing the typical regalia and dress of a male pharaoh.

The timing of Hatshepsut's bid for the throne is a matter of keen speculation among scholars. Joyce Tyldesley offers an interpretation in Source 20.

SOURCE 20

We shall probably never know what event precipitated Hatchepsut into proclaiming herself king. It is, of course, possible that she had always intended to seize power, and that following the death of Thutmosis II she had merely been biding her time, waiting for the politically opportune [convenient] moment to strike … Why then did Hatchepsut wait for between two and seven years before implementing her plan? Was she too young and inexperienced to act sooner? Or was she simply using the time to gather the support that she would need for her unorthodox [contrary to what is usual] actions?

J. Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut the Female Pharaoh*, Penguin Books, London, 1998, pp. 111–12

The nature of the co-regency

We need to consider the other contentious issue of the legality of Hatshepsut's accession. Sir Alan Gardiner (Source 21) and Gae Callender (Source 22) present different arguments. Information about co-regencies is provided in Source 23.

SOURCE 21

Meanwhile, however, her ambition was by no means dormant, and not many years had passed before she had taken the momentous step of herself assuming the Double Crown. Twice before in Egypt's earlier history a queen had **usurped** the kingship, but it was a wholly new departure for a female to pose and dress as a man … In many inscriptions she flaunts a full titulary.

A. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1961, pp. 183–4

usurped
took a position of power or importance, illegally

SOURCE 22

No matter what the reasons for Hatshepsut's assumption of the Double Crown were, there seems little doubt that the timing of her claim was itself '**unconstitutional**'… While Egyptians may have grudgingly accepted that a royal woman could rule … this in reality occurred infrequently; and Hatshepsut **exacerbated** the situation by delaying her assumption of kingly **prerogatives** until some time after the legitimate coronation of Thutmose III. Had she declared her intentions prior to the boy's installation as ruler, she possibly would not have breached the accepted code of regal conduct; but in delaying her claim until he actually wore the crown, she clearly usurped the throne of a reigning king.

G. Callender, 'Problems in the reign of Hatshepsut', in *KMT, A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt*, Vol. 6, No. 4, Winter 1995–1996, p. 24

unconstitutional
not in accordance with the political constitution or with procedural rules

exacerbated
made a problem or situation worse

prerogative
a right claimed by a particular person or group of people

SOURCE 23 Egyptian co-regencies

CONVENTIONAL CO-REGENCY	CO-REGENCY OF HATSHEPSUT AND THUTMOSE III
The reigning pharaoh takes an uncrowned junior partner to ensure the succession and train the future pharaoh	Thutmose III, the young reigning pharaoh, does not take a partner, but Hatshepsut (his senior) makes herself a crowned co-regent
The reigning pharaoh takes seniority in the co-regency	Hatshepsut as new pharaoh takes seniority in the co-regency over the reigning pharaoh

5.5 Understanding and using the sources

Source 19

1 On the evidence provided, which of the two years seems more likely for Hatshepsut's succession? Support your answer with specific evidence.

Sources 20–23

2 What is Gardiner's argument about Hatshepsut's accession? What is the effect of his choice of language such as 'momentous', 'usurped' and 'flaunts' in this source?

3 What are Callender's arguments about the legality and timing of Hatshepsut's accession?

4 What was unusual about the nature of Hatshepsut's co-regency in comparison to conventional co-regencies?

5.5 Check your learning

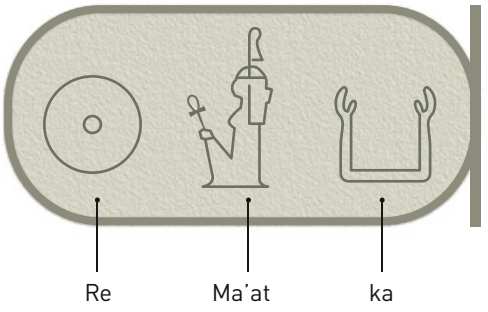
1 Create a table like the one below to summarise the arguments about Hatshepsut's accession presented in Sources 20 to 22. The first one has been modelled for you.

ISSUE	SCHOLAR	ARGUMENT
Hatshepsut's motives – timing of accession	Tyldesley	Difficulty of establishing Hatshepsut's motives. Lack of evidence. Possible motives suggested.

5.6 Changes to Hatshepsut's titles

As the great royal wife of Thutmose II, Hatshepsut bore the traditional female titles of:

- king's daughter – *s3t nswt* (*sat nesut*)
- king's sister – *snt nswt* (*senet nesut*)
- god's wife of Amun – *h.mt nt-r n Imn* (*hemet netjer en Amen*)
- king's great wife – *h.mt wrt nswt* (*hemet weret nesut*).



SOURCE 24 Throne name of Hatshepsut: *Ma'at-ka-re*

When she became pharaoh, Hatshepsut adopted new titles in line with pharaonic tradition. Every pharaoh had five great names or titles. One of these names was their personal or birth name. They automatically assumed four other royal names when they came to the throne, the most important being the throne name. However, pharaohs were able to choose the name that accompanied each title. For example, Hatshepsut chose *Ma'at-ka-re* (true one of the *ka* of Re) as her *nswt-bity* or throne name. All of Hatshepsut's five great names are shown in Source 25.

Hatshepsut was the first pharaoh to include the goddess Ma'at in her throne name. *Ma'at* was both the abstract concept of truth, justice and integrity, as well as a goddess, a daughter of the sun god, Re.

SOURCE 25 The five great names of Hatshepsut as pharaoh

ROYAL NAME	HIEROGLYPH	HATSHEPSUT'S TITLE	MEANING
Hr (Horus name)		*Weseret-kau*	Strong of *kas*
Nebty (Beloved of the Two Ladies)		*Nebty Wadjet-renput*	Flourishing of years
Hr-nbw (Horus of Gold)		*Netjeret-khau*	Divine in (her) diadems (crowns)
nswt-bity (He of the Sedge and the Bee) – throne name		*Ma'at-ka-re*	True one of the *ka* of Re
S3R (Son of Re) – personal name		*Khnumt-Amun Hatshepsut*	Foremost of noble ladies – she is united with Amun-Hatshepsut

In choosing *ma'at* as an integral part of her name, Hatshepsut was clearly identifying herself with this important goddess. At the same time, her son of Re name held a double meaning – she was feminising the traditional male pharaonic title, 'son of Re', to 'daughter of Re' and just in case anyone missed the significance of this, she added *ma'at* for emphasis.

Changes to Hatshepsut's royal image over time

iconography the study and interpretation of the visual images and symbols used in a work of art

In addition to royal titles, a pharaoh's royal image in statues and reliefs was also represented by conventional **iconography**. Such features included the royal *nemes* headdress or crowns, false beard and short kilt. As well as this, he was always depicted as a fine specimen of manhood, either seated on his throne or striding purposefully forward. The pharaoh was also shown as a sphinx, a military symbol reflecting his role as both conqueror and protector of Egypt, the 'warrior pharaoh'.

SOURCE 26 The colossal red granite sphinx of Hatshepsut now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York

The images of Hatshepsut

Hatshepsut, like her contemporaries understood the importance of image. A number of her statues depict her wearing full male pharaonic regalia. This was often misunderstood by early scholars who assumed that she was a 'cross-dresser' who wore king's clothing in order to pass herself off as a male. What is now clear is that there were changes to her royal image over time. In a number of her surviving statues as pharaoh, she appears to have experimented with a range of images in which traditional queenly elements give way to a more masculine, pharaonic depiction.

Source 27 shows the differences between traditional male and female royal statuary. Sources 29 and 30 are two statues of Hatshepsut from different periods in her reign.

SOURCE 27 Features of royal statuary

FEATURE	FEMALE	MALE
Headdress	Vulture cap representing the goddess Nekhbet	*Khat* (bag-shaped, soft headcloth) *Nemes* (wide striped headcloth)
Dress and jewellery	Ankle-length gown, broad collar, anklets – only females	*Shendyt* kilt, no anklets
Torso	Breasts, thin waist	Masculine musculature
Position of hands	Open on lap	Open on lap Clenched fist – only males
Position of feet	Against base of throne when seated Together when standing	Forward of base when seated In striding position when standing
Throne	Inscriptions in feminine gender	Inscriptions in masculine gender

Tefnin's thesis

There is now general consensus among Egyptologists that the French scholar Roland Tefnin in his PhD thesis, 'The Statuary of Hatshepsut', was correct in his analysis that Hatshepsut's statues represent a gradual change from female to male features. Source 28 summarises the key developments in this process.

SOURCE 28

THE EVOLUTION OF HATSHEPSUT'S ROYAL IMAGE

The analysis of the statuary program of the Djseru-djeseru [Deir el-Bahri] temple allows for a precise characterisation of the evolution of Hatshepsut's royal image. The late R. Tefnin … was able to demonstrate that this evolution took place in three main phases … a first feminine phase, that is, with the iconography of a female pharaoh, for the inception [beginning] of the reign; … then an **androgynous** step, when the reigning queen considerably reduced the iconographical explicitness of her femininity and, at the same time, put forward the insignias of her royal status; and, finally, a definitely masculine phase, with a fully masculinized image of her power until the end of the coregency.

D. Laboury, 'The image of Hatshepsut's royal power', in J. Galan, B. Bryan, & P. Dorman (eds), *Creativity and Innovation in the Reign of Hatshepsut*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisation, No. 69, Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2014, p. 79

androgynous partly male and partly female in appearance

SOURCE 29 The pink granite seated statue of Hatshepsut from her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri

SOURCE 30 The colossal striding statue of Hatshepsut in red granite from her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri

5.6 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 27, 29 & 30

1. Compare the images and, using the information provided in the table, list the differences between the two statues.
2. What do these two statues tell us about the change in Hatshepsut's image over time?
3. Suggest reasons for the gradual change in Hatshepsut's image.
4. Support this with other evidence from your study of this chapter.

Source 28

5. What are the three phases in the evolution of Hatshepsut's royal imagery as revealed by Tefnin's analysis of the Deir el-Bahri statues? To what extent are these evident in the statues depicted in Sources 29 and 30?

5.6 Check your learning

1. Collect as many pictures as you can of Hatshepsut's image in reliefs and statuary. Arrange them in the sequence of phases identified in Source 28. Include representations of her as a sphinx, her *Sed* festival, her obelisks, and her Red Chapel and Deir el-Bahri reliefs.

5.7 Religious policy

Hatshepsut's religious policy was a major focus of her reign. Like other New Kingdom pharaohs, Hatshepsut pursued traditional religious policies, displaying her devotion to Amun as well as promoting the cults of other gods. Because she was a female pharaoh, female deities such as Hathor and Pakhet received special devotion. You will see in the next section (5.8) how she used her building program to promote Amun and other gods.

Religious innovations

Besides following established practices, Hatshepsut made a significant contribution to her times through her religious innovations. Her particular focus was the cult of Amun-Re, which enjoyed an unprecedented influence during her reign. Hatshepsut was keen to promote Amun-Re both through public displays of devotion as well as through the development of new religious ideas. The influential German scholar Jan Assmann sees Hatshepsut's reign as the 'starting point of the revolutionary changes that occurred in the religious history of the New Kingdom'.

Hatshepsut's religious innovations included the following important developments:

- the concept of Amun-Re
- divine oracles
- personal piety
- ideology of kingship
- religious festivals.

The concept of Amun-Re

The establishment of the New Kingdom in the aftermath of the expulsion of the Hyksos brought with it the merging of the gods Amun and Re to form a new god, Amun-Re. Hatshepsut encouraged the development of new theological ideas. For example, from her time, offering-prayers use a variety of new **epithets** to express a range of divine roles ascribed to Amun-Re. Jan Assmann identifies these as city god, ruler god, primeval god, creator god, sun-god and ethical authority. The offering-prayer to Amun-Re (Source 31) from the tomb stela of Amenemhet (Theban Tomb 53, or TT 53) provides an example of these new epithets.

epithet
a word or phrase describing a particular quality or characteristic of a person

SOURCE 31

An offering prayer to Amun-Re, lord of Karnak,
lord of eternity, lord of everlastingness,
prince, lord of the great two-feathered crown.
The sole one in the beginning, the greatest of the great,
primeval god without his like,
he is the one who created men and gods
Living flame that arose from the **primordial** waters
to illuminate those in the sky.
Divine god who came into being by himself.

J. Assmann, *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2001, p. 190

primordial
referring to or existing from the very beginning of time

Divine oracles

Hatshepsut's emphasis on Amun-Re expressing his will through an oracle is an important new concept in New Kingdom theology. It represents, for the first time, the direct intervention of the god in human affairs. New Kingdom oracles usually occurred during religious festivals when the statue of the god was being carried in procession. At various times, the **barque**, in which the statue was being carried, would stop and incline in a particular direction. The Egyptians understood this to mean that the god was expressing his intention or favour. The first occurrence of an oracle is recorded in Hatshepsut's Coronation Inscription (Source 32). In this instance, she is claiming divine sanction for her kingship.

barque
a boat similar to a common Nile boat; divine barques were used to transport sacred objects between temples

SOURCE 32

FROM THE CORONATION INSCRIPTION OF HATSHEPSUT

Then: an oracle procession of his majesty [the god Amun]
without there having been a prior oracle on the 'lord's stations' of the king.
The entire land fell silent. 'One knows not,' said the king's nobles, the great ones of the palace lowered their faces, his [the god's] following said, 'Why?' The 'full-hearted' became 'empty-headed' their hearts trembled at his oracle.
The god arrived at the 'Head of the River' and gave a very great oracle at the double door of the palace, which lay alongside the avenue of offering tables.
Then one turned north, without knowing what he would do. … Then the majesty of the All-Lord [Amun-Re] inclined his countenance toward the east and gave a very great oracle …
The mistress of the Two Lands came out from inside the sanctity of her palace.
She went to meet the lord of the gods with praises. Then she threw herself down
before his majesty and said: 'How much greater is this than what is usual for your majesty,
O my father, who devises everything that exists, what is it that you desire to happen?
I shall certainly act according to your plans.'

J. Assmann, *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2001, pp. 192–3

Personal piety

As well as indicating the special relationship between Amun-Re and the king, oracles also marked the early development of **personal piety**. In this new theological concept, it was possible to establish a personal relationship with Amun-Re, who now communicated his will directly. He was also a god of ethics, concerned with moral behaviour and integrity. Now, his worship combined the outward display of ritual as well as conscious inner devotion or piety.

personal piety
a religious development in New Kingdom Egypt in which a personal relationship or devotion was established between the god and his worshippers

Ideology of kingship

Several scholars have interpreted Hatshepsut's Divine Birth and Coronation Inscriptions as mere propaganda. However, in the New Kingdom context, these can be seen rather as examples of Hatshepsut's religious and dynastic policies: to express the strong relationship between the pharaoh and Amun-Re by developing the ideology of kingship, that is, what it was to be king of Egypt.

Later pharaohs, such as Amenhotep III and Ramesses II, followed her example and used similar divine birth scenes to support their claims to be directly descended from Amun-Re.

Hathor/Isis and the kingship

As a female pharaoh, Hatshepsut stressed the sacred feminine principle in her kingship. She developed the ideology of kingship by adapting the ancient myth of Osiris to provide a central role for Hathor. In the traditional myth, Osiris, the rightful ruler of Egypt, was murdered by his brother Seth. After the death of Osiris, Isis, his sister–wife, nurtured and protected their child Horus in a hidden place in the delta called Khemmis. She ensured Horus's eventual succession as king of Egypt.

SOURCE 33 A scene from the Hathor chapel at Deir el-Bahri showing Hatshepsut being suckled by Hathor, represented as a cow

Hatshepsut designed her Hathor chapel at Deir el-Bahri as a representation of the mythical Khemmis. Inspired by Middle Kingdom motifs showing Hathor as a cow suckling (breastfeeding) the Twelfth Dynasty pharaoh Amenemhet III, she adapted the original myth by merging Isis with Hathor. Hathor plays a powerful maternal role in Egyptian mythology, as suggested by her depiction as a cow suckling the pharaoh. In the holy of holies of this chapel, Hathor, represented as a cow, emerges from the papyrus thicket of Khemmis and suckles the tiny figure of Hatshepsut crouching at her udder (Source 33).

Hathor's identification with Isis in the royal cult became a popular theme in the ideology of kingship and was used by Thutmose III and other pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty and by both Seti I and Ramesses II in the Nineteenth Dynasty.

Religious festivals

Hatshepsut was keen to create an appropriate theatrical setting for the celebration of kingship and the delivery of Amun-Re's oracles. Evidence suggests that two of the great festivals of the New Kingdom, *Opet* and the Beautiful Festival of the Valley, were first celebrated in Hatshepsut's reign. They provided opportunities for the general population to participate in ritual and celebration.

The *Opet* festival

The annual festival of *Opet* was the major festival of the New Kingdom calendar. It was a festival of rebirth and renewal celebrated during the annual inundation. During this festival, statues of Amun-Re and his consort Mut were ceremoniously transported in barques from Karnak to Luxor where their union would be re-enacted. The procession bearing Amun-Re's statue began from the heart of Karnak Temple and proceeded to the temple of Mut. Here, priests carrying Mut's statue joined the procession before continuing on to Luxor Temple.

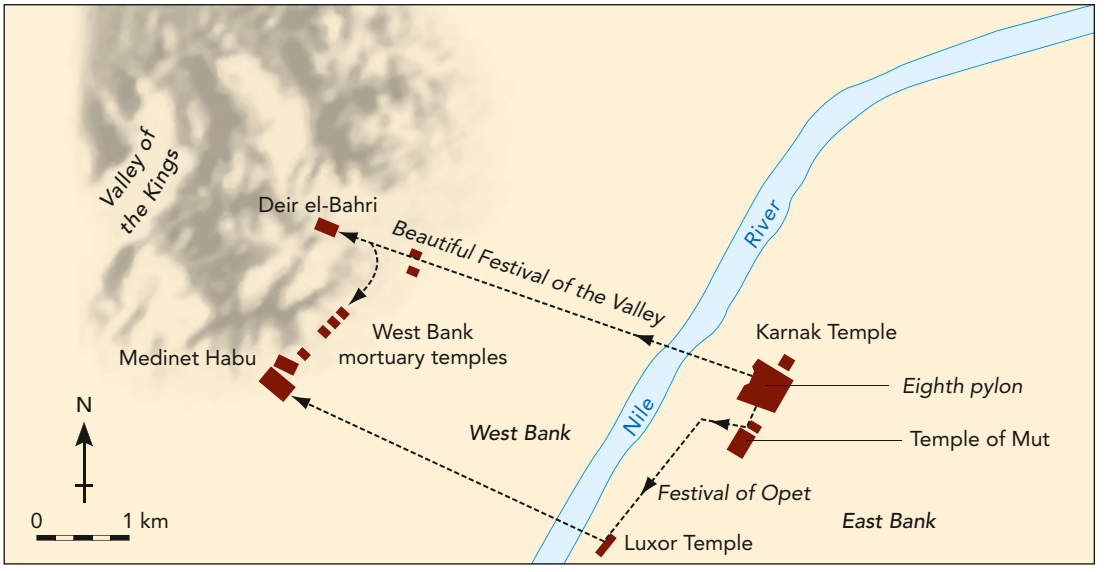
Hatshepsut's eighth pylon at Karnak was built on a new axis to provide an imposing entrance to the processional avenue leading to the temple of Mut. She also ordered the building of six barque stations along the processional route; these were resting places for the barque (and its bearers) on the 3-kilometre journey. In doing this, Hatshepsut dramatically altered the religious landscape of Thebes (see Source 35).

The Beautiful Festival of the Valley

SOURCE 34

One of the most important religious innovations of the queen concerns the Festival of the Valley. This was a religious festival in which the god Amen was taken in his barque across the River Nile to the west bank of Thebes, where lay the main Theban royal cemetery. There the procession moved along the valley floor bringing the light of the god to those who lay buried on the west bank. The barque stopped at the mortuary temples of previous kings and finally rested in the special barque shrine that Hatshepsut's officials had carved for her as the Holy of Holies in the cliff behind the Upper Terrace of her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri. In this way, Hatshepsut not only may have introduced a new festival to Egypt, but she ensured that her temple would be visited and blessed by the god each year. The festival itself became only second in importance to the Festival of Opet, and it was a great holiday period that the ordinary people also enjoyed for centuries after the death of the queen.

G. Callender, 'Innovations of Hatshepsut's reign', *The Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology*, 13, Australian Centre for Egyptology, Macquarie University, 2002, p. 39



SOURCE 35 A plan of Thebes showing processional routes for the festival of *Opet* and the Beautiful Festival of the Valley. At Luxor, in Hatshepsut's time, there was a small temple dating from the Middle Kingdom. A small temple at Medinet Habu on the west bank of the Nile, constructed by Hatshepsut, was dedicated to Amun in his form of a creator god.

Funerary innovations

Hatshepsut introduced innovations in funerary texts that were to become standard usage throughout the New Kingdom.

- *Amduat* ('Book of What Is in the Underworld'): A royal funerary text recounting the 12-hour journey of the pharaoh on the solar barque through the underworld towards his rebirth with the dawn. The first appearance of this text dates to Hatshepsut's time and was recorded on the third terrace at Deir el-Bahri.

- 'King as Priest of the Sun': A new text detailing the ritual performed by pharaohs to the sun god. This was found on the east wall of the sun court on the third terrace at Deir el-Bahri.
- 'Litany of Re': A hymn of praise to Re identifying his 75 different titles first appeared in the tomb of User-amun, a vizier from the joint reign of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III.
- 'Book of Coming Forth by Day' (or 'Book of the Dead'): A collection of funerary spells, used mostly by commoners, made its first appearance on tomb walls as well as in scroll form at this time.

5.7 Understanding and using the sources

Source 31

1 Identify the epithets that correspond to the six divine roles of Amun-Re outlined by Assmann.
2 Choose the epithets that most clearly express Amun-Re's role as a supreme deity. Explain the reasons for your choices.
3 Why was Hatshepsut interested in developing new religious ideas about Amun's role?

Source 32

4 What reaction from the courtiers indicates that the oracle was a new experience for them?
5 How did Amun-Re deliver his oracle in this instance?
6 What divine intention was Amun-Re communicating through his oracle?
7 How did Hatshepsut respond to the oracle?

5.7 Check your learning

1 For discussion:
   a What new religious concepts of Amun-Re were developed during Hatshepsut's times?
   b What were the political and religious implications of oracles in Hatshepsut's reign?
   c What new religious idea is evident in the development of personal piety?
   d How do the following contribute to the development of the ideology of Egyptian kingship?
      - Hatshepsut's Divine Birth and Coronation Inscriptions
      - the reliefs and inscriptions of the Hathor chapel from Deir el-Bahri
   e What contribution did Hatshepsut make to the development of funerary customs?
2 Use the following subheadings to make your own point-form summary of these topics: Concept of Amun-Re, Oracles, Personal piety, Ideology of kingship, Festivals, Promotion of other cults.
3 Writing task: Assess the significance of Hatshepsut's religious policy in her reign.
   To help plan your response:
   - identify some key features of Hatshepsut's religious policy
   - use these features to structure your answer
   - make judgements about the significance of these features
   - use specific evidence to support your assessment.

5.8 Building program

In a reign filled with both traditional and revolutionary ideas, Hatshepsut's building program was an important way of communicating these ideas to the people, both of her own time and of the future. Like her predecessors, Hatshepsut carried out a traditional building program. This included additions to the temple of Amun at Karnak, her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri and a tomb in the Valley of the Kings. She also built and restored temples to Amun-Re and other gods, including Hathor, Pakhet and Anubis. Many of these buildings incorporated new architectural features, which enabled Hatshepsut to demonstrate her originality and to underline her political and religious agenda.

Deir el-Bahri: *Djeser-djeseru*, 'Holy of Holies'

Hatshepsut's mortuary temple, set dramatically in a natural amphitheatre of limestone cliffs, dominates the landscape of the west bank at Thebes. It is composed of three stepped terraces linked by central ramps, each flanked by a pair of colonnades. In the spacious open court of the first terrace, Hatshepsut created a garden for her divine father Amun-Re to walk in.

On the walls behind the square pillars of the colonnades, Hatshepsut instructed her artists to paint brightly coloured scenes of selected accomplishments of her career, including her divine birth and coronation, the expedition to Punt and the transportation of her obelisks. At either end of the middle colonnade are two chapels, one dedicated to the goddess Hathor, the other to Anubis, god of mummification.

The restored upper (third) terrace contained an open court surrounded on each side by colonnades and statue niches. Two chambers on the left side of the central court were dedicated to the funerary cults of Hatshepsut and her father, Thutmose I. On the opposite side was an open-air sanctuary dedicated to the sun-god, Aten. At the rear of the upper terrace, in a recess cut deep into the rock, was the sanctuary of Amun-Re.

Innovations at Deir el-Bahri

Although Hatshepsut's mortuary temple was inspired by the adjacent Middle Kingdom mortuary temple of Mentuhotep II, she introduced a completely different type of rock-cut temple. Unlike traditional New Kingdom temples that featured pairs of pylons, courtyards and halls covered by ceilings of decreasing height, Hatshepsut's temple was carved from the living rock. Instead of pylons, ascending ramps led the eye upwards to the third terrace, the most sacred part of the temple.

hypostyle hall a hall in a temple, with two central rows of columns taller than those on either side of it creating a raised central roof area to admit light

An important architectural innovation was the **hypostyle hall** on the third terrace. This was a precursor of the great hypostyle hall at Karnak Temple, built by the Nineteenth Dynasty pharaohs. Another innovation was the rock platform created above the third terrace; it was designed to protect the temple from rock falling from the surrounding cliffs.

Hatshepsut's mortuary temple has aroused the admiration of numerous visitors. The famous Egyptologist Sir Alan Gardiner said, 'Even now there is no nobler architectural achievement to be seen in the whole of Egypt'. Source 37 gives the view of the director of

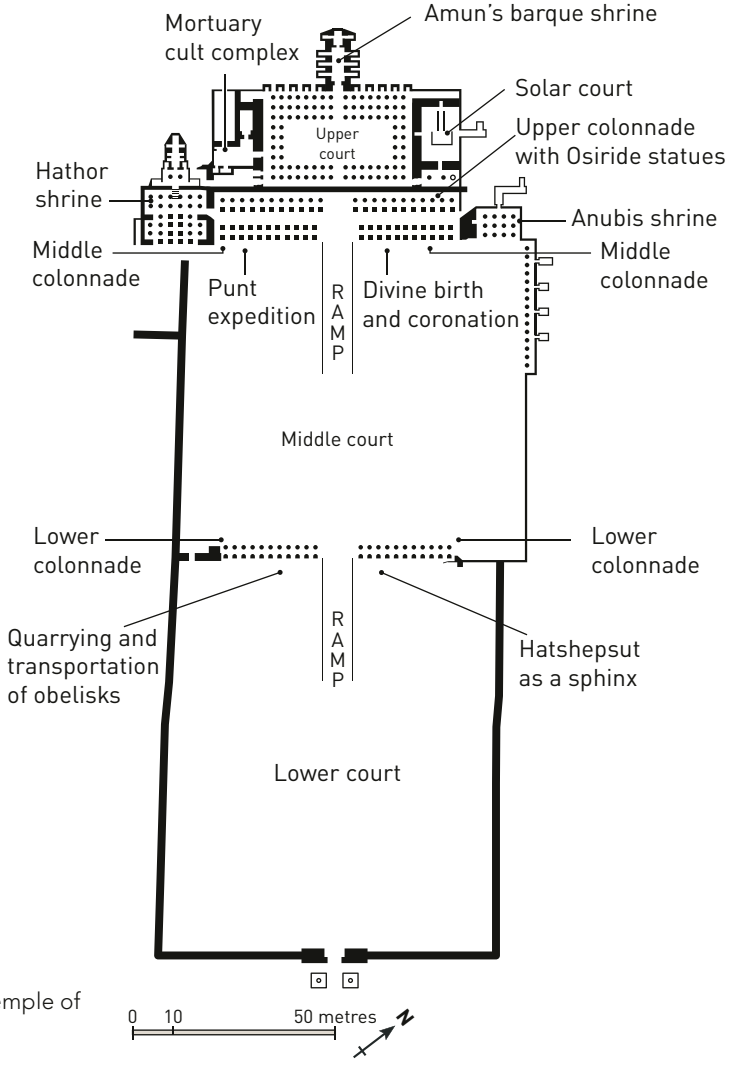
SOURCE 36 Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri

the Polish excavation team who spent several decades in the late 20th century on the study and conservation of Deir el-Bahri.

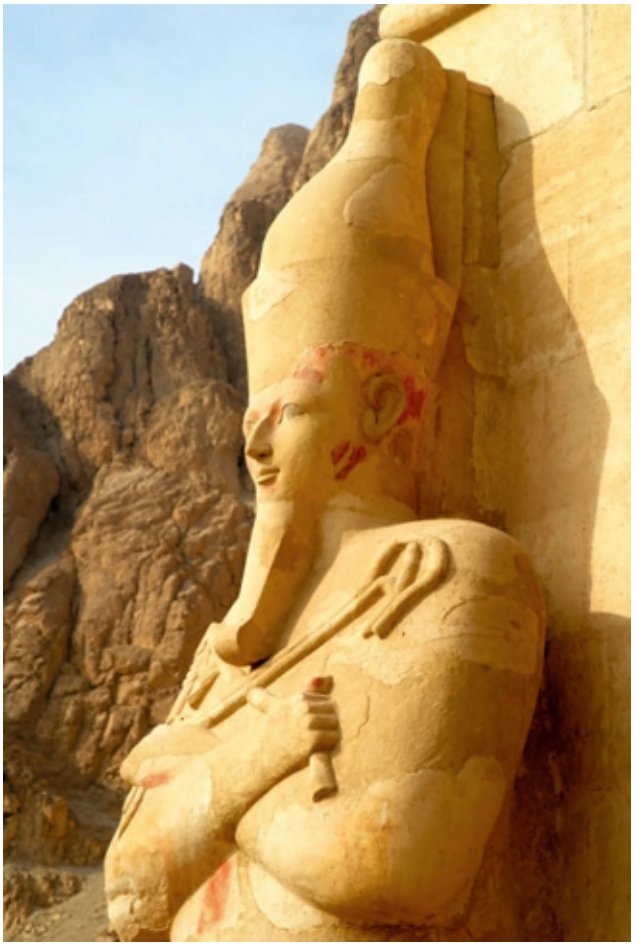
SOURCE 37

An explosion of artistic creativity by Hatshepsut is exemplified in her temple at Deir el-Bahri. Landscape, terrace architecture, and sculpture created one of the great architectural wonders of the ancient world. It is a masterpiece of pharaonic temple architecture. An architect … perhaps even Hatshepsut herself, designed an innovative and original monument. It seems that Hatshepsut did not follow any earlier idea of temple arrangement. She created the building from the start and its design was never repeated.

Z. E. Szafranski, 'The exceptional creativity of Hatshepsut', in J. Galan, B. Bryan & P. Dorman (eds), *Creativity and Innovation in the Reign of Hatshepsut*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisation, No. 69, Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2014, p. 125



SOURCE 38 A plan of the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri



SOURCE 39 A colossal **Osiride** statue of Hatshepsut from the Third Terrace of her Deir el-Bahri Temple

Decorative program at Deir el-Bahri

The paintings on the colonnades at Deir el-Bahri are usually regarded simply as an album of selected highlights of Hatshepsut's career. However, Hatshepsut appears to have an important religious agenda in the decorative program as Alison Roberts explains in her book, *Hathor Rising*.

Roberts' analysis of the decorative program at Deir el-Bahri builds on the work of Jan Assmann, who had identified the three key aspects of the nature of Amun-Re as demonstrated in Hatshepsut's introduction of particular epithets to the god's name. They are Amun as (1) ruler and king of the gods, (2) solar and preserver god, (3) creator god (see 5.7 Religious policy).

These aspects of the god had already been expressed in the various prayers and hymns to Amun which appeared at this time. Roberts takes this religious innovation a step further by demonstrating how these threefold aspects of the god are linked in the architectural and decorative program of the three terraces at Dier el-Bahri.

SOURCE 40 This aerial view of the restoration of the third terrace shows the rock platform (far right) designed to protect the temple from rock falls. Below this, cut deeply into the rock face, is the sacred sanctuary of Amun. Note the remains of the hypostyle court on this terrace. In the background can be seen the remains of the Middle Kingdom temple of Mentuhotep II.

The terraces show a progression from the earthly to the divine:

- First terrace – Amun as 'cult ruler of Egypt' – scenes depicting the transportation of a pair of granite obelisks for erection at Karnak Temple, emphasise Hatshepsut's service to Amun-Re as the monarch of Egypt.
- Second terrace – the 'life sphere' – scenes of Hatshepsut's divine birth as daughter of Amun-Re, her coronation and suckling by Hathor emphasise the life-giving and nurturing aspects of Hatshepsut's reign. The Punt expedition shows how Hatshepsut provided for her people.
- Third terrace – the 'creation realm' – Osiride structures and scenes indicate renewal and rebirth of the dead in the afterlife. The location of Deir el-Bahri directly opposite Karnak Temple on the east bank served to link Osiris' realm of the dead with Amun-Re's realm of the living.

5.8 Understanding and using the sources

Source 37

1 What aspect of Hatshepsut's innovation does Szafranski highlight in this source?
2 On what authority does he base his opinion?

5.8 Check your learning

1 Identify the architectural innovations at Deir el-Bahri.
2 According to Alison Roberts, what three aspects of Amun-Re are represented in Hatshepsut's decorative program at Deir el-Bahri?
3 Research the gods Hathor and Anubis, who have their own chapels at Deir el-Bahri. Why did Hatshepsut feature these two gods in her mortuary temple?
4 Discuss the following:
   a How does Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri differ from traditional New Kingdom temples?
   b What do you consider to be the significance of the prominent positions given to Hathor and Anubis at Deir el-Bahri?
   c How do religious festivals show the link between Hatshepsut's religious and building policies?
5 Writing task: Explain the significance of the temple of Deir el-Bahri in the reign of Hatshepsut.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify key aspects of Hatshepsut's policies and use them to structure your response
   - show how these aspects are demonstrated in various features of the temple
   - use specific evidence from Deir el-Bahri to support your explanation.

Osiride
representing Osiris, god of the dead; Osiride statues of deceased kings depict them with arms crossed on their chest, a crook and flail in each hand, and wearing a false beard

5.9 Other building projects

Hatshepsut commissioned a large number of building projects at Thebes, as well as throughout Egypt and in Nubia. Each of these demonstrated both traditional and innovative aspects of her building policy.

Karnak Temple

Hatshepsut initiated a renewed emphasis on building at Amun-Re's temple at Karnak. As at Deir el-Bahri, she was keen to be an innovator inspired by her political and religious policies.

SOURCE 41 Hatshepsut's fallen obelisk. It was one of a pair that stood in the centre of Karnak Temple. The pyramidion depicts Hatshepsut's blessing by Amun-Re.

Obelisks

Hatshepsut erected two pairs of obelisks at Karnak Temple. Two of the original four still exist and one is still standing. The inscriptions on the obelisks announce that they were made of red granite with the **pyramidions** of fine gold. They also make clear that she erected these obelisks as a gift for her divine father Amun-Re in memory of her earthly father Thutmose I. According to Alison Roberts, Hatshepsut claims here that she has made Karnak the sacred *akhet* , or horizon on earth by, replicating its hieroglyph with her obelisks. Her obelisk inscription makes this clear: 'Their rays flood the Two Lands, when the sun rises between them, like at sunrise in the horizon of the sky.'

pyramidion the small pyramid-shaped capping stone on the top of an obelisk or pyramid

The Eighth Pylon

Hatshepsut's sandstone pylon, the eighth pylon, was the first to be built on the new north–south axis that linked the main part of the temple to the precinct of the goddess Mut, wife of Amun-Re. In locating her pylon here, Hatshepsut forced the annual *Opet* festival procession to take a new route through this pylon gateway. This was reinforced by her construction of a temple dedicated to Amun-Re-Kamutef (Amun in his creator form) at the entrance to the Mut precinct and a small barque shrine opposite it, where the procession turned on its way to Luxor Temple (see 9.8 Profile).

The Red Chapel

As part of her renovations to the palace of Ma'at, the sanctuary area within Karnak Temple, Hatshepsut built a barque chapel of red quartzite, which has given rise to its name, the Red Chapel. This chapel was dedicated to Amun in his fertility manifestation of Amun-Min. The decoration of the chapel, featuring scenes of Hatshepsut's coronation, dedication of obelisks,

the *Opet* and Valley festivals as well as her *Heb Sed* (festival of renewal of kingship), indicates that it played an important role in her religious and political programs.

Beni Hasan: The *Speos Artemidos* temple

An important building of Hatshepsut's was her rock-cut cliff temple at Beni Hasan in Middle Egypt. This temple was dedicated to Pakhet, the lioness goddess of the desert ('she who scratches'), who was a local form of Sekhmet. Sekhmet is the fierce manifestation of the gentle, nurturing cow goddess Hathor, who must be tamed by the musical sound of the **sistrum** to prevent her turning into the fierce lion-headed goddess of destruction. Hatshepsut, in dedicating her temple to Pakhet, was thus continuing her identification with Hathor who was featured at Deir el-Bahri. In the reliefs of the *Speos Artemidos*, Hathor, in the form of Pakhet, gives Hatshepsut both the terrifying and protective qualities she needs as pharaoh of Egypt.

Hatshepsut appears to have been the first of the Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs to build in Middle Egypt. The famous *Speos Artemidos* inscription that was located on the entrance **architrave** of the temple, records her restoration of temples in this area that had been neglected since the time of the Hyksos.

SOURCE 42 Hatshepsut's reconstructed Red Chapel now located in the open-air museum at Karnak. Thutmose III dismantled it after her reign and replaced it with his own barque chapel.

sistrum
an ancient percussion instrument designed to rattle when shaken

SOURCE 43 A relief from the *Speos Artemidos* temple showing Hatshepsut being blessed by Amun (right) and Pakhet (left)

architrave
the frame around a doorway or window

SOURCE 44

The temple of the mistress of Cusae, which had [completely] fallen into dissolution – the earth having swallowed its noble sanctuary, children dancing on its roof[s] … I hallowed it, built anew … Great Pakhet, who roams the wadis, resident in the eastern desert, [was] s[eeking] the rainstorm's paths, since there was no relevant libation-service that fetched water [for her]. I have made her enclosure as [what this goddess] intende[d] … Since great Thoth, who came from the Sun, has been reveal[ing this to] me, I [have consecrated to] him an altar in silver and gold and chests of cloth, every vessel set in its [proper] place … I have constructed his great temple of white stone of Tur[a], its gateways of alabaster of Hatnub, the doorleaves of bronze of Asia, the reliefs on them in **electrum**, holy with [the image of] him of high plumes [that is, Amun] …

electrum
a naturally occurring alloy of gold and silver with some trace elements (e.g. copper)

So listen, all you elite and multitude of commoners: I have done this by the plan of my mind. I do not sleep forgetting, [but] have made form what was ruined. For I have raised up what was dismembered beginning from the time when the Asiatics were in the midst of the Delta, [in] Avaris, with vagrants in their midst, toppling what had been made. They ruled without the Sun [that is, Re] … [Now] I am set on the Sun's thrones, having been foretold from ages of years as one born to take possession.

J. Allen, 'The Speos Artemidos Inscription of Hatshepsut', *Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar*, 16, 2002, pp. 1–17

5.9 Understanding and using the sources

Source 44

1. Identify the gods whose temples Hatshepsut claims to have restored.
2. List the ways in which these temples had suffered neglect. How does Hatshepsut restore them?
3. What does this source reveal about Hatshepsut's promotion of the cults of Amun-Re and of other gods?
4. What claims does Hatshepsut make about the Hyksos?
5. What statement does Hatshepsut make in this inscription about her right to the throne?

5.9 Check your learning

1. Why did Hatshepsut build her Eighth Pylon on a new axis at Karnak?
2. Carry out further research on Hatshepsut's Red Chapel at Karnak. What was the purpose of the chapel? What were its unusual architectural features? What do its inscriptions and reliefs reveal about Hatshepsut's reign?
3. Hatshepsut's building program also included construction at sites other than those described in this chapter. Find information on the following:
   - her tombs
   - the small temple at Medinet Habu
   - monuments at sites in Nubia, including Qasr Ibrim, Semna, Faras and Buhen
   - additions to Ptah's temple at Memphis.
4. Create a table like the one below to summarise Hatshepsut's building program

BUILDING	LOCATION	GODS HONOURED	ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES	RELIEFS/ INSCRIPTIONS	SIGNIFICANCE

5. Writing task: Use the summary to plan and write an answer to the following: 'Assess the significance of Hatshepsut's building program.'

   To help plan your response:
   - identify significant features of the building program (e.g. political/religious}
   - use these features to structure your response
   - make judgements about their significance, using specific examples and evidence.

5.10 Foreign policy

Hatshepsut pursued the traditional foreign policy of New Kingdom pharaohs, although perhaps with a different emphasis from her predecessors.

Military campaigns

During her reign, a number of military campaigns were conducted in Nubia and to a lesser extent in Syria–Palestine. Some of these campaigns were under the command of Thutmose III, her co-regent, and may well have been initiated by her.

Like any other pharaoh, Hatshepsut depicted herself in full 'warrior pharaoh' regalia. In her coronation scene on one of her Karnak obelisks, she is shown wearing the blue war crown. At Deir el-Bahri she is depicted in both statues and reliefs as a sphinx, a symbol of military might.

Despite acknowledging her military activities, many scholars still support the view proposed by Egyptologist John A. Wilson, when comparing the reigns of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, that 'her pride was in the internal development of Egypt and in commercial enterprise; his pride was in the external expansion of Egypt and in military enterprise'. Source 45 summarises the evidence for Hatshepsut's military activities.

graffito
an inscription on a wall or other surface

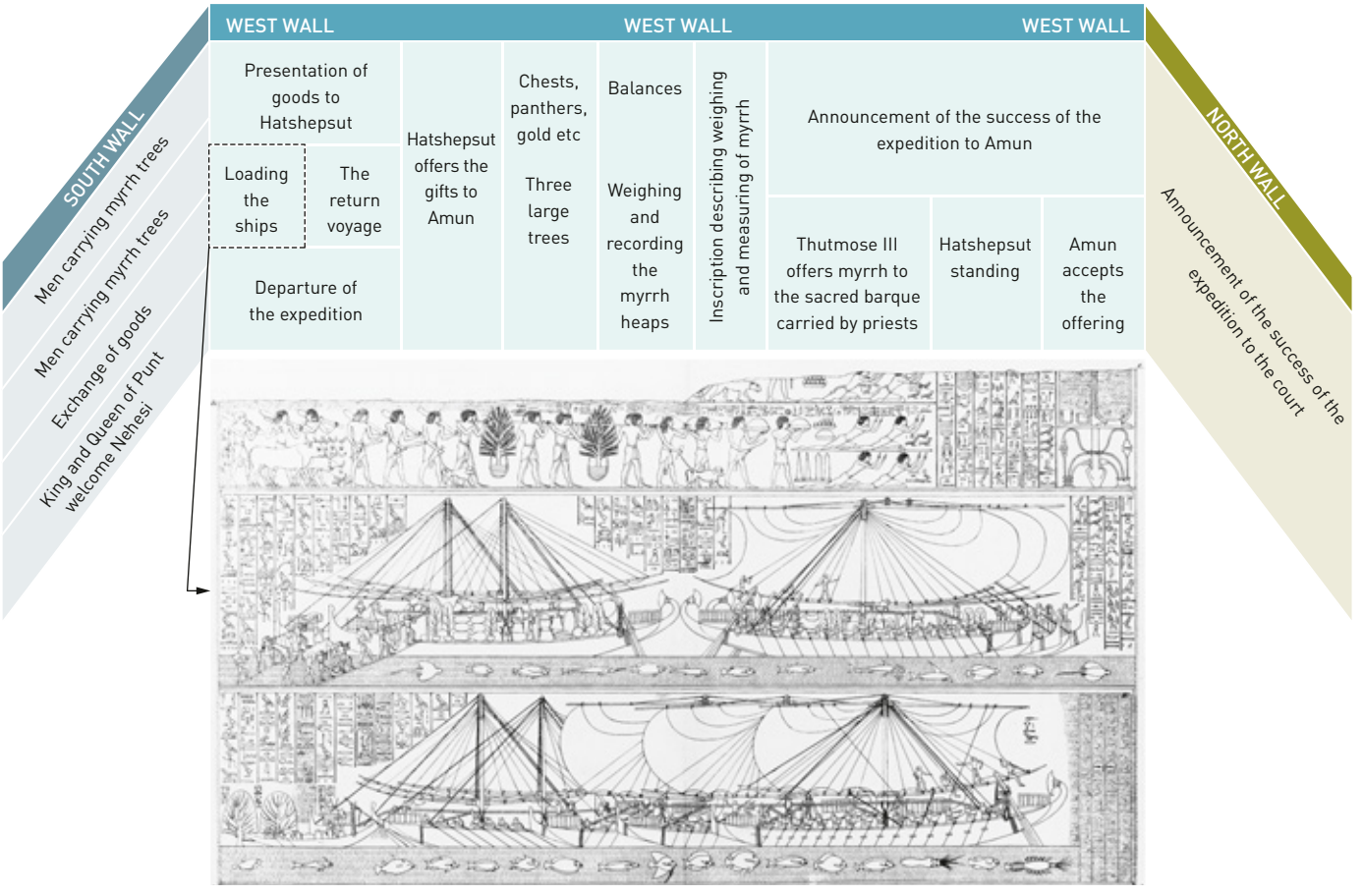
SOURCE 45 Military campaigns of Hatshepsut's reign

LOCATION	SOURCE	INSCRIPTION
Nubia	Damaged inscription on eastern colonnade at Deir el-Bahri with a relief depicting the Nubian god, Dedwen, presenting captives to Hatshepsut	'… as was done by her victorious father, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Okheperkare, [Thutmose I] who seized all lands … has begun an uproar … a slaughter was made among them, the number of dead being unknown; their hands were cut off … she overthrew …'
	Graffito of Ty (official of Hatshepsut) from the island of Sehel, Aswan	'I followed the Good God, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Maat-ka-re, may she live! I saw when he overthrew the Nubian bowmen, their chiefs being brought to him as prisoners. I saw him destroying the land of Nubia, while I was in the following of his majesty …'
	Rock inscription at Tangur West, south of the Second Cataract	A year 12 Nubian campaign recorded by Inebni/Amenemnekhu, Viceroy of Nubia during the co-regency. This inscription bears the double cartouches of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, with Hatshepsut's placed before his.
	Stela of Djehuty (official of Hatshepsut) Theban Tomb T11	'I saw the collection of booty by this mighty ruler from the vile Kush, who are deemed cowards, the female sovereign, given life, prosperity and health forever.'
Palestine	Deir el-Bahri inscription; possible reference to a campaign in Palestine	'Her arrow is among the Northerners.'

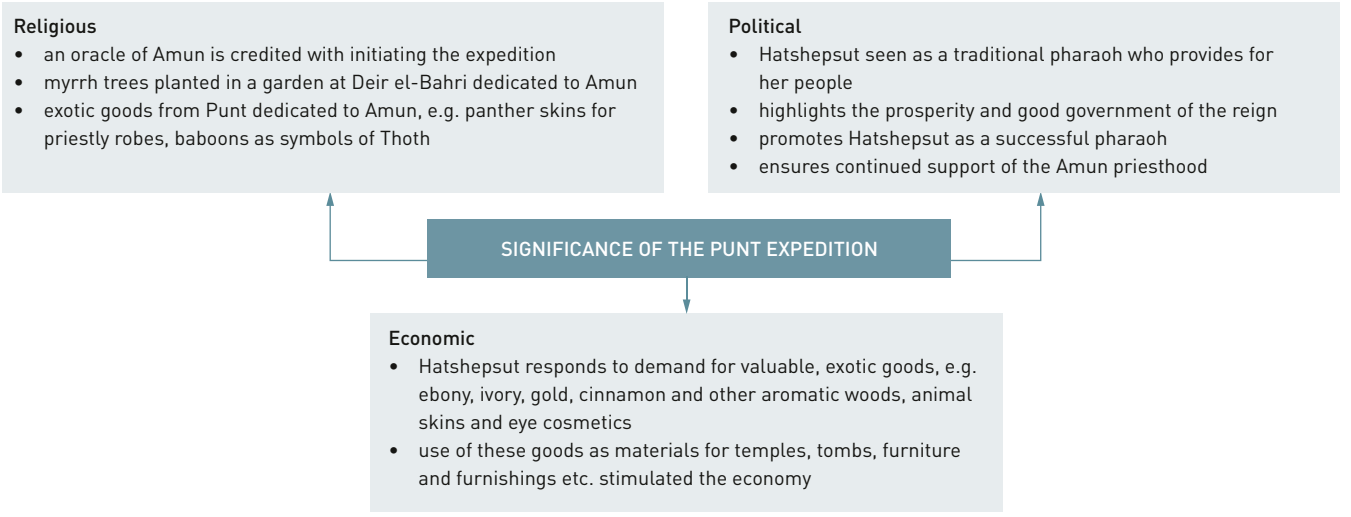
The expedition to Punt

Trade was also an important feature of Hatshepsut's foreign policy. Egypt's economy needed a boost to enable it to bear the cost of Hatshepsut's building projects, especially the financing of the new and restored temples. Her year 9 trading mission to Punt, led by Chancellor Nehesy, became one of her most celebrated achievements. The exact location of Punt is still debated. Long thought to have been in present-day Somalia, more recent suggestions place Punt in either southern Sudan or the Eritrean region of Ethiopia. The reliefs and inscriptions recording this event take pride of place in the decorative program of Hatshepsut's Deir el-Bahri mortuary temple. They occupy an entire wall of the second terrace colonnade.

Despite Hatshepsut's claim that 'never was the like done before', Egypt's contacts with this region dated to the Old Kingdom. However, she can rightly claim to have renewed trading links that had been neglected for a long time. The main purpose of the expedition was to obtain exotic goods, particularly the valuable myrrh used as incense in temple ritual. This was so highly prized that live trees were brought back to create a garden for Amun in the forecourt of the mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri. Amun was the main beneficiary of the expedition, but Hatshepsut was also aware of its political and economic value. Source 47 summarises these benefits.



SOURCE 46 A scene from the Punt expedition located on the west wall at Deir el-Bahri. It shows the loading of the ships with goods for the return journey to Egypt. Above the scene of ship loading is a description of the layout of the Punt expedition reliefs and inscriptions.



SOURCE 47 Significance of the Punt expedition

5.10 Understanding and using the sources

Source 46

1 Study the scenes in Source 46 and explain the sequence of events depicted in each register.
2 Which part of the expedition appears to be the most prominent in the sequence of reliefs of the Punt expedition? Suggest reasons for this prominence.
3 Which of the goods brought back to Egypt appears to be most important? Why?
4 What role does Thutmose III play in the sequence? What does this suggest about his role in the co-regency?
5 Why is the Punt expedition featured so prominently in Deir el-Bahri?

5.10 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   a What types of evidence do we have for Hatshepsut's military campaigns?
   b What conclusions can you draw about Hatshepsut's military activities from the available evidence?
2 Conduct a more detailed study of the Punt expedition reliefs and inscription. Who were Nehesy, Perehu and his wife Eti? What is unusual about Eti's depiction?
   For the full text of the Punt Inscription search online for 'J.H. Breasted's *Ancient Records of Egypt*, Volume II – Etana', and go to page 131.
3 Writing task: Explain the significance of foreign policy in Hatshepsut's reign.
   To help plan your response:
   • identify the main aspects of Hatshepsut's foreign policy (e.g. military and trade)
   • explain the nature and purposes of these aspects
   • make the significance of foreign policy clearly evident
   • use specific evidence to support your explanation.

5.11 Relationship with Amun priesthood and other officials

It seems clear that Hatshepsut would have needed the support of key courtiers to support her bid for the throne. Chief among them were members of the influential Amun priesthood, well known to her already through her role as god's wife of Amun. She would need to maintain their support throughout her reign as well appoint new men. Many of these were members of the bureaucracy, the vast civil service that all pharaohs relied on to assist them in the administration of Egypt.

Hatshepsut inherited some of her supporters from her father's and husband's administrations, such as Ineni and Ahmose Pennekhbet. Among those whom she herself appointed was her steward Senenmut, who enjoyed great prominence, but others such as her viziers, User-amun and Hapuseneb, were powerful men who would have served Hatshepsut loyally as they owed their prominence to her.

The Amun priesthood played an active role in supporting the many religious and political innovations of Hatshepsut's reign. Her focus on developing the theology of Amun and the accompanying building program served to increase the prestige and influence of the cult. A large number of her officials were involved in all aspects of her building projects, whether as architects, supervisors of workers, quarrying of her obelisks or in charge of the treasury for the procurement and distribution of resources. Her linking of Amun to the ideology of kingship involved the Amun priesthood directly in the fortunes of the dynasty.

SOURCE 48

The numbers of titleholders associated with the cult of Amen-Re, women as well as men, increased sharply during her reign … Hapuseneb, the High Priest of Amen, was connected to the ruler through the God's Wife [of Amen] office as well: his daughter Senisonb was the Divine Adoratrice of Amen, a role second only to God's Wife. The position of this Senisonb in her family parallels that of royal females, for her marriage to Puyemra, the Second Priest of Amen, another highly influential man under Hatshepsut, helped to form a powerful aristocratic dynasty.

B. Bryan, 'In women good and bad fortune are on earth: Status and roles of women in Egyptian culture', in A. Capel & G. Markoe (eds), *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven*, Hudson Hills Press, New York, 1996, p. 33

The increased numbers of well-appointed private tombs that appeared on the west bank at Thebes, as well as at Saqqara, suggest that Hatshepsut was a generous employer to those who served her loyally. In another innovation of her reign, the enthroned pharaoh was now depicted in these tombs, empowered to act as an intercessor with the gods on the behalf of the deceased.

Some significant officials of the Amun priesthood during Hatshepsut's reign include the following. The numbers in brackets are the numbers of their tombs in the Theban **necropolis**.

necropolis
a cemetery; from Greek, literally meaning 'city of the dead'

- Hapuseneb –First Prophet (High Priest) of Amun and Vizier of Upper Egypt (TT 67)
- Puyemre – Second Prophet of Amun (TT 39)
- Ineni – Overseer of the granary of Amun (TT 81)
- Amenhotep – Chief Steward of the Royal Estates (TT 73)
- Senenmut – Steward of Amun (TT 71), (TT 353)

Other members of the administration and military during Hatshepsut's reign include:

- User-amun – Vizier (TT 131)
- Nehesy – Overseer of the Seal (Chancellor)
- Djehuty – Overseer of Silver and Gold Houses (TT 11)
- Sennefer – Treasurer (TT 99)
- Inebni – King's Son of Kush
- Ahmose-Pennekhbet – Overseer of the Seal (tomb at el-Kab)

Senenmut: 'The Greatest of the Great in the Land'

Much has been written about Hatshepsut's chief steward, Senenmut, and the roles that he played in Hatshepsut's administration, so much that it is often difficult to distinguish between fact and fiction. Even his origins are obscure, but he appears to have come from a provincial family in Armant, just south of Thebes. Senenmut may have begun his career in the army, serving under Amenhotep I, but a career change saw him take up an administrative post in the treasury of Thutmose I.

SOURCE 49 A block statue of Senenmut in his role as tutor to Hatshepsut's daughter, Neferure

By the time of Hatshepsut's regency for Thutmose III, Senenmut had risen to prominence at the court. Evidence of his activities during the regency can be seen in a graffito, which he cut into the rock at Gebel el-Silsila near Aswan. It records the quarrying of a pair of obelisks for Hatshepsut, before her accession; in it Hatshepsut is referred to as 'one to whom Re has actually given the kingship'. Hatshepsut's confidence in his abilities was reflected in his appointment as tutor to her daughter, Neferure, and then more significantly as 'Steward of the God's Wife and Steward of the King's Daughter'. This position gave him responsibility for the property of both Hatshepsut and her daughter.

Senenmut reached the height of his career during Hatshepsut's co-regency with Thutmose III when he was appointed Great Steward of Amun, in charge of the economic affairs of the Temple of Amun. Other titles that reflect his growing prominence in the Amun cult include 'Overseer of the two granaries of Amun' and 'Overseer of the works of Amun'. Now he was responsible for the pharaoh's building works at Karnak and Armant. Despite the claims of some scholars, Senenmut was not Hatshepsut's architect. However, his responsibility for Hatshepsut's building projects would have enabled him to employ the best architects available. Other courtly titles held by Senenmut at this time, 'Superintendent of the private apartments' and 'Superintendent of the bathroom' attest to his high rank and influence within Hatshepsut's court.

With the favour of the pharaoh came wealth. Evidence for Senenmut's increased fortunes comes from the tomb with its rich grave goods, that he built for his mother, Hatnefer, and his own tombs, the second of which was located within the precinct of Hatshepsut's own mortuary temple.

A discussion of Senenmut's career would be incomplete without some mention of the rumour that he shared a much more intimate relationship with Hatshepsut than that of highly trusted official. Theories that they were lovers are based on little more evidence than some salacious graffiti found in a tomb located in the cliffs behind Deir el-Bahri and the sexist belief that a woman in a powerful position could not have functioned without masculine support.

Senenmut's sudden disappearance in year 16 is frequently explained as the result of his overstepping the mark. In this scenario Hatshepsut, indignant at Senenmut's presumption in placing his image in her temple and building his tomb in her mortuary temple's precinct, removed him from office. The defacement of his monuments added fuel to these theories. Today it is considered more likely that Senenmut disappeared simply because he died. The attacks on his monuments can be seen in the context of similar attacks on Hatshepsut's monuments; some could well have been perpetrated by the agents of the pharaoh who sought to remove all traces of Amun and his wife, Mut, during the **Amarna period**.

Amarna period an era of the Eighteenth Dynasty of New Kingdom Egyptian history when the pharaoh Amenhotep IV changed his name to Akhenaten, adopted the Aten as the sole state god and moved the capital of Egypt of Akhetaten

5.11 Understanding and using the sources

Source 48

1 What important roles in the Amun priesthood did Puyemre and his wife Senisonb hold under Hatshepsut?

5.11 Check your learning

1 For discussion:
   - **a** Where did Hatshepsut's support come from? Why did these people support her?
   - **b** What benefits could courtiers and officials expect in return for their support and service?
   - **c** What does Senenmut's career reveal about his contribution to Hatshepsut's reign and his relationship with her?

2 Research the officials of Hatshepsut listed in this section. Information about their careers can be found in the description of the reliefs and inscriptions in their tombs.

3 Writing task: Assess the contribution of Hatshepsut's officials to her reign.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify a range of officials and indicate the nature of their contributions
   - make a judgement about the value of their contribution
   - use specific information from sources to support your judgements.
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues, for example the origin and purpose of tomb reliefs and inscriptions.

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5.12 Relationship with Thutmose III

According to some now very outdated theories, labelled as 'the feud of the Thutmosids', the relationship between Hatshepsut and Thutmose III was a toxic one, in which she was the 'wicked stepmother' who had seized the throne, pushed Thutmose aside and denied him his birthright. A study of the available evidence suggests a very different story.

Throughout the co-regency it seems that Hatshepsut was careful to show her young co-regent the respect he was entitled to, even though she was almost invariably shown as the dominant partner. Further, the nature of the evidence suggests that by the time he was a young man, he began to take an active role in political, religious and military affairs.

Source 50 highlights some evidence of his activities during the co-regency.

SOURCE 50 Hatshepsut and Thutmose III

TIME	NATURE OF EVIDENCE	LOCATION
Year 2	Thutmose III orders renewed offerings to Dedwen, local Nubian god, deified king Sesostris III and his queen	Temple at Semna in Nubia
Year 5	Thutmose III appoints a new vizier, User-amun	Tomb of User-amun
Year 2–7 (?)	Thutmose III shown following the procession of the barque of Amun in Hatshepsut's coronation reliefs	Second colonnade, Deir el-Bahri
Year 9	Thutmose III offers incense from Punt to Amun-Re	Second colonnade, Deir el-Bahri
Year 13	A damaged inscription of an unnamed official referring to himself as 'a follower of his lord [i.e. Thutmose III] in the foreign land of [ ]'	Stela at Sinai
Year 16	Thutmose III and Hatshepsut shown making an offering to local gods of the turquoise mines Thutmose III shares Hatshepsut's *Sed*, but stands behind Hatshepsut	Stela at Serabit el-Khâdim in the Wadi Marghara (Sinai) Reliefs from the Red Chapel
Year 20	Inscription referring to Thutmose III as 'the good god who overthrows him who has attacked him', and to Amun as 'one who gave victory'	Rock inscription at Tombos, Third Cataract in Nubia

The *damnatio memoriae*

Thutmose III's undeniable attempts to destroy Hatshepsut's monuments and deface her portraits remain to be satisfactorily explained. Why did he attack her statues, reliefs and monuments? Was it a case of *damnatio memoriae*; that is, an attempt to deny her an afterlife?

The situation here is clearer now than in the past when it was assumed that Thutmose III was venting the hatred that he had supposedly bottled up for the duration of the co-regency. A study entitled 'The date of the dishonouring of Hatshepsut' by the scholar Charles Nims indicates that the damage was done at least 20 years into Thutmose III's sole reign. Hatshepsut's name and images were erased from a number of monuments and inscriptions, and replaced with those of Thutmose I, Thutmose II or Thutmose III himself.

SOURCE 51 Detail of a scene from Deir el-Bahri showing the defacement of Hatshepsut's image

SOURCE 52

His own legitimacy stood in need of demonstration and his own links with his illustrious grandfather Thutmose I had to be emphasized. To leave the glories of Hatshepsut's reign open to view would, in any case, invite invidious comparison with his own accomplishments, a comparison that the new monarch just would not brook.

D. B. Redford, *History and Chronology of the Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1967, p. 87

5.12 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 50 & 52

1. What conclusions can be drawn from Source 50 about the nature of the relationship between the co-regents?
2. What reason does Redford suggest for Thutmose's damage to Hatshepsut's monuments?
3. Why did Thutmose III need to demonstrate his legitimacy? Consider for example his mother. Why might Hatshepsut's claim in her inscriptions that Thutmose I chose her as his heir cast doubt on Thutmose III's claim to the throne?

5.12 Check your learning

1. For discussion:
   - a. Why is the old 'wicked stepmother' interpretation of the relationship no longer argued by modern historians?
   - b. What is the nature of the damage to Hatshepsut's monuments by Thutmose III?
   - c. Why is the timing of Thutmose III's damage to Hatshepsut's monuments significant?

5.13 Evaluation

In this section you have the opportunity to analyse and synthesise the information presented in this chapter, and evaluate Hatshepsut and her reign. You will need to make a judgement based on selected criteria to determine the value and significance of relevant features of her contribution to Egypt. It is up to you to choose the specific criteria on which to base your judgement.

Impact and influence on her time

In evaluating the impact and influence of Hatshepsut on her time, consider the following suggested definitions:

- impact – the immediate consequences of Hatshepsut's policies or actions
- influence – the extent to which Hatshepsut contributed to maintaining, shaping or changing the political, religious, economic or social structures of New Kingdom Egypt.

These key questions will help you investigate Hatshepsut's impact and influence on her time:

- What effect did Hatshepsut's accession have on Egypt?
- How did she change Egypt during her reign? What new ideas and concepts did she introduce?
- What are the main features of continuity with the past during her reign? How did she build on the traditions established by her predecessors?
- What evidence do we have of her relationship with her officials and her impact on them?
- What contribution did she make to Egypt's development?

In considering the effect of her accession, for example, we have no evidence for opposition to her assumption of power or during the co-regency. Considering that Thutmose III's destruction of her monuments and images occurred 20 years after her death, it is hardly an argument for opposition during her time.

To evaluate Hatshepsut's influence on her time, we must consider her achievements in relation to the criteria of traditional pharaonic policy, as well as to new initiatives. Traditional New Kingdom pharaohs engaged in the promotion of Amun-Re, self-promotion, waging successful military campaigns, maintaining Egypt's prosperity, building programs and ensuring the succession.

Assessment of Hatshepsut's life and reign

To assess means 'to make a judgement of value, quality, outcomes or results'. In assessing the life and reign of Hatshepsut, you can explore a range of issues, such as:

- the legality of her accession
- her relationship with Thutmose III and the officials of her reign
- the success of her internal policies, for example building, religious and administrative
- the success of her foreign policy, for example military and trade
- her effectiveness as a New Kingdom pharaoh.

To reach a conclusion about these issues, you will need to consider both ancient and modern sources and relevant issues based on an interrogation of the sources. Many have been included throughout the chapter, as well as in the ancient and modern interpretations sections that follow.

Legacy

Legacy refers to 'anything handed down by an ancestor or predecessor, a consequence'. It can include:

- the physical or tangible traces of their life – in the Egyptian context, this includes buildings, monuments and statuary, together with inscriptions and reliefs
- the non-physical, intangible traces such as ideas, concepts and institutions introduced, developed or sponsored by the pharaoh.

Legacy may be the result of a conscious or an unconscious action. In Hatshepsut's case, there was a very deliberate attempt to leave an indelible mark on the world of her time. In an inscription on one of her obelisks at Karnak Temple, she stated:

> Now my heart turns to and fro, In thinking what will the people say, They who shall see my monument in after years, And shall speak of what I have done.

Legacy can be viewed in both the short and the long term – in the short term, perhaps to the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty; and in the long term, from the Nineteenth Dynasty to our own times.

Legacy can also be seen in a positive or negative light depending on one's perspective. Consider, for example, the perspective of Thutmose III represented in his damage to Hatshepsut's monuments, and later pharaohs who omitted her name from their king lists. In the two reigns after Hatshepsut, tenure of the important religious office of god's wife of Amun was held by kings' mothers, not princesses. From the reign of Amenhotep III to the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty, the office of god's wife was not filled.

A survey of Hatshepsut's surviving monuments and inscriptions, especially her additions to Karnak and her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri, indicate that she left substantial traces of her reign. Later pharaohs, including Amenhotep III and Ramesses II, adopted her Divine Birth reliefs and inscriptions for their own purposes. Her contributions to the development of the theology of Amun-Re and the kingship together with the introduction of new festivals to demonstrate these ideas, are also important features to consider.

5.13 Check your learning

1 Use this chapter to research each of the following questions raised earlier in this section and construct responses to them.
   - **a** How did Hatshepsut change Egypt during her reign? What new ideas and concepts did she introduce?
   - **b** What are the main features of continuity with the past during Hatshepsut's reign? How did she build on the traditions established by her predecessors?
   - **c** What evidence do we have of Hatshepsut's relationship with her officials and her impact on them?
   - **d** What contribution did Hatshepsut make to Egypt's development?

2 Use the notes compiled for the above to construct an extended response to one of the following tasks.
   - **a** Assess Hatshepsut's influence on her times.
   - **b** To what extent was Hatshepsut a traditional New Kingdom pharaoh?

5.14 Ancient images and interpretations of Hatshepsut

We have a variety of images of Hatshepsut from her own reign. (Revisit the section 'Changes to Hatshepsut's royal image over time' in 5.6 Changes to Hatshepsut's titles.) Ancient sources of interpretation for Hatshepsut are few. We have, of course, her own testimony detailing the achievements of her reign, for example her famous *Speos Artemido*s inscription (Source 44). There are the tomb biographies of her courtiers, for example Ineni, Ahmose Pennekhbet and Djehuty, as well. Judgements of Hatshepsut come from later reigns, when pharaohs chose to remove her images and inscriptions or omit her from their king lists (e.g. Seti I and Ramesses II of the Nineteenth Dynasty).

Modern images and interpretations of Hatshepsut

Modern representations of Hatshepsut are evidence of changing interpretations from the early days of Egyptology to the present. The earlier historiographical debate focused on her gender and the extent to which she was a legitimate and/or effective ruler. The range of interpretations of Hatshepsut could be summed up as follows:

- a wicked stepmother usurping the throne from the rightful heir
- an ambitious power-seeker
- a loyal and dutiful daughter
- an intelligent, competent and innovative ruler.

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Your task is to examine the evidence for her reign together with the interpretations of Hatshepsut, and reach your own conclusions about this ancient personality. Sources 53 to 56 offer some further opinions on Hatshepsut's life and career for you to consider.

SOURCE 53

It is not to be imagined, however, that even a woman of the most virile [masculine] character could have attained such a pinnacle of power without masculine support. The Theban necropolis still displays many splendid tombs of her officials, all speaking of her in terms of cringing deference [in an excessively humble manner].

A. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1961, p. 184

SOURCE 54

The twenty-year reign, auspiciously inaugurated by Amun's oracle, was to be a unique break with the past. Far from conservative – how can a woman who proclaims herself king, thus violating all traditional norms of monarchy, be called conservative? – Hatshepsut showed herself to be an imaginative planner possessed of rather original taste.

D. B. Redford, *History and Chronology of the Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1967, p. 78

SOURCE 55

The motives for her gradual assumption of kingly power (and depiction) remain largely unknown. In view of the many intermediate iconographic stages Hatshepsut tried out over such a protracted period of time, it is hardly accurate to describe her actions as a usurpation or a power grab, with or without the help of a meddlesome coterie of supporters. Both Ineni's biography and Senenmut's graffito indicate that Hatshepsut was the effective ruler of Egypt from the death of her husband. The question was not the wielding of power but how to represent it in a public context. It is not impossible that Hatshepsut's experimentation with iconography was prompted by the necessity of effective rule during a prolonged regency, and that the strictures of functioning solely as a queen were inconsistent with that role.

P. Dorman, 'Hatshepsut: Wicked stepmother or Joan of Arc?', *The Oriental Institute News and Notes*, 168, Winter, 2001

SOURCE 56

Rather than finding fault with Hatshepsut's rule and attributing supposed failings to her female gender, contemporary scholars have admired the facility with which she fused past and current styles and iconography to create a new royal rhetoric. Hatshepsut's titulary, images, and building programs all reflect innovative solutions to the problem of situating a female ruler in the predominantly male institution of the kingship … Perhaps a modern reassessment of Hatshepsut as king should focus not on her personal reputation but on an appreciation of the dynamic presence that she brought to the throne and of the innovation and intellectual daring that characterized her reign.

C. Keller, 'Hatshepsut's reputation in history', in C. Roehrig (ed.), *Hatshepsut: From Queen to Pharaoh*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2005, p. 296

5.14 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 53–56

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What is Gardiner's assessment of Hatshepsut? What kind of bias is displayed here?
   - **b** What argument and/or evidence from Hatshepsut's reign would you use to counter Gardiner's view?
   - **c** What evidence from Hatshepsut's reign supports Redford's opinion that Hatshepsut was 'an imaginative planner possessed of a rather original taste'?
   - **d** What is Dorman's interpretation of Hatshepsut's accession and use her of male iconography as pharaoh?

e What does the title of Dorman's essay suggest about changing interpretations of Hatshepsut?

f On what issue of Hatshepsut's reign do Sources 55 and 56 agree?

g What is the 'new royal rhetoric' to which Keller refers in Source 56?

h Suggest examples of Hatshepsut's 'intellectual daring' that Keller might be referring to.

i Look at the dates when each of these sources was written. What conclusion can you draw from these and the sources themselves about changing modern interpretations of Hatshepsut? How would you account for these changes?

5.14 Check your learning

1 What does the fact that 'great royal wives' after Hatshepsut were not given the role of 'god's wife of Amun' suggest about this aspect of her legacy?

2 What comment would you make about the connection between the following:
   a the attempt to destroy Hatshepsut's memory
   b the omission of her name from later king lists
   c the copying of her divine birth scenes by later pharaohs on their own monuments?

3 Read the full online version of Dorman's essay 'Hatshepsut: Wicked stepmother or Joan of Arc'.

4 An interesting discussion of the disappearance of Hatshepsut from history and her rediscovery in modern times is Cathleen H. Keller, 'Hatshepsut's reputation in history', in C. Roehrig (ed.), *Hatshepsut: From Queen to Pharaoh*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yale University Press, 2005. (Also available online as a PDF)

5 Writing task: Choose one or more of the following and construct an extended response.
   a To what extent is Source 54 a fair assessment of the reign of Hatshepsut?
   b To what extent was Hatshepsut a traditional New Kingdom pharaoh?
   c Evaluate ancient and modern interpretations of Hatshepsut.

SOURCE 57 One of Hatshepsut's obelisks at Karnak Temple

Chapter conclusion

In considering the reign of Hatshepsut, a useful criterion by which to judge her success is to examine the extent to which she was able to negotiate the tension between continuity and change. In the conservative world of ancient Egypt, Hatshepsut introduced a major shift in the process of change – first, by being a female pharaoh in the male-dominated institution of kingship and, second, by initiating a number of significant changes to traditional practices and institutions. At the same time, she maintained and even strengthened the institutions of her predecessors, leaving her own mark on them. In noting her wish to leave a lasting impression of her reign, we, who in 'after years' now study Hatshepsut and 'see her monuments', are able to speak of 'what she has done'.

obook assess

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare students for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

6

Egypt – Akhenaten

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1 Who was Akhenaten and how did he rise to prominence?
2 What was the impact of Akhenaten's religious policy?
3 How was foreign policy conducted during the reign of Akhenaten?
4 What was the significance of the city of Akhetaten during the reign of Akhenaten?
5 What role did Nefertiti and the royal family play during his reign?
6 How do ancient and modern sources contribute to our understanding and assessment of Akhenaten?

FOCUS CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Continuity and change

The reign of Akhenaten is a complex mix of change and continuity. If, as often happens, only the change is focused on, the significant continuities can be overlooked. Certainly, Akhenaten's reign saw the introduction of changes that caused enormous upheaval within Egyptian society. However, the origins of the changes can be traced back at least to his father, Amenhotep III, and in some cases even further. The impact of these changes was a legacy to be dealt with by his immediate Eighteenth Dynasty successors as well as those in the following dynasty.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1 Explain Akhenaten's background and rise to prominence.
2 Assess the impact of Akhenaten's religious policy.
3 Discuss how foreign policy was conducted during the reign of Akhenaten.
4 Assess the significance of the city of Akhetaten.
5 Evaluate the role and contribution of Nefertiti and the royal family to Akhenaten's reign.
6 Analyse the contribution of ancient and modern sources to our understanding and assessment of Akhenaten.

SOURCE 1 A statue of Akhenaten in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo

6.1 Historical context

New Kingdom the period of ancient Egyptian history between the 16th century BC and the 11th century BC, comprising the Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties

Egypt is located to the west of the Red Sea and is bounded in the north by the Mediterranean Sea, in the east by the western desert and by Nubia to the south. In the Eighteenth Dynasty, at the beginning of the **New Kingdom**, Egypt's neighbours were Libya, Palestine, Syria, Babylonia, Naharin, land of the Mitanni, Hatti, land of the Hittites and Assyria. Egypt's most prominent geographical feature is the river Nile, which was responsible for the growth and development of the country. It rises in the mountains and lakes of central Africa, before flowing north through Egypt to the Nile Delta where it empties into the Mediterranean Sea. In ancient times, the Nile flooded annually, making navigation difficult and destroying settlements built too close to the river, but at the same time ensuring the fertility of the surrounding land and its production of the food to feed the population. The land adjacent to the river was *Kmt* (pronounced 'kemet'), meaning the 'black land', while the desert was *Dsrt* (pronounced 'deshret'), the 'red land'. Beside this division was the one separating the land into Upper and Lower Egypt, reflected in the pharaoh's titles, 'Lord of the Two Lands, King of Upper and Lower Egypt'.

The Nile not only provided water, but was also the source of food in the animals it sustained and the agriculture it made possible. From within its own borders Egypt had minerals and ores, especially gold and granite from Aswan, as well as precious stones for jewellery. Its neighbours were sources of timber, pottery, copper and luxury goods.

EGYPT, EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 2 Egypt and its neighbours in the Eighteenth Dynasty

An overview of the Eighteenth Dynasty

When Akhenaten assumed the throne of the Two Lands, Egypt was at its greatest period of achievement in both internal and foreign affairs, its 'golden age'. His father, Amenhotep III, had reaped the rewards of the foreign conquests made by his warrior pharaoh predecessors, pharaohs such as Thutmose III, who had carved out an empire. Egypt was now in direct control of Nubia to the Fourth Cataract, while her sphere of influence in Syria–Palestine was effectively managed by a combination of **garrison** troops and **vassals**, who were tied to Egypt by vows of loyalty. Diplomacy was now a major feature of Egyptian foreign policy. The pharaoh corresponded with his neighbouring rulers and vassals, and even married foreign princesses to cement the deals brokered between the 'royal brothers'.

Freed from the need for foreign conquest, and in command of the great wealth it had brought to Egypt, Amenhotep III could concentrate on an extensive building program, which stimulated both the economy and the artistic creativity of Egypt's artists and craftsmen.

garrison
troops stationed in a fortress or town to defend it

vassal
a person or country in a subordinate position to a superior power

Structures of Eighteenth Dynasty society

Eighteenth Dynasty Egyptian society was a highly complex hierarchy, dominated by the all-powerful pharaoh and his court. Beneath him were political, economic, religious and military structures that carried out the administration of Egypt. Each of these had its own internal hierarchy that conferred status on its members. Social status played an important role in the lives of ancient Egyptians, seen in the number of titles accumulated during their lives and displayed in their tombs. Although normally there was little social mobility, some men of exceptional ability achieved this. A notable example is Ay, a commoner who served as Akhenaten's personal secretary and eventually became pharaoh.

Women in Egyptian society

Women derived their social status from their male relatives. For all, the role of wife and mother was the traditional expectation. In general they played no role in the bureaucracy but higher-ranking women could serve as members of religious **cults**. The highest-ranking female in the land was the 'Great Royal Wife'. Tiye, Great Royal Wife of Amenhotep III, carried out important religious and diplomatic roles in her husband's reign. Her son's wife, Nefertiti, went on to play an exceptional role in Akhenaten's reign, perhaps even acting as his **co-regent**.

cult
a system of religious devotion associated with a particular god

co-regent
one partner in a system where rule is shared by two monarchs

Economic structures

Egypt's prosperity was largely dependent on the efficient production and distribution of grain as the staple of the economy. This explains the importance of the **vizier** and the high-ranking members of the civil administration, including overseers and treasurers. They were supported by a vast bureaucracy of officials such as scribes. **Pharaonic** building programs featuring the construction of temples, tombs and palaces employed a host of workers from all ranks of society. Here we find the architects, artists, stonemasons, carpenters, metalworkers and sculptors who produced the great masterpieces for which this period is renowned.

vizier
a chief minister and King's deputy in ancient Egypt

pharaonic
relating to the period when pharaohs ruled Egypt

Religious and military structures

Some of the most important people in the early New Kingdom belonged to the religious and military groups. The increasing prominence of the god Amun throughout this period guaranteed status and wealth to its high-ranking officials. The military, which was responsible for the creation and maintenance of the empire, also enjoyed the benefits of high social rank.

Ordinary people

At the bottom of the Egyptian social ladder was the great mass of the population: the unskilled workers, especially the farmers, on whose labour the rest of Egypt depended. Other unskilled workers included fishermen, herders and other food producers. Below them again was the army of servants and slaves who waited on their masters.

The role of Amun and his priesthood

tutelary
relating to protection

secular
unconnected to religious or spiritual matters

Amun, as the **tutelary** god of Thebes, rose to prominence when Thebes became the capital at the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty. The new pharaohs, having recently expelled the foreign Hyksos rulers associated their victory with Amun. His cult became the main beneficiary of the temples they constructed, adding to its prestige. Because of Amun's importance, his priesthood took a dominant role in both the religious and the **secular** affairs of state, actively promoted by pharaohs such as Hatshepsut and Thutmose III. The relationship between the king and the Amun cult was an interdependent one; the king promoted Amun as the state cult and appointed the chief priest, who in turn, supported the king.

Amenhotep III challenged this pre-eminence by appointing officials from Memphis instead of Thebes, and by elevating the cult of the god Aten to its highest level so far seen. But the pre-eminence of the Amun cult and its priesthood would be challenged in a much more forceful way in the reign of Akhenaten.

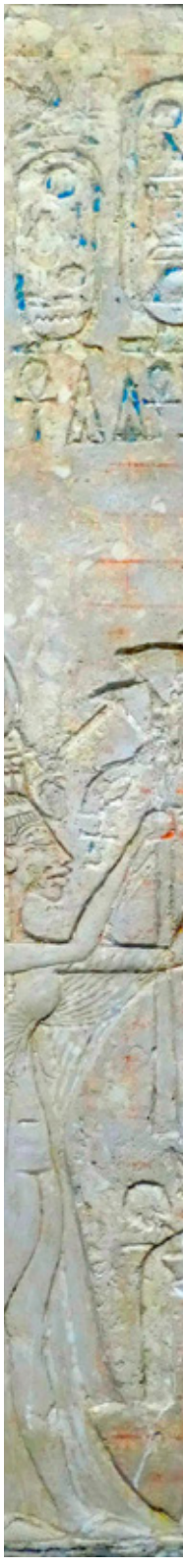
Roles of the king and relationship to the gods

ideology of kingship
a set of beliefs or principles relating to the state of being a king

booty
the spoils of war, including goods and people captured from the defeated enemy

In New Kingdom Egypt, religion and politics were closely linked. The king was both the political and the religious head of state with the god Amun as the chief god. According to the **ideology of kingship** in the New Kingdom, the pharaoh derived his right to rule from Amun. Following Hatshepsut's innovation of the concept of Divine Birth, the king was now the son of Amun. Akhenaten's father, Amenhotep III, copied Hatshepsut, claiming in reliefs on the walls of his temple at Luxor to be the divine child of Amun.

Another important feature of the king's relationship to Amun in this period is the 'warrior pharaoh' image, cultivated by most pharaohs. According to this, Amun directly inspired campaigns, assured victory and received the spoils of war. **Booty** was dedicated to Amun in his temples, especially at Karnak, which were built with the rich resources of conquest and decorated with scenes of the king's victories.



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SOURCE 3 Akhenaten and Nefertiti make offerings to the Aten

Religion in the Eighteenth Dynasty

In the New Kingdom, the sun god Re became linked to Amun. Re, as the creator god, was responsible for life, death and the afterlife, and all other gods came from him. However, the kings who had reunited Egypt and established the New Kingdom had come from Thebes, the sacred precinct of Amun. Both gods were joined in a process called **syncretism** to form the composite deity Amun-Re.

Hatshepsut's introduction of **oracles**, the *Opet* festival and the Beautiful Festival of the Valley, added new dimensions to Amun-Re's worship. He was now a god who made his will known and who left his temples to move among people in the great processions associated with the religious festivals. For the first time in this period, individuals were able to form a personal relationship with him, referred to as personal piety. Previously this was the **prerogative** of the king alone.

syncretism
the merging of two or more gods to make a single deity

oracle
a communication from a god indicating divine will

prerogative
a right claimed by a particular person or group of people

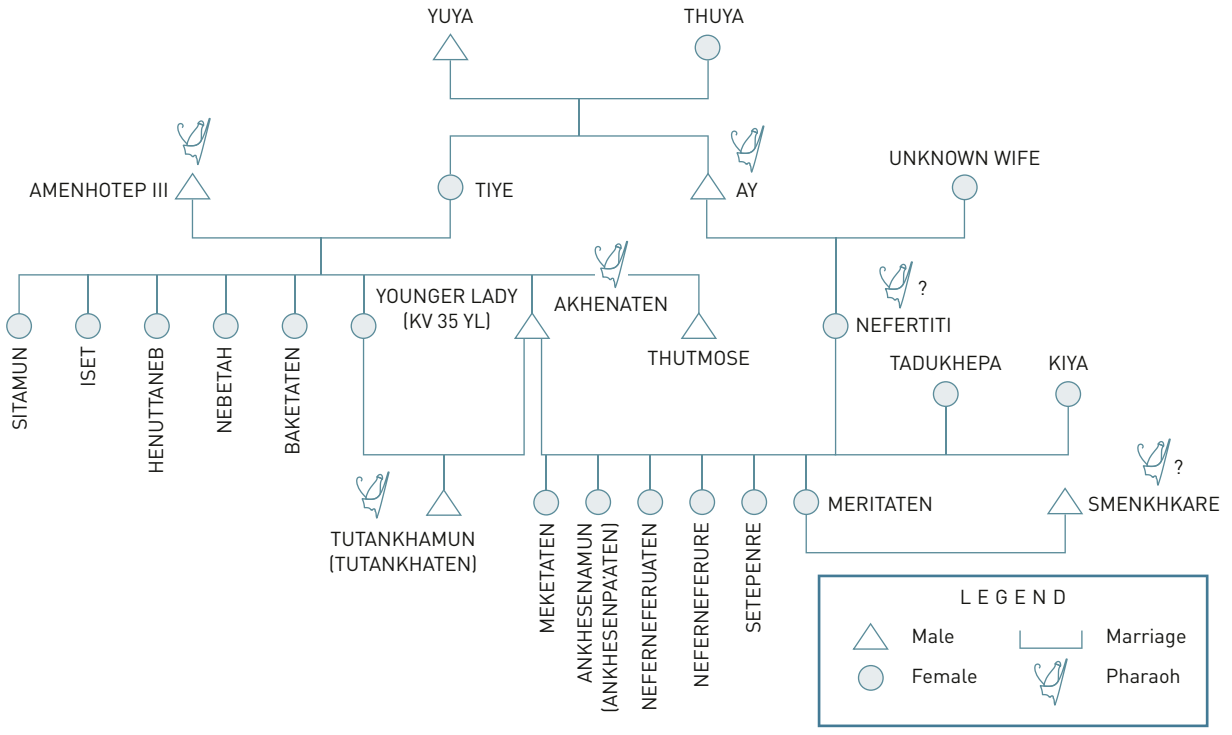
6.1 Check your learning

1 To develop your knowledge of the religious beliefs, cults and practices of the Eighteenth Dynasty, investigate the following:
- prominent cults – Horus, Re, Re-Horakhty, Isis, Hathor, Anubis
- the Theban triad – Amun, Mut and Khons
- afterlife beliefs, especially the role of Osiris, and the concepts of *ka* and *ba*
- funerary beliefs and customs, e.g. mummification, texts such as the *Amduat* (the Book of What Is in the Underworld), royal and non-royal tomb location, design and decoration
- the concept of ***ma'at***.

ma'at
the ancient Egyptian concept of truth, order, harmony and justice

6.2 Background and rise to prominence

Akhenaten, whose birth name was Amenhotep, was the second son of the pharaoh Amenhotep III and his wife, Tiye. He was descended directly from the Theban pharaohs who had expelled the Hyksos and established the Eighteenth Dynasty. His mother, Tiye, was the daughter of Yuya and Thuya, prominent courtiers from the upper Egyptian town of Akhmim. Yuya was 'master of the king's horse' and 'his majesty's lieutenant-commander of chariotry', while his wife held leading priestly roles in the cults of Amun, Min and Hathor. Akhenaten had an older brother, Thutmose, heir to the throne, who died when young. He also had eight sisters, five of them known to us by name: Sitamun, Iset, Henuttaneb, Nebetah and Baketaten, as well as the 'Younger Lady' from Tomb 35 in the Valley of the Kings.



SOURCE 4 The family tree of Akhenaten

Early years

Akhenaten was probably born around year 18 of his father's reign when the family lived at Memphis in the north of Egypt. When Amenhotep III, Tiye and their family moved from Memphis to the new palace at Malkata in West Thebes, Akhenaten accompanied them, according to evidence from a wine-jar seal bearing the inscription 'the estate of the true king's son Amenhotep', indicating that he lived there. Akhenaten probably began his married life with Nefertiti at Malkata, then moved to East Karnak as soon as the palace there was completed.

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The question of a co-regency

The issue of a **co-regency** between Amenhotep III and Akhenaten is important for understanding the responsibility for the significant changes that took place in the **Amarna period**. The focus on worship of the Aten (the disc of the sun) that took place in Akhenaten's reign had been introduced earlier in the Eighteenth Dynasty (see Source 22). Amenhotep III made significant contributions to the development of the cult.

SOURCE 5 The **cartouches** of Amenhotep III on the right with his throne name, Nebmaatre, and Akhenaten on the left showing the early form of his name, Amenhotep, from the tomb of the vizier Amenhotep Huy

Scholars are divided in their opinions as to whether Akhenaten came to the throne immediately after his father's death, or whether he shared a co-regency with him in the last years of his reign. Evidence for a co-regency initially came from the third pylon at Karnak, where a relief shows the figures of two kings. The larger figure is clearly Amenhotep III, while the second, which has been all but erased, has been identified as Amenhotep IV (who later took the name Akhenaten) in the role of the junior co-regent. As Akhenaten was not Amenhotep III's eldest son, a co-regency might have been used to strengthen his claim to the throne.

If there was a co-regency, its length is significant. If it was short, then Akhenaten could be seen as the chief initiator of the changes that came to be called the Amarna revolution. However, a long co-regency would suggest that both kings played important roles. Scholarly opinion has had the length of a possible co-regency between 2 and 12 years.

In 2014, new evidence came to light. It comes from the tomb of the vizier Amenhotep Huy, which has wall scenes and cartouches of both kings, which indicate a co-regency. The tomb dates to Amenhotep III's *Heb-Sed*, held in the 30th year of his reign. Considering that evidence gives Amenhotep III a reign of 38 years, this is seen as strong evidence of a co-regency of at least 8 years.

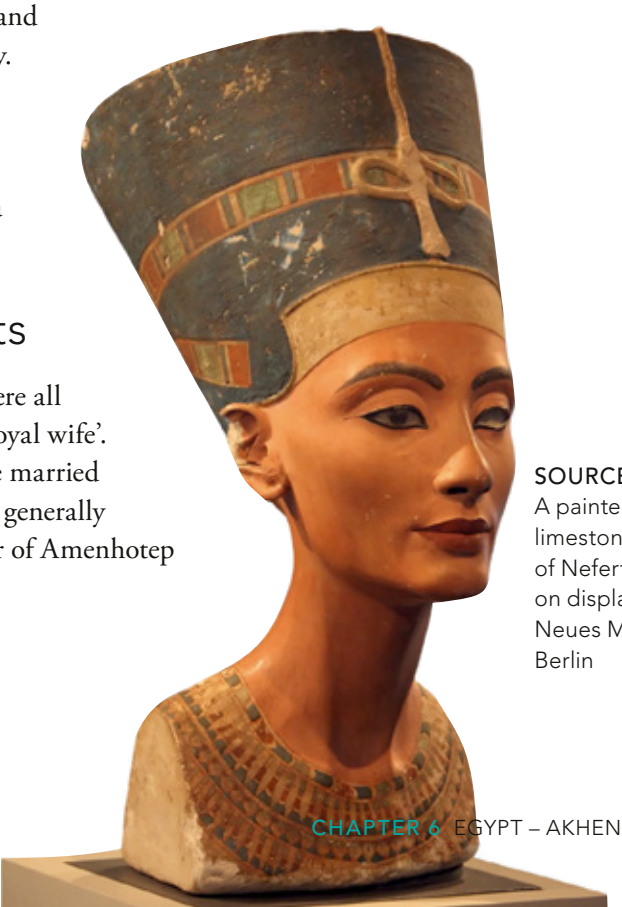
co-regency
a system where rule is shared by two monarchs; in Egypt usually between senior and junior partners

Amarna period
an era of the Eighteenth Dynasty of New Kingdom Egyptian history when the pharaoh Amenhotep IV changed his name to Akhenaten, adopted the Aten as the sole state god and moved the capital of Egypt to Akhetaten

cartouche
an oval shape containing the hieroglyphs representing the names of a pharaoh

Marriage: Queens and consorts

An Egyptian pharaoh often had several wives who were all 'queens consort'. The most important was his 'great royal wife'. Akhenaten's 'great royal wife' was Nefertiti, whom he married either before his accession or early in his reign. She is generally believed to have been the daughter of Ay, the brother of Amenhotep III's wife Tiye and an unknown woman.



SOURCE 6
A painted limestone bust of Nefertiti now on display at the Neues Museum in Berlin

SOURCE 7 A portrait of Kiya on her canopic jar from Tomb KV55

Ay was a high-ranking official from the court of Amenhotep III, holding the titles of 'father of the god' and 'king's own scribe'. Like his parents, Yuya and Thuya, he came from a prominent noble family from Akhmim.

A secondary wife or consort of Akhenaten was named Kiya, who bore the title 'greatly beloved wife'. She is known from a block found at the site of Hermopolis, located across the Nile from Akhetaten. Evidence from Hermopolis points to her being the mother of Akhenaten's daughters Meritaten Tashery (the younger) and Ankhesenpa'aten Tashery. Kiya's name has been identified on several items that associate her with the north palace, the great palace and the great temple at Akhetaten, but evidence of her role at these sites is lacking. Kiya appears to have died in about year 12 of Akhenaten's reign. Her images were subsequently renamed for Meritaten, Akhenaten's eldest daughter.

Another of Akhenaten's wives was Tadukhepa, a Mitannian princess from the land of Naharin. She had been sent to Egypt to marry Amenhotep III as part of a **diplomatic marriage** arrangement, but appears to have been transferred to Akhenaten on his father's death. Some scholars think she might have been the same person as Kiya, while others think that she might have been Nefertiti herself.

diplomatic marriage in ancient Egypt, marriage arranged between the Egyptian pharaoh and the daughter of a neighbouring king in order to cement political ties between their two countries

6.2 Check your learning

1. Discuss the following:
   - **a** Why might Amenhotep III have chosen a co-regency with his son in the latter part of his reign?
   - **b** What are the implications of a long co-regency for the changes implemented during Akhenaten's reign?
   - **c** What does the evidence from Amenhotep Huy's tomb suggest about the co-regency issue?
2. Read the online article 'New Evidence on the Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV Co-Regency'.
3. According to the family tree in Source 4, what was Nefertiti's family background?
4. What role did Kiya play in the royal family?
5. What is the significance of Tadukhepa's diplomatic marriage?

6.3 Akhenaten's early career

Akhenaten spent the early years of his career at Thebes. Evidence indicates that he began his reign in a traditional way with respect to his name, titles and images.

Akhenaten's titles

Every pharaoh had five great names or titles, one of which was his personal or birth name. When he came to the throne, he automatically assumed four other royal names, the most important being the throne name. It was common for a pharaoh to announce his agenda for the coming reign in his choice of titles. Akhenaten came to the throne as Neferkheprure-Waenra Amenhotep, known to us as Amenhotep IV. His personal name contained the only reference to the state god Amun. The remaining titles were unusual; instead of the warlike references to future military activity one would expect, they concentrated on the pharaoh's activities in Thebes, primarily his building at Karnak.

Year 5 marks a significant turning point in the reign. It is the last time that the pharaoh is addressed as Amenhotep IV, as the evidence of a letter from the high steward Ipy attests. From this time on, he was known as Akhenaten, the 'servant of the Aten' or 'he who acts effectively on behalf of the Aten'. His remaining titles heralded a totally new agenda.

titulary the standard titles or naming convention taken by Egyptian kings

SOURCE 8 The **titulary** of Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten

ROYAL TITLE	TITLES OF AMENHOTEP IV	MEANING	TITLES OF AKHENATEN	MEANING
Hr Horus	*Kanakht Quaishuty*	Strong bull with lofty double plume	*Meryaten*	The strong bull, beloved of the Aten
Nebty (Beloved) of the Two Ladies	*Wernesytem ipetsut*	Great of kingship in Karnak	*Wernesytem akhetaten*	Great of kingship in Akhetaten
Hr-nbw Horus of Gold	*Wetjeska huemiunu shema*	Who elevates the crowns in Thebes	*Wetjesre nenaten*	Who displays the name of the Aten
nswt bity He of the Sedge and the Bee – throne name	*Neferkheperure-waenre*	Beautiful are the Manifestations of Re The sole one of Re	*Neferkheperure-waenre*	Beautiful are the Manifestations of Re The sole one of Re
S3 R Son of Re – personal name	Amenhotep *Netjer heqa waset*	Amun is satisfied The god who rules in Waset (Thebes)	Akhenaten	Servant of the Aten

iconography
the study and interpretation of the visual images and symbols used in a work of art

nemes
a striped royal Egyptian headdress with lappets or hanging pieces on either side of the face, gathered at the back into a tail

crook and flail
the symbols of Egyptian kingship, originally representing the god Osiris

Changes to Akhenaten's royal image

A pharaoh's royal image in statues and reliefs was represented by conventional **iconography**. Traditionally, a pharaoh was shown wearing the royal ***nemes*** headdress, the *khat* or bag headdress, or pharaonic crowns all bearing the *uraeus*, a protective device in the form of a spitting cobra. To these were added a false beard, a short kilt and a bull's tail. Pharaoh often carried the **crook and flail**. As well, he was always depicted as a fine specimen of manhood, either seated on his throne or striding purposefully forward. Pharaoh was also commonly shown as a sphinx, a military symbol reflecting his role as both conqueror and protector of Egypt: the 'warrior pharaoh'.

Images of Amenhotep IV

The earliest representations of the new king come from a temple dedicated to Re-Horakhty at the temple of Amun at Karnak. A sandstone block later reused by Horemheb in the tenth pylon shows Amenhotep IV in the traditional style of the early New Kingdom, worshipping the falcon-headed Re-Horakhty, also traditionally depicted wearing the Aten or sun-disc on his head.

SOURCE 9 The unfinished 'smiting the enemy' relief of Akhenaten at Karnak was intended to be in the same style as this depiction of the warrior pharaoh Thutmose III smiting the enemy with his mace.

Also from Karnak comes an early, unfinished relief that shows the new pharaoh in the 'smiting the enemy' pose. This feature of a pharaoh's iconography dates from well before the **Old Kingdom** and depicts the pharaoh preparing to dash out the brains of his enemies with a stone-headed mace. These two pieces of evidence indicate that at the beginning of his reign, Akhenaten was following the standard mode of pharaonic representation.

A change in royal iconography

The decoration of the monuments Amenhotep IV built at East Karnak in the early years of his reign featured a dramatic change in royal iconography. Reliefs and statues from these buildings show that the king now chose to be depicted quite differently from his representation at the very beginning of the reign. Formerly depicted in the traditional Eighteenth Dynasty manner, now the king's long thin head, supported on an elongated neck, featured a face with almond eyes and fleshy lips. His body had swelling breasts, broad hips, plump thighs and long spindly legs. Changes in the depiction of the king were accompanied by similar changes to the iconography of his wife and daughters.

Old Kingdom
the period of ancient Egyptian history that occurred in the 3rd millenium BC, comprising the Third to the Sixth Dynasties

It seems that these changes must have occurred quite suddenly as seen in the tomb of the vizier Ramose at Thebes. Two juxtaposed scenes demonstrate the dramatic change: one shows Amenhotep IV as a seated pharaoh represented in the traditional style, while the other shows the pharaoh and his queen, Nefertiti, standing at a **window of appearance**, giving gifts to the tomb owner, beneath the rays of the Aten, shown in its new iconography (see Sources 11 and 12). Akhenaten's iconography was to undergo further changes during his reign.

Explanations for changes in Akhenaten's images

Scholars have offered a variety of explanations for changes in Akhenaten's images:

- Akhenaten was really a woman.
- Akhenaten suffered from a physical disorder – Fröhlich's syndrome and Marfan syndrome have been suggested.
- Artistic and religious innovation.

It is evident from the many reliefs of the period that the unusual portrayal of the human form was extended to Akhenaten's family and his followers at court. The **Amarna physiognomy** was most exaggerated in the early years of the reign, while reliefs from the middle years show a considerable softening of the style, and those of the later years a return to a more traditional depiction (see later discussion in 6.9 Artistic innovations and development).

SOURCE 10 This colossal head of Akhenaten shows the exaggerated features that characterised the art of the early Amarna period.

Akhenaten's *Heb-Sed*

In year 2 or year 3 of his reign, Akhenaten celebrated a *Heb-Sed*, or jubilee, a festival that focused on the renewal of the king. Reliefs of the *Heb-Sed*, found on the walls of the *Gem pa-aten* at east Karnak, show Akhenaten wearing the traditional festival robe and receiving the blessings of the Aten's rays.

Normally celebrated by pharaohs in around year 30 of their reigns, Akhenaten's *Heb-Sed* was different, not only because the king was still in the very early years of his reign but because this was a joint jubilee between the king and the god. The celebration shows that the Aten was in partnership with Akhenaten.

window of appearance an architectural feature in a temple or palace where a pharaoh, sometimes accompanied by his family, appears to the population

Amarna physiognomy the distinctive facial features of Akhenaten and his family as represented in reliefs and sculptures of the time

SOURCE 11 In this scene from the tomb of the vizier Ramose, Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten is shown as a seated pharaoh represented in the traditional, early New Kingdom style.

SOURCE 12 This relief from Ramose's tomb shows Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten and his queen, Nefertiti, standing at a window of appearance, giving gifts to the tomb owner.

Early building program at East Karnak

Early in his reign, while still known as Amenhotep IV, Akhenaten initiated an ambitious new building program. He gave orders for the quarrying of stone for four new buildings dedicated to the Aten. These were to be erected at East Karnak, outside the **temenos** wall of Karnak Temple, the traditional precinct of the god Amun. The four temples included the following:

- *Gem pa-aten* ('the Aten is found') – the largest and probably the first to be erected, it was oriented to the east and consisted of a roofed colonnade surrounded by a rectangular court about 130 metres by 200 metres in size. It was supported by square piers in front of which were colossal statues of the king holding the crook and flail (see Source 14). The rear wall of the colonnade was decorated with scenes of Akhenaten's *Heb-Sed*. The complex included a palace featuring a ceremonial window of appearance, at which the king received visitors or distributed rewards to his followers.
- *Rewed-menu* ('enduring in monuments') – the function of this building is unknown. Its decoration featured the king making offerings in roofless kiosks. Of interest is the frequent depiction of armed troops and police running beside Akhenaten's chariot or bowing low in the presence of pharaoh.
- *Teni-menu* ('exalted in monuments') – there are no inscriptions that indicate the function of this building, but its wall decoration shows the royal domestic apartments and activities that took place there, for example baking bread and storing wine.
- *Hewet-benben* ('mansion of the ***benben*** stone') – this unusual building was possibly built with an obelisk or some other depiction of the *benben*, the focus of

temenos
an area within the enclosure wall of a temple

Tefnut
Egyptian goddess of moisture, humidity and water; one of the nine gods of the Heliopolitan Ennead who played an important role in the story of creation

benben
a sacred pyramid-shaped stone representing the solar cult of ancient Egypt; it originated in Heliopolis, the precinct of the sun god Re

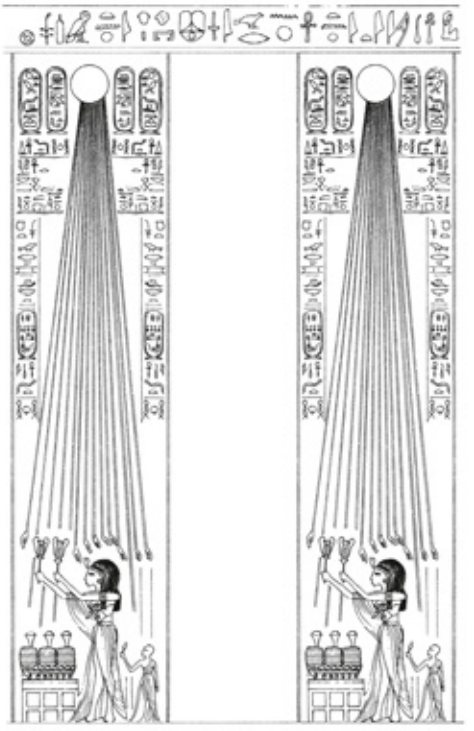
SOURCE 13 This colossal statue discovered at East Karnak was thought to be of Akhenaten. Today it is generally agreed to depict Nefertiti as the goddess **Tefnut**.

SOURCE 14 One of several painted limestone colossi of Akhenaten excavated from the site of the *Gem pa-aten* temple at East Karnak

the sun cult at Heliopolis. It is peculiar in that it consisted of a roofless colonnade of square piers decorated with scenes of Nefertiti, attended by daughters Meritaten and Meketaten making offerings to the Aten. The fact that she is not accompanied by Akhenaten indicates that the temple was reserved for Nefertiti's personal worship of the Aten.

These Aten temples signified a departure from traditional architecture in that they were open to the sky and the sun, in contrast to the roofed, dark chambers of the Amun sanctuaries. Further innovations in building and decoration techniques allowed the pharaoh's new monuments to be constructed more quickly and effectively:

- the use of ***talatat*** blocks – these were blocks of stone approximately 0.5 metres in length, small enough to be carried by one man; they were similar to the blocks used in the Third Dynasty by King Djoser in his step pyramid complex; sandstone was used extensively because it could be easily cut
- sunk-relief decoration – designs were incised deeply into the stone instead of raised slightly according to the classical tradition followed by earlier pharaohs.



SOURCE 15 A scene from a colonnade in the *Hewet-benben* at East Karnak, in which Nefertiti acts as the chief celebrant together with her daughter Meritaten, who shakes the sistrum

6.3 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** Suggest reasons why Akhenaten's original titles avoided references to the pharaoh's traditional military role.
   - **b** Why would Akhenaten have emphasised his building activities at Karnak in his original titles?
   - **c** In what ways do Akhenaten's new titles reveal his agenda for the remainder of his reign?
   - **d** What might have been the response of the Amun priesthood to Akhenaten's building program at east Karnak?

2 Find an image of the sandstone block from Karnak referred to above. Identify:
   - **a** Amenhotep IV shown on the right depicted in the traditional style
   - **b** the sun god, Re-Horakhty, on the left
   - **c** the sun disc in an early form of the later Aten iconography, with affixed *ankh* signs.

3 Find out more about the theories explaining Akhenaten's appearance in the early part of his reign. Which theory do you think is most likely? Why? You could start with Chapter 5, 'Pathology', in Lise Manniche's *The Akhenaten Colossi of Karnak*. Search online for 'The Akhenaten Colossi of Karnak – Education for Life Academy'.

4 Research online the work done by the Akhenaten Temple Project on the *talatat* of Akhenaten's Theban temples.

5 How are change and continuity apparent in the early years of Akhenaten's reign? Consider his titles, image, *Heb-Sed* and building program.

talatat
small sandstone blocks averaging 55 x 25 x 25 cm, used to construct buildings during Akhenaten's reign; usually decorated with scenes representing religious and daily life

6.4 Transfer of the capital to Akhetaten

In year 5, Akhenaten took the first step to establish a new capital. At a place about halfway between Thebes and Memphis, the existing religious and administrative capitals, he marked out a site between the river and the encircling mountains. He named this 'Akhetaten', meaning the 'horizon of the Aten'. There had been no previous settlement at the site, nor had it been dedicated to any god. Unlike other sites in ancient Egypt, Akhetaten was built not in the fertile valley but on a barren plain, with the agricultural land lying on the western bank of the Nile.

The relocation of the capital to Akhetaten signalled Akhenaten's total focus on the cult of the Aten, to the exclusion of the cults of all other gods. The king reduced the power of the priesthoods and officials of the traditional cults, diverting their estates and income to his own purposes. Akhenaten needed these revenues to build his new city and to provide the lavish offerings for the new temples to Aten. Evidence suggests that a new class of courtiers was created to administer this property. As well, the workers from the workers' village at Deir el-Medina were transferred to Akhetaten to construct the new city.

stela (*pl.* stelae) an upright slab of stone or sometimes wood, bearing inscriptions, reliefs or paintings; often placed in temples and tombs

vignette a small illustration accompanying a text

The king established the limits of the new city by ordering the carving of 14 boundary **stelae** into the rocks surrounding the site. Each stela was elaborately carved with the king's formal announcement of the founding of the city and a beautiful **vignette** showing the royal family worshipping the sun god. Source 16 reproduces the text of one of the boundary stelae.

SOURCE 17 Boundary stela A from Akhetaten, showing the pharaoh and his family offering to the Aten

SOURCE 16

His Majesty [said]; 'Bring me the royal courtiers, the great ones of the palace, the army officers, [and the] entire [entourage?]: and they were quickly ushered into him. Then they were on their bellies before him, kissing the earth in his presence. Said His Majesty to them: 'See [Akhetaten], which the Sun-disc wishes to have built [for] himself as a memorial in [his] own name. Now it was the Sun-disc, my father that [made the proposal] concerning Akhetaten; no official proposed it, nor [any man in] the entire land … And my father has conversed with me: It shall belong to me as a horizon of the Disc for ever and ever!'

D. B. Redford, *Akhenaten, the Heretic King*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1984, p. 144

Motives for the move

Akhenaten's motives for abandoning Thebes are unclear and modern scholars are divided in their interpretations. Was it the act of a religious madman, prepared to go to any lengths to promote his god of choice? Or was it the act of a pharaoh who was determined to keep political power firmly in his own hands in the face of threats from an increasingly powerful Amun priesthood?

In Nicholas Reeves' opinion, Akhenaten's very life might have been threatened. He refers to a section of text on the boundary stelae that appears to record Akhenaten's outrage at a terrible event that had happened.

SOURCE 18

Had there, in short, been an attempt on the life of the royal person? What could have been worse than regicide [the act of killing a king]? If Akhenaten had narrowly escaped assassination– and his subsequent persecution of the Theban god does indeed suggest a grudge of considerable magnitude – then he was now moving cleverly and decisively to outflank the opposition.

N. Reeves, *Akhenaten: Egypt's False Prophet*, Thames & Hudson, London, 2001, p. 111

SOURCE 19

Whether there were political as well as religious motives for this drastic decision remains unknown, although the king appears to hint at opposition to his religious reforms in the decree inscribed on a series of 'boundary stelae' defining the territory of Akhetaten. Opposition there must have been, especially among the dispossessed priestly establishment of the great temples of Amun at Thebes and probably elsewhere as well. Even before the move to Akhetaten some of the revenues of the established cults had been diverted to the cult of the Aten, and the situation must have deteriorated even further when the king abandoned the city of Amun for his new capital.

J. van Dijk, 'The Amarna Period and the Later New Kingdom', in I. Shaw, *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000, p. 277

6.4 Understanding and using the sources

Source 16

1 Who is given credit for the idea of building Akhetaten?
2 What is to be the purpose of the city?

Source 18

3 How likely is Reeves' suggestion of an assassination attempt against Akhenaten?

Source 19

4 What justification does Van Dijk provide for opposition to Akhenaten in Thebes?

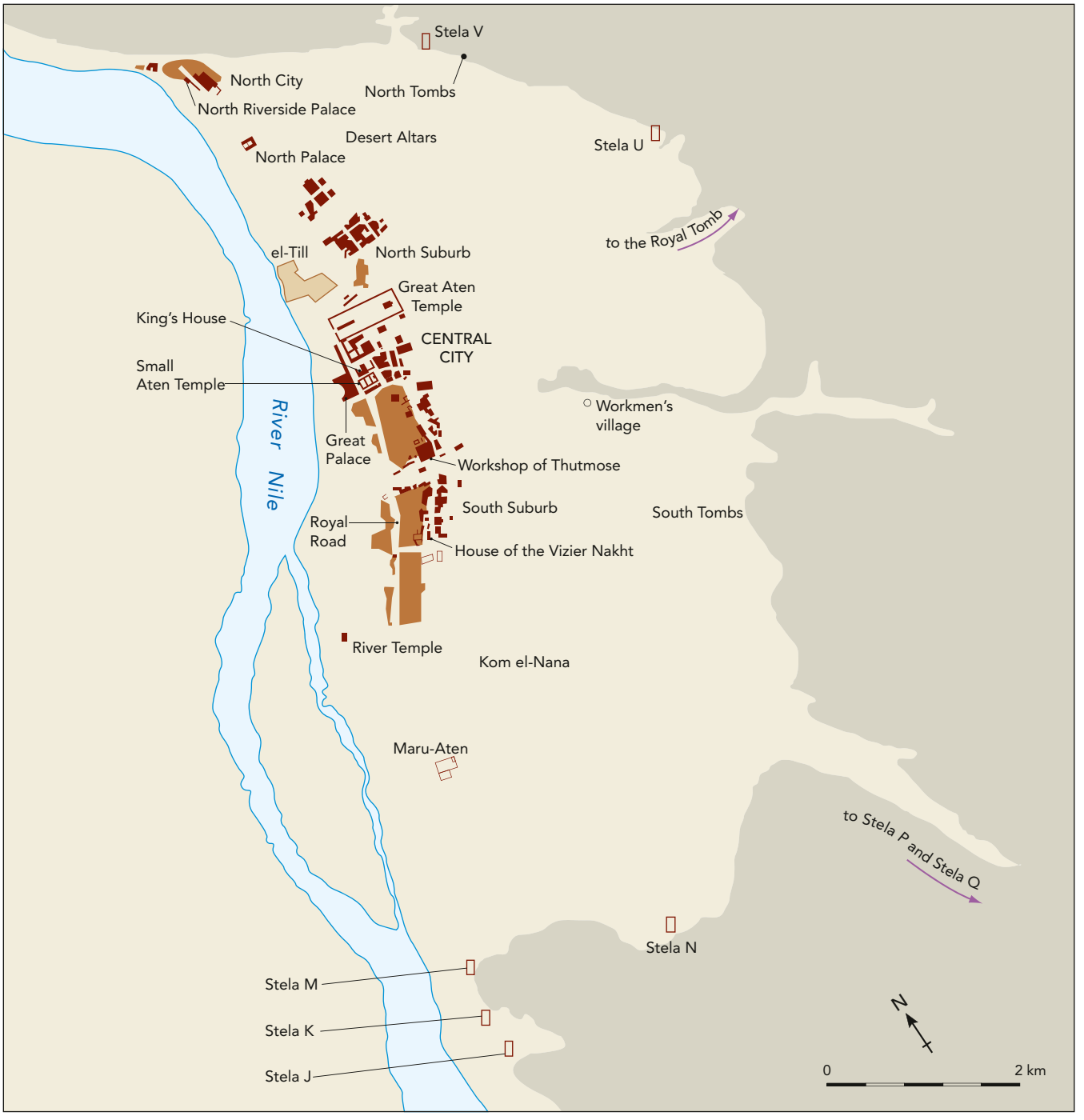
6.4 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   a Who had the most to gain and who had the most to lose when Akhenaten moved the capital to Akhetaten?
   b Why might Akhenaten have chosen a site that had no associations with other gods?
   c What is your opinion of Akhenaten's motives?
2 Use the information in this section to write a response to the following question: Assess the significance of the transfer of the capital to Akhetaten.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the main aspects of significance of the transfer
   - use these to structure your response
   - make judgements about the significance of these aspects
   - use specific evidence to support your explanation
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

6.5 Akhetaten: Function and layout

Akhetaten, founded in year 5 and built over the following 3 years, became the new religious and political capital for the remainder of Akhenaten's reign. By year 9 the full court had taken up residence there, and the city's buildings were completed. Many of these were hastily and shoddily constructed of plastered mudbrick. Akhetaten contained palaces, administrative



SOURCE 20 A plan of Akhetaten showing the main residential, administrative and religious areas, as well as the locations of the royal and private tombs

headquarters, houses of courtiers and artisans, a workers' village, military barracks, archives office and temples. The city was supplied with food grown on the west bank of the river. In the cliffs to the east of the city, rock-cut tombs were prepared for the royal family and the nobility. It has been estimated that at its height, Akhetaten housed a population of 20 000 to 50 000 people.

The city itself consisted of a number of sections occupying a long, narrow stretch of land bordering the Nile. The Royal Road ran parallel to the river, joining the North City to the Central City.

SOURCE 21 A 3D model of Akhetaten constructed using a spatial high-resolution satellite imagery system

North Akhetaten

The North City, located on the northern periphery of the site, comprised an administrative complex and storage magazines. Some of the city's upper class residents had villas here, bordering the Royal Road. The 'North Riverside Palace', which modern excavator Barry Kemp considered the main residence of the royal family, was located here.

The North Palace is known for its beautiful wall paintings of life in the marshes. It is now known to have been the residence of Queen Kiya. Her names were subsequently changed when Meritaten occupied the palace.

The North Suburb was a residential area apparently designed mostly for lower class citizens.

Central Akhetaten

The Central City was the administrative centre of Akhetaten. Planning is evident in the grid layout, which featured blocks separated by straight streets. The Royal Road, which had followed the Nile from the north, terminated at the Great Palace, 'the house of rejoicing in Akhetaten'. This building featured painted pavements, courtyards and colossal statues of Akhenaten. A bridge across the Royal Road connected the Great Palace to the King's House, which contained a palace, courtyard and magazines. The window of appearance, seen in many reliefs from the officials' tombs, was probably located here. Surrounding the King's House were the police barracks, administrative offices, archives and a dormitory area.

Great Aten Temple

In the north of the central city was the Great Aten Temple, the 'house of the Aten in Akhetaten'. This imposing building occupied a rectangular enclosure of 800 metres by 300 metres. The vast unroofed courtyard surrounding the main buildings, the *Per-Hai* and the *Gem-Aten*, contained hundreds of offering tables. Scenes of the rituals conducted within the temple are shown in some of the officials' tombs. They included offerings designated as from Upper and Lower Egypt. To the south of the Great Aten Temple was the Small Aten Temple, which scholars consider to have been equivalent to a royal mortuary temple.

South Akhetaten

The South Suburb was a residential region that contained the homes of more upper-class citizens such as the vizier Nakht and the general Ramose. The workshop of the sculptor Thutmose, who produced many well-known royal portraits, was located in this district.

Kom el-Nana, a sun-temple, was probably built on this site. Recent excavation has revealed the remains of a combined bakery and brewery. A series of buildings in the south of the site included a pylon, a columned building opening onto sunken gardens, a central platform featuring a wide columned hall and a small shrine in the south.

Further south was the precinct of *Maru-aten*, two adjacent walled enclosures containing pavilions and small shrines, called 'sunshades', all surrounded by gardens and ponds. The 'sunshades' were dedicated to various royal women. The remains of beautiful painted pavements have been found. Kiya's monuments here were altered in favour of Meritaten.

The Workers' Village comprised 64 houses surrounded by an enclosure wall. Outside the wall was a chapel for the workers' use. Occupation of the village seems to have continued into the reign of Tutankhamun, Akhentaten's successor.

Akhetaten was abandoned about 20 years after the end of Akhenaten's reign. Later pharaohs, especially the Ramesside kings, systematically destroyed the site, removing building blocks for reuse at other sites such as Hermopolis, on the opposite bank of the Nile.

Symbolism of Akhetaten

Michael Mallinson, an architect with the Egypt Exploration Society, has studied Akhenaten's building program at Akhetaten. He has developed an interesting theory that the major buildings and boundary stelae were located in a symbolic pattern that in effect made them all component parts of a huge 'temple'. Further to this, he argues that Akhenaten's tomb in the royal **wadi**, because of its connection with the other structures within the city, was the *akhet* or horizon; that is, the daily birthplace of the sun. If his theory is correct, the tomb became simultaneously Akhenaten's burial place, the place of the sun's rebirth and the location of the resurrection of every pharaoh of Egypt.

wadi
a dry river bed

6.5 Check your learning

1. Discuss the following:
   - **a** What evidence is there for the royal family, courtiers and ordinary Egyptians at Akhetaten?
   - **b** What is significant about the length of occupation of the workers' village?
   - **c** Why is Mallinson's theory about Akhenaten's tomb significant?
2. Visit the Amarna Project website for information on the Akhetaten site.
3. There are several websites that have reconstructions of Akhetaten. Visit these and assess them for accuracy against the descriptions given in this chapter.
4. Research the details of Michael Mallinson's intriguing theory by reading his article 'The sacred landscape', in R. Freed, Y. Markowitz & S. D'Auria (eds), *Pharaohs of the Sun*, pp. 72–9. It is also discussed in N. Reeves, *Akhenaten: Egypt's False Prophet*, pp. 116–18.
5. Visit the Amarna Virtual Museum to see 3D models of artefacts from Akhetaten.

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6.6 Akhenaten's religious policy

The changes Akhenaten made to religion in Egypt were his most dramatic reforms and centred on the worship of the Aten or the sun-disc. Aten had been known as an aspect of the great sun god Re since **Middle Kingdom** times. The Twelfth Dynasty king Amenemhat I, in the *Story of Sinuhe*, is referred to as dying and flying to heaven to unite with Aten. Source 22 summarises references to Aten before Akhenaten's reforms.

Middle Kingdom the period of significant development in ancient Egyptian history comprising the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties

electrum a naturally occurring alloy of gold and silver with some trace elements (e.g. copper)

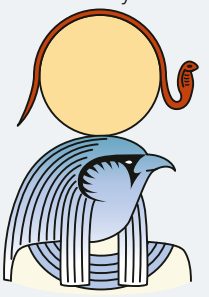
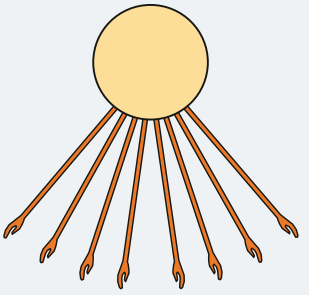
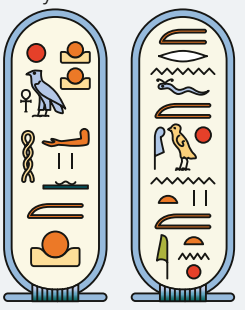
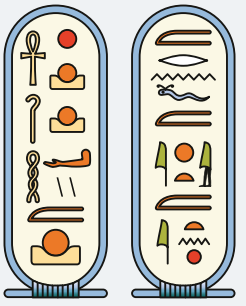
SOURCE 22 The early history of Aten

PHAROAH	REFERENCES TO ATEN
Thutmose I	One of his titles was 'Horus-Re, mighty bull with sharp horns, who comes from the Aten'.
Hatshepsut	An inscription on one of the obelisks she erected in Karnak Temple reads: 'the making for [Amun] of two great obelisks of hard granite of the south, their upper side being of **electrum**. Seen on both sides of the river, their rays flood the Two Lands when Aten dawns between them, as he rises in heaven's lightland'. Excavation at Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri has revealed a sun altar on the topmost level dedicated to the Aten.
Rekhmire	As vizier of Thutmose III, he emphasises his close relationship with the king: 'I saw his person in his true form, Re, the Lord of Heaven, the Lord of Upper and Lower Egypt when he rises, the Aten when he reveals himself'.
Amenhotep II	During his reign the symbol of the sun-disc appears for the first time with a pair of enveloping arms. Amenhotep II was also depicted on an ivory wrist ornament, wearing the sun-disc on his head.
Thutmose IV	On a large scarab dating to his reign, the Aten is mentioned as a god of warfare who makes the pharaoh mighty in his domains and brings all his subjects under the dominion of the sun-disc. Foreigners are spoken of as 'subjects to the rule of Aten forever'.
Amenhotep III	There are numerous references to the Aten dating from his reign: one of the state barges was called 'Radiance of the Aten'; one of his daughters, Baketaten, had her name compounded with Aten's. Recent study of the iconography of his reign suggests that the king elevated the Aten to the status of a major cult. It seems that in year 30 of his reign, when he celebrated his first *Sed* festival, he was deified and ruled as a personification of the Aten. An inscription on a statue refers to him to as 'the dazzling Aten'.

Religious reform

From the earliest years of his reign, Akhenaten instituted reforms in religious policy. The architecture and decoration of his buildings at East Karnak indicated that the Aten was now the supreme god in Egypt. Source 23 shows the main developments in Akhenaten's religious ideas in the ensuing years.

SOURCE 23 Religious developments of Akhenaten's reign

PERIOD	FEATURES	ICONOGRAPHY
Years 1–4	• Other gods shown on king's reliefs • Aten is depicted as falcon-headed Re-Horakhty, but referred to as 'living sun-disc' • First representation of Aten as disc of sun with downward-extending arms • Aten's name first appears in double cartouche to indicate Aten's kingship and the spiritual co-regency of Akhenaten and Aten: 'Re-Horakhty rejoicing in the Horizon' (cartouche at left); 'Within his name Shu, who is Aten' (cartouche at right)	Re-Horakhty  Aten disc with hands  Early form of Aten cartouches 
Years 5–8	• Fewer gods depicted, e.g. Horus, Shu, Hathor • Plural form 'gods' no longer used in religious inscriptions	
Years 9–12	• Persecution of Amun – Amun's name chiselled off the monuments • Other gods' names randomly removed • New version of Aten's name: 'Living disc, Ruler of the Two Horizons, rejoicing in the Horizon' (cartouche at left); 'Within his name who has come as the Aten' (cartouche at right) • *Ma'at* now spelt phonetically without the female hieroglyph • Atenism completely replaces Amun religion as the state cult	Hieroglyph of Amun struck out Cartouches showing later version of Aten's name 

The nature of the Aten

The beliefs expressed in the cult of the Aten are not described completely in any one ancient source, but various hymns, as well as scenes and inscriptions found in five Amarna tombs at Akhetaten, have enabled Egyptologists to establish the main principles of Atenism.

The *Hymn to the Aten*

The most famous single text is the *Hymn to the Aten*, the longest version of which is found in the tomb of the courtier Ay. It is an eloquent statement of the doctrine of the one god. Most Amarna scholars see Akhenaten's monotheism (the exclusive worship of a single deity) as the most radical of his reforms.

SOURCE 24

EXTRACTS FROM *HYMN TO THE ATEN*

Splendid you rise in heaven's lightland,
O living Aten, creator of life!
When you have dawned in eastern lightland,
You fill every land with your beauty.
You are beauteous, great, radiant,
High over every land;
Your rays embrace the lands,
To the limit of all that you made …

How many are your deeds,
Though hidden from sight,
O Sole God beside whom there is none!
You made the earth as you wished, you alone …

When you set in western lightland,
Earth is in darkness as if in death;
One sleeps in chambers, heads covered,
One eye does not see another.
Were they robbed of their goods,
That are under their heads,
People would not remark it.
Every lion comes from its den,
All the serpents bite;
Darkness hovers, earth is silent,
As their maker rests in lightland …

You are in my heart,
There is no other who knows you,
Only your son, Neferkheprure, Sole-one-of Re,
Whom you have taught your ways and your might …

When you rise you stir [everyone] for the King,
Every leg is on the move since you founded the earth.
You rouse them for your son who came from your body,
The King who lives by *ma'at*, the Lord of the Two Lands,
Neferkheprure, Sole-one-of-Re,
The Son of Re who lives by *ma'at*, the Lord of crowns,
Akhenaten, great in his lifetime;
(And) the great Queen whom he loves, the Lady of the Two Lands,
Nefernefruaten Nefertiti, living forever …

M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Vol. II: The New Kingdom*,
University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1976, pp. 96–9

SOURCE 25 Akhenaten and Nefertiti offering beneath the rays of the Aten

Comparing hymns

The *Hymn to the Aten* bears many similarities to earlier hymns of the New Kingdom, especially those dedicated to the god Amun. These earlier hymns emphasised the role of Amun as a sun and creator god who manifested himself in many different forms and under different names. Egyptologist Jan Assmann sees these hymns as evidence of what he calls a 'new solar theology', or new way of thinking about the sun religion. He thinks that the Amarna religion came from this movement, but was a non-mainstream version.

Source 26 is an extract from the second *Hymn to the Sun-God* by the twin brothers Suti and Hor, architects, who lived in the reign of Amenhotep III. The hymns were inscribed on a stela, together with a scene depicting Suti and Hor worshipping the standing figures of Anubis and Osiris. The first part of the hymn addresses Amun as Re-Horakhty, while the second part addresses Amun as the Aten who is now a god rather than the physical sun-disc.

SOURCE 26

EXTRACT FROM *HYMN TO THE SUN-GOD*

Hail to you, Aten of daytime,
Creator of all, who makes them live!
Great falcon, brightly plumed,
Beetle who raised himself.
Self-creator, uncreated,
Eldest Horus within **Nut**, …
Khnum and Amun of mankind …
Khepri of distinguished birth,
Who raises his beauty in the body of Nut,
Who lights the Two Lands with his disc.

Lichtheim, 1976, p. 87

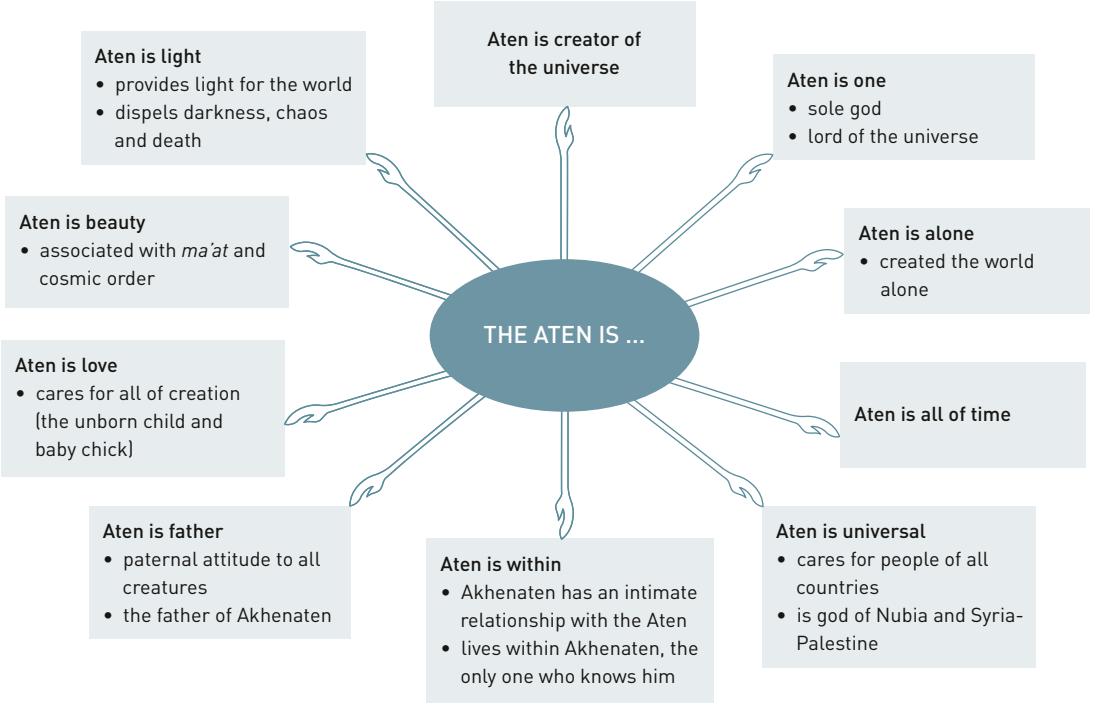
Nut
Egyptian goddess of the sky, one of the nine gods of the Heliopolitan Ennead who played an important role in the story of creation

Khnum
an ancient Egyptian god of fertility, associated with water and with procreation

Khepri
a solar deity who took the form of a scarab beetle who pushed the rising sun over the horizon at dawn; also associated with creation and rebirth

What is the Aten?

The diagram in Source 27 sums up the concepts of the Aten gained from the available sources.



SOURCE 27 What is the Aten?

Akhenaten: Religious revolutionary or reactionary?

Source 28 offers one assessment of Akhenaten's religious innovations.

SOURCE 28

In spite of these novel features of the Amarna reform, Akhenaten's policy was basically a reaction against developments that had taken place in the theology of kingship and in personal religion. The new dogma [that is, pre-Amarna], according to which the king was the image, the representative, of god, was countered [opposed] by his proclaiming himself son and co-regent of the Aten. A halt was put to the growth of a form of personal religion which by-passed the king: now only through the king could the ordinary person approach the deity. Akhenaten, hailed as the great revolutionary, seems in some respects to have been an arch reactionary [someone radically opposed to political or social progress or reform].

B. Ockinga, 'Amarna kingship', in G. Callender (ed.), *Aegyptiaca: Essays on Egyptian Themes*, Macquarie Ancient History Association, Sydney, 1996, p. 90

6.6 Understanding and using the sources

Source 24

1 Find lines that identify Aten as a creator god and as a sole god.
2 What does the hymn say about the difference between day and night?
3 What does the hymn reveal of the relationship between Aten and Akhenaten?
4 What is the significance of Akhenaten being the 'Sole one of Re'?
5 What do the closing lines of the hymn indicate about the role played by Akhenaten and Nefertiti in the Aten religion?

Source 26

6 What similarities and differences are there between Source 24 and Source 26?
7 Explain the references to Horus, Nut, Khnum, Khepri and Amun.
8 Explain 'Self-creator, uncreated'. What does this reveal about Amun/Aten?

Source 28

9 Explain in your own words the difference between 'revolutionary' and 'reactionary'.
10 According to Ockinga, what aspect of Akhenaten's reforms might be considered reactionary rather than revolutionary?
11 Why was Akhenaten changing the traditional ideology of kingship?
12 What were the revolutionary aspects of Akhenaten's religious changes?

6.6 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   a What evidence shows that Akhenaten continued to worship traditional gods at the beginning of his reign?
   b Was Atenism introduced gradually or suddenly? Support your answer with reference to Source 23. Why did Akhenaten introduce Atenism in this way?
   c How do you account for the new version of Aten's name that appeared after year 8?
   d Why did Akhenaten refer to Amenhotep III only as Nebma'atre after year 8?
   e Suggest reasons for Akhenaten's persecution of Amun between years 9 and 12. What would have been the impact of this persecution on various groups within Egypt?

6.7 Nature, importance and impact of Aten worship

Aten worship was responsible for many important changes in New Kingdom Egyptian religious beliefs and practices.

Methods of worship

One of the most important of Akhenaten's changes was the concept that the king was the only person through whom prayers and petitions to the deity could be delivered. Since king and god were now virtually interchangeable, this meant, in effect, that Akhenaten and his family became the sole focus of worship.

In the shrines of private houses, in tombs and temples, the statues and images of the old gods were replaced by scenes of the royal family, and prayers were now directed to them. In all of these scenes the sun-disc of the Aten shines down on the royal family, extending its rays only to them, with the exception of scenes recording Queen Tiye's visit to Akhetaten, in which she also is encompassed by the rays.

Amarna excavations have revealed shrines to the royal family in private homes of all classes of citizens. But we also know that chapels from the workers' village and the city contained small limestone stelae with representations of traditional gods such as Thoth and Ptah, as well as Taweret and Bes, the latter two associated with women and childbirth. The picture of personal religion at Amarna during Akhenaten's reign, therefore, indicates that both the traditional cults and the new one were represented.

It has often been assumed that the Aten religion did not have popular support among the ordinary people. Barry Kemp's excavations at Akhetaten have led him to revise this assumption.

SOURCE 29

Pharaoh had always been a god, and the cult of the new royal image may have found a real emotional target. So, too, with the Aten. For lack of evidence and from the eventual failure of Akhenaten's ideas to survive his death it is easy to conclude that the cult of the Aten had little popular following. Yet in the midst of this negative picture stand two unique papyrus letters written by a minor official from Amarna to his relatives on entirely private matters. In them the Aten is freely used as a bestower of blessings, just as Amun and other deities were in the letters of other periods. If history had run a different course, and subsequent kings had maintained the cult of the Aten, it is possible to imagine from evidence such as this that the Aten would have developed a truly popular aspect.

B. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilisation*, Routledge, London, 1989, p. 301

Other religious changes

There are several new features evident in the Amarna theology that appear to replace aspects that had developed in the theology of Amun from the early New Kingdom. These include the following:

- The concept of the deity's kingship, which the Aten exercised in a co-regency with the king.
- The concept of the divine family modelled on traditional divine families, usually a triad or group of three, consisting of a god, his consort and their son; for example, Amun, Mut and Khons of Thebes. This had two aspects:
  - the Aten, both the mother and father of creation with Akhenaten and Nefertiti as his children; they are depicted as Shu (air) and Tefnut (moisture) the twin children of Atum, the **primeval** creator god (see Source 13)
  - Akhenaten, Nefertiti and their daughters.
- The central position held by the king in the sphere of personal religion. No longer could the individual have a personal relationship with the god; a personal relationship was restricted to the king who interceded with the Aten on behalf of the people.
- The removal of the ethical aspect in the god's make-up. The god as divine helper of the poor, judge and helper can only be experienced through the king.
- The procession of the king and the royal family from the North Palace to the Great Aten Temple replaces the great festivals of the New Kingdom. Unlike Amun, who appeared before the people in procession, the Aten is only present in the daily processions of the king.
- The extremism of Amarna dogma, most evident in the persecution of other gods.

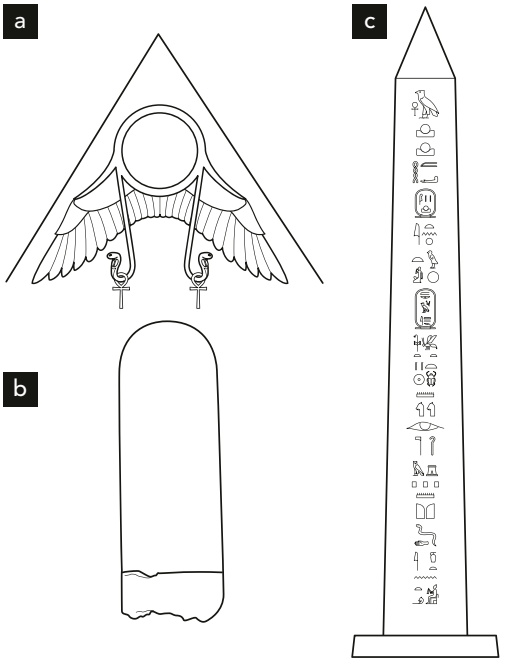
primeval
belonging to the earliest times

SOURCE 30 This limestone stela, probably from a chapel in the grounds of a private house at Akhetaten, has been interpreted as a depiction of the divine Amarna triad: Akhenaten, Nefertiti and their daughters.

Aten temples

There were changes in the architecture of temples in the Amarna period. The roofed temples of former times, in which the statue of the god occupied the innermost and darkest place, were now replaced by temples that were open to the sky, enabling the Aten to shine down on his creation. There was no cult statue of the god Aten. This was in keeping with the new iconography, which abandoned the traditional representations of the animal and human forms of the gods.

Unlike traditional Egyptian temples, which began with an open court followed by roofed chambers leading to a gloomy innermost sanctuary, the Great Temple of the Aten at Akhetaten reversed the sequence. Beginning with a columned hall, the temple opened into a series of unroofed courts with multiple stone offering tables – a particular feature of Akhenaten's cult. Scenes from nobles' tombs at Amarna show these altars piled high with food and drink offerings, a traditional method of worshipping the gods. Akhenaten seems to have used it to demonstrate an extreme devotion to his god. Because the temple was unroofed, the Aten was able to shine directly on the altars and therefore participate directly in the ritual.



SOURCE 31 *Benben*-shaped cult objects: (a) pyramidion form, (b) round-topped tradition, (c) obelisk shaped

Another feature of Atenist temples was the *benben* stone, a ritual object dating from the earliest sun worship in Old Kingdom times, with its cult centre at Heliopolis. It was depicted in different shapes – **pyramidion**, round-topped and obelisk forms. The *Hewet-benben* at East Karnak also contained a *benben* stone. The *talatat* reveal that in this temple it took the form of a single obelisk.

In the Great Temple of the Aten at Akhetaten, a round-topped *benben* stone stood on a pedestal. This points to the dependence of Akhenaten's cult on traditional architectural forms.

pyramidion the small pyramid-shaped capping stone on the top of an obelisk or pyramid

Impact of Aten worship on kingship

Akhenaten's religious reforms changed the traditional relationship between the king and the gods. As we have seen, one of the most striking features of Akhenaten's religion was the notion that a special relationship prevailed between the king and the Aten. In some respects this represented an important difference from earlier times. In the Old Kingdom and Middle Kingdom the pharaoh had come to be seen as the 'son of Re'. By New Kingdom times the pharaoh had acquired a new title, the 'image of god', which indicated the role of the king as the god's representative on earth. Although the title 'son of Re' continued to be used, the king's right to rule, his legitimacy, was now based on his being chosen by the god and placed on earth as his special representative, rather than on being his son. Many kings included this 'chosen' aspect as part of their titulary, for example 'Setep en Re' (Chosen of Re) was very common.

This decline in the position of the king was accompanied by a growth in personal piety – ordinary Egyptians now had a closer, more direct relationship with the gods without always having to rely on the pharaoh as an intermediary. It was during the New Kingdom that representations of gods first appeared in private tombs. In making himself the sole intermediary between the Aten and the people, Akhenaten seems to have been returning to a 'purer' theology where the king was closer to a divine being.

Impact on the Aten priesthood

Now that worship of the Aten had to be directed through Akhenaten, the Aten priesthood's role was necessarily diminished during the Amarna period. Because Akhenaten was regarded as a god, he was served by a priesthood led by a first and second 'prophet of Neferkheperure Wa'enre' (Akhenaten). These priests performed lesser duties such as carrying a trestle-stool and the king's sandals. Akhenaten was also chief priest of the Aten, and Nefertiti took the role of chief female celebrant. Below them were other priests, the highest ranking being the 'chief seer [prophet] of the disc'.

Despite the lack of clear evidence concerning Akhenaten's treatment of the cults and priesthoods of other gods, scholars have emphasised the negative impact of the Amarna reforms on these institutions. What can be said with some certainty is that since the pharaoh was the chief patron of all temples and priesthoods, a withdrawal of his patronage would have seriously affected them.

A natural consequence of the abolition of other gods was that the pharaoh no longer provided financial support for their temples. As a consequence, their priests and temple employees would have become unemployed. Some would have found work in the new Aten temples, but the great majority would have experienced considerable hardship. There is no evidence that Akhenaten actually ordered the closure of the temples or in any way directly interfered with their operation, but the effects of his religious reforms must have been serious and widespread.

The Amun priesthood stood to lose the most. It had risen to a position of great prominence during the New Kingdom, particularly during the reign of Thutmose III, whose numerous military conquests, carried out in the name of Amun, had increased the wealth and influence of the Amun cult. Members of the Amun priesthood had staffed the most important positions in the administration of the kingdom – some high priests became royal viziers, and lower-ranking priests held key financial and administrative posts. These people would have been alarmed by the changes Akhenaten made. What they did as a consequence is unknown. However, the fact that the Amun cult was operating at Thebes again in the reign of Smenkhkare suggests that they could have been quietly waiting for the 'revolution' to go away.

Impact on the people

So little is known about the impact of the Amarna period on ordinary Egyptians that comments are usually restricted to references to cult objects found in the workers' village at Akhetaten. Some have even suggested that Akhenaten's reforms were essentially aimed at official religion and that the ordinary people would have been largely untouched.

However, this might not have been the case. Jan Assmann thinks there is sufficient evidence to see the Amarna period as 'a time of religious intolerance, persecution, and police control'. As evidence he cites what he calls 'dissident literature'. This consists of texts mainly from the Ramesside period including hymns, pupils' exercises on school manuscripts, and tomb and temple inscriptions, which express joy and relief at the reappearance of Amun and the ability to renew relationships with him. Other gods such as Thoth and Ptah seem to share in this literature. Assmann sees the renewed growth of personal piety in the Ramesside period as a direct response to Akhenaten's attempts to monopolise a personal relationship with the god.

6.7 Understanding and using the sources

Source 29

1 Why has it been assumed that the Aten religion was not popular with the ordinary Egyptians?
2 What evidence does Kemp cite to support his theory?
3 How does the reliability of this evidence compare with that from the tombs of prominent Amarna officials?

6.7 Check your learning

1 How can both change and continuity be seen in the following Amarna religious changes:
   - gods worshipped at Akhetaten
   - the concept of the divine triad of Akhenaten, Nefertiti and their daughters
   - the role of the pharaoh
   - Aten temples
   - the Aten priesthood?

6.8 Changes to afterlife beliefs and funerary customs

It is clear that during the Amarna period a number of traditional Osirian beliefs and practices were abandoned. Previously, Egyptians had hoped for an afterlife that could have taken a variety of forms. Now, according to Jan Assmann, the nature of Akhenaten's monotheism meant that there was only one time and place, 'the here and now', and no afterlife at all.

Afterlife beliefs of the New Kingdom had always included some concepts of the deceased experiencing the world of the living as well as that of the dead. The revolutionary feature of Amarna beliefs was that hopes for an afterlife now focused exclusively on the world of the living. A prayer from the time demonstrates this (see Source 33). The prayers for survival in the afterlife, once addressed to funerary gods such as Osiris, were now directed to Akhenaten himself. A prayer in the tomb of Ay petitions Akhenaten for 'a life prolonged by thy favours … Grant me pure food which has been placed before thee from the surplus of thy Father Aten every day'.

ba
Egyptian afterlife concept relating to the spirit force of an individual, usually represented as a human-headed bird

SOURCE 32

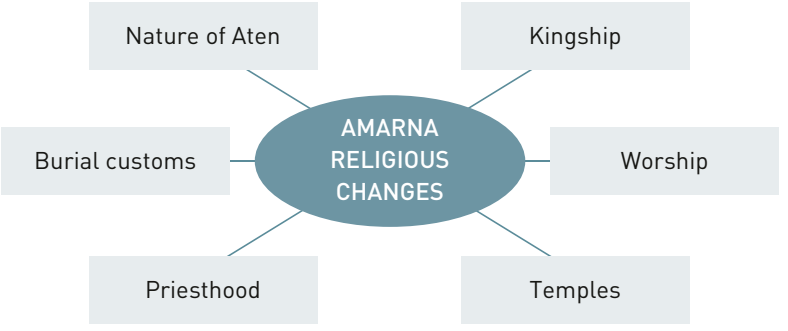
There is no talk of the mythical, primeval time when the cosmos came into being, when the present-day world was produced after many changes related in the myths, or of a next world, where the dead go … Akhenaten's monotheism was a radical doctrine of a single realm. Amarna religion abolished the afterlife. The dead continued to live, but they dwelled in their tomb, not in the netherworld; by day, they visited the temples of Amarna in an invisible or altered form, and by night they returned to their tomb.

J. Assmann, *Death and Salvation in Ancient Egypt*, trans. D. Lorton, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2005, p. 15

SOURCE 33

May you set me forever in the place
of the praised ones,
in my house of vindication.
My ***ba***, may it go forth to behold your rays,
and to eat its offerings.
May one call on my name,
may one (= my *ba*?) come at the call,
may I receive the offerings that go forth
from the Presence (= from the temple)
may I partake of the nourishment
of bread and beer,
roasted and boiled meat,
cool water, wine, and milk,
that go out from the temple of
the Aten at Akhetaten.

Assmann, 2005, p. 218



SOURCE 34 Amarna religious changes

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Amarna burial practices

Burial practices appear to have undergone few changes. Mummification continued to be practised in the traditional way. **Heart scarabs** were retained, but the offering formulas they were inscribed with were now addressed to Aten. **Mummiform coffins** and the stone **sarcophagus** were still used. The badly damaged sarcophagus of Akhenaten, recovered from the royal tomb at Akhetaten, is unique in that Nefertiti replaces the traditional tutelary or protective deities on each corner. **Shabtis** were retained, but inscriptions on them from the *Book of the Dead* were often replaced by Atentist petitions; for example, the text on the shabti of the concubine Pya reads, 'May she serve the Disc when he rises in the morning to take his form in life …'. Two hundred smashed shabtis have been recovered from the royal tomb at Akhetaten. Tomb scenes depict funerary furniture and other goods being brought to the tomb in the usual way.

heart scarab
an Egyptian amulet in the shape of the scarab beetle bearing magical spells; these amulets were placed in the wrappings of mummies approximately over the heart to ensure the deceased's acceptance into the afterlife

mummiform coffin
a human-shaped coffin with a face resembling the deceased person contained within

sarcophagus
an inscribed or sculpted stone coffin

shabti
a small statuette included in Egyptian funerary goods that was believed to work for the deceased in the afterlife

6.8 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 32 & 33

1 In what ways did Amarna religion 'abolish the afterlife'?
2 What does the prayer in Source 33 reveal of the afterlife activities of the *ba*?

6.8 Check your learning

1 Research the traditional afterlife beliefs of the Eighteenth Dynasty and compare them with the Amarna beliefs and practices described above. Can you account for the differences? Look up:
   - Osirian burial, 'Weighing of the heart', Fields of Yaru
   - mummification, scarabs, amulets, tutelary goddesses, shabtis
   - *Litany of Re*, *Amduat*, *Book of the Dead*.
2 How do the activities of the deceased mentioned in Source 33 differ from traditional afterlife activities you have discovered in your research?
3 Discuss:
   a What effect do you think the abandonment of traditional Osirian beliefs would have had on the Egyptian people?
   b Why do you think the Egyptians still practised mummification?
   c What is the significance of Nefertiti replacing the tutelary goddesses on Akhenaten's sarcophagus?
   d From what you have learnt about Amarna religion, how do you account for the dominance of Akhenaten and the royal family in tomb reliefs?
4 The diagram in Source 34 summarises the main themes of Akhenaten's religious policy discussed in this chapter. Complete the following using the headings shown in the diagram.
   a Make a summary of the religious changes introduced by Akhenaten.
   b Suggest reasons under each theme why the people of Egypt ultimately rejected these changes.
5 Writing task: Assess the importance of Akhenaten's religious policy to his career.
   To help plan your response:
   - identify the key features of Akhenaten's religious policy
   - use these features to structure your answer – avoid purely narrative structure
   - make judgements about the relative importance of these features to Akhenaten's career
   - use specific evidence to support your assessment.

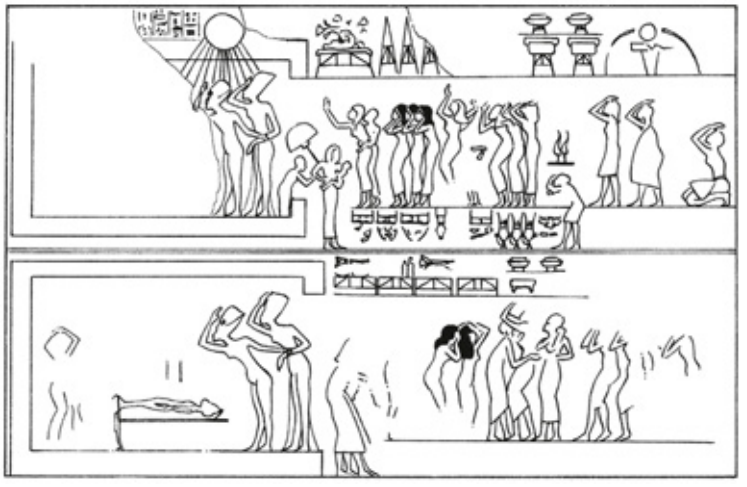
6.8 Profile

Amarna tombs: Source study

During the 12 years when Akhetaten was flourishing, 45 non-royal tombs were constructed in the wadis to the east of the city. Five royal tombs were begun in what is known as the royal wadi.

The royal tomb

The royal tomb consisted of a large entrance corridor from which two sets of corridors and rooms opened. At the end of the corridor was a set of stairs, a well shaft and a burial chamber. The decoration of the burial chamber, now almost completely destroyed, featured the tomb's main decorative motif: Akhenaten, Nefertiti and the royal daughters worshipping the rising and the setting Aten. There are no *Amduat* or *Book of the Dead* scenes in the tomb. The walls of one set of rooms show the royal family making offerings to the Aten. There are two unusual scenes in which the king, queen and courtiers mourn the death of Meketaten in one and possibly Kiya in the other. Both scenes include depictions of a nurse with a royal infant (see Source 35). Evidence suggests that at one time the tomb contained Akhenaten's own remains as well as those of his mother, Tiye, and his daughter Meketaten. The other tombs were unfinished and undecorated.



SOURCE 35 In this scene from the royal tomb, the royal family and courtiers show their grief at the death of Meketaten, second daughter of Akhenaten and Nefertiti.

Non-royal tombs

The tombs of nobles and officials were begun in two groups, the northern and southern. None were ever completed or occupied. Though clearly provided by the king, there is still some variation in design and decoration, suggesting that the owners had a part in the decision-making about their funerary monuments. In place of the traditional representation of the tomb owner at work and play, or joining the gods in scenes from the *Book of the Dead*, Akhenaten and the royal family dominate the reliefs of these tombs. They are shown engaged in a variety of public and private activities, especially the royal procession from the palace to the Great Aten Temple. The tomb owner, now a tiny figure, is depicted in a subservient role, either attending upon the royal family or being rewarded with gold rings for services rendered. Some of the non-royal tombs located at Akhetaten belonged to the officials Ay, Huya, Tutu, Pentu, Mahu, Parennefer, Meryra, Ahmose and Panhesy.

Value and limitations of the source

The Amarna tombs provide important evidence for a study of Amarna burial practices. We need to be aware of the problems raised by their condition and the interpretation of their decoration.

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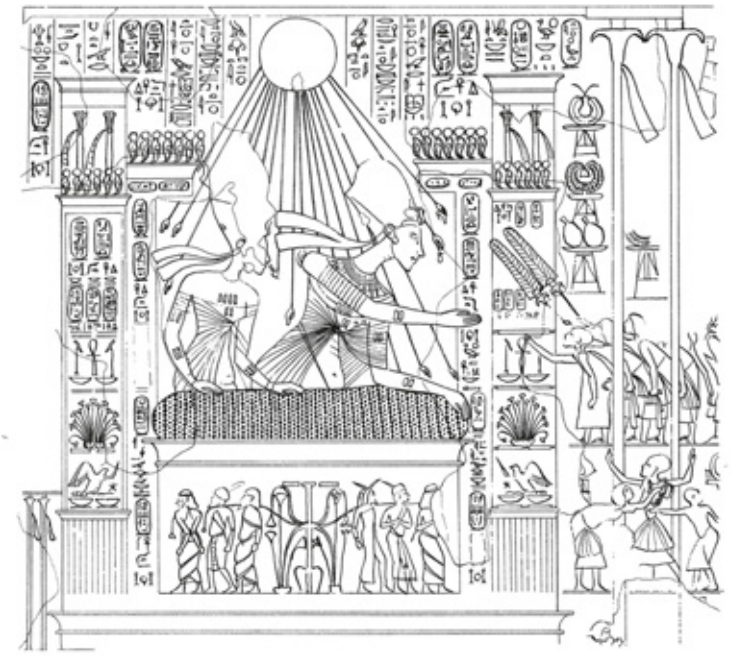

SOURCE 36 A scene from the tomb of Parennefer, butler to Akhenaten. Parennefer is shown in the lower right-hand corner.

6.8 Profile tasks

Source 35

1 Identify Akhenaten and Nefertiti. How does their depiction indicate their grief?

2 Is there anything in the scene to indicate the cause of Meketaten's death?

3 What is unusual about the subject of this scene in a royal tomb?

Source 36

4 Identify Akhenaten, Nefertiti and the tomb owner. What is happening in this scene?

5 What typical features of Amarna art can you recognise in this scene (see 6.9 Artistic innovations and development)?

6 Discuss the following:

- **a** What do the Amarna tombs reveal of changes in religion, funerary customs and art in the reign of Akhenaten?
- **b** What problems does the damaged state of the tombs present for historians?

7 In light of your discussion and work on Sources 35 and 36, what are the strengths and limitations of the Amarna tombs as sources for an understanding of Amarna period?

8 Writing task: How significant are the Amarna tombs for an understanding of Akhenaten's reign? Support your response with reference to Sources 35 and 36.

To help plan your response:

- identify the key areas of significance of the Amarna tombs
- make judgements about the significance of each based on criteria (e.g. funerary customs, religious change, Amarna art)
- use specific evidence to support your answer.

6.9 Artistic innovations and development

The way in which the king and his kingdom were portrayed during the reign of Akhenaten is one of the more striking changes instituted in a reign noted for its innovation. However, it is important to recognise that Amarna art was not a sudden phenomenon; rather, it developed out of techniques already in use. Amarna artists and sculptors worked in innovative ways in their choice of subjects and the way in which they depicted them. For example, the intimacy of human relationships was rarely shown in pre-Amarna art, the emphasis being on idealised depictions of the human form based on strict artistic rules. Amarna artists, on the other hand, gave their subjects liveliness and naturalism. Now, instead of having to work within the constraining influence of **registers**, strict proportion and stylised forms, artists seem to have been free to experiment with texture, light and shade, and perspective.

register
a band of decoration containing inscriptions and paintings; the wall paintings of Egyptian tombs were usually executed in registers

Akhenaten himself appears to have been responsible for the style adopted by Amarna artists. An inscription on a stela from Aswan indicates that Bek, one of Akhenaten's sculptors, was personally instructed by the king. Other sculptors, including Auta and Thutmose, are known to us from tomb reliefs and from the remains of their workshops excavated in the south suburb of Akhetaten.

Representations of the Aten

An important function of Egyptian art was its depiction of religious themes. Akhenaten's adoption of Aten as his sole god required a change in iconography. Initially depicted as the falcon-headed god Re-Horakhty at Karnak, by the time the decoration of the East Karnak temples was carried out, the Aten had taken on the form it would maintain for the rest of the reign. The *talatat* reliefs and later reliefs from Akhetaten bear depictions of the Aten as a globe, not just a flat disc, wearing the *uraeus* and with spreading arms ending in human hands. In all reliefs, these hands caress Akhenaten and Nefertiti, offer the *ankh*, the hieroglyph for life, to their noses and hover over their children. In the tomb of Huya at Akhetaten, even Tiye, the mother of Akhenaten, is offered the sign of life by the rays of the Aten.

Representations of Akhenaten and the royal family

The most dramatic evidence of artistic change can be seen in the portrayal of the king and the royal family. Like the Aten, Akhenaten was depicted in the traditional style in the early part of his reign. Reliefs at Karnak and in some Theban tombs (see Source 11) show the king as young, slim and resembling his predecessors. The other figures are depicted in the traditional manner.

The revolutionary iconography adopted by Akhenaten on the erection of his East Karnak temples has been described earlier in the chapter. The decoration of these temples was also revolutionary in the inclusion of scenes that had never been used in temples before:

- Scenes that were common in private tombs were now used – daily life, agriculture, domestic work, activities along the Nile, animals waking at dawn and building sites.
- Nefertiti was depicted in ways that were usually reserved for kings – smiting enemies, trampling enemies as a sphinx.
- Nefertiti was shown worshipping the Aten without the presence of the king (see Source 15).
- The daughters of the king were regularly shown.

Akhenaten goes to extremes

The move to Akhetaten was accompanied by the introduction of an extreme new style, featuring:

- Nefertiti shown on the same scale as Akhenaten in reliefs and statuary
- the depiction of emotions felt by the royal family – the affection felt by the royal couple for each other and for their children can be seen in reliefs and statues (such as Source 37); their anguish can be clearly seen in scenes from the royal tomb of the deaths of Meketaten and possibly Kiya
- the entire royal family shown with extreme physiques and facial features common to Akhenaten – the royal children are depicted with characteristic elongated skulls (see Source 30)
- the introduction of three-dimensional representation – this was achieved by overlapping elements in a composition rather than placing them side by side (see Source 30).

SOURCE 37 A relief showing Nefertiti kissing one of her daughters

Late Amarna style

The late Amarna period saw a softening in some of the extreme features of royal iconography that had characterised the earlier part of the reign. At this time, members of the royal family were shown in a more realistic style, without elongated limbs, swollen hips and full bellies. The human figure was now more aesthetically pleasing.

An interesting feature of the portrayal of the royal family at Akhetaten is that they grow, change and age. The previous tradition of presenting the royal family as unchanging and ageless was abandoned by the artists at this time. Maybe inspired by some depictions of Amenhotep III as an old man, sculptures found in the studio of Thutmose at Akhetaten include subjects in a variety of ages.

SOURCE 38 A limestone statue depicting Nefertiti as an older woman

Representations of the natural world

It is worth recalling that Akhenaten, in his *Hymn to the Aten*, claimed that he was 'the king who lives by *ma'at*'. It may be that Akhenaten's devotion to *ma'at* encouraged the tendency towards realistic depiction in Amarna art. Examples of artwork recovered from the royal palace and other domestic areas at Akhetaten show a rich and colourful diversity of plant and animal motifs executed in a flowing and naturalistic manner not seen in works from other periods.

SOURCE 39

The lush beauty of nature and its serendipity are nowhere better seen than in the wall paintings of the 'Green Room' of the North Palace, where a variety of birds takes flight from a dense thicket on the riverbank … These paintings also testify to a love of bright colours and juxtaposed dense patterns: courtyard floors were transformed into dense carpets of favourite plants painted on plaster with the spontaneity of an experienced and confident artisan. The themes of nature and its bounty were repeated in **faience** and on ceramics.

R. Freed, 'Art in the service of religion and the state', in R. Freed, Y. Markowitz & S. D'Auria (eds), *Pharaohs of the Sun: Akhenaten, Nefertiti, Tutankhamun*, Thames & Hudson, London, 1999, p. 123

faience
a material made from powdered quartz, usually covered with a transparent blue or green glaze

SOURCE 40 A wall painting from Akhetaten

6.9 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What were the most distinctive features of Amarna art?
   - **b** Account for the artistic innovations of this period.
   - **c** How was art used to distinguish the royal family?
   - **d** How was *ma'at* expressed in Amarna art?

2 Writing task: Evaluate the artistic innovations of Akhenaten's reign.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the key artistic innovations
   - make judgements about the value of each based on criteria (e.g. contribution to the reign, religious change).
   - use specific evidence to support your answer.

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6.10 Foreign policy

The nature of Akhenaten's relationship with countries outside Egypt is as contested as any other aspect of his reign. The traditional view is that Akhenaten was an atypical pharaoh who abandoned warfare, resulting in a reign that was a political and economic disaster. Scholars who hold this view feel that the king was too preoccupied with his religious changes to bother with foreign affairs. An analysis of the sources suggests that other interpretations are possible.

Syria–Palestine

Akhenaten has long been blamed for losing Egypt's sphere of influence in the Syria–Palestine region. (For a more detailed treatment of Egypt's relations with Syria–Palestine, see 10.14 Maintenance and administration of the 'empire': Syria–Palestine.) Recent scholarship suggests that the situation in Syria–Palestine was much more complex than had been previously realised. It is argued that Akhenaten was sensitive to Egypt's interests and monitored the balance of power in the Near East. Evidence comes from new interpretations of the Amarna Letters (see 6.10 Profile), and from the Aten temples at East Karnak.

In the early years of Akhenaten's reign, his armies appear to have campaigned against the Apiru, outlaw bands of Palestine, some of whom the king resettled in Nubia. Akhenaten was the first pharaoh to resettle Nubian rebels in Palestine using the strategy in reverse. Akhenaten is also known to have fought at least one war against the Hittites, the rapidly growing power in the region. *Talatat* from East Karnak reveal a war or battle fought against Hittite and other Asiatic soldiers. Reliefs depict Egyptians besieging cities, while Akhenaten himself is shown riding in his chariot and killing prisoners. A.R. Schulman believes that the war must have taken place within the first 5 years of Akhenaten's reign, the period when the temples were decorated, and could have involved the retaking of cities captured by Abdi-Ashirta of Amurru.

This victory is recorded by Rib-Addi, the prince of Byblos, the writer of many Amarna Letters. Byblos was a vassal town of Egypt. Rib-Addi's letters record repeated requests to Akhenaten for aid against Aziru of Amurru who was taking advantage of Hittite destabilisation (upsetting the political stability) in the region to increase his own territory. Over-emphasis on the complaints of this vassal king encouraged the view that Akhenaten neglected his empire. Aziru was eventually summoned to Egypt and detained for a long period. On his return, his subsequent defection to the Hittites indicates Egypt's difficulty maintaining control over the distant parts of its sphere of interest in Syria–Palestine, particularly in the face of aggressive Hittite expansion.

SOURCE 41

Even when the Hittites took over two of Egypt's most important affiliates, Ugarit and Qadesh, Pharaoh failed to react until Qadesh was revealed as a Hittite cat's paw [that is, manipulated to serve the Hittites' purpose], seeking to detach other Egyptian vassals – and even then, both Egypt and Hatti pursued limited war aims and remained formally at peace while actually engaged in cold war. What this pattern reveals is not the indecision of a pacifist Akhenaten but entirely reasonable caution on both sides.

W. Murnane, 'Imperial Egypt and the limits of power', in R. Cohen & R. Westbrook (eds), *Amarna Diplomacy: The Beginnings of International Diplomacy*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2002, p. 110

It is now clear that Akhenaten followed Amenhotep III's policy of maintaining diplomatic ties to avoid warfare in the Near East. He married a Mitannian princess as his father had done and continued the diplomatic correspondence with Egypt's vassals, as well as the Mitannian king, Tushratta. His policy of limited military action and containment enabled Akhenaten to maintain Egypt's influence in Syria and the Levant at a time when expansion was not feasible.

Nubia

It is clear that Akhenaten maintained a traditional foreign policy in Nubia, including the construction of towns and waging of military campaigns. Early in his reign, he founded a town at Sesebi, near the Fourth Cataract of the Nile. Although it was originally dedicated to Amun, the town was subsequently rededicated to the Aten. Another town at Kawa was named *Gem pa-aten*. In year 12 the army, under the command of the viceroy of Kush, Thutmose, was sent to Nubia to put down a rebellion there. This is recorded on a stela at Buhen. The viceroy's tomb biography records that the campaign was intended to punish the local Nubians for the theft of grain in the Wadi el-Allaqi. The capture of 145 Nubians and 361 head of cattle is recorded as well as the impaling of 80 other rebels.

Trade

There is no evidence that trade was disrupted during this period. The Amarna Letters indicate that the tribute levied on vassal states continued to be paid. Archaeological evidence, especially the remains of ancient shipwrecks such as the *Ulu Burun* wreck off the coast of southern Turkey, points to a well-established trading network between Egypt and her eastern Mediterranean and Aegean neighbours. It is clear that trade with Mycenae was maintained during the reign of Akhenaten because a quantity of **Mycenaean** pottery from this period was excavated at the site of Akhetaten. Two Amarna courtiers, Huya and Meryre II, record in their tombs a great ceremony to receive foreign tribute that took place in year 12 of Akhenaten's reign (see Source 46). Deliveries of goods were accepted from Kharu (Asia) and Kush (Nubia), as well as Libya and the Aegean. Whether or not these goods were diplomatic gifts or tribute, it is clear that Egypt was maintaining economic links with its neighbours.

Mycenaean relating to the late Bronze Age Greek civilisation originating at the site of Mycenae on mainland Greece; it flourished between 1600 and 1100 BC

6.10 Understanding and using the sources

Source 41

1. In what way was Qadesh a 'Hittite cat's paw'?
2. Why did Egypt and Hatti remain 'formally at peace'?
3. Why was Akhenaten's indecision 'entirely reasonable'?

6.10 Check your learning

1. Discuss the following:
   - **a** What examples of change and continuity can you identify in Akhenaten's foreign policy? Find out about the foreign policies of New Kingdom pharaohs such as Thutmose I, Thutmose III and Amenhotep III to help you answer this.
   - **b** Did Akhenaten face any problems that were different from those faced by his predecessors? What were they?
   - **c** Suggest ways in which Akhenaten could have made his foreign policy more effective.

2 Using the map in Source 2, locate all the places referred to in the account of Amarna foreign policy in this section. List them and record the significance of each one.

3 Create a diagram of the actions taken by Akhenaten to maintain Egyptian foreign policy. You could use headings such as Military, Diplomatic, Trade and Building.

4 Use the summary you have created to plan and write an answer to the following: Assess the effectiveness of Akhenaten's foreign policy.

To help plan your response:

- identify the key features of Akhenaten's foreign policy
- use these features to structure your answer – avoid purely narrative structure
- make critical judgements of the effectiveness of these features
- use specific evidence to support your assessment.

6.10 Profile

Amarna Letters: Source study

The Amarna Letters were found in the ruins of the records office at Akhetaten. Most of the tablets are undated, but they represent the correspondence from foreign rulers to the Egyptian kings, particularly Amenhotep III and his son, Akhenaten. Some are from the kings of neighbouring countries, such as Babylonia and Hatti. Most that have survived, some in a very damaged condition, were sent by the chiefs of vassal towns and cities in Syria and Palestine. They frequently complained of attacks by other cities in their region and asked for Egyptian assistance. The action taken by Egypt in such circumstances is not really known, for apart from nine draft replies that have survived, there were no other letters to inform us of the pharaohs' replies.

SOURCE 42 An Amarna Letter from Abi-milku of Tyre, a vassal ruler, to Akhenaten

Value and limitations of the source

The Amarna Letters are valuable sources for a study of Akhenaten's foreign policy; however, there are important problems of evidence which limit their value. A brief outline of the correspondence from Rib-Addi of Byblos to Akhenaten, the pharaoh's handling of the situation and the outcome has been given in 6.10 Foreign policy.

Amarna letter EA 75 is a letter from Rib-Addi to Akhenaten.

SOURCE 43

AMARNA LETTER EA 75

Rib-Addi spoke to his lord, the King of Lands:

May the Mistress of Gubla [the goddess Baalat] grant power to my lord. At the feet of my lord, my sun, I fall down seven times and seven times. Let the king, my lord, know that Gubla, your handmaid from ancient times [Byblos had trade connections with Egypt since pre-dynastic times], is well. However, the war of the 'Apiru against me is severe. [Our] sons [and] daughters are gone, [as well as] the furnishings of the houses, because they have been sold in Yarimuta to keep us alive. My field is 'a wife without a husband,' lacking in cultivation. I have repeatedly written to the palace regarding the distress afflicting me, … but no one has paid attention to the words that keep arriving. Let the king heed the words of his servant … Aduna, the king of Irqata [town north-east of Byblos], mercenaries have killed, and there is no one who has said anything to Abdi-Ashirta, although you knew about it. Miya, the ruler of Arashni, has taken Ardata; and behold now the people of Ammiya have killed their lord; so I am frightened. Let the king, my lord, know that the king of Hatti has overcome all the lands that belonged to the king of Mittani or the king of Nahma [Naharin] the land of the great kings. Abdi-Ashirta, the slave, the dog, has gone with him. Send archers. The hostility toward me is great.

Letters by Rib-Addi of Byblos, K.C. Hanson after a translation by Mercer

6.10 Profile tasks

Use Source 43 to answer questions 1–6.

1. Who is Rib-Addi and why is he writing to Akhenaten?
2. How has the war against the Apiru affected Rib-Addi?
3. What has Rib-Addi done about the situation and what has been the outcome?
4. What has the king of Hatti done?
5. What does EA 75 reveal of the situation in Syria–Palestine and Egypt's handling of it?
6. What other sources would be useful to help understand the situation described in the letter and make a judgement about the accuracy of Rib-Addi's claims?
7. Discuss the following:
   a. What problem of evidence is raised by: (i) the damaged state of some of the tablets? (ii) the absence of dates on the letters?
   b. Considering that we have the letters that foreign kings and princes wrote to the pharaoh and only nine replies, what further problems does this raise?
8. In light of your discussion and work on EA 75, what are the strengths and limitations of the Amarna Letters for an understanding of foreign policy in the Amarna period?

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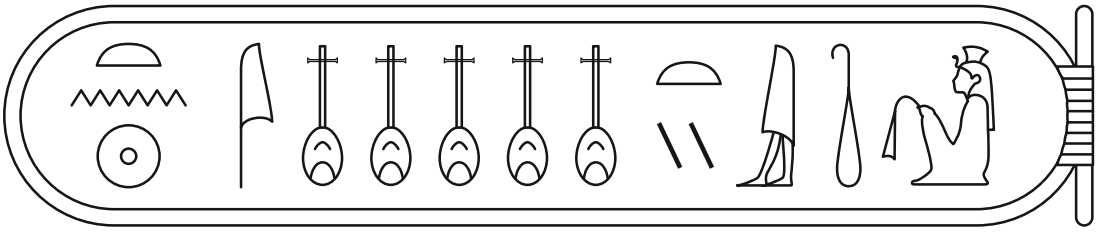
6.11 The role of Nefertiti

Nefertiti, great wife of the Akhenaten, merits attention because of her prominence in the reign of Akhenaten and the debates about her role. From the earliest days of the reign in Thebes, Nefertiti appears to have played a role of greater religious and political significance than other Eighteenth Dynasty queens consort. Indeed, in the scenes recorded on the *talatat* blocks from Thebes, the image of Nefertiti appears nearly twice as often as that of her husband. When Amenhotep IV changed his name to include the Aten, Nefertiti took on the additional name 'Neferneferuaten'. This new long name, meaning 'beautiful are the beauties of Aten', was written in two identical, adjacent cartouches, replicating the style of Akhenaten's names. Egyptologist Julia Samson points out the honour paid to Nefertiti in that the written form of her name always has the reed hieroglyph in the Aten's name written backwards so that it faces the queen's image. This honour is never shared by Akhenaten.



SOURCE 44
Nefertiti's cartouche reads 'Neferneferuaten Nefertiti', which means 'beautiful are the beauties of Aten' – note how the Aten's name is reversed to face Nefertiti's image.

Both at Thebes and at Akhetaten, Nefertiti was depicted with many of the prerogatives usually reserved for a ruling monarch.

- On the pillars of the *Hewet-benben*, which seems to have been reserved for the queen's personal worship of the Aten, Nefertiti, attended only by her daughters Meritaten and Meketaten, is shown making offerings to the god (see Source 15).
- A colossal statue from East Karnak holding the pharaonic crook and flail is now thought to represent Nefertiti as the goddess Tefnut (see Source 13).
- Nefertiti is depicted in a traditional head-smiting scene in blocks from both Thebes and Hermopolis, and female captives are shown kneeling around her throne.
- Nefertiti is always drawn on the same scale as Akhenaten. She was never depicted as a miniature woman beside her husband, in the traditional manner.
- She is depicted distributing favours from the window of appearance (see Sources 12 and 36).
- Nefertiti accompanies her husband in the royal chariot in processions to the great Aten temple and is even shown driving a chariot herself.
- Prayers inscribed on stelae and tomb reliefs ask Nefertiti for the same benefits that they request from the Aten or Akhenaten.
- While most often shown wearing her characteristic blue platform crown, Nefertiti occasionally appears wearing crowns normally worn only by a king – the *Atef* crown and the cap-crown (see Sources 38 and 45).
- Nefertiti takes the place of the four protective goddesses on the corners of Akhenaten's sarcophagus found shattered in the royal tomb.

SOURCE 45 This detail from an Amarna tomb shows Nefertiti wearing the triple *Atef* crown, traditionally worn only by a king – one of the arms of the Aten offers her the *ankh*.

This iconography has led some scholars to argue that Nefertiti acted as queen regnant (a queen who reigns in her own right) during Akhenaten's reign. Others argue that such depictions merely show that developments in queenship, begun in the reign of Amenhotep III, when Queen Tiye achieved very high status, continued into Akhenaten's reign.

The end of Akhenaten's reign

It is generally agreed that Akhenaten died in year 17 of his reign. Nothing is known of the cause of his death. He is believed to have been buried in the royal tomb at Akhetaten and may have been removed to the Valley of the Kings at some time after the abandonment of Akhetaten. The identity of his remains is linked to the mystery of Tomb 55 in the Valley of the Kings. There are a number of theories about the nature of the succession and the identity or identities of possible successors. Nefertiti is thought by some scholars to have played an important role in the succession. This issue is one of the more complex ones in understanding the events at the end of the Amarna period.

The issue of the co-regency

It was long thought that Nefertiti fell from favour in the later years of Akhenaten's reign and retired to the North Palace. However, it is now known that the name removed from reliefs, which had given rise to such claims, was not Nefertiti's but Kiya's. Nefertiti's apparent disappearance, accompanied by the appearance of a pharaoh called Ankhkheperure Neferneferuaten has been interpreted by many scholars as evidence of a co-regency between Akhenaten and his wife. The main co-regency theories are discussed below.

Theory 1

Akhenaten was initially succeeded by his co-regent, Nefertiti, ruling as Ankhkheperure Neferneferuaten. Egyptologists John R. Harris and Julia Samson have been the main proponents of this theory. They have cited the existence of several rings from Akhetaten, inscribed in the female form, *Ankhetkheperure* (the 'et' denotes the feminine form) as evidence of this co-regency. They argue that Nefertiti adopted a new kingly titulary that was in keeping with the pharaonic iconography with which she had been depicted throughout the reign.

Nicholas Reeves, has argued further that the year 12 scenes from Huya and Meryre II's tombs, showing the ceremonies surrounding a great receipt of tribute, record an early stage in Nefertiti's elevation to the co-regency, maybe even her coronation. This scene shows Akhenaten virtually superimposed on Nefertiti, apparently signifying their unity. They sit on adjacent thrones under a canopy, receiving ambassadors and gifts/tribute from Nubia, Asia, Libya and the Aegean (see Source 46). This was thought to be the last date for Nefertiti.

Theory 2

Akhenaten was initially succeeded by his female co-regent, Ankhkheperure Neferneferuaten, who occupied the throne for about 3 years. She was then succeeded by Smenkhkare, and his great royal wife, Meritaten, who reigned for no more than a year. Alternately, Neferneferuaten's 3-year reign might have been concurrent with the last 3 years of Akhenaten's reign. Neferneferuaten has been identified by scholars as Nefertiti, Kiya, Meritaten and even the daughter of Akhenaten and Nefertiti, who was also named Neferneferuaten.

Theory 3

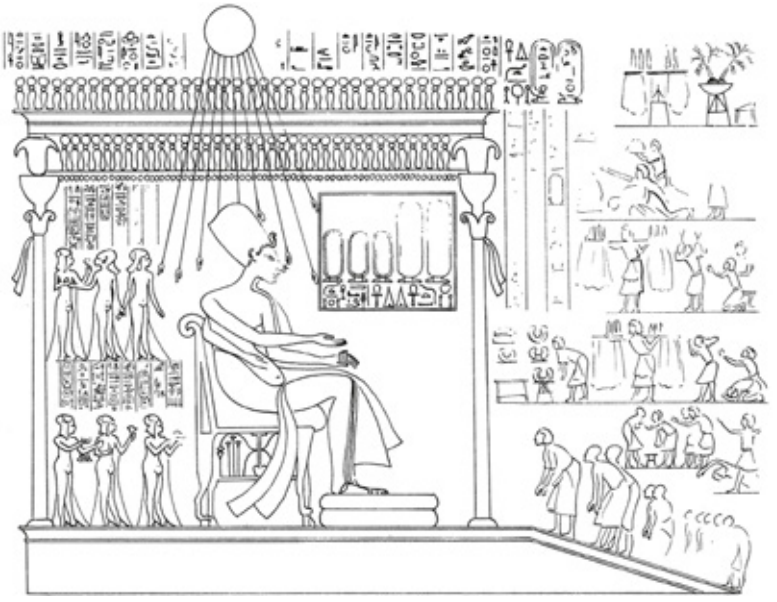
After he died in year 17, Akhenaten was succeeded by a pharaoh, known to us as Smenkhkare. Smenkhkare then ruled for a short time before being succeeded by Tutankhaten and Ankhesenpa'aten, third daughter of Akhenaten, who ruled as Tutankhamun and Ankhesenamun.

Theory 4

Nefertiti became Akhenaten's co-regent towards the end of his reign, then eventually reigned as Ankhkheperure Smenkhkare after her husband's death.

Who was Smenkhkare?

The identity and even the gender of Smenkhkare are hotly contested by scholars. According to the traditional view, Smenkhkare was a young man of uncertain parentage, possibly the son of Amenhotep III, son-in-law of Akhenaten and maybe the brother of Tutankhamun.



SOURCE 46 A scene from the tomb of Meryre II that has been interpreted as Nefertiti's elevation to the co-regency, or coronation

SOURCE 47 An unfinished stela belonging to a soldier named Pase was thought to depict Akhenaten and Smenkhkare in a homosexual relationship; others argue that it depicts the king with Nefertiti as co-regent wearing a king's crown.

This view is based on the presumption that he married Akhenaten's eldest daughter, Meritaten, and that his is the skeleton found in Tomb 55 in the Valley of the Kings. If, as some argue, the remains in Tomb 55 are those of Akhenaten himself, it is then an easy step to see two pharaohs with the same prenomen (first or personal name), Ahkhkheperure, as the same person, Nefertiti.

Some new evidence

What happened immediately before and after Akhenaten's death, and Nefertiti's role in it, is perhaps the most controversial aspect of the whole reign. New light has been shed on the period by a discovery revealed in 2012. The Leuven Archaeological Mission found an inscription referring to a building project at Akhetaten in a limestone quarry in Deir el-Bershā in Middle Egypt. It is dated to year 16, the highest date for the reign yet found, and refers to Nefertiti as Akhenaten's chief wife. This is evidence that Akhenaten and Nefertiti were still on the throne as pharaoh and great royal wife a year before what is considered to be the end of his reign. If Nefertiti became Akhenaten's co-regent, it cannot have happened before the last year of his reign. If Tutankhamun came to the throne immediately following Akhenaten's death, then Nefertiti's 3 years on the throne as co-regent must have taken place at the same time as Tutankhamun's reign. Nefertiti might have ruled for 3 years to be then succeeded by Tutankhamun. Where Smenkhkare's reign fits into this is still a problem. As with so many aspects of Amarna history, each new discovery opens up more questions.

SOURCE 48 An Amarna princess, possibly Meritaten

The role of the royal family

The Amarna royal family is arguably better recorded than any other Egyptian royal family. In earlier times the artistic depiction of the royal family was limited to a formal representation of the king and his mother. However, Akhenaten chose to express the intimate relationships he shared with his family and their importance in his reign. This appears to have been inspired by both personal and religious motives. It could be argued that it was an aspect of Akhenaten's theme of 'living in truth'.

Although reliefs focus on Akhenaten, Nefertiti and their daughters, it is important to remember that other members of the extended family played influential roles in the Amarna years. For example, there is the religious role played by Akhenaten's parents, who seem to have been influential in the development of the new religion. Nefertiti's role in the religious changes was clearly significant and can be traced to the very early years of the reign, while the daughters formed a part of a divine triad with their parents.

The daughters' dynastic role is less clear. There is some evidence to suggest that Akhenaten attempted to secure the succession by engendering a male heir with one or more of his own daughters. This was not an uncommon practice in ancient Egypt. That he was unsuccessful is apparent in the later succession of Tutankhamun, now thought to be Akhenaten's son by his own sister, the 'younger lady' from KV 35 according to DNA analysis.

We know that Queen Tiye played a significant diplomatic role in her husband's reign, conducting correspondence with the Mitannian king, Tushratta. One letter written after Amenhotep III's death asks her to use her influence with her son to smooth relations with the new pharaoh. Tushratta's daughter, Tadukhepa, joined Akhenaten's **harem** on the death of Amenhotep III.

harem
an establishment housing the pharaoh's secondary wives, both Egyptian and foreign, their servants and their children

A further interesting example of the diplomatic role of queens is the problematic evidence of a letter written by an Amarna queen to the Hittite king requesting a marriage alliance with his son. Whether this was Nefertiti (following Akhenaten's death) or Ankhesenamun (after the death of Tutankhamun), it remains that at this time an Egyptian queen felt politically powerful enough to attempt to arrange an alliance with a neighbouring power. The status of such a consort within the Egyptian royal family raises interesting questions.

6.11 Check your learning

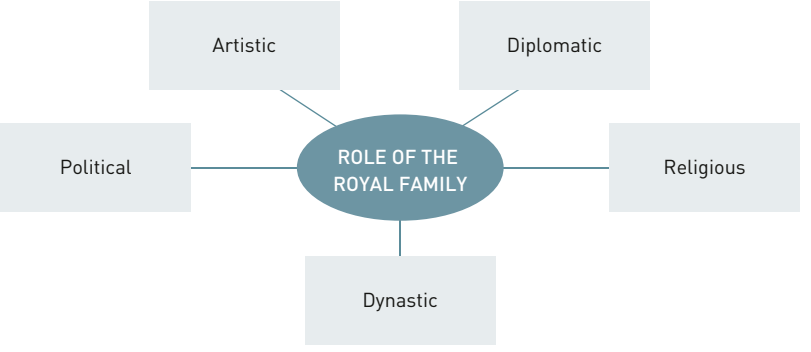
1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What features of kingly iconography are incorporated in depictions of Nefertiti at Thebes and Akhetaten?
   - **b** Why would Akhenaten have granted his wife such prominent political and religious roles?
   - **c** What do you think is the most likely explanation for the identity of Smenkhkare?
   - **d** How were the Amarna daughters involved in securing the succession?

2 Research current opinion on the remains found in Tomb 55 in the Valley of the Kings. What are the arguments for their identification as Akhenaten or Smenkhkare? As a starting point, search online for 'Mystery of the mummy from KV 55'.

3 Research the controversial topic of the Amarna succession. A good starting point is James P. Allen, 'The Amarna succession', in P. Brand & L. Cooper (eds), *Causing His Name to Live*, BRILL, Leiden/Boston, 2009, pp. 9–20.

4 In groups, prepare a list of questions that you think would have to be answered before the mystery surrounding the end of Akhenaten's reign can be solved. Exchange your questions with those of other groups and do your best to answer them.

5 The members of the Amarna royal family have been mentioned in several contexts in this chapter. Locate these and use the information given there and in this section to construct a diagram that summarises their roles. You could use the headings suggested in Source 49. Look for the following: Amenhotep III, Tiye, Nefertiti, Kiya, Tadukhepa, Meritaten, Meketaten, Ankhesenpa'aten (Ankhesenamun), the younger daughters, Smenkhkare and Tutankhamun.



SOURCE 49 An overview of the roles of the royal family

6.12 Evaluation

There is keen scholarly debate on key aspects of Akhenaten's reign. In his own time he was called a 'criminal' and a 'heretic'. Interpretations or misinterpretations of the sources have seen him charged with everything from incest to wilful neglect of the security of Egypt. In this section you have the opportunity to analyse and synthesise the information presented in this chapter. An essential part of this exercise requires you to evaluate Akhenaten and his reign. You will need to make judgements based on selected criteria. In other words, you will determine the value and significance of relevant features of his contribution to Egypt. It is up to you to choose the specific criteria on which to make your judgement.

Akhenaten's impact and influence on his time

The following key issues in determining Akhenaten's influence on his time can be considered:

- What effect did Akhenaten's religious policies have on Egypt?
- How did he change Egypt during his reign? What new ideas and concepts did he introduce?
- What are the main features of change from, or continuity with, the past during his reign?
- What contribution, if any, did he make to Egypt's development? What effect did his reign have on New Kingdom Egypt?

To evaluate Akhenaten's influence on his time, we must consider his achievements in relation to the criteria of traditional pharaonic policy, as well as to new initiatives. Traditional New Kingdom pharaohs engaged in the following:

- promotion of Amun-Re and the other cults
- self-promotion
- waging successful military campaigns
- developing foreign policy (i.e. relationships with neighbouring countries)
- maintaining Egypt's prosperity
- a building program
- ensuring the succession.

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Assessment of his life and reign

To assess means to 'make a judgement of value, quality, outcomes or results'. In assessing the life and reign of Akhenaten, you can explore a range of questions and issues such as:

- his religious reforms and their motivation
- his relationships with Nefertiti and the royal family
- his transfer of the capital to Akhetaten
- the success of his internal policies (e.g. building, religious, artistic innovations)
- the success of his foreign policy (e.g. military, trade)
- relationship with officials of his reign
- his effectiveness as a New Kingdom pharaoh
- impact of his reign (short-term and long-term).

In order to reach a conclusion about these questions and issues, you will need to consider both primary and secondary sources and relevant historiographical issues. Many have been included throughout the chapter, as well as in 6.13 Images and interpretations of Akhenaten.

Legacy

Legacy refers to 'anything handed down by an ancestor or predecessor, a consequence'. It can include:

- the physical or tangible traces a person leaves behind – in an ancient royal Egyptian context, this may refer to the buildings or monuments, together with their inscriptions and reliefs erected during a pharaoh's reign
- the non-physical, intangible traces such as ideas, concepts and traditions, ideologies and institutions introduced or developed or sponsored by the pharaoh.

This legacy may be the result of a conscious or an unconscious action. Indeed, in Akhenaten's case – as with other pharaohs – there was a very deliberate attempt to leave an indelible mark on the world of his time. Such a legacy can be viewed in both the short term and the long term. The parameters defining 'short' and 'long' are open to interpretation. For our present purposes, we suggest that 'short term' could be applied to the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty, referred to as the 'post-Amarna period'. 'Long term' refers to the Nineteenth Dynasty until the present.

The return to orthodoxy

In the years immediately following the death of Akhenaten, the court returned to Memphis and the traditional cults were reinstated. Tutankhaten and his queen, Ankhesenpa'aten, clearly signalled this return to orthodoxy by changing their names to Tutankhamun and Ankhesenamun and moving to Thebes. Tutankhamun's 'Restoration Stela' and the later 'Coronation Edict' of Horemheb speak of Akhenaten's reign as a time when 'the land was in confusion, the gods forsook the land … their temples and shrines had fallen into neglect'. It seems highly unlikely that the youthful Tutankhamun himself was the instigator of the restoration of Amun – most scholars believe this to have been the work of Ay, Horemheb and other stakeholders. Some of the claims in these inscriptions about the confusion and corruption of the Amarna years are difficult to substantiate; they may indeed have an element of propaganda in them. It was common practice for New Kingdom pharaohs to highlight their own achievements, sometimes at the expense of their predecessors.

The religious legacy

Akhetaten may have been abandoned by the court but it continued to be inhabited for some years as excavation at the site has shown. The Aten cult was not abolished; it was tolerated and coexisted with other cults for a number of years. Evidence of this can be seen in objects from Tutankhamun's tomb in which the Aten name is preserved. For example, the golden throne of Tutankhamun is inscribed with both the Aten and Amun cartouches of the king. In addition, the distinctive Amarna representation of the Aten as a rayed disc is prominently featured in the back panel of the throne.

Horemheb's rejection of Atenism

The effects of Akhenaten's reign were clearly still being felt some 15 years after his death, when Horemheb succeeded to the throne. Horemheb began the systematic destruction of Akhenaten's monuments and continued the policy of restoring the traditional cults. He dismantled the Aten temples at East Karnak and used their *talatat* blocks as fill in the pylons he added to the temple of Amun at Karnak. Hymns to Amun from this period maintain the concept of the Aten as a deity, but the Aten cult is no longer dominant.

In his excavation of Horemheb's tomb at Memphis, archaeologist Geoffrey Martin found a fascinating document attesting to the extent of Akhenaten's legacy. This new *Hymn to Osiris* refers to Osiris as 'the nocturnal manifestation of the sun-god, Re'. Source 50 offers an interpretation of the role of Osiris in the aftermath of Amarna.

SOURCE 50

Akhenaten was unable to deal with one of the most essential aspects of Egyptian religion; that is, death and life after death. In the period after the Amarna interlude the traditional religion was reinterpreted in reaction to Akhenaten's doctrines … the cult of Osiris became much more important than before the Amarna Period, and in the tombs of private persons Osiris and Re have a role of equal weight.

J. van Dijk, cited in G. Martin, *The Hidden Tombs of Memphis*, Thames & Hudson, London, 1991, pp. 64–5

The Ramesside reaction

The Ramesside kings continued the destruction of Akhenaten's monuments and were responsible for the systematic and almost total annihilation of the city of Akhetaten. For more than a century afterwards, the ruins were used as a quarry for the building of the site of Hermopolis, a few kilometres to the north of Akhetaten, across the river. Other temples of the Amarna period at Memphis and Heliopolis were also destroyed, probably around the same time.

Amun had been restored as the chief god of Egypt, but in the early Nineteenth Dynasty there was greater emphasis on the worship of other gods as well. Seti I's beautiful Abydos temple was dedicated to no fewer than seven gods, while Ramesses II's magnificent mortuary temple at Abu Simbel features statues of Ptah, Amun, Re-Horakhty and Ramesses himself.

This has been seen as a deliberate policy designed to avoid the concentration of power in one cult, such as the Amun cult, which may have been partly responsible for Akhenaten's revolution.

The reaction against Akhenaten and his reign was finally completed under these Ramesside kings. In the king lists compiled in this period, which give the names of the legitimate rulers of Egypt, Horemheb's name is shown immediately after that of Amenhotep III. This signalled once and for all that, as far as the traditionalists were concerned, Akhenaten and his immediate successors were to be condemned to oblivion.

SOURCE 51 Tutankhamun's Restoration Stela. Tutankhamun is shown with Amun and his consort Mut.

6.12 Understanding and using the sources

Source 50

1 What evidence is there that Akhenaten could not deal with death and life after death?

6.12 Check your learning

1 Search online for copies of the texts of Tutankhamun's Restoration Stela and Horemheb's Coronation Edict. Construct a diagram to summarise the information they give about the period of Akhenaten's reign. You might consider the issues of reliability and usefulness associated with these sources.

2 Discuss the following:

- **a** How reliable are the primary sources such as Tutankhamun's Restoration Stela and Horemheb's Coronation Edict in depicting conditions in Egypt during Akhenaten's reign?
- **b** What might have motivated Horemheb's systematic destruction of Amarna monuments?
- **c** Which changes introduced by Akhenaten would have been most hated by his successors. Why?
- **d** Can you explain why the cult of Osiris became more important after the Amarna period?
- **e** What legacy of the Amarna years can be seen in the policies adopted by the Ramesside kings?

3 Writing task: Assess the achievements of Akhenaten's reign.

To help plan your response:

- identify the key achievement areas of Akhenaten's reign
- use these features to structure your answer – avoid purely narrative structure
- make critical judgements of the effectiveness, success or longevity of these features
- use specific evidence to support your assessment.

6.13 Images and interpretations of Akhenaten

In this chapter we have explored a variety of sources about Akhenaten from his own time. It is evident that he wanted to portray himself as different from the ordinary. Ancient judgements of Akhenaten come from later reigns, when pharaohs chose to remove his images and inscriptions and omit him from the king lists. In the Nineteenth Dynasty he was referred to as 'the heretic' and 'that criminal of Akhetaten'.

Modern images and interpretations of Akhenaten

> 'You're never going to find two Egyptologists who agree on this period.'
>
> (Nicholas Reeves, British Egyptologist)

> 'The minute you begin to write about those people you begin to write fiction.'
>
> (Barry Kemp, archaeologist at Cambridge University)

Modern representations of Akhenaten reflect a wide range of changing perspectives from the early days of Egyptology to the present. Some of these include:

- a naive, religious fanatic
- an inspired religious reformer
- a visionary whose worship of a single god anticipated the monotheism of later Judaism, Christianity and Islam
- an astute politician intent on the destruction of the Amun cult
- an intelligent and competent ruler.

You must now examine these modern interpretations of Akhenaten and reach your own conclusions. The following sources offer a range of opinions on Akhenaten's life and career for you to evaluate.

SOURCE 52

Whatever speculations the original and uncharacteristic reign of Akhenaten may arouse, we can only judge by what evidence his monuments have bequeathed us, tenuous as it may be. The expression his artists recorded – when he groped for Nefertiti's supporting arm in his daughter's death chamber, or registered grim distaste at the wringing of the neck of a sacrificial bird, or the affection between him and other members of his family, or the joy of his followers in his presence – all portray 'The Good Ruler who loves Mankind'. These and other touches strike a chord that is humane and sympathetic.

C. Aldred, *Akhenaten: King of Egypt*, Thames & Hudson, London, p. 305

SOURCE 53

Akhenaten was certainly not a 'visionary'; he was a methodical rationalist. His reforms were implemented one by one, as soon as the necessary political conditions had been created.

This philosopher on the throne of the pharaohs was certainly not unworldly. He manipulated the power of the institutions at his command in virtuoso fashion, and his eventual failure was probably not the result of a loss of political control.

E. Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many*, trans. J. Baines, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1982, pp. 244–5

SOURCE 54

What manner of man was this? Because of his religious reforms, Akhenaten has for long struck a chord in today's predominantly monotheistic world; and the fact that pharaoh's revolution ultimately failed has seemed only to confirm his role as an early revealer of religious truth – a power for good. Such a spin, promoted almost a century ago by James Henry Breasted and Arthur Weigall and eagerly taken up by scholars and general public alike, is certainly wrong, and now beginning to give way to darker visions. As prophets go, it seems clear that Akhenaten was a false one, and working very much in his own political interest.

N. Reeves, *Akhenaten: Egypt's False Prophet*, Thames & Hudson, London, 2001, pp. 8–9

SOURCE 55

If the king and his circle inspire me somewhat with contempt, it is apprehension I feel when I contemplate his 'religion'. In Egypt the sun may well be a reliable and beneficent power, but it is nonetheless destructive, and mankind seeks to hide from it. If Re must be worshipped, let there be a refuge of shade close at hand! … For all that can be said in his favour, Akhenaten in spirit remains to the end totalitarian. The right of an individual to choose was wholly foreign to him. He was the champion of a universal, celestial power who demanded universal submission, claimed universal truth, and from whom no further revelation could be expected. I cannot conceive a more tiresome regime under which to be fated to live.

D. Redford, *Akhenaten: The Heretic King*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1984, p. 235

6.13 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 52–55

1. Consider the use of language in the sources. Find examples of emotive expression, bias or exaggeration.
2. Which views can be supported by specific evidence from Akhenaten's reign?
3. Do any of the sources contradict each other? How would you deal with this problem?
4. Which source comes closest to your own assessment of Akhenaten? Why?

6.13 Check your learning

1. Discuss or debate the following:
   - a. Akhenaten – religious visionary or political opportunist?
   - b. Akhenaten, as we know him today, is a fiction: a construct of scholars' imaginations.
2. Writing tasks:
   - a. To what extent have the images and interpretations of Akhenaten changed over time?
   - b. Assess Akhenaten's influence on his time.

Chapter conclusion

With the support of his wife Nefertiti, Akhenaten changed the focus of religious belief and practice from the state god, Amun, and the cults of other gods, to a single god, the Aten. He moved the capital of Egypt from Thebes to Akhetaten, a city dedicated to the Aten's worship; it occupied a site known today as el-Amarna. All features of New Kingdom life underwent substantial change at this time, the most obvious being religion, art and architecture. Yet, there is also evidence of the continuity of many aspects of traditional Egyptian culture, albeit in another form. When Akhenaten died, his successors restored the worship of Amun and systematically set about destroying his monuments in an attempt to obliterate all memory of both the pharaoh and the 'heretical' acts of his reign.

obook assess

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare students for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

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7

The Near East – Xerxes

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. Who was Xerxes and how did he rise to prominence?
2. How did Xerxes administer the Persian Empire?
3. What was the significance of Persepolis in the reign of Xerxes?
4. How was foreign policy conducted during Xerxes' reign?
5. How important were Xerxes' relationships with prominent Persians and non-Persians?
6. How do ancient and modern sources contribute to our understanding and assessment of Xerxes?

FOCUS CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Perspectives

When studying Xerxes, it is essential to recognise differing perspectives. Following the defeat of the Persian army by the Greeks in the 5th century BC, Greek writers portrayed Xerxes as an arrogant, impious aggressor, ruined by the luxury of the Persian court. The earliest Greek perspectives come from Aeschylus' *Persai* and Herodotus' *The Histories*. Their Hellenocentric perspective – that is, a largely one-sided Greek view – continues to colour interpretations of Xerxes' actions to this day. The Persian perspective comes from official inscriptions, as well as royal buildings and their decoration. The student of Xerxes must examine these perspectives to reach an understanding of this controversial personality.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Explain Xerxes' background and rise to prominence.
2. Assess Xerxes' administration of the Persian Empire.
3. Discuss Xerxes' conduct of foreign policy.
4. Assess the significance of Persepolis in the reign of Xerxes.
5. Evaluate the importance of Xerxes' relationships with prominent Persians and non-Persians.
6. Assess the contribution of ancient and modern sources to our understanding and assessment of Xerxes.

SOURCE 1 A relief of Xerxes leaving his palace in Persepolis

7.1

Historical context

Achaemenid dynasty relating to the hereditary rulers in Persia from Cyrus I to Darius III (553–330 BC)

The Persian **Achaemenid dynasty** (560–330 BC) established the first empire in world history. Xerxes, who succeeded to the kingship in 486 BC, inherited the empire created by his three predecessors – Cyrus the Great, Cambyses and Darius I. It was the largest and most powerful that the ancient world had yet seen.

THE PERSIAN EMPIRE, 486 BC

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 2 The Persian Empire at the accession of Xerxes in 486 BC

Geography and resources of the empire

The landform, climate and resources of the Persian Empire reflected the great diversity of its many regions. At its centre was the homeland of the Persians, a landlocked region that formed a bridge between central and western Asia. Its terrain consisted of a great central plateau of arid desert surrounded by rugged ranges such as the Zagros Mountains, which reached peaks of 5000 metres.

The Persian economy was based largely on agriculture and livestock. Other valuable resources included the timber of the mountains; metals such as iron, copper, tin and lead; and semi-precious stones such as turquoise and lapis lazuli. Horses for the Persian cavalry were bred in the rich pasturelands of the mountain regions, which also maintained stocks of goats, cattle and sheep – the latter an important source of wool for textiles.

The conquest of Media to the north-west added grain- and horse-producing regions to the empire. Further west, the incorporation of Babylonia and Mesopotamia provided a range of wild animals such as lions, bears and ostriches. Their fertile plains yielded an abundance of barley, figs, dates, pomegranates, sesame and wine made from date palms.

The trading system introduced by Achaemenid rule facilitated the exchange of commodities throughout the vast reaches of the empire. As a result of this commercial activity, Persian words for products traded became popular and eventually entered the English language. Some examples include bazaar, shawl, sash, turquoise, tiara, orange, lemon, peach, spinach and asparagus.

Of particular importance for the expansion and maintenance of the empire, was the acquisition of the fleets of the conquered territories to form the Persian navy. These included those of the important maritime trading nations of Egypt, Phoenicia and Ionia.

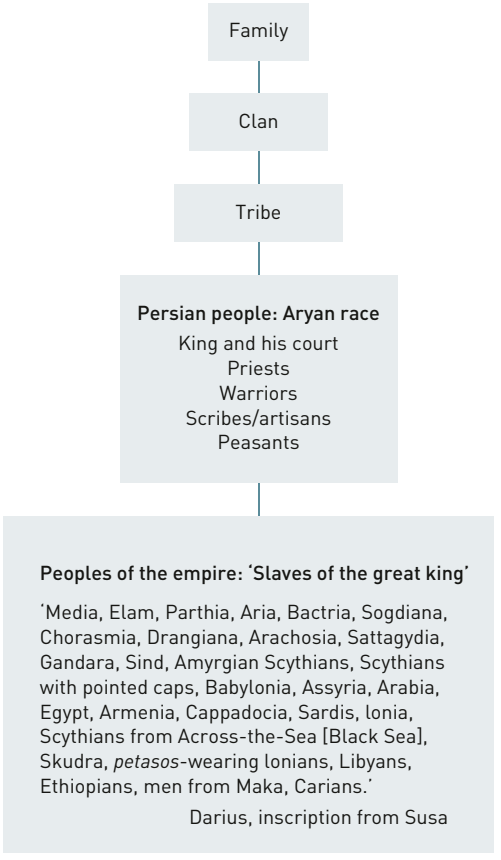
The Persians also exploited the cultural and human resources of its subject peoples. For example, foreign artists and craftsmen were employed on the design and building of Achaemenid building projects such as the great palace at Persepolis. The distinctive, unified Achaemenid style of art and architecture that emerged represents an eclectic mix of Greek, Egyptian, Assyrian and other influences.

SOURCE 3 A pair of winged bulls with human heads guards the entrance to the Gate of All Nations at the Palace of Persepolis – these mythological creatures, called *lamassu* originated in Babylonia and Assyria.

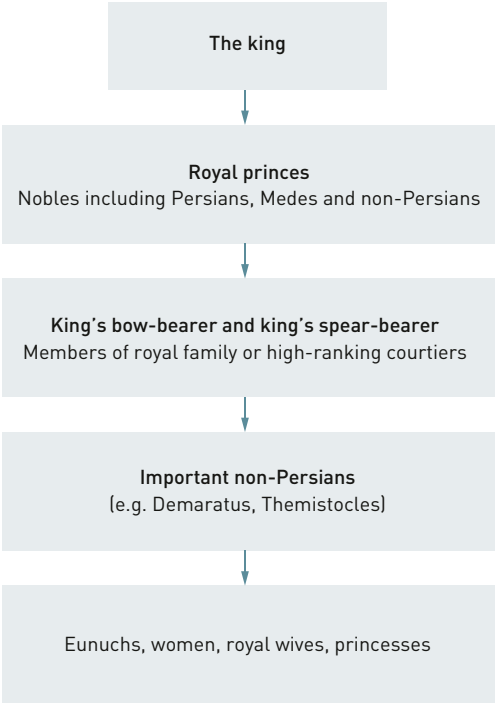
SOURCE 4 A 6th-century BC gold and silver bowl featuring ibex (wild goats) and a central sun-symbol is an example of the fine craftsmanship of the Achaemenid dynasty.

Persian political and social structures

The Achaemenid monarch was the absolute ruler of the Persian people and the empire. All authority – political, legal and military – was centred in the king. In the absence of any clear rules, succession to the Achaemenid kingship was by designation – the reigning king chose his successor, usually his son.



SOURCE 5 Persian society



SOURCE 6 The Persian court

Achaemenid political structure was both feudal and patriarchal. The king's power over property and privilege was delegated to trusted male members of the royal family and nobility – usually high-ranking Medes and Persians – and other persons as the king chose. Marriage alliances between the royal family and the nobility created an extensive network of mutually beneficial relationships based on the king's support in return for the nobles' loyalty.

The king exercised power over the subject peoples of the empire through the **satrapy system**. However, Persian political structures were not imposed, but worked alongside those of the subject nations – an enlightened policy that generally provided for stability.

Achaemenid kings, from the reign of Darius I onwards, claimed to rule with the sanction of the god Ahuramazda. Under the guidance of this deity, the kings saw themselves as wise, morally upright leaders of their people. Unlike their Near Eastern neighbours, for example Egypt, Achaemenid kings did not claim to be divine.

Members of the king's court who were also his counsellors and advisers were ranked according to merit. Rewards for service and loyalty were distributed in the form of gifts such as land, clothing and jewellery. Nobles of the court are easily distinguished in reliefs from the palaces of Susa and Persepolis by the richness of their robes and jewellery such as necklaces and bracelets.

Royal women

Female social status in Persia was determined by the rank of male relatives. The top-ranking women at the Persian court were the king's mother and the king's wife, followed by the king's daughters. Persian kings often had many wives to increase the number of offspring and ensure the succession. Non-Persian women could be **concubines** of the king but never wives.

Few sources detailing the lives of Persian women have survived and there are few representations of women in Persian imperial art. However, surviving evidence from the **Persepolis Fortification Archive and Persepolis Treasury Archive** – and the existence of personal seals – indicates that high-ranking women led privileged lives and enjoyed a measure of influence and economic independence. They could own estates and employ workers and officials to manage them. They accompanied the king and his entourage on tours of the empire and capital cities, but could also travel independently to visit and inspect their own properties.

The identification of a so-called 'harem' of Xerxes at Persepolis owes more to the imagination of modern excavators of the site than to any ancient reality. The depiction of the king's court as a nest of scheming and manipulative females is Greek invention. We know that Xerxes had only one wife, Amestris, although little else is known about her. His mother, Atossa, is not named anywhere in the Persian sources, only in Greek ones.

Sources and perspectives

An important historiographical issue to consider in your study of Xerxes is the Hellenocentrism of the sources – that is, the domination of Greek sources – and, as a result, Greek perspective for many of the events of this period. Persian sources such as buildings, royal inscriptions and some official archives do exist, but do not reveal anything about some important events of the reign. For example, there is no Persian account of the wars between Persia and Greece. The hostilities between Greece and Persia during this period have clearly affected the value of two of our main Greek sources, Herodotus and Aeschylus.

Herodotus (c. 484 – c. 424 BC) was an Ionian Greek, originally from Halicarnassus, on the south-west coast of Asia Minor. He was born around the time of the second Babylonian revolt shortly after Xerxes' accession. His *Histories* contain lively and detailed narratives of the many peoples and places he saw on his extensive travels around the Mediterranean world. He lived for some time in Athens. In Books 6–8 of *The Histories* there is a detailed account of the wars between the Greeks and the Persians.

Aeschylus (c. 525 – c. 456 BC) was an Athenian who fought in the war against the Persians at Marathon (490 BC) and at Salamis (480 BC). He later became a playwright and produced up to 90 plays, only seven of which have survived. His play *Persai* (*The Persians*), although set in the Persian court at Persepolis, gives a Greek perspective of Xerxes' invasion of 480–479 BC. First performed at Athens in 472 BC, it is a celebration of the Greek victory.

Ctesias (late 5th–4th century BC) was a Greek historian and physician who lived at the Persian court. He was physician to Artaxerxes II (404–359 BC). He wrote a history of Persia, *Persika,* in 23 books of which only fragments remain. He claims to have made detailed researches about the reigns of the Persian kings from the palace archives. Some of his work was found and preserved by the Byzantine scholar Photius in the 9th century.

satrapy system
the system used by the Persian kings to govern the empire, based on regions run by provincial governors or satraps

7.1 Check your learning

1 Research the three Greek writers, Herodotus, Aeschylus and Ctesias. You will find more information about Herodotus and Aeschylus in 11.1 Historical context. For Ctesias, search online for 'Ctesias Encyclopaedia Iranica'.

2 Create a table like the one below and use it to record the information you discover about Herodotus, Aeschylus and Ctesias.
- Record the relevant biographical information about each writer in the table.
- In the last column, make a note of any details from your reading and discussion that may affect the value of the sources for our understanding of the reign of Xerxes.

SOURCE	WRITER	BIOGRAPHICAL DETAIL	HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ISSUES

3 Revisit the table as you study this chapter and include additional information.

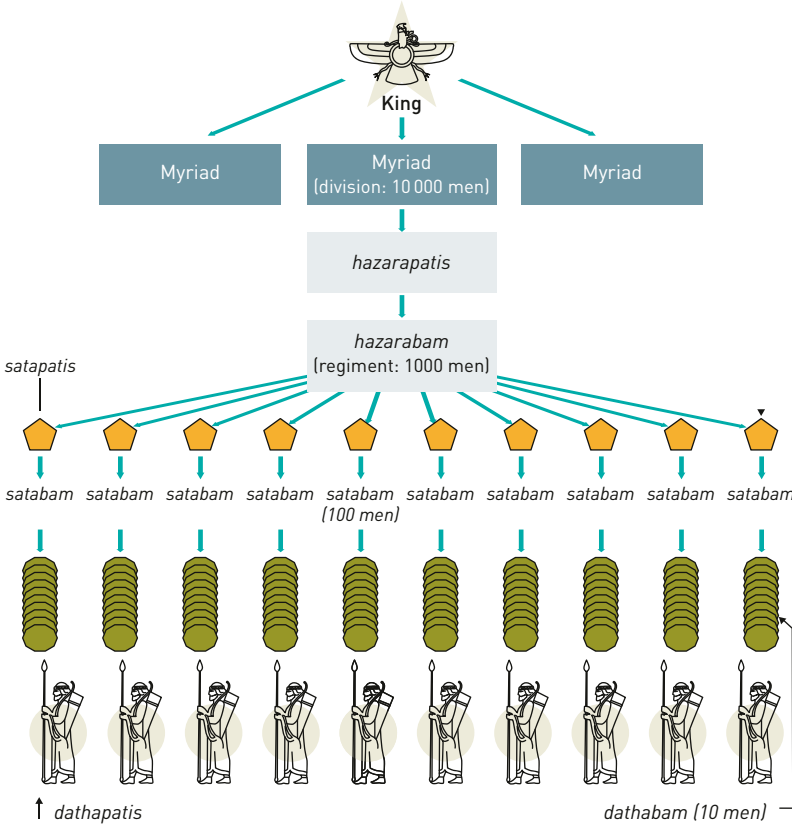
4 Find out more about the different groups in Persian society as shown in Source 5.

concubine
a secondary wife, usually ranking lower than official wives in a king's household

Persepolis Fortification Archive and Persepolis Treasury Archive
two groups of clay administrative archives found in Xerxes' capital at Persepolis

7.2 Persian military structures

The Persian army, formed during the campaigns of Cyrus the Great, developed from the military traditions and tactics used by the Assyrian army, which had dominated the Near East before the rise of the Persians. In these early years the king was the supreme commander of the army, the essence of which was the infantry, made up of *sparabara* – archers who carried a large body shield called a *spara*.



SOURCE 7 Organisation of the Persian army – note that the Persian suffix *-bam* indicates the unit, while the suffix *-patis* refers to the leader of the unit

SOURCE 8 These figures in glazed brick relief at the Palace of Susa are thought to represent the king's bodyguard, the famous Immortals.

Elite Persian units

The largest unit in the Persian army was a division, comprising 10 000 men. The Greeks referred to this as a *myriad*; we do not know what term the Persians used to describe it. The elite myriad of the Persian army was the king's personal division, the 10 000 specially chosen 'Immortals', so called because their numbers were always kept up to 10 000. Included within the Immortals was the highest-ranking group of all, the *Arstibara* or king's 'spear-bearers', composed of members of the Persian nobility. Their high status in reliefs, such as in Source 8, was indicated by their gold bracelets and elaborately ornamented gowns. Each carried a spear and bow, and wore a shoulder scabbard.

Each myriad consisted of 10 regiments, each of 1000 men. Each regiment, or *hazarabam*, was commanded by a *hazarapatis*, or 'commander of a thousand'. Below the *hazarabam*, the army was further divided into units based on the decimal system, each with its commander, as shown in Source 7. The smallest unit was the *dathabam*, consisting of 10 men. Their leader, the *dathapatis*, was stationed in the front rank, carrying the *spara*. Behind him, in file, came the other nine in the *dathabam* unit, each armed with a bow and sword.

Persian battle formations also included lines of spear-men armed with shields in front of long lines of archers. However, as the Persian Wars showed, the lightly protected archers were rarely a match for the heavily armed Greek **hoplite phalanx**, which excelled in close combat.

Subject peoples in the army

As the empire expanded, the army was increased by the addition of infantry conscripted from the subject peoples. Each of these units was commanded by a Persian nobleman appointed by the king. Evidence of these peoples can be found in the sculptured reliefs from the palace at Persepolis. Herodotus gives a detailed roll-call of the many different subject peoples who marched in Xerxes' huge army, together with a description of their clothing and weaponry.

SOURCE 9 Persian and Median soldiers, from Persepolis

The cavalry

The cavalry was the most important addition to the army in the early years of empire building. The Medes, who were regarded as the finest horsemen in Asia, formed the cream of the cavalry. After Cyrus conquered Croesus of Lydia in 546 BC, Lydian cavalry contingents were also added to the Persian army. Cyrus, who appreciated the mobility of cavalry units, formed contingents of them from among the Persian nobility. By the time of Xerxes' campaign against Greece, the cavalry included contingents of Bactrians, Sagartians, Cissians and Indians, as well as Libyan chariotry and Arabian camel units.

hoplite phalanx a Greek battle formation in which the hoplites, citizen soldiers, lined up in ranks with their shields locked together, and their spears projecting, presenting a shield wall and a mass of spear points to the enemy

The navy

Because Persia was a landlocked nation, it possessed no navy of its own, but relied on the use of the navies of the maritime nations that it conquered. The fleets of the Phoenicians, Egyptians and Ionians formed the core of the Persian navy to which were added smaller contingents from eastern Mediterranean states such as Cyprus, Pamphylia, Lycia and Caria. The crews of these ships were manned by the marines of the subject states as well as a number of Persian sailors. Each state's navy was commanded by its own naval officers under the overall command of Persian admirals.

7.2 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 8 & 9

1 Identify the weapons and clothing worn by the Immortals.
2 What weapons are carried by the Median and Persian soldiers?

7.2 Check your learning

1 What does the organisation of the Persian army suggest about its significance in Persian society?
2 What roles did the subject peoples play in the Persian armed forces?

7.3 Persian Empire: Expansion, religion and kingship

The foundation and expansion of the Persian Empire brought Persian administration and culture to a vast number of subject peoples. However, although the Persians had their own religion, it was not imposed on the people they ruled. The Persian concept of kingship developed with the expansion of the empire.

Expansion of the Persian Empire

The Persian Empire was founded by Xerxes' grandfather, Cyrus the Great, who reigned c. 560–530 BC. He conquered and incorporated into Persia the earlier neighbouring kingdoms of the Medes, Lydians and Babylonians. Cyrus' son and successor, Cambyses, reigned for only 8 years, but added Egypt to the empire. The empire reached its greatest extent with the addition of Thrace and Macedonia under Darius I. Cyrus and Darius also set in place an efficient system of administration to control the people and resources of the empire. The basis of this was the satrapy system – 23 administrative districts each governed on behalf of the king by a satrap, usually a high-ranking Persian official.

The amount of territory under Persian rule was vast by any standard; it covered 7.5 million square kilometres, making it comparable in size to the Roman Empire of later times. It stretched from Libya and Egypt in the west across to India in the east, and from southern Russia in the north to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean in the south. By the time of Darius I, the empire included 30 nations (see Source 2).

Just as remarkable as the vastness of the empire was its longevity. It remained largely intact for the 200 years from its foundation under Cyrus II in 560 BC until its conquest by Alexander the Great in 330 BC. One reason for this success was Persian tolerance of the political and cultural systems of the subject peoples. The Persians were astute administrators and rarely tried to impose their own culture. They were more interested in harnessing the resources of the empire for their own purposes, and so a policy that sought cooperation, rather than applying coercion, was generally followed.

Religion in the Persian Empire

Aryan referring to an ancient people who spoke an Indo-European language; they invaded northern India in the 2nd millennium BC

The influences that shaped Persian religion can be traced to the beliefs and practices of the different **Aryan** peoples who settled in the Iranian plateau before the 6th century BC. Their most important god was a sky god, Ahuramazda. Other gods included Mithras, a sun god, and Anahita, a fertility goddess. Natural forces such as earth, fire and water were important elements of religious belief. Religious ritual was conducted by priests called Magi. They performed sacrifices and conducted all the important rituals, including those involving the tending of the sacred fires at fire altars.

Ethical concepts and the dualism evident in the conflict between good and evil were introduced into Persian religion largely through the influence of the teachings of Zoroaster, a 7th-century prophet. Ahuramazda and Mithras came to represent qualities such as truth and justice. The world was also full of evil represented by spirits called *daevas* and life was seen as a constant struggle between the forces of good and evil, truth and falsehood.

SOURCE 10
A relief frieze from Persepolis depicting representatives from the various lands of the empire bearing gifts for the great king

By the reign of Darius, Ahuramazda had emerged as the chief god of the Achaemenid dynasty, a wise creator god, protector of the king and sponsor of his policies. The king became Ahuramazda's earthly representative. Darius' successors maintained and developed this close association with the god, for both political and religious reasons.

Ahuramazda was the principal god, but he was not an exclusive one. Achaemenid kings, in line with a general policy of political and cultural tolerance of subject peoples, paid due respect to foreign cults and gods and did not attempt to impose their religious royal cult on other peoples.

In Egypt, where the pharaoh was regarded as both god and king, Persian kings followed custom by adopting pharaonic titles, observing rituals associated with the **Apis bull cult** and the upkeep of temples. Royal patronage was similarly extended to other foreign cults such as those in Babylon and Jerusalem, where Xerxes' predecessor Cyrus authorised the restoration of temples. Departures from this policy might occasionally have been necessitated by the need to deal with sporadic rebellions or other unrest around the empire, but such actions seem to have been based on pragmatic and diplomatic rather than religious concerns.

SOURCE 11 This figure within a winged disc, often shown in reliefs hovering above the king, is thought to represent Ahuramazda, or the king's divine royal glory: his *farr*.

Apis bull cult
Egyptian worship of a bull sacred to the city of Memphis

Persian concept of kingship

The Achaemenid kingship that Xerxes inherited on his accession in 486 BC represented a fusion of elements shaped by its Persian origins and by the empire that it had acquired. Inscriptions from the reigns of Darius I and Xerxes indicate the importance that they attached to establishing their right to rule. For example, the opening lines of the famous **Behistun inscription** of Darius I, list his ancestors and explain his struggle for the succession (see Source 16).

Behistun inscription
an inscription recording the victories of Darius I against those who rebelled against his rule

SOURCE 12 The Behistun relief and inscription of Darius showing his victory over those who rebelled against his succession

The Behistun relief was placed high on a cliff face along the road that connected the capitals of Babylon and Ecbatana. A central feature is the link to Ahuramazda. The relief and inscription show Darius' victory over those who rebelled against his succession. The text attributes his success to the 'grace of Ahuramazda', who is shown hovering above the scene.

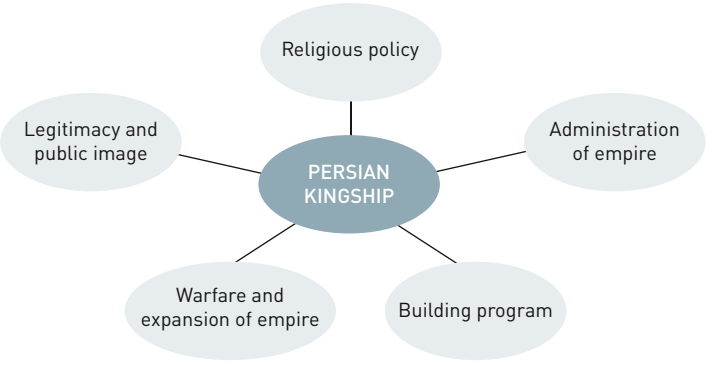
Xerxes also cites his pedigree in inscriptions of his reign. Legitimacy was clearly an important issue for a dynasty that did not have established rules of succession.

The public image of the kings, as rulers of a great empire is reflected in the titles and iconography they adopted. Xerxes refers to himself as 'the great king, king of kings, king of lands containing many men …'. This is followed by a long list of the many peoples who made up the Persian Empire. The iconography of imperial rule can be seen in the Achaemenid art and architecture of the great building programs, such as those in Susa and Persepolis. Source 14 is a sculptural relief from the treasury at Persepolis showing Darius I giving audience to delegations of foreign envoys from the subject states of the empire. Xerxes and other members of the court are present, standing behind the throne.

It is interesting that Achaemenid iconography is more concerned to show the king as a peaceful ruler and administrator, rather than a conquering warrior – an image which was typical of other Near Eastern nations such as Egypt and Assyria. Such motifs were absorbed into Persian art and architecture, but did not dominate the **ideology of kingship**.

ideology of kingship
a set of beliefs or principles relating to the state of being a king

The god of the Achaemenid dynasty was Ahuramazda. He was both the guardian and patron of the kings and the god in whose name the empire had been won. Xerxes mentions other gods, but Ahuramazda was always the supreme deity. However, as we have already seen, Persian kings from Cyrus on were tolerant of foreign cults and did not impose Persian beliefs.



SOURCE 13 Features of Persian kingship

SOURCE 14 The 'treasury relief' from Persepolis – Darius I is seated, and his son Xerxes and other members of the court stand behind the throne.

7.3 Understanding and using the sources

Source 12

1 How does Darius show his devotion to Ahuramazda?
2 How does the relief show his supremacy over the other figures?

Source 14

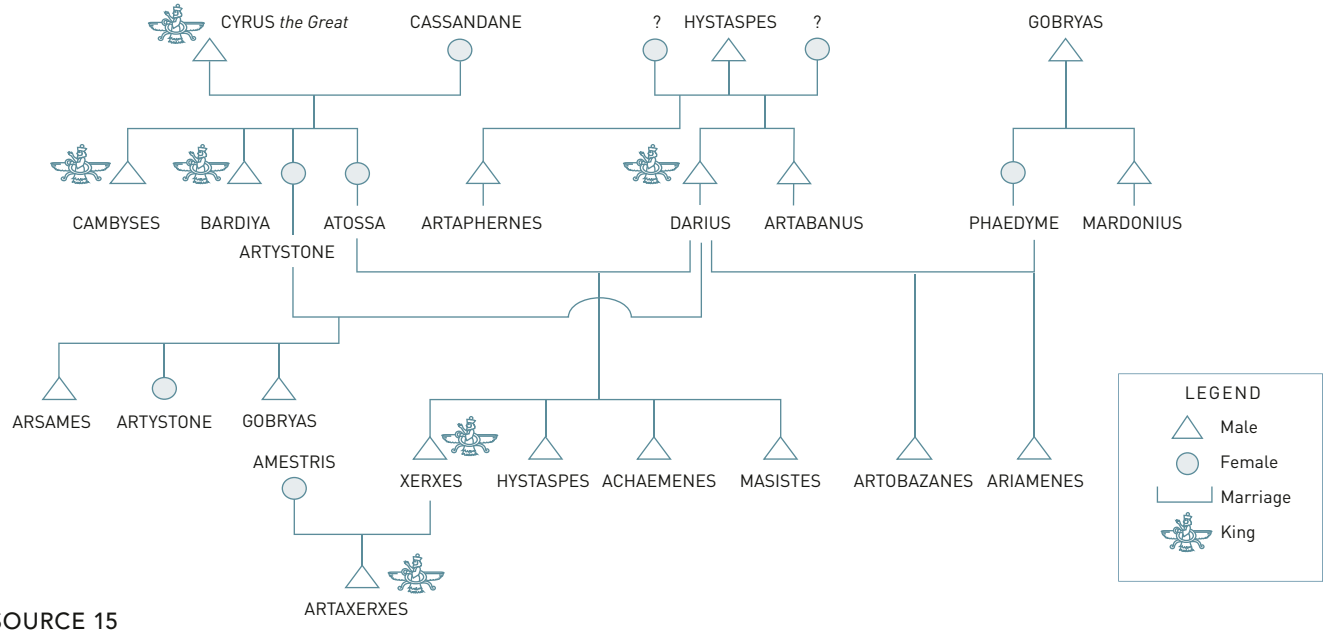
3 How is the status of the king shown in the 'treasury relief'?
4 Why is Xerxes shown standing behind the throne?
5 Who are the other members of the court likely to be (see Source 6)?

7.3 Check your learning

1 Read a more detailed account of the expansion of the Persian Empire in Chapter 11.
2 Research the Behistun relief and inscription. Where is it located? Why? What historical events lie behind it?

7.4 Background and rise to prominence

Xerxes belonged to the Achaemenid dynasty, named for Achaemenes, claimed by Darius I as an ancestor and leader of people who settled in the land that was later to become Persia.



SOURCE 15
Xerxes' family tree

Family background and status

On his paternal side, Xerxes could trace his ancestry back to Achaemenes, founder of the dynasty. Xerxes' father, Darius, came to the throne in 522 BC in questionable circumstances, after the death of Cambyses, successor to Cyrus the Great. In Source 16, an extract from the Behistun inscription, Darius claims his ancestry and his right to be king.

SOURCE 16

I am Darius, the great king, king of kings, the king of Persia, the king of countries, the son of Hystaspes, the grandson of Arsames, the Achaemenid.

King Darius says: My father is Hystaspes; the father of Hystaspes was Arsames; the father of Arsames was Ariaramnes; the father of Ariaramnes was Teispes; the father of Teispes was Achaemenes.

King Darius says: That is why we are called Achaemenids; from antiquity we have been noble; from antiquity has our dynasty been royal.

King Darius says: Eight of my dynasty were kings before me; I am the ninth. Nine in succession we have been kings.

King Darius says: By the grace of Ahuramazda am I king; Ahuramazda has granted me the kingdom.

The Behistun Inscription, Livius.org

On his maternal side, Xerxes could claim descent from Cyrus the Great, his grandfather. His own statement of family background appears in his famous *Daeva* inscription (see Source 17). Like Darius, he claimed the divine sanction of Ahuramazda for his reign.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

SOURCE 17

A great god is Ahuramazda, who created this earth, who created man, who created peace for man, who made Xerxes king, one king of many, one lord of many.

I am Xerxes, the great king, king of kings, king of lands containing many men, king in this great earth far and wide, son of Darius the king, an Achaemenid, a Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan, of Aryan seed.

Says Xerxes the king: By the favour of Ahuramazda, these are the lands of which I am king outside Parsa [ancient name for Persia] … I governed them, they brought tribute to me, they did that which was commanded them by me; the law which was mine, that held them firm.

A. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1948, p. 231

Like the kings before him, Xerxes zealously maintained royal political and religious traditions. He emphasised his royal lineage, particularly his descent from the Achaemenid line.

Little is known of Xerxes' childhood and youth; however, some conclusions can be drawn about the education of Persian upper-class males from available sources. Herodotus, for example, recorded that Persian males were educated between the ages of 5 and 20, and that they were taught 'to ride, to use the bow and to speak the truth'. This description is supported by Sources 18 and 19, which refer to the training of high-ranking males in 5th-century BC Persia. Source 18 is an inscription on Darius' tomb at Naqsh-i Rustam, while Source 19 is a comment by Xenophon on Cyrus the Younger.

SOURCE 18

Trained am I both with hands and feet. As a horseman I am a good horseman. As bowman I am a good bowman both afoot and on horseback. As a spearman I am a good spearman both afoot and on horseback.

R. Kent, *Old Persian: Grammar Texts, Lexicon*, American Oriental Series, Vol. 33, American Oriental Society, New Haven, Connecticut, 1953, p. 140

SOURCE 19

… he was remarkable for his fondness for horses and being able to manage them extremely well. In the military arts also of archery and spear-throwing they judged him to be the most eager to learn and the most willing to practise them.

Xenophon, *Anabasis*, I.9.3–4

7.4 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 15, 16 & 17

1. Who were Xerxes' parents and brothers?
2. How was Xerxes' claim to the throne strengthened by his descent from Cyrus the Great?
3. Why would Darius have married Atossa?
4. Using Sources 15 and 16, list the nine kings that Darius refers to.
5. What is Xerxes' claim concerning his ancestry in Source 17?
6. Why does Xerxes give Ahuramazda the chief credit for his accession (Source 17)?

Sources 18 & 19

7. Neither of the sources refers specifically to Xerxes. Are they still valuable? Why or why not?

7.5 Succession to kingship

Little evidence survives for Xerxes' career before his accession. Documentary evidence from Borsippa, an archaeological site near Babylon, refers to the completion of a 'new palace' in which Xerxes may have resided as personal representative of his father. It is therefore possible that this period provided training for his future role as king. In the Persepolis 'treasury relief' of his father Darius I (see Source 14), Xerxes is shown standing behind the throne in the role of crown prince.

Some scholars have suggested that Xerxes shared a **co-regency** with his father in the last 11 years of Darius' reign. This is based on a Persepolis inscription in which Xerxes is said to have become king after Darius 'left the throne'. Darius, then, may have stepped aside in favour of his son. Another version of the same text, in the **Akkadian** language, uses the term 'he went to his fate'. This, according to the historian Dandamaev, indicates that Darius died before Xerxes' accession, thus excluding the possibility of a co-regency.

co-regency
a system where rule is shared by two monarchs; in Egypt usually between senior and junior partners

Akkadian
a Semitic language spoken in Mesopotamia from the 3rd to the 1st millennium BC; used as the language of diplomacy in the region

It was not straightforward that Xerxes would become crown prince and succeed his father Darius. Xerxes was not Darius' eldest son – Artobazanes was his eldest. Artobazanes appears to have been named as Darius' successor in 507 BC. However, before Darius' death, quarrels over the succession erupted between the supporters of Artobazanes and those of Xerxes. An inscription dating to the beginning of Xerxes' reign alludes to this power struggle (see Source 20).

SOURCE 20

Other sons of Darius there were, [but] – thus unto Ahuramazda was the desire – Darius my father made me the greatest after himself.

R. Kent, *Old Persian: Grammar Texts, Lexicon*, American Oriental Series, Vol. 33, American Oriental Society, New Haven, Connecticut, 1953, p. 150

Herodotus tells us that the solution was provided by Demaratus, an exiled Spartan king residing at the Persian court, who pointed out that Xerxes was the first son born to Darius after he had taken the throne. Because of this, Xerxes had a better claim than Artobazanes, who was born when his father was still a commoner. As there were no clear rules about who should succeed a Persian king, Darius appears to have accepted this advice. However, archaeologist J.M. Cook, in his book *The Persian Empire*, points out that Xerxes had a stronger claim than his brother because his mother, Atossa, was the daughter of Cyrus the Great.

Interestingly, the lines of the *Daeva* inscription that follow those given in Source 17 suggest that Xerxes' assumption of power was not entirely without incident.

SOURCE 21

Says Xerxes the king: When I became king, there is among these countries which are inscribed above, [one which] was in commotion. Afterwards Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favour of Ahuramazda, I smote that country and put it down in its place.

Kent, 1953, p. 151

Xerxes could be referring to the satrapy of Bactria governed by Xerxes' brother Ariamenes. According to Ctesias, a source from a later period, Ariamenes sought to challenge Xerxes' right to the succession. He appears to have been won over as he is recorded as having placed the crown upon his brother's head.

7.5 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 20 & 21

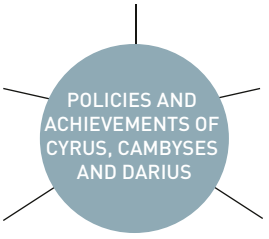
1 What do these sources suggest about Xerxes' succession to kingship?

2 What are the limitations of these sources?

7.5 Check your learning

1 Read more about the reigns of Cyrus, Cambyses and Darius. The events surrounding Darius' succession are particularly important considering the claims made in his inscriptions, for example at Behistun.

2 Summarise the policies and achievements you discover from your research of Cyrus, Cambyses and Darius, using a diagram similar to that shown in Source 13.



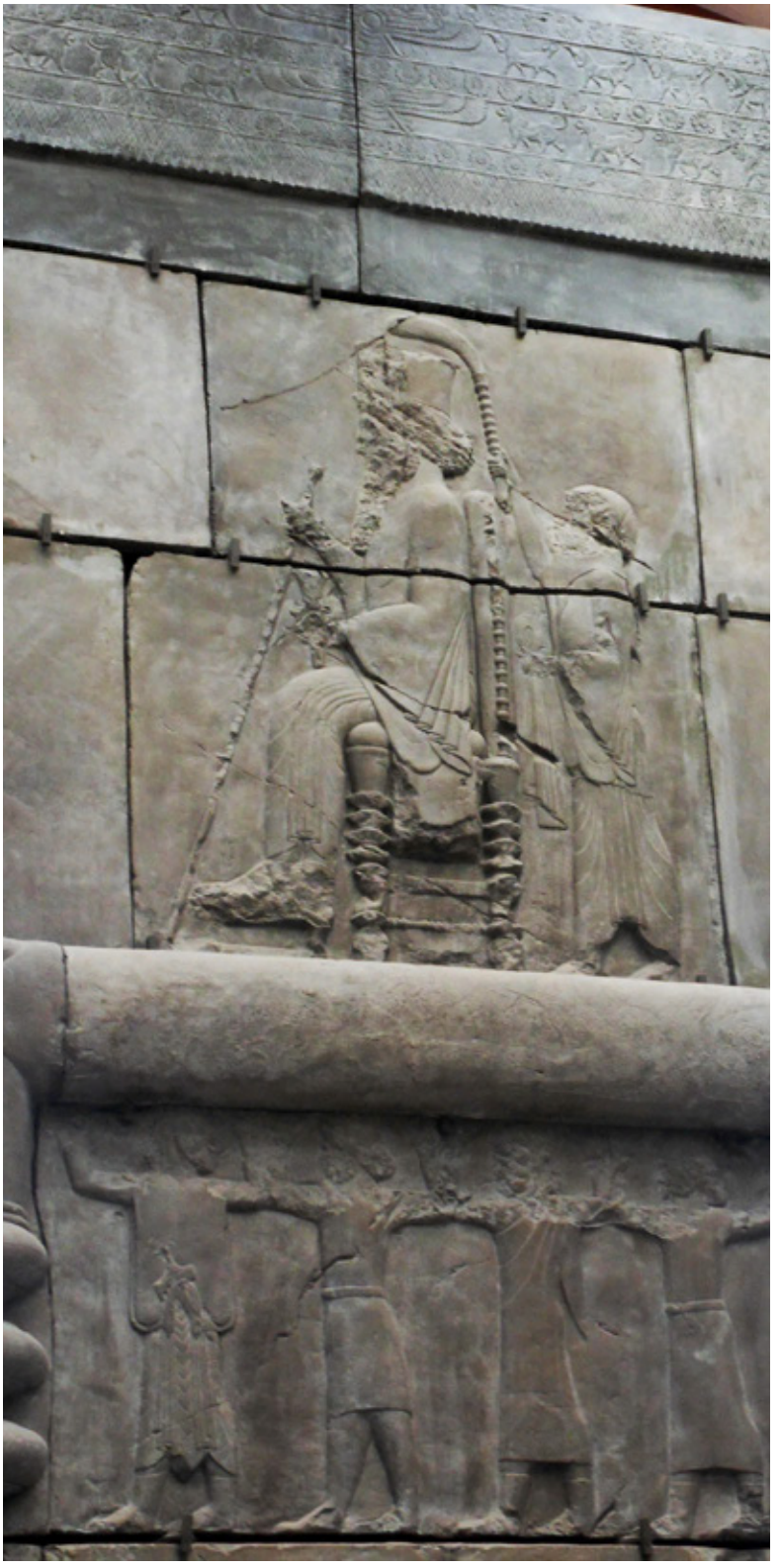
3 What do their reigns suggest about the influences that shaped Xerxes' reign?

4 Do you accept Herodotus' story about the advice of Demaratus concerning Xerxes' right to the Persian throne? Give reasons for your answer. What questions would you ask about the reliability of this account?

5 Writing task: Explain how Xerxes' background prepared him to be king of Persia.

To help plan your response:

- identify relevant aspects of Xerxes' background
- use these to structure your response
- make the relationship between the aspects and Xerxes being king of Persia clear.



SOURCE 22 A cast of a palace doorway from Persepolis depicting Xerxes seated on a throne, with sceptre and lotus flower. An attendant stands next to the king, who is covered by a canopy.

7.6 Administration of the Persian Empire

The system of imperial administration under Xerxes had been largely created by Cyrus and Darius before him. The system was functioning efficiently to judge by the marshalling of resources and troops in preparation for his Greek campaign. Herodotus tells us that 'Xerxes in the process of assembling his armies, had every corner of the continent ransacked'.

Key features of imperial administration

The division of the large satrapy of Babylon into two smaller regional districts, of Babylon and Across-the-River, is thought to have occurred in the reign of Xerxes. Another possibly related administrative reform was the abolition of the post of provincial governor of Babylon. The date of these measures is uncertain, but it is possible they were responses to the revolt of Babylon early in his reign. If so, they indicate Xerxes' appreciation of the need for tighter control of this important province of the empire.

The administrative processes were based on ancient and sophisticated systems of record- and book-keeping as evidenced by the palace archives, such as the Persepolis Treasury and Persepolis Fortification Tablets. The key features of imperial administration are summarised in Source 23.

Satrapy system

Division of the empire into 23 administrative districts called satrapies

Each was administered by a governor (satrap) directly responsible to the king

High-ranking family members were appointed to the most important ones, e.g. Xerxes' brother, Achaemenes, was satrap of Egypt

Satraps were responsible for maintaining the peace, tax collection and conscription of troops and labourers

Local forms of government were tolerated provided they paid their taxes, kept the peace and complied with requests for troops and other services

Roads and communications

A 2500-km-long highway, the 'royal road' from Susa to Sardis – protected by over 100 sentry fortifications

Other feeder roads created the fastest communication network in the ancient world

Royal messengers represented the world's first 'postal system'– within 15 days, messages could be relayed anywhere in the empire

Communication and trade were also conducted by sea, particularly by Phoenician and Cilician trading ships in the eastern Mediterranean

Under Darius I, the valuable trade of Egypt was improved via the building of a canal to link the Red Sea with the Nile

IMPERIAL ADMINISTRATION

Coinage, weights and measures

All were all standardised throughout the empire

Darius introduced gold (the *daric*) and silver coins as legal tender everywhere in the empire

A system of standardised weights based on the Babylonian system was introduced

A new weight, the *karsha*, was introduced during the reign of Darius

Evidence of standardised measures was the royal 'cubit', a black limestone ruler measuring 45.7 cm

Agriculture, tribute, trade

Agriculture was the backbone of the imperial economy – the best agricultural land belonged to the king and land tenure was based on a feudal system

Imperial revenue also came in the form of the tribute (taxes) paid by Persians and subject peoples

Payment was made in silver and goods in kind such as horses and other livestock

A variety of raw materials and manufactured goods was traded around the empire, stimulated by improved communications and standardisation of coinage, weights and measures

SOURCE 23 Administration of the empire

Revolts in the empire

While preparations were being made for the invasion of the Greek mainland, revolts occurred in both Egypt and Babylon. Darius' death meant that Xerxes had to deal with them. Our knowledge of his methods and the repercussions comes largely from Herodotus and other ancient and modern sources derived from his account.

SOURCE 24 A gold *daric* bearing the image of the royal archer was introduced by Darius and used by Persian kings for patronage and reward throughout the empire.

Revolt in Egypt

In 486 BC, shortly before the death of Darius, the satrapy of Egypt rose in revolt, apparently as a protest against the heavy taxes imposed by the Persians. It is possible that Darius had increased taxation throughout the empire to pay for his planned expedition to Greece and his building program. Following his father's death, Xerxes was left to deal with this revolt. Herodotus' version of what happened follows.

SOURCE 25

First, however, in the year following the death of Darius, he marched against those who had revolted from him; and having reduced them, and laid all Egypt under a far harder yoke than ever his father had put upon it, he gave the government to Achaemenes, who was his own brother, and son to Darius.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, VII.8

Russel Granger, in Source 26, argues that this account is not supported by the evidence.

SOURCE 26

… Xerxes' administration aimed at a maximisation of economic return for the imperial coffers [strongboxes for holding valuables]. The view that Xerxes treated Egypt harshly after the rebellion is not tenable. Xerxes took pharaonic titles and donated to temples … the extension of irrigation works … in the Kharga Oasis illustrates the imperial government's desire to extend agricultural production and to keep firm control over revenue raised from renting watercourses. Evidence from such sources as the Ahiqar Scroll demonstrates that trade flourished in Egypt during Xerxes' reign.

R. Granger, 'Legacy: An assessment of Xerxes' reign, Part III', *Teaching History*, Journal of the History Teachers' Association of NSW, 40(2), 2006, p. 17

The Babylonian revolt

Xerxes' preparations for the Greek campaign were further delayed by two revolts involving the city of Babylon. Theories concerning the revolts and Xerxes' response have been reinterpreted recently in light of new evidence and new approaches. Some newly published **cuneiform** documents indicate that the two revolts of Bel-Shimanni and Shamash-eriba both occurred in Xerxes' second year, 484 BC, rather than separated by 2 years as was previously thought.

cuneiform
a system of wedge-shaped writing on clay tablets first developed by the ancient cultures of Mesopotamia and Persia

Traditionally, Xerxes has been charged with brutally suppressing the revolts, destroying Babylon in the process. The charges, largely based on Herodotus and other Greek sources, include:

- the theft and melting down of the golden statue of Bel-Marduk, the chief god of the city of Babylon, resulting in the end of the cult
- the removal of the title 'King of Babylon' from Xerxes' titles and thus the end of Babylonian kingship
- the diversion of the Euphrates River to flow through the middle of the city
- the desecration of the city's shrines, including Marduk's temple of Esagila, and the end of the New Year Festival
- the division of the satrapy of Babylon into two smaller satrapies.

Revised interpretations argue the following:

- The stolen statue was more likely to have been a votive statue, one offered to the god in appreciation for a favour, not the cult statue of Bel-Marduk, the statue embodying the god itself. Herodotus, the main source, refers to a 'statue', not the cult statue and he says nothing about the cessation of the cult.
- Newly published documents show that the title 'King of Babylon' continued to be used throughout Xerxes' reign, and also later in the Achaemenid period.
- There is no evidence that the Euphrates flowed on a new course in the Achaemenid period. The cuneiform texts reveal that it followed exactly the same course as it had done in the Babylonian period.

The situation is summed up in Source 27.

SOURCE 27

Both revolts thus followed immediately after another, lasting for about half a year. Despite this, neither destruction nor cultic impairment can be demonstrated. This deserves emphasis. While the new cuneiform documents certainly place the revolts in Babylon and attest administrative and bureaucratic restructuring, they do not bear witness to harsh repressions or destructions with lasting consequences for the urban topography. The situation has plainly been misunderstood.

W. Henkelman, A. Kuhrt, R. Rollinger & J. Wiesehöfer, 'Herodotus and Babylon reconsidered', *Herodotus and the Persian Empire*, Classica et Orientalia 3, Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 2011, p. 452

SOURCE 28 Relief from the Apadana Staircase at Persepolis

7.6 Understanding and using the sources

Source 26

1 Why was Egypt valuable to the Persian Empire?
2 What evidence indicates that Egypt continued to be an asset to the empire after the suppression of the revolt?
3 What would Xerxes' intentions have been in 'adopting pharaonic titles and donating to temples'?

Source 27

4 What aspect of the revolts needs to be emphasised? Why?
5 What do the new cuneiform documents provide evidence for?
6 What claims about Xerxes' handling of the revolts are not supported by evidence?

7.6 Check your learning

1 From your understanding of Xerxes' imperial policy, how plausible is Herodotus' account of Xerxes' responses to the revolts in Egypt and Babylon?
2 Suggest reasons to explain Herodotus' hostility.
3 Create a table like the one below that summarises the revolts in Egypt and Babylon.

REVOLT	CHARGES MADE AGAINST XERXES	ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE CHARGES AND EVIDENCE

4 Read the full article by Henkelman et al. for their reinterpretation of Herodotus' accounts of Xerxes and Babylon (Source 27). Search online for 'Herodotus and Babylon Reconsidered – Achemenet'.
5 Writing task: Evaluate Xerxes' management of revolts in the empire.

To help plan your response:

- identify the main aspects of Xerxes' management of revolts
- make judgements about the effectiveness of his management
- use specific evidence to support your assessment
- use appropriate terms and concepts.

7.7 Religious policy

The Persian/**Zoroastrian** god Ahuramazda was the major deity worshipped by Achaemenid kings. He first appeared in royal inscriptions from the reign of Xerxes' father, Darius I. Like Darius, Xerxes acknowledged Ahuramazda as the supreme creator god. More importantly, Xerxes recognised that he was king through the god's 'favour' (see Source 17). The kings' worship of Ahuramazda gave the religion an important political dimension; in justifying their claims to the throne and the activities of their reigns they could seek divine approval.

Zoroastrian related to Zoroastrianism, the world's oldest monotheistic religion, founded by the prophet Zoroaster in ancient Iran (Persia) about 3500 years ago

An important concept of this religion was 'Arta', meaning 'truth' or 'righteousness', and Xerxes chose to emphasise this. This concept came to be identified with political loyalty as much as with religious truth. Xerxes demonstrated his devotion to Arta, by naming his son and successor Artaxerxes, meaning 'Arta's kingdom'. An inscription from Xerxes' reign reads as follows:

SOURCE 29

You who shall be hereafter … Worship Ahuramazda and the holy Arta. The man who has respect for that holy law which Ahuramazda has established, and the holy Arta, shall be happy while living and blessed when dead.

A. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1948, p. 232

Herodotus' account of the invasion of the Greek mainland records some of Xerxes' behaviours that appear to go against Zoroastrian morality. For example, the sacrifice of nine boys and nine girls at the river Strymon and the lashing of the Hellespont, after the destruction of his bridge by a storm. There is no justification offered for the human sacrifice; however, Xerxes' reference to the 'acid and muddy waters' of the Hellespont seems to excuse his defilement of the water, which was regarded as sacred. In addition, according to Herodotus, Xerxes ate only one meal a day, which seems in keeping with the self-discipline required by Zoroastrianism.

The *Daeva* inscription: An historiographical issue

The *Daeva* inscription, found at Persepolis and later at Pasargadae, has been used by scholars to support a range of opinions about Xerxes' religious policy. Traditional interpretations of this inscription depict Xerxes, at worst, as a religious **zealot** intolerant of other gods and, at best, as a lawgiver and religious reformer. The relevant section of the inscription is given in Source 30.

zealot a person who is extreme and uncompromising in pursuing their religious, political or other goals

SOURCE 30

Xerxes the King says: When that I became king, there is among these countries which are inscribed above, (one which) was in commotion. Afterwards, Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favour of Ahuramazda I smote that country and put it down in its place.

And among these countries there was a place where previously *daevas* [that is, false gods] were worshipped. Afterwards, by the favour of Ahuramazda, I destroyed that sanctuary of *daevas* and I proclaimed, 'The *daevas* shall not be worshipped!' Where previously the *daevas* were worshipped, there I worshipped Ahuramazda reverently.

And there was other business that had been done ill; that I made good. That which I did, all I did by the favour of Ahuramazda. Ahuramazda bore me aid until I completed the work …

Xerxes the King says: … May Ahuramazda protect me from harm, and my royal house, and this land; this I pray of Ahuramazda, this may Ahuramazda give to me!

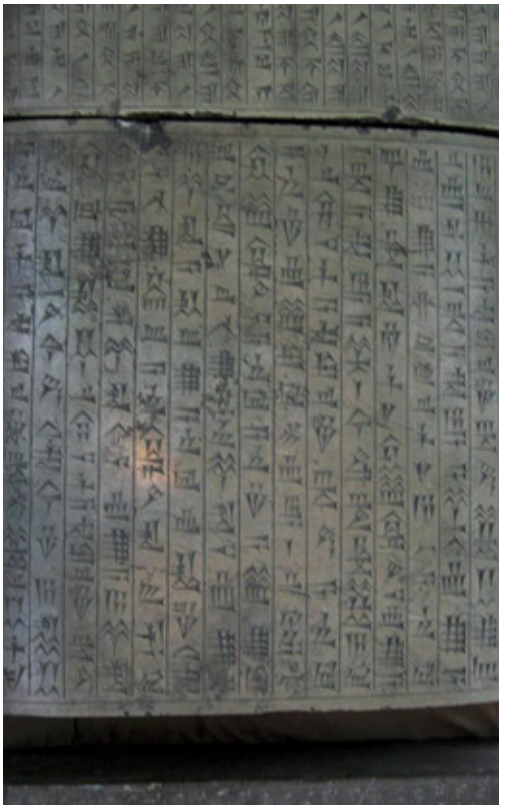
O man, that which is the command of Ahuramazda, let this not seem repugnant to you; do not leave the right path; do not rise in rebellion!

R. Kent, *Old Persian: Grammar Texts, Lexicon*, American Oriental Series, Vol. 33, American Oriental Society, New Haven, Connecticut, 1953, p. 151

This inscription can be interpreted in different ways:

- Xerxes was carrying out religious reforms – he aimed to strengthen the cult of Ahuramazda by removing less important gods.
- Xerxes was asserting his political power – he wanted to demonstrate his control over rebellious parts of the empire by forbidding them to worship their own gods.
- Xerxes was making a general statement of imperial policy – it does not refer to specific events, but is an ideological assertion of his power and royal virtues. This is the view of contemporary scholars such as Sancisi-Weerdenburg, Briant and Wiesehöfer.

A major obstacle to reaching a firm conclusion about Xerxes' policy and actions, on the basis of this text, is that no specific places or events are mentioned. Scholars have suggested Egypt, Babylon, Delphi and Athens as possibilities. Another issue concerns the dating of the text. Linguistic studies of its syntax and verb tense, together with **epigraphical** studies, suggest that it was written later, rather than earlier in the reign.



SOURCE 31 Xerxes' *Daeva* inscription, now in the Tehran Museum

epigraphic/ epigraphical relating to the study of inscriptions on stone or metal

7.7 Understanding and using the sources

Source 30

1 What is the role of Ahuramazda?

2 What is the relationship between Xerxes and Ahuramazda?

7.7 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - a What evidence from the *Daeva* inscription can you find to support each of the three interpretations of Xerxes' policy?
   - b Which interpretation seems more consistent with what you already know of Achaemenid and/or Xerxes' policies?
   - c If the *Daeva* inscription was written later rather than earlier in Xerxes' reign, which of the three interpretations would seem the most plausible? Why?

2 Xerxes' policy in relation to Egypt and Babylon has already been mentioned. Use the index in Herodotus' *Histories* to read his accounts of Xerxes' actions regarding Egypt, Babylon and the Greek shrines and temples at Delphi and Athens during his invasion of Greece.
   - What do they reveal of Xerxes' actions?
   - What do they suggest about the reliability of Herodotus' accounts?
   - How might Xerxes' actions be explained from a Persian perspective?

7.8 Building program: Persepolis

Ancient rulers frequently undertook a program of building monuments soon after they came to power. These structures had several benefits, including:

- portrayal of the ruler as a mighty king and conqueror
- promotion of the ruler's favoured gods
- promotion of the members of the dynasty
- employment for the ruler's subjects.

One of the best ways to appreciate the ideology of Achaemenid kingship and the character of the Persian Empire is to examine the building programs of successive kings. Xerxes, like his predecessors, was keen to promote himself and his family through his building program. The best evidence is the great palace at Persepolis, which was begun by Darius around 515 BC but was largely completed by Xerxes. Source 32 is an inscription of Xerxes at the Gate of All Nations.

SOURCE 32

Saith Xerxes the King: By the favor of Ahuramazda, this Colonnade of All Lands I built. Much other good [construction] was built within this [city] Persepolis, which I built and which my father built. Whatever good construction is seen, all that by the favor of Ahuramazda we built.

R. Kent, *Old Persian: Grammar Texts, Lexicon*, American Oriental Series, Vol. 33, American Oriental Society, New Haven, Connecticut, 1953, p. 150

cache
valuable items concealed in a hiding place

Xerxes both completed and added a number of buildings at Persepolis, as shown in Sources 33–35.

SOURCE 33 Xerxes' contributions to the construction of Persepolis

FEATURE OF PERSEPOLIS	XERXES' CONTRIBUTION	DESCRIPTION
Gate of All Nations	Built by Xerxes – his name was written in three languages and carved on the entrances	• Formal entrance to the Apadana • Reached by an imposing double staircase near the north-west corner • Sculptured guardian figures (see Source 3) were inspired by similar creatures in the Assyrian palace of Nineveh
Apadana	Begun by Darius and completed by Xerxes	• A 60-metre-square audience hall that could have accommodated up to 10000 people • 36 columns supported a 25-metre-high roof • The largest and most spectacular building in the complex • The north and east stairways leading to it contained the famous reliefs depicting the dignitaries of the court, peoples of the empire and the Immortals, the king's elite guards
Palace of Xerxes, or the *Hadish* Palace	Built by Xerxes	• In the south-west corner on the highest part of the complex • Modelled on the nearby palace of Darius but with a much grander 36-columned, square hall with two double, sculpture-decorated staircases • Door jambs have images of the king entering the palace
Throne Hall, or Hall of a Hundred Columns	Begun by Xerxes and completed by his son, Artaxerxes I	• A 70-metre square hall with 10 rows of 14-metre-high columns • Reliefs of throne scenes and the king in combat with lion monsters

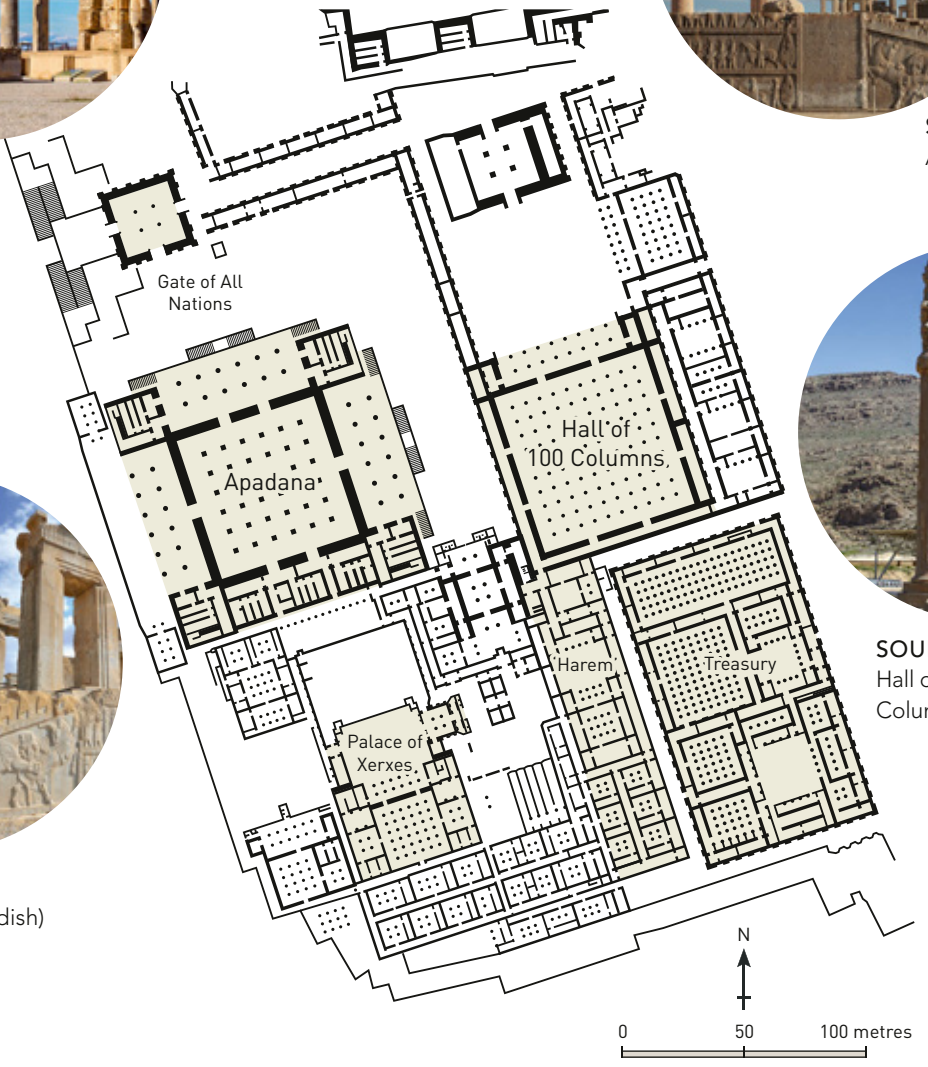
FEATURE OF PERSEPOLIS	XERXES' CONTRIBUTION	DESCRIPTION
Imperial treasury	Begun by Darius I and finished by Xerxes	• A huge structure, measuring 120 x 60 metres • Notable for the large **cache** of clay tablets that have supplied much information about the Achaemenid empire
'Harem'	Built by Xerxes	• A collection of buildings in the south-eastern part of the site • The main wing contained two rows of six apartments, each one consisting of a large pillared room with one or two smaller rooms • The west wing had another 16 apartments • No evidence that it housed the king's concubines as the name suggests

SOURCE 34a
Gate of All Nations

SOURCE 34b
Apadana

SOURCE 34d
Hall of a Hundred Columns (Throne Hall)

SOURCE 34c
Palace of Xerxes (Hadish)



SOURCE 35 A plan of Persepolis showing additions made during Xerxes' reign

7.8 Profile

Persepolis: a source study

Unlike the other cities used as capitals of the Persian Empire – Ecbatana, Pasargadae and Susa, which had been inherited from conquered nations – Persepolis was founded as an Achaemenid city on Persian soil. The palaces were not permanent residences, but were visited by the king on his journeys around his kingdom.

The exact purpose for the building of Persepolis is unclear and continues to be the subject of scholarly debate. Evidence from buildings and inscriptions on the site suggests that it may have served a variety of functions including an administrative centre and focus for religious ritual. Ernst Herzfeld, who excavated the site in the 1930s, and others from the early period of twentieth century investigations held that Persepolis was built as the venue for celebrating *Now Ruz*, the Persian New Year festival. More recently, this interpretation of Persepolis as a primarily ritual city has been questioned. Scholars now think that the *Now Ruz* was unlikely to have been celebrated in the times of the Achaemenid kings at all. There is agreement that the reliefs, formerly interpreted as depicting people from the empire bringing offerings for the festival, are best explained as an expression of kingship.

SOURCE 36

Perhaps we shall never be able to determine absolutely whether the Achaemenid reliefs should be read as a pure metaphor of royal power or as a metaphorical description of an actual ceremonial display of imperial might. But … the motif of the king carried by anonymous representatives of the subject peoples of the empire [see Source 39] … was certainly designed to convey in its role as art a political message of calculated significance … a new vision of hierarchical order and kingship on earth …

M. Cool Root, 'The king and kingship in Achaemenid art: Essays on the creation of an iconography of empire', *Acta Iranica*, Vol. 9, Diffusion, E. J. Brill, 1979, Leiden, p. 161

shekel
an ancient unit of weight or a coin; records from the Persian Empire range from 2 shekels per month for unskilled labour to as many as 7–10 shekels per month

The Fortification and Treasury Tablets from Persepolis offer valuable insights into the day-to-day administration of the Empire, its commerce and bureaucracy. The Fortification Tablets, written in Elamite, the language of the Persian administration, deal with economic transactions. One example refers to the ration payment of 130 litres of barley paid to a worker named Barik-'El for services rendered. These tablets also contain information about the issuing of passports, orders for payments of silver and gold to the chief treasurer, and the dispatching of judges, accountants, caravans and teams of country labourers.

Another set of 139 tablets called the Persepolis Treasury Tablets describe payments to workers between 492 and 458 BC. One example, like a modern invoice, records the entitlement of the Egyptian Herdkama, foreman of a crew of 100 Persepolis labourers, to the amount of 2.5 **shekels** of silver as wages.

SOURCE 37 Gate of All Nations at Persepolis

7.8 Profile tasks

1. What problem of evidence regarding the interpretation of the Persepolis reliefs is raised in Source 36?
2. Consider what we know about Persepolis, its function and the contributions of Xerxes to the site. What is the value of Persepolis as a source for the reign of Xerxes? What are its limitations? To answer these questions you might consider:
   - how to interpret the reliefs that feature Xerxes
   - how to interpret Xerxes' motives for building
   - the significance of Xerxes' inscriptions
   - the information revealed by the artefacts found on the site (e.g. the Fortification and Treasury Tablets)
   - the scholarly debate concerning the function of the site.
3. Writing task: Evaluate Persepolis as a source for understanding the reign of Xerxes.
   To help plan your response:
   - identify the features of Persepolis that reveal aspects of Xerxes' reign
   - make judgements about the value and limitations of these features
   - use evidence from the site and, where relevant, the opinions of modern scholars to support your points.

7.8 Understanding and using the sources

Source 32

1. What information about Persepolis is revealed in this source?
2. What role is ascribed to Ahuramazda?
3. What is the significance of Xerxes' mention of Darius in this inscription?

7.8 Check your learning

1. For a more detailed account of Xerxes' building program at Persepolis and his architectural and other building innovations see R. Granger, 'Legacy: An assessment of Xerxes' reign, Part II', *Teaching History*, Journal of the History Teachers' Association of NSW, Vol. 40(1), 2006, pp. 26–9.
2. For a virtual tour of Persepolis search online for 'Persepolis panorama – virtual tour gallery'.
3. Writing task: Explain the significance of Persepolis in the reign of Xerxes.
   To help plan your response:
   - identify a range of aspects relevant to the significance of Persepolis, for example symbolic and other functions
   - use these aspects to help structure your response
   - indicate the main features and aspects, showing the relationships between them
   - use evidence from the site and, where relevant, the opinions of modern scholars to support your points.

7.9 Images and representations of Xerxes as king

In a number of inscriptions from the palaces of Persepolis and Susa, Xerxes presents himself as a king of the Achaemenid line, proud of his lineage and ruler of a great empire. He is depicted carrying out the duties of kingship and upholding truth and integrity as opposed to falsehood and evil, qualities particularly associated with the god Ahuramazda. The *Daeva* inscription (Source 17) clearly demonstrates these ideas. Other sources, including building inscriptions, contain the same themes.

The images and representations of Xerxes tell us more about Achaemenid ideology than about specific events of Xerxes' reign. They are cast in the rhetoric (a persuasive style of speaking or writing) and symbolism that are typical of the period. As already noted, Xerxes' *Daeva* inscription shares many similarities with the famous Behistun inscription of Darius I. Sources 1, 14, 38 and 39 are visual representations of the king, while written Sources 40 and 41 indicate Xerxes' own representation of himself.

griffin
a mythical creature with the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion

SOURCE 38 The entrance to the Palace of Xerxes with a bas-relief of Xerxes fighting a lion. In another relief nearby, Xerxes is shown fighting a composite animal with the body of a lion, the head of a **griffin** and the tail of a scorpion.

SOURCE 39 Xerxes sitting on a throne upheld by representatives of the subject peoples, from Persepolis

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

SOURCE 40

I am Xerxes, the great king, king of kings, king of all nations, king of this world, son of Darius, the Achaemenid.

Inscription from the 'Gate of All Lands' at Persepolis

SOURCE 41

When my father Darius went away from the throne, I became king on his throne by the grace of Ahuramazda. After I became king, I finished what had been done by my father, and I added other works.

Persepolis inscription of Xerxes

7.9 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 1, 14 & 38–41

1 Record each of the sources above in a table like the one below. One has been modelled for you. You will have to research some of the images to get the information you need.

NAME AND LOCATION OF RELIEF	DESCRIPTION	SIGNIFICANCE FOR UNDERSTANDING XERXES AS KING
Treasury relief	• The king, possibly Darius I, sits on a throne, his feet on a small stool to prevent them touching the ground. • The crown prince, probably Xerxes, stands behind the throne. He carries a lotus flower like the king. • They receive a Persian court official who touches his hand to his lips as a sign of respect. • Incense burners are placed in front of the king. • Two personal attendants, the royal towel bearer and the royal weapon bearer, hold their signs of office.	Darius and Xerxes can be seen as figures who represent the monarchy. The continuation of the Achaemenid dynasty can be seen in: • the lotus flowers carried by the king and crown prince, which symbolise eternity • the presence of Xerxes as successor who is depicted the same size as the king.

2 How do these images and representations contribute to our understanding of Xerxes as king?

7.9 Check your learning

1 Read the full versions of the *Daeva* and Behistun inscriptions online at Livius.org.

2 Compare these two inscriptions.
- What are the main similarities/differences between the two?
- What do the inscriptions reveal about Achaemenid kingship?

7.10 Xerxes' role in the invasion of the Greek mainland

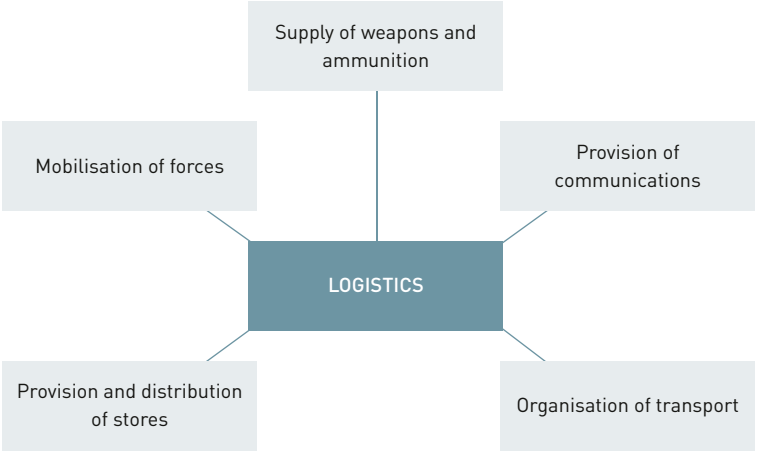
Like his predecessors, Xerxes pursued an active foreign policy and was keen to make his own contribution to the expansion of the Persian Empire. When his father died, Xerxes inherited Darius' unfinished business of the invasion of the Greek mainland. His plans were interrupted by the outbreak of revolts in Egypt and Babylon. Having dealt with these, Xerxes was then able to turn his attention to Greece. He had three main objectives for his Greek offensive:

- to punish the Athenians for their involvement in the Ionian revolt and for the Persian defeat at Marathon in 490 BC (see 11.3 The Ionian Revolt 449–490 BC and 11.5 The Battle of Marathon)
- to extend the Persian Empire into Europe by adding Greece
- to gain personal glory as his predecessors had done.

Xerxes' strategy

Strategy refers to the high-level overall planning of a war or campaign. This involves making decisions about objectives – generally made by the king and his top advisers. Herodotus tells us that 'Xerxes called a conference of the leading men in the country, to find out their attitude towards the war and explain to them his own wishes'.

Strategy also involves the methods by which the war aims are to be achieved. We know that Xerxes sent envoys to the Greek states demanding 'earth and water', the traditional tokens of submission. Athens and Sparta were excluded from this offer, because they were to be attacked and punished for previous offences. Many of the Greek states had little choice but to agree to Persian demands in view of their own defencelessness and the size of the Persian force marching against them.



SOURCE 42 Military logistics

A vital component of Xerxes' strategy was the decision to invade Greece by a combined land and sea attack. It was essential that the navy keep close contact with the army in order to provide it with supplies, protection and communication. This was a feature of Persian policy throughout the Greek campaign. This is important to remember when studying the battle of Salamis, because the defeat of the Persian fleet at this time had an important impact on Xerxes' subsequent strategy.

Xerxes' logistical preparation

Logistics refers to the provision, movement and supply of armed forces. Herodotus gives a detailed account of Xerxes' logistical preparations for the Greek campaign in Source 43.

SOURCE 43 A map and list of Xerxes' preparations for the Greek campaign

1 Diplomatic manoeuvres

- In 481 BC, Xerxes sent envoys throughout Greece, with the exception of Athens and Sparta, demanding earth and water, the traditional tokens of submission.
- Many northern and central states, aware of their vulnerability, complied with his demands.
- *'This ... was due to his confident belief that the Greeks who had previously refused to comply with the demand of Darius would now be frightened into complying with his own.'* (Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VII, 23, trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972.)

2 Recruitment of army and navy

- Combined infantry and cavalry force of over 200 000 assembled from all satrapies.
- A 10 000-strong elite corps of Immortals
- A fleet of 1200 triremes, comprising the navies of Egypt, Phoenicia, Cyprus and the Ionian Greeks
- Navy included warships, supply ships and horse-transports.
- *'The army was indeed far greater than any other in recorded history ... Xerxes in the process of assembling his armies, had every corner of the continent ransacked.'* (Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VII, 18)

3 Bridging the Hellespont

- A bridge built of boats was constructed across the narrowest part of the Hellespont to enable a more efficient movement of troops from Asia to Europe.
- *'Galleys and triremes were lashed together to support the bridge. They were moored slantwise to the Black Sea and at right angles to the Hellespont.'* (Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VII, 36)

4 Supply depots set up

- Stores of provisions for the army and navy were established at key locations along the coast of Thrace and Macedonia.
- *'And provision dumps were being formed for the troops lest either men or animals should go hungry on the march to Greece.'* (Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VII, 23)

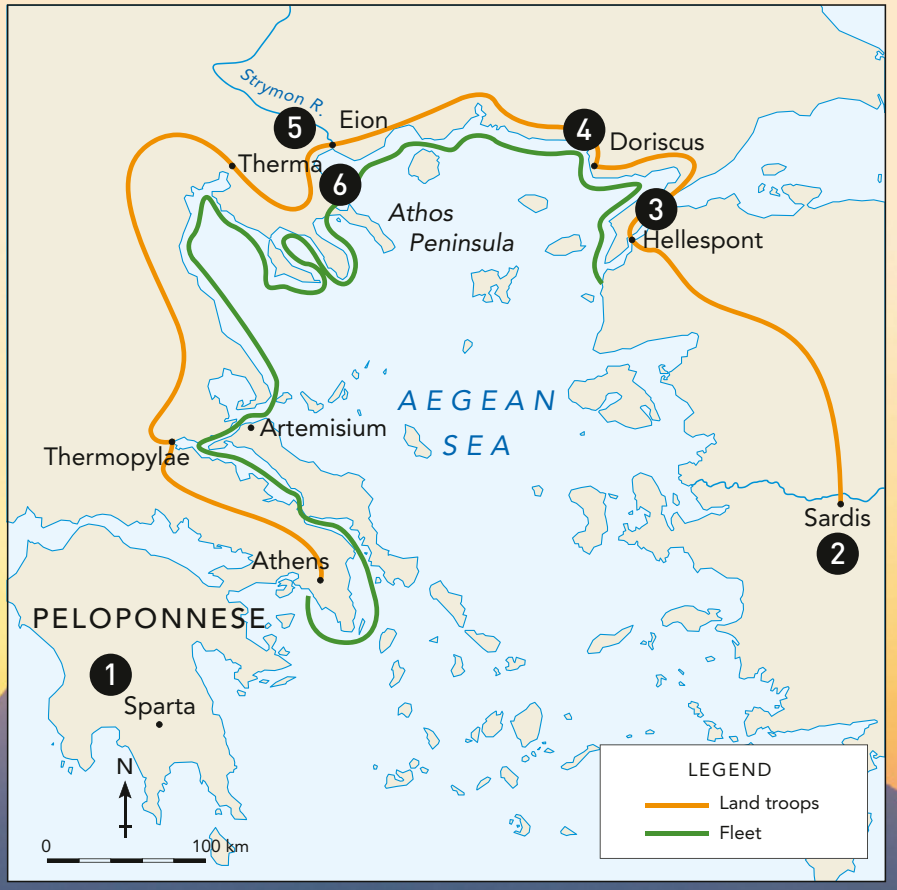
5 Bridging the Strymon River

- The Strymon River in Thrace was bridged near its mouth, not far from the supply depot at Eion.
- *'Cables, some of papyrus, some of white flax, were being prepared for this bridge – a task which Xerxes entrusted to the Egyptians and the Phoenicians.'* (Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VII, 23)

6 Canal dug through Mt Athos Peninsula

- For three years workmen dug a canal through the Mt Athos Peninsula to allow the fleet to pass safely. (Darius' previous invasion attempt had failed when the Persian fleet was destroyed in a storm off the dangerous waters of the peninsula – Xerxes had learnt from previous mistakes.)
- *'It was mere ostentation that made Xerxes have the canal dug – he wanted to show his power and leave something to be remembered by.'* (Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VII, 23)

XERXES' PREPARATIONS FOR THE GREEK CAMPAIGN



Xerxes' tactics

Tactics concern the particular methods of fighting adopted in battle. They include:

- choice of area in which to fight
- decision about when to fight
- deployment (positioning) of troops before battle
- troop manoeuvres during battle.

Persian battle tactics relied on the use of vast numbers of soldiers, who were thrown in wave after wave against the enemy front line. This tactic was more suitable for the open terrain of Persian lands than the mountains and narrow passes of Greece.

Another feature of traditional Persian tactics was the use of archers in the initial attack. Kneeling archers would direct volleys of arrows at the enemy's front line. The purpose of this was to panic the opposing force and prepare the way for the advance of the infantry. The cavalry, a vital contingent of the army, would support the infantry and archers – its mobility enabled it to harass any section of the enemy line that tried to retreat.

Xerxes and his commanders used these tactics with varying success throughout the campaigns of 480–79 BC. You will need to assess these tactics in the light of those employed by the Greeks against them.

7.10 Understanding and using the sources

Source 43

1 What does the size of Xerxes' army and navy suggest about the importance of the Greek campaign?
2 What arrangements did Xerxes make to transport his army across the Hellespont?
3 Why were strategically located supply dumps important? What other methods would Xerxes have used to provision his troops?
4 Why did Xerxes order the building of a canal at Mt Athos? What does Herodotus' remark indicate about his attitude to Xerxes?

7.10 Check your learning

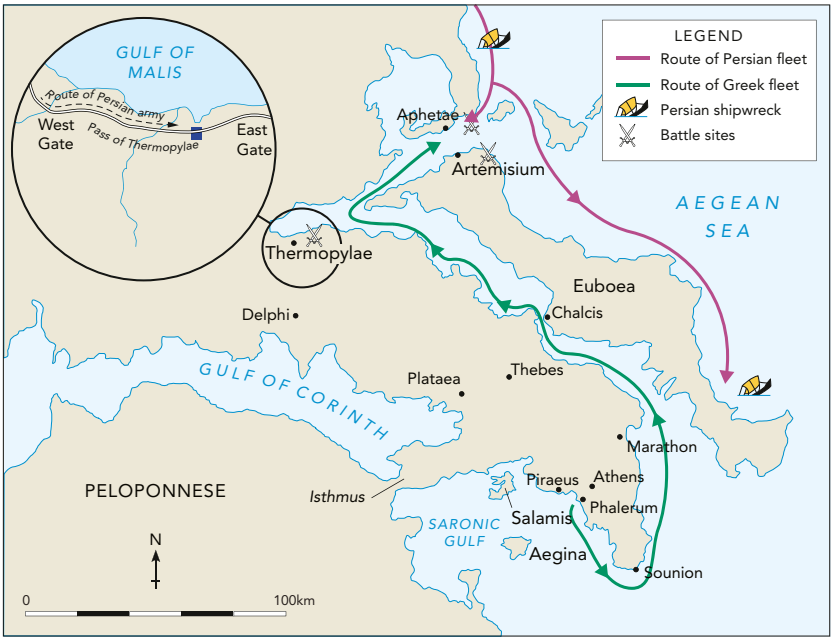
1 Read about the Ionian revolt and the Battle of Marathon in Chapter 11.
2 Read Herodotus' colourful account of Xerxes' meeting with his advisers and the reasons for his decision to invade Greece in *The Histories*, Book VII, 8. What issues of reliability are raised by this account (see 7.17 Profile)?
3 Herodotus' provides a detailed description of the multinational force that accompanied Xerxes on his Greek campaign in *The Histories*, Book VII, 60–98. Read this account and make a list of the countries of origin and numbers of the following:
   - infantry contingents, including their dress and weapons
   - cavalry units
   - naval units and numbers of ships.
4 Source 43 outlines Xerxes' preparations for his invasion of Greece.
   - Using each text box as the basis for a paragraph, construct your own recount of Xerxes' preparations.
   - Refer to the references to Herodotus that are included in the boxes and offer your own assessment of Xerxes' actions.

7.11 Artemisium and Thermopylae

The Greeks knew of Xerxes' plans through spies sent to Persia, but were too preoccupied with domestic concerns to respond. It was not until 481 BC, in the last months of Xerxes' preparations, that they began to prepare a strategy of their own.

A conference was held at the Isthmus of Corinth. It was attended by 31 states that had not medised, meaning that they had not sided with the Persians. Leadership of the newly formed Hellenic League was given to Sparta.

LOCATION OF ARTEMISIUM AND THERMOPYLAE



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 44 Map shows close proximity of Thermopylae and Artemisium. Inset circle shows a detail of the narrow pass taken by the Persians.

It was decided that the best overall strategy to counter the invasion was to contain Persia's army and navy in narrow areas. This would make it impossible for them to deploy their huge numbers of troops and ships in traditional open formation. Another important strategy was to prevent the Persian fleet from carrying out its vital supporting role of maintaining the extended supply lines to the army.

The first line of defence at which the Greeks chose to implement this strategy was the narrow mountain pass at Tempe in Thessaly. This, however, proved impossible to defend. A viable alternative was the narrow pass between the mountains and the sea at Thermopylae. Here, the Greek force of about 7000 men, under the command of King Leonidas of Sparta, made its stand. In the nearby straits of Artemisium, the Greek navy assembled to support their land forces and to prevent the advance of the Persian fleet.

The Battle of Artemisium

The main stages of the battle of Artemisium were as follows:

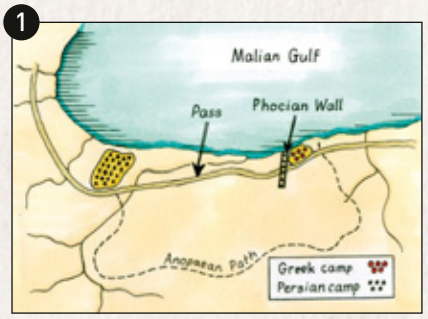
- A total of 271 Greek ships were stationed at Artemisium to defend Greece.
- The Persians, with superior forces, attempted to trap the Greeks in the narrow waters.
- On the first day, in an indecisive battle, the Persians attempted to encircle the Greeks; however, the Greeks formed a tight circle, pointed their ships' bows towards the enemy and charged. The Greeks captured 30 Persian ships in that encounter.
- Violent storms destroyed many Persian ships.
- On the second day, the Greeks attacked and destroyed some Cilician vessels.
- Over the next few days, several indecisive battles were fought, with heavy losses on both sides – news arrived of the disaster at Thermopylae, and the Greeks decided to withdraw.

The Battle of Thermopylae

The Battles of Thermopylae and Artemisium are usually regarded as a joint action. It was probably intended that the Greek navy at Artemisium would support their land forces by preventing the Persian navy from landing troops behind the Greek position at Thermopylae. It was no doubt also intended to prevent, or at least delay, the Persian navy from sailing south to attack southern Greece. Source 45 summarises the main developments in the Battle of Thermopylae.

SOURCE 45 A sequence chart of the Battle of Thermopylae

1



Xerxes marshals his troops

For four days Xerxes waited, in constant expectation that the Greeks would make good their escape.

Herodotus, *The Histories,* Book VII, 210

2

Day 1: The Persians attack

On the fifth [day] when still they had made no move, ... he was seized with rage and sent forward the Medes and Cissians with orders to take them alive and bring them into his presence. The Medes charged, and in the struggle which ensued many fell; but others took their places and in spite of terrible losses refused to be beaten off. They made it plain enough to anyone, and not least to the king himself, that he had in his army many men, indeed, but few soldiers.

Herodotus, *The Histories,* Book VII, 210

3

Xerxes sends in the Immortals

All day the battle continued; the Medes' ... place was taken by Hydarnes and his picked Persian troops – the king's Immortals – who advanced ... But, once engaged, they were no more successful than the Medes had been; all went as before, the two armies fighting in a confined space, the Persians using shorter spears than the Greeks and having no advantage from their numbers.

Herodotus, *The Histories,* Book VII, 210

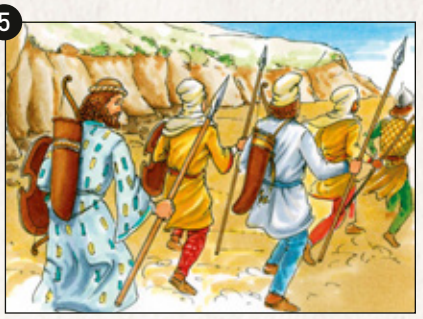
4

Persian forces withdraw

At last the Persians. finding that their assaults upon the pass ... were all useless, broke off the engagement and withdrew. Xerxes was watching the battle from where he sat; and it is said that in the course of the attacks three times, in terror for his army, he leapt to his feet.

Herodotus, *The Histories* Book VII, 212

5



Day 2: Persia attacks again

Next day the fighting began again, but with no better success for the Persians, who renewed their onslaught in the hope that the Greeks, being so few in number, might be badly enough disabled by wounds to prevent further resistance ... But the Greeks never slackened ... So when the Persians found that things were no better for them than on the previous day, they once more withdrew.

Herodotus, *The Histories* Book VII, 212

6

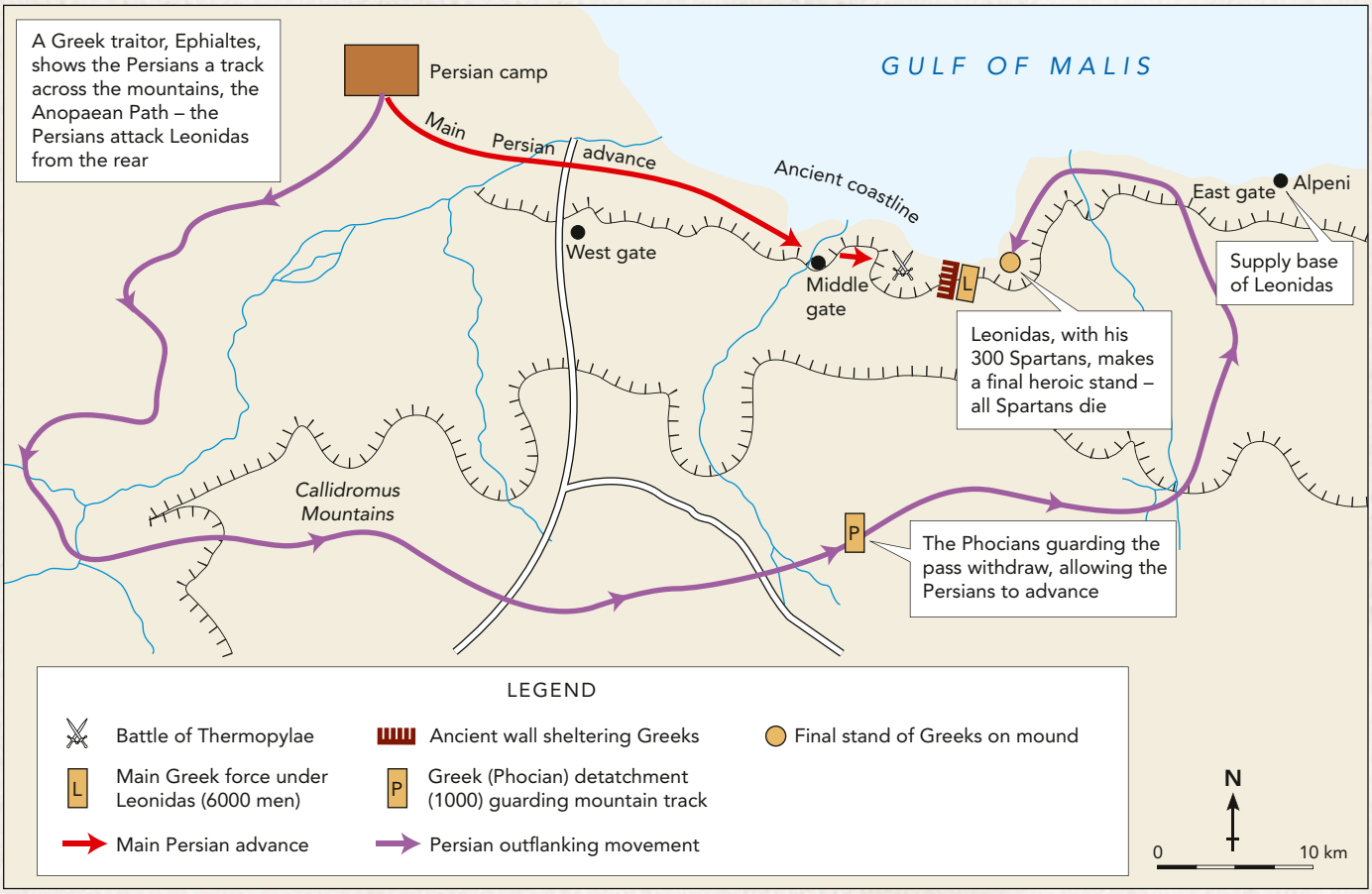
Ephialtes saves the day!

[B]ut just then, a man named Ephialtes, from Malis [a nearby Greek state] came in hope of a rich reward, to tell the king about the track which led over the hills to Thermopylae – and thus he was able to prove the death of the Greeks who held the pass.

Herodotus, *The Histories* Book VII, 212

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

BATTLE OF THERMOPYLAE, 480 BC



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 46

7

Overnight: Persians surround the Greeks

Xerxes ... promptly sent off Hydarnes with the troops under his command ... By early dawn they were at the summit of the ridge, near the spot where the Phocians [a local Greek tribe] stood on guard with a thousand men ... [When the Persians attacked them] ... the Phocians withdrew to the highest point of the mountain, where they made ready to face destruction. But the Persians ... paid no further attention to them and passed on along the descending track with all possible speed.

Herodotus, *The Histories* Book VII, 218

8

Day 3: Persian victory

When Leonidas saw that he would soon be surrounded, he sent away most of the troops who were with him. In the fighting that followed, Leonidas was killed. The Spartans who were left: withdrew into the narrow neck of the pass ... and took up a position in a single compact body ... Here they resisted to the last, with their swords if they had them, and if not, with their hands and teeth, until the Persians coming on from the front ... and closing in from behind, finally overwhelmed them with missile weapons.

Herodotus, *The Histories* Book VII, 227

7.11 Understanding and using the sources

Source 45

1. What assumption does Xerxes appear to make about the Greek response to his march on Thermopylae?
2. What tactics did the Persians use in their opening manoeuvres?
3. What did Xerxes hope to gain by sending in the Immortals?
4. Why were the Persians unable to take the pass by conventional tactics?
5. What critical role did the Greek traitor Ephialtes play in the Persian victory?
6. What do the tactics adopted by the Greeks at Thermopylae indicate about the effectiveness of Xerxes' strategy and tactics?

7.11 Check your learning

1. Read Herodotus' gripping narrative of this battle in its entirety (*The Histories*, Book VII, 208–227).
2. Find examples of the way Xerxes is portrayed by Herodotus. Note them for a source analysis and evaluation at the end of this chapter.

SOURCE 47
Xerxes watching the Battle of Salamis from Mt Aegaleos

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7.12 From Thermopylae to Salamis

After Thermopylae, the Greeks offered no further resistance. The Persian forces pillaged and burnt villages and countryside as they headed southwards. Within a few days, Xerxes reached Athens, which the majority of the citizens had evacuated shortly before his arrival. Those who remained were put to death. Temples and buildings were looted and burnt. A major objective had now been accomplished: Xerxes had taken revenge on Athens for its interference in Persia's affairs.

The tide turns at Salamis

The Persian fleet sailed south from Artemisium after the fall of Thermopylae and anchored in the Bay of Phalerum near Athens, meeting up with its army, which now occupied the city. The Greek fleet had withdrawn to the waters of Salamis to help in the evacuation of Athenian citizens before the arrival of Xerxes and the Persian army and to plan a strategy in the face of the continuing Persian advance.

Peloponnese
a peninsula in southern Greece, separated from the mainland by the Isthmus and the Gulf of Corinth

Xerxes' next objective was to mount a combined land and sea operation against the **Peloponnese**. Fearing an imminent attack, the Peloponnesians were building a wall across the Isthmus to prevent the passage of the Persian army. But in order to attack the Peloponnese, Xerxes would have to divide his fleet. He was unable to do this because a large number of ships had been lost in storms and the naval engagements at Artemisium, so he was forced to concentrate his fleet at Salamis. We do not have reliable figures for the Persian fleet at this time, but it has been estimated to have numbered perhaps 500 vessels. Herodotus says that 387 Greek vessels were stationed at Salamis.

At Salamis, in what is regarded as the turning point of the Persian wars, the Greek navy decisively defeated Xerxes' fleet. The Greek commanders were bitterly divided about the best tactics to adopt against the Persians. The overall commander of the Greek navy was the Spartan Eurybiades, while Themistocles was the leader of the Athenian contingent. The main events of the battle are set out in the sequence chart in Source 49.

Xerxes' withdrawal from Greece

After Salamis, Xerxes' position was untenable. His situation is summed up in Source 48.

SOURCE 48

The whole situation was now changed, and Xerxes was in serious difficulties. Without a fleet, the Peloponnese could not be conquered. Winter was only a month or two away: and with the prospects of unrest after such a reverse, he must return to Sardis to keep the empire under surveillance. But to abandon his new Greek conquests would be an admission of defeat and a failure to equal his predecessors in glory …

J. M. Cook, *The Persian Empire*, Book Club Associates, London, 1983, pp. 121–2

After the defeat at Salamis, Xerxes returned to Persia, leaving Mardonius in Greece to continue the campaign. The Persian army was still undefeated and in the following spring Mardonius led his troops against the combined Greek army at Plataea in central Greece.

SOURCE 49 A sequence chart of the Battle of Salamis

1 Greek council of war

A council of war was held ... on the most suitable place for engaging the enemy fleet ... The general feeling of the council was in favour of sailing to the Isthmus [of Corinth) and fighting in defence of the Peloponnese, and a resolution was passed to fight in defence of the Isthmus.

Herodotus, *The Histories,* Book VIII, 49–57

2 Themistocles' plan

Themistocles persuaded Eurybiades to call another conference, where he makes the following speech: 'It is now in your power to save Greece if you take my advice and engage the enemy's fleet here in Salamis, instead of withdrawing to the Isthmus ... if you fight [at the Isthmus), it will have to be in the open sea, and that will be greatly to our disadvantage, with our smaller numbers and slower ships ... Fighting in a confined space favours us but the open sea favours the enemy.'

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VIII, 58–60

LOCATION OF SALAMIS

Source: Oxford University Press

3 Themistocles' trick

The Greek commanders, continued to argue the issue and Themistocles, anxious to force the Greeks to stay and fight at Salamis, secretly sent a messenger to the Persian camp, who said to Xerxes '[Themistocles] has told me to report to you that the Greeks are afraid and planning to slip away. Only prevent them from slipping through your fingers, and you have at this moment an opportunity of unparalleled success. They are at daggers drawn with each other, and will offer no opposition – on the contrary, you will see the pro-Persians among them fighting the rest.'

Herodotus, *The Histories,* Book VIII, 76

4 Xerxes deceived!

The Persians believed what he had told them and proceeded to put ashore a large force on the islet of Psyttaleia, between Salamis and the coast; then, about midnight, they moved their western wing in an encircling movement upon Salamis, while at the same time their ships ... advanced and blocked the whole channel as far as Munychia ... These tactical manoeuvres were carried out in silence, to prevent the enemy from being aware of what was going on; they occupied the whole night, so that none of the men had time for sleep.

Herodotus, *The Histories,* Book VIII, 77

5 The battle lines are drawn

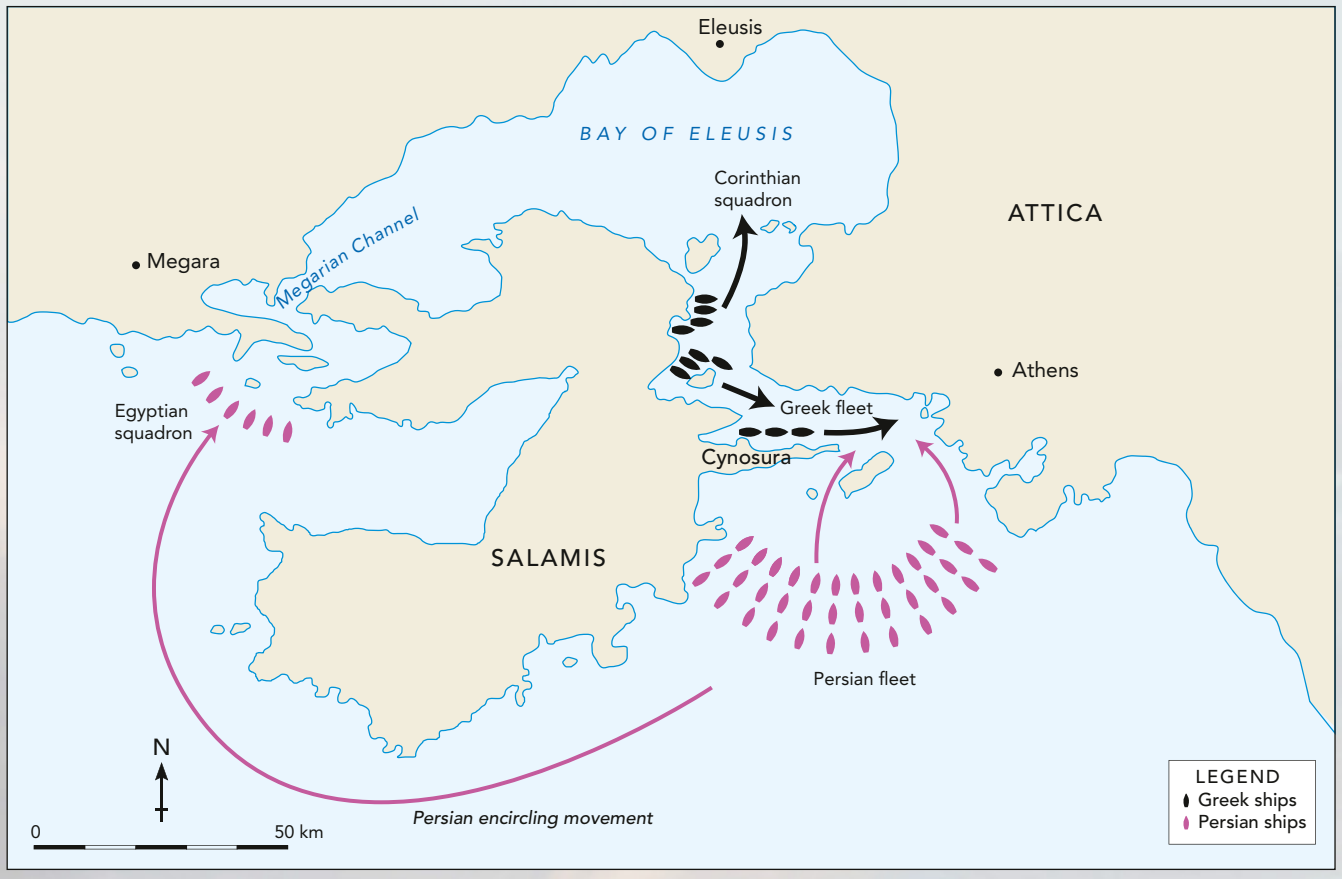
The Greek fleet, having learnt of the Persian encircling movement, put to sea at dawn and prepared to give battle. Greek squadrons were lying in ambush behind the promontory of Cynosura. When the Corinthian squadron hoisted its sails and began to sail north with the object of defending the Megarian Channel and the Greek rear from Egyptian attack, Xerxes ordered his fleet to follow them by advancing into the narrow waters of the straits.

6 The Greeks attack

The whole [Greek] fleet now got under way, and in a moment the Persians were on them ... The Athenian squadron found itself facing the Phoenicians, who formed the Persian left wing, on the western, Eleusis, end of the line; the Lakedaemonians faced the ships of Ionia, which were stationed on the Piraeus, or eastern end ... the greater part of the Persian fleet suffered severely in the battle ... the Greek fleet worked together as a whole, while the Persians had lost formation and were no longer fighting on any plan.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VIII, 83–5

BATTLE OF SALAMIS, 480 BC



Source: Oxford University Press

7 The Persian fleet destroyed

The greatest destruction took place when the ships which had been first engaged turned tail; for those astern fell foul of them in their attempt to press forward.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VIII, 92

Then charge followed charge on every side.
At first by its huge impetus
Our fleet withstood them . But soon, in that narrow space,
Our ships were jammed in hundreds; none could help another.
They rammed each other with their prows of bronze; and some
Were stripped of every oar. Meanwhile the enemy
Came round us in a ring and charged.

Aeschylus, *The Persians*, II, 406–515

8 Xerxes' dilemma

Xerxes, when he realised the extent of the disaster, was afraid that the Greeks, either on their own initiative or at the suggestion of the Ionians, might sail to the Hellespont and break the bridges there. If this happened, he would be cut off in Europe and in danger of destruction.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VIII, 97

HERODOTI HISTORICI INCIPIT.
Laurentii Vallen. conuersio de Græco in Latinum.

ERODOTI Halicarnaſei hiſtoriæ explicatio hæc eſt: ut neq; ea quæ geſta ſunt ex rebus humanis obliterentur ex æquo neq; ingentia & admiranda opera: uel a Græcis edita: uel a Barbaris gloria fraudétur: cum alias tum uero: qua de re iſti inter ſe belligerauerũt. Perſarũ eximii memorãt diſſenſionũ auctores extitiſſe Phœnices qui a mari quod Rubrum uocatur: in hoc noſtrum proficiſcentes: & hanc incolentes regionem: quam nunc quoq; incolunt: longinquis continuo nauigationibus incubuerunt: faciendiſq; Aegyptiarum & Aſſyriarum merciũ uecturis in alias plagas: præcipueq; Argos traiecerunt. Argos &enim ea tempeſtate omni-

SOURCE 50 Title page of a Latin edition of Herodotus' *The Histories*

7.12 Understanding and using the sources

Source 48

1 Why is the loss of Xerxes' fleet significant for:
   - **a** Xerxes' further plans for the conquest of Greece?
   - **b** the security of the empire?

Source 49

2 Study the sequence chart of the Battle of Salamis and consider the following questions:
   - **a** Why had the Persian fleet anchored near Salamis?
   - **b** What was the initial Greek response to the presence of the Persian fleet?
   - **c** What disadvantages did the Persian fleet face at Salamis?
   - **d** What tactics did the Greeks adopt to overcome the Persians?
   - **e** Xerxes has usually been ridiculed for his willingness to accept the secret message of Themistocles at face value. How might his decision be explained or justified on this occasion?

7.12 Check your learning

1 Read Herodotus' narrative of events from the end of the Battle of Thermopylae to the end of the Battle of Salamis in Book VIII, 41–111. Add notes on Herodotus' treatment of Xerxes to those you made during your reading of his account of Thermopylae.
2 Note especially the role played by Artemisia, Queen of Caria, in this narrative (Book VIII 86–91, 101–102).
3 Read about the events that followed Xerxes' withdrawal from Greece in Chapter 11.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

7.13 Xerxes' leadership of the invasion of Greece

Because the sources for the Persian wars are predominantly Greek, the Greek view of the victory against the Persians has been emphasised. Greek propaganda represented the victory of little Greece against the big, bad Persians as a triumph of democracy and freedom over tyranny and oppression. This simplistic view ignores some important facts: the Persians did not view it as a serious humiliation, nor did it herald the collapse of Xerxes' empire as the Greek sources implied. Source 51 sums up the Persian perspective.

SOURCE 51

What was the influence of the Persian–Greek wars on the Persians? According to a classical writer from the first century AD, Dio Chrysostomos, the Persians wrote in relation to these wars that 'Xerxes, having undertaken an expedition against the Greeks, defeated the Lakedaemonians [Spartans] at Thermopylae and destroyed the city of Athens. All who could not escape were enslaved. After having imposed tribute on the Greeks, Xerxes returned to Asia'. There is no doubt that the Persians (in any case, in their official tradition), did not regard themselves as being defeated, because the previously proclaimed objectives had been accomplished: Athens was taken twice; the Eretrians were taken away in captivity … To the Achaemenid empire, with its huge extent and enormous resources, the defeat in Greece had the character of minor set-back along the periphery of its realm.

M. Dandamaev, *A Political History of the Achaemenid Empire*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1989, pp. 225–6

The following two sources provide modern assessments of Xerxes' achievements in his invasion of the Greek mainland.

SOURCE 52

On the evidence above all of Xerxes' [Greek] expedition, Persian preparation at this time was first class from the point of view both of political warfare and of the movement of large forces by land and sea. The weakness, if we must look for one, was in the higher command. The king had little experience of war. The lesson of Marathon had not been learnt. Too great faith was placed in the valour of the king's forces when fighting under his eye, and too little account taken of the free Greeks' will to resist. The Persian command did not have the strategical grasp to impose its own pattern on the fighting, and Persian professionalism in mounting the expedition and delivering men and ships to the battle fronts was not enough to ensure victory.

J. Cook, *The Persian Empire*, Book Club Associates, London, 1983, pp. 111–12

SOURCE 53

In the end, the Greek campaign was a distraction that prevented the king from doing what he might otherwise have done – extend the empire further east. The land-based empire was what Xerxes needed to secure, and the fact that not only Greece but, by the end of his reign, Bactria had slipped from his hands, suggests that his efforts had not been best deployed.

But in the meantime, he was back in Susa. Several of his brothers were dead, the Greeks were to remain a thorn in his flesh for fifteen years; but his empire still stood proud as ruler of lands. This was not a demoralised Xerxes who sank into apathy and devoted his time to buildings and women. Rather, the building of Persepolis became his main occupation and must, in a just view, remain his greatest monument.

R. Stoneman, *Xerxes: A Persian Life*, Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 2015, p. 159

7.13 Understanding and using the sources

Source 51

1 What were the 'previously proclaimed objectives' and how had they been accomplished?

2 What does Dandamaev see as the Persian perspective of the defeat in Greece?

Source 52

3 According to Cook, what was the most successful aspect of Xerxes' campaign?

4 What does he see as weaknesses in the Persian higher command?

5 What is meant by 'The Persian command did not have the strategical grasp to impose its own pattern on the fighting'? Give examples of this from Xerxes' invasion of Greece.

6 Is this a valid assessment of Xerxes' conduct of the Greek campaign? Give reasons.

Source 53

7 What is Stoneman's assessment of Xerxes' maintenance of his land-based empire?

8 What is his view of the outcome of the invasion of the Greek mainland?

7.13 Check your learning

1 The table below lists some important activities and events of the campaign against Greece and some positive and negative assessments of Xerxes' leadership. Copy the table and match the activities and events with the assessments, identifying them as positive or negative. Suggest other aspects of the Greek campaign that demonstrate positive or negative features of Xerxes' military leadership. Add them to the table.

ACTIVITY/EVENT	ASSESSMENT OF LEADERSHIP	POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE?
Preparations for Greek offensive 484–481 BC	Use of diplomacy to neutralise opposition	
Demands made for 'earth and water'	Skill in logistical planning	
Strategy of combined land and sea offensive	Lack of reconnaissance of local weather conditions	
Victory at Thermopylae	Skill in strategic planning	
Loss of ships in storms off Greek coast	Ability to exploit opportunities	
Sending squadron of ships to blockade Megarian Channel before Salamis	Over-reliance on superior numbers	
Being drawn into the battle at Salamis	Planning for future outcomes	
Defeat at Salamis	Skill in naval tactics	
Return to Persia after Salamis	Being outmanoeuvred by superior tactics	

2 Writing task: Assess the effectiveness of Xerxes' leadership in the invasion of 480–479 BC.

7.14 Relationships with prominent Persians and non-Persians

Xerxes' reign was notable for the relationships he maintained with his advisers, both Persian and foreign, and often family members. Unfortunately, it was members of his own family and court who appear to have been responsible for his death.

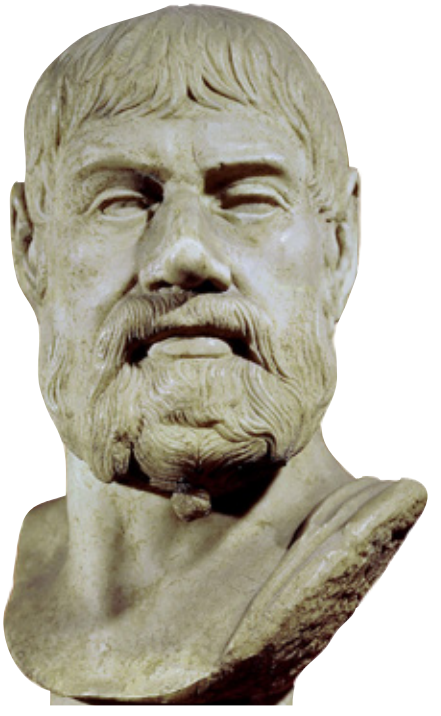
The nature of Xerxes' relationships was largely dictated by his position as an absolute monarch of a large empire, by the hierarchical structure of Persian society and by Achaemenid court protocols.

The Persian nobility, many of whom were family members, formed a circle of advisers around the king. They included men of the families who had helped his father, Darius, to gain the throne. Many were appointed as satraps throughout the empire and became commanders of the various imperial regiments that fought on the Greek campaign. Chief among them in Xerxes' reign were men such as Mardonius.

Many of these members of the nobility formed a special group known as 'the king's friends and benefactors'. They were men whom the king rewarded for outstanding loyalty and service. They could include non-Persians, for example exiled Greeks such as Demaratus and Themistocles.

Herodotus provides colourful accounts of some of Xerxes' relationships with prominent Persians and non-Persians. Some key men included:

- *Mardonius* – nephew and son-in-law of Darius I; a key adviser and general during Xerxes 480–479 BC invasion of Greece; stayed with the army after its defeat by the Greeks at Salamis, and was killed at the Battle of Plataea
- *Artabanus* – Xerxes' uncle; commander of the palace guard during the reign of Xerxes; in Herodotus' account, he warned Xerxes against undertaking the 480–479 BC invasion of Greece
- *Masistes* – brother of Xerxes; planned a revolt in the east following a violent personal dispute with Xerxes and fled Susa for his satrapy in Bactria; Xerxes dealt swiftly with this threat
- *Pythius* – a wealthy Lydian who entertained Xerxes during the Greek campaign
- *Demaratus* – an exiled Spartan king who attached himself to the Persian court; was greatly honoured by Darius and accompanied Xerxes on his Greek campaign, offering valuable advice on local conditions
- *Pausanias* – a Spartan leader; in the months after Plataea, Xerxes entered into negotiations with Pausanias. According to evidence recorded by Thucydides, Pausanias promised to deliver Greece to the Persian Empire in return for marriage with one of Xerxes' daughters



SOURCE 54 A bust of Pausanias

- *Themistocles* – Athenian leader during the Greek campaign; had been exiled from Athens in the years after the Persian Wars and sought asylum at the Persian court, where he was honoured with the title 'king's friend' and given estates to support him in a luxurious lifestyle.

Xerxes' death

Very little is known about Xerxes' last years. The evidence from Persepolis indicates that he was busy with his building program and the administration of his empire. The last years of his reign appear to have been troubled. Just 4 years before his death, Persian forces in Ionia suffered a final defeat by Greek forces at the battle of the Eurymedon River in the 460s BC.

The Persepolis archives also refer to a famine in Persia in 467 BC, 2 years before Xerxes' death. According to this evidence, the shortage of grain resulted in a dramatic price increase. Xerxes apparently dismissed approximately 100 high-ranking officials in an attempt to curb discontent.

eunuch
a man who has been castrated, employed in the courts of ancient eastern rulers to guard the women's living areas, sometimes rising to become a royal adviser

Ctesias, the Greek physician, is the main source for Xerxes' death. According to his account, Xerxes was murdered in his bed, the victim of a palace plot. The key conspirators appear to have been Artabanus, an adviser of Xerxes (not the same Artabanus who was Xerxes' uncle and chief of the palace guard), and a chief **eunuch** of the court named Aspamitres. Xerxes' younger son, Artaxerxes, was possibly also involved in the conspiracy.

SOURCE 55 The tomb of Xerxes I at Naqsh-i-Rustam, near the site of Persepolis

Impact of the death of Xerxes

Because the Persians had not formulated laws regarding the succession, the period following the death of a king might be very unstable. If the king had not named his successor, there could be bloody struggles between rival claimants to the throne. When Xerxes was assassinated, his son Artaxerxes I faced a revolt by a younger brother, Hystaspes, the satrap of Bactria. Artaxerxes led an army against him, putting down the revolt in two battles. Artaxerxes then put to death all of his remaining brothers to prevent future revolts. According to Diodorus, Artaxerxes also slew Artabanus and his sons.

This unstable political climate continued for several years. Libyan rebels took advantage of the situation to revolt against Persian rule in Egypt (revolts in the empire were fairly common on the death of the ruler). The leader of the Egyptian revolt was Inarus, the ruler of Libya, who led his forces against the Persian satrap Achaemenes, a brother of Xerxes. Achaemenes was killed and it was 6 years before Persia managed to suppress the revolt.

These troubles occurred on the periphery of the empire; the heartland of the empire remained stable. For example, archaeological evidence for the period from about 470 to the 440s BC points to the extension of infrastructure, including canal-building projects in Media, Persis and Babylonia. Such activity suggests economic stability, even growth, in these areas.

In the longer term, Xerxes' reign has been seen as the beginning of a decline into decadence, in which the court was corrupted by its luxurious lifestyle and the power struggles and intrigues of the queens and courtiers. The problem with this perspective is that it is essentially a Greek one; it tells us more about Greek attitudes than Persian affairs. To the Greek way of thinking, the lifestyle of the Persian court, with its harems, eunuchs and luxury, was alien and self-indulgent. This view has also coloured the writing of many modern scholars.

SOURCE 56

The court turned in on itself and was caught up in its own petty jealousies and sillinesses: the kind of court which leads people into bloody assassinations, but which cannot lead an empire … Indeed the whole of Achaemenid history from 479 BC onwards [was] a holding operation in the face of challenges from rebellious subjects, ambitious satraps and external enemies.

Cambridge Ancient History: Persia, Greece and the Western Mediterranean, Vol. 4, 2nd edn, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1988, p. 78

7.14 Understanding and using the sources

Source 56

1. What indicates that this scholar writes from a Greek perspective?
2. What happened in 479 BC? What conclusion does this scholar draw about the effect of the events of 479 BC on later Persian history?
3. Comment on this writer's use of emotive language and generalisation.

7.14 Check your learning

1. Use the references in brackets to investigate these four key figures in more detail: Pythius (Herodotus, Book VII, 27–29, 37–41), Masistes (Herodotus, Book IX, 107–113), Demaratus (Herodotus, Book VII, 101–105 234–515), Themistocles (Plutarch, 'Themistocles').
   - Write a brief description of their relationships with Xerxes.
   - What aspects of Xerxes' character are revealed through each relationship?
   - How reliable is the information and/or judgement provided by the relevant source?
3. Read Herodotus' account of Xerxes' affair with his niece Artaynte and the consequences for her and her father, Masistes and his wife (Herodotus, Book IX, 109–114). Assess the reliability of the account and the role it might have played in Xerxes' assassination.
4. Discuss the following:
   a. What were the immediate consequences of Xerxes' assassination?
   b. Why have some historians suggested that Xerxes' reign began a period of decline in domestic and foreign affairs? Is this view defensible?

7.15 Evaluation

In this section you have the opportunity to analyse and synthesise the information presented in this chapter, and evaluate Xerxes and his reign. You will need to make a judgement based on selected criteria to determine the value and significance of relevant features of his contribution both to Persian domestic affairs and to the Persian Empire. It is up to you to choose the specific criteria on which to make your judgement.

Xerxes' impact and influence on his time

In evaluating the influence of Xerxes on his time, it is important to have a clear understanding of:

- *impact* – the immediate consequences of Xerxes' policies or actions
- *influence* – the extent to which Xerxes contributed to maintaining, shaping or changing the political, economic, social and/or religious structures of Persia and/or the empire.

Analysis of the following key questions will help you investigate Xerxes' impact and influence on his time:

- What were the consequences of Xerxes' policies? (For example, his religious, imperial and administrative policies.)
- What were the consequences of Xerxes' campaign against Greece?
- What were the main features of continuity with the past during his reign? (For example, how did he build on or develop the traditions established by his predecessors?)
- What were Xerxes' main achievements?

Another useful approach to investigating and evaluating Xerxes' influence on his time would be to consider his policies and actions in relation to the features of Persian kingship. Some relevant criteria include:

- promotion of Ahuramazda – policy towards other cults
- waging successful military campaigns
- administration of the Persian Empire
- relationship with/treatment of Persians and non-Persians
- maintaining Persia's prosperity
- building program.

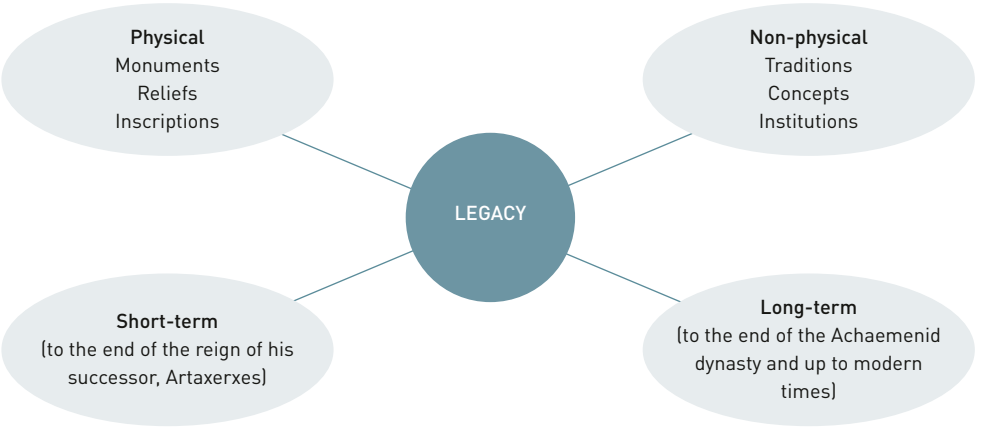
Assessment of his life and reign

We can also evaluate Xerxes by assessing or making judgements about more specific aspects of his life and reign. Some issues for consideration include:

- Xerxes' accession
- his relationship with a range of people, both Persian and non-Persian
- the success of his policies (e.g. building, religious, administrative)
- the success of foreign policy (e.g. military campaigns, imperial control/expansion)
- his effectiveness as an Achaemenid ruler.

Legacy

Legacy refers to anything handed down by an ancestor or predecessor, or a consequence. Such a consequence may be the intended or unintended result of the individual's policies and actions. Source 57 summarises the key aspects of Xerxes' legacy that are relevant to our discussion.



SOURCE 57 Features of legacy

7.15 Check your learning

1. For a comprehensive historiographical survey of Xerxes and the legacy of his reign, see R. Granger, 'Legacy: An assessment of Xerxes' reign, Part I', *Teaching History*, Journal of the History Teachers' Association of NSW, Vol. 39(4), 2005, pp. 14–21.
2. Using Source 57, make your own summary of Xerxes' legacy.
3. Writing tasks:
   - **a** Explain Xerxes' impact on his time.
     To help plan your response:
     - identify a range of relevant policies and actions of Xerxes' reign
     - use these to help structure your response
     - clearly indicate the effect of each of these on Persia and/or the empire
     - use specific evidence to support your points
     - refer to relevant historiographical issues.
   - **b** Assess the legacy of Xerxes.
     To help plan your response:
     - identify significant aspects of Xerxes' legacy
     - use these aspects to structure your answer
     - make judgements of the significance of each of these in relation to Xerxes' legacy
     - use specific evidence to support your assessment
     - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

7.16 Ancient images and interpretations of Xerxes

Now that you have examined some of the key aspects of Xerxes' reign you are in a position to draw some conclusions about the ancient and modern interpretations of Xerxes.

The ancient Greek sources – Herodotus, Aeschylus and Ctesias – include the following in their interpretations of Xerxes: impetuosity, arrogance, sadism, madness and gullibility.

Xerxes on trial

Following is the evidence for the charges made against Xerxes in the ancient sources.

Arguments for the prosecution

Charge 1: Impetuosity

In the following extract from Aeschylus' *Persai,* Xerxes' mother, Atossa, discusses the reasons for the Persian defeat at Salamis with the ghost of Darius.

SOURCE 58

DARIUS: Tell me, which of my sons campaigned so far afield?
ATOSSA: Xerxes, whose rashness emptied Asia of its men.
DARIUS: Poor fool! Was it by land or sea he attempted this?
ATOSSA: Both: he advanced two-fronted to a double war …
…
ATOSSA: Xerxes the rash learnt folly in fools' company.
They told him you, his father, with your sword had won,
Gold to enrich your children; while he, like a coward,
Gaining no increase, played the warrior at home.

Aeschylus, *Persai*, II, 710–737
(trans. P. Vellacott, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1961)

Charge 2: Arrogance

The concept of hubris, or arrogant pride, was central to the Greek way of thinking. Anyone who dared to challenge the will of the gods, or who failed to respect them, must expect to be punished. Xerxes, by attempting to conquer Greece, was committing an act of hubris and so the Greeks saw his failure as fair punishment for such arrogance.

You will remember that as part of his preparations for the Greek invasion, Xerxes had a bridge of boats built across the Hellespont. In the following extract, Herodotus tells us what happened when a violent storm destroyed the first attempted crossing.

SOURCE 59

Xerxes was very angry when he learnt of the disaster, and gave orders that the Hellespont should receive 300 lashes and have a pair of fetters [chains] thrown into it. I have heard before now that he also sent people to brand it with hot irons. He certainly instructed the men with the whips to utter, as they wielded them, the barbarous and presumptuous words: 'You salt and bitter stream, your master lays this punishment upon you for injuring him, who never injured you.'

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VII, 36
(trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972)

Charge 3: Sadism

A sadistic person is someone who enjoys inflicting pain on others. Herodotus appears to delight in recounting instances of Xerxes' brutal punishment of disobedience, incompetence or questioning of his authority. In the following extract he tells us what happened when Pythius, one of Xerxes' Lydian subjects, begged that one of his five sons be exempted from service in Xerxes' army.

SOURCE 60

Xerxes was furiously angry. 'You miserable fellow,' he cried, 'have you the face to mention your son, when I, in person, am marching to the war against Greece with my sons and brothers and kinsmen and friends – you, my slave, whose duty it was to come with me with every member of your house, including your wife?'

Xerxes at once gave orders that the men to whom such duties fell should find Pythius' eldest son and cut him in half and put the two halves one on each side of the road, for the army to march out between them. The order was performed.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VII, 40
(trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972)

Charge 4: Madness

Greeks sources tended to equate Xerxes' ambition with madness.

SOURCE 61

DARIUS: … my son, in youthful recklessness,
Not knowing the gods' ways, has been the cause of all [this destruction].
He hoped to stem that holy stream, the Bosporus,
And bind the Hellespont with fetters like a slave;
He would wrest Nature, turn sea into land, manacle
A strait with iron, to make a highway for his troops.
He in his mortal folly thought to overpower
Immortal gods, even Poseidon. Was not this
Some madness that possessed him?

Aeschylus, *Persai*, II, 737–749
(trans. P. Vellacott, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1961)

Charge 5: Gullibility

Xerxes' failure at the battle of Salamis is largely attributed to his willingness to accept at face value the message brought to him by Themistocles' slave, Sicinnus, the night before the battle.

SOURCE 62

MESSENGER: A Hellene from the Athenian army came and told
Your son Xerxes this tale: that, once the shades of night
Set in, the Hellenes would not stay, but leap on board,
And, by whatever secret route offered escape,
Row for their lives. When Xerxes heard this, with no thought
Of the man's guile, or of the jealousy of gods,
He sent this word to all his captains: 'When the sun
No longer flames to warm the earth, and darkness holds
The court of heaven, range the main body of our fleet
Threefold, to guard the outlets and the choppy straits.'

Aeschylus, *Persai*, II, 355–383
(trans. P. Vellacott, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1961)

Arguments for the defence

While we lack specific Persian sources, we do know enough about Persian customs to suggest explanations for Xerxes' actions from a Persian perspective. We can also use our historical judgement. Consider the following hints that might help you to reflect on the Persian perspective.

- Had Xerxes' readiness to accept Greek advice been successful in the past? (Are there any examples?)
- Why did Xerxes decide to invade Greece by both land and sea?
- After crossing the Hellespont successfully, Xerxes gave offerings to the waters, according to Greek custom.
- What were Xerxes' reasons for invading Greece in the first place?
- How do you think Xerxes would have defended his execution of Pythius' son?
- According to Persian religious belief, the storm that destroyed the bridge over the Hellespont was probably the work of *daevas*.
- Herodotus enjoyed embellishing his narrative with sensational anecdotes designed to entertain his Greek audience.
- What does the scale of Xerxes' logistical preparations for the invasion of Greece suggest about his abilities as a military leader?
- What strategic lessons had Xerxes learnt from Darius' attempts to invade Greece?
- Herodotus was writing a generation after the wars and appears to have relied largely on oral sources.

As we have seen throughout this chapter, the Persian sources from Xerxes' reign take the form of royal inscriptions marking significant events of the reign, particularly additions to the buildings of Persepolis. In one such inscription, found near Persepolis in 1967, Xerxes gives a long list of his personal qualities.

SOURCE 63

By the favor of Ahuramazda I am of such a sort that I am a friend to right, I am not a friend to wrong. It is not my desire that the weak man should have wrong done to him by the mighty; nor is that my desire that the mighty man should have wrong done to him by the weak.

What is right, that is my desire. I am not a friend to the man who is a Lie-follower. I am not hot-tempered. What things develop in my anger, I hold firmly under control by my thinking power. I am firmly ruling over my own [impulses].

R. Kent, *Old Persian: Grammar Texts, Lexicon*, American Oriental Series, Vol. 33, American Oriental Society, New Haven, Connecticut, 1953, p. 140

Prior to his account of the battles of Thermopylae and Artemisium, Herodotus concludes his estimate of the size of the Persian force (5 283 320 men) with this assessment of Xerxes:

SOURCE 64

Amongst all these immense numbers there was not a man who, for stature and noble bearing, was more worthy than Xerxes to wield so vast a power.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VII, 187
(trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972)

7.16 Check your learning

1. It is now time for you to assess the evidence and deliver your verdict on Xerxes. In addition to considering the Greek and Persian perspectives, you also need to include some evaluation of the sources themselves (e.g. trustworthiness and value). Assign each of the charges to different groups in your class for deliberation.
2. Revisit your study of the ancient images of Xerxes in 7.9 Images and representations of Xerxes as king. How do they contribute to your assessment of Xerxes?
3. Writing task: After each group has presented its findings, choose one of the following methods of recording the results:
   - the prosecution's closing address to a jury
   - the defence's closing address
   - a modern historian's summary of the evidence for and against the charges.

SOURCE 65 Palace of Xerxes (Hadish)

7.17 Modern images and interpretations of Xerxes

A number of modern scholars' interpretations of aspects of Xerxes' reign have already been cited throughout this chapter. The following offer additional assessments of his reign.

SOURCE 66

He is remembered mainly as the king who failed to conquer Greece, the villain of a heroic story of resistance. The memory is a partial one, and Xerxes should equally be recognised for his achievements: he reigned for twenty years, crushed several provincial revolts, bequeathed to his heirs an empire whose boundaries were to remain stable for almost 150 years, and brought to a conclusion (apart from minor later additions) one of the greatest building projects of antiquity, the imperial city of Persepolis.

R. Stoneman, *Xerxes: A Persian Life,* Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 2015, p. 1

SOURCE 67 Rodrigo Santoro as Xerxes in *300: Rise of An Empire*, directed by Noam Murro. The film portrays Xerxes as a giant god-king.

SOURCE 68

The fine promise of Xerxes' younger years had not been fulfilled. Failure of the European adventure opened the way to harem intrigues, with all their deadly consequences … More and more the character of Xerxes disintegrated. The enlarged but still crowded harem at Persepolis tells its own story. For a time he continued his interest in the completion of the Persepolis buildings. Towards the end of his reign he was under the influence of the commander of the guard, the Hyrcanian Artabanus, and of the eunuch chamberlain Aspamitres.

A. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1948, pp. 266–7

SOURCE 69

Whatever, the case may be, we cannot judge Xerxes' reign in terms of dynastic difficulties, nor, a fortiori [for an even stronger reason], can we postulate [assume] with the classical authors that his assassination was destiny's just punishment of a man guilty of immoderation [overindulgence]. We must renounce, once and for all, the Greek vision of Xerxes' reign. At bottom, his policy does not appear fundamentally different from his father's, even if the defeats suffered on the western front betoken an incontestable shrinkage of Darius' imperial realm. Again, we must stress that, seen from the center, these setbacks were only temporary and that Xerxes never gave up the idea of reconquest.

P. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, Indiana, 2002, p. 567

SOURCE 70

It is impossible to accept, at face value, the judgment of Xerxes that has come down to us from the Greek sources, especially Herodotus. He was not a typical oriental tyrant … he was man of flesh and blood, full of contradictions. We will probably never know the real Xerxes, because the only picture of him that we can glean from the official Persian sources is of a man who strived to be the equal of his father and to serve his god. The Greek campaign, which so profoundly stirred the Hellenic world, is scarcely mentioned in the ancient Persian sources … The image of Xerxes that has persisted down through the centuries and that continues to fascinate us, is based on a mixture of Greek and oriental legend; it is the image of a personality both noble and generous, but at the same time unpredictable, cruel and despotic.

M. Mayrhofer, 'Xerxes, roi des rois', in L. de Meyer & E. Haerinck (eds), *Archaeologica Iranica et Orientalis*, Vol. 1, Peeters Presse, Gent, 1989, pp. 113–14

7.17 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 66–70

1. Which of the sources presents the most positive assessment of Xerxes? How reliable is it?
2. Which is most critical? Why?
3. Do any of the sources contradict each other? Can you account for the contradictions?
4. Which source or sources come closest to your own assessment? Explain your view.

7.17 Check your learning

1. Create a table similar to the following and use it to record the main historiographical issues associated with the ancient sources, both Greek and Persian.

	WRITER	TOPIC	HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ISSUE
Greek evidence			
Persian evidence			

7.17 Profile

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Books VII–VIII: A source study

In Books VII and VIII of *The Histories*, Herodotus provides a detailed account of Xerxes' invasion of Greece until Xerxes' withdrawal after the naval defeat at Salamis. Several excerpts from these books have been included in this chapter. At the beginning of this chapter you conducted some research on the sources for Xerxes. You should therefore be aware of the need to treat Herodotus with caution. Consider, for example, that:

- the *Histories* were composed a generation after the Persian Wars
- Herodotus wrote from a largely Athenian perspective
- his account was based on an oral tradition with stories designed to entertain a live audience.

One issue of Herodotus' narrative is his use of direct speeches. He provides the text of speeches delivered by key people in his account despite the fact that it highly unlikely that he would have known what was said by Greeks or Persians on given occasions. David Pipes, in his commentary 'Herodotus: Father of history, father of lies', considers this problem.

SOURCE 71

Recent scholars have pointed out that in Greek history, the narrative is used to relate historical events, and the personal speeches are reserved to provide rational explanation for the events. These dramatic speeches are used (and composed?) by Herodotus to reveal character, to explain a policy, and, most importantly, to keep the audience interested in the progress of the tale.

D. Pipes, 'Herodotus: Father of history, father of lies', *Student Historical Journal 1989–1999*, Vol. 30, Loyola University, New Orleans

Source 72 is an example of the speech that Herodotus composed to explain Xerxes' reasons for invading Greece.

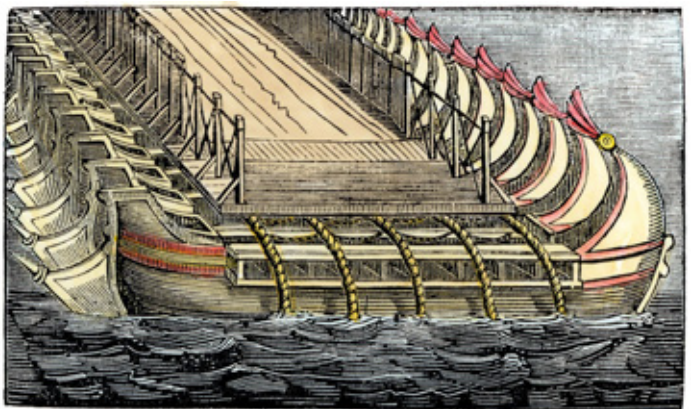
SOURCE 72

I will bridge the Hellespont and march an army through Europe into Greece, and punish the Athenians for the outrage they committed upon my father and upon us. As you saw, Darius himself was making his preparations for war against these men; but death prevented him from carrying out his purpose. I therefore on his behalf, and for the benefit of all my subjects, will not rest until I have taken Athens and burnt it to the ground, in revenge for the injury which the Athenians without provocation once did to me and to my father.

These men, you remember, came to Sardis with Aristagoras the Milesian, a subject of ours, and burnt the temples and sacred groves; and you know all too well how they served our troops under Datis and Artaphernes, when they landed upon Greek soil. For these reasons I have now prepared to make war upon them, and, when I consider the matter, I find several advantages in the venture; if we crush the Athenians and their neighbours in

the Peloponnese, we shall so extend the empire of Persia that its boundaries will be god's own sky, so that the sun will not look down upon any land beyond the boundaries of what is ours. With your help I shall pass through Europe from end to end and make it all one country. For if what I am told is true, there is not a city or nation in the world which will be able to withstand us, once these are out of the way. Thus the guilty and the innocent alike shall bear the yoke of servitude.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VII, 8a
(trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, 1984, p. 444)



SOURCE 73 An artist's impression of Xerxes' bridge over the Hellespont

7.17 Profile tasks

1 Discuss the following:

- **a** Why does Herodotus use a speech by Xerxes to relate his plan for the invasion of Greece? What language techniques can you identify that suggest its role in constructing a gripping narrative for his listeners or readers?
- **b** What does this source reveal about Xerxes' character?
- **c** How does this extract explain Xerxes' policy regarding the invasion of Greece?
- **d** Does Xerxes' speech engage the reader? How?
- **e** What is the value of this source for revealing Xerxes' character and motivations?
- **f** What are its limitations as a source of information about Xerxes and his role in the invasion of the mainland?

2 Writing task: Why did Xerxes invade Greece? Answer with reference to the source provided below and other sources.

> I will bridge the Hellespont and march an army through Europe into Greece, and punish the Athenians for the outrage they committed upon my father and upon us.
>
> Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VII, 8a

To help plan your response:

- identify the main reasons for Xerxes' invasion of Greece and use them to structure your response
- make the relationships between Xerxes' motives and actions evident and provide why and/or how
- support your explanation with reference to the source provided and other sources
- use appropriate terms and concepts.

Chapter conclusion

A comprehensive survey of the reign of Xerxes, within the context of Achaemenid history, should make it clear that the hostile interpretations of his reign come largely from non-Persian sources. The 'bad king' view preserved in this Hellenocentric view needs to be challenged. He was neither the first nor the last Persian king to suffer a military defeat. The reputation of his father, Darius I, has suffered little, if at all, from the failure of his attack on Greece at the Battle of Marathon. As we have seen, Xerxes' Greek campaign from a Persian perspective was a minor setback in an otherwise successful career. A balanced assessment based on both Persian and Greek perspectives suggests that Xerxes was a traditional Achaemenid ruler who made his own contribution to the developing ideology of Achaemenid kingship.

obook assess

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare students for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

8

Rome – Agrippina the Younger

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1 Who was Agrippina the Younger and how did she rise to prominence?

2 What was the basis of Agrippina's power and influence during the reigns of Gaius, Claudius and Nero?

3 What was the nature of Agrippina's relationship with other members of the imperial court?

4 What factors contributed to Agrippina's downfall and death?

5 What impact and influence did Agrippina have on her time?

6 How do ancient and modern images and interpretations contribute to our understanding and assessment of Agrippina?

FOCUS CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Perspectives

For a long time we were restricted to the perspectives of the ancient writers, particularly Tacitus, Suetonius and Cassius Dio, who viewed Agrippina the Younger as a woman who trespassed in the affairs of men. As such, she was portrayed as a manipulative schemer, an adulteress and a poisoner. More recent perspectives have enabled Agrippina to be seen largely as a literary construct, particularly at the hands of Tacitus, whose hatred of the imperial system led him to use Agrippina to show the immorality and corruption of a system that had departed from the republican ideals that he admired. The student of Agrippina must examine these different perspectives to reach an understanding of this controversial personality.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1 Explain Agrippina the Younger's background and rise to prominence.

2 Analyse the basis of Agrippina's power and influence during the reigns of Gaius, Claudius and Nero.

3 Analyse Agrippina's relationships with other members of the imperial court.

4 Discuss the factors that contributed to Agrippina's downfall and death.

5 Assess Agrippina's impact and influence on her time.

6 Evaluate the contribution of ancient and modern images and interpretations to our understanding and assessment of Agrippina.

SOURCE 1 A portrait head of Agrippina the Younger in marble, by an unknown sculptor, dated to AD 50

8.1 Historical context

Agrippina the Younger lived between AD 15 and AD 69, in a world dominated by Rome and its empire. Agrippina was the great-granddaughter of the emperor Augustus, who reigned from 27 BC until his death in AD 14 (see the family tree in Source 9). He had emerged victorious from the bloody civil war that followed the murder of Julius Caesar and brought the Roman Republic to its end. Augustus established a new form of government, the **principate**, with himself as *princeps* or 'first citizen'. He kept some of the old features of republican government, for example the Senate, but in reality he was supreme ruler.

principate the form of government established by Augustus, based on the old republican system

Augustus founded the Julian branch of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. Tiberius, his successor, was the son of his wife, Livia, and her first husband, Tiberius Claudius Nero, and therefore a member of the Claudian family. Agrippina was born during Tiberius' reign. As members of the ruling Julio-Claudian dynasty, Agrippina and her family were caught up in the political turmoil, the intrigue and violence of the emperor's court that characterised these times.

Geography of Rome

Rome is situated on the west coast of Italy about halfway down the Italian peninsula. The peninsula is approximately 1000 kilometres long and is at no point more than 200 kilometres wide. The Apennine mountain range runs the entire length of the peninsula. The fertile plains of the west coast are crossed by rivers such as the Arno and the Tiber, and the climate is 'Mediterranean' – mild winters and hot summers with a moderate annual rainfall. Italy is also a volcanic region – Stromboli, Mount Vesuvius and Mount Etna are all active volcanoes. The volcanic soil of this region is very fertile and produces fine crops.

The Roman Empire

During the Julio-Claudian period, Rome was the bustling hub of a vast empire centred on the Mediterranean. From there it extended into continental Europe in the north, to Greece and Asia in the East, to Egypt and Africa in the south, and to Spain in the west. Provinces surrounding the Mediterranean Sea had a climate similar to Italy's although cooler and wetter in the north and hotter and drier in the south. Agricultural production was a major activity of these regions and included grapes, olive oil and cereals. Rome's empire in the south included Egypt and other African provinces. Egypt was the biggest producer of grain and an important source of wealth for the Roman Empire.

The various regions under Roman control were designated as either senatorial or imperial provinces. The governors of senatorial provinces, known as proconsuls, were appointed by the Roman Senate, while the governors of imperial provinces, because of their strategic importance, were appointed by the emperor himself.

Beyond the regions under direct Roman control lay the frontiers. They were patrolled by legions of the Roman army stationed there to defend the borders from invasion by foreign tribes and to supervise traffic, both commercial and human. Rome's influence extended well beyond its provincial borders. For example, the Romans regularly traded overland in regions along the Danube River to the north of Italy and also conducted long-distance maritime trade in the Indian Ocean.

ROMAN EMPIRE, EARLY 1ST CENTURY AD

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 2 The Roman world in the time of Agrippina the Younger

Resources of Rome and the empire

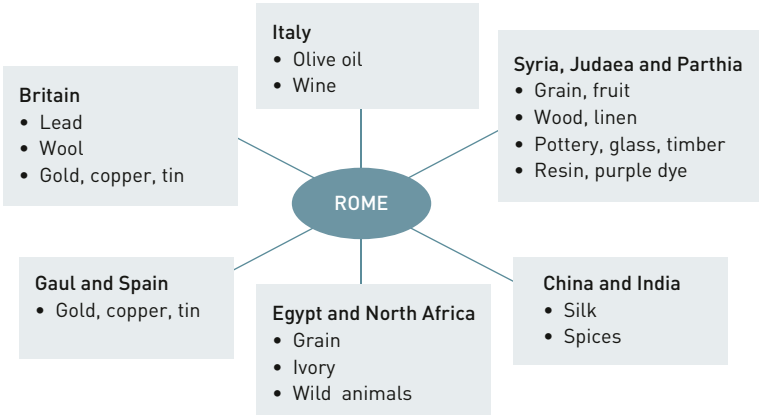
Trade was very important to the Roman Empire. Big cities such as Rome had to import large amounts of food from all over the empire. Luxury goods came from Europe, Africa and the Near East. Ships brought products from the East, notably via the **Silk Road**.

Silk Road
an ancient network of trade routes through regions of Europe and Asia connecting the East and West

The most important trade was the import of grain to feed Rome's urban masses, for the Italian peninsula did not produce enough grain to be self-sufficient. Egypt was vital for this grain supply and huge shipments arrived almost daily from Africa at the port of Ostia on the mouth of the Tiber River. Here, slaves unloaded the cargo onto barges that could navigate the 24-kilometre trip up the shallow Tiber to Rome.

Roman imports from all over the empire included beef, grain, precious and non-precious metals, timber, oils, spices, wine, glass, pottery and marble. The major Roman exports to the empire included wine, olive oil, pottery and papyrus.

The slave trade was also big business in the Roman Empire. Slaves came from many of the conquered territories: the two main sources were Thrace and Bithynia in the Black Sea region and



SOURCE 3 The major resources available to the Roman Empire

the area near the Danube River, inhabited by various Celtic and Germanic tribes. Source 3 summarises the major resources available to the Roman Empire during this period.

Written sources for Agrippina

The ancient Roman writers listed in Source 4 are our major written sources for Agrippina the Younger.

SOURCE 4 Ancient writers on Agrippina the Younger

WRITER/TEXT	BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS	CONTEXT OF WRITER
Tacitus *Annals of Imperial Rome*	AD 56 – c. 117 • A senator in imperial service as proconsul of Asia AD 112–113 (Domitian's' reign) • Most famous historian of this period	• Generally hostile to imperial rule; he regarded it as a form of tyranny – was a republican sympathiser and admirer of the old senatorial system • His hatred of Domitian has coloured his account of the earlier Julio-Claudian period
Suetonius *The Twelve Caesars*	AD c. 71 – c. 135 • Roman biographer • Member of **equestrian** order, scholar and official during the reign of Trajan	• Had access to some official documents, including the letters of Augustus • Wrote biographies of the emperors – the life of Augustus is the most positive • Included gossip and scandal in his biographies although his account lacks the malice of Tacitus
Cassius Dio *Roman History*	AD c. 150 – c. 235 • Roman historian • Senator and provincial governor under reigns of Commodus and Septimius Severus	• Politically conservative • Few of the books of his history have survived • Attitudes largely shaped by the political conditions of his own times – he was a soldier and politician rather than a critical historian

equestrians *(equites)* one of the two aristocratic classes of ancient Rome, ranking below the patricians; equestrians were entitled to wear a gold ring and a tunic with a narrow band

8.1 Understanding and using the sources

Source 2

1 What does the higher number of imperial provinces compared to senatorial ones suggest about the role and influence of the emperor in this period?

Source 4

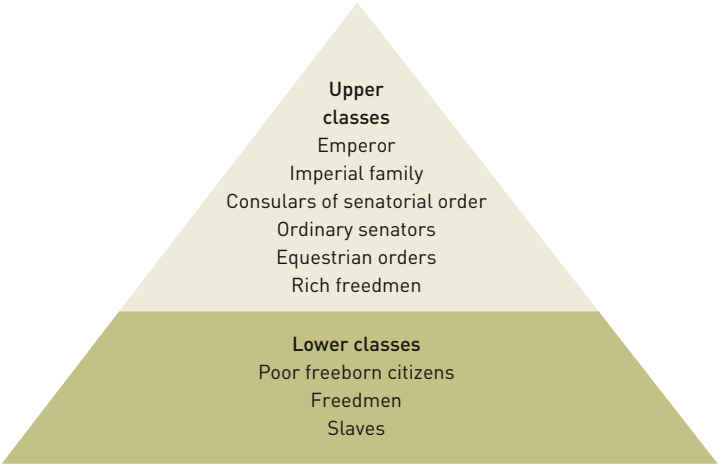
2 What questions need to be asked about the value of these writers as sources for Agrippina the Younger?

8.1 Check your learning

1 Research the writers in Source 4. Create a file for each and add to it as you work through this chapter. A useful discussion of these writers can be found in A. Barrett, *Agrippina: Sex, Power and Politics in the Early Empire*, Routledge, London, 1996, Chapter 9.

2 Writing task: Describe the Roman Empire and its resources in the time of Agrippina the Younger.

8.2 Roman social and political structures



SOURCE 5 Roman social structure

Roman society was very class-conscious. It was based on a strict hierarchy with a clear upper and lower class, but there was no group between the two that could be called a middle class. Most Romans were born into a particular social group and had limited means to improve their social status. The main factors determining a person's place in Roman society were citizenship status (e.g. freeborn or slave), place of birth, wealth and whether they were a country or city dweller. There were numerous divisions in the social structure. These divisions between groups were often reinforced by legal and political privileges.

The upper classes

The structure of Roman society reflected the political power of different groups.

- *Emperor:* From the time of Augustus, the emperor exercised total control over political, military, economic and religious affairs in Rome and the empire.
- *Imperial family:* Members of the Julio-Claudian family also enjoyed considerable power and influence.
- *Consulars:* Consulars usually came from noble families. They were senators who had achieved the office of consul and were respected because of their experience and authority.
- *Senators:* Membership was hereditary and limited to those with a property qualification of one million **sesterces**. They served the emperor in offices throughout the empire – most gained their wealth from large estates.
- *Equestrians* (*equites* or knights): Membership (not hereditary) was based on a property qualification of 400 000 sesterces. Their wealth was gained through public office, trade and banking. The *equites* served the emperor in a number of roles including as **procurators**, **praetorian prefects,** commanders of the fire service and in charge of grain supply, *iudices* (jurors), and as military officers. *Equites* outnumbered senators. For example, at the time of Augustus, there were 20 000, but their numbers increased in the imperial period as provincials were admitted.
- *Freedmen (liberti):* These were ex-slaves who had acquired wealth from trade, banking, manufacturing and land dealings. Many served in the imperial court. They could marry freeborn women and become members of the equestrian order, but were never allowed to join the senatorial class.

sesterce
a bronze or silver Roman coin valued at a quarter of a denarius; also referred to as a 'sestertius'

procurator
an officer of the Roman empire responsible for the financial and administrative affairs of a province as an agent of the emperor

praetorian prefect
an equestrian official in charge of the Praetorian Guard, an elite army corps

The lower classes

The lower classes included poor freeborn citizens, ordinary freedmen and slaves. There was great diversity among this group. For example, there was an important distinction between city dwellers (*plebs urbana*) and country dwellers (*plebs rustica*). City dwellers usually had better employment opportunities with more access to public life and entertainment.

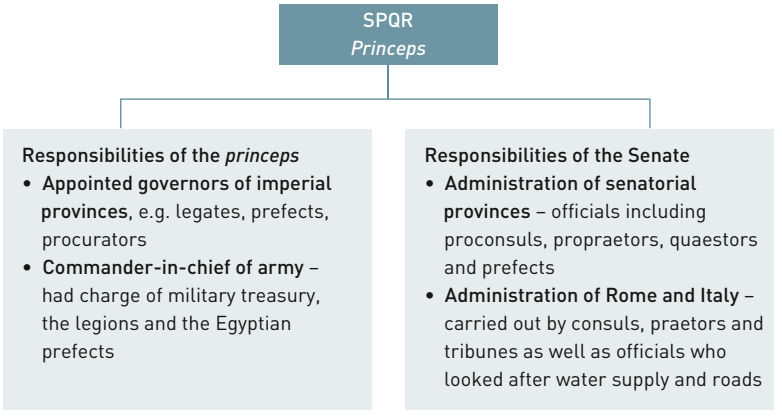
Another feature of the urban lower classes were the *collegia,* or guilds. Most members of the plebs would have belonged to a guild of craftsmen. As a member of this guild, a man paid dues that would help provide him with meals and a decent burial. The urban poor had hard lives, often living in squalid conditions with the barest essentials of food and clothing. Their occupations varied widely and included legal advisers, doctors, scribes, actors, engineers, small businessmen, craftsmen and traders.

Slaves belonged to the lower social class. They had been defeated in war, or were free citizens who sold themselves to pay a debt. According to many sources, their lives appear to have been quite hard. In the time of Augustus, the proportion of slaves in the Roman population was estimated to have been 35 per cent. They performed most of the work in agriculture and manufacture. Upper-class Romans drew most of their wealth from the work of slaves.

The lower classes greatly outnumbered the upper classes. For this reason, various emperors saw the wisdom of keeping them content by providing them with *panem et circenses* ('bread and circuses') – handouts of food and lavish, staged public entertainments.

Political structures: The principate

The principate, the form of government established by Augustus, was based on the structures of the old republican system. The Senate appeared to retain its supreme position, but modifications were made during the reign of each *princeps* in terms of the rights of ordinary Romans and the powers of the *princeps*. Major changes occurred during the principates of Gaius and Claudius, particularly in the latter, when freedmen took over many of the responsibilities of senators. By the end of the reign of Agrippina's son Nero, so many standard features of the principate had been compromised that it was little more than a tyranny.



SOURCE 6 The structure of government in the early principate

Role of imperial women

During the early empire, the pre-eminent role of the Julio-Claudian family in providing the *princeps* meant that the women of the imperial household played a very important role in the dynastic succession. Although the *princeps* came from this composite family, he could not directly designate a successor. He might indicate a successor by arranging a marriage or conferring special honours and powers upon him – but the ultimate choice was not his. In this respect, the women of the imperial family played increasingly important roles.

While women could not become emperor themselves, their sons could, through their mother's influence on the *princeps*. Their husbands could also gain power on their son's behalf.

SOURCE 7

A strong-minded woman was also able to influence general aspects of an emperor's policy … [The early] Principate sees women's involvement in politics and public life at a peak. Perhaps because of the novelty of having the palace replace the **forum**, the women of the Domus [imperial household] rose to a higher and more spectacular position than any of their republican forebears. In a very real sense, the domestic history of the period is the history of those women.

R. Bauman, *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome*, Routledge, London, 1992, p. 6

forum
the original marketplace of Rome; the site of popular elections

The women of the Julio-Claudian royal family were raised in the palace under strict supervision. Part of Augustus' program of reform was to restore traditional Roman values such as the importance of marriage and family. Females were expected to be modest, to marry young, to have large families and, as Roman matrons, to exhibit the feminine form of *gravitas*; that is, to behave with a sense of dignity and awareness of their responsibilities. The basic function of motherhood was to shape the moral outlook of children.

Roman upper-class women enjoyed considerable freedom in the early years of the empire. Although roles in public life were closed to them, they could acquire the rights to own, inherit and dispose of property. Some women owned and operated businesses in shipping and trade. By the time of Augustus, women with three children (and freedwomen with four) became legally independent, a status known as *sui iuris*. And although women could play no part in politics, they could still exercise considerable influence over their husbands. The role played by Livia during the reign of Augustus is an example of this.

SOURCE 8 A bust of Livia, wife of Augustus and great-grandmother of Agrippina the Younger

8.2 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 6 & 7

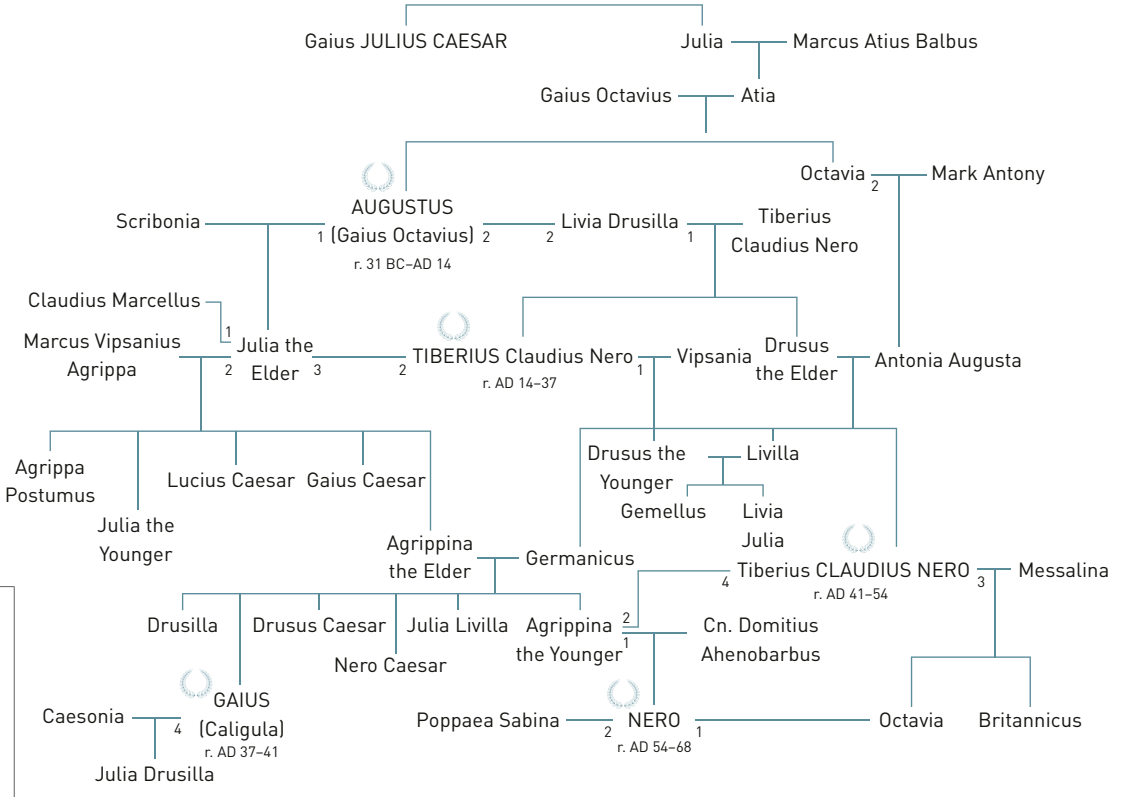
1. What does the division of administration between *princeps* and Senate indicate about the nature of government in this period? What information about the nature of the powers of the Senate indicates the superior position of the *princeps*?
2. How had the transition from Republic to Empire increased the importance of the women of the Domus, according to Source 7?

8.2 Check your learning

1. Find out the meaning of 'SPQR'. What was its importance in ancient Rome?
2. Write paragraphs for each of the following:
   - **a** Outline the social structure of imperial Rome in this period.
   - **b** How did the relationship between the *princeps* and the Senate change during the Julio-Claudian period?

8.3 Agrippina's family background and status

Agrippina was born into the Julio-Claudian family, a composite of the Julii and the Claudii, the two most prominent families of imperial Rome. Her mother, Agrippina the Elder, was the granddaughter of the emperor Augustus. Her father, Germanicus, was the grandson of Livia. His father was the elder son of Livia's son, Drusus, and his wife Antonia, a daughter of Mark Antony and Octavia, sister of Augustus.



SOURCE 9 The Julio-Claudian family tree

Agrippina's parents

Agrippina's parents enjoyed high-profile positions in the Julio-Claudian family and in Rome. Germanicus had a very successful political and military career. He was a favourite of Augustus, on whose order he was formally adopted by Tiberius in AD 4. Agrippina the Elder married Germanicus in AD 5. Unlike many aristocratic Roman marriages, which were purely political arrangements, there appears to have been genuine affection between Germanicus and Agrippina; the sources reveal a picture of a loving couple.

Germanicus

On the death of Augustus in AD 14 and the accession of Tiberius as emperor, the Senate appointed Germanicus commander of the Roman legions in Germania. At the same time, there was a serious mutiny in Lower Germany, which Germanicus managed to suppress. Germanicus' negotiation of a beneficial settlement and Agrippina the Elder's display of their son Gaius, dressed as a little soldier, made them very popular with the Roman legions.

In AD 15–16, around the time of the birth of Agrippina the Younger, Germanicus was campaigning against various German tribes. He was attempting to extend the Roman Empire in Germany at a time when this was against Roman policy.

In AD 17, Tiberius recalled Germanicus to Rome where he was given a **triumph** and other honours. Germanicus was then sent to the eastern part of the Roman Empire where he organised Cappadocia and Commagene into provinces. In AD 19, he travelled to Egypt without the approval of the emperor. Tiberius was greatly angered by this, for men of senatorial and imperial rank were barred from entering Egypt without permission. Germanicus therefore disobeyed an important imperial ruling.

triumph
a ceremonial procession through Rome to celebrate and dedicate a general's victories and completion of foreign wars

Death of Germanicus

Agrippina was only 3 or 4 years old when her father, Germanicus, fell ill and died of suspected poisoning in AD 19. He had returned to the province of Syria from his visit to Egypt to discover that the orders he had previously issued regarding Syria had been countermanded by Piso, the local governor. Tiberius had only recently appointed Piso to the province. His wife, Plancina, was a close friend of Livia's. Source 10 gives Suetonius' account of Germanicus' death.

SOURCE 10

It is even believed that [Tiberius] arranged for Gnaeus Piso, the governor of Syria, to poison Germanicus; and that Piso, when tried on this charge, would have produced his instructions had they not been taken from him when he confronted Tiberius with them, whereupon he was executed. As a result of these events, 'Give us back Germanicus!' was written on the walls throughout Rome and shouted all night. Tiberius later strengthened popular suspicion by his cruel treatment of Germanicus' wife Agrippina and her children.

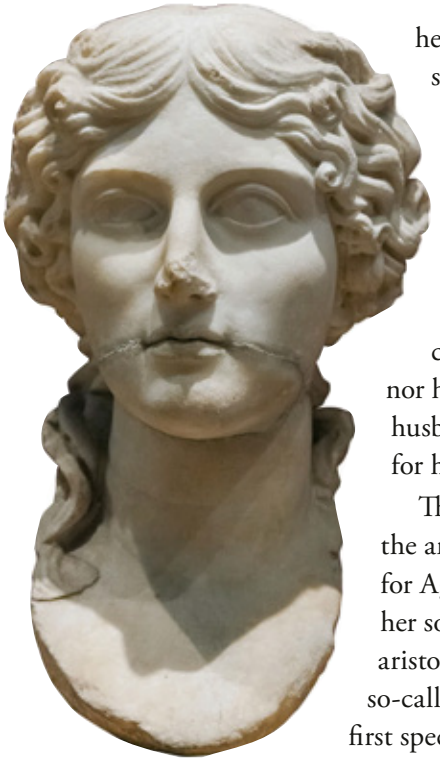
Suetonius, *Tiberius*, 52 (in *The Twelve Caesars*, trans. R. Graves, Penguin Books, London, 1979)

SOURCE 11
A marble bust of Germanicus from the Museo Capitolino, Rome

Agrippina the Elder

In many respects, Agrippina the Elder fulfilled the expected role of a Roman woman of the imperial period; nine children with Germanicus were ample proof of her fertility. She bore all her children in military camps on the Roman frontier between AD 6 and 19. The couple had six sons, three of whom survived: Nero, Drusus and Gaius. The three daughters were Agrippina the Younger, Drusilla and Livilla.

Under Augustan legislation, women who had given birth to more than three children were allowed the privilege of participating fully in Roman life. Agrippina the Elder also demonstrated the traditional matronly virtues of *fide*s, faithfulness to one man, as shown by



SOURCE 12
A marble bust of Agrippina the Elder, granddaughter of the emperor Augustus

her devotion to the memory of Germanicus, and *pudicitia,* observance of high standards of sexual conduct.

Tacitus says of Agrippina the Elder's early career that she had an 'impressive record as a wife and a mother', and that 'she was determined and rather excitable. But she turned this to good account by her devoted faithfulness to her husband'.

Agrippina the Elder was a strong and forceful woman who was determined to avenge the death of her husband and advance her children's cause. After his death, she carried Germanicus' ashes back to Rome and was greeted by large crowds of sympathetic Romans during her journey, an event that neither Tiberius nor his mother Livia can have failed to notice. She complained to Tiberius about her husband's death until he refused to speak with her, although he did make arrangements for her children's future.

The death of Tiberius' son and heir Drusus in AD 23 and the emergence of Sejanus, the ambitious praetorian prefect and right-hand man to Tiberius, signalled great danger for Agrippina the Elder and her sons. To protect herself and her family's interests – for her sons now stood in line for the succession – she had gathered a group of powerful aristocratic friends around her. It has been claimed that she was forming a 'party', the so-called '*partes Agrippinae*'. If so, according to the scholar Richard Bauman, 'it was the first specific political movement to be formed by a woman'.

It is interesting to note that Tacitus changes his opinion of Agrippina the Elder. His final verdict describes her as a woman who 'could not endure equality and loved to domineer, [and who] with her masculine aspirations was far removed from the frailties of women'.

Despite all her efforts, Agrippina the Elder and two of her sons, Nero and Drusus, eventually fell victim to the intrigues of Sejanus. He constantly informed Tiberius of rumours about them, until in AD 29 he succeeded in having them imprisoned on false charges. Agrippina the Elder died in AD 33, and her sons Nero and Drusus perished at about the same time. Suetonius gives his account of what happened in Source 13. At the time of her mother's death, Agrippina was about 19 years of age and had been married for 5 years to her first husband, Domitius Ahenobarbus.

SOURCE 13

At last [Tiberius] falsely accused [Agrippina the Elder] of planning to take sanctuary beside the image of her grandfather Augustus, or with the army abroad; and exiled her to the prison island of Pandateria. In punishment for her violent protests he ordered a centurion to give her a good flogging, in the course of which she lost an eye. Then she decided to starve herself to death and, though he had her jaws prised open for forcible feeding, succeeded …

[Nero and Drusus] were declared public enemies and starved to death – Nero on the island of Pontia, Drusus in a palace cellar.

Suetonius, *Tiberius*, 53

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

8.3 Understanding and using the sources

Source 9

1 Study the Julio-Claudian family tree and identify each of the emperors in the following relationships with Agrippina the Younger:
   - **a** her great-grandfather
   - **b** her brother
   - **c** her uncle and husband
   - **d** her son.

2 What do these relationships reveal of Agrippina's status?

Source 10

3 According to Suetonius, what role did Piso play in the death of Germanicus?

4 Who does Suetonius suggest was the architect of the plan to kill Germanicus?

5 What evidence does Suetonius provide to indicate that Germanicus was a popular figure?

Source 13

6 What does Suetonius give as the reasons for Agrippina the Elder's exile? Why would these have influenced Tiberius' decision?

7 What questions need to be asked about Suetonius' account of Agrippina the Elder's death?

8.3 Check your learning

1 Make a copy of the family tree in Source 9. Using two different-coloured highlighters, identify each family member as Julian or Claudian. Some will be both Julian and Claudian, so mark them with both colours. This will help you to remember who was who in the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

2 Discuss the following:
   - **a** Why might Tiberius have wanted to eliminate Germanicus?
   - **b** What did Germanicus' death mean for the future of Agrippina the Elder and her children?
   - **c** In what ways did Agrippina the Elder demonstrate the traditional virtues of a Roman matron?
   - **d** Why did Tiberius distance himself from Agrippina the Elder after the death of Germanicus?
   - **e** What did Sejanus have to fear from Agrippina the Elder and her family?
   - **f** In what ways did the career of Agrippina the Elder serve as a model for her daughter, Agrippina the Younger?

3 Writing tasks:
   - **a** Describe the family background and status of Agrippina the Younger.
   - **b** How did her family background and early years shape the career of Agrippina the Younger?

8.4 Agrippina's early life and marriages

Agrippina was born in the winter quarters of her father's army at *Oppidum Ubiorum* (modern Cologne) in AD 14–15, where her father was campaigning against German tribes. She was the seventh child of her parents and the first daughter. Three brothers had been lost by Agrippina the Elder in childbirth. Because of Germanicus' military appointments, Agrippina and her family were constantly on the move and often in danger.

Agrippina was only 3 or 4 years old when Germanicus died of suspected poisoning in AD 19. Normally her father's death would have brought Agrippina under the tutelage of a guardian, whose role was to arrange a suitable marriage for her. Agrippina's guardian is thought to have been the emperor Tiberius.

Agrippina's marriages

The marriages of imperial women were recognised as political events, a key consideration being to keep power within the hands of a few families. Agrippina's first two marriages were arranged for her, but she probably played a decisive role in the third.

First marriage

In AD 28, Tiberius arranged the marriage of Agrippina, then aged 13 or 14, to Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus, a descendant of the Domitii, a noble and wealthy family. He was connected to the Julio-Claudian family in that he was a great nephew of Augustus, first cousin of Claudius and also a cousin of Agrippina herself. Domitius Ahenobarbus was also a descendant of Mark Antony, who had married Augustus' sister Octavia.

SOURCE 14 Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus, first husband of Agrippina and father of Nero

The most important part of the Roman marriage contract was the intended procreation of children. On 16 December AD 37, Agrippina gave birth to her son, Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus (later renamed Nero) at Antium. Unlike her mother, Agrippina did not have numerous children. The year AD 37 was a momentous one for Agrippina: she became a mother and, with the accession of her brother Gaius, she became the emperor's sister.

Second marriage

In AD 41, Agrippina married Sallustius Passienus Crispus. The emperor Claudius had asked Passienus to divorce his wife, and marry Agrippina following the recent death of Domitius Ahenobarbus. Although wealthy and of consular rank, Passienus was not as well connected as her first husband. However, he was a man of letters, with a lively wit. He died in AD 47, according to Suetonius, poisoned by Agrippina after he had named her as his heir. He left his valuable estate to Agrippina's son, Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Third marriage

In AD 49, Agrippina married her uncle, the emperor Claudius. The marriage was met with widespread disapproval primarily because of their close family relationship. The Senate granted them special dispensation to marry. It is possible that the Senate could have promoted the marriage between Agrippina and Claudius to consolidate the Julio-Claudian family after the feud between Tiberius and Agrippina the Elder.

Basis of Agrippina's power and influence

Agrippina's three marriages underlined the significance of her family background and status. The marriages also made her very wealthy. The birth of her son gave her new status as a mother; evidence of matronly virtue was an important criterion of acceptance in Roman society, as seen with Agrippina the Elder. The fact that her child was a potential heir to the Julio-Claudian dynasty was even more significant. Like her grandmother and mother before her, Agrippina would have been aware of the importance of furthering the prospects of her offspring. She now had a vested political interest in the dynasty beyond her own survival and advancement.

Patronage

Agrippina was highly skilled at using her contacts and her influence to achieve her objectives. This system was known as patronage and had been normal practice in Roman society from republican times through to the empire. Patron–client relationships existed at every level of society. A patron was expected to assist his clients and their relatives by advancing their careers. In return, clients had to support and further the cause of their patron. Patronage was particularly important for noble families and, as can be seen with Agrippina, the women of the imperial household could exert their influence as patrons.

Agrippina's most influential clients were Seneca and Burrus, whom she appointed as her son's advisers (see 8.8 Agrippina's relationships with Senecca, Burrus and others and 8.10 Agrippina's role in Nero's reign). The residents of the colony established in Agrippina's name, modern Cologne, were also her clients.

SOURCE 15 The basis of Agrippina's power and influence

8.4 Understanding and using the sources

1 How did Agrippina's family background, marriages, patronage and motherhood contribute to her power and influence?

8.4 Check your learning

1 Research Agrippina's other clients, including Junius Gallio, Annaeus Milo, Balbillus and Anteius Rufus. How did they benefit from her patronage?
2 Writing task: Discuss the importance of Agrippina's early life and marriages in shaping her career.

8.5 Agrippina's role during the reign of Gaius (Caligula)

SOURCE 16 Agrippina the Younger and her son, Nero – statue in marble by a Roman artist, 1st century AD, now in the Capitoline Museum, Rome

vestal virgin
a priestess of Vesta, Roman goddess of the hearth

games
ancient Roman spectacles, including chariot races, theatrical performances and gladiatorial shows

Ptolemaic
relating to the dynasty that ruled Egypt from the death of Alexander the Great (323 BC) to the death of Cleopatra VII (30 BC)

SOURCE 17 A brass sestertius issued by Caligula in AD 38, showing Caligula on the face and his three sisters on the reverse

On the death of Tiberius in AD 37, Gaius Julius Caesar, nicknamed Caligula or 'little boots', became emperor. Gaius immediately ordered that the bones of his mother and brothers be brought to Rome and formally buried.

One of Gaius' first acts was to give his three sisters unprecedented status. In a series of measures, the three sisters were:

- made honorary **vestal virgins**
- given seats in the imperial enclosure at the **games**
- included in the annual vows for the emperor's safety: 'I will not value my life or those of my children less highly than I do the safety of the Emperor and his sisters'
- included in the annual vows of allegiance to the emperor
- included in the preamble (introductory statement) to proposals submitted to the Senate.

Gaius also issued a coin, a sestertius (or sesterce), showing his three sisters on the reverse (see Source 17). No Roman coinage had ever before depicted the sisters of an emperor. Agrippina, standing on the left, represents *securitas*, or security. She holds a cornucopia in her right hand and her right arm rests on the shoulder of Drusilla. Drusilla, her head turned in the direction of Agrippina, symbolises *concordia*, unity or consensus. In her right hand, she holds a *patera* and a cornucopia in the left. Livilla stands on the right, her head turned in the direction of her two sisters. She represents *fortuna,* or divine approval. She holds a rudder in her right hand and in her left hand, a cornucopia.

Gaius' relationship with his sisters

Some ancient sources have suggested that Gaius had an incestuous relationship with his sisters, especially Drusilla. Historians have pointed out that such accusations, based on Gaius' open affection for his sisters, are probably groundless and evidence only of the bias of the writers.

His relationship with Drusilla, however, was particularly close, and it is claimed that he lived with her as a wife (although she was actually married to somebody else) and that he wanted to introduce the concept of **Ptolemaic** brother–sister marriage into the imperial household in order to preserve the Julian bloodline. Interestingly, when Gaius fell ill in AD 37 he considered making Drusilla his heir, and when she died the following year, he had her **deified** as the goddess Panthea.

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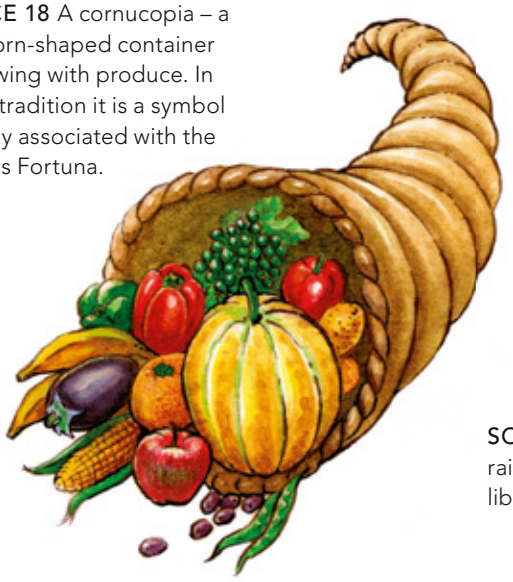

SOURCE 18 A cornucopia – a large horn-shaped container overflowing with produce. In Roman tradition it is a symbol of plenty associated with the goddess Fortuna.

SOURCE 19 A *patera* – a bowl or dish with a raised centre that was used in religious rituals as a libation vessel to offer drinks to the gods

SOURCE 20

With his brothers and parents dead, and without a compatible wife, it might be expected that Caligula would have looked for affection from his three sisters. The enormous favours that he heaped on them at the beginning of his reign had a political purpose, but they also suggest considerable affection within the family. It was doubtless this affection that led to the stories of incest with all three sisters. Such reports are to be treated with scepticism. Suetonius admits the story was hearsay. Neither Seneca nor Philo, contemporaries of Caligula who both adopt a highly moral tone, make any mention of incest. Also when Tacitus deals with Agrippina's incestuous designs on her son, the emperor Nero, he makes no hint of any improper relationship with her brother and attributes her moral corruption to her association with Lepidus.

A. Barrett, *Caligula: The Corruption of Power*, B.T. Batsford, Ltd, London, 1989, p. 85

Conspiracy and exile

After the death of Agrippina's first husband in AD 39–40, she and her sister became involved in a conspiracy, the aim of which is unknown. It resulted in the execution of Lentulus Gaetulicus, the legate (governor) of Upper Germany, and Aemilius Lepidus, the former husband of Drusilla and brother-in-law to Gaius. Agrippina and Livilla were charged with committing adultery with Lepidus. Agrippina was forced to carry his ashes to Rome, where they were scattered unceremoniously. The sisters' property was disposed of, and they were banished to the Pontian Islands. Associates of the conspirators were put to death. The death of Gaius in AD 41 ended his sisters' exile. Source 21 gives a modern interpretation of the events.

SOURCE 21

Caligula's own construction on events is clear. Agrippina and Lepidus had formed a conspiracy to replace him; involved Julia [Livilla] to replace him … and had the promise of military support from Gaetulicus. Caligula, in gratitude dedicated three daggers in the temple of Mars Ultor … Thus Agrippina's first attempt at seizing power long predated her marriage to Claudius …

B. Leadbetter, 'The ambition of Agrippina the Younger', *Ancient History: Resources for Teachers*, XXV(1), Macquarie Ancient History Association, 1995, p. 44

deified elevated to the status of a god

8.5 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 17–19

1 Why would concepts such as *securitas, concordia* and *fortuna* be important to Rome and the empire?

2 What is the significance of having these concepts inscribed on a coin and why are they associated with Gaius' sisters?

3 What does Gaius' choice of symbols such as the cornucopia and *patera* suggest?

4 Why does Livilla hold a rudder? What does this suggest?

Sources 20 & 21

5 What is Barrett's opinion of the story that Caligula had an incestuous relationship with his sisters?

6 What evidence does he present to support his opinion? Do you accept his arguments? Explain your answer.

7 Does the information provided by the coin (Source 17) tend to support or contradict Barrett's opinion?

8 According to Leadbetter, what role had Gaetulicus and Lepidus played in the conspiracy against Caligula?

9 How was Agrippina implicated in the plot? What were her possible motives according to Leadbetter?

8.5 Check your learning

1 Suggest reasons why Gaius would have minted this coin.

2 What two imperial titles are represented by the letters PONMTRPOT (read them as PON-M and TR-POT) on the face of the coin in Source 17? What do the initials SC on the reverse represent? Why did emperors include it on their coins? Search online for 'Reading ancient Roman coins' to help you.

3 What other types of coins did Gaius mint during his reign? What do they reveal about his imperial agenda? Search online for 'Caligula, Roman Imperial Coins reference at WildWinds.com'.

4 Research the conspiracy against Gaius. Do you think Agrippina was involved? Weigh up the evidence for and against. Useful resources include:
   - Suetonius, *Life of Caligula*, 24
   - Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 59, 22
   - A. Barrett, *Agrippina: Mother of Nero*, Routledge, London, 2002, p. 71. (Search online for 'Gaetulicus and Lepidus' and scroll down to 'Agrippina: Mother of Nero – Page 71 – Google Books Result'.)

5 Writing task: Assess the significance of Gaius' reign in Agrippina's rise to prominence.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify relevant features, for example developments, individuals and relationships of the reign, that are significant for Agrippina's rise to prominence
   - use these to structure your answer – avoid a purely narrative account of the reign
   - make judgements about the importance of the features you have chosen in relation to Agrippina's rise to prominence – a concluding paragraph might identify the most significant feature of the reign
   - use appropriate ancient and/or modern sources to support your assessment
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

8.6 Agrippina's role during the reign of Claudius

The accession of Claudius as emperor of Rome marked a critical turning point in the career of Agrippina. Her family background and her first two marriages had established her in the public eye. The birth of her son had increased her prestige, but it also marked the birth of an ambition that would come to dominate her future career – the elevation of her son to the role of *princeps*.

Claudius became *princeps* following Gaius' assassination with support of the Praetorian Guard, rather than the Senate. The nobility, particularly those in the Senate, were not keen to accept him. His hold on power was always tenuous and he was continuously suspicious of threats against him.

Prior to becoming emperor, Claudius had led a quiet life, pursuing scholarly interests and writing histories. He suffered from a medical condition, possibly cerebral palsy. The sources present him as a figure of fun – under the control of his freedmen and his women. A more balanced picture shows a man of considerable intellect with great interest and skill in the administration of the empire. Claudius enjoyed numerous successes as Roman ruler, including the conquest of Britain. Criticism of his reign centres on the behaviour and power of his freedmen and his wives.

Soon after his accession, Claudius recalled Agrippina and Livilla to Rome, and Agrippina's son, Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus, now aged nine, was reunited with his mother. During her exile he had lived with his aunt Domitia Lepida, and had lost his inheritance. This was now restored to him. Following the death of Domitius Ahenobarbus in AD 41, the sources tell us that Agrippina was on the lookout for a new husband. According to Suetonius she chose Galba (see Chapter 13), the future emperor, whose wife, Lepida, had recently died. He relates that she used every means at her disposal to secure him, even before his wife died, and was even publicly reprimanded by Lepida's mother, who slapped her face. Both Anthony Barrett and Judith Ginsburg doubt the truth of this anecdote, seeing it as another example of the 'transgressive sexual behaviour' ascribed to Agrippina in the construction of her history by Tacitus, as well as Suetonius. Ginsburg draws parallels between Suetonius' portrayal of Agrippina's advances to a still-married man and Tacitus' portrayal of her as the seducer of Claudius and as a serial adulteress.

Agrippina and Messalina

Messalina, Claudius' third wife, was also his cousin. She was Agrippina's niece (daughter of a sister of Domitius Ahenobarbus). Messalina wielded considerable power in Claudius' reign, using her authority as his wife to dispose of suspected rivals. Anyone who appeared as a threat to her position and her children's prospects soon found themselves with charges against them. Messalina wanted to ensure that her children would succeed Claudius. According to the ancient sources, numerous people were accused of treason and exiled or killed on her orders.

Messalina appears to have considered Agrippina's son, Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus (later Nero), a threat to the position of her son, Britannicus. Apparently at the games in AD 47, Lucius had received more applause from the crowd than Britannicus. Agrippina, moreover, was a serious rival because of her descent from the popular Germanicus and the sympathy she was given because of her hardships.

SOURCE 22 Messalina holding Britannicus, her son by Claudius, Louvre Museum

Messalina's downfall was caused by her public and bigamous marriage to Gaius Silius in AD 48. Silius was the consul designate for that year. As the Senate was hostile to Claudius, Silius saw an opportunity to make a bid for the throne through an alliance with the wife of the emperor. Silius promised Messalina that her position would remain intact and that her son Britannicus would become heir to the throne. Messalina's behaviour in the affair is curious. Some sources present her as a woman driven by sexual passion, but perhaps it was more that she was an ambitious mother who wanted the best for her son and herself.

The freedman Narcissus informed Claudius of the plot against him. Despite Messalina's protests, the Praetorian Guard was sent to kill her.

Agrippina's third marriage: Claudius

Agrippina may not have been directly involved in Messalina's downfall, but she was quick to take advantage of it. Her second husband had died in AD 47, leaving her very wealthy. According to the sources, Agrippina was a beautiful woman. Claudius was renowned as a 'womaniser' and his freedmen, competing to choose a wife for him, knew only too well his need for a companion. The freedman Pallas, who was also believed to be Agrippina's lover, promoted Agrippina, even though she was Claudius' niece. Sources 23 and 24 suggest the vested interests involved in promoting the marriage of Claudius and Agrippina the Younger.

SOURCE 23

After a little [Claudius] married his niece Agrippina, the mother of Domitius, who was surnamed Nero. For she was beautiful and was in the habit of consulting him constantly; and she was much in his company unattended, seeing that he was her uncle, and in fact she was rather more familiar in her conduct towards him than became a niece … The freedmen zealously aided in bringing about this marriage, since Agrippina had a son, Domitius, who was already nearing man's estate [adulthood], and they wished to bring him up as Claudius' successor in the imperial office so that they might suffer no harm at the hands of Britannicus for having caused the death of his mother, Messalina.

Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 61, 31, 6–8(trans. E. Carey, Harvard University Press, 1982)

SOURCE 24

But Agrippina was the last surviving daughter of the beloved Germanicus and his martyred wife, descended from Augustus, and the victim (it might be claimed) of several political vicissitudes [unpleasant and unexpected changes and difficulties] already. By marrying her, Claudius could both right old wrongs and immeasurably reinforce his political position.

B. Levick, *Claudius*, B.T. Batsford, London, 1990, p. 70

In less than 3 months, Agrippina and Claudius were married. In ancient Rome, as in many societies, a marriage between an uncle and his niece was considered to be incestuous. Claudius was granted a special dispensation from the Senate, which legitimised his marriage.

SOURCE 25 The Gemma Claudia, a **cameo** depicting two cornucopia with an eagle between them. Four portraits emerge from the cornucopia: the pair at left is the emperor Claudius and his new wife, Agrippina (as Cybele, the goddess of fertility); on the right are Agrippina's parents, Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder.

cameo
a piece of stone jewellery with the subject carved in relief to stand out from and contrast with its background, which is usually a different colour

8.6 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 23–25

1. How would the following benefit from the marriage between Agrippina and Claudius?
   - Agrippina herself
   - Claudius
   - The freedmen who urged the marriage
   - The Roman people
2. What do both Source 24 and Source 25 indicate about the significance of Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder in the career of Agrippina the Younger?

8.6 Check your learning

1. Use the following headings to create a table: Individual, Role in reign of Claudius, Relationship with Agrippina, Sources. Research and record information about the following individuals of this period:
   - Messalina
   - Octavia (child of Messalina)
   - Britannicus (child of Messalina)
   - Narcissus (freedman)
   - Pallas (freedman)
   - Nero
2. Read Tacitus' account of Messalina's career and downfall in *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, Book 11.
3. Read Judith Ginsburg's comments on the episode of Agrippina and Galba in *Representing Agrippina: Constructions of Female Power in the Early Roman Empire*, Oxford University Press, USA, 2006, p. 16. (Search online for 'Agrippina and Galba' and select the Judith Ginsburg 2006 Google Books result.)

8.7 Agrippina: Augusta

SOURCE 26 Statues of Claudius and Agrippina from the Sebasteion in Aphrodisias – Claudius and Agrippina clasp hands, a typical gesture to express both *concordia* and marital affection; Agrippina is holding a corn stalk in her left hand, a symbol of the prosperity of the Roman empire

The privileges that Agrippina acquired together with her titles, and images as seen in statuary and coins from this period, provide eloquent testimony to the unprecedented status that she enjoyed as the wife of the emperor. In some statues from this time, she is depicted wearing a **diadem** – an exceptional honour usually reserved for goddesses. Among the many statues of Agrippina and Claudius that were set up in imperial cities, one of the most interesting is a relief from the Sebasteion of Aphrodisias in modern Turkey, built between AD 20 and AD 40 as part of the **imperial cult**. The temple was named after Sebastos, the Greek equivalent of Roman Augustus and was dedicated to the goddess Aphrodite and members of the imperial family. It was discovered in 1979 with a large number of large reliefs and decorative panels.

The ancient sources comment on Agrippina's handling of her new role.

diadem
a jewelled crown or headband worn as a symbol of sovereignty

imperial cult
worship of the emperor during his reign (as in the eastern provinces), or in Rome after his death

carpentum
a two-wheeled carriage in which women of the Roman imperial family were sometimes allowed to ride

SOURCE 27

As soon as Agrippina had come to live in the palace she gained complete control over Claudius. Indeed, she was very clever in making the most of opportunities, and, partly by fear and partly by favours, she won the devotion of all those who were at all friendly towards him …

[Agrippina] quickly became a second Messalina, the more so as she obtained from the senate the right to use the ***carpentum*** at festivals, as well as other honours.

After that Claudius gave Agrippina the title of **Augusta** …

Agrippina also banished Calpurnia, one of the most prominent women – or even put her to death, according to one report – because Claudius had admired and commended her beauty.

Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 62, 32, 1
(trans. E. Carey, Harvard University Press, 1982, pp. 15–19)

SOURCE 28

From this moment the country was transformed. Complete obedience was accorded to a woman – and not a woman like Messalina who toyed with national affairs to satisfy her appetites. This was a rigorous, almost masculine despotism. In public, Agrippina was austere and often arrogant. Her private life was chaste – unless power was to be gained. Her passion to acquire money was unbounded. She wanted it as a stepping-stone to supremacy …

More remarkable was the compliment that [Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus] received: legal adoption into the Claudian family with the name of Nero. Authorities noted that this was the first known adoption into the patrician branch of the Claudii, which had come down without a break from Attus Clausus. And now Agrippina, too, was honoured with the title of Augusta. After these developments no one was hard-hearted enough not to feel distressed by Britannicus' fate. Gradually deprived even of his slaves' services, Britannicus saw through his stepmother's hypocrisy and treated her untimely attentions cynically …

Agrippina now advertised her power to the provincials. She had a settlement of ex-soldiers established at the capital of the Ubii and named after her. This was her birthplace. Incidentally, it had been her grandfather Agrippa to whom the tribe had submitted after crossing the Rhine …

Claudius responded by pardoning Caractacus [a captured British chieftain] and his wife and brothers. Released from their chains, they offered to Agrippina, conspicuously seated on another dais nearby, the same homage and gratitude as they had given the emperor. That a woman should sit before Roman standards [banners or other symbols identifying Roman military units] was an unprecedented novelty. She was asserting her partnership in the empire her ancestors had won.

Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, 12.7
(trans. M. Grant, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986)

SOURCE 29
A *carpentum*, a horse-drawn wagon with wooden wheels – this *carpentum* is depicted on the reverse of a coin struck during the reign of Gaius in memory of his mother, Agrippina the Elder

SOURCE 30

After she became empress we hear accounts of numerous suits instituted against personages who had been guilty of wasting public treasure. We know … that she re-established the fortune of the imperial family, which in all probability had been seriously compromised by the reckless expenditures of Messalina. This is what Tacitus refers to in one of his sentences, which, as usual, is colored by his malignity [intense ill will or hatred]: 'She sought to enrich the family under the pretext of providing for the needs of the empire'. What Tacitus calls a 'pretext' was, on the contrary, the ancient aristocratic conception of wealth, which in the eyes of the great families was destined to be a means of government and an instrument of power: the family possessed it in order to use it for the benefit of the state.

G. Ferrero, 'The women of the Caesars', Online reader,
Project Gutenberg, p. 62

8.7 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 26–30

1. List the honours, titles and powers held by Agrippina indicated in the sources. What is the significance of each?
2. What is the significance of the comparison between Messalina and Agrippina in Sources 27 and 28?
3. What evidence do Sources 27 and 28 provide of Agrippina's abilities and achievements in Claudius' reign?
4. What different assessment of Agrippina's financial management is given in Source 30? How would you explain the difference?
5. Explain the political significance of Source 26.

Augusta
an honorific title, first awarded to Livia, wife of Augustus, and later given to emperors' wives and honoured women of the imperial families

8.7 Check your learning

1. Discuss the following:
   - a. What is the significance of Agrippina's depiction wearing a diadem?
   - b. What precedent did Agrippina set by organising Nero's adoption into the Claudian family?
   - c. What impact did Agrippina's marriage to Claudius have on Britannicus?

8.8 Agrippina's relationships with Seneca, Burrus and others

Throughout the reign of Claudius, and in the early years of her son's reign, Agrippina managed to have some of her clients placed into key positions. Two of her most influential clients were Seneca and Burrus.

Seneca

Lucius Annaeus Seneca was a Roman philosopher and dramatist who played a significant role in the Julio-Claudian period. He was born in Cordoba in Spain around 4 BC and moved to Rome as a child. His education included training in **rhetoric** and philosophy. He served as a senator during his early career. Despite depicting Gaius negatively in his writing, Lucius managed to survive that reign. After Claudius' accession, Messalina accused him of adultery with Agrippina's sister Julia Livilla in a move that was aimed more at Julia Livilla and her supporters than at Seneca. Nevertheless, he was given a death sentence, which was commuted to exile. He spent the following 8 years in Corsica.

rhetoric
the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing

In AD 49, Agrippina used her influence with Claudius to have Seneca recalled from exile and given the position of **praetor**. She helped Seneca because she wanted him as a tutor for her son, Nero.

praetor
a Roman magistrate with chiefly judicial functions, ranked next after a consul

Burrus

Another of Agrippina's protégés was Sextus Afranius Burrus who, with Seneca, wielded considerable power in the early years of Nero's reign. He was born in France and, following a brief period in the army, served in the households of Livia and Tiberius. Agrippina was responsible for his elevation to sole praetorian prefect in AD 51 after she fired his predecessors for their support of Messalina. As with Seneca, she wanted Burrus to help Nero in handling the affairs of the *princeps*. Source 31 gives Tacitus' account of the elevation of Burrus.

SOURCE 31

Nevertheless, Agrippina did not yet venture to make her supreme attempt until she could remove the commanders of the [Praetorian] Guard, Lusius Geta and Rufrius Crispinus, whom she regarded as loyal to the memory of Messalina and to the cause of Messalina's children. So Agrippina asserted to Claudius that the Guard was split by their rivalry and that unified control would mean stricter discipline. Thereupon the command was transferred to Sextus Afranius Burrus, who was a distinguished soldier but fully aware whose initiative was behind the appointment. Agrippina also enhanced her own status. She entered the Capitol in a ceremonial carriage. This distinction, traditionally reserved for priests and sacred emblems, increased the reverence felt for a woman who to this day remains unique as the daughter of a great commander and the sister, wife and mother of emperors.

Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, 12.41
(trans. M. Grant, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986)

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Agrippina used her influence to further the careers of her other clients. One of Seneca's brothers, Junius Gallio, became proconsul of Achaea, a region in the Greek Peloponnese, in AD 61–62, while another brother, Annaeus Milo, became an imperial procurator. Tacitus tells us that other *amici* (friends) of Agrippina gained senatorial imperial posts: Balbillus as prefect of Egypt, Anteius Rufus as governor of Syria.

These men owed their positions to Agrippina and were expected to remember these favours and do her bidding. Seneca followed Agrippina's instructions until he found that being an *amicus principis* (friend of the *princeps*) to Nero when he became emperor gave him even greater power.

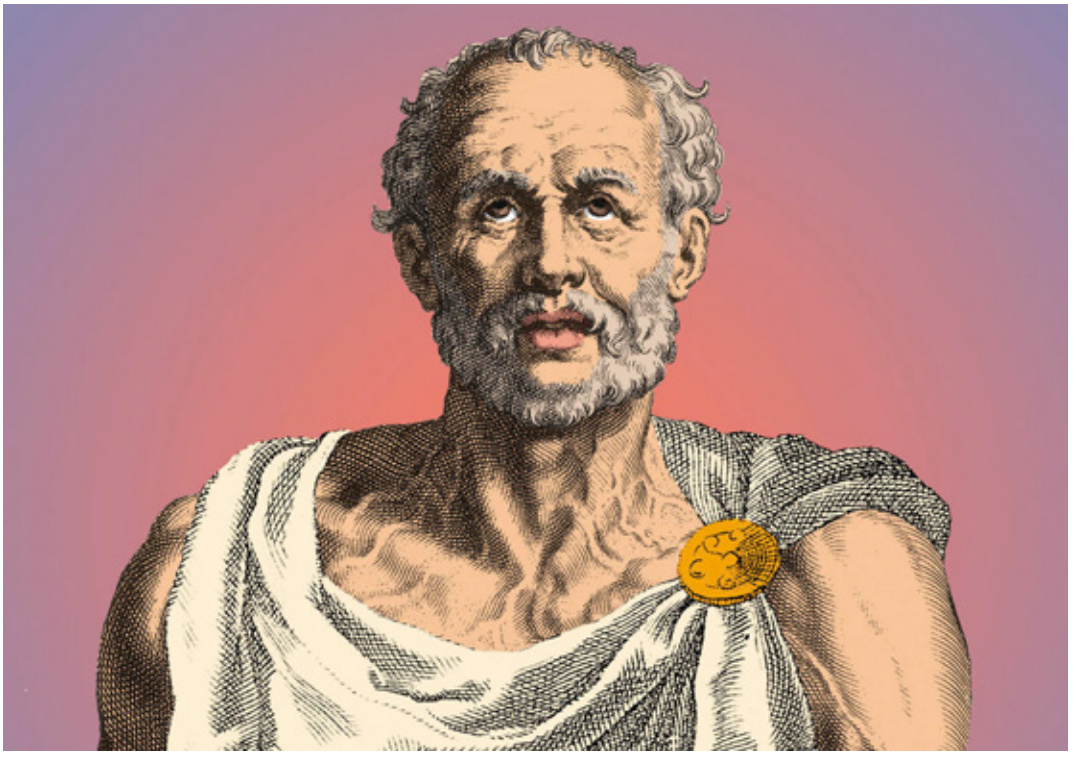
8.8 Understanding and using the sources

Source 31

1 Why did Agrippina want to remove Geta and Crispinus from their command of the Praetorian Guard?
2 How did Agrippina convince Claudius to make Burrus sole commander of the Guard?
3 Why does Tacitus point out that Burrus was aware of who was behind his appointment?

8.8 Check your learning

1 Search online to find out about the role played by the Praetorian Guard in this period. See also Chapter 13.
2 Writing task: Assess the significance of Agrippina's relationships with Seneca, Burrus and freedmen in her career to the end of Claudius' reign.



SOURCE 32 Lucius Annaeus Seneca

8.9 Agrippina's role in Nero's succession

Agrippina's marriage to Claudius enabled her to pursue her major ambition – the succession of her son, Nero, as *princeps*. Many of her activities during Claudius' reign were dictated by this agenda. Sources 33 and 34 provide some information about the steps she took to secure Nero's succession.

SOURCE 33 Steps taken to ensure Nero's succession

SOURCE 34

Agrippina was training her son for the throne and was entrusting his education to Seneca. She was amassing untold wealth for him, overlooking no possible source of revenue, not even the most humble or despised, but paying court to everyone who was in the least degree well-to-do and murdering many for this very reason. Indeed, she even destroyed some of the foremost women out of jealousy; thus she slew Lollia Paulina because she had been the wife of Gaius and had cherished some hope of becoming Claudius' wife. As she did not recognise the woman's head when it was brought to her, she opened the mouth with her own hand and inspected the teeth, which had certain peculiarities.

Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 61, 32, 3–4
(trans. E. Carey, Harvard University Press, 1982, p. 17)

Death of Claudius

Claudius died in AD 64. Most of the ancient sources, including Tacitus and Cassius Dio, blame Agrippina, claiming that she used poisoned mushrooms to kill him. However, despite their claims, the evidence against her is inconclusive. Sources 35 and 36 are the reports of Titus Flavius Josephus (the Jewish historian) and Suetonius on Claudius' death.

SOURCE 35

Claudius Caesar now died after a reign of thirteen years, eight months, and twenty days. It was reported by some that he had been poisoned by his wife Agrippina … Agrippina, fearing that Britannicus on coming to manhood might fall heir to his father's office, and wishing to forestall this by snatching the empire for her own child, contrived, according to report, the death of Claudius.

Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, Book 20.8.1
(trans. L. Feldman, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1981)

SOURCE 36

Most people think that Claudius was poisoned; but when, and by whom, is disputed … An equal discrepancy exists between the accounts of what happened next. According to many, he lost his power of speech, suffered frightful pain all night long, and died shortly before dawn. A variant version is that he fell into a coma but vomited up the entire contents of his overloaded stomach and was then poisoned a second time, either by a gruel [thin porridge] – the excuse being that he needed food to revive him – or by means of an enema [a procedure in which liquid is introduced into the rectum], the excuse being that his bowels required relief and must be emptied too.

Suetonius, Claudius, 44.2
(in *The Twelve Caesars*, trans. R. Graves, Penguin Books, London, 1979, pp. 181–3)

8.9 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 33–36

1. What can be learnt from Cassius Dio about the workings of patronage in Rome?
2. Why was Nero's marriage to Claudius' daughter Octavia important in Agrippina's plan? (See the family tree in Source 9.)
3. According to Source 33, what were the major obstacles in the path of Nero's succession which Agrippina had to overcome?
4. According to the sources, how did Claudius die?
5. Suggest a reason why Nero and Agrippina suppressed Claudius' will after his death.
6. How does Josephus' account of Claudius' death differ from that of Suetonius? What motives does Josephus ascribe to Agrippina?

8.9 Check your learning

1. Read what Tacitus and Cassius Dio have to say about Agrippina's role in the death of Claudius:
   - Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, 12.66–67
   - Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 61.34.
2. Find out more about Jewish historian Josephus. How would you compare his reliability as a source on Agrippina with that of Tacitus and Cassius Dio?
3. List the inconsistencies in all the accounts of Claudius' death that you have read.
4. Draw up a page in two columns labelled 'For' and 'Against'. Using all the sources, list the reasons for and against the proposition that Agrippina was responsible for Claudius' death.
5. Writing tasks: Use the information, including the figures and sources in this section, to plan and write a response to one or both of the following:
   a. Explain the role of Agrippina in the reign of Claudius.
   b. Explain Agrippina's role in the succession of Nero.

8.10 Agrippina's role in Nero's reign

Nero's accession occurred on 13 October AD 54; he was 17 years old. He had support from both the Praetorian Guard and the Senate. His first act was to appear at the Guards' camp, where he gave a speech. The password he gave to the Praetorian sentry on duty on the day of his accession was *optima mater*, 'the best of mothers'. He then proceeded to the Senate where lavish honours were voted to him. It appears that these moves were engineered by his trusted advisers, Burrus and Seneca. These two men, chosen by his mother would go on to play important roles in Nero's reign.

Agrippina's initial status

The great honour enjoyed by Agrippina at the beginning of Nero's reign can be seen in the sculptured relief of them both from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias (see Source 37). Other significant honours were also accorded to her at this time:

- when Claudius was deified, she became priestess of his cult
- she was granted two **lictors**
- she was given a squad of Praetorian guardsmen as personal bodyguards.

Evidence of Agrippina's exceptionally high status can be seen in the gold and silver coins minted in the first year of Nero's reign. For the first time, a living woman is shown on the face of a coin with the emperor (see Source 38).

SOURCE 37 Agrippina crowning Nero, a relief from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias

lictors
men carrying the official emblems of public office – the *fasces* – who walked before Roman magistrates to clear a path through the crowd so that they could pass

Agrippina's changing relationship with Nero

As time went on, a number of developments revealed that Agrippina's influence on Nero was being challenged. These developments include the following:

- *Claudian legislation:*
  - The Senate decided to change some of the Claudian legislation. In AD 47, Claudius had set a maximum fee that could be charged by advocates (defence lawyers). As Tacitus records, the Senate now 'forbade advocates to receive fees or gifts'. Agrippina, priestess of the Claudian cult, argued that his legislation could not be tampered with, as he had been deified. Despite her objections, this measure was passed.
  - When the Senate tried to excuse **quaestors** from the obligation to hold gladiatorial games, Agrippina again objected, as this had been part of Claudian legislation. The Senate treated her objections seriously. The meeting to discuss this issue was held at the Palatine (the location of the imperial palace) and, as Tacitus records, a door was built at the back so that Agrippina could stand behind a curtain and listen. However, the legislation was passed despite her objections.

quaestor
a Roman magistrate responsible for management of state finances

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- *The Armenian delegation:* On another occasion, Agrippina attempted to mount the emperor's dais and sit beside Nero while he was receiving a delegation from Armenia. However, Seneca intervened and advised Nero to step down and meet his mother before she could sit down. This, Tacitus tells us, managed to 'avert a scandal'.
- *The influence of Seneca and Burrus:* Seneca and Burrus gradually replaced Agrippina as chief advisers and took over most of the administration of affairs. (The Roman concept of *amicitia* or political friendship, by which clients owed loyalty to their patrons, did not really apply to women.) Apparently, their moderation gained general approval and Nero, having little interest in the business of state, was content to let them manage state affairs.

SOURCE 38 A coin minted in Rome in AD 54, showing busts of Nero and Agrippina. On this coin, Agrippina's names and titles are beside the heads, while Nero's appear in the less prestigious position on the reverse.

The role of Acte

Nero's relationships with women other than his mother were to have important consequences for Agrippina. To ensure his place on the throne, Nero had married Claudius' daughter, Octavia. However, soon after his succession he became infatuated with a freedwoman called Acte. In imperial Roman society, no one would have questioned the emperor's right to pursue extramarital affairs. Nero had been trying to dissociate himself and his government from the influence of the freedmen, who had played significant roles in Claudius' reign, yet now he had fallen under the spell of a freedwoman.

According to the ancient sources, Agrippina was furious at having an ex-slave as a rival for her son's affections; she went into a rage and violently scolded him. Nero responded by openly disobeying his mother and asking Seneca for help. As a young man in love, Nero showered Acte with presents, but afraid that his mother would find out, he arranged for Seneca to appoint another man, Serenus, to be the gift giver. At this point, Agrippina changed tactics, and offered her own bedroom for Nero's frolics. The continuing breakdown in the relationship between mother and son is revealed in Source 39.

SOURCE 39

One day Nero was looking at the robes worn by the resplendent wives and mothers of former emperors. Picking out a jewelled garment, he sent it as a present to his mother – a generous, spontaneous gift of a greatly coveted object. But Agrippina, instead of regarding this as an addition to her wardrobe, declared that her son was doling out to her a mere fraction of what he owed her – all else but this one thing was kept from her.

Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, 13.13
(trans. M. Grant, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986, p. 289)

Agrippina versus Nero

Agrippina and Nero now engaged in a game of brinkmanship; that is, deliberately pushing dangerous events to the edge of actual conflict. Nero removed the freedman Pallas from his treasury position to make way for his new regime. This was designed to lessen Agrippina's influence, because Pallas was her friend and adviser – and also supposedly her lover. Agrippina was now aware that her appointees, Seneca and Burrus, no longer supported her. She decided to support the claims of Claudius' son Britannicus and even threatened to take him to the Praetorian Guards' camp and have him recognised as heir.

According to Tacitus, Nero hired the poisoner Locusta, to dispose of his 14-year-old half-brother Britannicus, which she did at a public banquet. The sources report that Nero led the guests to believe that Britannicus was merely having an epileptic fit. Subsequently, Agrippina held secret meetings with officers and noblemen to try to gain their support against her son; she also supported the young Octavia, Nero's wife.

Nero's response to his mother's manoeuvres was to remove her Praetorian bodyguard, then to isolate her from her supporters by moving her out of the palace to her own residence at Bauli. This was a clear sign to Rome that Agrippina's influence had declined. For the next few years, until her death, Agrippina was effectively out of the limelight.

Junia Silana, once Agrippina's friend but now her enemy, decided that this was the moment to seek revenge. She accused Agrippina of supporting Rubellius Plautus (like Nero, a direct descendant of Augustus) in a bid for the throne. Nero considered eliminating his mother, but Burrus and Seneca persuaded Nero to hear Agrippina's defence.

8.10 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 37 & 38

1. Compare the relief in Source 37 with the one of Agrippina and Claudius in Source 26. What are the similarities and differences?
2. What is the significance of Nero's military dress? Which family members would he be associated with in the public's mind?
3. What aspects of Agrippina's depiction in Source 37 suggest that she has increased her influence and status?
4. What aspects of the coin in Source 38 indicate Agrippina's high status?

Source 39

5. What might have been Nero's reasons for sending Agrippina the jewelled garment?
6. What was Agrippina's likely intention in responding as she did?
7. How might Tacitus have known about this detail of imperial court life?
8. What might have been Tacitus' motives in recording the incident?
9. What other questions about the trustworthiness of the account need to be asked?

8.10 Check your learning

1. List the honours accorded to Agrippina at the beginning of Nero's reign.
2. What was the significance of Nero granting her two lictors? How would this have been viewed by the Roman public?
3. How would Nero benefit from his association with Agrippina in reliefs and coins?
4. Discuss the following:
   - **a** How do the changes to Claudius' legislation suggest Agrippina's diminished influence?
   - **b** Why would Agrippina mounting the dais during the Armenian delegation have caused a scandal?
   - **c** How would Agrippina have viewed the actions of both Seneca and Nero?
   - **d** What evidence do we have that the loyalty of Seneca and Burrus had shifted? What might their motives have been?
   - **e** How did Nero's relationship with Acte affect Agrippina? Explain her changed tactics.

8.11 Agrippina's death

It is important to note that, until her death, Agrippina represented the typical Roman matron exercising influence on her son. However, she was prepared to go to extraordinary lengths to ensure his success.

SOURCE 40 Poppaea Sabina, second wife of Nero, from the Archaeological Museum of Olympia, Greece

The motives for her death

Agrippina had worked diligently to achieve eminence for her son only to encounter resentment when she made too many claims on him. Roman society generally accepted that mothers had considerable authority over their sons. Suzanne Dixon, in her study *The Roman Mother*, points out that the relationship between Nero and Agrippina appears to have been based on political, sexual and emotional dependence. Agrippina continued to be a dominating influence and this finally threatened Nero's pride in his maturity and his security in the imperial office.

With Agrippina banished to her residence at Bauli, relations with Nero improved for a short time, but in AD 58 Nero began a relationship with Poppaea Sabina who had been married previously to both Rufrius Crispinus and Otho.

According to the ancient sources, Nero's infatuation with Poppaea eventually pushed him into planning the death of his mother. The sources suggest that Poppaea urged him to put the plan into action. However, the fact that he did not marry Poppaea until 3 years after Agrippina's death casts doubt on the reliability of this information. It was clear in any case that Nero wished to free himself of his mother's influence, according to both Suetonius and Tacitus.

SOURCE 41

The over-watchful, over-critical eye that Agrippina kept on whatever Nero said or did proved more than he could stand. He . . . tried to embarrass her by . . . threats to abdicate and go into retirement in Rhodes. Then, having deprived her of all honour and power, and even of her Roman and German bodyguard, he . . . expelled her from his palace; after which he did everything possible to annoy her, sending people to pester her with law suits while she stayed in Rome, and when she took refuge on her riverside estate, making them constantly drive or sail past the windows, disturbing her with jeers and cat-calls. In the end her threats and violent behaviour terrified him into deciding that she must die.

Suetonius, *Nero*, 34 (in *The Twelve Caesars*, trans. R. Graves,Penguin Books, London, 1979, pp. 198–9)

SOURCE 42

Acte … was instructed to warn Nero that Agrippina was boasting of her intimacy [that is, incest] with her son, that her boasts had received wide publicity, and that the army would never tolerate a sacrilegious emperor …

Finally, however, he concluded that wherever Agrippina was she was intolerable. He decided to kill her.

… a scheme was put forward by Anicetus, an ex-slave who commanded the fleet at Misenum. In Nero's boyhood Anicetus had been his tutor; he and Agrippina hated each other. A ship could be made, he now said, with a section which would come loose at sea and hurl Agrippina into the water without warning.

Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, 14.2–3
(trans. by M. Grant, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986, pp. 313–14)

The manner of her death

The ancient sources suggest that Nero killed his mother, but they give different reasons for the murder. In brief, the story goes that Nero devised a plan to stage her apparently accidental death from drowning using a collapsible boat. However, Agrippina managed to escape death and swim to shore. Subsequently, she realised that her life was in danger. Nero then sent some hand-picked men to carry out the murder. However, the events that led to her death are still not clear.

The impact of her death

Nero did not return to Rome from Neapolis until 6 months after the death of Agrippina in AD 69, when he delivered a speech to the Senate crafted by Seneca, pleading self-defence. The Senate offered thanksgivings for his deliverance and commemorated it with annual games at Minerva's festival. Agrippina's birthday was added to the list of days of ill omen, the usual fate assigned to those who fell foul of the principate. According to the ancient sources, Nero was haunted by his mother's ghost.

8.11 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 41 & 42

1 What are Nero's motives for the murder of Agrippina, according to Suetonius and Tacitus?

8.11 Check your learning

1 Read the accounts of Agrippina's death by the following writers: Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, 14.3–9; Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 62.13–14; Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, 34.
2 Using the information you have researched, answer the following questions.
   - **a** According to Tacitus, what went wrong when the boat collapsed? Why did Agrippina not die?
   - **b** Who was Acerronia? What happened to her?
   - **c** How did Nero react when he realised his mother was still alive?
   - **d** What part in the events surrounding Agrippina's death was played by each of the following: Agerinus, Seneca, Burrus, Anicetus?
   - **e** How did Agrippina finally die?
   - **f** Account for the inconsistencies you find in these different accounts.
3 Writing task: Explain the motives for and the manner of Agrippina's death.

8.12 Evaluation

This section invites you to make judgements about Agrippina and her career based on selected criteria. Most importantly, you will need to evaluate the value and limitations of the ancient sources as evidence for Agrippina. Some of the modern sources will be useful in helping you to make these judgements.

Impact and influence on her time

It is important to clearly understand:

- *impact* – the immediate consequences of Agrippina's actions
- *influence* – the extent to which Agrippina contributed to maintaining, shaping or changing the political, economic, social and religious structures of Rome during her time.

These questions will help you analyse and evaluate Agrippina's impact and influence:

- What were the consequences of her relationships with Gaius, Claudius and Nero?
- In which of these relationships did she exercise the greatest influence?
- What were the consequences of her relationships with key nobles and freedmen?
- What were Agrippina's main achievements?

Assessment of her life and career

We can also evaluate Agrippina by making judgements about specific aspects of her life and career, including:

- the impact of her family background on her career
- her relationships with Gaius, Claudius and Nero, and with other members of the imperial court, especially Seneca, Burrus and the imperial freedmen
- the success of her manoeuvres for power and influence
- her successes in light of the power structures and norms of the Julio-Claudian court.

Legacy

Legacy refers to anything handed down by an ancestor or predecessor, or a consequence. Such a consequence may be the intended or unintended result of the individual's policies and actions. Legacy can include:

- the physical traces a person leaves behind – in Agrippina's case, this includes her representations on coins, cameos and in statuary. It also includes her memoirs, which, despite being now lost, were available to the ancient writers
- the non-physical traces, such as traditional interpretations of the ancient writers and her representation in modern scholarship and popular culture.

Agrippina saw herself as a major player on the Julio-Claudian stage. If her vision extended to herself as a matriarch in the style of Livia – through Nero's reign and beyond – then she would have been disappointed. Nero's reign lasted only 10 more years after her death and ended in humiliation and disgrace. No woman in the dynasties that followed would ever again have the prominence and the power that Agrippina had known.

Impact of her personality on her public image

The negative character sketch of Agrippina drawn by the ancient writers needs no further elaboration here. Agrippina was no doubt a more complex and rounded personality than the portraits by Tacitus and Suetonius suggest. Recent studies of iconographic representations of Agrippina suggest that she projected a very different public image from the one provided by Tacitus. Sources 43 and 44 suggest approaches for understanding Agrippina.

SOURCE 43

… Agrippina's contribution to her time seems on the whole to have been a positive one. This does not mean of course, that she was a paragon of virtue [someone with morals of the highest quality] and a woman of sterling [excellent] character … In fact, the evidence, honestly and fairly evaluated, seems to suggest that she was a distinctly unattractive individual. But in her defence, it might be pointed out that politically ambitious people tend not to be appealing at the very best of times. And politically ambitious people who have to make their way in a monarchical system can generally succeed only through behaviour that is by most norms repellent. If we add to this formula a politically ambitious woman in a monarchical structure that had no formal provision for the involvement of women, the odds are almost insurmountable in favour of her being, by necessity, rather awful. It is when Agrippina is judged by her achievements rather than her personality or character, that she demands admiration.

A. Barrett, *Agrippina: Sex, Power and Politics in the Early Empire*, Routledge, London, 1996, p. xiii

SOURCE 44

The depictions of Agrippina on coinage and statuary provide a stark contrast with the written evidence. She appears as matron and priestess, emblematic of domestic rectitude [morally correct behaviour] and public piety, and a central figure in the continuity of the dynasty. Ginsburg incisively demonstrates the means whereby Agrippina's imagery was molded both to serve the interests of the Julio-Claudian regime and to advance the ends of its critics.

E. Gruen, Preface to J. Ginsburg, *Representing Agrippina: Constructions of Female Power in the Early Roman Empire*, Oxford University Press, 2006

8.12 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 43 & 44

1. According to Barrett, why might Agrippina have been an 'unattractive person'?
2. Suggest examples of contemporary 'politically ambitious people' who might be viewed as negatively as Agrippina.
3. According to Gruen in Source 44, how is the Agrippina on coins and in statuary different from the Agrippina of the ancient written sources?

8.12 Check your learning

1. Discuss the following:
   - **a** What were the major strengths and weaknesses of Agrippina's personality?
   - **b** To what extent did she contribute to her own downfall?
   - **c** To what extent was her fate determined by factors beyond her control?
   - **d** What conditions or constraints did Agrippina operate under?

8.13 Ancient images and interpretations of Agrippina the Younger

The ancient images and interpretations of Agrippina consist of both written and archaeological sources. The written works of Tacitus, Suetonius and Cassius Dio have tended to dominate representations of Agrippina and, as we have seen, are uniformly hostile to her. Archaeological sources with images of Agrippina include coinage (Source 46), statuary (Source 1), cameos (Source 25), and the sculptured reliefs from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias of Agrippina and Claudius (Source 26), and Agrippina and Nero (Source 37). Most of these images were from public sources; that is, statues and coins commissioned by the imperial mint. Many cameos were small luxury objects of semi-precious stone belonging to private citizens who wished to display their support for a contender for power in the imperial family.

Source study: coinage

Of special interest to a study of Agrippina the Younger are the coins from the reigns of Gaius and Nero, in which she is depicted in various ways for various purposes. It has already been noted that when Agrippina and her sisters appeared on a sestertius (or sesterce) from Gaius' reign, it was the first time that the sisters of the emperor had ever been featured on a Roman coin (see Source 17). Agrippina is depicted representing *securitas*, or security, leaning on a column and holding a cornucopia, the symbol of the goddess Fortuna. Agrippina was also depicted on coins from the reign of Claudius, in the company of either the emperor or Nero. She was depicted wearing the corn-ear crown of the fertility goddess Ceres. In all coins from Claudius' reign she is referred to as Agrippina Augusta. The scholar Susan Wood comments on the significance of these coins in Source 45.

SOURCE 45

These issues of coins also make Agrippina II the first living woman to wear the corn-ear crown of Ceres on the coins of the Roman mint, an honor previously bestowed on Antonia Minor after her death. Ceres is not only a goddess of fertility but the Roman equivalent of Demeter, the archetypal good mother who loyally and tirelessly searched for her missing daughter Proserpina until she obtained her release from the underworld … The corn-ear crown was an easy and familiar way to conjure up all the associations of the beloved chthonian [underworld] goddesses in connection with the new Augusta. Since Agrippina II's marriage to Claudius would have been illegal under the pre-existing incest laws, the designers of these coins probably recognised her public image as a 'hard sell' and accordingly invoked the most emotionally powerful allusions possible.

S. Wood, *Imperial Women: A Study in Public Images, 40 BC – AD 68*, Brill, Leiden, 2000, p. 290

Two coins from Nero's reign, depicting both the emperor and his mother, reveal much about Agrippina's changing status during her son's reign. The first (see Source 38), a gold coin minted in AD 54, shows busts of Nero and Agrippina facing each other. Agrippina's names and titles – Agrippina Augusta, wife of the Divine Claudius, mother of Nero Caesar – are beside the heads, while Nero's appear in the less prestigious position on the reverse. The second coin (see Source 46), minted in AD 55, also gold, has Nero's bust superimposed on his mother's. His titles now take precedence over hers.

The scholar Anthony Barrett offers an interpretation of the AD 54 coin in Source 47.

SOURCE 46 A gold Roman coin of Nero, AD 55. Unlike those on coins from the previous year, the image and titles of Nero take precedence over those of his mother.

SOURCE 47

Agrippina's elevated status is also reflected in the imperial coinage. It is impossible to exaggerate the impact that the numismatic [relating to coins] innovations of Nero's reign would have had on his contemporaries. Agrippina became the very first woman during her lifetime to share with a reigning princeps the face of an official coin minted in Rome … Gold and silver coins issued during Nero's first year, beginning in late 54, depict busts of Nero and his mother facing one another [see Source 38]. The legend identifies Agrippina as Agrippina Augusta, the wife of the Deified Claudius, the mother of Caesar, and thus brings together on a single coin, the three roles that brought her the greatest pride. Nero's own legend is reserved for the back of the coin … This arrangement involves a remarkable association of the emperor with his mother and is the most powerful hint that Agrippina saw herself as a kind of **regent** or co-ruler with her son, a position that had no precedent in Roman law or tradition.

A. Barrett, *Agrippina: Sex, Power and Politics in the Early Empire*, Routledge, London, 1996, p. 152

regent
a person who rules in the place of a monarch who is a minor or incapable of ruling

8.13 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 17, 38 & 45–47

1. What suggests that Gaius was responsible for the appearance of his sisters on the sestertius in Source 17?
2. What features of the coin in Source 38 indicate the power held by Agrippina in AD 54?
3. According to Wood, how do the coins depicting Agrippina as Ceres contribute to her positive public image?
4. According to Barrett, what was Agrippina's likely opinion of her position in AD 54?
5. How have Agrippina's power and status changed by the time the coin in Source 46 was minted? What is the evidence from the coin?
6. What is the value of the coins as sources for an evaluation of Agrippina's impact and influence on her time?
7. What are the limitations of these coins as sources for an evaluation of Agrippina?

8.13 Check your learning

1. Use the internet to make a file of images of Agrippina's statuary.
2. Look at a range of coins depicting Agrippina the Younger in the reigns of Gaius, Claudius and Nero. Search online for 'Agrippina the Younger – Online Coins of the Roman Empire'. Make note of the **iconography** of Agrippina's depiction on each coin and its significance.
3. Writing task: Evaluate the coinage minted during the reigns of Gaius, Claudius and Nero as sources for interpreting Agrippina the Younger.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the features of specific coins that reveal aspects of Agrippina's lifetime
   - make judgements about the value and limitations of these features
   - use evidence from the coins and, where relevant, the opinions of modern scholars to support your points.

iconography
the study and interpretation of the visual images and symbols used in a work of art

8.13 Profile

Tacitus: A source study

Tacitus' *Annals of Imperial Rome* is one of the major narrative sources for the life and times of Agrippina the Younger. Agrippina is one of the six major female characters included by Tacitus in his account of the principates of the Julio-Claudian emperors. His portrayal of Agrippina readily draws complaint for its obvious prejudice and gender bias; he seems to hate powerful women. However, it is clear that this source needs to be read carefully, with a recognition of Tacitus' context, perspective and aims. In addition, it is important to look at the literary features of his account.

Source 4 recorded that Tacitus was a senator during the reign of Domitian, whom he regarded as a tyrant. Tacitus admired the senatorial system of the old Republic, valued its virtues and regretted the corruption of the Senate under the imperial system. He equated tyranny with moral decline.

Peter Keegan, in his article '"She is a Mass of Riddles": Julia Augusta Agrippina and the Sources', comments that there were two probable motivations for portraying imperial women in a negative way: to criticise the men they were associated with and to discourage imperial women from challenging the status quo; that is, male domination of the political system.

If we accept Keegan's interpretation, these might well have been Tacitus' aims in his portrayal of Agrippina. Her brother (Gaius), husband (Claudius) and son (Nero) were not the sorts of leaders Tacitus would have admired. Agrippina, ambitious, power-driven and ruthless, was hardly the virtuous matron of the Republic, so highly regarded by Tacitus.

Source 48 is from Tacitus' *Annals*. You have already looked at it in terms of what it tells us about Agrippina's achievements during Claudius' reign. Now read it again to help you evaluate Tacitus' portrayal of Agrippina.

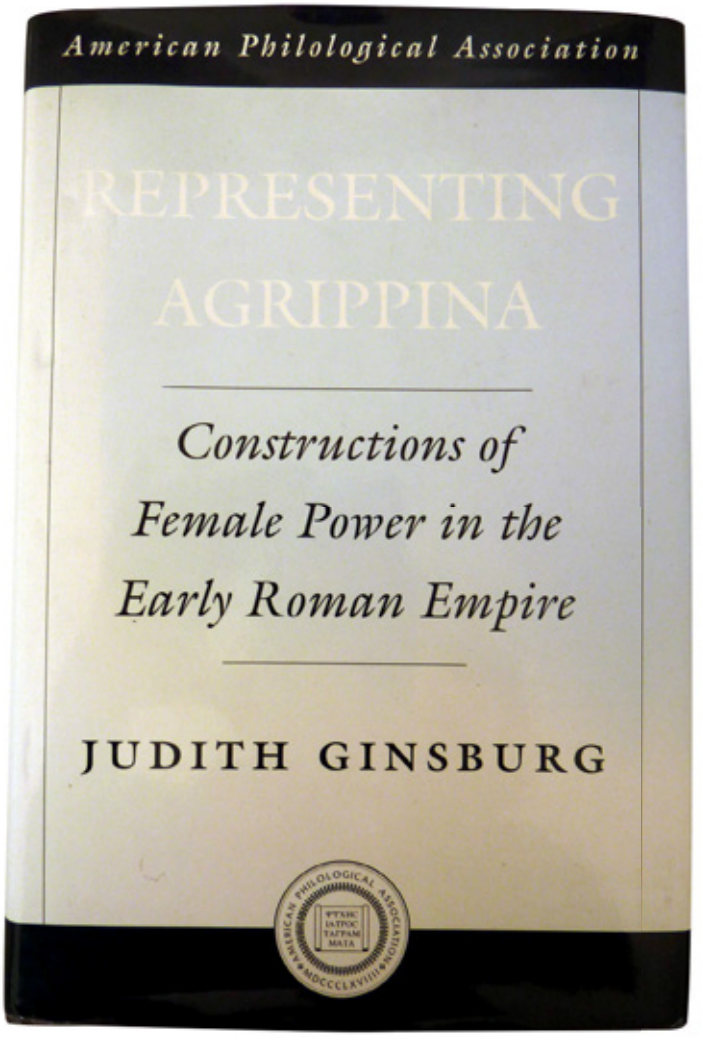
SOURCE 48

From this moment the country was transformed. Complete obedience was accorded to a woman – and not a woman like Messalina who toyed with national affairs to satisfy her appetites. This was a rigorous, almost masculine despotism. In public, Agrippina was austere and often arrogant. Her private life was chaste – unless power was to be gained. Her passion to acquire money was unbounded. She wanted it as a stepping-stone to supremacy …

Claudius responded by pardoning Caractacus [a captured British chieftain] and his wife and brothers. Released from their chains, they offered to Agrippina, conspicuously seated on another dais nearby, the same homage and gratitude as they had given the emperor. That a woman should sit before Roman standards was an unprecedented novelty. She was asserting her partnership in the empire her ancestors had won.

Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, 12.7
(trans. M. Grant, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986)

The scholar Judith Ginsburg comments on the literary representation of Agrippina by Tacitus, Suetonius and Cassius Dio in Source 49.



SOURCE 49

The literary record on Agrippina is shaped with calculation to produce a portrait – or portraits. The product may intersect or overlap with history, but it is not be to be confused with history. This entangled relationship between report and design arises most conspicuously and powerfully in Tacitus. But it clings also to the accounts of Suetonius and Cassius Dio … we will go a long way towards dispelling the power that the Tacitean account has over us by recognising that a number of literary and rhetorical features of the historian's narrative make it extremely problematic to take the picture of Agrippina that emerges as an accurate reflection of the historical woman. We need to acknowledge, in other words, that Tacitus' Agrippina is largely a literary construct [that is, a character created by the written sources] that serves the larger ends of the narrative of the principates of Claudius and Nero.

J. Ginsburg, *Representing Agrippina: Constructions of Female Power in the Early Roman Empire*, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 9

One rhetorical feature to which Ginsburg draws particular attention is Tacitus' choice of language to describe the situation following her marriage to Claudius (Source 48). For example, the statement 'the country was transformed' echoes the words he used to describe the state of Rome after Augustus' victory at the Battle of Actium which ushered in the imperial age. Significantly, this repetition of language expresses Tacitus' double disapproval of both Augustus and Agrippina.

A literary feature to which Ginsburg refers includes Tacitus' highly gendered treatment of Agrippina. Source 50 illustrates this aspect of his portrayal.

SOURCE 50

The Tacitean narrative makes great play with notions of gender … the description of Agrippina [often] sees her as both feminine and masculine, and in both roles she is portrayed as overstepping the bounds or failing to observe the proper limits. As a *femina* Tacitus' Agrippina is in complete control of everyone and everything around her … rather than as the ideal construction would have it, under the control of her husband.

J. Ginsburg, 2006, p. 20

8.13 Profile tasks

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What does the expression 'rigorous, almost masculine despotism' in Source 48 mean? What impression of Agrippina does Tacitus wish to convey?
   - **b** What does this comment reveal about Tacitus' attitude to Agrippina?
   - **c** How does Tacitus build on the impression he has created?
   - **d** How do Caractacus, his wife and his brothers treat Agrippina?
   - **e** What has Agrippina done that is so shocking to Tacitus? What is his attitude to this?
   - **f** What is the value of this source to a study of Agrippina? What are its limitations as a source of information about Agrippina?
   - **g** According to Ginsburg, why should the literary record on Agrippina not be taken as history?
   - **h** What does Ginsburg mean by 'Agrippina is largely a literary construct'. What example of this literary construction does Ginsburg offer in Source 50?

2 Read more of Tacitus' account of Agrippina's life. Be alert for the way in which he portrays her ambition, her relationships with men and her sexuality.

3 Writing task: Evaluate Tacitus as a source of information on Agrippina the Younger. Answer with reference to the source provided below and other sources.

> 'This was a rigorous, almost masculine despotism. In public, Agrippina was austere and often arrogant. Her private life was chaste – unless power was to be gained.' (Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book XII, 7)

To help plan your response:

- identify the main aspects of Tacitus as a source and use them to structure your response
- make judgements about the usefulness, value, trustworthiness etc. of Tacitus as a source
- support your evaluation with reference to the source provided and other sources (e.g. Ginsburg)
- use appropriate terms and concepts.

8.14 Modern images and interpretations of Agrippina the Younger

Modern images and interpretations of Agrippina vary from those that echo the negative treatment of the ancient writers such as Tacitus to the more positive assessments of recent scholars writing in a context in which feminism and gender studies are reflected in historiography.

Modern interpretations

Some modern studies have concentrated on analysing the representations of Agrippina and other Julio-Claudian women in coins, statuary and cameos. For example, Susan Wood's study focuses on the problem of the succession in the Julio-Claudian period and thus the increasing importance of imperial women to their male relatives. Wood examines the increasingly bold representation of women of the family in public art. She shows how this is propaganda aiming to justify the current emperor's status, or his choice of heir. Their representation reflects the increasing need to emphasise bloodlines and distinguished descent.

The following sources offer some other modern interpretations of Agrippina the Younger.

SOURCE 51

Ambitious and unscrupulous, Agrippina struck down a series of victims: no man or woman was safe if she suspected rivalry or desired their wealth. Her weapons were poison or trumped up charges, often of magic …

H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome from 133 BC to AD 68*, 2nd edn, Methuen, London, 1963, p. 314

SOURCE 52

In some respects she would be a worthy successor to Messalina, eliminating those who stood in her way with the same ruthless efficiency. She also shared Messalina's indifference to conventional morality, except that she kept a tight rein on her passions. As Tacitus puts it, 'She held honour, modesty, her body, everything, cheaper than sovereignty'. A strong tradition, which Tacitus finds it difficult to reject, has her offer herself to her son in order to retain her grip on power. She had one supreme ambition, to place her son Nero on the throne: 'Let him kill me, but let him rule.' But not far behind that was her determination to secure a position of unprecedented eminence for herself. She proposed coming as close as it was possible for a woman to come to a partnership in power; she would be, in fact though not in law, a *socia imperii* [a female associate]. The story of Agrippina in Claudius' reign is the story of her successful realization of both her objectives.

R. Bauman, *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome*, Routledge, London, 1992, p. 179

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SOURCE 53

The actual record, however, suggests, very strongly that both ancient and modern writers offer a lopsided portrait, at best. Agrippina's presence seems to have transformed the regime of her husband, the emperor Claudius. Only a secure ruler can be an enlightened ruler. She appreciated that such security depended on the loyalty of the troops, especially the Praetorian Guard garrisoned in Rome … her cleverness lay in recognizing that it was not enough to control their commander, who might be removed peremptorily; she also hand-picked the middle officers, and through them kept a secure grip on the rank and file.

A. Barrett, *Agrippina: Sex, Power and Politics in the Early Empire*, Routledge, London, 1996, p. xiii

SOURCE 54

[Agrippina] was, to be sure, calculating, ambitious for power, and determined to be respected and feared. But she deserves credit for wise financial policies and the generally effective administration that prevailed in the latter part of Claudius' reign and the first part of Nero's.

E. Gruen, 'Introduction', in J. Ginsburg, *Representing Agrippina: Constructions of Female Power in the Early Roman Empire*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2006, p. 5

SOURCE 55 A poster for Opera Collective Ireland's 2015 production of Handel's opera *Agrippina*

SOURCE 56 Sian Thomas as Agrippina in a 2011 production of *Britannicus*, Racine's 17th-century study of Rome under the tyranny of Nero's rule

Agrippina in popular culture

It is not surprising, given the dramatic and tragic events of Agrippina the Younger's life, that her story would find its way into modern opera, film and television. The opera *Agrippina* by Handel was first performed in Venice in 1709. Perhaps the best known television production of recent times featuring the Julio-Claudians was the miniseries *I, Claudius*, based on the novel of the same name by the modern author Robert Graves. They all depict Agrippina as the femme fatale – an attractive, seductive but dangerous woman – of Tacitus' *The Annals of Imperial Rome*. It has even been argued that Agrippina was the inspiration for Cersei Lannister, a character from George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire,* adapted by HBO as *Game of Thrones*. It is unlikely that we will ever know the real Agrippina.

8.14 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 51–56

1. Which of the sources presents the most positive assessment of Agrippina the Younger? How reliable is it?
2. Which is most critical? Why?
3. Do any of the sources contradict each other? Can you account for the contradictions?
4. Which source or sources come closest to your own assessment? Explain your view.

8.14 Check your learning

1. Scullard (Source 51) refers to Agrippina's 'series of victims'. Research some of her alleged victims and see if you can determine whether Agrippina was responsible for their deaths and her possible motives. They include Passienus Crispus, Lollia Paulina, Lucius Silanus, Sosibius, Calpurnia, Statilius Taurus, Claudius, Domitia Lepida and Marcus Junius Silanus.
2. Using the ancient (written and archaeological) and modern sources in this section and throughout the chapter, compile a summary of the different assessments of Agrippina. Record your findings in a table like the one below.

WRITER	ASPECT OF AGRIPPINA'S LIFE	INTERPRETATION	HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ISSUES

3. Writing task: Using any of the interpretations in Sources 51–54 and other sources, assess Agrippina's influence on her time.

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Chapter conclusion

This study of Agrippina the Younger has focused on the positions of power and influence she achieved during the reigns of three Julio-Claudian emperors: Gaius, Claudius and Nero – her brother, husband and son. As the great-granddaughter of Augustus and daughter of Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder, Agrippina clearly refused to be limited by Roman society's concept of acceptable behaviour for a matron. Despite this, is it possible to accept at face value the exceptionally negative portrayals of her as presented by the ancient Roman writers? And if not, why not? What other perspectives (e.g. archaeological and modern) need to be considered, and what questions do we need to ask of them?Chapter conclusion

obook assess

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare students for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

A relief from the northern side of the *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Altar of Augustan Peace) in Rome, built as a celebration of Augustus in 13 BC

PART D

Historical periods

Chapter 9 New Kingdom Egypt to the death of Thutmose IV 368

Chapter 10 New Kingdom Egypt – Amenhotep III to the death of Ramesses II (obook-only chapter) 426

Chapter 11 The Greek world 500–440 BC 427

Chapter 12 The Augustan age 44 BC – AD 14 (obook-only chapter) 490

Chapter 13 The Julio-Claudians AD 14–69 491

SOURCE 1 Relief carving of pharaoh Thutmose III smiting the enemy on a wall at Karnak Temple, Thebes

9

New Kingdom Egypt to the death of Thutmose IV

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. What was the chronological, geographical and political context of New Kingdom Egypt in this period?
2. What role did the wars against the Hyksos play in the establishment of the Eighteenth Dynasty?
3. What contributions did rulers, queens and prominent officials make to the development of the early New Kingdom?
4. What was the political and religious significance of building programs?
5. How was the 'empire' established, maintained and administered in this period?

FOCUS CONCEPT & SKILLS

Significance

In considering historical significance in relation to New Kingdom Egypt in this period of the Eighteenth Dynasty, we want to know what was important about this time and why. A key criterion for determining significance is the degree to which events or developments resulted in change and the extent of their impact. This historical period certainly produced major changes, beginning with the political impact of the Hyksos wars and resulting in other important developments in internal and external affairs.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Explain the chronological, geographical and political context of New Kingdom Egypt in this period.
2. Assess the significance of the Hyksos wars in the establishment of the Eighteenth Dynasty.
3. Assess the contributions of rulers, queens and prominent officials to the development of the early New Kingdom
4. Evaluate the political and religious significance of building programs
5. Discuss the establishment, maintenance and administration of the 'empire' in this period.

9.1 Chronological, geographical and political context

Old Kingdom
the period of ancient Egyptian history that occurred in the 3rd millennium BC, comprising the Third to the Sixth Dynasties

Middle Kingdom
the period of significant development in ancient Egyptian history comprising the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties

New Kingdom
the period and ancient Egyptian history between the 16th century BC and the 11th century BC, comprising the Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties

During the **Old** and **Middle Kingdoms**, Egypt had been a politically united country with its ruler in control of both the north (Lower Egypt) and the south (Upper Egypt). However, in the period immediately preceding the **New Kingdom**, there was no centralised rule and the country was broken up into independently administered regions.

It was during this period that the Hyksos people migrated from Palestine to the Nile Delta region in Egypt and settled there, establishing their capital at the site of Avaris, modern Tell el-Dab'a. Egypt was divided into two regions: the north under Hyksos control and the south under the control of local Egyptian rulers with their capital at Thebes. The subsequent reunification of the Two Lands of Upper and Lower Egypt, with which the period opens, was achieved as a result of a series

EGYPT, EARLY NEW KINGDOM

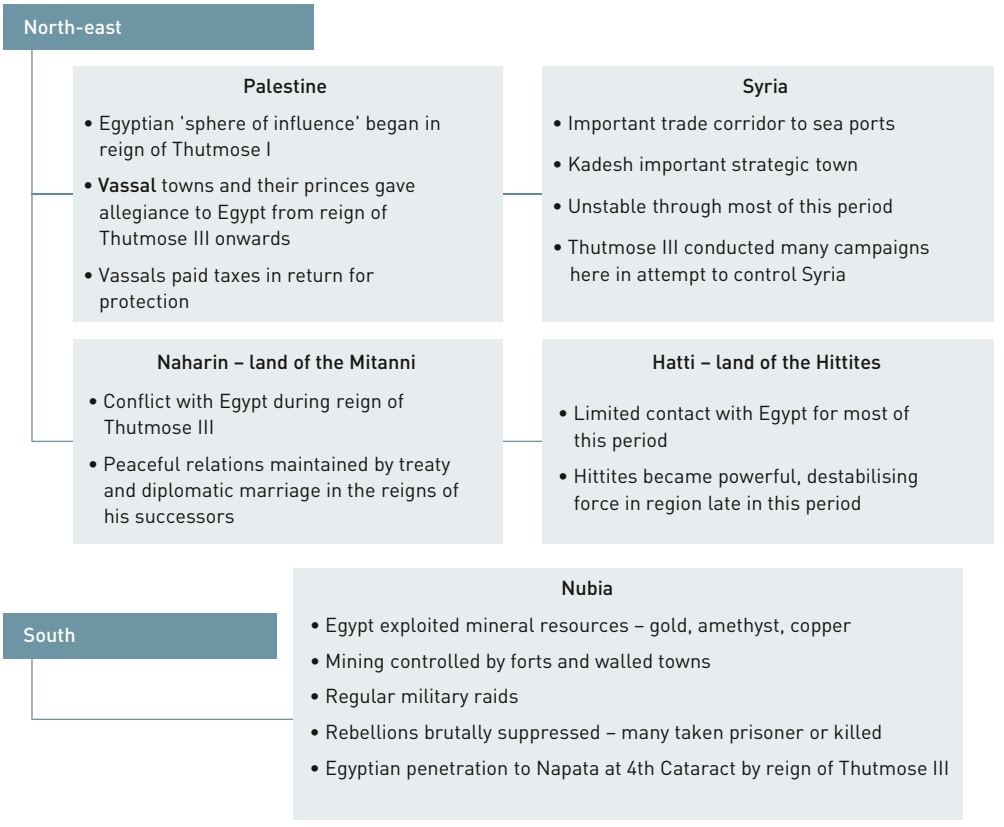
Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 2 Egypt and her neighbours in the early New Kingdom

of wars conducted against the Hyksos by Egyptian rulers from Thebes in the south. They expelled the Hyksos and established the Eighteenth Dynasty. So began the New Kingdom, a long period of growth and expansion.

The fertile Nile River Valley continued to provide abundant agricultural and other resources for the Egyptian people. Egypt was bounded in the north by the Mediterranean Sea and in the south by the First **Cataract** at Aswan. To the east and west of the Nile Valley were extensive desert regions, forming natural boundaries. The Sinai Peninsula to the east of the Nile Delta was a natural barrier between Egypt and her Asian neighbours. In this period, Egypt's main neighbours were Nubia in the south, Syria–Palestine (called Retjenu, or Retenu, by the Egyptians) to the north-east and Libya to the west. Further away were Babylonia, Naharin (land of the Mitanni), Hatti (land of the Hittites) and Assyria. Source 3 gives an overview of Egypt's relations with her neighbours throughout this historical period.

cataract
a section of the Nile River where huge granite outcrops force the water into a narrow channel, making navigation difficult



SOURCE 3 Egypt's relationships with her neighbours in the early New Kingdom

vassal
a person or country in a subordinate position to a superior power

9.1 Check your learning

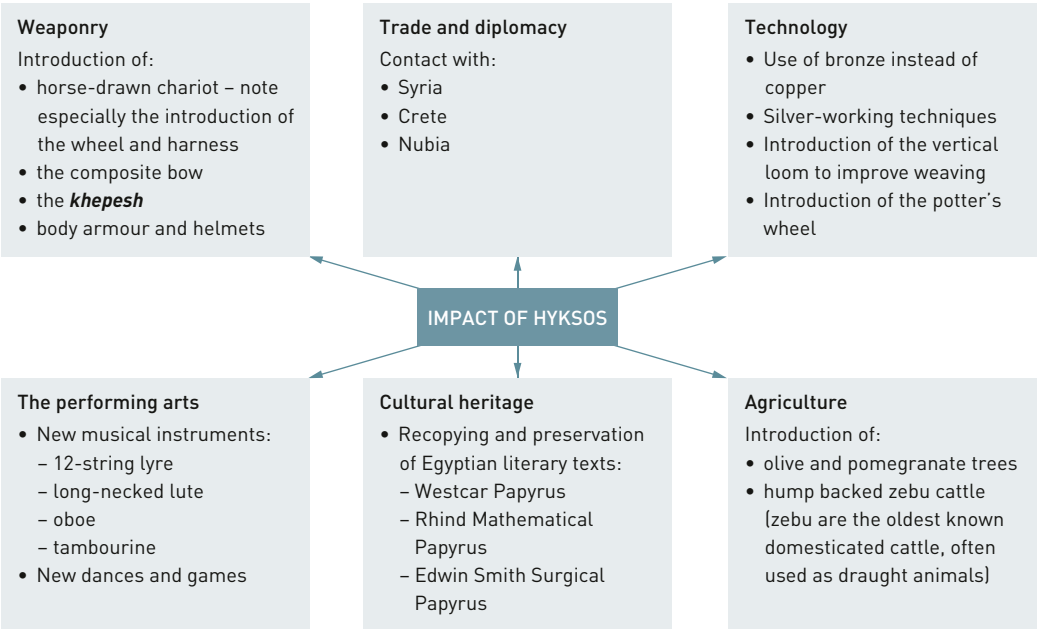
1 Why was northern Egypt known as Lower Egypt and the south as Upper Egypt?
2 How was Egypt politically divided in the period preceding the New Kingdom?
3 How was the reunification of Upper and Lower Egypt achieved?
4 Who were Egypt's main neighbours in this period?
5 How did Egypt's relations with her neighbours to the north-east differ from her relations with Nubia in the south?

9.2 Impact of the Hyksos

The name 'Hyksos' is derived from the Greek version of the Egyptian term *hekau khasu*, meaning 'rulers of foreign countries'. In the period preceding the New Kingdom, the Hyksos had extended their rule westward to include Memphis and south to Cusae. Evidence from the period also indicates that they established diplomatic and trading relations with the Nubians from Kerma. Excavations at Tell el-Dab'a and the **Turin Canon** reveal a Hyksos dynasty that lasted for about a 100 years and ended with Awessere Apopi, who reigned at the time of the Hyksos–Theban wars.

Turin Canon
an ancient Egyptian papyrus recording the names of the pharaohs and the lengths of their reigns

The Hyksos occupation stimulated significant cultural and technological developments in Egypt. Among the most important of these were innovations in weaponry, which the Egyptians were later able to use successfully against them. Source 4 summarises the various contributions of the Hyksos.



SOURCE 4 Impact of the Hyksos

khepesh
a sickle-shaped battle axe

Hyksos trade and diplomacy

The Hyksos had extensive trading and diplomatic contacts with the Eastern Mediterranean region during their occupation of the Egyptian Delta. Source 5 provides some evidence of Hyksos influence at the time of the wars of expulsion.

SOURCE 5

Kamose's [the Theban prince who carried out the first attack on the Hyksos] description of the harbour at Avaris during the reign of Apophis … refers to the 'hundreds of ships of fresh cedar which were filled with gold, lapis, silver, turquoise, bronze axes without number, not to mention the moringa-oil, fat, honey, willow, box-wood, sticks, and all their fine woods – all the fine

products of Syria!' Though meager, this evidence cannot be misinterpreted. Military conquest, clearly in the north, the status of a great king, vast amounts of **tribute** – all this accrued to the great Apophis, and perhaps to his forebear Khayan as well. The latter's name is known from a number of small objects – a weight from Baghdad, an unguent vessel from Boghaz Keui [the later Hittite capital], and the lid of an alabaster vessel from Knossos –which at one time was enough to conjure up to some scholars the vision of a world empire. There was nothing of the sort, of course, during Hyksos times; but … these scattered objects do tell us something. When combined with the vessel inscribed for a princess and sister of Apophis, from Spain, and the plate of a daughter of Apophis, from Amenhotep I's tomb at Thebes, can we catch a glimpse of an active court at Avaris, with international interests, sending diplomatic presents and perhaps arranging marriages with the city-states of Palestine and Syria and the Aegean?

D. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1992, p. 120

tribute
money or valuables paid to a state or ruler to acknowledge submission

Technological impact of the Hyksos

The traditional weaponry of the Egyptians consisted of bows and arrows, shields, spears, axes and throwing sticks, and an array of impact weapons such as **maces**, **cudgels** and clubs. During the Hyksos wars, the Egyptians added to their armoury by adopting the superior military technology of the enemy, chief among which were the horse-drawn war chariot and the composite bow.

mace
a blunt, club-like weapon with a heavy stone or metal head on a wooden or metal handle

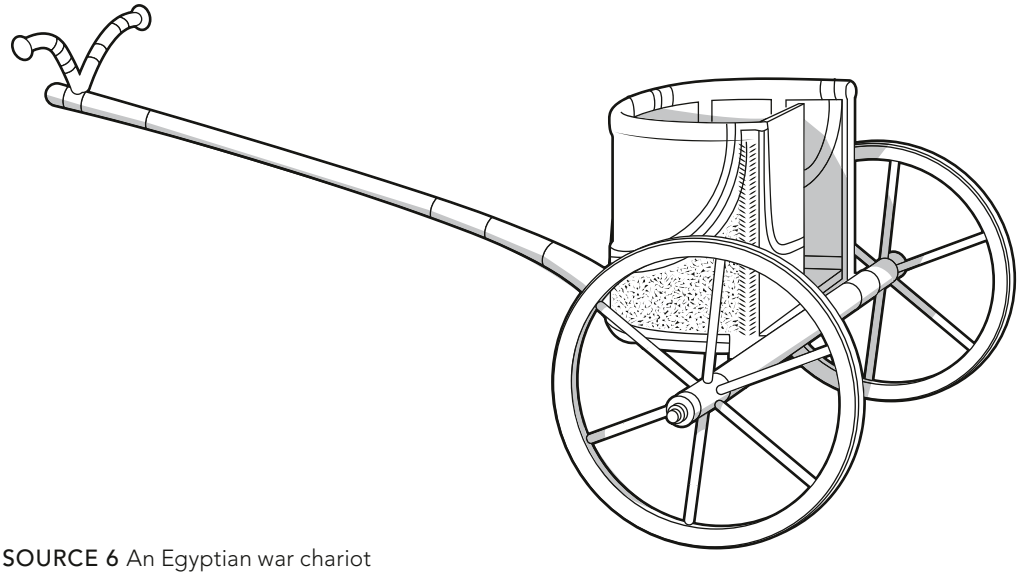
cudgel
a short, thick stick used as a weapon

stela (*pl.* stelae)
an upright slab of stone or sometimes wood, bearing inscriptions, reliefs or paintings; often placed in temples and tombs

The chariot

The victory **stela** set up by Kamose after his successful attack on the Hyksos capital at Avaris lists chariots among the booty collected, so it is therefore likely that the horse and chariot were introduced into Egypt at this time. Archaeological and written evidence indicates that the Egyptians were using the horse and chariot during Ahmose's reign.

The chariot consisted of a light, wooden, semi-circular framework with an open back attached to an axle and a pair of four- or six-spoked wheels with leather tyres (see Source 6). Two horses were yoked to the chassis by a long pole attached to the centre of the axle. It was manned by two soldiers: the charioteer (driver) and the warrior armed with a bow and spear and shield.



SOURCE 6 An Egyptian war chariot

SOURCE 7
An Egyptian composite bow

The composite bow

The bow and arrow was the most important long-range weapon in the Egyptian armoury. The traditional wooden 'self' or simple bow, between 1 and 2 metres long, consisted of a wooden rod that narrowed at either end and was strung with twisted gut. An innovation in the design and construction of this bow involved a technique of adding laminated materials, which made it more elastic and gave it greater range and penetration. This new, recurved or composite bow (see Source 7), like the chariot, was also introduced by the Hyksos.

Other weapons and armour

More sophisticated versions of weapons included a longer, narrower battleaxe blade. A new form of dagger introduced from Asia was the *khepesh* with a curved blade. Both the battleaxe and the *khepesh* were used in close hand-to-hand fighting. Other early New Kingdom developments included upper body armour made of leather or linen to which small bronze scales were attached and a smaller type of shield that was tapered in its lower half. Another development deriving from the Hyksos helmet was the protective headgear worn by the pharaoh. This helmet, called the 'blue war crown', became an important part of the pharaoh's regalia. It consisted of metal discs sewn onto a leather headpiece (see 2.2 Nature and role of the army).

9.2 Understanding and using the sources

Source 5

1. List the following:
   - goods captured by Kamose in the siege of Avaris
   - places where the Hyksos had trading or diplomatic contacts.
2. What does this catalogue of goods suggest about the nature of Hyksos technology and crafts?
3. What do the 'scattered goods' to which Redford refers tell us about the nature of Hyksos contacts with other powers in the region?
4. Based on the information in this source, how might the Theban princes have benefited from the Hyksos wars?

9.2 Check your learning

1. What were the significant developments of the Hyksos in military technology?
2. Carry out further research on features of the Hyksos impact shown in Source 4. Useful sources for this activity include:
   - I. Shaw & P. Nicholson, *British Museum Dictionary of Ancient Egypt*, British Museum Press, London, 1995
   - I. Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000.
3. For a survey of scholarship on all aspects of the Hyksos period, including an analysis of key historiographical issues, see E. Oren (ed.), *The Hyksos: New Historical and Archaeological Perspectives*, University of Pennsylvania, 1997
4. Writing task: Using the information in this section and the following section on the Hyksos wars, explain the technological, political and economic impact of the Hyksos on Egypt.

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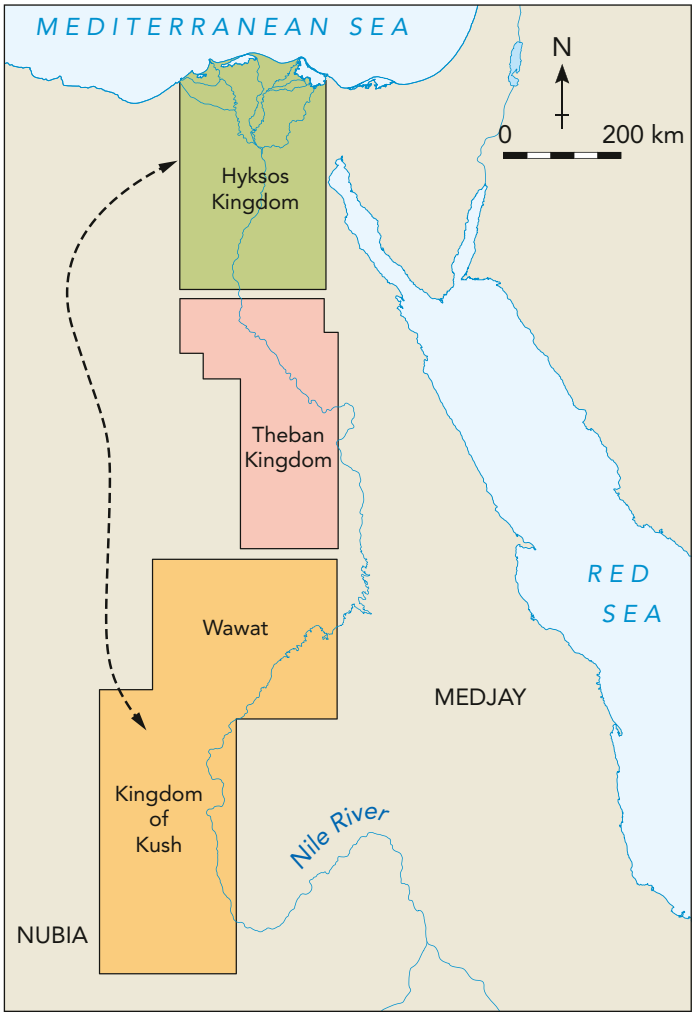
9.3 Wars against the Hyksos

Little is known about Theban contact with the north before the wars. It is likely that the Hyksos taxed Thebans travelling north of Cusae and may have limited their access to valuable resources such as cedar from Lebanon and limestone from the northern quarries. The Thebans would also have felt hemmed in from the south where the Hyksos controlled the route to Nubia via the western oases. This provided access to the goldmines and trade of the region. The Theban kings could only use the Nile for trading expeditions to Nubia. They also had to pay a tax to the Nubian king of Kush who controlled the region south of Elephantine at the First Cataract. This may help to explain Theban military actions against both north and south in the war that followed. In the absence of Hyksos records for the wars, we must rely on Egyptian accounts.

KINGDOMS OF HYKSOS, THEBES AND KUSH



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 8 Map showing Hyksos, Theban and Kushite spheres of influence immediately preceding the New Kingdom. The dotted line shows the desert routes of contact between the Hyksos and Kush.

The coming of war

The conflict between the north and the south is not usually portrayed as a civil war, but evidence suggests that this may be the appropriate term to use. Primary written sources from Thebes depict the Hyksos as hated foreign oppressors. However, evidence from Tell el-Dab'a shows that the Hyksos by this time had become thoroughly Egyptianised. Their king had the titles of a traditional Egyptian king and worshipped Seth, the local god of Avaris, whose cult had been merged with the Asiatic deity Baal Zephon.

The hippopotamus affair

Hostilities seem to have begun in the reign of Seqenenre Taa, King of Thebes. A partially preserved later Nineteenth Dynasty papyrus records the Hyksos king, Apophis' (also Awessere Apopi) challenge to the Theban king. It appears that he complained of losing sleep due to the noise made by the hippopotami in Thebes. The distance between Avaris and Thebes of about 600 kilometres makes it obvious that Apophis was being openly provocative. Seqenenre could not ignore the insult.

The remains of the papyrus unfortunately do not record the outcome of the incident. However, it seems likely that Seqenenre met a violent death in battle against the Hyksos. His mummy, now on display in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, bears the marks of wounds inflicted by a dagger, an axe, a spear and even a mace. The axe marks on his forehead match Hyksos weapons found at Tell el-Dab'a.

Kamose at war: Enemies in the north and south

Kamose, successor of Seqenenre, took the war to the Hyksos. Before heading north, however, he had to deal with a major threat from the south. Evidence indicates that he attacked and captured the fort of Buhen (at the Second Cataract) from the Kushites, who ruled a powerful Nubian kingdom with its capital at Kerma, and who were allies of the Hyksos.

A remarkable inscription relating to the attack on the south was discovered in 2003 in the tomb of Sobeknakht, governor of Elkab, an important provincial town of Upper Egypt in the late Seventeenth Dynasty. The discovery was made during work undertaken by British and Egyptian conservators led by W. Vivian Davies of the British Museum. The inscription contains evidence of a previously unknown attack on Egypt by a coalition of Nubian and southern allies led by the Kingdom of Kush. Source 9 is from a 2003 report in the Cairo *Al-Ahram Weekly*.

SOURCE 9

The text recounts his [Sobeknakht's] role in the crisis, from his command to strengthen the defences of Elkab to his mustering of a force to combat the Nubians, to his successful counter-attack southwards which destroyed an enemy force through the aid of Elkab's vulture goddess, Nekhbet. The inscription ends with an account of celebration in the presence of the Egyptian king, who is not identified by name, and of the temple of Nekhbet's endowment with a sacred boat … Davies stated 'We always thought that the Hyksos were the greatest of Egypt's enemies but Kush was as well.' The defeat of the Kush-led invasion represented in Sobeknakht's tomb may come to be interpreted as a critical event in Egypt's subsequent defeat of the Hyksos and expansion of its nascent [recently formed] empire into Palestine and Sudan.

Al-Ahram Weekly Online, Nevine El-Aref, 'Elkab's hidden treasure', 31 July – 6 August 2003

This new evidence indicates that the Kushite kingdom was a far more dangerous threat than previously thought and that a Kushite army had penetrated perhaps as far north as Elkab south of Thebes. Taking into account this evidence and our prior knowledge of the Hyksos–Nubian alliance, Kamose's attack on Buhen would have made good sense strategically in order to secure his rear from attack. Two texts from Kamose's reign give accounts of what happened next. Kamose's own account (see Source 10) explains his reasons for the proposed attack to his council of nobles.

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SOURCE 10

To what end do I know my [own] strength? One chief is in Avaris, another in Kush, and I sit [here] associated with an Asiatic and a Nubian! Each man has his slice in this Egypt and so the land is partitioned with me! None can pass through it as far as Memphis [although it is] Egyptian water! See he [even] has Hermopolis! No one can be at ease when they are milked by the taxes of the Asiatics. I shall grapple with him that I might crush his belly, [for] my desire is to rescue Egypt which the Asiatics have destroyed.

D. Redford, 'Textual Sources for the Hyksos Period', in E. Oren (ed.), *The Hyksos: New Historical and Archaeological Perspectives*, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1997, p. 13

His councillors were reluctant to support the plans for the reasons given in Source 11.

SOURCE 11

See, as far as Cusae it is Asiatic water … We are doing all right with our [part of] Egypt: Elephantine is strong, and the interior is with us as far as Cusae. Their free land is cultivated for us, and our cattle graze in the Delta … while corn is sent for our pigs. Our cattle have not been seized … He has the land of the Asiatics, we have Egypt. Only when comes one who [acts against us] should we act against him.

Redford, 1997, pp. 13–14

Kamose chose to ignore their arguments and launched an attack. Source 12 is his own account of the events that brought him to the eve of the attack on Avaris.

SOURCE 12

I sailed north … to repel the Asiatics through the command of Amun, exact-of-counsel, with my brave army before me like a flame of fire and the Medjay archers [contingents of Nubian bowmen fighting on the side of the Thebans] … on the lookout for the Asiatics in order to destroy their places. East and West proffered their abundance, and the army provisioned itself everywhere … [I besieged] Tety the son of Pepy in the midst of Nefrusy. I was not going to let him escape, once I had repelled the Asiatics who had defied Egypt, so that he could turn Nefrusy into a nest of Asiatics. I passed the night in my ship, my heart happy; and when day dawned I was upon him like a hawk. When breakfast time came I overthrew him having destroyed his walls and slaughtered his people, and made his wife descend to the river bank. My army acted like lions with their spoil – chattels, cattle, fat, honey – dividing their things, their hearts joyful. The district of Nefrusy came down [in submission] … I put in at Per-djedken … so that I might let Apopy experience a bad time, that Syrian prince with weak arms.

… I espied his women upon his roof, peering out of their windows towards the harbor. Their bellies stirred not as they saw me, peeping from their loop-holes upon their walls like the young of *inh*-animals [lizards?] in their holes, saying: he is swift! Behold! I am come! … Does your heart fail, O you vile Asiatic? Look! I drink of the wine of your vineyards which the Asiatics whom I captured pressed out for me. I have smashed up your resthouse, I have cut down your trees, I have forced your women into ships' holds, I have seized [your] horses; I haven't left a plank to the hundreds of ships of fresh cedar which were filled with gold, lapis, silver, turquoise, bronze axes without number, over and above the moringa-oil, incense, fat, honey, willow, box-wood, sticks and all their fine woods – all the fine products of Retenu – I have confiscated all of it! I haven't left a thing to Avaris to her [own] destitution: the Asiatic has perished!

Redford, 1997, p. 14

During Kamose's campaign, his soldiers captured a messenger carrying a message from the Hyksos king to the king of Kush as recorded in Source 13.

SOURCE 13

I captured his messenger in the oasis upland, as he was going south to Kush with a written dispatch, and I found on it the following, in writing by the hand of the Ruler of Avaris: '[Aweserre] son of Re, Apophis greets my son the ruler of Kush. Why have you arisen as ruler without letting me know? Do you see what Egypt has done to me? The Ruler which is in her midst – Kamose-the-Mighty, given life! – is pushing me off my [own] land! I have not attacked him in any way comparable to all that he has done to you; he has chopped up the Two Lands … my land and yours … Come north! Do not hold back! See, he is here with me: There is none who will stand up to you in Egypt. See, I will not give him a way out until you arrive! Then we shall divide the towns of Egypt, and [Khent]-hen-nofer shall be in joy.'

Redford, 1997, pp. 14–15

SOURCE 14 The great stela of king Kamose (limestone, 2.31 metres high) found in the first court of the temple of Amun at Karnak

Having intercepted the letter, Kamose returned it to the Hyksos king as a gesture of contempt. He then returned to Thebes, conducting further operations to root out remaining enemy forces in the north at Cynopolis, the Bahariah Oasis and Sako. Kamose held victory celebrations and made thanksgiving offerings to Amun, the chief god of Thebes. He instructed his triumph to be recorded on a stela set up at the temple of Amun at Karnak.

9.3 Understanding and using the sources

1 Discuss the following:

Sources 8, 9 & 13

- **a** What do these sources indicate about the nature of the threat from the south to the Theban princes?
- **b** What is the nature of the Hyksos involvement in this threat?

Sources 10 & 11

- **c** What reasons does Kamose give for his planned attack?
- **d** What does Kamose's language reveal about his attitude to his neighbours?
- **e** Explain what is meant by 'as far as Cusae it is Asiatic water'.
- **f** What reasons do the councillors give for their opposition to Kamose's plans?
- **g** What do the sources suggest about:
  - **i** the economic impact of the Hyksos on Upper Egypt?
  - **ii** Kamose's claim that he wishes to 'rescue Egypt'?

2 Using the map in Source 2 and the account of battles in Source 12, outline the sequence of events in Kamose's campaign against the Hyksos. What did he achieve in this campaign?

3 In pairs or small groups, discuss the strengths and limitations of these sources for understanding Egypt's role in the Hyksos–Theban wars.

9.4 Expulsion of the Hyksos

Despite Kamose's victory celebrations, the final expulsion of the Hyksos was left to Ahmose, the successor and possible brother of Kamose. Ahmose was very young when he came to the throne, so the queen-mother, Ahhotep, acted as regent. At this time of great instability, she maintained the Theban dynasty's control of Upper Egypt by suppressing rebels. When Ahmose finally came of age, he turned his attention to the unfinished business in the north and launched a direct attack on Avaris.

A written account of the final victory over the Hyksos comes from Ahmose, son of Ebana, a soldier whose career spanned the reigns of three pharaohs: Ahmose, Amenhotep I and Thutmose I. (Note that the pharaoh is Ahmose and the soldier is Ahmose, son of Ebana – they are not related.) This source is an example of the tomb autobiography genre, in which successful elite officials recorded the achievements of their careers on the walls of their tombs (Sources 15 and 16). The purpose of such autobiographies was to immortalise their deeds both for future generations and for their own afterlives.

gold of valour a military decoration for bravery in the form of a golden fly

Source 16 records the role of Ahmose, son of Ebana in the final campaigns. These included the siege and capture of Avaris and a later assault on Sharuhen, in southern Palestine – the last stronghold of the retreating Hyksos.

SOURCE 15 The Tomb of Ahmose, son of Ebana, showing Ahmose and his tomb autobiography

SOURCE 16

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AHMOSE, SON OF EBANA

… When the town of Avaris was besieged, I fought bravely on foot in his Majesty's presence. There was fighting on the water in 'Pjedku' of Avaris. I made a seizure and carried off a hand. [A common practice of Egyptian soldiers was to cut off a hand of a slain enemy as a record of numbers killed.] When it was reported to the royal herald the **gold of valor** was given to me [see Source 32]. Then they fought again in this place: I again made a seizure there and carried off a hand. Then I was given the gold of valor once again.

Then there was fighting in Egypt to the south of this town and I carried off a man as a living captive. I went down into the water … and crossed the water carrying him. When it was reported to the royal herald I was rewarded with gold once more. Then Avaris was despoiled, and I brought spoil from there: one man, three women; total four persons. His majesty gave them to me as slaves. Then Sharuhen was besieged for three years. His majesty despoiled it and I brought spoil from it: two women and a hand. Then the gold of valor was given me, and my captives were given to me as slaves.

M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Vol. II: The New Kingdom*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1976, pp. 12–13

Reunification of Upper and Lower Egypt: establishment of the Eighteenth Dynasty

Ahmose's final expulsion of the Hyksos paved the way for the reunification of Upper and Lower Egypt under a new dynasty, the Eighteenth, with its capital at Thebes. Egypt was once again a united land for the first time since the end of the Middle Kingdom. Ahmose now turned to the task of consolidating his reign in a campaign against the Nubian allies of the Hyksos. Ahmose, son of Ebana tells us he 'made a great slaughter among them'. With this victory, Ahmose had 'conquered southerners and northerners', completing the work begun by Kamose to free Egypt from the forces that had hemmed it in.

The threats to the new dynasty were not only external. Rebellions in Upper Egypt indicate that Ahmose had to defeat rival claimants to his throne. Ahmose, son of Ebana's account describes a rebellion led by a man called Aata. This was speedily put down by the new pharaoh who captured the rebels alive. A further threat came from a man called Teti-an, leader of another rebel group. This time the king showed no mercy and executed Teti-an and his entire troop.

The victory over the Hyksos justified the claim of the new dynasty to the throne of the Two Lands and a new confidence is reflected in the policies of the pharaohs from this time onwards. When Amenhotep I succeeded to the throne on the death of his father, Ahmose, the pattern for future development of the Eighteenth Dynasty had been set.

9.4 Understanding and using the sources

Source 16

1 Why was Sharuhen attacked as well as Avaris?

2 What does Ahmose, son of Ebana's account of this campaign reveal about the soldier's experience of the Hyksos wars?

9.4 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** To what extent can the campaigns against the Hyksos be justified as a war of 'liberation'? Consider: To what extent did Upper Egypt suffer from Hyksos rule? What threats from other quarters were there? What other motives might the Theban kings have had?
   - **b** How is Ahmose, son of Ebana's account (Source 16) of these military events different from that of royal accounts, for example Source 12?

2 Writing tasks:
   - **a** Explain the significance of the wars against the Hyksos for the establishment of the Eighteenth Dynasty.
   - **b** Assess the value and limitations of the written sources for an understanding of the causes and course of the war against the Hyksos.

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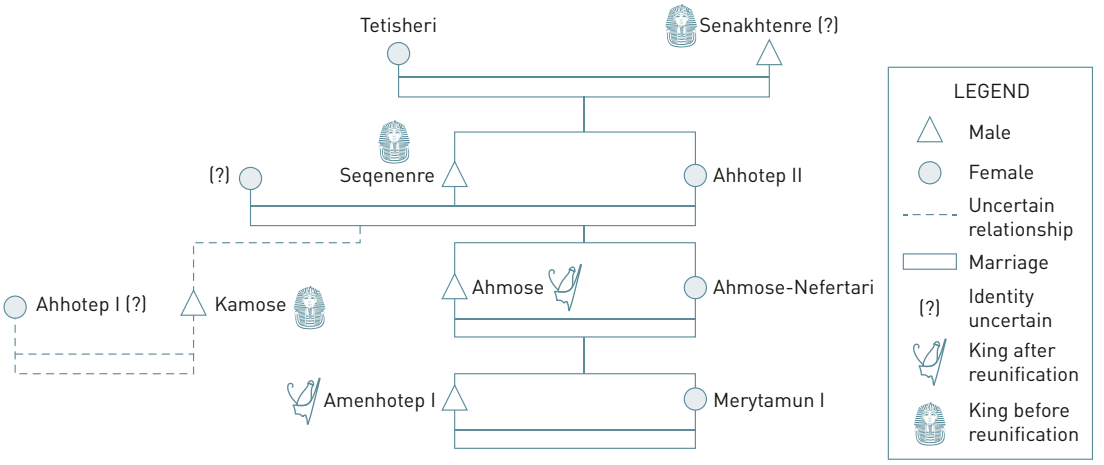
9.5 The role of queens

The queens of the early New Kingdom period played important roles in the establishment and consolidation of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Their key role as the chief wife of the reigning pharaoh was a dynastic one – to provide heirs to ensure the succession. However, in the founding days of the dynasty when Egypt was at war, the evidence indicates that these women assumed prominent political roles as well. This seems to have been because the king was away fighting or had been killed, leaving an heir who was too young to rule. Such queens often acted as **regents**, exercising considerable power, particularly in military affairs. As the cult of the main god, Amun, increased in importance, the Theban queens also came to play an important religious role in the dynasty. Three important names stand out in this early period. They are Tetisheri, Ahhotep II and Ahmose-Nefertari.

regent
a person who rules in the place of the monarch who is a minor or incapable of ruling



SOURCE 17 The royal family tree of the early New Kingdom. After the reunification, pharaohs wore the Double Crown of Upper and Lower Egypt.

Tetisheri

Although Tetisheri belonged to the Seventeenth Dynasty, she is regarded as the founding mother of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Of non-royal origin herself, she held the titles 'king's mother' and 'great king's wife'. She was the mother of Seqenenre, who began the war against the Hyksos, and the grandmother of pharaoh Ahmose, who completed the expulsion of the Hyksos and founded the Eighteenth Dynasty. It is clear that she played a vital role in the establishment of the new dynasty. She may have acted as regent for her grandson, Ahmose, on the death of his father, Seqenenre. Evidence for this comes from the monuments erected in her honour by Ahmose. These include her own lavishly decorated tomb at Thebes and a pyramid and chapel at Abydos. A stela set up by Ahmose at the Abydos site honours Tetisheri (see Sources 18 and 19).

SOURCE 18 The lunette (upper part) of the Abydos Stela of Ahmose: Ahmose (far-right and far-left figures) makes a presentation to his grandmother, Tetisheri, who is seated in front of heavily laden offering tables. Tetisheri wears the regalia of a queen, including the vulture cap and double *shwty* feathers, and holds a floral sceptre.

SOURCE 19

THE ABYDOS DONATION STELA OF AHMOSE

I, it is, who have remembered the mother of my mother and the mother of my father, great king's wife and king's mother, Tetisheri, triumphant. [Although] she already has a tomb and a mortuary chapel on the soil of Thebes and Abydos, I have said this to thee, in that my majesty has desired to have made for her [also] a pyramid and a house in Tazeser, as a monumental donation of my majesty. Its lake shall be dug, its trees shall be planted, its offerings shall be founded, equipped with people, endowed with lands, presented with herds, mortuary priests and ritual priests having their duties, every man knowing his stipulation … His majesty did this because he so greatly loved her, beyond everything. Never did former kings the like of it, for their mothers.

J. Breasted (ed.), *Ancient Records of Egypt, Vol. 2: The Eighteenth Dynasty*, Histories & Mysteries of Man, London, 1988, pp. 15–16

Ahhotep II

Ahhotep II was the daughter of Tetisheri, wife of Seqenenre and the mother of Ahmose. While her mother, Tetisheri, contributed to the establishment of the dynasty, Ahhotep II played an active role in its consolidation, holding the kingdom together during a time of warfare. An inscription found on a doorway at the Nubian fortress of Buhen links the names of Ahmose and Ahhotep II, implying that they shared a **co-regency**. Scholars believe that she played an active military role necessitated by the very young age of Ahmose at his accession. Her title, 'mistress of the land', suggests that a particular region was directly controlled by her. Ahhotep II's importance can be seen in the stela erected at Karnak by Ahmose in year 18 of his reign.

co-regency
a system where rule is shared by two monarchs; in Egypt usually between senior and junior partners

SOURCE 20

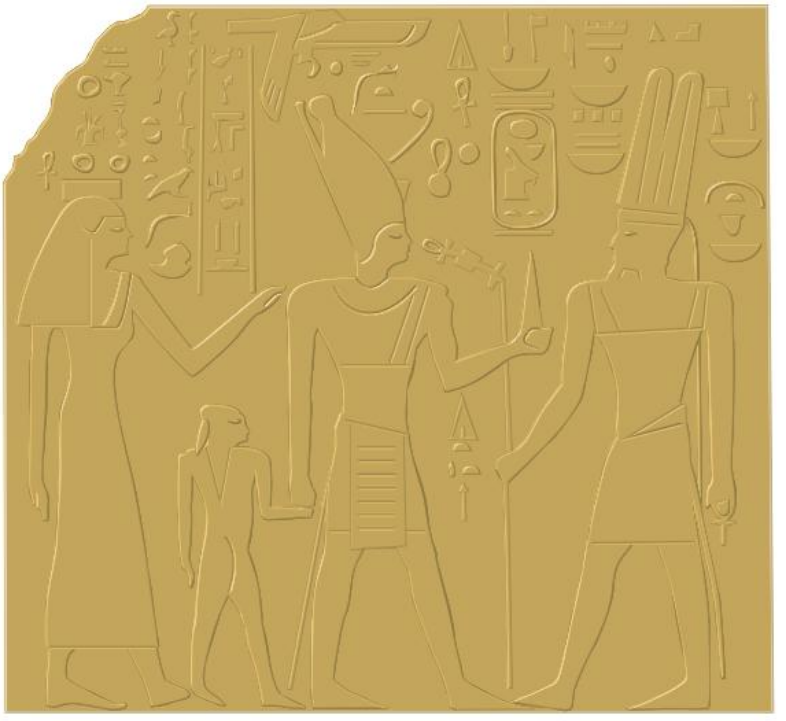
THE KARNAK STELA OF AHMOSE

Praise the mistress of the country, the sovereign of the lands of Hau-nebet, whose name is lifted up in all the foreign lands, who takes the decisions in respect of the people, King's Wife, King's Sister, life, health, strength! King's Daughter, respected Mother of the King, who is in control of affairs, who unites Egypt. She has assembled her notables with whom she has assured cohesion; she has brought back its fugitives, she has gathered its dissidents; she has pacified Upper Egypt, she has put down its rebels; the King's Wife, Ahhotep, who lives!

URK, IV, 21, cited in G. Callender, *The Eye of Horus: A History of Ancient Egypt*, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1993, p. 180

Ahmose-Nefertari

Ahmose-Nefertari was the daughter of Ahhotep II and Seqenenre, sister and wife of Ahmose and mother of Amenhotep I. She bore the traditional titles 'king's mother', 'king's daughter', 'king's sister', 'king's great wife' and 'mistress of Upper and Lower Egypt'. She was also the first queen to hold the important title 'god's wife of Amun'. This prestigious office gave her religious and economic influence in the Amun cult. The Karnak Donation Stela of Ahmose (Source 21) records Ahmose's purchase for his wife, Ahmose-Nefertari, of this important position of 'second priesthood of Amun', an office which she could pass on to future holders of the office of god's wife of Amun. Ahmose-Nefertari also held the office of 'divine adoratrice', another important position in the Amun cult.



SOURCE 21 An illustration of the Karnak Donation Stela of Ahmose, showing King Ahmose (centre) and his wife, Ahmose-Nefertari (far left), with their young son, making an offering of bread to the god Amun (far right). The inscription records the king's purchase of the office of second priesthood of Amun for Ahmose-Nefertari.

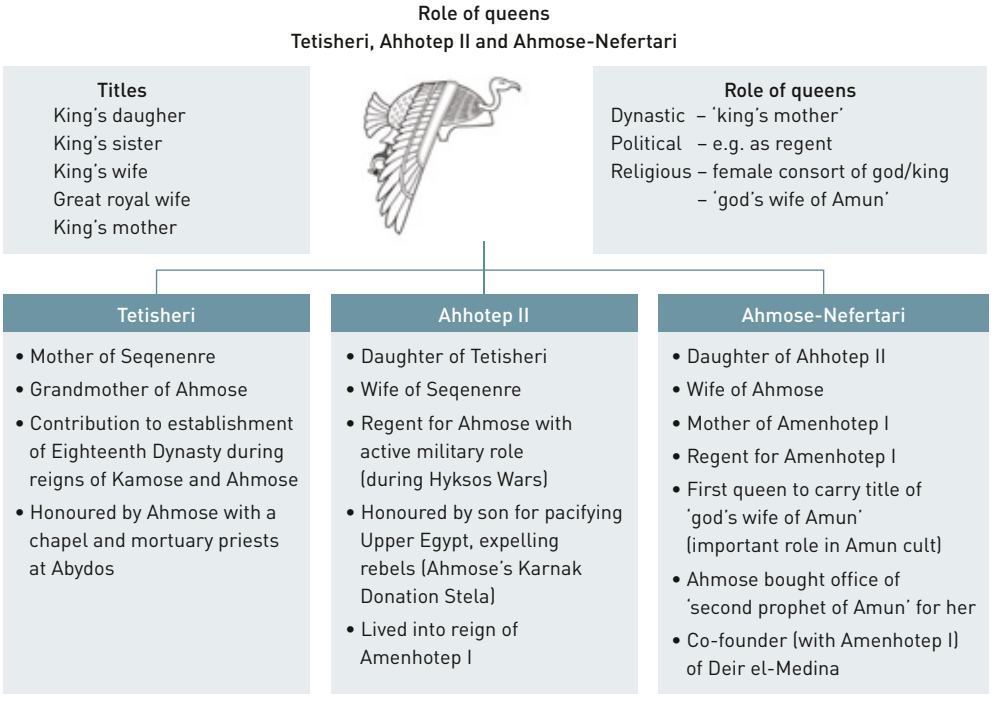
Ahmose-Nefertari and her son, Amenhotep I, founded the workers' village at Deir el-Medina on the west bank of the Nile at Thebes. They later became the focus of divine worship; their images depicted on tomb walls and their statues carried in religious processions by the villagers. No other queen of this period enjoyed such status. Other inscriptions provide evidence of her role: she is included in her husband's building inscriptions at Sinai and in Nubia; and she appears with Ahmose in his Abydos Donation Stela, discussing with him the honours they will bestow on their grandmother, Tetisheri. Ahmose-Nefertari may have served as a regent for her son, Amenhotep I, when her husband died. Evidence suggests she was still alive at the beginning of the reign of her son's successor, Thutmose I.

Source 22 on the next page summarises the role of the queens of this period. The vulture cap (in the centre) worn by New Kingdom queens represents the female goddess Nekhbet, one of the chief deities of Upper Egypt.

9.5 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 19–22

1. List the honours that Ahmose and Ahmose-Nefertari gave to their dead grandmother, Tetisheri.
2. What does Source 20 reveal about the dangers facing Egypt at this time?
3. Check the meaning of the words 'sovereign' and 'notables' in relation to Source 20 and rewrite Ahhotep II's activities in your own words.
4. What additional honours and roles did Ahmose-Nefertari receive? (Source 21)



SOURCE 22 The role of queens

5 What does the linking of Ahmose-Nefertari's name to the buildings for Tetisheri at Abydos tell us about the role of queens at this stage of the dynasty's development?

6 Compare the titles held by Tetisheri, Ahhotep II and Ahmose-Nefertari. What conclusion can you draw about the developing role of queens?

9.5 Check your learning

1 Carry out further research on the role of royal women in this period. Useful resources include:
   - B. Bryan, 'The significance of the royal women of the early 18th Dynasty', in Chapter 9, 'The 18th Dynasty before the Amarna Period c. 1550–1352 BC', in I. Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, 2000, pp. 226–30.
   - Ann Macy Roth, 'Models of authority, Hatshepsut's predecessors in power', in C. Roehrig (ed.), *Hatshepsut: From Queen to Pharaoh*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2005, pp. 9–14 (available as a PDF).

2 Writing task: Assess the contribution of queens to the establishment and development of the Eighteenth Dynasty.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the roles of queens and structure your answer accordingly
   - make judgements about the contribution of queens to the establishment and/or development of the Eighteenth Dynasty
   - use specific evidence to support your judgements.

9.6 Development and importance of the cult of Amun

state cult
the cult of the god who was worshipped and promoted by the Egyptian pharaohs as their particular god; in the New Kingdom this was Amun-Re of Thebes

primeval waters of chaos
in the Egyptian myth of creation, these were the stormy waters from which the first life emerged

syncretism
the merging of different religions, cultures or schools of thought

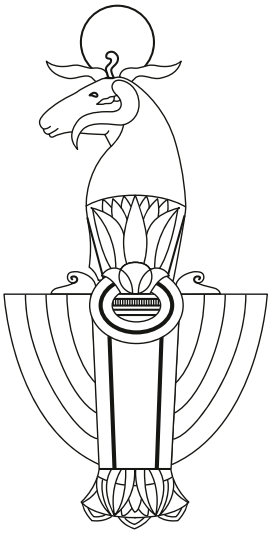
One of the most important developments of the Eighteenth Dynasty was the prominent role played by the cult of Amun. Amun's cult became the **state cult** of the newly formed dynasty. The rulers of the newly reunited Egypt were forging a new political identity closely linked to the development of the god and his cult.

The god Amun was the local god of Thebes, where he had been worshipped from the Eleventh Dynasty onwards. Amun's name means 'the hidden one' as he was the invisible strength of the wind. His name also possibly derives from the Libyan word *aman*, meaning water. This connected him with the creation of Egypt from the **primeval waters of chaos** and explains why Egyptians worshipped him in the form of a goose. Amun was also depicted as a ram with curved horns, which refers to his role as a fertility god. The sacred barques that carried the statue of Amun in the *Opet* Festival featured the ram-headed Amun at the bow and stern.

Another animal form of Amun was Kamutef, a creator god, who could renew himself by taking the form of a snake shedding its skin. Amun was part of the Theban triad – that is, three members of the family of Amun, together with his wife, Mut, and their son, the moon god Khons.

A significant development of this time was the **syncretism** of the Amun cult with the older, influential cult of the sun god Re, to form a new composite deity, Amun-Re. Amun-Re was represented as a crowned man wearing a double-plumed headdress; he was the divine father who looked after the king and the royal family, giving victories and wealth to them and the Egyptian people.

a



b

SOURCE 23 (a) Amun-Re depicted as a ram-headed god (symbol of fertility) and wearing the sun disc of Re. (b) The Theban triad: Amun-Re, wearing the double plumed headdress and carrying the *was* sceptre (symbol of power), accompanied by his wife, Mut, and his son, Khons.

Amun-Re and the ideology of kingship

The pharaohs of the young Eighteenth Dynasty were keen to develop the ideology of kingship – what it meant to be king of Egypt. The pharaohs' prime concern was to demonstrate their close connection to the god Amun-Re. Initially, the pharaoh was identified as the chosen one of Amun, his representative on earth. Hatshepsut was responsible for two important developments in the New Kingdom ideology of kingship: the practice of oracles and the concept of the divine birth of the king.

Oracles

oracle
a communication from a god indicating divine will; a prophecy

An **oracle** occurred when Amun-Re revealed his intentions through movements of his statue when it was being carried through Karnak Temple, the centre of his cult worship at Thebes. The first record of an oracle can be found in the Coronation Inscription of Hatshepsut in which Amun chooses Hatshepsut as his successor (see Chapter 5). In recording the oracle, Hatshepsut was further developing the ideology of kingship by emphasising her close link to Amun-Re. For it was by his will that she was chosen to rule. Her co-regent and successor, Thutmose III, also chose to assert his divine claim to the kingship when he recorded that the statue of Amun-Re stopped in front of him during a religious procession at Karnak, then led him to the place reserved for the king.

Divine birth of the king

The concept of the divine birth of the king meant that the king was no longer just the god's representative; he was now the son (or daughter, in Hatshepsut's case) of Amun, having been divinely conceived via the pharaoh and his great royal wife. Scenes of Hatshepsut's divine birth are depicted in her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri. They show Amun, in the form of her earthly father, Thutmose I, visiting Hatshepsut's mother, Queen Ahmose, her subsequent pregnancy and the presentation of the newly born Hatshepsut to her divine father, Amun.

Amun and military conquest

From the beginning of the wars against the Hyksos to later military campaigns of imperial expansion, Amun was credited with the victories. A generous portion of the spoils of war and booty was dedicated to Amun in his great temple at Karnak as is shown by the following Karnak inscription, an excerpt from the *Annals* of Thutmose III.

SOURCE 24

Then the entire army rejoiced and gave praise to Amun [for the victory] he had given to his son on [this day. They lauded] his majesty and extolled his victory. Then they presented the plunder they had taken: hands, living prisoners, horses, and chariots of gold and silver …

M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Vol. II: The New Kingdom*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1976, p. 33

9.6 Check your learning

1. Amun was closely associated with two annually celebrated religious festivals: the festival of *Opet* and the Beautiful Festival of the Valley. Research these festivals and find out about:
   - what happened when they were celebrated
   - what role was played by Amun and his family
   - their religious and political significance in this period.
2. Summarise in your own words how the god Amun became central to the New Kingdom ideology of kingship.

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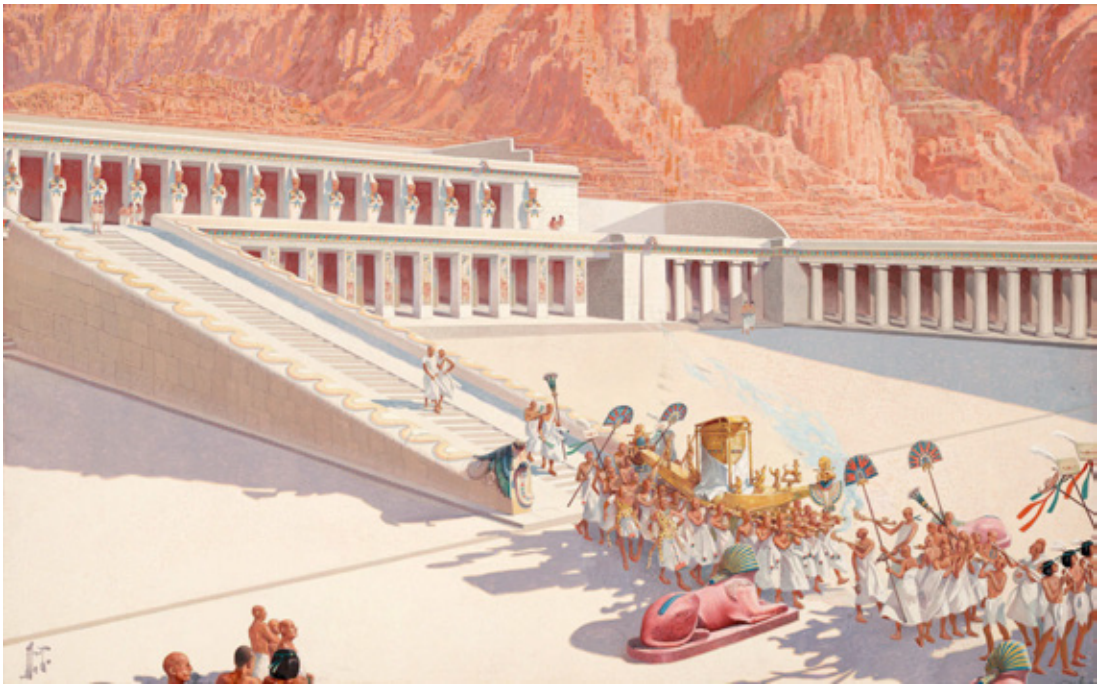
9.7 The Amun priesthood

As the guardians of the state cult of Amun, members of the Amun priesthood enjoyed a prominent position in New Kingdom society and exercised great political and religious influence. The highest ranking priest, the 'first prophet of Amun', was appointed by the pharaoh. This provided a means for the pharaoh to connect his family with Amun, as in the case of Ahmose's purchase of the 'second prophet of Amun' priesthood for his wife, Ahmose-Nefertari. It also contributed to a growing interdependence between the king and Amun priesthood.

The influence of the Amun priesthood appears to have increased in proportion to the increasing wealth derived from military conquest, subsequently directed to the Amun cult. It is possible that by the beginning of the reign of the young Thutmose III, the Amun priesthood was powerful enough to play 'kingmaker'. It supported Hatshepsut in her claim to the throne, enabling her to take the step of assuming the kingship herself.

The power of the first prophet of Amun was significantly increased when he also held the title 'overseer of prophets of Upper and Lower Egypt'. This gave him authority over all other religious cults. Such a man was Hapuseneb, who held both titles in the reign of Hatshepsut. As one of Hatshepsut's most important officials, he was responsible for her building works at Karnak. Other high priests of the Amun cult combined this role with other official duties that increased their influence. Menkheperraseneb, first prophet of Amun under Thutmose III, was a new appointee, not inherited from Hatshepsut's reign. He combined his priestly role with those of chief architect and 'overseer of the houses of gold and silver', or treasurer. He thus carried out both secular and religious duties. Menkheperraseneb was able to pass his office briefly to his nephew before the role was taken on by Amenemhet, the last high priest of Amun in Thutmose III's reign.



SOURCE 25 A modern artist's impression of priests carrying an image of Amun in a religious procession from Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahri

God's wife of Amun

An important feature of the cult of Amun in the early Eighteenth Dynasty was the introduction of the title 'god's wife of Amun'. The title was first held by Ahmose-Nefertari, wife of Ahmose I. The god's wife, who was usually the king's 'great wife', acted as Amun's consort in religious rituals that emphasised the ideology of the divine birth of the king. A pharaoh whose mother held the title 'god's wife of Amun' could claim to be directly descended from the god himself.

As noted earlier, this title had more than ritual significance – each holder wielded important economic influence in the state cult. Ahmose-Nefertari's religious and economic power as 'god's wife' was increased by her other roles in the Amun priesthood: 'second priest of Amun' and 'divine adoratrice'. Ahmose-Nefertari had the power to pass on the benefits of these positions to people of her choice. This power allowed her to emphasise her religious rather than her political role as king's wife, as seen in her more frequent use of the 'god's wife' title. Ahmose-Nefertari continued to hold the position of 'god's wife of Amun' into the reign of Thutmose I.

Ahmose
a popular name in this period, used by both men and women

Later holders (in this period) of the 'god's wife of Amun' title were Ahmose Merytamun, sister of Amenhotep I; Satamun, his daughter; **Ahmose**, queen of Thutmose I and her daughter Hatshepsut. Hatshepsut's accession to the throne following her regency for Thutmose III could well have been made possible by the influence she exercised as 'god's wife of Amun'. When she became pharaoh, Hatshepsut passed on this title to her daughter, Neferure.

9.7 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following in groups and share your responses.
   - **a** What could the pharaoh gain through his power to appoint the chief priests of the Amun cult?
   - **b** Explain the link between the growing wealth of the New Kingdom and the influence of the chief priests of the Amun cult.
   - **c** How were royal women of the early Eighteenth Dynasty able to exercise power through holding the title 'god's wife of Amun'?
   - **d** What role might Hatshepsut's title 'god's wife of Amun' have played in her rise to power as pharaoh?

2 Construct an annotated mind map to summarise the features of the cult of Amun-Re discussed in this and the later sections on the Amun priesthood and building programs. Features include:
   - syncretism of Amun and Re
   - link to ideology of kingship – role of oracles, divine birth of king, military victory
   - Amun priesthood, including 'god's wife of Amun'
   - pharaonic building program, for example Temple of Karnak
   - religious festivals.

3 Writing task: Use your mind map to construct a response to the following: Assess the importance of the cult of Amun-Re in the development of the early Eighteenth Dynasty.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the important features of the cult of Amun-Re in this period.
   - use these features to structure your response
   - make judgements of the relative importance of these features
   - use specific evidence to support your assessment.

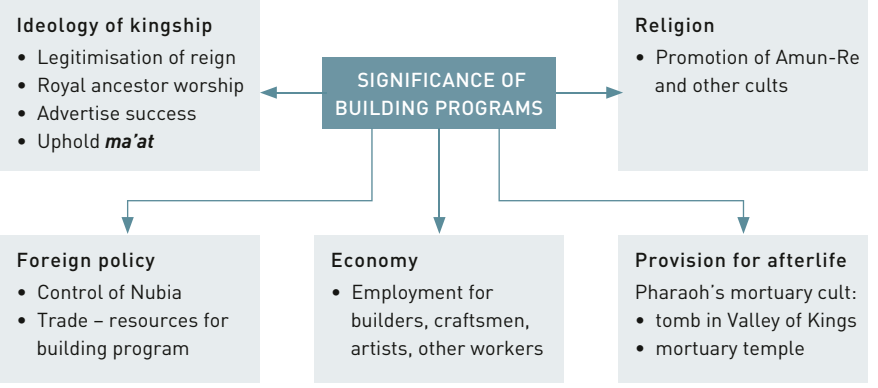
9.8 Political and religious significance of building programs

'Ideology needs architecture for its fullest expression.' This statement by the Egyptologist Barry Kemp sums up an important motive for the building policy pursued by New Kingdom pharaohs – building was a politico-religious activity. At the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty, the pharaohs of the newly unified Egypt had a statement to make: they had expelled the Hyksos and their allies from Egyptian soil, unified a previously divided land and established themselves and their successors as 'kings of Upper and Lower Egypt'. Moreover, they had achieved this with the inspiration and help of the god Amun-Re. What remained was to express this in architecture. As each new pharaoh came to the throne of the Two Lands, he initiated a building program for his reign. Some of the key features of building programs are identified in Source 26.

While a major focus of each pharaoh's program was the Temple of Amun at Karnak, building in Nubia had a more political purpose as an expression of Egyptian control of this region. Pharaohs also honoured ancestors and provided for the cults of other gods throughout Egypt, restoring their old sanctuaries or building new temples, shrines and other structures. The following towns and their patron gods featured in pharaonic building of this period:

- Memphis – Ptah
- Abydos – Osiris
- Beni Hasan – Pakhet
- Dendera – Hathor
- Edfu – Horus
- Kom Ombo – Sobekh.

ma'at
the ancient Egyptian concept of truth, order, harmony and justice



SOURCE 26 The significance of building programs

Ahmose

Military affairs took up the majority of Ahmose's time, but when he turned his attention to building, he constructed a palace on the site of the former Hyksos capital at Avaris. Ahmose also built at Memphis, resettling and redeveloping the city that had been the traditional capital of Egypt. Karnak was the site of some building, and he also restored traditional cults that had suffered neglect: he built temples for Ptah, Montu and Osiris at their cult centres.

SOURCE 27 Building projects of early Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs

PHARAOH	KARNAK	ELSEWHERE
Ahmose	• Tempest Stela • Donation Stela	Abydos, Avaris, Memphis
Amenhotep I	• Alabaster barque sanctuary for Amun	Abydos, Aswan, Deir el-Medina
Thutmose I	• Pylons 4 and 5 with a hypostyle hall between them • Pair of obelisks	Abydos, Memphis, Armant, Elephantine, Nubia
Thutmose II	• Limestone gateway in front of forecourt of Pylon 4	Semna, Napata
Hatshepsut	• Pylon 8 (on new axis) • Two pairs of obelisks • Red Chapel (barque sanctuary for Amun)	Deir el-Bahri, Medinet Habu, Beni Hasan, Memphis, Hermopolis, Cusae. Nubia: Qasr Ibrim, Sai, Semna, Faras, Buhen
Thutmose III	• Pylons 6 and 7 • Pair of obelisks • ***Sed*** Festival Temple	Medinet Habu, Kom Ombo, Edfu, Elkab, Delta, Elephantine, Buhen, Semna, Gebel Barkal
Amenhotep II	• *Sed* Festival Pavilion	Giza, Seheil, Elephantine, Amada, Buhen
Thutmose IV	• Peristyle court before Pylon 4	Giza, Memphis, Serabit el-Khadim, Abydos, Dendera, Elkab, Edfu, Elephantine

Sed
an ancient Egyptian ceremony celebrating the continued rule of a pharaoh; the name is taken from the name of an Egyptian wolf god, one of whose names was Wepwawet or Sed

Amenhotep I

Amenhotep I followed the policies of his predecessor, but introduced an innovation with the founding of the workers' village at Deir el-Medina near the Valley of the Kings to house the royal tomb builders and their families. Another innovation was the renewed exploitation of traditional building resources for royal building projects: turquoise mines in the Sinai desert, alabaster from Bosra and Hatnub, and sandstone from Gebel el-Silsila.

Thutmose I

By this reign, building activities spread from Nubia in the south to Giza in the north. This pharaoh followed his predecessors in building at cult centres, emphasising the king's connection with his ancestors and the gods. He built at Abydos, cult centre of Osiris. At Karnak he built new pylons creating a new entrance to the temple, a move that later pharaohs would copy enthusiastically.

Hatshepsut

Thutmose II had time to do little more than erect a gateway at Karnak before he died, but his wife, Hatshepsut, undertook a building program that reflects the confidence, stability and

wealth of this period. She made additions and innovations to Karnak Temple; her mortuary temple, at Deir-el-Bahri on the west bank, is one of the finest examples of New Kingdom architecture. Her building activities stretched from Nubia to Memphis and included Middle Egypt, where at Beni Hasan she built a rock-cut temple, now called the *Speos Artemidos*.

Thutmose III

Thutmose III continued the practice of building extensively, both within and outside Egypt. The furthest extent of his building was at Gebel Barkal, deep in Nubia near the Fourth Cataract. He also followed tradition by adding to Karnak, his major contribution being the magnificent Festival Hall to commemorate his *Sed* festival. An interesting feature of Thutmose III's activity at Karnak is his desecration, concealment or dismantling of buildings belonging to his predecessor, Hatshepsut (see Chapter 5).

Amenhotep II

Amenhotep II also followed a traditional building program with some innovations. His reopening of the limestone quarries at Tura provided new resources for royal monuments. As well as building at Karnak, Amenhotep II favoured Giza, where he erected a temple to the god Horemakhet adjacent to the sphinx. This interest in the sphinx was continued in the reign of his son, Thutmose IV.

Thutmose IV

Thutmose IV had a short reign, but he did have time to make additions to Karnak, the most notable being a spacious peristyle (or portico) court in front of the fourth pylon. He followed his father in veneration of the sphinx at Giza. The erection of the 'Dream Stela' between its paws demonstrates this veneration. What is interesting this time is the omission of Amun and the emphasis on the cult of Horemakhet, an aspect of Re.

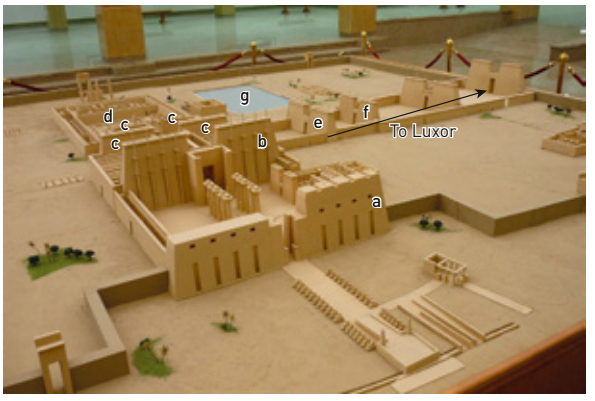
9.8 Check your learning

1. A more detailed discussion of royal building programs of the pharaohs of this period can be found in B. Bryan, 'The 18th Dynasty before the Amarna Period', in I. Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000, pp. 218–71.
2. In groups, choose one of the pharaohs of this period and find out about some of the building projects referred to in Source 27. Share your findings with other groups to construct a complete file on key building projects for each of the pharaohs in the table.
3. Redraw the mind map in Source 26 and add examples from your research in the correct categories.
4. Writing task: Use your annotated mind map to structure a response to the following: Explain the political and religious significance of the building programs of Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the key features of building policy and use these to structure your response
   - explain the relationship between building and political and religious policies
   - make the significance of this relationship clear
   - use specific evidence to support your explanation.

9.8 Profile

The Temple of Amun at Karnak



a Pylon I (Ramesses II, Nineteenth Dynasty)

b Pylon 2

c Pylons 4, 5 + 6 (Thutmose I + III)

d Festival Hall of Thutmose III

e Pylon 8 (Hatshepsut)

f Pylon 7 (Thutmose III)

g Sacred Lake

SOURCE 28 A model of Karnak Temple as it would have appeared in ancient times

SOURCE 29 One of a pair of the obelisks of Thutmose I at Karnak Temple

The temple of Amun at Karnak was known as *Ipet-isut*, 'the most select of places'. It had existed as a sanctuary to Amun since Middle Kingdom times. In the New Kingdom it underwent a major program of additions and redecoration, as the pharaohs demonstrated their devotion to Amun with the erection of pylons, obelisks, statues and chapels. It was here at Karnak that the developing ideology of kingship could be given physical expression.

The earliest part of the temple was the inner core of pylons and shrines. Each pharaoh added their own buildings in front of existing ones so that the temple grew outwards; each pair of pylons built by Thutmose I, Hatshepsut and Thutmose III created a new processional gateway entrance to the temple.

Amenhotep I's Karnak monuments commemorate his *Sed* festival or jubilee. Thutmose III was one of the first to dismantle the buildings of his predecessors in order to promote the cults of his more favoured relatives. Hatshepsut was the first to change the direction of the processional way, building her eighth pylon on a new axis that changed the direction of the *Opet* procession towards the Temple of Luxor.

9.8 Profile tasks

1. Explore the Temple of Karnak and view digital reconstructions of some of the major buildings within the complex. Search online for 'Digital Karnak'.
2. You can also experience the Karnak Virtual Reality model by loading it into Google Earth.
3. Research the purpose and significance of obelisks and how they were quarried and erected at Karnak.

9.9 Role and contribution of prominent officials

While the pharaoh had responsibility for the inspiration and direction of internal and foreign affairs, it was his officials who carried out pharaonic policy and ensured its success. In addition to the prestige and honours they enjoyed in life, some of the highest ranking officials were granted the privilege of a burial in the special cemetery for nobles at Thebes. Their decorated tomb chapels provide valuable evidence of the duties they carried out in their lives.

Civil administration

vizier
a chief minister and king's deputy in ancient Egypt

As the 'empire' grew, a vast bureaucracy of civil officials became necessary to administer both internal and external policy. At the head of the civil administration stood the **vizier** who was directly responsible to the pharaoh for all of the branches of national government. The complexity of the New Kingdom administration required two viziers, one for the north and one for the south, although most of our evidence relates to the southern (Theban) vizier in this period. He was the chief financial officer in charge of taxation and tribute, he acted as chief judge in legal affairs, and he had overall responsibility for the royal building program. He also acted on behalf of the king in foreign affairs, such as the reception of the annual tribute.

nomarch
a governor in charge of an Egyptian nome, a district of Egypt

Below the vizier were other important officials such as the overseers of the treasury, overseers of the granaries and overseers of building works, scribes, and members of the provincial administration such as **nomarchs** and mayors.

Rekhmire

The best known vizier of this period, Rekhmire, served both Thutmose III and Amenhotep II. (See 2.2 Social structure and political organisation.)

Neferperet

Neferperet was the chief treasurer and overseer of building works at Abydos during the reign of Ahmose. He was responsible for the reopening of the Tura quarry, which was the source of the fine limestone used for casing stones and other projects.

Paheri of Nekheb

nome
one of 42 administrative districts of ancient Egypt: 22 in Upper Egypt and 20 in Lower Egypt

A notable nomarch (provincial governor) during the reigns of Thutmose II, Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, Paheri performed similar duties to the vizier, although on a reduced scale. He was responsible for tax collection, justice and the local religious cults in his **nome**. He also made an important contribution to the economy through his supervision of the weighing and transportation to Thebes of the gold that was mined in the desert near Nekheb.

Sennefer

Sennefer was mayor of Thebes during the reign of Amenhotep II. Because of the importance of Thebes, its mayor was a high-ranking member of the provincial administration. He worked with the southern vizier to oversee the great building projects of Thebes. His duties included supervision of the workers' village at Deir el-Medina and the organisation of the great religious festivals of the Theban year. Sennefer no doubt enjoyed a close relationship with the vizier of the time, Amenemopet, who happened to be his brother. These two men enjoyed such favour with the king that they were both given tombs in the Valley of the Kings (a privilege usually reserved for royalty).

SOURCE 30 The official Menna, an Eighteenth Dynasty scribe and Inspector of Estates in the reign of Thutmose IV. He is depicted (far left) in his Theban tomb supervising workers.

Religious officials

The religious administration was headed by the chief priest (or first prophet) of Amun, who was also chief overseer of all the other religious cults. We have already seen how important this office became, when the chief priest of Amun, Hapuseneb, also held the post of vizier during the reign of Hatshepsut. Other important members of the religious hierarchy were responsible for administering the finances and estates of the various cults, and these included the second prophet and stewards of the gods. Two very important officials included:

- Hapuseneb – combined office of chief priest of Amun and vizier during Hatshepsut's reign.
- Senenmut – a chief official of Hatshepsut's reign, chief steward of Amun.

The king's estate

The pharaoh's personal estate and affairs were administered by the chancellor (personal seal-bearer of the king), the chamberlain and the chief steward. Two notable stewards were:

- Kenamun – steward of the king's household in the reign of Amenhotep II. He was a boyhood companion of the king and had also served with him on campaigns.
- Tjenuna – steward of the king's household in the reign of Thutmose IV. He was a close personal friend of the king. He also held the post of steward of Amun.

The army

Because the military played a vital role in the building of the empire, some outstanding soldiers received great honours and wealth; they enjoyed a special place in the king's affection as well. These included:

- Ahmose, son of Ebana – a highly decorated soldier who served in the military campaigns of three pharaohs: Ahmose, Amenhotep I and Thutmose I.
- Amenemhab – a general in the army of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II.

Administration of the empire

The most important official in the administration of the empire in this period was the **viceroy** of Kush. As the king's senior deputy in the south, this official governed the whole of Nubia, which was divided into two regions: Wawat (Lower Nubia) and Kush (Upper Nubia). Each was administered by a deputy answerable to the viceroy. The viceroy of Kush controlled the Nubian forts, the military, the collection of taxes and the building of temple towns. Two Nubian viceroys from this period were:

viceroy
king's deputy

- Nehi – viceroy of Nubia in the reign of Thutmose III
- Usersatet – viceroy of Nubia in the reign of Amenhotep II (see 9.11 The army: A good career path).

There is much less evidence for imperial administration in Syria–Palestine during this period. The machinery for this was first established during the reign of Thutmose III and was initially carried out by garrison commanders and local vassal princes.

9.9 Check your learning

1 A useful discussion of administration in the Eighteenth Dynasty can be found in I. Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000, pp. 269–71.

2 Research and read the tomb biography of Amenemhab, an army general in the reign of Thutmose III.

3 Information about the careers of many officials of this period can be found in their Theban tombs. A list of the nobles of this period and the number of their Theban tomb can be found online. Search for 'Theban tombs: 18th Dynasty'.

4 Summarise your knowledge of the role and contribution of officials in this period by creating a table similar to the following for recording details of officials.

OFFICIAL	TITLE/ROLE	PHARAOH SERVED	CONTRIBUTION/IMPACT	EVIDENCE
Usersatet	Viceroy of Nubia (King's son of Kush)	Amenhotep II	• King's deputy in the south • Controlled Nubian forts and the military • Oversaw collection of taxes and building of temple towns	Semna Stela of Usersatet

5 Writing task: Evaluate the role and contribution of officials in this period.

To help plan your response:

- identify the important features of the role and contribution of officials
- use these features to structure your answer
- make judgements of the significance/value of their roles and contributions
- refer to specific officials and use information from relevant sources to support your response.

9.10 Expansion of Egypt's boundaries

militarism
a strong military spirit or policy

The expulsion of the Hyksos signalled the beginning of an age of **militarism**. In the century that followed, Egypt embarked on a policy of imperial expansion. Ahmose opened the way in the north by taking the war against the Hyksos into their homeland at Sharuhen in southern Palestine. In the south, his conquest of the Kerma Nubians, who had allied themselves with the Hyksos, set the scene for further expansion. Ahmose's successors campaigned vigorously, for the most part, to 'extend Egypt's boundaries with might', the greatest expansion occurring during the reign of Thutmose III. To what extent Egypt had developed 'an empire' in this period is open to question.

Development and role of the army

The permanent military campaigning of the early New Kingdom brought about important changes in the structure and operation of the Egyptian army. In Old Kingdom times, a fighting force was conscripted as the need arose. In the Middle Kingdom, campaigning in Nubia saw the beginnings of a professional fighting force and a distinct military hierarchy. Now in the New Kingdom, with warfare as a constant activity, Egypt required a professional, well-trained army.

SOURCE 31 Models of soldiers from an Egyptian tomb

Composition and tactics of the army

The core of the Egyptian army was the infantry, which included archers and foot soldiers. In battle, the archers formed the front line, firing their volleys of arrows into the advancing enemy to break their line of attack. The massed ranks of infantry followed, using close-range weapons, including the *khepesh* and the axe, to complete the slaughter.

The infantry was supported by the new chariot divisions, which revolutionised warfare by adding both mobility and the element of surprise. During an attack, the chariotry would charge at full speed at the massed enemy ranks, showering them with their arrows as they passed. Once the enemy lines were broken, the light, easily manoeuvrable chariots pursued and harassed the scattered foot soldiers. In time, the chariotry became an elite corps of the Egyptian army known as the *maryannu* (young heroes). From this time onwards, the holders of the office of the viceroy of Nubia, the chief administrator of Nubia, were recruited from the members of the chariotry (see 2.2 Nature and role of the army).

Foreign contingents also served in the Egyptian army. They included the Medjay Nubians, who were used as scouts and especially as skilled archers. Other foreigners, usually serving as mercenaries, were incorporated into the Egyptian army as the wars of expansion widened.

Organisation of the army

The early New Kingdom army was composed of two divisions named after the chief gods Amun of Thebes and Re of Heliopolis. The numbers of soldiers within each unit were:

- division – approximately 5000
- host – approximately 500
- company – 250
- platoon – 50
- squad – 10.

Command structure

The pharaoh was the supreme commander of the army. Below him was the commander-in-chief, usually a son of the king, and below him, chief deputies of the northern and southern corps, representing Lower and Upper Egypt. The highest ranks included generals, scribes of infantry, host commanders, standard bearers and adjutants (deputies). These positions were restricted to men who usually began their career as young scribes, carrying out clerical duties such as account keeping and stores records. The next step on the career path was as chief army clerk, performing general secretarial work such as report writing. From here, one could be promoted to 'scribe of recruits', supervising the conscription and allocation of new recruits.

Military **strategy** was usually devised in a council of the pharaoh and his generals. The *Annals* of Thutmose III (the log book of his campaigns) provide evidence of how the pharaoh consulted with his war council (see Source 40). The lower ranks were organised into combat and non-combat roles. Combat officers included leaders of platoons, garrisons and squads. Below them were ordinary infantrymen. Non-combat personnel included scribes responsible for equipment, weaponry, rations and the day-to-day record keeping of the army's activities. Some were also deployed in other non-combat areas such as mining, quarrying and building.

strategy
the long-term planning or overall objectives of a campaign or series of campaigns

Role of the navy

In the early New Kingdom, the navy was used to transport soldiers and equipment. During the Hyksos wars, the navy transported the king and his soldiers from Thebes to battle sites such as Avaris in the north and Nubia in the south. Thutmose III later used the navy to transport men and equipment to the coastal ports of Syria in preparation for the campaign against the Mitanni. A notable feature of this campaign was the transportation of prefabricated boats from the Syrian coast, overland to the Euphrates River, to enable the army to cross over and attack the Mitanni.

9.10 Check your learning

1. What role did the infantry, chariotry and navy play in New Kingdom warfare?
2. What contribution did Hyksos military technology make to the effectiveness of the Egyptian army?
3. What career opportunities were offered by non-combat roles? Who were eligible for these roles?

9.11 The army: A good career path

It is clear from the accounts of career soldiers such as Ahmose, son of Ebana and Usersatet that an army career offered outstanding opportunities for reward and promotion. Officers – and even rank-and-file soldiers who demonstrated exceptional bravery – could be rewarded with land, gold and slaves. The lure of adventure and foreign travel would have drawn many an Egyptian boy to the army. Add to that the honour of fighting with the pharaoh for the glory of Egypt and the social prestige of being on the winning side. A potent mix! The army's role in empire building contributed to its growing status as a new social elite.

SOURCE 32 Gold flies of valour, a military decoration of the early New Kingdom

Distinguished service

The career of Ahmose, son of Ebana

Ahmose, son of Ebana was one of the most decorated soldiers of the early New Kingdom. He came from Elkab, an important centre of support for the new dynasty. His father had served under Seqenenre of the late Seventeenth Dynasty. Ahmose was a marine and a soldier. He had a long career fighting in the campaigns of three successive pharaohs: Ahmose, Amenhotep I and Thutmose I. In Source 33, he proudly records each of his major promotions under the pharaohs he served.

SOURCE 33

FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AHMOSE, SON OF EBANA

Service under King Ahmose in the Hyksos campaigns

I have been rewarded with gold seven times in the sight of the whole land with male and female slaves as well. I have been endowed with very many fields … I became a soldier … on the ship 'The Wild Bull' in the time of the Lord of the Two Lands, Nebpehtire [Ahmose]. I followed the sovereign on foot when he rode about on his chariot. When the town of Avaris was besieged, I fought bravely on foot in his Majesty's presence. Thereupon, I was appointed to the ship 'Rising in Memphis'…

Promotion under Amenhotep I

… I conveyed King Djeserkare [Amenhotep I] … when he sailed south to Kush, to enlarge the borders of Egypt … Now I was in the van [that is, front] of our troops and I fought really well. His majesty saw my valour, I carried off two hands and presented them to his majesty … and I carried off a living captive and presented him to his majesty. I brought his majesty back to Egypt in two days from 'Upper Well [that is, at the First Cataract] and was rewarded with gold … Then they made me 'Warrior of the Ruler' …

Promotion under Thutmose I

Then I conveyed King Aakheperkare [Thutmose I] … when he sailed south to Khent-hen-nefer [Egyptian term for Nubia], to crush rebellion throughout the lands … I was brave in his presence

in the bad water, in the towing of the ship over the cataract. Thereupon I was made crew commander …

M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Vol. II: The New Kingdom*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1976, pp. 12–14

The career of Usersatet

Usersatet was a boyhood friend – a 'child of the nursery' – of pharaoh Amenhotep II. He began his career as a royal herald and later served in the military as a member of the king's chariot corps. He was eventually promoted to the prestigious position of viceroy of Nubia. Source 34 is unusual in being a personal letter to Usertatet from Amenhotep II. In the letter, Amenhotep, celebrating the twenty-third anniversary of his accession, reminisces about his youthful days of military campaigning in Syria–Palestine with Usersatet. He concludes with some advice for Usersatet about how to handle the Nubians. Usersatet was so proud of this evidence of his friendship with the pharaoh that he had the letter inscribed on a stone stela and set up in the fort at Semna in Nubia.

SOURCE 34

THE SEMNA STELA OF USERSATET

Year 23, fourth month of Akhet [season of inundation], day 1, the day of the festival of the king's accession. Copy of an order which his Majesty made with his own two hands for [the king's son, Usersatet] … of Pharaoh – Life! Prosperity! Health! – while sitting and drinking, and making holiday … might, brave with strong arm, who binds [the northerners, and who overthrows the southerners (?)] in all of their places. There are no enemies left in any land. You sit … a brave one, who takes plunder from all lands, a chariot soldier who fights for his Majesty, Amenophis, who-rules-in Heliopolis … Naharin …; the [possessor of a wo]man from Babylon, and a servant from Byblos, of a young maiden from Alalakh and an old lady from Arrapkha [Amenhotep boastfully refers to the women he has taken as 'spoils of war']. The people of Tahksy [town on Orontes River in Syria; it revolted and was attacked by Amenhotep II in Syrian campaign of Year 3] are completely worthless. Of what are they trustworthy? Further speech to the king's son: Do not trust the Nubians, but be wary of their people and of their magicians. Watch the servant of private citizens whom you have brought in order to promote him.

URK IV, 1343–44, cited in P. der Manuelian, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II*, Gerstenberg Verlag, Hildesheim, 1987, pp. 157–8

9.11 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 33 & 34

1 Explain what is revealed about the following aspects of these soldiers' careers: methods of fighting; role of foot soldiers, marines and chariotry; treatment of the enemy; rewards; relationship with the pharaoh.

9.11 Check your learning

1 An interesting discussion of the Semna Stela of Usersatet by J. Darnell of Cornell University can be found by searching online for 'The Stela of the Viceroy Usersatet (Boston MFA 25.632)'.
2 Writing task: What evidence do we have for the role of the military in the early New Kingdom?

9.12 Establishment of 'empire': Nubia

Egypt's earliest contacts with Nubia date to Old Kingdom times. They were mostly trading and mining expeditions to exploit the valuable resources of the region. These included gold and copper mines and quarries of diorite, granite and amethyst in Lower Nubia. Of particular importance for Egypt was the fact that Nubia acted as a trading corridor to central Africa, through which exotic products of the interior such as **frankincense**, **myrrh**, ebony, ivory and precious oils reached Egypt. During Middle Kingdom times, the Egyptians began to establish a more permanent presence there by building fortresses, such as those at Buhen and Semna between the Second and Third Cataracts. Their purpose was to secure Egypt's access to the resources of the region and protect trading missions from attack by Nubian tribes.

frankincense
an aromatic gum resin from certain trees, used chiefly for burning incense in religious rituals

myrrh
an aromatic resinous sap from certain plants, used for incense and perfume

Egyptian policy in Nubia in the New Kingdom

During the New Kingdom, the province of Nubia extended southwards from Aswan to the district of Napata (modern Sudan). As we have already seen, the warlike Kushites (the most powerful of the tribes of Kush) posed a major threat to Egypt at the beginning of this historical period.

Once the Eighteenth Dynasty was established, Egyptian policy towards Nubia was dictated by both political and economic necessity. Politically it was designed to protect Egypt's southern border from further threat, and economically it was designed to guarantee safe access to the resources of the region.

Campaigns of Ahmose, Amenhotep I and Thutmose I

The military conquest of Nubia took some years to accomplish. Lower Nubia (the district of Wawat) was more quickly subdued than Upper Nubia, the heartland of the Kush. It held out for some time offering fierce resistance to a number of warrior pharaohs. The first campaigns into Nubia in this period were conducted by Kamose and Ahmose, who were bent on driving back the Kerma Nubians who had captured the Egyptian fort at Buhen. The campaigns of Kamose and Ahmose resulted in the recapture of Buhen, which was to serve as a base for future expansion.

Amenhotep I and Thutmose I continued to campaign in the south, both leaving records of their victories at sites including Sai and Tombos. Thutmose I built a fort at Tombos (Third Cataract) to mark the new southern boundary of Egypt's control. The Nubian campaigns conducted by Ahmose, Amenhotep I and Thutmose I were also recorded by the two soldiers who fought in these campaigns – Ahmose, son of Ebana and Ahmose Pennekhbet.

Other methods of control

In addition to regular military campaigns to deal with rebellion and unrest among the Nubian tribes, the pharaohs of this early period employed a number of other methods to consolidate their control. These included the strengthening of existing forts, the establishment of Egyptian colonies clustered around temple-towns and – beginning in the reign of Amenhotep I – the setting up of a system of imperial administration headed by the viceroy of Nubia, often referred to as the 'king's son of Kush'.

Final conquest under Thutmose II and his successors

Kush continued to rebel and was finally pacified sometime between the reigns of Thutmose II and Thutmose III. The Aswan Inscription of Thutmose II records a major campaign to quash an uprising, somewhere between the Third and Fourth Cataracts. In this campaign, ruthless punishment was meted out to the rebels, and all, except one son of the ruler of Kush, were put to death. Disturbances broke out again during the reign of Hatshepsut, who has left a record of at least two campaigns in Upper Nubia during her reign. One of these may have been led by Thutmose III late in their joint reign.

We know that Thutmose III left extensive records of his Nubian activities, although there is limited evidence of specific military campaigns during his sole reign. It is likely that the major work of pacification had been accomplished by his predecessors and that Thutmose III's contribution was a consolidation of Egypt's control. However, he is credited with having achieved the greatest extension of Egypt's southern boundary, at Napata (the Fourth Cataract), as evidenced by his building of a temple to Amun at nearby Gebel Barkal.

SOURCE 35 Remains of the ancient fortress at Buhen in Nubia at the Second Cataract of the Nile. These ruins were submerged beneath the waters of Lake Nasser when the Aswan High Dam was built in the 1960s.

After this time there is less military activity. There is one reference to a possible campaign during the reign of Amenhotep II and one campaign is recorded for year 8 of the reign of Thutmose IV. However, despite the claims in Thutmose IV's Konosso Inscription of a widespread Nubian revolt, this was most likely a punitive raid against Nubians attacking Egyptian gold caravans near Edfu.

Source 36 provides an overview of the Nubian campaigns of the pharaohs of this period and the main evidence for them.

9.12 Check your learning

1. Why was Nubia important to Egypt?
2. What relations had Egypt had with Nubia before the New Kingdom?
3. What different methods did Egypt use to establish control of Nubia in the New Kingdom period?

9.13 Military campaigns in Nubia

The following sequence chart and map provide an outline of Egyptian military activity in Nubia in the early New Kingdom.

SOURCE 36

A SEQUENCE CHART OF THE NUBIAN CAMPAIGNS OF THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY

1 AHMOSE

Now when his Majesty had slain the nomads of Asia, he sailed south to Khent-hen-nefer [below the Second Cataract] to destroy the Nubian Bowmen. His majesty made a great slaughter among them ... His majesty journeyed north, his heart rejoicing in valor and victory. He had conquered southerners, northerners ...

Biography of Ahmose son of Ebana

2 AMENHOTEP I

(i) Then I conveyed King Djeserkare [Amenhotep I], when he sailed south to Kush, to enlarge the borders of Egypt. His majesty smote that Nubian Bowman in the midst of his army. They were carried off in fetters, none missing, the fleeing destroyed as if they had never been ... Then his people and his cattle were pursued, and I carried off a living captive and presented him to his majesty ...

Biography of Ahmose son of Ebana

(ii) I followed King Djeserkare [Amenhotep I], triumphant, I captured for him in Kush, a living prisoner ...

Biography of Ahmose Pennekhbet

3 THUTMOSE I

(i) Then I conveyed King Aakheperkare [Thutmose I] ... when he sailed south to Khent-hen-nefer to crush rebellion throughout the lands, to repel the intruders from the desert region ... Then his majesty [was informed that the Nubian] ... At this, his majesty became enraged like a leopard. His majesty shot, and his first arrow pierced the chest of that foe. Then those [enemies turned to flee], helpless before his Uraeus. A slaughter was made among them; their dependents were carried off as living captives. His majesty journeyed north, all foreign lands in his grasp, and that wretched Nubian Bowman head downward at the bow of his majesty's ship 'Falcon' ...

Biography of Ahmose son of Ebana

(ii) I followed the King Aakheperkare [Thutmose I], triumphant; I captured for him in Kush, two living prisoners, besides three living prisoners, whom I brought off in Kush, without counting them.

Biography of Ahmose Pennekhbet

(iii) He hath overthrown the chief of the [Nubians] ... there is not a single survivor amongst them ... the Nubian Troglodytes [that is, ugly, sub-human creatures] fall by the sword ... the fragments cut from them are too much for the birds, carrying off the prey to another place ... The lords of the palace have made a fortress for his army, [called] 'None-Faces-Him-Among-the Nine-Bows-Together' [a reference to the Tombos fortress]; like a young panther among the fleeing cattle; the fame of his majesty blinded them.

Tombos Stela of Thutmose I

4 THUTMOSE II

One came to inform his majesty as follows: 'the wretched Kush has begun to rebel ... The inhabitants of Egypt [that is, Egyptian colonists in Nubia] are about to bring away the cattle behind this fortress that thy father built [that is, the one built by Thutmose I at Tombos] ... His majesty was furious like a panther, when he heard this. Said his majesty 'I swear, as Re loves me, as my father, lord of gods, Amun, lord of Thebes, favours me, I will not let live anyone among their males' ... Then his majesty despatched a numerous army into Nubia ... this army of his majesty overthrew those barbarians; they did not let anyone live among their males ... except one of those children of the wretched Kush, who was taken away alive as a living prisoner with their people to his majesty ... This land was made subject of his majesty as formerly ...

Aswan Inscription of Thutmose II

5 HATSHEPSUT

(i) I followed the good god, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt [Makare] [that is, Hatshepsut] may she live! I saw when he [sic] overthrew the Nubian bowmen, and when their chiefs were brought to him as living captives.
I saw when he razed Nubia, I being in his majesty's following ...

Inscription of Tiy, from Hatshepsut's temple at Sehel on the island of Elephantine (First Cataract) – [note that scribes used both 'he' and 'she' to refer to Hatshepsut, indicating the difficulty they had writing about a female pharaoh in a language designed for male pharaohs]

(ii) I saw the collection of booty by this mighty ruler from the vile Kush, who are deemed cowards, the female sovereign, given life, prosperity and health forever.

Stela of Djehuty

6 THUTMOSE III

(i) List of these south countries, [115 names of Nubian towns/districts are given] the Nubian Troglodytes of Khenthenofer, whom his majesty overthrew, making a great slaughter among them, [whose] number is unknown, and carrying away all their subjects as living captives to Thebes, in order to fill the storehouse of his father, Amun-Re, lord of Thebes.

Inscription from 6th Pylon of Thutmose III

(ii) ... among the negroes, given from chiefs and living captives, [...] for divine offerings of Amun, when Kush, the wretched, was overthrown; together with the tribute of all countries, which his majesty gave to the temple of Amun as yearly dues, for the sake of the life, prosperity, and health of King Thutmose III.

Tomb Biography of Ineni

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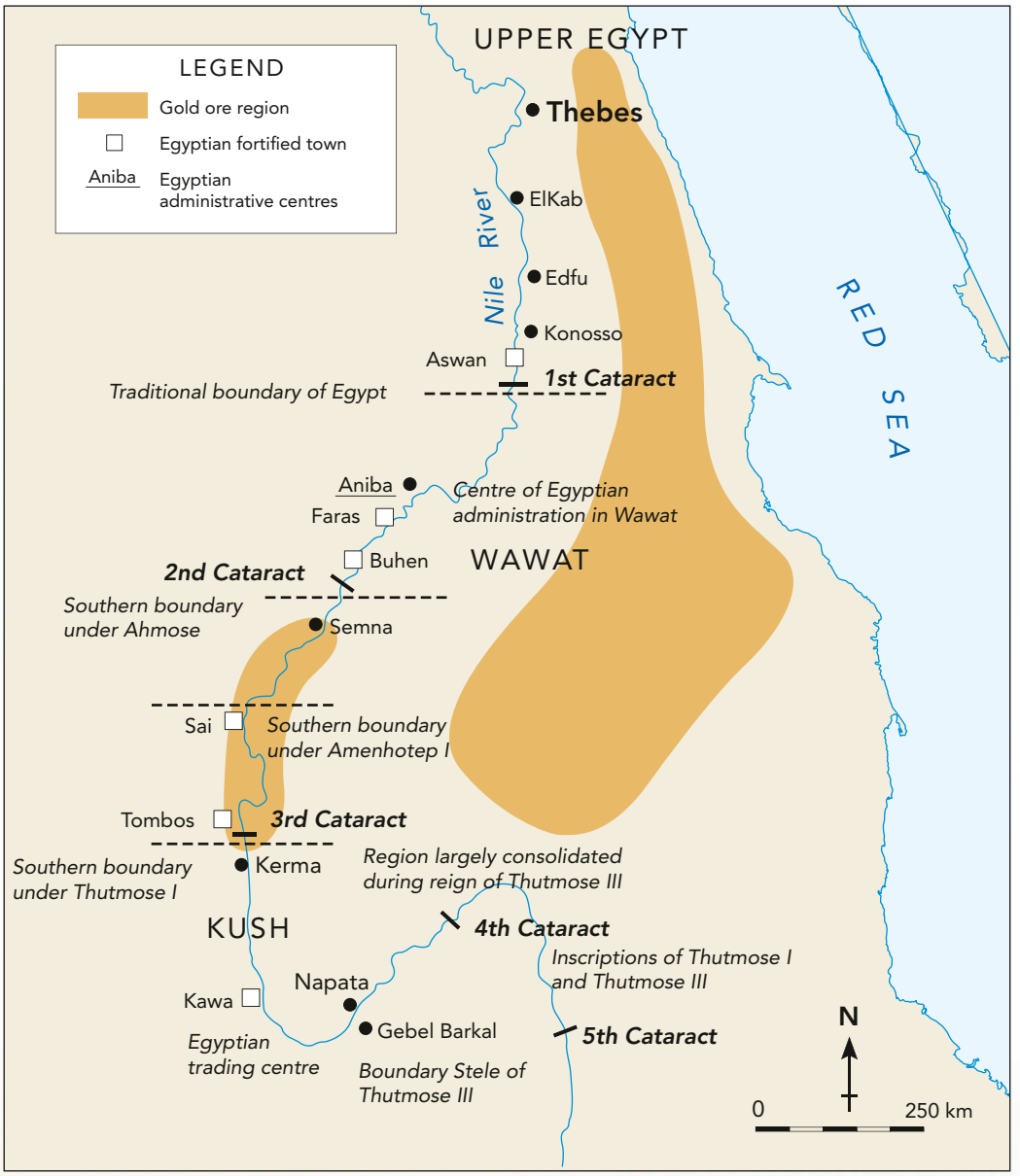
NUBIAN CAMPAIGNS



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 37 Nubian campaigns of the early Eighteenth Dynasty

7 **AMENHOTEP II**

... glorious arising of his Majesty ... upon the great Throne-platform, in order to proclaim wonders for his army, [victorious?] and steady in the fray [battle]. The expedition ... that stood in the presence of his Majesty and brought the tribute of the southern foreign lands in front of this perfect god, while the courtiers gave praise and the army revered his Majesty.

Inscription of Usersatet

8 **THUTMOSE IV**

Behold, his majesty was in ... Karnak ... One came to say to his majesty: 'The Negro descends from above Wawat; he hath planned revolt against Egypt. He gathers to himself all the barbarians and the revolters of other countries ... his majesty proceeded to overthrow the [Negro] in Nubia ... His army came to him, numerous – with his mighty sword. The fear of him entered into every body ... He coursed through the eastern highland, he traversed the ways like a jackal ...

The Konosso Inscription of Thutmose IV – this inscription was cut into the rock-face near the island of Philae (Aswan at the First Cataract)

9.13 Understanding and using the sources

1 What do these sources indicate about:
   a the reasons for the campaigns against the Nubians?
   b Egyptian attitudes to them?
   c the treatment of the defeated Nubians?
   d the nature of the plunder?

2 What evidence is provided about the importance of Amun in these campaigns?

9.13 Check your learning

1 Use the information provided in the sequence chart to summarise Egypt's military campaigns in Nubia in a table as per the example below. The first one has been modelled for you.

PHARAOH	BATTLE LOCATION/S	DETAIL	SOURCE/EVIDENCE	SIGNIFICANCE
Ahmose	Buhen	• Defeat of Nubian bowmen • Recapture of fort at Second Cataract	Biography of Ahmose, son of Ebana	• Southern frontier protected • Buhen secured as base for future expansion

2 Discuss the following:
   a Why was the conquest of Nubia essential to the development of the early Eighteenth Dynasty?
   b What are the strengths and limitations of the sources in this section?

3 Writing task: Assess the importance of military campaigns against Nubia in the development of the early New Kingdom.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the important features of the military campaigns against Nubia
   - use these features to structure your answer
   - make judgements about the relevant importance of these features
   - use specific evidence to support your assessment
   - integrate discussion of relevant historiographical issues.

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9.14 Establishment of 'empire': Syria–Palestine

As with Nubia, Egypt's relations with its Asian neighbours in Syria–Palestine (which the Egyptians called Retjenu) before the New Kingdom were dominated by trading interests. The 160-kilometre stretch of the Sinai desert formed a natural border with Palestine. From Middle Kingdom times onwards, Egypt constructed a network of fortresses along this border, both to protect its north eastern border and to facilitate its access to the valuable resources of Asia.

Some of the materials that Egypt obtained from mining and trade expeditions included turquoise, gold and copper from Sinai, silver from Anatolia and cedar from Byblos in Lebanon (Egypt lacked timber of any quality for building purposes).

Egyptian policy in Syria–Palestine

From the time of Ahmose's expulsion of the Hyksos, border protection became an important priority. New forts were constructed on the eastern border to create a buffer zone – an area of neutral territory – between Egypt and its neighbours. The survival and consolidation of the new dynasty in Thebes also relied on maintaining the wealth that came from trade with the north (much of which had previously been in Hyksos hands). The careful cataloguing of the rich booty in the aftermath of the Hyksos defeat is important evidence that economic interests, as much as political ones, dictated Egypt's policy in Syria–Palestine.

The political situation in Syria–Palestine was much more complex than that in Nubia at this time.

Beyond Sinai lay the settled and developed city-states of Palestine, including important towns such as Megiddo and prosperous trading ports such as Byblos (see Source 42).

Significance of Kadesh

Control of Kadesh was the key to the control of Syria. It was a well-fortified town at the headwaters of the Orontes River. It was also strategically and economically the most important gateway linking the trading ports of the Phoenician coast with Syria and the kingdoms beyond. In our period, these kingdoms included Naharin (the home of the Mitanni and the dominant power in the region during the early New Kingdom), Babylonia and Assyria. Later in the period, it included the emerging Hittite power.

Syria–Palestine during the New Kingdom consisted of what the scholar Donald Redford aptly calls 'a welter of jockeying states'. There was competition and conflict, both between the powerful kingdoms of the north and the smaller towns of Syria–Palestine. They all fought for territory, resources and access to trade. The Mitanni wished to expand into Syria at the same time that the Egyptians, under the Thutmosid pharaohs, began to establish their own sphere of influence in the region. The smaller, vulnerable towns were tied to the more powerful states by a complex network of alliances and treaties. In effect, they became vassals of these greater powers. They received protection from enemy attack in return for supporting their overlords.

Three main stages of Egyptian policy

Egyptian policy in Syria-Palestine can be summarised by the following three broad stages of development:

STAGE 1	Ahmose to Hatshepsut	Military raids to protect borders and trade
STAGE 2	Thutmose III	Sustained military campaigning, creation of an Egyptian 'empire'
STAGE 3	Amenhotep II to Thutmose IV	Consolidation and maintenance based largely on diplomacy, treaty and foreign marriage

Stage 1: From Ahmose to Hatshepsut – border protection

It has been suggested that the very long periods of time Ahmose spent in laying siege to Avaris and Sharuhen may help to explain why, from Amenhotep I to Hatshepsut, there are few if any references to assaults on cities in Syria–Palestine. However, Thutmose I's activity in Syria–Palestine is regarded as having laid the foundations for a major change in Egypt's relations with that region. Records indicate that he was the first pharaoh to fight a battle against the Mitanni at the Euphrates River. He left behind a stela to mark the event. This campaign appears to have been more in the nature of a raid, rather than any planned strategy of conquest.

No northern campaigns are recorded in the reign of his successor Thutmose II, who had a short reign. Nor is there clear evidence for Asiatic campaigns during the reign of Hatshepsut. However, she makes conventional claims such as 'her arrow is among the northerners' and 'my eastern frontier is on the marshes of Asia, and the Montiu ['people across the sand'; that is, Sinai] of Asia are in my grip'. It is possible that her co-regent, Thutmose III, conducted a campaign late in the joint reign to capture the town of Gaza, on the border of Egypt and Palestine.

Stage 2: Thutmose III – creation of the empire

Thutmose III pursued the most active and certainly the most successful policy of expanding Egypt's borders during the New Kingdom. In the first 20 years of his independent reign, he conducted 17 campaigns into Syria–Palestine. The records of these campaigns were preserved in a range of sources. Royal sources include the official military log or day book, called the *Annals*, and a number of victory and dedication stelae. They also include pylon inscriptions erected at sites such as Karnak and as far away as Napata in Nubia. Private sources, useful for corroborating the official ones, include the important tomb biography of Amenemheb, a general who served under Thutmose III on his many campaigns.

What is particularly worth noting about Thutmose III's campaigns is not just his personal bravery in battle, but also his command of military strategy, **tactics** and **logistics.** While Thutmose III made much of his great success at Megiddo, it was only the first step in a long military career whose broad aim was to secure Egyptian dominance in Palestine and beyond. While his military ambition had been inspired by the campaigns of his grandfather Thutmose I, his strategy of further conquest in Syria was no doubt formulated in response to developments in the north.

The most significant of these developments was the growing power of the Mitanni. Syria and Palestine became the battleground for supremacy. On the eve of the Battle of Megiddo, the large coalition of forces marshalled against Egypt was led by the prince of Kadesh with Mitanni support (see Source 40).

tactics
the specific methods used to achieve short-term objectives, for example in a particular battle

logistics
the equipping and supplying of an army while it is on campaign

SOURCE 38 An aerial view of the remains of the middle/late Bronze Age fortified city of Megiddo

Specific details of some of Thutmose's campaigns are lacking; many so-called 'campaigns' were probably no more than tours of inspection to inspire fear and collect the annual tribute. A study of these campaigns reveals development of a strategy based on four major phases.

SOURCE 39 Main phases of the campaigns of Thutmose III

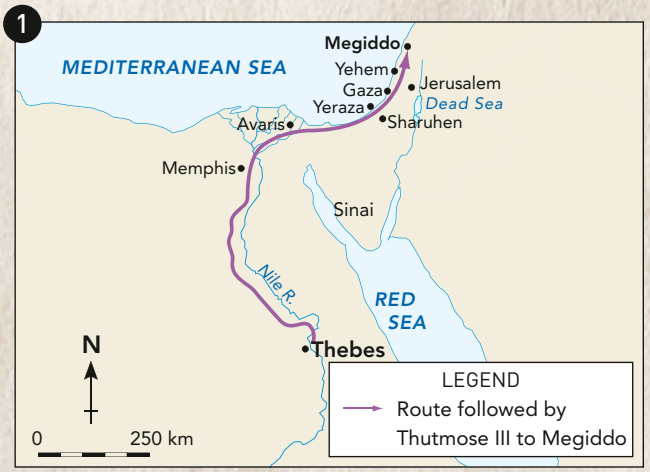
PHASE	OBJECTIVE	CAMPAIGN NUMBER	YEAR/S OF REIGN
1	Secure and control Palestine as a buffer zone between Egypt and the north	1	22
2	Gain control of the Phoenician coast and its ports north to Arvad, to secure supply lines	2–5	23–29
3	Gain control of Syria by striking inland to capture Kadesh	6	30
4	• Extend Egypt's influence to the Euphrates by defeating the Mitanni • Maintain control of previous areas conquered by: – regular tours of inspection – military reprisals against rebels – development of an administrative policy	8–17	31–42

SOURCE 40

THE MEGIDDO CAMPAIGN OF THUTMOSE III

Sources for battle descriptions are shown in italics. They are from the *Annals* of Thutmose III and the Gebel Barkal Stela of Thutmose III.

1



Route followed by the army of Thutmose III

The Egyptian army, led by Thutmose III, marches north from Thebes, passing through Sharuhen and Gaza in southern Palestine en route to Megiddo '*to smite those who attacked the borders of Egypt for there was rebellion against his majesty*'. They arrive in the town of Yehem and Thutmose addresses his officers, telling them that he has learn of a major coalition of enemy forces preparing to attack Egypt '*... that wretched foe of Kadesh has come and entered into Megiddo ... He has gathered together a force of all the princes of all the foreign lands ... as well as those from as far as Naharin*'.

2

The Council of War

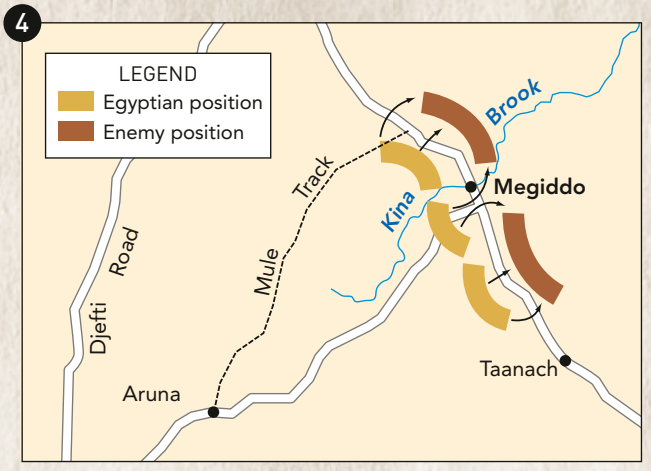
'*His majesty ordered a consultation with his valiant army, saying "Now, tell me [what you think]?" They said. "How will it be to go on this road which becomes narrow, when it is reported that the enemies are waiting there [beyond and they] are numerous? Will not horse go behind horse and soliders and people too? That means our advance guard will be fighting while the rearguard waits here in Aruna unable to fight. There are two other roads here that we can take. One is to our east and comes out at Taanach. The other is on the north side of Djefti, so that we come out to the north of Megiddo. May our valiant lord proceed on whichever of these roads [that is, Taamach or Djefti] seems best to him, but do not make us go on that difficult, [Aruna] road."*'

3

Thutmose III chooses the Aruna Road

But Thutmose rejected their advice saying: '*I swear, as Re loves me, as my father Amun favours me ... I shall proceed on this Aruna Road. Let any of you who wish, go on the other roads. Let those of you wish, follow me. Or the enemy will say "Has his majesty gone on another road because he is afraid of us?" Then his officers said to his majesty: "We are followers of your majesty wherever your majesty goes! A servant always follows his lord."*'

4



The military genius of Thutmose III

'*Thutmose III was at the head of the army as it marched along the Aruna Road.*' His choice of the Aruna Road was shown to have been a clever tactical decision, because his army was able to '*come out of the pass, without meeting a single enemy*'. The enemy had clearly expected the Egyptians to arrive at Megiddo by either the southern road or the northern road and had been forced to divide and deploy their forces accordingly. '*Their southern wing was at Taanach, and their northern wing on the north side of the Qina Valley.*' So the enemy, taken by surprise, would have to redeploy their forces as quickly as possible to prepare for the Egyptian attack. The Egyptians meanwhile posted sentries and pitched camp to prepare for battle on the following day.

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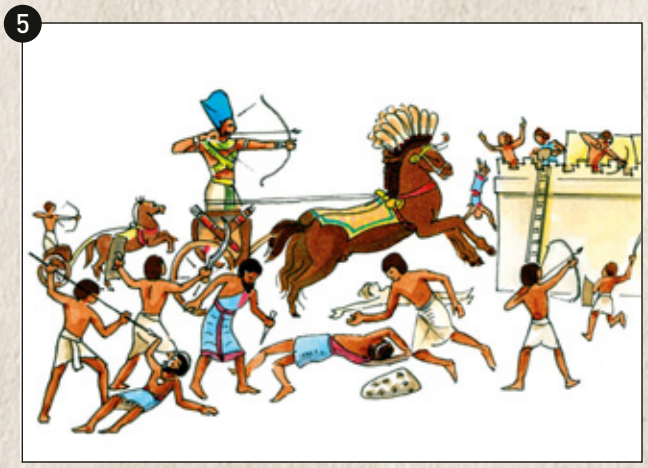
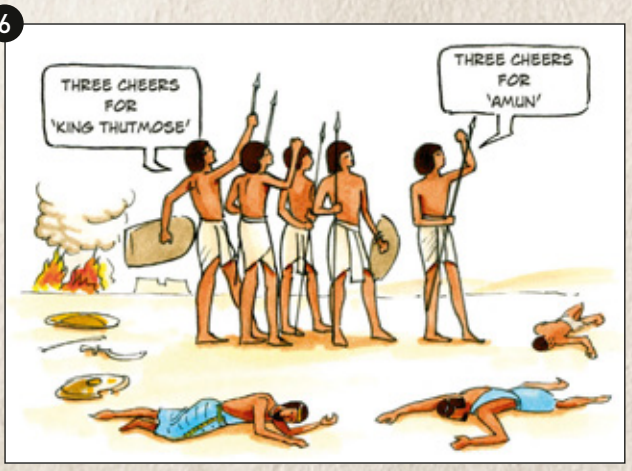
5



The Battle of Megiddo

Thutmose III led his army into battle early the next morning. '*His majesty set out in a chariot of fine gold, decked in his fine armour, like strong-armed Horus, lord of action; like Montu of Thebes, his father, Amun, strengthening his arms. The southern wing of the [Egyptian] army was on a hill south of the brook of Kina, the northern wing was at the north-west of Megiddo, while his majesty was in the centre*.' It would seem from the account of the battle that the enemy offered only token resistance, so they were either heavily outnumbered or had not been able to regroup in time to meet the Egyptian advance. '*Then his majesty overwhelmed them at the head of his army, and when they saw this, they fled headlong to Megiddo in fear, abandoning their horses and their chariots of gold and silver. The people inside the city hauled them up, pulling them by their clothing inside the city*.'

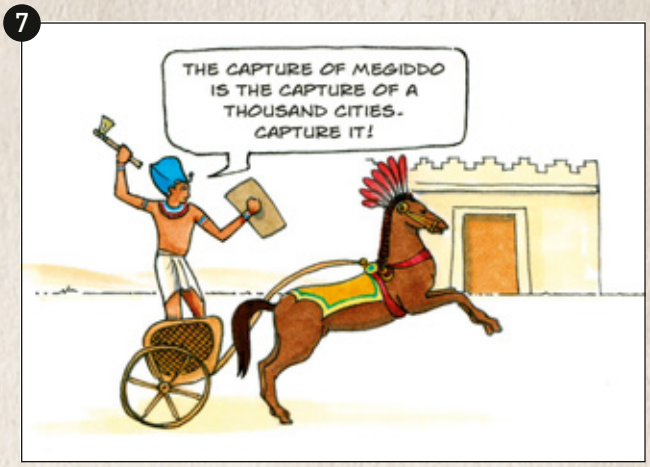
6



Booty and plunder

At this point, the army of Thutmose showed an unfortunate lack of discipline. Instead of following up their advantage by attacking the fleeing enemy and capturing the city, they stopped to collect the abandoned belongings of the enemy from the battlefield. '*They captured their horses, their chariots of gold and silver; they lay stretched out like fish on the ground. The victorious army of his majesty counted their possessions. The whole army celebrated, praising Amun for the victory he had granted to his son. They presented the booty they had taken, [including] hands, of living prisoners, of horses, chariots of gold and silver*.'

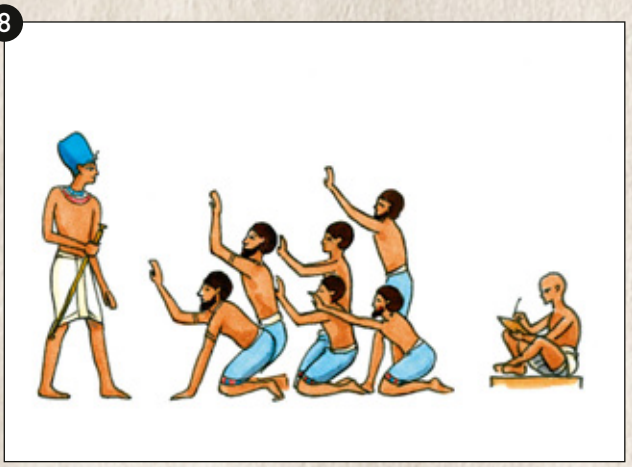
7



The Siege of Megiddo

Then Thutmose III said to his army: '*Every chief of every country that has revolted is inside this city: the capture of Megiddo is the capture of a thousand cities. Capture it!' So they measured the city and surrounded it with an enclosure wall of timber. Its name was 'Menkheperre [Thutmose III] – is-the-Surrounder-of-the-Asiatics'. Sentries were posted and Thutmose gave the command 'Do not let anyone come out, unless they are coming out to surrender'*.

8



The Surrender of Megiddo

According to an inscription set up much later at the temple Thutmose III built at Gebel Barkal in Nubia, the siege of Megiddo is supposed to have lasted for seven months. '*My Majesty besieged them for a period of seven months before they emerged outside, begging My Majesty as follows: "Give us thy breath! our Lord. The people of Retenu will never again rebel!" Then that doomed one together with the chiefs who were with him made all their children come forth to My Majesty, bearing many gifts of gold, silver, all their horses they had, their chariots of gold and silver, their coats of mail, their bows, their arrows and all their weapons of war*.' There follows a detailed inventory of the plunder collected from the defeated enemy and some of pharaoh's arrangements for the future administration of the conquered towns.

Stage 3: Amenhotep II and Thutmose IV – maintenance of the empire

After the accomplishments of Thutmose III, the most significant development of the reigns of his successors was the change in Egyptian foreign policy from warfare to diplomacy, such as the use of treaty and foreign marriage. The first years of the reign of Amenhotep II were concerned with consolidating the achievements of his father Thutmose III. This was achieved through military campaigns to suppress rebellion in the north and the wholesale deportation of rebellious populations, for example the town of Gezer in Palestine. The seven ringleaders of the Takhsy rebellion were put to death and their bodies hung from the temple walls at Thebes and Napata.

However, as the reign progressed, a newer and greater threat arose in the north – serious enough to challenge the power of both Egypt and of Mitanni. This threat came from the Hittites, a people from Anatolia (modern Turkey) in the far north-west, who had embarked upon a period of aggressive military expansion. The Mitanni found themselves caught between two foes – the Hittites in the west and the Egyptians in the south. Negotiations for an alliance between Egypt and Mitanni were begun late in the reign of Amenhotep II and the evidence suggests that a treaty between Egypt and Mitanni was signed in his reign.

The alliance with Mitanni was renewed and cemented during the reign of Thutmose IV with the marriage of the king to the daughter of king Artatama I of Mitanni. This treaty brought to an end the years of military campaigning in Syria–Palestine and was followed by 65 years of peace between the two powers.

9.14 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:

- **a** How did the political make-up of Syria–Palestine differ from the situation in Nubia? How did this affect Egypt's policy in Syria–Palestine?
- **b** Which pharaohs were most active in Syria–Palestine and what did they aim to achieve?
- **c** Why did Thutmose III regard Megiddo as one of his most important achievements?
- **d** What do the major campaigns of the military career of Thutmose III reveal about his:
  - abilities as a military tactician?
  - leadership qualities?
  - contribution to the creation of an empire?
- **e** How has Egyptian policy in Syria–Palestine changed by the end of this historical period?

2 Writing tasks:

- **a** Using the sequence chart of the Megiddo campaign of Thutmose III, construct a paragraph summary of the battle.
- **b** Extended response: To what extent did Egypt establish an 'empire' in Syria-Palestine in this period?

9.15 Military campaigns in Syria–Palestine

Source 41 provides an overview of the major campaigns in Syria–Palestine of the pharaohs of the early New Kingdom period.

SOURCE 41

MILITARY CAMPAIGNS IN SYRIA–PALESTINE OF PHARAOHS OF THE EARLY NEW KINGDOM

1 **AHMOSE**

Then Avaris was despoiled, and I brought spoil from there: one man, three women; total four persons. His majesty gave them to me as slaves … Then Sharuhen was besieged for three years. His majesty despoiled it and I brought spoil from it: two women and a hand. Then the gold of valor was given me, and my captives were given to me as slaves.

Biography of Ahmose son of Ebana

2 **AMENHOTEP I**

No clear record of military campaigns in Syria–Palestine during the reign of Amenhotep I.

3 **THUTMOSE I**

After this [that is, the Nubian campaign] his majesty proceeded to Retjenu [Syria–Palestine] to vent his wrath [anger] throughout the lands. When his majesty reached Naharin … he found that foe marshalling troops. Then his majesty made a great slaughter of them. Countless were the living captives which his majesty brought back from his victories.

Biography of Ahmose son of Ebana

Again … I served for King Okheperkare [Thutmose I] triumphant; I captured for him in the country of Naharin, 21 hands, one horse, and one chariot.

Biography of Ahmose Pennekhbet

He brought the ends of the earth into his domain: he trod its two extremities with his mighty sword, seeking battle; but he found no-one who faced him. He penetrated valleys which the royal ancestors knew not, which the wearers of the doublecrown had not seen. His southern boundary is as far as the frontier of this land [that is, Nubia], his northern as far as that inverted water [that is, Euphrates River] which goes downstream instead of going upstream. [Note: Egyptians were used to the Nile flowing north, but the Euphrates flowed in a southerly direction.]

Tombos Stela of Thutmose I

4 **HATSHEPSUT**

No evidence of specific campaigns, but inscriptions include stock phrases such as the following:

Her arrow is among the Northerners.

Fragment from Deir el-Bahri inscription

My eastern frontier is on the marshes of Asia, and the Montiu [archaic form meaning 'those that are across the sand'] of Asia are in my grip.

Deir el-Bahri inscription

5 **THUTMOSE II**

Campaign against the Shasu Bedouin: I followed King Okhepernere [Thutmose II], triumphant; there were brought off for me in Shasu very many living prisoners; I did not count them.

Biography of Ahmose Pennekhbet

6 THUTMOSE III

Campaign 1: Year 22 – capture of Megiddo [that is, the first year of his independent reign]

Every chief of every country that has revolted is inside this city: the capture of Megiddo is the capture of a thousand cities.

The *Annals* of Thutmose III

Campaign 6: Year 30 – capture of Kadesh

Again I beheld his [Thutmose III] bravery, while I was among his followers. He captured the city of Kadesh … I brought off two men … as living prisoners; I set them before the king, the Lord of the Two Lands, Thutmose III, living forever.

Biography of Amenemhab

Campaign 8: Year 33 – conquest of Naharin

They had no champion in that land of Naharin, whose lord had abandoned it through fear. I houghed [destroyed] his cities and his towns and set them on fire … I plundered all their inhabitants, who were taken away as prisoners-of-war along with their numberless cattle and their goods likewise. I took away from their provisions and I uprooted their grain, and chopped down all their trees [even] all their fruit trees … Now when My Majesty crossed over to the marshes of Asia, I had many ships constructed of cedar upon the mountains of God's-land [Lebanon], in the vicinity of the Mistress of Byblos, and placed upon carts with oxen drawing them. They travelled in the van [front] of My Majesty to cross that great river [that is, Euphrates] that flows between this country and Naharin … Thereupon My Majesty set up my stela on that Mountain of Naharin, a block quarried from the mountain on the west side of the Great Bender [that is, Euphrates River].

The Gebel Barkal Stela

Campaign 10: Year 35 – revolt of Naharin

Now his Majesty was in Djahy on his tenth victorious campaign. Now his majesty arrived at the town of Araina [town unknown but believed to be north of Aleppo] and that vile doomed one [of Naharin] had collected horses with their people [and … their armies] of the ends of the earth. They were … intent on fighting with His Majesty. Then His Majesty closed with them, and then the army of his Majesty performed the charging manoeuvre with the [battle] cry. Then His Majesty overpowered these foreigners through the power of … Amun and made a great slaughter among those doomed ones of Naharin.

The *Annals* of Thutmose III

Campaign 17: Year 42 – reconquest of Kadesh

On this last campaign, the *Annals* record that Thutmose marched towards Kadesh via the coastal route destroying the towns of Irkata, Tunip and Takhsy on the way. He then attacked and destroyed the fortifications of Kadesh which had been rebuilt after the campaign of year 34.

Amenemhab, his general, recounts an interesting strategy used by the prince of Kadesh during the siege of the town: *Then the chief of Kadesh released a mare and it galloped upon its legs and entered into the midst of the army; and I ran after her on foot with my sword and ripped open her belly. I cut off her tail and presented it before His Majesty. Thanks were showered on me for it; he gave forth with rejoicing and it filled my soul! A thrill shot through my limbs!*

Biography of Amenemhab

7 AMENHOTEP II

Campaigns of years 2, 7 and 9

Three campaigns have been identified for this reign. However, their sequence and the events within them are not clear from surviving texts. These include stelae erected by the king at Karnak, Memphis and at Elephantine and Amada in Nubia. However, they include the conquest of rebellious towns in the region of Kadesh, including the town of Takhsy whose ringleaders were brutally punished as follows: *When his majesty returned with joy of heart to his father, Amun, he slew with his own weapon, the seven princes [captured] in Takhsy. They were placed head downward at the prow of his majesty's barge … Six of those captives were hung on the wall at Thebes. Another was taken up-river to Nubia and hung on the wall of Napata, in order to announce the victories of his majesty in all the lands … of the Negro.*

Amada Stela of Amenhotep II

Other military activity includes actions against a number of Syrian towns including Shemesh- Edom, Niy, Ugarit, Hasabu and other places whose exact location remains unknown. It seems that the northernmost extent of these campaigns was probably the town of Alalakh on the northern bend of the Orontes River. The last year of campaigning seems to have been confined to the area of Palestine.

8 THUTMOSE IV

Thutmose IV had at least one campaign into Syria–Palestine. A Karnak inscription contains a list of offerings to Amun, *'which his majesty captured in Naharin … on his first victorious campaign'*. This is supported by the tomb biography of a bodyguard named Amenhotep who accompanied the king: *'Attendant of the king on his expeditions in the south and north countries: going from Naharin to Karoy [near the Fourth Cataract] behind his majesty, while he was on the battlefield.'*

Biography of Amenhotep

MILITARY CAMPAIGNS OF THUTMOSE III

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 42 Early New Kingdom military campaigns in Syria–Palestine. The arrows on the map show the main phases of the campaigns of Thutmose III.

9.15 Understanding and using the sources

1 What evidence do these sources provide about the role of the pharaoh in these campaigns?
2 Which pharaohs were most active in campaigns in Syria–Palestine in this period?
3 What unusual strategy did the prince of Kadesh use against the Egyptian army in Thutmose's III's seventeenth campaign of year 42? What was the purpose of this strategy? How was it foiled?
4 What evidence do the sources provide about the treatment of rebellious towns in the reign of Amenhotep II?

9.15 Check your learning

1 Locate the following places on the map in Source 42: Sharuhen, Byblos, Megiddo, Kadesh, Orontes River, Euphrates River, Naharin. Explain why each was important in this period.
2 Summarise the information in this section on military campaigns in Syria–Palestine, by using a table as per the example below. The first one has been modelled for you.

PHARAOH	BATTLE LOCATION/S	DETAIL	SOURCE/ EVIDENCE	SIGNIFICANCE
Ahmose	Sharuhen	Three-year siege against remnants of Hyksos army	Biography of Ahmose, son of Ebana	• Comprehensive defeat of Hyksos • North-eastern frontier protected • Southern Palestine forms buffer zone between Egypt and Retjenu

3 Explain the major phases of development in Egyptian foreign policy in Syria–Palestine during this period.
4 Trace the changing nature of Egypt's relations with the Mitanni from the first battles against them under Thutmose I to the conclusion of a peace treaty and the diplomatic marriage under Thutmose IV. Explain the reasons for the change.
5 Writing tasks:
   a Explain the major developments in Egypt's relations with Syria–Palestine during the early New Kingdom.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the key phases of Egypt's relations with Syria–Palestine
   - explain the role of military campaigns and diplomacy
   - use specific evidence from relevant sources to support your explanation.

   b Account for Egypt's changing relations with Syria–Palestine during this period.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify examples of changing relations across the period
   - explain the reasons for these changes, using specific evidence to support your response
   - include discussion of any relevant issues of evidence.

9.16 The image of the 'warrior pharaoh'

The mighty 'warrior pharaoh' is one of the most enduring images of ancient Egypt and dates to the beginnings of Egyptian civilisation around 3000 BC. It was both a political and a religious statement and emphasised the king's role as the divine upholder of *ma'at*, the Egyptian concept of order. The king is shown triumphing over the forces of chaos, represented by foreign enemies and bound captives. In earlier times, the king, a distant and mysterious being, was held in godlike awe by his subjects. However, by New Kingdom times he was a more earthly, vulnerable figure who fought alongside his troops in battle. The militarism of the New Kingdom gave birth to a new heroic age.

To the traditional elements of the warrior pharaoh image was added the chariot, one of the most important innovations of this period. The essential features of the New Kingdom 'warrior pharaoh' image include the pharaoh:

- leading his soldiers into battle and returning in victory
- attacking the enemy while riding in his chariot
- wearing war regalia, for example the blue war crown or other pharaonic headdress
- depicted larger than life, holding one or more of the enemy with one hand, while he clubs their brains out with a mace
- depicted as a sphinx, trampling his enemies underfoot
- offering the spoils of war to the god Amun, the inspiration for his victory.

SOURCE 43
A scene from Karnak Temple depicting Thutmose III in traditional warrior pharaoh pose, smiting his enemies

Another aspect of the warrior pharaoh image that developed over time was the pharaoh as elite athlete and sportsman, a perfect physical specimen. Both Thutmose I and Thutmose III took time out while on campaign to indulge their taste for big game hunting, which included lions, elephants and, on rarer occasions, rhinoceros. Thutmose IV recorded his hunting expedition in the desert around Giza on his Dream Stela. Thutmose III and Amenhotep II both had themselves depicted in stelae and reliefs driving their chariots at breakneck speed while firing arrows through copper targets.

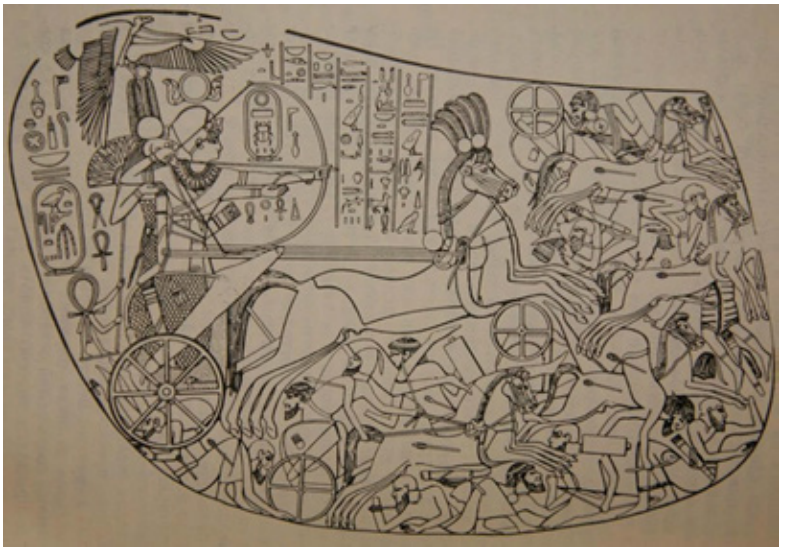
Amenhotep II, the most enthusiastic sportsmen of them all, added running and rowing to this list of royal athletic accomplishments. The Armant Stela of Thutmose III was set up as a permanent record of his military and sporting achievements.

SOURCE 44

ARMANT STELA OF THUTMOSE III

Compilation of the deeds of valor and might which this perfect god performed … Every successful act of physical prowess …

He shot at a copper target, all the wooden ones having shattered as though [they had been] papyrus; and His Majesty put one such example in the temple of Amun. It was a target of hammered copper, several fingers thick, transfixed by his arrow which protruded three palms [length] out the back …



SOURCE 45 Thutmose IV in his chariot

If ever he spent a moment of relaxation, hunting in a foreign country, the size of his catch would be greater than the bag of his entire army. He slew seven lions by shooting in the space of a moment, and he brought off a herd of 12 bulls in one hour, and by the time breakfast came, the tails thereof were on his own rump. He cut down 120 elephants in the land of Niya [Syria] on his return from Naharin, when he had crossed the Euphrates, destroyed the towns on both its banks, consumed with fire for ever, and set up his triumph stela upon its bank. He got a rhinoceros by shooting, in the southland in Nubia … He set up his stela there, as he had done at the ends of Asia.

D. Redford, *The Wars in Syria and Palestine of Thutmose III*, Brill, Leiden, 2003, pp. 154–5

9.16 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 44 & 45

1 Describe the weapons used by the pharaoh, the pharaonic headdress, the depiction of the pharaoh in relation to those around him and the depiction of the enemy.

9.16 Check your learning

1 Read the full text of the Dream Stela of Thutmose IV. Enter the following in your search engine: 'Ancient Egypt Library: Dream Stela (Spninx Stela) of Thutmosis IV'.

2 Writing task: Assess the significance of the warrior pharaoh image in the New Kingdom.

9.17 Administration of the empire: Nubia and Syria–Palestine

Egypt's aims in creating an empire in Nubia and Syria–Palestine were both political and economic. Having secured her southern and northern borders, the next imperative was to exploit the resources and opportunities for trade offered by these regions. The era of military conquest had fostered a demand for the exotic goods of the north and the south. It had also stimulated the growth of new social elites in the military, the religious and the imperial administration.

While there were a number of similarities between Egyptian aims and methods of administration of the empire in Nubia and Syria–Palestine, there were also some important differences. The most important were:

- Nubia was regarded as a region suitable for colonisation while Syria–Palestine was not.
- Egypt already had a long history of relations with Nubia based on conquest during the Middle Kingdom – Egypt's earlier relations with Syria–Palestine were based on trade, not conquest.
- Egyptian administrative structures could be more easily imposed in Nubia; Syria–Palestine, however, had a more complex political organisation of independent city-states whose relations were characterised by treaties and power blocs.

Nubia

In addition to regular military campaigns, the Egyptians employed a number of other methods of control:

- strengthening of existing forts
- establishment of Egyptian colonies clustered around temple-towns
- creation of imperial administration headed by the viceroy of Nubia.

Evidence of Egypt's more direct and permanent control of Nubia can be seen in the changing pattern of building works. Under the early New Kingdom conquerors such as Ahmose and Amenhotep, building focused on fortification works. By the reign of Thutmose II, fortification became less important and temple building was undertaken on an increasingly grandiose scale. The temples of Semna and Kumna constructed by Thutmose II and III are among the most complete surviving examples of Eighteenth Dynasty architecture anywhere. No such program of building was undertaken in Syria–Palestine.

It is interesting to note that the section of the *Annals* of Thutmose III that records the annual collections of revenue from each makes a clear distinction between the taxes of Nubia and the tribute received from princes of Palestine and Syria. This would suggest that Egypt regarded Nubia as a colonial possession and an extension of its own economic system, whereas the chiefs of Syria–Palestine, as vassals, were regarded as exercising authority over their own towns.

Syria–Palestine

The first steps in the development of an administrative system in Syria–Palestine were taken by Thutmose III in the aftermath of his military conquests. One of our problems of evidence is that the majority of sources for Egyptian administration of the region come from the Amarna age, 100 years later, when the system was more fully developed. According to Donald Redford, 'Only in **Ramesside** times did a full-fledged provincial system, with "governors", commercial agents and military personnel become the norm'.

Ramesside relating to the Nineteenth Dynasty established by Ramesses I

Redford has identified four key features that characterised the administration initiated by Thutmose III and maintained by his immediate successors.

- *Demolition and deportation:* This was done to maintain Palestine as a buffer zone to protect Egypt from invasion from the north. This was accomplished by demolishing fortified centres that had resisted Egypt – or might do so in the future – and deporting their populations.
- *Confiscation:* The wheat-producing plains of northern Palestine were taken over by the crown and the estate of Amun, but elsewhere towns and cities retained possession of their own lands and property. The harbours on the coast of Phoenicia were provided with storehouses and perhaps a shrine (for the use of Egyptian traders and officials).
- *Political arrangements:* Securing the loyalty and cooperation of vassals by
  - administration of an oath of loyalty
  - taking as hostages sons and daughters of vassal rulers and powerful local families.
- *Permanent presence:* During the reign of Thutmose III, the administration of Syria–Palestine was very rudimentary. The Egyptian army marched forth on such a regular basis that 'resident governors' were unnecessary. The stationing of permanent troops did not occur until late in the reign – at Gaza in the south and at Ullaza on the north Phoenician coast. Their role at Ullaza was to guard the stores in the harbours, supervise the cutting and transporting of timber, and keep the local area under surveillance. A garrison was also assigned to Ugarit either late in this reign or early in the reign of Amenhotep II.

SOURCE 46 Features of Egyptian administration of Nubia and Syria–Palestine

FEATURE OF ADMINISTRATION	NUBIA	SYRIA–PALESTINE
System of supervision	• Complete reorganisation under chief Egyptian official, viceroy of Nubia, and a specialised Egyptian bureaucracy • Integration of local chieftains into Egyptian administrative network • Troops permanently stationed at all major forts	• Local vassal rulers maintain control of their own affairs; bound to Egypt by oaths of loyalty and hostaged children • Civil administrators assigned specific tasks as the need arises • Troops permanently stationed only in Gaza and Ullaza by end of reign of Thutmose II
Status and obligations of conquered peoples	• Much of lower Nubia (Wawat) colonial subjects of Egypt • Areas far from Egyptian centres operated as vassals of Egypt	• Vassal princes take oath of loyalty to Egypt, but are otherwise independent • Obliged to collect and pay tribute, keep the peace

SOURCE 46 *(continued)*

FEATURE OF ADMINISTRATION	NUBIA	SYRIA–PALESTINE
Military activity	• Initial campaigns of conquest followed by punitive raids in the event of rebellion • Maintenance of permanent system of fortresses (e.g. Buhen) to protect Egyptian interests	• Initial campaigns of conquest followed by punitive raids in the event of rebellion • Army used for regular collection of tribute and shows of force • Demolitions of rebellious towns in Palestine and deportation of their populations
Economic relationship	• Annual harvest tax (similar to Egypt) • Natural resources (e.g. gold, ebony) paid to Egypt as tax	• Booty taken after military conquest • Tribute collected by local rulers and sent to Egypt
Building activities	• Construction of fortified temple towns • Extensive building indicates policy of permanent control and Egyptianisation	• Construction of storehouses at Phoenician ports for storage of grain, etc. for shipment to Egypt • No archaeological evidence of permanent building or occupation in Syria–Palestine
Imperial policy	Deliberate policy of control and Egyptianisation: • Egyptian settlers • integration of local chieftains in imperial administration • education of Nubian princes in Egypt	• Policy of hostage taking (sons and daughters of vassal princes) to ensure loyalty of vassals • No attempt to impose Egyptian political structures or customs

9.17 Understanding and using the sources

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What were the reasons for the different methods of administration in Nubia and Syria–Palestine?
   - **b** Which features of imperial administration had a political purpose?
   - **c** Which features were primarily economic in purpose?
   - **d** Explain what you understand by the term 'Egyptianisation'.
   - **e** What is your understanding of the term 'colonisation?' How does it apply to Egyptian policy in Nubia?
   - **f** What historiographical issues are relevant for a study of Egypt's administration of its empire?

9.17 Check your learning

1 Use a graphic organiser, for example a Venn diagram, to summarise the major similarities and differences between the administration of Nubia and Syria–Palestine.

2 Writing task: Analyse Egypt's administration of its 'empire' in Nubia and Syria–Palestine in this period.

To help plan your response:
- identify the key features of administration in Nubia and Syria–Palestine, explaining how and why they differed
- explain the significance of these differences
- use relevant evidence to support your analysis.

9.18 The nature of Egyptian imperialism

Any discussion of Egyptian imperialism must recognise that 'imperialism' is a modern concept. It would be useful to consider a definition of the term 'imperialism': the policy of extending the rule or authority of an empire or nation over foreign countries, or of acquiring and holding colonies and dependencies.

The main features of imperialism include:

- permanent military occupation of conquered territories, usually referred to as 'colonies'
- control and administration by governors
- economic exploitation of the resources of the colonies for the benefit of the coloniser
- imposition of dominant culture on the subject populations.

These features were evident in the relationship between Egypt and Nubia. However, the relationship between Egypt and her northern neighbours was different. Here, the nature of Egypt's control was less clear. The fact that Thutmose III campaigned almost annually during the first 20 years of his reign – often suppressing rebellious towns – indicates that Egyptian control was limited. This was especially the case with the towns of Syria, such as Kadesh. The term 'sphere of influence' better describes Egypt's relationship with Syria. Here, Egypt relied on oaths of allegiance and the taking of hostages, rather than military occupation, to ensure the payment of tribute.

The ideology and language of imperialism

You will have recognised the Egyptian demonising of the enemy in your reading of the accounts of Egyptian military campaigns. It is clear that the Egyptians considered themselves superior to non-Egyptians. For example, many inscriptions refer to Nubia as 'the vile Kush' or 'the wretched Kush'. Thutmose I in his Tombos Stela refers to them as 'troglodytes' (a term of abuse to suggest people of low intelligence): 'The Nubian Troglodytes fall by the sword, and are thrust aside in their lands; their foulness, it floods their valleys; the [–] of their mouths is like a violent flood …'

The same kind of language was used to describe the peoples of Syria–Palestine who were frequently called 'miserable Asiatics'. It is interesting to observe, though, how the language of aggressive imperialism ('that foe of Naharin'), evident in the inscriptions of Thutmose III, changed to the more neutral language of diplomacy ('the Asiatics') when the peace treaty between Egypt and the Mitanni was being negotiated.

The negative stereotyped portrayals of Egypt's neighbours moreover, were not always consistent with reality. Ian Shaw points out, first, that the population of many Egyptian towns consisted of both Nubians and Asiatics living in apparent harmony with native Egyptians. Second, the policy of Egyptianisation of Nubians and Asiatics through hostage taking and education of youth is hardly consistent with an attitude of fear and hatred.

Imperialism or divine kingship?

One scholar has suggested a reason why it would be misleading to see an explicit policy of Egyptian imperialism in royal inscriptions and reliefs of the New Kingdom. Barry Kemp suggests in Source 47 that such material provides evidence for an understanding of the nature of divine kingship rather than foreign policy.

SOURCE 47

From the New Kingdom, a considerable body of inscriptions and scenes has survived related to the theme of conquest and subjection of the outside world to the rule of the king of Egypt. Some of them, in alluding to specific instances of triumph, are termed 'historical' by modern scholars, but from their language, and very often from their context within a temple, one can judge them to be more truly theological documents and sources for our understanding of divine kingship. Within them the divine king is depicted fulfilling a specific role with historical actuality entirely subordinated to a predetermined format. Presented as a form of cultic drama the conquest theme is one element in the broader and fundamental role of divine kingship: that of reducing chaos to order … It is also likely that the great scenes of victory and the listing of conquered places which frequently occur on temple walls, particularly on the towers of pylon entrances, were regarded as magically efficacious in protecting Egypt from foreign hostility.

B. Kemp, 'Imperialism and empire in New Kingdom Egypt', in P. Garnsey & C. Whittaker (eds), *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1978, p. 8

Economic and socio-political aspects of Egyptian imperialism

To reach a better understanding of the nature of Egyptian imperialism, it would be useful to examine both the nature of Egyptian activities in Nubia and Syria–Palestine and the importance of the military in Egyptian society during this period. As seen in the previous section on imperial administration, one of the main interests in conquest was economic. This was based on a desire to protect and increase Egypt's trading activities and to exploit mineral and other resources. The importance of Nubian gold, especially, may help to explain why the policy of colonisation was so thoroughly developed in this region. In Syria–Palestine, there can be little doubt that the booty gained from conquest and the regular collection of tribute from these conquered towns was a primary interest of Thutmose III and his successors.

Imperial policy also had an important political dimension, because a successful foreign policy reflected and reinforced the power of the pharaoh and guaranteed the security of Egypt's borders. It was also enthusiastically supported and sustained by important sections of New Kingdom society and especially by the military, which enjoyed increasing prestige and influence in Egyptian society. The careers of prominent soldiers are well documented and indicate how successful military careers guaranteed not only fame and glory – important for their own sake – but also provided an avenue for advancement in the civil and imperial administration.

SOURCE 48

The overall image of Egyptian 'imperialism' … is multifaceted, the economic and political pragmatism of the pharaohs often being cloaked in the hyperbole of royal rhetoric and piety. The debate concerning ideology versus economics is difficult to resolve because we rely primarily on a combination of royal religious and funerary texts for our reconstruction of Egyptian behaviour in the outside world, yet the real story probably lies in the more prosaic archival material that has so rarely survived.

I. Shaw (ed.), 'Egypt and the Outside World', *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000, pp. 326–7

9.18 Understanding and using the sources

Source 47

1. Explain in your own words the Egyptian concept of divine kingship.
2. Kemp suggests that inscriptions and scenes of conquest should be seen as theological (i.e. religious) rather than imperial statements. What evidence does he use to support his argument?

Source 48

3. Check the meaning of 'multifaceted', 'pragmatism', 'hyperbole', 'rhetoric' and 'prosaic' in relation to this source and summarise the source in your own words.

Sources 47 & 48

4. In pairs or small groups, discuss the value of these sources for an understanding of the nature of Egyptian imperialism.
5. According to these sources, why is it difficult to reach a firm conclusion about the nature of Egyptian imperialism?

9.18 Check your learning

1. What features of imperialism are applicable to Egyptian policy in (a) Nubia and (b) Syria–Palestine?
2. What are some negative stereotypes of Nubians and Asiatics used by the Egyptians?
3. Working in groups, summarise your understanding of Egyptian imperialism. Use the following headings: Political, Ideological, Economic, Social. Share your summaries with other groups to construct a class diagram or mind map of the topic.
4. Writing task: Explain the nature of Egyptian imperialism in the early New Kingdom.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the key aspects of Egyptian imperialism
   - explain the features of these aspects and the relationship between them
   - use relevant evidence to support your explanation
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

SOURCE 49
Remains of the Temple to Amun built by Thutmose III at Gebel Barkal, at Napata in Nubia. It provides evidence of Egypt's imperial expansion in this period.

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9.19 Role and contribution of kings from Ahmose to Thutmose IV

This section requires you to synthesise what you have learnt about the key developments and issues that have shaped this historical period. In particular, you will need to consider the contribution of the pharaohs of this period to the development of Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt. Most of the information that you will need for this section is in the relevant parts of the chapter. Supplement this text with your own reading. To get you started, the following overview of each pharaoh's reign is provided.

SOURCE 50 The role and contribution of New Kingdom pharaohs from Ahmose to Thutmose IV. The dates for each reign follow the chronology of Ian Shaw's *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt.* The name in italics after each pharaoh is their chosen throne name.

PHARAOH	MAIN DEVELOPMENTS OF THE REIGN
Ahmose *Nebpehtyre* 1550–1525 BC	• Sacking of Hyksos capital at Avaris; siege of Sharuhen in southern Palestine; final expulsion of the Hyksos • Egyptian control of Nubia established • Reunification of Upper and Lower Egypt; establishment of Eighteenth Dynasty • Pharaonic building program begun; honouring cults of gods, especially Amun at Karnak and Osiris at Abydos
Amenhotep I *Djeserkare* 1525–1504 BC	• Founding of workers' village at Deir el-Medina with his mother Ahmose-Nefertari • Successful Nubian campaign; increased control of this region • Building at Karnak and Abydos • Defining features of Eighteenth Dynasty clearly evident by end of reign; importance of Amun, efficient bureaucracy, control of Nubia
Thutmose I *Aakheperkare* 1504–1492 BC	• Possible co-regency with Amenhotep I; smooth transition of power to a new family (Thutmosid) possibly cemented by king's marriage to Ahmose, princess of Ahmosid family • Continued military and economic exploitation of Nubia; Syrian expedition lays foundation for Egyptian penetration of this region • Extensive building program: Karnak, Abydos, Giza and in Nubia
Thutmose II *Ahkheperenre* 1492–1479 BC	• Short reign; one Nubian campaign results in final defeat of Kushites at Kerma • Building at Karnak
Thutmose III *Menkheperre* 1479–1473 BC	• Reign begins with Hatshepsut as regent for Thutmose III, following king's accession as a young child
Hatshepsut *Maatkare* & Thutmose III *Menkheperre* 1473–1458 BC	• Co-regency established between year 2 and year 7 • Extensive building program of Hatshepsut at Karnak and from Nubia to Memphis; mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri • Trading expedition to Punt for incense trees and reopen trade routes • Some military activity in Nubia to quash Nubian rebellion • Promotion and increasing importance of Amun • Co-regency continues for 19 years until death of Hatshepsut

SOURCE 50 *(continued)*

PHARAOH	MAIN DEVELOPMENTS OF THE REIGN
Thutmose III *Menkheperre* 1458–1425 BC	• Beginning of 30-year period of sole rule • Successive military campaigns over 17 years establish an Egyptian 'empire' in Syria–Palestine; control of Nubia consolidated • Establishment of a policy for administration of the 'empire' • Increase in Egyptian wealth from exploitation of resources of 'empire' • Extensive building program at Karnak and throughout Egypt; temple at Gebel Barkal in Nubia • Late in reign Thutmose III begins redesign of Hatshepsut's monuments, dismantling some; replacing her name with those of Thutmose I and Thutmose II
Amenhotep II *Aakheperure* 1427–1400 BC	• Widespread building, especially at Karnak and Giza • Two campaigns fought in Syria; rebellious vassals severely punished • Peace negotiated with Naharin
Thutmose IV *Menkheperure* 1400–1390 BC	• 'Dream Stela' erected between the paws of the sphinx at Giza possibly indicates irregularity in royal succession • Sun cult of Heliopolis promoted during this reign • Building at most major sites in Egypt and Nubia • King marries a Mitannian princess to cement diplomatic relations with Naharin • Military activity against rebellious vassals in Syria and Palestine and Nubia

9.19 Check your learning

1 Use the information in this chapter and Source 50 together with your own research to complete a table using the following headings: Pharaoh, Religious policy, Aims and extent of building program, Foreign policy, Specific contribution.

2 Writing task: Assess the contribution of (name of pharaoh) to the development of New Kingdom Egypt.

To help plan your response:

- identify the important areas of policy and activity in the pharaoh's reign
- use these features to structure your answer
- make judgements of the significance of these features
- use specific evidence to support your assessment
- refer to relevant historiographical issues.

Chapter conclusion

By the end of the reign of Thutmose IV, Egypt had undergone a period of significant change since the early days of the Hyksos wars. The most significant impact of the success against the Hyksos was a dynamic new Egyptian dynasty with a wide range of important political, economic, religious and other agendas to pursue. Egypt in this period became a major power in the Near East, with a sphere of influence stretching from Syria in the north to the Fourth Cataract of the Nile in the south. Wealth flowed into Egypt from foreign booty, tribute and trade. Egypt was on the verge of a 'golden age' of peace and prosperity. Her pharaohs had established themselves as the direct descendants of the gods, and Amun-Re was foremost among the gods, with his priesthood more powerful than any other. All of these developments were significant in the history of this period – and were to become even more so in the period that followed.

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare students for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

10

New Kingdom Egypt – Amenhotep III to the death of Ramesses II

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1 What was the chronological, geographical and political context of New Kingdom Egypt in this period?
2 What contributions did rulers, queens and prominent officials make to New Kingdom Egypt's development?
3 What was the significance of the Amarna 'revolution' and its failure?
4 What was the political and religious significance of building programs?
5 How was the Nineteenth Dynasty established and how was it significant?
6 How was the 'empire' expanded, maintained and administered in this period?

FOCUS CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Continuity and change
In studying Egypt in the New Kingdom from the reign of Amenhotep III to Ramesses II, it is immediately apparent that although the structures of society and government remained the same, much changed over time. Most obvious are the changes to religion that occurred with the Amarna 'revolution' and the later return to the traditional gods. The many changes that occurred during this New Kingdom period must be explored, explained and evaluated for an understanding of the nature of power and authority at this time. The conditions and factors that caused the changes, as well as their impact on Egyptian society, must be analysed.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1 Explain the chronological, geographical and political context of New Kingdom Egypt in this period.
2 Evaluate the contributions of rulers, queens and prominent officials to New Kingdom Egypt's development.
3 Assess the significance of the Amarna 'revolution' and its failure.
4 Evaluate the political and religious significance of building programs.
5 Account for the establishment of the Nineteenth Dynasty and its significance.
6 Discuss the expansion, maintenance and administration of the 'empire' in this period.

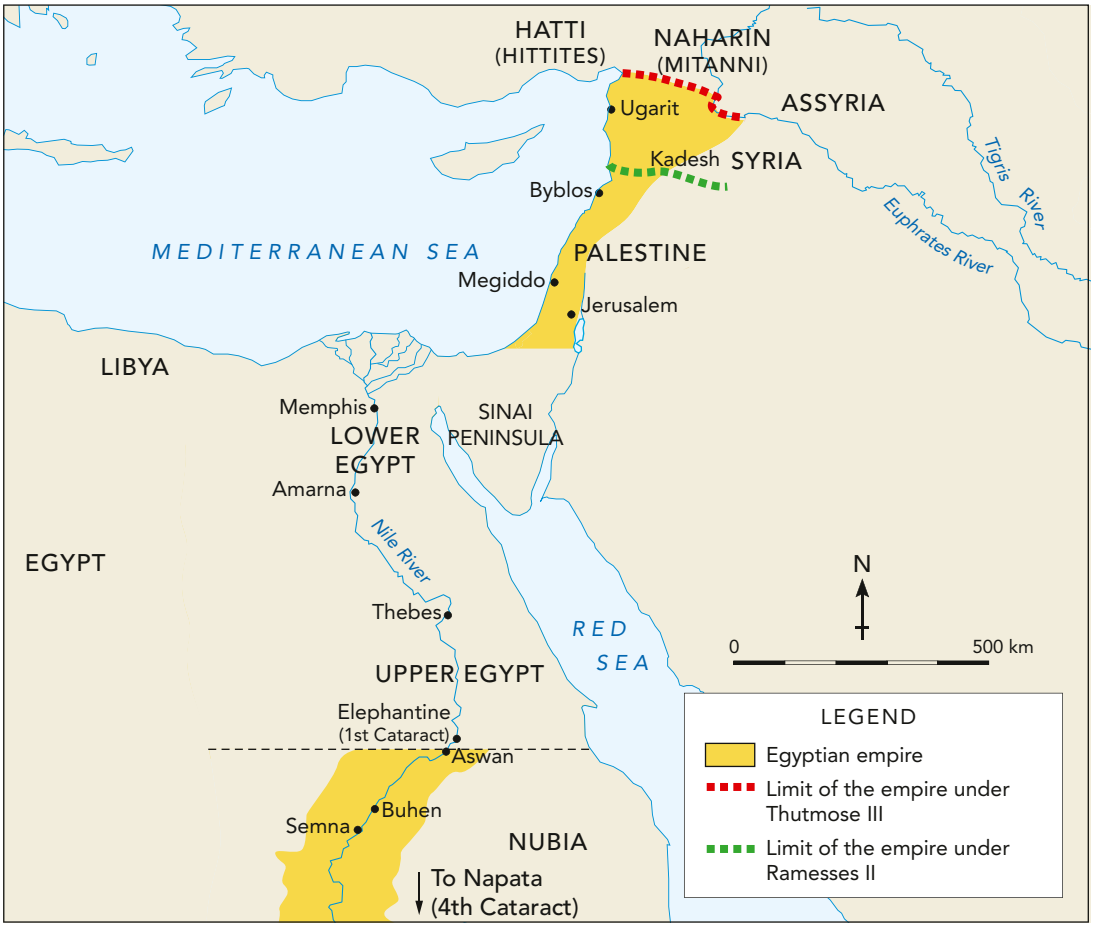
SOURCE 1 Ramesses II depicted on a wall of the Temple of Amun at Karnak

10.1 Chronological and geographical context

New Kingdom
the period of ancient Egyptian history between the 16th century BC and the 11th century BC, comprising the Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties

When Amenhotep III ascended the throne, Egypt was at the height of its power and prosperity. The reunification of the Two Lands of Upper and Lower Egypt, achieved at the beginning of the **New Kingdom**, set the scene for a long period of growth. The fertile Nile River Valley continued to provide abundant agricultural and other resources for the Egyptian people. Egypt was bounded in the north by the Mediterranean Sea and in the south by the First Cataract at Aswan. To the east and west of the Nile Valley were extensive desert regions, forming natural boundaries. The Sinai Peninsula to the east of the Nile Delta was a natural barrier between Egypt and her Asian neighbours. In this period, Egypt's main neighbours were Nubia in the south, Syria–Palestine (called Retjenu or Retenu by the Egyptians) to the north-east and Libya to the west. Further away were Babylonia, Naharin (land of the Mitanni), Hatti (land of the Hittites) and Assyria. Source 3 gives an overview of Egypt's relations with the key powers throughout this historical period.

EGYPT, NEW KINGDOM



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 2 Egypt and her neighbours in the New Kingdom

NORTH-EAST

Palestine
- Egyptian 'sphere of influence'
- **Vassal** towns and their princes gave allegiance to Egypt
- Vassals paid taxes in return for protection
- Princes kept in Egypt as hostages

Syria
- Territory desired by Hatti
- Acted as a trade corridor to sea ports
- Unstable throughout most of this period

Naharin – land of the Mitanni

Peaceful relations maintained by treaty and diplomatic marriage

Hatti – land of the Hittites
- Hittite destabilisation in Syria–Palestine in Eighteenth Dynasty
- Warfare between Egypt and Hittites in Nineteenth Dynasty
- Eventual peace treaty
- Diplomatic marriages to Hittite princesses

SOUTH

Nubia
- Egypt exploited mineral resources – gold, amethyst, copper
- Mining controlled by forts and walled towns
- Regular military raids
- Rebellions brutally suppressed – many taken prisoner or killed

WEST

Libya
- Problems caused by Libyan border incursions in the Nineteenth Dynasty
- Invasion of Nile Delta
- Fortresses built along the Mediterranean coast

vassal
a person or country in a subordinate position to a superior power

SOURCE 3 Egypt's relationships with the key powers of the region

10.1 Understanding and using the sources

1 Who were Egypt's main neighbours in this period?

2 Using Source 2, how has the extent of Egypt's empire changed from the reign of Thutmose III to that of Ramesses II?

3 Using Source 3, what differences can you observe in Egypt's relations between the neighbours to the north-east and Nubia in the south?

SOURCE 4 A 19th-century painting of the Colossi of Memnon, which marked the entrance to the mortuary temple of Amenhotep III on the west bank of the Nile at Thebes

10.2 The reign of Amenhotep III

The reign of Amenhotep III was the culmination of the long period of development by the early Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs. The achievements of his reign earned it the title of 'the golden age'. The prosperity, stability and advances in art and architecture of the period are clearly evident in the magnificent building programs of the pharaoh.

The tradition of the king as a mighty conqueror was continued despite the fact that only one military campaign was conducted. Diplomacy, demonstrated by the exchange of correspondence with foreign rulers and marriage with their daughters, was more effective in maintaining Egypt's interests abroad. However, by the end of his reign the balance of power in the region was shifting with the emergence of the Hittites in the north-east as a rival force. The effectiveness of Amenhotep III's foreign policy is open to debate in view of subsequent losses in the Syria–Palestine region. The **Amarna Letters**, an archive of diplomatic correspondence from the period, raise some tricky problems of evidence in this regard. Although the pharaohs addressed in the letters are not always identified, it is clear that some can be dated to the latter part of Amenhotep III's reign. The requests for military assistance in these letters from Egypt's vassal princes indicate political instability in the region. Eventually, Egypt lost control of some of its northern vassals to the Hittites.

The pharaoh's relationship with his great royal wife, Tiye, is evidence of the changing role of queens in this period. Other royal women are also prominent in the reign; some of them were the daughters of foreign rulers given to Amenhotep III in diplomatic marriage.

Amarna Letters diplomatic correspondence between Egyptian rulers and their fellow rulers and vassals, inscribed on clay tablets

SOURCE 5 A statue of Amenhotep III from the Luxor Museum

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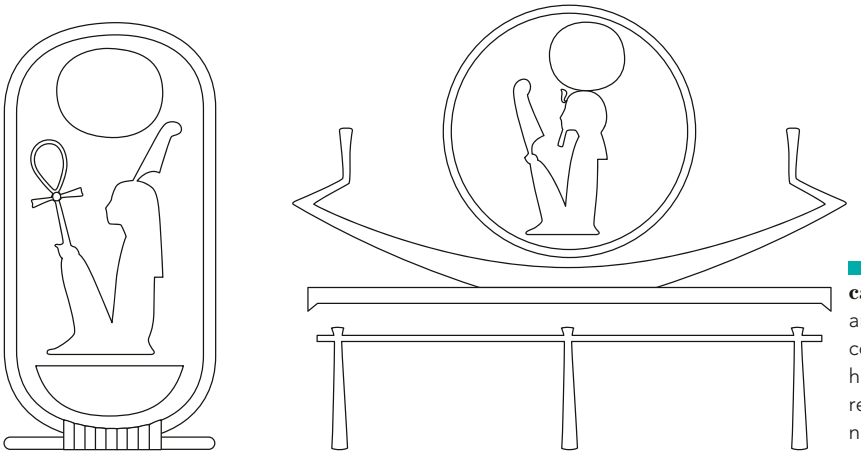
Religious policy

An interesting, if somewhat controversial, aspect of his reign is Amenhotep III's increasing emphasis on **solar theology**, especially in the latter part of his reign. Before his time, the god Amun of Thebes had been syncretised, or joined, with the sun god Re of Heliopolis to create a new god, Amun-Re. According to Egyptologist Jan Assmann, this represents a focus on the sun's cosmic nature (i.e. relating to the natural order of the universe), characterised especially by its visible features such as brightness and movement. Amenhotep III's interest in this aspect of Amun-Re is reflected in his identification with the sun god in its Aten form, with its emphasis on the radiance of the sun's disc (see Source 6).

solar theology
religious beliefs and practices based on sun worship

This new identification with the Aten was shown in the adoption of new **epithets**, for example 'Nebmaatre, the dazzling sun-disc'. Amenhotep III also added 'Aten' to the names of buildings, the royal barge and even his youngest daughter, Baketaten. It is important to note that Amenhotep III did not promote the Aten as an exclusive god; it was one of the many gods honoured during his reign. In fact, Egyptologist Erik Hornung points out that despite his promotion of solar religion Amenhotep III was keen to 'prevent this single god [Amun-Re] from gaining the upper hand by stressing the multiplicity of deities in Egypt'. Amenhotep III appears to have favoured continuity of established religious tradition alongside his promotion of new religious ideas.

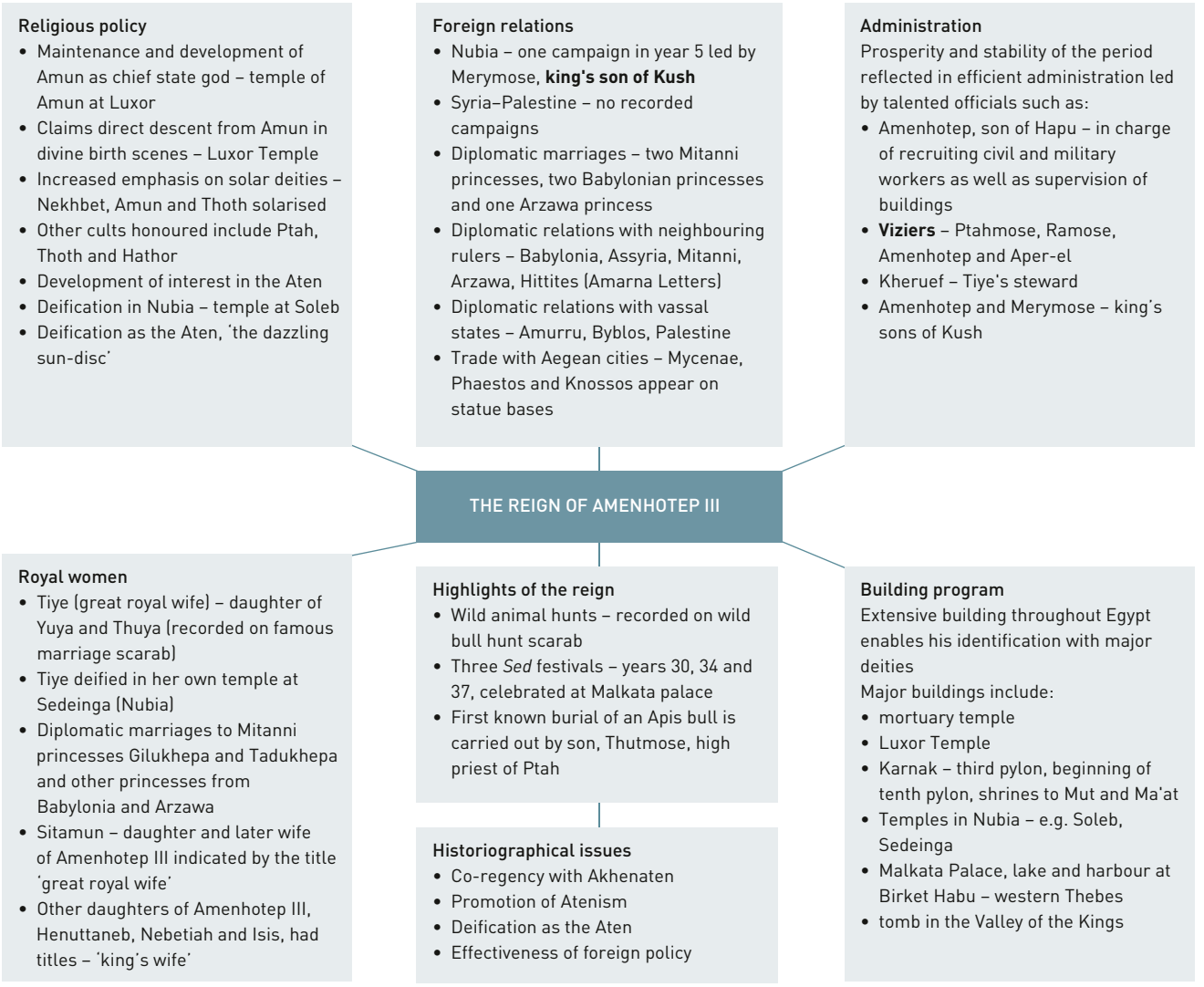
epithet
a word or phrase describing a particular quality or characteristic of a person



SOURCE 6 On the left is the **cartouche** of Amenhotep III with the traditional hieroglyphic representation of his throne name, Nebmaatre; on the right is the new version of his name shown as a rebus (a representation of words or syllables in pictures), which reads 'Nebmaatre is the dazzling Aten' – note that the seated figure of the king is now identified with the sun in the **solar barque**, which replaces the 'neb' glyph beneath the seated figure of Ma'at in the cartouche at left.

cartouche
an oval shape containing the hieroglyphs representing the names of a pharaoh

solar barque
the sun boat that carried the sun god Re across the sky in the daytime and through the realms of the underworld at night



SOURCE 7 The main features of the reign of Amenhotep III

king's son of Kush
the king's viceroy or deputy in charge of Nubia

vizier
a chief minister and king's deputy in ancient Egypt

10.2 Check your learning

1 Source 7 summarises the main features of the reign of Amenhotep III. Use it as a research guide to find out more about these features.

2 Writing task: Assess the achievements of Amenhotep III.

To help plan your response:

- identify the main areas of achievement to be used as criteria
- use these to structure your response
- make judgements about areas of achievement of Amenhotep III's reign
- use sources to support your response
- use appropriate terms and concepts.

10.3 The Amarna 'revolution'

Following Amenhotep III's increasing emphasis on solar religion, his son and successor, Akhenaten, elevated the status of the Aten as a single, exclusive deity. Assmann, in his book *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt*, says of this revolution, 'The new religion was not promoted, it was imposed. Tradition was not questioned, it was persecuted and forbidden.' Scholars however, disagree about the degree of change involved in this so-called 'revolution'.

Akhenaten came to the throne as Amenhotep IV, but later changed his name in honour of his god. Not only did he refuse to follow the established religious policy of worshipping Amun-Re as the state deity, but after the first few years of his reign, he attempted to destroy the Amun cult by withdrawing funds from its temples. Later he even ordered the removal of the god's name, and those of other gods and goddesses, wherever they appeared. New temples built during Akhenaten's reign were devoted solely to the Aten, and state religious policy took a political turn with the removal of the capital from Thebes to a new location at Akhetaten.

Amarna period an era of the Eighteenth Dynasty of New Kingdom Egyptian history when the pharaoh Amenhotep IV changed his name to Akhenaten, adopted the Aten as the sole state god and moved the capital of Egypt to Akhetaten

iconography the study and interpretation of the visual images and symbols used in a work of art

Motives for change

The motives for this religious 'revolution' are uncertain. It is possible that Akhenaten's religion was part of the theological movement that Assmann calls the 'New Solar Theology', even though his Aten religion diverges radically from the mainstream. Perhaps Akhenaten's motives were more pragmatic in that he was seeking to distance himself from Amun's religious and economic dominance at Thebes. These and other theories posed by historians of the **Amarna period** form some of the historiographical issues you will have to address in studying this era. (For a detailed treatment of Amarna religion, kingship and the new capital at Akhetaten, see Chapter 6.)

SOURCE 8 Akhenaten and Nefertiti depicted after year 9 of Akhenaten's reign and the move to Akhetaten

Failure of the Amarna 'revolution'

After a mere 20 years, the Amarna 'revolution' was over. On the death of Akhenaten, or maybe even before his death, moves were made to restore the traditional religion. After the brief reign of his successor Smenkhkare, state religious policy returned to the promotion of the Amun cult. Tutankhamun's reign served as an interim period in which both cults appear to have coexisted, as can be seen by the **iconography** of the golden throne from the young king's tomb. Such a policy of tolerance for the Aten cult was no doubt considered necessary for ensuring stability in a time of uncertainty.

Reasons for failure

The reasons for the failure of Akhenaten's 'revolution' are many. The following have been suggested.

- *The changes were too radical:* To the naturally conservative Egyptian people, the worship of a single god, the Aten, in place of the multitude of traditional gods was likely to have been unwelcome.

SOURCE 9 The backrest of Tutankhamun's golden throne showing the king and his wife, Ankhesenamun, beneath the rays of the Aten in its Amarna depiction, but wearing crowns representing traditional gods

- *The religious ideas were too abstract:* The **anthropomorphic** Re-Horakhty was replaced by the abstract depiction of the Aten as a rayed sun-disc. There were no statues, no cult figures that ordinary people could relate to. Moreover, ordinary people could have no personal relationship with the god; all worship was through Akhenaten.
- *Shortness of the reign:* Akhenaten's relatively short reign did not allow enough time for new ideas to take hold.
- *Lack of widespread support:* The only real supporters appear to have been the royal family and some courtiers. Atenism did not appear to be popular with the mass of the people. Evidence may be seen in the discovery of statues and images of other gods, such as Bes and Taweret, in the workers' village at Akhetaten.
- *No designated heir:* Akhenaten died before he could ensure the continuation of his cult. Akhenaten's role as sole intermediary between Aten and the people meant that without Akhenaten, the new religion had no one committed to its continuation. Moves to restore traditional religious practices appear to have begun during the reign of Smenkhkare.
- *Lack of afterlife beliefs:* The traditional Osirian cult that offered hope to all of an afterlife in the realm of Osiris was abandoned. It was replaced by a continued but altered existence in the present; prayers for survival after death were addressed to Akhenaten, not to Osiris.
- *Hostility of Amun priesthood:* The relative speed with which the traditional religion was restored after the Amarna period indicates the hostility felt by the Amun priesthood who had been dispossessed of their wealth and influence by the Amarna **heresy**.

anthropomorphic displaying animals, gods and objects with human features

heresy belief contrary to orthodox or traditional doctrine

10.3 Check your learning

1. Discuss the suggested reasons for the failure of the Amarna 'revolution'. Which do you think is most likely? Why?
2. Rank these reasons in order of significance. Justify your choices.

10.4 Post-Amarna reforms

Despite its failure, the Amarna 'revolution' had a marked impact on the reigns of later pharaohs of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties. Sources from the time paint a picture of an Egypt in dire need of a stable new government with a clear agenda for restoration and reform. Whether this was indeed the case is difficult to tell.

SOURCE 10 The Restoration Stela of Tutankhamun – this important source of evidence for the restoration of Amun and the other gods was damaged in antiquity by attempts to cut it for reuse.

Tutankhamun's restoration of Amun and other gods

The restoration of traditional religious practices is indicated by items from Tutankhamun's tomb showing a return to traditional Osirian burial practices. There is evidence of continued restoration during Tutankhamun's reign. This evidence includes:

- changes to the names of the pharaoh and his queen, from Tutankhaten and Ankhesenpa'aten to Tutankhamun and Ankhesenamun
- addition of the epithet 'ruler of southern Heliopolis' (i.e. Karnak at Thebes) to Tutankhamun's titles
- removal of the residence of Tutankhamun and Ankhesenamun from Akhetaten to Memphis, the traditional administrative capital of Egypt, and subsequently to Thebes, patron city of Amun.

It is important to note that Tutankhamun was only about 9 years of age on his accession. In the traditional protocol for this situation, the principal wife of the deceased king acted as regent for the young successor until he was old enough to rule in his own right. This might have indeed happened, according to one theory regarding the Amarna succession (see 6.11 The role of Nefertiti). We do know that Horemheb, the commander-in-chief of the army during Tutankhamun's reign, assisted by Ay, the senior member of Akhenaten's court, became Tutankhamun's advisers. Following Tutankhamun's death after 9 years on the throne, Ay and then Horemheb succeeded him.

stela (*pl.* stelae)
an upright slab of stone or sometimes wood, bearing inscriptions, reliefs or paintings; often placed in temples and tombs

ma'at
the ancient Egyptian concept of truth, order, harmony and justice

The Restoration Stela

The most important evidence of the restoration of Amun as the state deity can be found in Tutankhamun's Restoration **Stela**. Whether the text on this stela should be taken literally as evidence of the neglected state of Egypt during the reign of Akhenaten or as a piece of political propaganda on the part of the new regime is difficult to determine. It was a tradition for new pharaohs to claim that they had restored ***ma'at*** to Egypt after a time of chaos. However, some references in the text are specific and seem to refer to actual events. Source 11 is an extract from the Restoration Stela.

SOURCE 11

For when his majesty appeared as king, the temples of the gods and goddesses from Elephantine to the marshes of the delta … were about to be forgotten, and their holy places, in a condition of collapse, became ruin heaps, overgrown with weeds, their divine dwellings were as though they had never existed, their temples were a footpath. The land was in extreme distress, the gods had turned from this land. If an army was sent to Syria, to expand the boundaries of Egypt, it was not granted the slightest success. If one turned to a god in prayer, to ask counsel of him, he did not draw nigh at all. If one went to a goddess, likewise, she did not draw nigh at all. For their hearts had become weak in their bodies. They had destroyed what had been created.

Cited in J. Assmann, *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt*, trans. D. Lorton, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2001, pp. 228–9

Later in the text, Tutankhamun records what he did to remedy the condition of Egypt. His actions included:

- commissioning new statues of Amun in gold
- commissioning new statues of many other gods, especially Ptah
- rebuilding of the temples and restoration, and doubling of their incomes and offerings
- recruitment of many new, young priests from the children of prominent families.

Restoration under Ay and Horemheb

***Opet* festival**
an annual Theban festival involving a journey of Amun and his family from Karnak to Luxor, with ceremonies focusing on rebirth and renewal of kingship

Horemheb in his reign was intent on destroying the remains of the Amarna 'revolution'. He dismantled the Aten temples at Thebes and began the systematic destruction of the city of Akhetaten. Horemheb's religious policy was strictly orthodox (followed traditional beliefs and practices); he supervised full restoration of the Amun cult. Religious texts from this period make it quite clear that the sun-disc (the Aten) was now nothing more than the physical form of the sun god and that Amun-Re, not Aten, was the creator of all things.

SOURCE 12 General Horemheb

Two important documents from Horemheb's time recording his promotion of Amun are the Coronation Text and the Great Edict. The Coronation Text records Horemheb's presentation to Amun during an ***Opet* festival**, and his subsequent coronation by Amun. It also records that he appointed priests chosen from the ranks of the army to serve in the newly reopened temples.

Horemheb's restoration of the traditional cults was accompanied by significant social reform. The Great Edict, inscribed on a stela from Karnak Temple, records measures undertaken to eliminate corruption throughout Egypt. It also deals with reform of local courts and the regulation of state employees. Some historians believe that the problems Horemheb was addressing began during Akhenaten's reign when the traditional authority of Amun priests was lacking. However, others feel that the edict refers to problems that arose during Tutankhamun's reign. Source 13 is an extract from Horemheb's Great Edict.

SOURCE 13 Horemheb's **Great Edict**

His majesty took counsel with his heart [how he might] – [exp]el evil and suppress lying. The plans of his majesty were an excellent refuge, repelling violence behind – [and delivering the Egyptians from the oppressions] which were among them. Behold, his majesty spent the time seeking the welfare of Egypt and searching out instances [of oppression in the land]. – [came the scribe] of his majesty. Then he seized palette and roll; he put it into writing according to all that his majesty, the king himself said. He spoke as follows: '[My majesty] commands – [concerning all] instances of oppression in the land … If there be a [poor man] who pays the dues of the breweries and kitchens of the pharaoh, Life, Prosperity, Health, to the two deputies [and he be robbed of his goods and his craft, my majesty commands: that every officer who seizeth the dues] and taketh the craft of any citizen of the army or any person who is in the whole land, the law shall be executed against him, in that his nose shall be cut off, and he shall be sent to Tha[ru].

J. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt, Vol. 3: The Nineteenth Dynasty*, Histories & Mysteries of Man, London, 1988, pp. 25–6

Restoration in the early Nineteenth Dynasty

SOURCE 14 Seti I's King List in his temple at Abydos, which omits the Amarna pharaohs

In the Nineteenth Dynasty, the pharaohs followed a policy that promoted many gods, perhaps as a reaction to the religious upheavals of the preceding dynasty. Amun was still prominent but shared his position with other deities. Seti I, the second king of the dynasty, was responsible for the majority of the restoration of the traditional cult temples as well as the construction of many new ones. He restored original inscriptions and supervised the re-carving of the names and images of Amun that had been chiselled out in Akhenaten's reign. Seti's beautiful temple at Abydos was dedicated to Osiris, Isis, Ptah, Re-Horakhty, Horus, Amun and Seti himself as a god. Seti I chose this temple to contain his famous King List, a relief and inscription recording all of his predecessors. Significantly, all the pharaohs from Akhenaten to Ay were omitted and their regnal years were given to Horemheb.

Like Hatshepsut (see Chapter 5) and Amenhotep III before him, Ramesses II claimed divine descent from Amun as seen in reliefs in the Ramesseum. He also made prominent additions to Amun's temples at Luxor and Karnak. His temple at Abu-Simbel, however, was dedicated to Re-Horakhty, and the adjacent temple built for his wife, Nefertari, was dedicated to the goddess Hathor. Foreign gods were also recognised during Ramesses II's reign in the construction of temples to Sutekh and Astarte in his new capital at Pi-Ramesse. Sutekh was a variation of the god Seth, who appears as a Hittite god in the declarations of the Egyptian-Hittite peace treaty. Astarte was a fertility goddess worshipped by the Phoenicians.

10.4 Understanding and using the sources

Source 11

1 According to the source, what is the physical state of Egypt at the time of Tutankhamun's accession?
2 What does the source reveal about the relationship between Egypt and the gods at this time?
3 What happened when the army went on campaign?
4 Do you think the Restoration Stela is a trustworthy source? What questions need to be asked about its purpose?

Source 13

5 What are Horemheb's chief aims as expressed in this source?
6 What penalties are prescribed for wrongdoers? Why would they be so harsh?
7 How might the problems indicated in the source have arisen?
8 What questions need to be asked about the reliability of this source?
9 Why was the Great Edict Stela erected at Karnak?

10.4 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   a What was the significance of the changes made to the names of Tutankhamun and his wife?
   b Why did Tutankhamun remove the capital first to Memphis and then later to Thebes, after leaving Akhetaten?
   c Do you think that the army would have supported the restoration of the traditional cults? What evidence is there to support this?
   d Why did Tutankhamun provide new statues of Amun and the other gods, double the incomes of the temples and recruit new young priests?
   e Why did Seti I honour so many gods in his Abydos temple?
   f What was Seti I's purpose in amending his list of royal ancestors in the Abydos King List?
2 Read the full text of the Restoration Stela of Tutankhamen online. Make a list of what it reveals about the restoration of Amun and the other gods during the reign of Tutankhamun.
3 Search online for 'Reshafim – Great Edict of Horemheb' to read a full translation of the text.
4 Who were Re-Horakhty, Hathor, Sutekh and Astarte? Why were they chosen for special attention by Ramesses II?
5 Summarise the post-Amarna religious reforms of Tutankhamun, Ay, Horemheb, Seti I and Ramesses II by completing a table using the following headings: Pharaoh, Attitude to Amun, Attitude to other gods, Evidence.
6 Use the table to write a response to the following: Explain the reforms made by the post-Amarna pharaohs of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth dynasties.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the types of reform relevant to the question and use them to structure your response
   - give the cause and effect, why and/or how for each reform
   - use specific evidence to support your answer
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

10.5 Political and religious significance of building programs

The words of Barry Kemp, a respected Egyptian scholar – 'Ideology needs architecture for its fullest expression' – sum up the motives for the building policies pursued by New Kingdom pharaohs. For them, building was a politico-religious activity. As each new pharaoh came to the throne of the Two Lands, he initiated the program that was to determine all building activity in his reign.

Pharaohs from Amenhotep III onwards used their building programs for the following purposes:

- development of the ideology of kingship – through association of the pharaoh with the gods, recorded on royal monuments
- promotion of the Amun cult – through additions to the Temple of Amun at Karnak and construction of other temples and structures dedicated to him
- maintenance of traditional pharaonic building policy – honouring the cults of the traditional gods throughout Egypt and re-establishment after the Amarna period
- promotion of solar worship – prior to and including the Amarna period
- construction of funerary monuments for their mortuary cults – a tomb and mortuary temple
- maintenance of control of Nubia and the Egyptian borders – through the building of temples and forts
- self-promotion of the pharaoh and the worship of his royal ancestors
- establishment of a new capital at Pi-Ramesse in the Delta (Ramesses II).

Religious role of buildings

The religious role of public buildings was of primary importance. In dedicating palaces and temples to particular gods, the pharaoh was able to show his piety. He was also able to stress his relationship to the gods and the ideology of kingship, as Amenhotep III did in his 'divine birth' scenes, in the Temple of Amun at Luxor. This temple and the Temple of Amun at Karnak provided the settings for the *Opet* festival, which was vital to the concept of kingship itself. At this time, the king was rejuvenated and merged with the Theban god Amun, becoming a divine being. The departure from the worship of Amun during the reign of Akhenaten is reflected in his building program, while the return to orthodoxy is demonstrated in the new buildings erected by the pharaohs who succeeded him.

Political role of buildings

Pharaonic buildings were also a visible sign of the political power of the pharaoh and of Egypt. Not only in Egypt was their monumental size designed to impress; the temples built in Nubia were clearly meant to play a role in the subjugation of the Nubian tribes. Amenhotep III, in dedicating a temple to himself as a god at Soleb, was giving a clear message about the might of Egypt and its king. The building program of each pharaoh was a clear demonstration of his religious and political policies.

SOURCE 15 Remains of Amenhotep III's temple at Soleb in Nubia, dedicated to himself as Amun-Re

Economic role of temples

The economic function of Egypt's temples was an important feature contributing to their politico-religious significance. The pharaoh's role as upholder of *ma'at* included providing stability for the nation through a strong economy. The temples themselves were integral to the efficient functioning of the country. Once built, they were endowed with permanent sources of revenue, particularly agricultural land and labourers to work it. Surplus grain was stored in the magazines built in the temple precincts – the best preserved are those at Ramesses II's mortuary temple, the Ramesseum. The temples also owned herds, fishing and fowling rights, ships, barges and even access to mineral resources. Seti I's temple at Abydos had rights to mine gold in the Eastern Desert. Temples provided regular occupation for armies of workers, from unskilled labourers to highly skilled stonemasons and artists. Tribute and booty from foreign conquests were used to fund the pharaonic building programs; gold, precious stones and timbers were used to decorate palaces and mortuary temples.

Pharaonic builders of the Eighteenth Dynasty

All pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty initiated building programs at the beginning of their reigns. Various parts of Egypt were chosen, frequently because of their associations with particular gods. Building in Nubia was part of the mechanism for controlling the local tribes.

Amenhotep III

Amenhotep III was the most prolific builder of Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt. Traces of his building activity can be found in Lower, Middle and Upper Egypt. Like his predecessors, he focused on the Temple of Amun-Re at Karnak where he:

- constructed the third pylon, which created a new entrance to the temple
- began construction of the tenth pylon on the new axis oriented towards Luxor Temple
- began construction of temples to Mut, consort of Amun, and the goddess Ma'at, both of whom were strongly associated with solar theology.

Amenhotep III's major achievement on the east bank at Thebes was Luxor Temple (see Chapter 2). The temple was important in his self-promotion as it featured his divine birth reliefs. Like Hatshepsut before him, he claimed that he was the offspring of the union between his mother, Mutemweia, and the god Amun.

Amenhotep III's mortuary temple was located on the west bank at Thebes, the largest of its kind in the New Kingdom. A short distance away, he constructed his palace complex, known today as Malkata (see Chapter 2) with its adjacent harbour, Birket Habu.

In Nubia, Amenhotep III built temples or shrines at Quban, Wadi es-Sebua, Soleb and Sedeinga. At Soleb he was depicted worshipping himself as a god, while at Sedeinga the great royal wife, Tiye, is similarly honoured.

An important focus of Amenhotep III's building program, which has emerged from recent study, is his identification with the sun god Re in the latter part of his reign. He began to build open sun courts in the front of his buildings. For example, his temple at Soleb in Nubia features a large, open, **peristyle** sun court erected after the rest of the temple.

SOURCE 16 In this scene from Amenhotep III's divine birth reliefs at Luxor Temple, Amun-Re offers the *ankh*, the sign of life, to the nostrils of the king's mother, Mutemweia, as a sign of their divine union.

Akhenaten

Akhenaten's building program is remarkable for its departure from tradition. Unlike his predecessors, Akhenaten focused exclusively on his preferred deity, the Aten. At East Karnak, early in his reign, he constructed four new temples to the Aten. When he transferred the capital to Akhetaten in Middle Egypt, the radical nature of his building program became apparent. Gone were the roofed temples with darkened inner sanctuaries, characteristic of the former worship of Amun, 'the hidden one'. They were replaced by temples with huge open courts that allowed the rays of the sun to reach into every corner. His new city also contained a number of palaces and private dwellings as well as tombs for the royal family and courtiers.

Akhenaten's buildings featured the use of ***talatat***, small blocks of sandstone that facilitated faster construction. These were decorated using sunk relief rather than the traditional raised relief. Sometimes a mixture of raised and sunk relief allowed the artists to make the most effective use of the changing angles of the sun. An enduring legacy of Amarna art and architecture was its depiction of the vitality of the natural world. Palaces featured walls and pavements of glazed tiles decorated with brightly painted motifs of plants and animals. The traditional use of registers was abandoned in favour of filling a whole wall with a single scene.

peristyle
a row of columns enclosing a court or other space, or the space surrounded by these columns

talatat
small sandstone blocks averaging 55 × 25 × 25 cm, used to construct buildings during Akhenaten's reign; usually decorated with scenes representing religious and daily life

Smenkhkare

Smenkhkare's building program was limited by a short reign, but was traditional in nature. An addition to the great palace at Akhetaten appears to have been built to mark his coronation. This was a huge hall, the main room of which had 546 square columns. The bricks from these columns all bore the name Ankhkheperure, this pharaoh's throne name. A graffito (inscription) from a Theban tomb (TT 139) refers to a priest attached to the 'temple of Ankhkheperure', so Smenkhkare apparently had a mortuary temple.

Tutankhamun

Tutankhamun's building program was more extensive than is usually realised. It is generally thought that the tomb he had started for himself at Thebes was unfinished when he died, so he was buried in a tomb, in the Valley of the Kings, probably intended for his courtier, Ay (KV 62). Tutankhamun's Restoration Stela refers to his rebuilding of temples neglected during his predecessor's reign, which included the Temple of Amun at Karnak. Here he restored the damaged sixth pylon and built two temples of his own. The name of one of these, the 'mansion of Nebkheperure, beloved of Amun, who sets Thebes in order', testifies to his restoration work.

Tutankhamun is also responsible for the magnificent reliefs of the *Opet* festival, which adorn the walls of a colonnaded hall in the Temple of Amun at Luxor, built by his grandfather, Amenhotep III. These were later taken over by Horemheb. It is thought that Tutankhamun's mortuary temple was erected near the later site of Ramesses III's mortuary temple at Medinet Habu. He built at least one temple at Memphis, and temples at Kawa and Faras in Nubia.

Ay

As pharaoh, Ay began a tomb in the western Valley of the Kings that was incomplete at the time of his death. The names of Ay and his queen, Tey, were later hacked out of the tomb's wall paintings, probably during the reign of Horemheb. Ay continued Tutankhamun's restoration work, especially at Thebes, where he allowed his predecessor's name to remain on a completed temple, even adding Tutankhamun's figures and cartouches. This temple was later dismantled by Horemheb and used as filling for his pylons at Karnak. Ay's mortuary temple was located near Tutankhamun's at Medinet Habu and was later usurped (taken over) by Horemheb. He built a rock-cut shrine, a sacred building excavated from solid rock at Akhmim, which, unlike his other monuments, does not appear to have been defaced. Ay probably built a structure at Abydos, the cult centre of Osiris, according to a stela now located in the Louvre in Paris. He also built a small rock-cut shrine in Nubia.

Horemheb

Horemheb began his extensive building program at Karnak where he started work on the Great Hypostyle Hall. His second, ninth and tenth pylons at Karnak were filled with the *talatat* from Akhenaten's East Karnak temples, which he had dismantled. In recycling these blocks he unwittingly ensured the preservation of many details of the early years of Akhenaten's reign. Horemheb's Great Edict Stela at the tenth pylon gives valuable details of his administration of Egypt and his methods of dealing with corrupt officials within the bureaucracy, army and judiciary.

Horemheb's royal tomb was located in the Valley of the Kings, but it is the tomb he built at Saqqara before becoming pharaoh that is more historically significant. Scenes depict Horemheb receiving homage from Libyan, **Asiatic** and Nubian prisoners, including men, women and children. Libyan and Asiatic ambassadors petition Tutankhamun for mercy after battle. Such scenes led the excavator Geoffrey Martin to suggest that they are evidence of campaigns fought and led by Horemheb during Tutankhamun's reign. Horemheb also built a rock temple at Gebel el-Silsila in Nubia, the reliefs of which depict his battles with the Nubians. Other constructions include a temple to Seth at Avaris in the Nile Delta.

Asiatic
a term used by the ancient Egyptians to refer to any people native to the areas north east of Egypt, including Syria–Palestine

SOURCE 17 Asiatics and Nubians pay tribute to Tutankhamun in the Memphite tomb of Horemheb in the Saqqara necropolis.

10.5 Check your learning

1. Discuss the following:
   - **a** Why was a pharaoh's building program such an important aspect of his reign?
   - **b** In what ways did Akhenaten's building program differ from those of the other pharaohs?
   - **c** Why would Tutankhamun have erected a stela to record his restoration of buildings in Egypt?
   - **d** What motives could Ay have had in completing Tutankhamun's buildings at Karnak?
2. Explain what you understand by Barry Kemp's statement that 'Ideology needs architecture for its fullest expression'. To what extent is this demonstrated in the pharaonic building programs of the Eighteenth Dynasty?
3. Suggest some examples of buildings throughout history that demonstrate ideology through their architecture.
4. Explain the political, religious and economic significance of some major buildings of the Eighteenth Dynasty.

10.6 Pharaonic builders of the early Nineteenth Dynasty

Nineteenth Dynasty pharaohs built as prolifically as their predecessors did. Their motives were similar, but some of the changes of the Eighteenth Dynasty were reflected in the policies of the **Ramesside** pharaohs.

Ramesside
relating to the Nineteenth Dynasty established by Ramesses I

Ramesses I

Ramesses I, first pharaoh of the Nineteenth Dynasty, began work on the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak. He erected a stela dedicated to Mut at Wadi Halfa in Sinai, where he sent a turquoise-mining expedition. Re and Ptah are also mentioned on another stela at Buhen in Nubia. When he died he was buried in an unfinished tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

Seti I (also Sety/Sethos)

Seti I's extensive building program focused on the building of new temples to the gods at the traditional religious centres of Thebes, Abydos, Memphis and Heliopolis. He continued work on the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak. His mortuary temple on the west bank and the restored mortuary temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri formed a new setting for the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, an important annual festival in honour of Amun (see Chapter 2).

Perhaps Seti I's greatest achievement is the temple he built for Osiris at Abydos. Behind its columned hall are seven chapels, each dedicated to a different god: Osiris, Isis, Ptah, Amun, Re-Horakhty, Horus and himself as a god. Behind these chapels is a sanctuary dedicated to Osiris, which features beautiful reliefs of the legend of Osiris. The Osireion, an unusual structure built in the precinct of the Abydos temple, might have functioned as a **cenotaph** for Seti as the god Osiris. This temple is of particular significance as its 'hall of records' contains the famous King List, a relief depicting Seti and his young son Ramesses worshipping the cartouches of their ancestors (see Source 14). The omission of the pharaohs from Akhenaten to Ay is evidence of the Ramesside rejection of the Amarna period. Seti I's tomb in the Valley of the Kings is the longest and deepest tomb constructed in Egypt.

cenotaph
a monument or tomb commemorating someone who is buried elsewhere or does not have a tomb

Ramesses II

Ramesses II is regarded by many as the greatest builder of the New Kingdom. According to Sir Alan Gardiner in his book *Egypt of the Pharaohs*:

> If the greatness of an Egyptian pharaoh be measured by the size and number of his monuments remaining to perpetuate his memory, Sethos's son and successor Ramesses II would have to be adjudged the equal, or even the superior, of the proudest pyramid-builders.

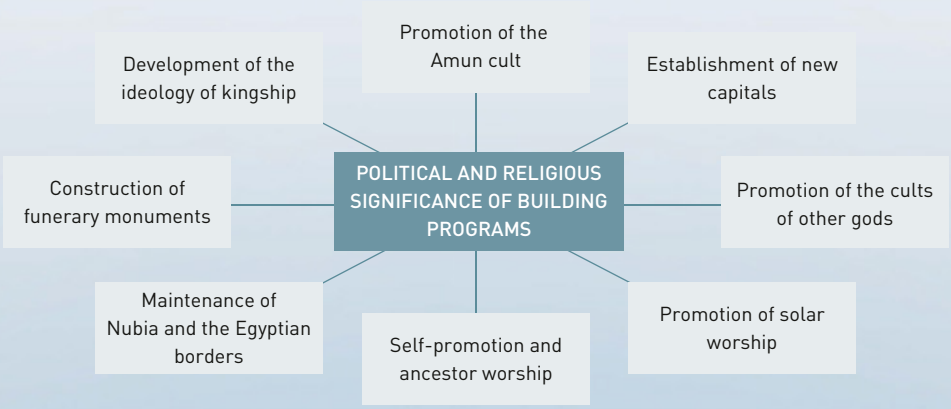
Ramesses II's deeply carved cartouches can be found on many monuments, including those he built himself and those that he usurped. By replacing the names of other pharaohs with his own, he claimed these buildings as his own constructions. As well as completing his grandfather's Hypostyle Hall at Karnak and his father's temples at Abydos and Thebes, he built a huge mortuary temple, the Ramesseum, in Western Thebes. He also added a peristyle

courtyard, pylon and obelisks to the front of the Luxor Temple, thus suggesting that he had built all that lay behind. He did the same to Seti's Abydos temple, blocking up the seven entrance ways and covering them with a long text that glorified his own achievements.

Ramesses II built several temples in Nubia, the most impressive being the pair of temples carved out of the mountainside at Abu Simbel. The larger of the two, featuring four colossal statues of the king, was dedicated to Re-Horakhty, while statues of other gods – including Amun-Re, Ptah and Ramesses himself as a god – were located in the interior of the temple. This recognition of other gods in addition to Amun-Re was in keeping with the religious policy followed by the earlier Ramesside kings. The smaller temple at Abu Simbel was dedicated to Hathor and Ramesses' favourite wife, Nefertari. An interesting feature of the decoration of these temples (as well as those at Thebes and Abydos) is the depiction of battle scenes from his year 5 battle of Kadesh.

SOURCE 18 Ramesses II's mortuary temple, the Ramesseum, on the west bank of the Nile at Thebes

Ramesses built a tomb in the Valley of the Kings, which, although once magnificent, is now in extreme disrepair. His other notable achievement, the new capital Pi-Ramesse in the Nile Delta, is now in a totally ruined state. In its heyday the city comprised four main quarters, with suburbs for traders, foreign residents and ordinary Egyptians, extending for some kilometres along the banks of the Nile. A great temple to Amun-Re was constructed there, together with temples and shrines for all of Egypt's principal gods and the foreign gods worshipped in this cosmopolitan age.



SOURCE 19 Political and religious significance of building programs

10.6 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What gods were honoured by the Ramesside kings? Why were they keen to show their devotion to so many gods in their buildings? What other evidence can you cite to support your answer?
   - **b** What examples of buildings specifically constructed for political purposes can you identify?

2 Construct a table using these headings: Political features, Religious features. Use it to summarise the political and religious features of the building programs of the pharaohs of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties.

3 Use Source 19 as a template to summarise the information in this section.

4 Writing task: Evaluate the political and religious significance of the building programs of pharaohs in this period.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the key political and religious features of pharaonic building programs
   - use these to structure your response
   - make judgements about the political and religious significance of the building programs, saying how and why they are significant
   - use sources to support your response
   - use appropriate terms and concepts.

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10.7 Establishment and significance of the Nineteenth Dynasty

The Nineteenth Dynasty or Ramesside period was founded by Ramesses I, previously known as Paramessu. An army man and vizier, he was Horemheb's own choice for the succession. Judging by the titles he assumed (see Source 20), the new pharaoh must have been a man of vision, conscious that he was beginning a new era. He was, however, also mindful of the achievements of the pharaohs who had preceded him. Ramesses I's new titles echoed those of his role model, Ahmose, expeller of the Hyksos and founder of the Eighteenth Dynasty. The titles of Seti I and Ramesses II also reflect the priorities of their reigns. Source 20 gives the titles of Ahmose and the first three Ramesside pharaohs. (See 2.2 Social structure and political organisation.)

Ramesses I, after a short reign, was succeeded by his son Seti, already a middle-aged man at the time of his accession. Seti I is responsible in the main for establishing the nature and purpose of the new dynasty. He undertook a major building program and set out to regain Egypt's prestige through an active foreign policy. Seti's reign was a period of high art and culture, epitomised by his temple at Abydos, cult centre of Osiris. He married Tuya, daughter of a lieutenant of chariotry, Raia. Their second son would become his successor, Ramesses II.

Ramesses II came to the throne at the age of 25. While there had been no formal co-regency with his father, Ramesses had been designated prince regent in his mid-teens and had learnt the business of being pharaoh at his father's side. An inscription at Abydos recorded that Seti I had done this 'that I might see his beauty while I yet live'. Ramesses II, like his father Seti I, attempted to deal with the Hittite threat to Egypt's dominance in Syria–Palestine. His most famous exploit is the Battle of Kadesh, but he should be remembered equally for the Egyptian-Hittite peace treaty in year 21 of his reign.

Nine Bows
a term used by the ancient Egyptians to represent the traditional enemies of Egypt

SOURCE 20 Titles of Ahmose and early Nineteenth Dynasty pharaohs

PHARAOH'S GREAT NAMES	NAME ADOPTED BY:			
	AHMOSE	RAMESSES I	SETI I	RAMESSES II
Hr Horus	Strong Bull – Great of Kingship	Strong Bull – Flourishing in Kingship	Strong Bull – Appearing in Thebes, Nourishing the Two Lands	Strong Bull – beloved of Re
Nebty Beloved of the Two Ladies	Perfect of birth	Appearing as king like Atum	Bringer of Renaissance (rebirth), the strong-armed one who has repelled the **Nine Bows**	Protector of Egypt who curbs foreign lands
Hr-nbw Horus of Gold	He who knots together the Two Lands	Establishing right throughout the Two Lands	He who renews the crowns, he who subjugates the Nine Bows in all lands	Rich in years, great in victories
nswt bity He of the Sedge and the Bee	*Neb-pehty-Re* Lord of might is Re	*Men-pehty-re* Enduring of might is Re	*Men-maat-re* Enduring of right is Re	*Usermaatre Setepenre* The justice of Re is powerful, chosen of Re
S3 R Son of Re	Ahmose The moon is born	Ramesses Re has fashioned him	Seti He of the god Seth Meren-ptah Beloved of Ptah	Ramesses Re has fashioned him, beloved of Amun

Ramesses II was also a great builder as can be seen in the many buildings he erected throughout Egypt and Nubia, marking them all with his deeply incised cartouches. These have already been treated in more detail in 10.6 Pharaonic builders of the early Nineteenth Dynasty.

10.7 Understanding and using the sources

Source 20

1 Investigate the identity of the god Atum. Why would Ramesses I choose a *Nebty* title, 'Appearing as king like Atum'?
2 What do Ramesses I's titles suggest about his religious and political priorities?
3 What is the significance of Seti I's title 'Bringer of Renaissance'?
4 What do Seti I's and Ramesses II's titles suggest about their military agendas?
5 Which gods are favoured by Ramesses II? Suggest a reason for this.

10.7 Check your learning

1 In what circumstances was the Nineteenth Dynasty born?
2 Why did Ramesses I choose Ahmose as a role model for his reign?
3 In order to assess the significance of the Nineteenth Dynasty, draw up a mind map like the one below. You can make notes on the sections already covered in this chapter and

complete the rest as you study the following sections.

4 Writing task: Use your completed mind map to write a response to the following: Assess the significance of the Nineteenth Dynasty in this historical period.

To help plan your response:

- identify the aspects that display the significance of the Nineteenth Dynasty
- use these to structure your response
- make critical judgements about these aspects giving how and/or why they are significant
- use specific evidence to support your answer.

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10.8 Changing role and contribution of queens

The early New Kingdom saw immense change in the role and contribution of queens. Traditionally, the most important role of Egyptian royal women was to provide a female equivalent for the male aspect of kingship in both a practical and a religious sense. The royal wives produced the heirs to the throne and acted as divine consorts for the kings.

SOURCE 21

On an ideological level, the queen represented the female principle of the universe through which the male king could renew himself … Both the king's mother and the king's principal wife had important ritual roles to play, and it is possible that these offered potential power to the holder.

G. Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, British Museum Press, London, 1993, p. 55

Thutmosid referring to the New Kingdom Egyptian dynasty established by Thutmose I

titulary the standard titles or naming convention taken by Egyptian kings

Considerable change to this traditional role came about in the late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth dynasties, when native Egyptian rulers asserted themselves against the Hyksos. At this time, queens assumed roles of great significance while their husbands were busy fighting the wars. Notable queens from this period include Tetisheri, who probably founded the Eighteenth Dynasty; Ahhotep II, who put down a rebellion; and Ahmose-Nefertari, the first god's wife of Amun (the highest ranking priestess in the cult of Amun), who was later worshipped as a goddess. Hatshepsut, from the **Thutmosid** family, ruled in her own right, assuming a full **titulary** and the iconography of a king. It is against this background that we consider the major queens of this historical period.

SOURCE 22 A wooden head of Tiye from the Egyptian Museum in Berlin

Tiye

The reign of Amenhotep III was a turning point for royal women. His great royal wife, Tiye, assumed prominence with her marriage, which was recorded on a series of marriage scarabs issued by the king. These amulets, shaped like scarab beetles, named her parents, Yuya and Thuya, who were commoners but were connected to a prominent family of officials from Akhmim.

Tiye's prominence is indicated in several ways. Unlike other queens she is frequently present on the king's monuments, depicted in the same proportions as he is. More importantly, she is shown with a king's attributes – in the tomb of her steward, Kheruef, she is shown as a sphinx, trampling enemies. Amenhotep III built a temple for

SOURCE 23 A scarab commemorating the marriage of Amenhotep III to Tiye. The inscription on the obverse reads: 'The great royal-wife Tiy, may she live. The name of her father is Yuia, the name of her mother is Tjuia. She is the wife of the mighty king whose southern boundary is as far as Karoy, whose northern is as far as Naharin.'

Tiye at Sedeinga, in Nubia, where she is depicted as a goddess.

An interesting aspect of Tiye's role that demonstrates the changing role of queens is her involvement in diplomatic affairs. It is clear that at least one foreign ruler wrote to her personally concerning matters of state, or simply asking her to support him in his requests for gold from Egypt. Tushratta, king of the Mitanni, wrote directly to Tiye following the death of her husband.

SOURCE 24

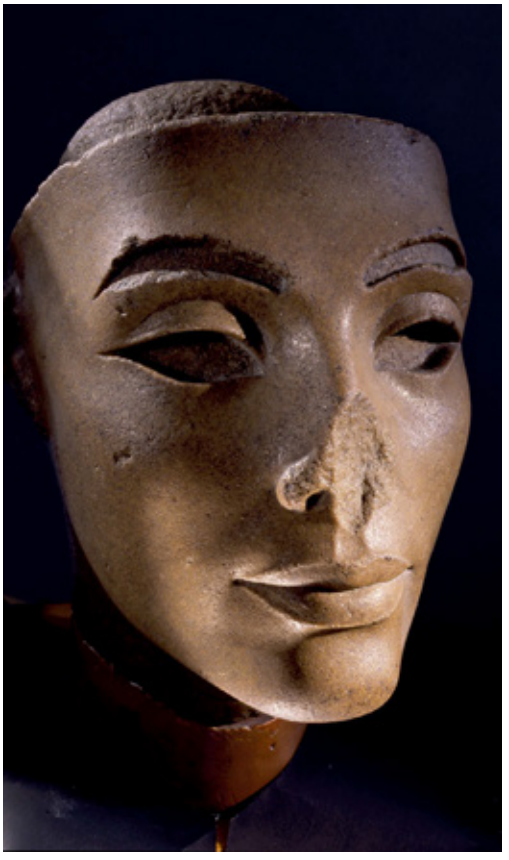
To Tiye, Lady of Egypt. Thus speaks Tushratta, King of Mitanni

Everything is well with me. May everything be well with you. May everything go well for your house, your son [Akhenaten], may everything be perfectly well for your soldiers and for everything belonging to you.

You are the one who knows that I have always felt friendship for Mimmuriya [Amenhotep III], your husband, and that Mimmuriya, your husband, on his part always felt friendship for me. And the things that I wrote and told Mimmuriya, your husband, and the things that Mimmuriya, your husband, on his part wrote and told me incessantly, were known to you, Keliya and Mane [diplomatic messengers]. But it is you who knows better than anybody, the things we have told each other. No one knows them better …

Amarna Letter EA 26

Nefertiti



SOURCE 25 A sculpture of the head of Nefertiti

Perhaps the most important and controversial queen of this period is Nefertiti, wife of Akhenaten. Nefertiti seems, from the very beginning, to have played a vital role in her husband's brief, unconventional reign. She is shown in the *Hewet-benben* at East Karnak, a temple devoted entirely to her worship of the Aten, where she and her eldest daughter, Meritaten, make offerings to the god. Akhenaten is not depicted in any of the reliefs in this temple; indeed Nefertiti is depicted twice as often as her husband in all of the East Karnak temples (see Chapter 6).

Like her mother-in-law, Nefertiti seems to have been given pharaonic attributes. *Talatat* from both East Karnak and Akhetaten depict her in the traditional pharaonic poses of 'smiting the enemy' and trampling enemies as a sphinx. Scenes from public and private buildings as well as tomb paintings at Akhetaten depict Nefertiti driving her own chariot in state processions, accompanying her husband in worshipping the Aten, distributing honours and receiving foreign envoys. Unlike other queens, she is also shown in scenes of intimate family life.

Such iconography suggests that Nefertiti played a prominent political role during the reign of her husband. Many historians now agree that she shared a co-regency with Akhenaten towards the end of his reign, as the pharaoh Neferneferuaten. What happened after Akhenaten's death is unclear; some historians believe that

his successor was a young male pharaoh called Smenkhkare. Others argue that this enigmatic pharaoh was actually Nefertiti herself, who ruled after her husband for a short time, accompanied by her daughter Meritaten as great royal wife (see Chapter 6). Nefertiti was a queen who enjoyed enormous religious and political influence in Egypt's affairs at this time.

Ankhesenamun

Ankhesenamun is well known from her portrayal as a small child in domestic scenes from the reign of her parents, Nefertiti and Akhenaten. She is also depicted on the funerary goods of her husband, Tutankhamun. Items such as the small golden shrine depict Ankhesenamun in a variety of poses that reveal her religious role in the rebirth of her husband and her association with the goddess Hathor. The highly unusual events following her husband's death indicate Ankhesenamun's apparent attempt to play a much more important political role in Egypt's affairs than was usual for a queen (see 10.15 The Hittites and the post-Amarna pharaohs).

SOURCE 26 Queen Ankhesenamun on the small golden shrine from Tutankhamun's tomb. She is handing arrows to her husband, thereby carrying out her symbolic duty of ensuring his happiness in the afterlife.

10.8 Understanding and using the sources

Source 24

1. What motivated Tushratta to write to Tiye? Find evidence in the letter to support your answer.
2. What does the letter indicate about the role Tiye played in her husband's foreign affairs?
3. Why did Tushratta mention Tiye's son, Akhenaten?

10.8 Check your learning

1. Discuss the following:
   - **a** What were the main roles of the queens of this period?
   - **b** Apart from traditional roles as wives and mothers, what other influence did these queens have?
   - **c** Why is Nefertiti's position exceptional?

10.9 Early Nineteenth Dynasty queens

After the prominent and sometimes highly atypical roles played by some Eighteenth Dynasty queens, the queens of the early Nineteenth Dynasty played much more conventional roles. Tuya, wife of Seti I and mother of Ramesses II, enjoyed a prominent role in the reign of her son, but was eclipsed by her daughter-in-law, Nefertari.

Nefertari

Nefertari (her name means 'She, for whom the sun shines') was the great royal wife of Ramesses II. Although she did not attain the kind of influence enjoyed by Nefertiti, she played important religious and diplomatic roles in her husband's reign. She is depicted officiating jointly with him in religious ceremonies on the walls of a shrine at Gebel el-Silsila. She also accompanied her husband on royal processions up the Nile, presiding with him at religious festivals and the investiture of at least one high priest. As well as being depicted next to her husband in reliefs at Karnak and Luxor, Nefertari was provided with an exquisitely painted tomb in the Valley of the Queens. Ramesses II dedicated an entire temple to Nefertari and the goddess Hathor next to his temple at Abu Simbel. Nefertari exchanged greetings with the Hittite queen, Pudukhepa. Source 28 is one of her letters, written on the occasion of the signing of the great peace treaty between Egypt and the Hittite nation in year 21 of Ramesses' reign.

SOURCE 27 Queen Nefertari depicted in Luxor Temple

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SOURCE 28

… With me, your sister, all goes well; with my country all goes well. With you, my sister, may all go well. See now, I have noted that you, my sister, have written to me, to enquire after my well being. And that you have written to me about the new relationship of good peace and brotherhood in which the Great King, the King of Egypt [now stands] with his brother, the Great King, the King of Hatti. May the sun-god [of Egypt] and storm-god [of Hatti] bring you joy; and may the sun-god cause the peace to be good and give good brotherhood to the Great King, the King of Egypt, with his brother the Great King, the King of Hatti, forever. And I am in friendship and sisterly relations with my sister the Great Queen of Hatti, now and forever.

K. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant: The Life and Times of Ramesses II*, Aris & Phillips Ltd, Warminster, 1982, p. 80

10.9 Understanding and using the sources

Source 28

1 Why did Nefertari write the letter to Pudukhepa?
2 What is the tone of the letter? What does it reveal about relations between Egypt and the Hittites?
3 Why did Nefertari mention the sun god and the storm god?
4 What does this letter suggest about Nefertari's role? Compare it with the role played by Queen Tiye in the Eighteenth Dynasty.

10.9 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   a What were Nefertari's roles and contributions in the Nineteenth Dynasty?
   b In what ways did the roles of queens change in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties?
   c What kinds of written and archaeological sources are available for this topic? How reliable are they as evidence of the changing roles of queens in this historical period?
2 Summarise the information in this section on the changing roles and contributions of queens in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties in a table. You could use the following headings as starting points: Religious, Diplomatic, Traditional, Political, Change.
3 Writing task: Assess the changing roles and contributions of queens in this period.
   To help plan your response:
   - identify the important aspects of the roles and contributions of queens, noting change
   - use these aspects to structure your answer
   - make judgements of the changing role and contribution of queens in these aspects
   - use sources to support your response
   - use appropriate terms and concepts.

10.10 Role and contribution of officials

The tremendous development of Egypt that took place in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties is largely attributable to its pharaohs, whose power and vision enabled significant economic growth. A vital role in this development was played by the pharaoh's officials. Many of the influential individuals in this group remain largely unknown, despite their contribution to the administration and organisation of the powerful country they served.

The internal and external affairs of New Kingdom Egypt were conducted by an extensive network of high-ranking bureaucrats supported by an army of scribes and lesser officials. At the head of the internal civil service were the viziers of the north and south, the king's deputies and the most senior members of the bureaucracy. Other members of the civil administration included overseers of treasuries and granaries, and those responsible for building works and taxation. The king's personal household was headed by a chancellor, who was assisted by chamberlains and stewards. A commander-in-chief with deputies in charge of different regions was responsible for military and naval affairs.

Outside Egypt, governors were appointed to act on behalf of the pharaoh. Those in Syria–Palestine supervised local vassal princes, while Nubia was controlled by the viceroy, or 'king's son of Kush'. With the exception of the Amarna period, the religious domain was in the hands of the chief priest of Amun, who was nominally in charge of all the cults. Beneath him was a highly organised hierarchy of priests, stewards and scribes.

SOURCE 29 Amenhotep, son of Hapu, as a scribe

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Officials of Amenhotep III

Amenhotep III's reign is notable for the changes that took place in the appointment of officials. Some officials inherited their positions, as had happened in the past, but increasingly officials were appointed from the army. Perhaps the king was attempting to find suitable occupations for ambitious military men, denied their usual pursuits in a time of peace. It is possible that Amenhotep III was also trying to curb the increasing power of the Theban officials, as a number of his officials were recruited from Memphis. His officials included:

- Menkheper
- Amenhotep
- Amenhotep, son of Hapu
- Aper-el
- Khaemhet
- Kheruef.

Officials of Akhenaten and Tutankhamun

Akhenaten seems to have followed his father's lead in appointing officials from the ranks of the army. Egyptologist Donald Redford calls Akhenaten's officials 'new men', and alludes to the frequent distribution of gold jewellery and 'gargantuan' feasts as the king's means of ensuring their support. However, Akhenaten may have been following the precedent set by his father in choosing officials who were not tied to Thebes. Many of his officials seem to have resided at Akhetaten, despite being responsible for institutions in other parts of Egypt, and so, during this reign, the usually thriving centres of Thebes and Memphis were idle.

This idleness seems to have lasted only the length of Akhenaten's reign, as Tutankhamun recorded on his Restoration Stela that the new priests he appointed for the restored Amun cult were sons of the Theban upper class. Tutankhamun's capital was at Memphis, however, and his officials seem to have combined some of their Amarna beliefs with the worship of the restored Amun. His principal courtiers, Ay and Horemheb, obviously had immense power at court – considering the youth of the pharaoh – and it is not surprising that these officials, both having military backgrounds, rose to the position of pharaoh following Tutankhamun's death. Officials from these reigns included:

- Maya
- Ramose
- Ranefer
- Ay
- Huya
- Mahu
- Nakhtmin
- Pentu
- Panhesi.

SOURCE 30 Amenemopet, king's son of Kush, in the reign of Seti I

Officials in the Nineteenth Dynasty

The increasingly prominent role played by military men in administration reached its culmination in the establishment of the Nineteenth Dynasty. Ay and Horemheb left no heirs, and the succession fell to Horemheb's vizier, the former chariotry officer Paramessu, who became the pharaoh Ramesses I.

One of the most interesting developments in Egyptian administration was the attempt to curb corruption among officials. This became apparent in the aftermath of the Amarna period, when major reforms of the bureaucracy were undertaken by Horemheb and later by Seti I. Horemheb appointed new judges and other officials, who were required to follow new, strict regulations of conduct. Seti I's Great Edict warned officials against interfering with the king's building projects, temples and estates. Punishment for these offences included cutting off noses and ears, lashes and bodily wounds. The victim's family was also punished, regardless of their possible innocence. Some prominent officials included:

- Paser
- Amenemopet
- Heqanakht
- Ptahemwia.

10.10 Check your learning

1 Research the officials referred to in this section online. Record details of their roles and contribution in a table similar to the following. One example has been modelled for you.

OFFICIAL	TITLE/ROLE	PHARAOH SERVED	CONTRIBUTION/IMPACT	EVIDENCE
Maya	Overseer of the treasury	Tutankhamun	Collected special tax that marked the completion of restoration of temples	

2 Read the discussion of administration in the Eighteenth Dynasty in I. Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 269–71.

3 Writing task: Evaluate the role and contribution of officials in this period.

To help plan your response:

- identify the important features of the role and contribution of officials
- use these features to structure your answer
- make judgements of the importance of the role and contribution of officials in the areas you have identified
- refer to specific officials and sources to support your response
- use appropriate terms and concepts.

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10.11 Foreign relations

The two regions that dominated Egypt's foreign policy interests in the New Kingdom period were Nubia to the south and Syria–Palestine to the north-east. In the earlier New Kingdom period, a succession of conquering pharaohs in command of a highly organised and professional army had penetrated these regions in an attempt to establish firm control over them. This openly imperialist policy was known as 'extending the boundaries with might'. Of particular value to Egypt were the rich resources of these regions, and military conquest was largely designed to protect Egypt's mercantile access to them.

By the reign of Amenhotep III, the hard work of conquest had established for Egypt a strong sphere of influence in both north and south, and warfare was now conducted only on rare occasions. The foreign policy of this period was characterised, particularly in the north, by the maintenance and consolidation of Thutmose IV's diplomatic policy of treaty and foreign marriage.

Egypt also maintained diplomatic and trading relations with other powers in the region, including Babylonia, Assyria, the Mitanni and the emerging Hittite Empire. We know also that Egypt traded directly with Aegean powers such as Crete and Mycenae. Evidence comes from tomb reliefs and artefacts found at sites such as Akhetaten. Inscriptions on statue bases from the reign of Amenhotep III also attest to trade with the Aegean.

Egyptian sources

Royal inscriptions

These official sources are the records of campaigns, which the pharaohs ordered to be inscribed either on stelae, usually set up within the temples, or on the walls of the temples themselves, both in Egypt and in the conquered territories. Sometimes inscriptions were cut into the rocks bordering the Nile, especially at Aswan, recording victories in that region.

Tomb inscriptions of officials

These inscriptions record the public careers of members of the Egyptian administration who served abroad or were responsible for foreign affairs. The inscriptions were often accompanied by wall paintings depicting some of the officials' most significant achievements in the king's service.

Foreign sources

cuneiform
a system of wedge-shaped writing on clay tablets first developed by the ancient cultures of Mesopotamia and Persia

The Amarna Letters

These letters are the diplomatic correspondence sent to Amenhotep III and Akhenaten and, to a lesser extent, Tutankhamun from foreign rulers in Syria and Palestine. These clay tablets, written in the **cuneiform** script, give valuable insights into Egypt's administration of the empire in Syria–Palestine. However, these letters have raised many difficulties for scholars because they are undated and many are in a damaged condition. An additional problem is that,

with very few exceptions, we do not have the replies that the pharaohs might have sent. For this reason, scholars have often drawn very different conclusions about the nature of Egypt's foreign policy in Syria–Palestine during the Amarna period.

The correspondence was of two basic kinds: it came either from great kings or from vassal princes and chieftains.

- *Great kings:* These included the independent rulers of important kingdoms such as the Mitanni, Babylonians and Hittites. These kings arranged inter-dynastic marriages in accordance with the diplomatic etiquette of the time and sent each other gifts of gold and other valuables. King Tushratta of Naharin even sent Amenhotep III a statue of the goddess Ishtar in a vain attempt to improve his health towards the end of his life. Egypt was regarded as the most important power at this time. Evidence of this can be seen in the fact that while other kings offered princesses to the Egyptian pharaoh, the king of Egypt never gave daughters or sisters in marriage to other powers. See Source 38 for an example.
- *Vassal princes:* These local rulers were not independent, but owed allegiance to a 'great king' and were bound by treaty obligations that included the payment of taxes, trading rights and supply of troops to the great king's army. The majority of Egypt's vassal princes were situated in Palestine, where Egypt's control was greatest. The sons and daughters of these princes were often brought up in the Egyptian court, but they were regarded as hostages to ensure the loyalty of the vassal towns. The letters of vassal princes from both Syria and Palestine proclaim their loyalty to Egypt, denounce the rival princes whom they are attacking or who are attacking them, and contain frequent requests for gold, soldiers and other provisions. See Source 35 for an example.

Hittite sources

One particularly valuable source from the reign of Ramesses II concerns the Hittite peace treaty that Ramesses II negotiated in year 21 of his reign. The Hittite version of this important event, recovered during the excavation of the Hittite capital of Hattusas, has enabled scholars to test the reliability of the Egyptian account of this event.

10.11 Check your learning

1. What was the main feature of Egypt's relations with foreign powers during the later Eighteenth Dynasty?
2. What are the Amarna Letters? What problems of evidence do they raise for the historian investigating Egyptian foreign policy in this period?
3. What different perspectives are represented in the range of sources described above? How are they valuable for our understanding of Egypt's foreign relations in this period?

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10.12 Image of the 'warrior pharaoh'

Central to the concept of kingship in the New Kingdom was the king's portrayal as a warrior pharaoh. This was both a political and a religious statement and emphasised the king's role as the divine upholder of *ma'at*. In earlier times, the king, a distant and mysterious being, was held in godlike awe by his subjects. However, by New Kingdom times he was a more earthly, vulnerable figure who fought alongside his troops in battle.

Iconography

'Warrior pharaoh' iconography, showing the king triumphing over the forces of chaos, represented by foreign enemies and bound captives made the pharaoh appear an almost superhuman, invulnerable being.

The essential features of the New Kingdom warrior pharaoh image include the pharaoh:

- leading his soldiers into battle and returning in victory
- attacking the enemy in his chariot, a New Kingdom innovation (see Source 45)
- wearing war regalia, for example the blue war crown or other pharaonic headdress
- in larger than life-size depiction, holding one or more of the enemy with one hand, while he clubs their brains out with a mace – also known as 'smiting the enemy' (see Source 32)
- in the guise of a sphinx, trampling his enemies (see Source 31)
- offering the spoils of war to the god Amun, the inspiration for his victory.

SOURCE 31 A detail of a chariot from Tutankhamun's tomb showing the king as a sphinx trampling his enemies

Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs

During the reign of Amenhotep III, warfare was replaced largely by diplomacy and foreign marriage. The royal iconography, however, required the king to continue to be portrayed as a potent warrior pharaoh. The Tablet of Victory from his mortuary temple shows Amenhotep III driving his chariot over both Nubian and Syrian enemies, while the text describes him as 'annihilating the heir of the wretched Kush' and 'smiting Naharin [Mitanni] with his mighty sword'.

The scarcity of scenes depicting Akhenaten in traditional warrior pose has led many scholars to assume that his reign lacked a military dimension. Evidence suggests, however, that he followed a traditional foreign policy. We know of one traditional 'warrior pharaoh' scene at East Karnak where Akhenaten is shown killing prisoners beneath

the rays of the Aten. There are numerous scenes of a strong military presence at Akhetaten, indicating that the army was not idle during his reign. A career in the army continued to be a major avenue of promotion for ambitious and able men, as the career of Horemheb demonstrates.

The brief reign of Tutankhamun witnessed a re-establishment of the traditional warrior iconography of the king, even though there is some doubt that the young king ever personally conducted a military campaign. The painted wooden chest from his tomb shows the young pharaoh as a warrior, driving his chariot into battle against both Nubian and Asiatic warriors.

Nineteenth Dynasty pharaohs

The Nineteenth Dynasty produced a large number of pharaonic battle scenes, known as battle cycles, on temple walls, accompanied by explanatory text. This contrasts with earlier written accounts of battles (e.g. the *Annals* of Thutmose III) or battle scenes appearing mostly in the private tombs of generals. These new battle scenes include depictions of preparations for war, troops marching off to fight, and the battle itself. The king in his chariot fires arrows at the enemy or tramples their corpses and takes prisoners. Final scenes often depicted the victory parade and presentation of booty and prisoners to the pharaoh, who is shown 'smiting the enemy', and ultimately the dedication of everything to Amun.

SOURCE 32 Seti I smiting enemies in a relief from the Temple of Amun at Karnak

Other aspects

Another aspect of the warrior pharaoh image that developed over time was the portrayal of the pharaoh as an elite athlete and sportsman – a perfect physical specimen. Amenhotep III took up this theme by promoting his ability as a great hunter. A commemorative scarab issued in the early years of his reign records a wild bull hunt where the young pharaoh killed many animals while riding in his chariot. A further scarab records the killing of 102 lions over the first 10 years of his reign.

A variation on this theme can be seen in Ramesses II's portrayal in reliefs depicting the siege of Dapur in year 10 of his reign. Ramesses I is shown fighting in his chariot without his protective mail shirt. The accompanying text records that he fought three times, and on one occasion for two hours, without his shirt!

10.12 Check your learning

1. Explain the political and religious significance of the 'warrior pharaoh' image.
2. Make a collection of the following and explain what they reveal about 'warrior pharaoh' iconography:
   - images of the pharaohs of this period depicted in any of the guises of the 'warrior pharaoh'
   - images of Nineteenth Dynasty battle cycles, such as depictions of Ramesses II's battle of Kadesh or the battles of Seti I
   - images and text of Amenhotep III's commemorative scarabs.

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10.13 Maintenance and administration of the 'empire': Nubia

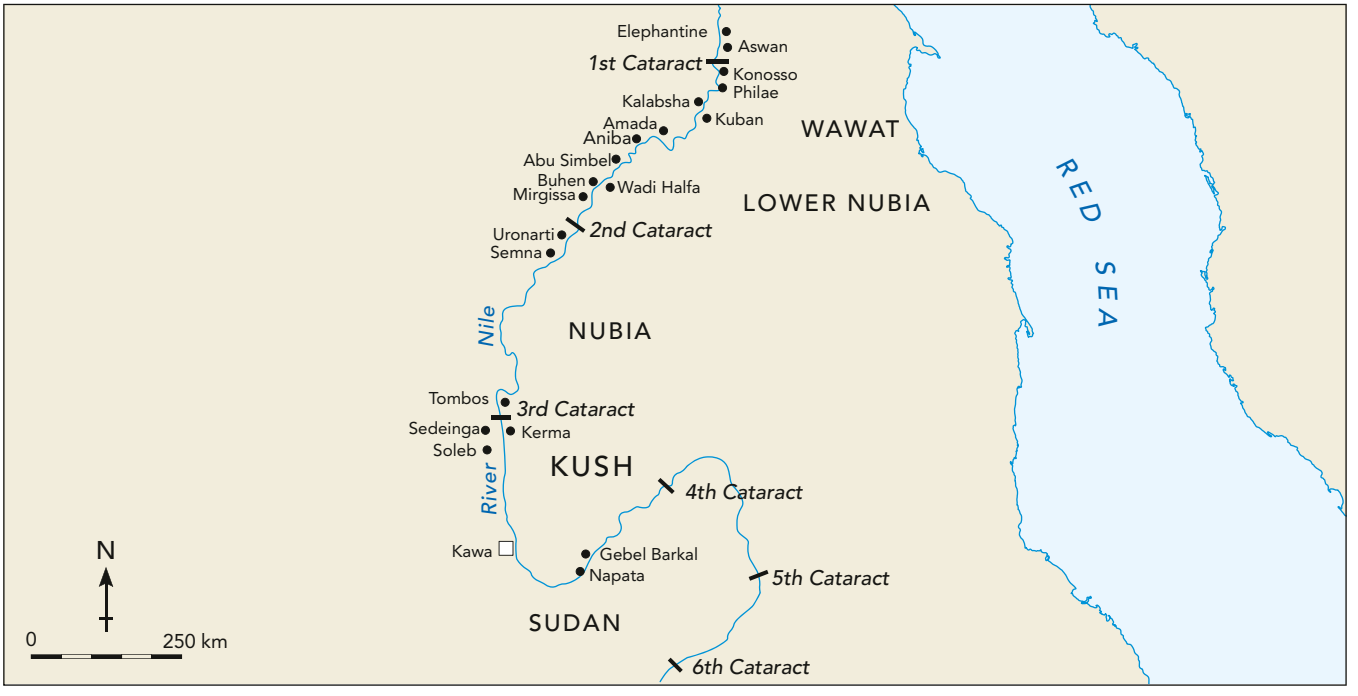
Old Kingdom the period of ancient Egyptian history that occurred in the 3rd millennium BC, comprising the Third to the Sixth Dynasties

Egypt's relations with Nubia date to **Old Kingdom** times. During the Eighteenth Dynasty, the province of Nubia extended southwards from Aswan to the district of Napata (modern Sudan) and included two regions known as Wawat and Kush. Nubia contained a number of independent tribes, which sometimes combined to attack the Egyptians. Because they lacked unity, it was relatively easy for the Egyptians to defeat them.

Egypt aimed to secure her frontier at Aswan and exploit the mineral resources of the region, especially gold. The Egyptians also mined amethyst and copper, and quarried green diorite, a quality stone used for sculpture. Egypt had established trade routes to gain access to these resources and had also built forts at strategic points along the Nile, most notably in Buhen near the area of the Second Cataract. During the Eighteenth Dynasty, Egypt maintained its control by building walled towns that featured imposing temples. These acted as administrative centres and bases for mining operations. One of the most impressive of these temples was built by Amenhotep III at Soleb, south of the Third Cataract. Two red granite lions, symbol of the all-conquering pharaohs, originally stood in front of the temple (see Source 15).

By the reign of Amenhotep III, the Nubian gold trade was one of Egypt's most valuable enterprises. The 'king's son of Kush' or viceroy of Nubia, an Egyptian governor appointed by the king and resident in Nubia, protected both Egypt's interests and Egyptian colonists. Throughout the New Kingdom period, pharaohs conducted regular military raids into Nubia to quash sporadic rebellions, often brutally. Large numbers of rebels were often executed and, on occasion, thousands of prisoners were taken to captivity in Egypt.

NUBIA



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 33 Nubia in the New Kingdom

Amenhotep III: 'Annihilator of the wretched Kush'

Despite the fact that only one military campaign is recorded for the long reign of Amenhotep III, against Nubia in year 5, the king continued to depict himself as a great warrior pharaoh in the tradition of his predecessors. A number of royal inscriptions, including the Konosso Stela from the First Cataract and the Tablet of Victory from the king's mortuary temple, record the campaign and refer to the king as 'annihilator of the wretched Kush'. The most detailed account can be found in the Semna Inscription from the tomb of Merymose, viceroy of Nubia, who supervised the campaign.

SOURCE 34

The might of Nibmare [Amenhotep III] took them in one hour, making a great slaughter – their cattle; not one of them escaped … The might of Amenhotep took them; the barbarians among them, male as well as female, were not separated; by the plan of Horus, Lord of the Two Lands, King Nibmare, mighty bull, strong in might. Ibhet had been haughty, great things were in their hearts, [but] the fierce-eyed lion, this ruler, he slew them by the command of Amun-Atum, his august father; it was he who led him in might and victory.

J. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt, Vol. 2: The Eighteenth Dynasty*, Histories & Mysteries of Man, London, 1988, p. 341

Akhenaten's Nubian policy

Akhenaten maintained the Nubian policy of his predecessors, conducting a campaign during his reign. The pharaoh did not accompany the expedition but authorised his Nubian viceroy, Thutmose, to deal with the rebellion. A stela erected at Buhen by Thutmose recorded his victory and the capture of about 150 Nubians and 360 head of cattle. A number of the rebels were impaled on stakes, an indication that Egypt was prepared to take tough measures to protect its southern possessions.

Akhenaten introduced a new feature into Egypt's Nubian policy by resettling in Nubia the ringleaders of the nomadic and warlike Apiru, who had been attacking Egypt's vassal towns in Palestine. This was intended to serve a double purpose: to curb rebellion in Nubia and to rid Egypt of the perennial threat posed by the Apiru to her Palestinian interests.

During the New Kingdom, Egypt began to employ contingents of Nubian bowmen as mercenaries in the Egyptian army. Akhenaten was the first pharaoh to make regular use of these Nubians as garrison troops in Retjenu. These troops were stationed in Egyptian forts and could be called upon by the Egyptian governors of the region to deal with rebellious vassal towns. Evidence from the Amarna Letters suggests that the policy may not have been very successful. In Source 35, Abdu-heba, the Egyptian vassal prince of Jerusalem, complains about Nubian vandalism.

SOURCE 35

With reference to the Nubians, let my king ask the commissioners whether my house is not very strong! Yet they attempted a very great crime; they took their implements and breached … the roof. [If] you send troops into the land [of Jerusalem] let there be an [Egyptian] officer with them for regular service. Let my king provision them – for [all] the lands are impoverished by

them – [and] let my king supply them with adequate grain, oil and clothing, until Pawure, the royal commissioner, comes up to the land of Jerusalem.

J. Pritchard (ed.), *The Ancient Near East, Vol. 1: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1965, p. 271

Nubia in the post-Amarna period

During the short reigns of Tutankhamun and Ay, the military played an increasingly important role in Egyptian affairs. This is clearly shown by the career of Horemheb, who rose from the rank of 'scribe of recruits' to that of generalissimo (chief commander) of the New Kingdom army. Horemheb's increasing power during this period was probably the result of his military successes abroad. The tomb that he built for himself at Memphis during this time, before he became pharaoh, contains a number of reliefs depicting his military exploits in both Nubia and Retjenu. Among the scenes of prisoners captured in battle are a number that show long lines of Nubians being paraded before general Horemheb. Another shows a large group of seated Nubians awaiting transportation to work camps or other places of confinement. Although no specific battles or campaigns are referred to, it is likely that these scenes indicate that a number of foreign campaigns were conducted during Tutankhamun's reign. There are no recorded Nubian campaigns during the reigns of Ay and Horemheb.

SOURCE 36 A scene from the Memphite tomb of Horemheb shows Nubian prisoners waiting to be transported to work camps.

Nubia in the Nineteenth Dynasty

The Nineteenth Dynasty was a period of renewed military campaigning, although Nubia was less troublesome in this period. In year 8 of Seti I's reign, a punitive raid into Nubia successfully put down a rebellion by a tribe known as the Irem. The record shows that 660 people were taken prisoner. No other disturbance in Nubia is recorded until the end of Seti's long reign, when an army was despatched under Seti's son, the future king, Ramesses, to deal with the problem.

Nubia remained relatively quiet during the reign of Ramesses II, although another rebellion by the Irem tribe between years 15 and 20 was ruthlessly suppressed. This time 7000 of the Irem were taken captive; it is not surprising that no further rebellions by the tribe are recorded. As in the past, Egypt's control of her southern neighbour continued to be exercised through the office of the Egyptian viceroy, the king's son of Kush. Perhaps as a reminder to the Nubians that Ramesses was indeed their lord and master, the king erected the great mortuary temples for himself and his queen, Nefertari, at a site in Nubia just south of Aswan at Abu Simbel.

10.13 Understanding and using the sources

Source 34

1 What evidence does the source give about Egypt's attitude to the Nubians and methods used to deal with them?

2 What does it indicate about the relationship between (a) the king and his Nubian viceroy, and (b) the king and the god Amun?

3 Comment on the strengths and limitations of royal inscriptions in comparison to those of officials such as Merymose for reconstructing events such as Amenhotep III's Nubian campaign.

Source 35

4 What crime did the Nubians commit?

5 What does Abdu-heba want the king to do when he sends troops to Jerusalem? Why?

6 What does this source tell us about the policy of having Nubians as garrison troops in Syria–Palestine?

10.13 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What was Egypt's main interest in Nubia?
   - **b** What methods were used to protect Egypt's interests in Nubia?

2 Summarise Egypt's activities in Nubia during this period by drawing up a table using the information in this section and the following headings: Pharaoh, Military activity, Administration, Evidence, Significance.

3 Writing task: Explain how Egypt maintained and administered the 'empire' in Nubia.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the important features of military activity and administration in Nubia
   - use these features to structure your answer
   - give cause and effect, why and how for these features
   - use specific evidence to support your explanation
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues, such as differing perspectives of sources.

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10.14 Maintenance and administration of the 'empire': Syria–Palestine

Egypt's so-called 'Asian empire', established during the reign of Thutmose III, was still largely intact at the accession of Amenhotep III. Egypt was firmly in control of the land of Palestine, an area that extended to the north of Damascus into the region of the upper Orontes River and included the cities of the Phoenician coast as far as Byblos. Egypt's control of this area was exercised through a system of administration based on the allegiance of vassal princes in the conquered towns. Egypt did not interfere in their internal affairs provided they kept the peace and paid an annual tax or tribute, which was a percentage of their crops, livestock or other produce. The Egyptians also maintained garrisons of soldiers at forts in strategic areas and appointed Egyptian governors to supervise both the garrisons and the activities of the vassals.

Syria included the territory north of Kadesh to the border of the Hittite kingdom. It was bounded on the north-east by the Euphrates River, on the other side of which lay the land of Naharin, the territory of the Mitanni people. The fertile river valley of the Orontes, together with the other natural resources of the region, acted as a magnet to the surrounding kingdoms, which competed for domination of the area. Syria was also an important trade corridor for the nearby powers wishing to gain access to seaports, such as Byblos on the Phoenician coast.

EGYPT AND THE NEAR EAST

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 37 Egypt and the Near East in the New Kingdom

An Egyptian 'empire'?

The term 'empire' tends to be used loosely to describe Egypt's relationships with both Nubia and Syria–Palestine. However, the situation usually understood by the term 'empire' is more appropriate for Nubia than Syria–Palestine. Features of the relationship between Egypt and Nubia that fit the term 'empire' include:

- Egypt's permanent military occupation of Nubia – garrisons stationed at fortified towns could be mobilised quickly to deal with rebellions
- direct administration by an Egyptian governor – the king's son of Kush, or viceroy of Nubia
- economic exploitation of Nubian resources for the benefit of Egypt
- imposition of Egyptian culture on the Nubian population.

Whether the term 'empire' accurately describes Egypt's control of Syria–Palestine is a matter of debate. Here Egypt did not exercise the kind of direct control that it did in Nubia. The term 'sphere of influence' is a more appropriate term.

Changing relations with the Mitanni and the Hittites

During the early Eighteenth Dynasty, the Mitanni were the strongest power in the north, and often formed powerful alliances with the towns of Syria, especially the strategically important town of Kadesh. This checked Egyptian attempts at expansion. The Egyptians eventually recognised the futility of trying to dominate northern Syria, and in the reign of Amenhotep II, grandfather of Amenhotep III, they appear to have sought peace with the Mitanni. This, together with a policy of diplomatic marriage of Mitanni princesses to the Egyptian kings, during the reign of Amenhotep III, ensured peace between the two kingdoms for the next generation. Egypt now reaped the benefits of foreign trade free from the burden of constant warfare. This was set to change with the appearance of an aggressive new power on the scene – the Hittites.

SOURCE 38 A letter from Tushratta, king of the Mitanni, to Amenhotep III

Amenhotep III: diplomat

Amenhotep III continued the diplomatic policy established by his predecessors. Correspondence was exchanged between Amenhotep III and Tushratta, king of the Mitanni. Amenhotep III maintained the balance of power in the Near East by applying the policy of diplomatic marriages with important powers. He married both Gilukhepa and Tadukhepa, sister and daughter of Tushratta. There is also evidence from Amenhotep III's reign of marriages to Babylonian and Syrian princesses, as well as one from Arzawa. The Amarna Letters reveal that he also maintained friendly relations with other powers, especially the Hittites whose kingdom lay to the north of Syria. They were to become a major threat to Egypt's Asiatic interests in the reigns of Amenhotep's successors.

Hittite expansion

The peace that had prevailed for the greater part of Amenhotep III's reign was threatened when, towards the end of the reign, Suppiluliumas succeeded to the Hittite throne. His accession marked the beginning of a period of aggressive Hittite expansion. The Mitanni kingdom was soon overpowered and the Hittites moved into north Syria, conquering the former allies of the Mitanni. They also threatened Egyptian interests by trying to detach the vassal princes from their Egyptian overlord.

Suppiluliumas' double game

Suppiluliumas was a clever strategist. When Akhenaten became pharaoh, Suppiluliumas wrote to him congratulating him on his accession. He declared his friendship with Egypt and sent appropriate gifts. But at the same time, while avoiding any direct military attack on Egypt's vassals in Syria or on the Phoenician coast, he prepared to attack the kingdom of Mitanni. He aimed to win over Egypt's vassals by diplomacy or warfare. Source 39 is an extract from a letter he sent to Akhenaten on his accession.

SOURCE 39

The messages I sent to your father and the wishes he expressed to me will certainly be renewed between us. O King, I did not reject anything your father asked for, and your father never neglected none of the wishes I expressed, but granted me everything. Why have you, my brother, refused to send me what your father during his lifetime has sent me?

Now, my brother, you have acceded to the throne of your father, and similarly as your father and I have sent each other gifts of friendship, I wish good friendship to exist between you and me …

Amarna Letter EA 41

Akhenaten's Hittite war

Many scholars have argued that Akhenaten did nothing to prevent Hittite aggression at this time. However, evidence on the *talatat* from his East Karnak temples, recovered from the fill within the second and ninth pylons of Karnak Temple, indicates that he did fight a war against the Hittites. This would have occurred at some time between years 1 and 4 of his reign, when the temples were erected. Reconstructed scenes on these blocks record sieges against two cities, one of which is Hittite and the other Syro-Palestinian. In one scene, a group of Hittite soldiers is depicted within the walls of a fortified city, which is being attacked by Egyptian forces. In other *talatat*, Akhenaten is seen riding in an army procession and also killing prisoners, with the rays of the Aten shining down on him.

10.14 Understanding and using the sources

Source 39

1 What relationship does Suppiluliumas claim to have had with Amenhotep III?
2 What does he complain of in his letter to Akhenaten?
3 Comment on the tone of this letter.

10.14 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:

- **a** How did Egypt exercise control over Palestine?
- **b** Why was Egypt unable to exercise direct control over Syria–Palestine as it did in Nubia?
- **c** Explain the difference between an 'empire' and a 'sphere of influence'.
- **d** How did the relationships between Egypt, the Mitanni and the Hittites change?
- **e** What was the cause of the changes?
- **f** How did Suppiluliumas show himself to be 'a clever strategist'?

10.14 Profile

Vassal rulers: Rib-Addi of Byblos and Aziru of Amurru

Egypt's relationships with its vassals became much more complicated with continued Hittite expansion into northern Syria. This brought Suppiluliumas into more direct conflict with Egypt's vassals. The political situation in the north was confused and volatile.

There were two key players in this situation. One was Rib-Addi of Byblos (referred to as 'Gubla' in the Amarna Letters), an important port and trading centre on the Phoenician coast. Rib-Addi was a loyal vassal of Egypt. The other was Aziru of Amurru, the northern-most of Egypt's inland vassal states. Rib-Addi's relations with Aziru's predecessor, Abdi-Ashirta had been troubled. His letters of complaint to Akhenaten accused Abdi-Ashirta of trying to assassinate him and of attempting to incite his subjects to rebellion. Abdi-Ashirta's son, Aziru, was no more inclined to peaceful relations. Now Rib-Addi's letters reported the death of his sister and her family who were caught up in a revolt in Tyre, and the repeated Hittite incursions into territory owing allegiance to Egypt.

Aziru of Amurru was in a difficult situation because, although he was an ally of Egypt, his land was immediately adjacent to the Hittite kingdom. He was also a cunning strategist, attempting to carve out his own sphere of influence by attacking other vassals of Egypt and forming alliances wherever he could. He played a double game by declaring his friendship with both the Egyptians and the Hittites as the situation demanded.

Rib-Addi was eventually captured and killed by Aziru. When Akhenaten wrote to Aziru demanding he present himself at the Egyptian court to account for his actions, Aziru delayed complying with the order, claiming that Hittite attacks on his territory prevented him from attending. When he finally did make the journey to Egypt, he was detained for several years. On his return to Amurru he finally renounced his alliance with Egypt and, bowing to a greater force, became a vassal of the Hittites. The status of Amurru remained unresolved until the conclusion of a peace treaty with the Hittites in the reign of Ramesses II when it became part of the Hittite Empire. The situation is summed up in Source 39.

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SOURCE 40

Allowing the latter [Aziru] to consolidate his power, even at the expense of vassals like Rib-Hadda [Rib-Addi], was a price the Egyptians, clearly, were willing to pay … The lessons Egypt learned from its bitter experience at the end of the Amarna Age are reflected, perhaps, in the tighter controls it would exert over its vassals in the later New Kingdom.

W. Murnane, 'Imperial Egypt and the limits of power', in R. Cohen & R. Westbrook, *Amarna Diplomacy: The Beginnings of International Relations*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2000, p. 111

Historiographical issue: Interpretation of Egyptian foreign policy

The story of Aziru and Rib-Addi is one of the most interesting of the many examples of treachery and intrigue recorded in the Amarna Letters. What was the policy of the Amarna kings in the face of such a complex situation? Because there are so few surviving replies sent by the Egyptian kings, it has been difficult to draw any firm conclusions.

Compared to his father, Amenhotep III, Akhenaten certainly pursued a more active policy. Some requests for military and other assistance were granted; others were refused or ignored. One of Akhenaten's harshest critics, Donald Redford, argues that 'Akhenaten refused to apply himself to the necessary organisation required to send forth an expeditionary force' and that his 'hesitancy and lack of foresight … on his northern frontier … lost him the initiative'. For more discussion of this issue, see Chapter 6.

SOURCE 41 Amarna Letter EA 362, one of the many letters sent by Rib-Addi of Byblos to Egypt

10.14 Profile tasks

1. Discuss the following:
   - **a** Explain the conflict between Rib-Addi and Aziru and its outcome.
   - **b** How did Akhenaten respond to the dispute? What does it suggest about the nature of Egyptian policy?
   - **c** What conclusion does Murnane draw in Source 40? Do you agree?
   - **d** What different conclusion does Redford draw? Is it supported by the evidence?
   - **e** What does the treatment of Aziru of Amurru reveal of Akhenaten's foreign policy? What is the significance of his becoming a Hittite vassal on his return home?
   - **f** What do the Amarna Letters reveal about Egyptian policy in Syria–Palestine?
2. Read some of Rib-Addi's letters to the Egyptian pharaoh. For example, see Source 43 in Chapter 6, and also search online for 'The Amarna Letters: Rib-Addi'. What were his main complaints? How should the pharaoh have dealt with them?

10.15 The Hittites and the post-Amarna pharaohs

During the reigns of Akhenaten's successors, the Hittites continued their warlike activities, and Egypt mounted some campaigns against them when they ventured too close to Egyptian territory. Towards the end of Tutankhamun's reign, Hittite sources recorded a victory against an alliance of Egyptian and Assyrian forces at Kadesh. On this occasion, the Hittites followed up the victory with a raid into the territory of the Amki, at the headwaters of the Orontes River, territory that was under the direct control of Egypt. A number of Egyptians were taken captive.

The campaigns of Tutankhamun's reign were probably organised and led by Horemheb, the commander of the Egyptian army. In the tomb that he built for himself at Memphis, while he was still general, a number of scenes depict victorious campaigns in Syria–Palestine, although details of specific battles and their dates are lacking.

The affair of the Hittite prince

Tutankhamun's death occurred shortly after the Hittite defeat of the Egyptians at Kadesh. The events that followed are by no means certain, but Tutankhamun's widow, Ankhesenamun, appears to have written to the Hittite king, Suppiluliumas, requesting that he send one of his sons to Egypt to marry her and thereby become the king of Egypt. Ankhesenamun's letters to the Hittite king, preserved in the Hittite archives, record that she was reluctant to choose a 'servant' of hers for a husband. Suppiluliumas, thinking that this was a trick, sent a messenger to the Egyptian court to verify the request. The queen replied as shown in Source 42.

SOURCE 42

… If I had a son, should I write to a foreign country in a manner humiliating to me and to my country? You do not believe me and you even say so to me! He who was my husband is dead and I have no son. Should I then perhaps take one of my servants and make of him my husband? I have written to no other country, I have written to you. They say that you have many sons. Give me one of your sons and he will be my husband and lord of the land of Egypt.

T. Bryce, *Letters of the Great Kings of the Ancient Near East*, Routledge, 2003

Suppiluliumas was persuaded and sent his son Zannanza to Egypt. However, the prince died en route, whether by foul play or illness is unknown. The motivation behind the queen's move can only be guessed; however, if it was to bring about peace with the Hittites, it failed.

Egypt seems to have enjoyed a respite from foreign conflict during Ay's short reign and the early years of Horemheb, his successor. Hittite records indicate that in about year 10 of Horemheb's reign, attempts were made to regain Kadesh and Amurru, but without success. A later Hittite text referring to a peace treaty broken in the early Nineteenth Dynasty, suggests that such a treaty might have been negotiated during the reign of Horemheb. A more energetic foreign policy, particularly in Retjenu, was to be taken up by Horemheb's Nineteenth Dynasty successors.

10.15 Check your learning

1. Discuss the following:
   - **a** What is surprising about Ankhesenamun's request to Suppiluliumas?
   - **b** If Zannanza was murdered on his way to Egypt, who might have been responsible and why?
   - **c** How might Egypt's relations with Near Eastern powers have changed if a Hittite prince had become pharaoh of Egypt?
2. Find out more about Ankhesenamun and the Hittite prince. You could start by reading the online article 'The death of Tutankhamun – The Zannanza incident part 1'.
3. Writing task: Explain Egypt's relationship with Syria–Palestine in this period.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the relevant aspects of Egypt's relationship with its vassal rulers
   - use these to structure your response
   - give cause and effect, why and how for these aspects
   - use specific evidence to support your explanation
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

SOURCE 43 Gate of the Lions, entrance to Hattusa, the Hittite capital in late Bronze Age times

10.16 Ramesside imperialism: The wars of Seti I and Ramesses II

Seti I's wars aimed to reassert Egypt's influence in Syria–Palestine that had been established by his role model, Thutmose III. An additional motivation was the need for resources to carry out his ambitious building program of restoration and personal promotion. He had reopened old mines and quarries, but needed the resources that traditionally came from Syria–Palestine.

Seti I's wars in Asia

The principal evidence for the campaigns of Seti I in Syria–Palestine consists of a series of sculptured scenes on the outside of the north wall of the Great Hypostyle Hall in Karnak Temple. These scenes, although not depicted in any chronological order, suggest that Seti I may have conducted as many as five campaigns, concentrating on a carefully planned penetration of Retjenu, which aimed ultimately at the conquest of northern Syria.

SETI I CONQUESTS IN SYRIA–PALESTINE

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 44 Syria–Palestine, showing the four phases of Seti I's Asian conquests

The four strategic phases of Seti's northern campaigns bear a remarkable similarity to the military strategy followed by Thutmose III when he first carved out an Egyptian sphere of influence in Asia in the early Eighteenth Dynasty.

According to Egyptologist Raymond Faulkner, the four phases of Seti's conquests were:

- *Phase 1* – the conquest of the Shasu Bedouin in southern Palestine, probably centred on the coastal fortress of Gaza
- *Phase 2* – the conquest of the Phoenician coast and Egyptian coastal route into northern Palestine; this was apparently accomplished by a carefully planned simultaneous attack on the three key towns of Yenoam, Beth-Shan and Hammath, located in the region south of the Sea of Galilee
- *Phase 3* – having secured his rear, Seti travelled further north to the Levant (modern Lebanon) and the seaports of the northern Syrian coast, capturing important towns, including Simyra and Ullaza
- *Phase 4* – the allegiance of the coastal cities assured, and his flank and supply lines by sea into Phoenician ports secured, Seti now struck inland and captured the strategically important town of Kadesh; control of Kadesh gave him access to the northern Syrian plain and brought Amurru back to Egypt's side.

SOURCE 45 A scene from Karnak Temple showing Seti I receiving the submission of the Syrian chiefs in the upper register and attacking a town in Canaan in the lower register

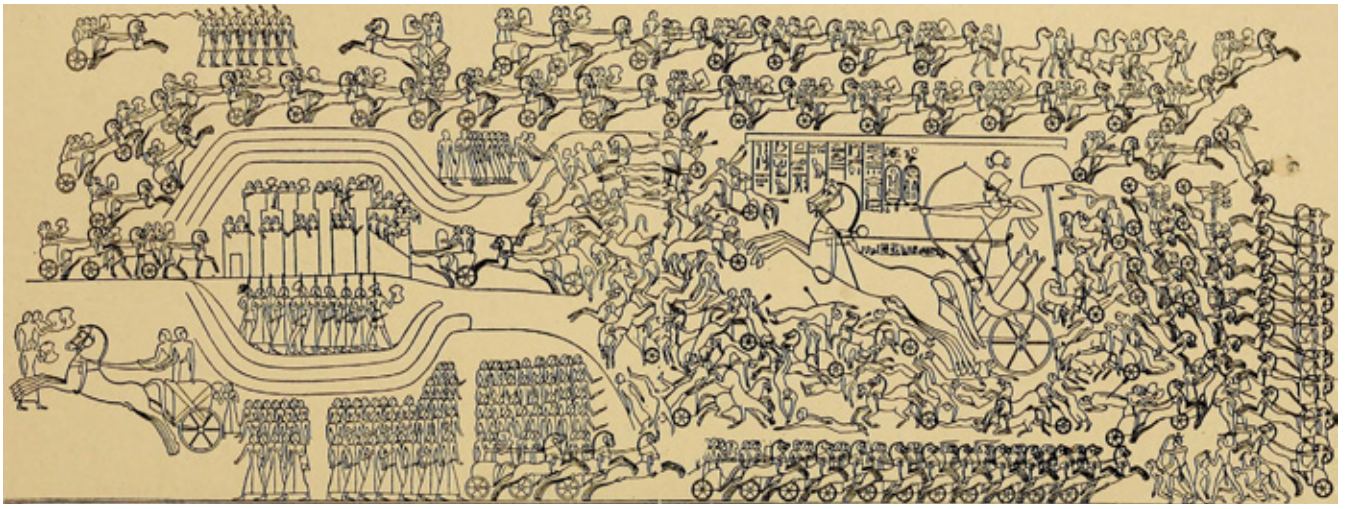
This latter phase also brought him into direct conflict with the Hittites. Despite his initial success at Kadesh, Seti was unable to reassert Egyptian dominance in northern Syria. Both Kadesh and Amurru went back to the Hittites when Egyptian forces retired. Seti appears eventually to have concluded a peace treaty with the Hittite king, Muwatallis. By the terms of this treaty, Egypt lost both Kadesh and Amurru again.

SOURCE 46

At the end of [Seti's] wars it seems probable that the frontier of the re-established Asiatic empire ran roughly eastward from the mouth of the river Litany, with Tyre, Megiddo and Bethshan perhaps serving as its main military bases … Although he failed to restore the Asiatic empire of Egypt to what it had once been, he at least succeeded in imposing Egyptian authority over the whole of Palestine and probably a portion of Southern Syria, which in the face of a strong Hittite Empire in the north was as much as Egypt could reasonably expect to hold.

R. Faulkner, 'The wars of Sethos I', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 33, 1947, pp. 38–9

SOURCE 47 Hittite soldiers from the temple of Ramesses II at Abu Simbel



SOURCE 48 A scene depicting Ramesses II in his chariot at the Battle of Kadesh

Seti I's Libyan war

In addition to Egypt's traditional areas to the north and south, Seti also had to deal with a new and different threat – this time from the west: an invasion of Libyan tribesmen into Egypt's Nile Delta region. The campaign, most likely conducted in year 2 of Seti's reign, was successful. However, it marked the emergence of a disturbing problem that would culminate in the great Libyan war fought later by Ramesses III.

Ramesses II and Asia

Ramesses II's first major campaign into Syria took place in year 4 of his reign, some 10 years after his father had campaigned there. As a result, Amurru was regained for Egypt. This gave Ramesses a convenient base for a later attack on Kadesh. Suppiluliumas' successor, Muwatallis, assembled a huge army and made ready to fight Egypt in an attempt to regain Amurru. Ramesses led his army across the Egyptian border. The scene was set for the Battle of Kadesh, which took place in year 5 of his reign (see 10.17 The Battle of Kadesh).

10.16 Understanding and using the sources

Source 46

1 Why was there a resurgence of military activity in Retjenu during the reign of Seti I?
2 According to Faulkner, how successful was Seti I?

10.16 Check your learning

1 What is the significance of Amurru in Egyptian-Hittite relations so far?
2 Why was it so difficult for Egypt to control the territory beyond Kadesh?

10.17 The Battle of Kadesh

Kadesh was strategically important. It had been fought over many times before and had been passed backwards and forwards between Egyptian and Hittite hands. The Battle of Kadesh is one of the most famous battles of ancient times, but not for its outcome, which was a stalemate with both sides claiming victory. It was famous because Ramesses II made it so. In a bold propaganda exercise, Ramesses claimed the battle as a great victory for Egypt and had accounts of it carved on all the major temples in the land.

The sequence chart of the Battle of Kadesh (Source 49) shows the major developments in the battle, together with extracts from Ramesses' own accounts.

SOURCE 49

A SEQUENCE CHART OF THE BATTLE OF KADESH

All quotes are from Ramesses II's own accounts in the *Bulletin*, cited in M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Vol. II: The New Kingdom*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1976, and G. Callender, *The Eye of Horus: A History of Ancient Egypt*, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1993.

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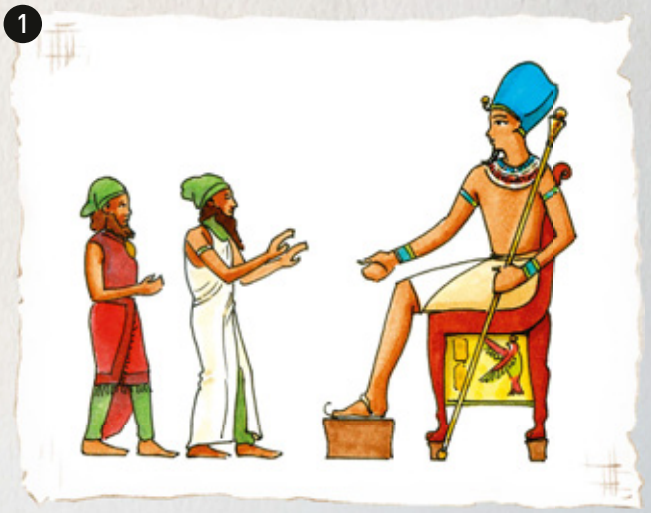

Bedouin spies bring false information

Two Bedouin spies come to Ramesses, claiming that the Bedouins are preparing to abandon their alliance with the Hittites in order to join the Egyptian forces. When Ramesses asks where the army of the Hittites is located the spies say: 'They are in the land of Kaleb [that is, Aleppo, 190 kilometres north of Kadesh] to the north of Tunip. For [the Hittite chief] was too fearful of Pharaoh to come southward when he heard that Pharaoh had come northward.'

Lichtheim, p. 60

2

Muwatallis sets a trap at Kadesh

'Now the two Shosu who said these words to his majesty, said them falsely, for ... the foe from Khatti [the Hittites] had come with his infantry and his chariotry and ... [his] allies to fight against the army of his majesty, he standing equipped and ready behind Kadesh the Old, and his majesty did not know that they were there.'

Lichtheim, p. 60

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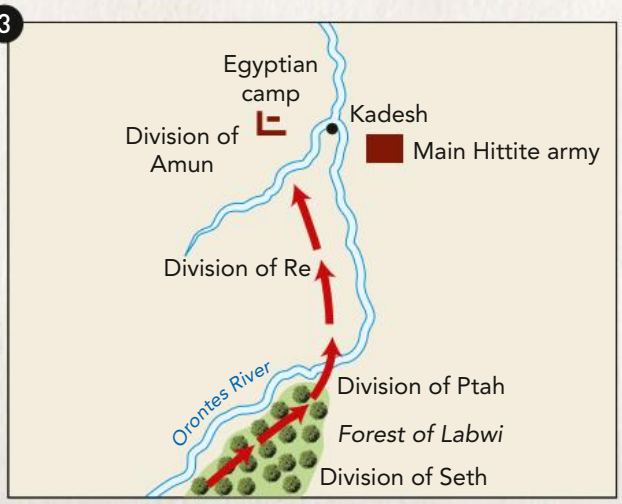
3



Egyptians advance to Kadesh

'When the two Shosu ... had been [released], his majesty proceeded northward and reached the northwest of Kadesh. The camp of his majesty's army was pitched there, and his majesty took his seat on a throne of fine gold to the north of Kadesh on the west side of the Orontes.'

Lichtheim, p. 60

4

Captured Hittite spies reveal ambush plans

Egyptian scouts had captured two Hittite scouts who, when beaten, revealed the trap that Muwatallis had prepared for the Egyptians. They tell Ramesses: 'Look, the vile Chief of Khatti has come together with the many countries who are with him, ... as allies ... They are equipped with their infantry and their chariotry, and with their weapons of war. They are more numerous than the sands of the shores. Look, they stand equipped and ready to fight behind Kadesh the Old.'

Lichtheim, p. 61

5

Hittites attack

'Crossing the ford to the south of Kadesh they charged into his majesty's army as it marched unaware ... Thereupon the forces of the foe from Khatti surrounded the followers of his majesty who were by his side.'

Lichtheim, p. 61

6

Ramesses saves the day

'Taking up weapons and donning his armour ... [Ramesses] mounted "Victory-in-Thebes", his great horse, and started out quickly alone by himself ... His majesty charged into the force from Khatti and the many countries with him ... His majesty slew the entire force of the foe from Khatti ... His majesty slaughtered them in their places; they sprawled before his horses; and his majesty was alone, none other with him.'

Lichtheim, p. 62

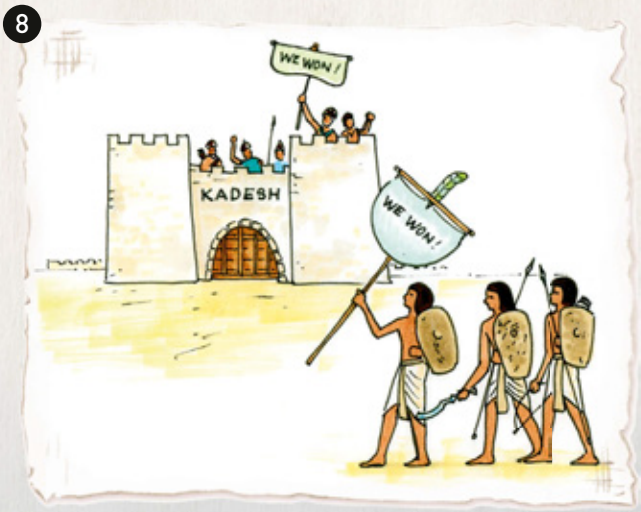
7

Reinforcements to the rescue

'The arrival of the reinforcements of pharaoh, from the land of Amurru. They found that the force of the vanquished Chief of Khatti had surrounded the camp of His majesty on its western side. His majesty had been camping alone, no army with him, awaiting the arrival of his officers and his army ... Then the reinforcements cut off the foe belonging to the vanquished Chief of Khatti, while [the foe] were entering onto the camp, and pharaoh's officers slew them; they left not a single survivor among them.'

Callender, p. 256

8



Stalemate at Kadesh

The next day's fighting gave no clear victory to either side. According to the Egyptian accounts, the Hittites then sued for peace: 'Then the vile Chief of Khatti ... sent his envoy with a letter ... As for the land of Egypt and the land of Khatti, they are your servants, under your feet ... Peace is better than fighting. Give us breath!' Immediately after the armistice, Ramesses returned to Egypt with his army and the Hittites withdrew inside the walls of Kadesh.

Lichtheim, p. 71

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Consequences of Kadesh

After the armistice, both sides claimed victory. For Ramesses, Kadesh was his finest hour. His account of the battle, both in texts and reliefs, was inscribed prominently on the walls of several temples throughout Egypt – at Abu Simbel, Karnak, Luxor, the Ramesseum and at Abydos. As for the Hittites, their own cuneiform tablets found in the remains at Hattusas (the Hittite capital), tell a very different story. According to Hattusilis, successor of Muwatallis, Ramesses was conquered at Kadesh and was forced to retreat.

An uneasy truce was all that was really gained for Egypt by the Battle of Kadesh – Egypt had failed to regain Kadesh and Amurru.

Campaigns after Kadesh

After the Battle of Kadesh, Egyptian influence was again limited to Palestine, Syria being controlled by the Hittites. Ramesses II campaigned on several occasions in Palestine, in response to rebellions. His armies pushed the Shasu Bedouin out of Canaan, then brought the towns of East Palestine back under Egyptian control. However, his attempts to dominate the cities of northern Syria, which were traditionally allied to the Hittites, came to nothing, despite some outstanding instances of personal bravery on the king's part. Towns such as Tunip and Dapur returned to Hittite control after Ramesses' return to Egypt. In year 10, Ramesses tried to regain Dapur but to no avail. It is unclear how long he persisted in the 'conquer, lose, reconquer' contest, but after year 11, Ramesses seems to have resigned himself to maintaining the Asian territories closer to home.

10.17 Check your learning

1. Discuss the following:
   - **a** What is the importance of Amurru in the relations between Egypt and the Hittites?
   - **b** Consider Ramesses II's description of his own role in the battle. What aspects of his account seem plausible? Are there any that you find hard to accept?
   - **c** How reliable is the Egyptian version of the Hittite request for peace?
   - **d** What do the events surrounding the Battle of Kadesh reveal about Ramesses II's skills as a military leader?
2. The Egyptian account of the Battle of Kadesh has been preserved in two separate narratives: a short version called the *Bulletin* and a longer one, the *Poem*. Both narratives have been reconstructed from the several duplicate accounts inscribed on temple walls throughout Egypt. Read the full account of the battle for yourself. A good source is M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Volume II: The New Kingdom*, or search online for 'Egyptian accounts of the Battle of Kadesh'.
3. Research Ramesses' campaigns in Syria–Palestine between years 5 and 11. Search online for 'Ramesses II Syrian campaigns ' or use K.A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant: The Life and Times of Ramesses II*, Aris & Phillips Ltd, Warminster, 1982.

10.18 The Egyptian–Hittite peace treaty

The relationship between the Egyptians and the Hittites nearly broke down again in year 16 of Ramesses II's reign following dynastic struggle in the Hittite kingdom. Egypt's refusal to extradite a Hittite soldier, who had sought refuge in Egypt, brought the two powers to the brink of war. Just at that time, however, the Hittites faced an attack by the Assyrians, which led them to begin negotiating a peace settlement with Egypt.

In year 21, Ramesses II and Hattusilis finalised the treaty, which brought peace and stability to the region. Egypt officially lost Amurru and Kadesh, but the long-standing hostility between Egypt and the Hittites was at an end. Copies of the peace treaty were inscribed on the walls of the Ramesseum and the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak. A Hittite version of the same treaty was filed in the archives at Hattusas.

SOURCE 50 The Hittite copy of the treaty between Hattusilis and Ramesses II found in the Hittite capital, Hattusas

SOURCE 51 The Egyptian copy of the Egyptian-Hittite peace treaty carved on a wall at Karnak Temple

The treaty was ratified (made valid) in year 21 of Ramesses' reign and represented a significant diplomatic achievement. The provisions of the treaty included:

- the end of all hostilities and the formation of a friendly alliance
- a promise of no further aggression
- a mutual defence agreement against attack by another power
- a guarantee of the succession in both countries
- the mutual extradition and fair treatment of exchanged prisoners.

Diplomatic marriage, trade and cultural exchange

Exchanges of gifts were made between Egypt and Hatti following the ratification of the peace treaty and letters of congratulations were sent by various members of the court. Queen Nefertari wrote to the Hittite queen, Pudukhepa (see Source 28), and her letter was accompanied by gifts of jewels and garments of rich fabrics.

Relations between the two countries were further strengthened by a marriage, in about year 34, between Ramesses II and the Hittite princess who was named Maat-hor-neferure. Source 52 is Ramesses' reply to a letter from the Hittite queen, Pudukhepa, mother of the bride, concerning the forthcoming marriage.

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SOURCE 52

I have seen the tablet that my Sister sent me, and I have noted all the matters on which the Great Queen of Hatti, my Sister, has so very, very graciously written me … The Great King, the King of Hatti, my Brother, has written to me saying, 'Let people come, to pour fine oil upon my Daughter's head, and may she be brought into the house of the Great King, the King of Egypt!' … Excellent, excellent is this decision about which my Brother has written to me … [our] two great countries will become as one land, forever!

K. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant: The Life and Times of Ramesses II*, Aris & Phillips Ltd, Warminster, 1982, p. 85

With the princess came her splendid dowry, which included animals, slaves, precious jewels and other valuable items. Her arrival in Pi-Ramesse was recorded as an event of great pomp and excitement.

Thirteen years later, Ramesses apparently married a second Hittite princess. The event was recorded in the Marriage Stela erected at Abu Simbel to commemorate the occasion.

There were also trading benefits to be gained from the Egyptian-Hittite peace treaty. The Phoenician ports would be available to Egypt, and they would now have access as far north as Ugarit, which had not been possible since the reign of Amenhotep III. The removal of barriers to the Euphrates and the Black Sea also brought renewed trading opportunities to Egypt. The Hittites were now free to concentrate on the threat from Assyria to the east.

10.18 Understanding and using the sources

Source 52

1 Comment of the tone of Ramesses II's letter of reply to Pudukhepa. What does it reveal about the importance of the Egyptian-Hittite peace treaty?

10.18 Check your learning

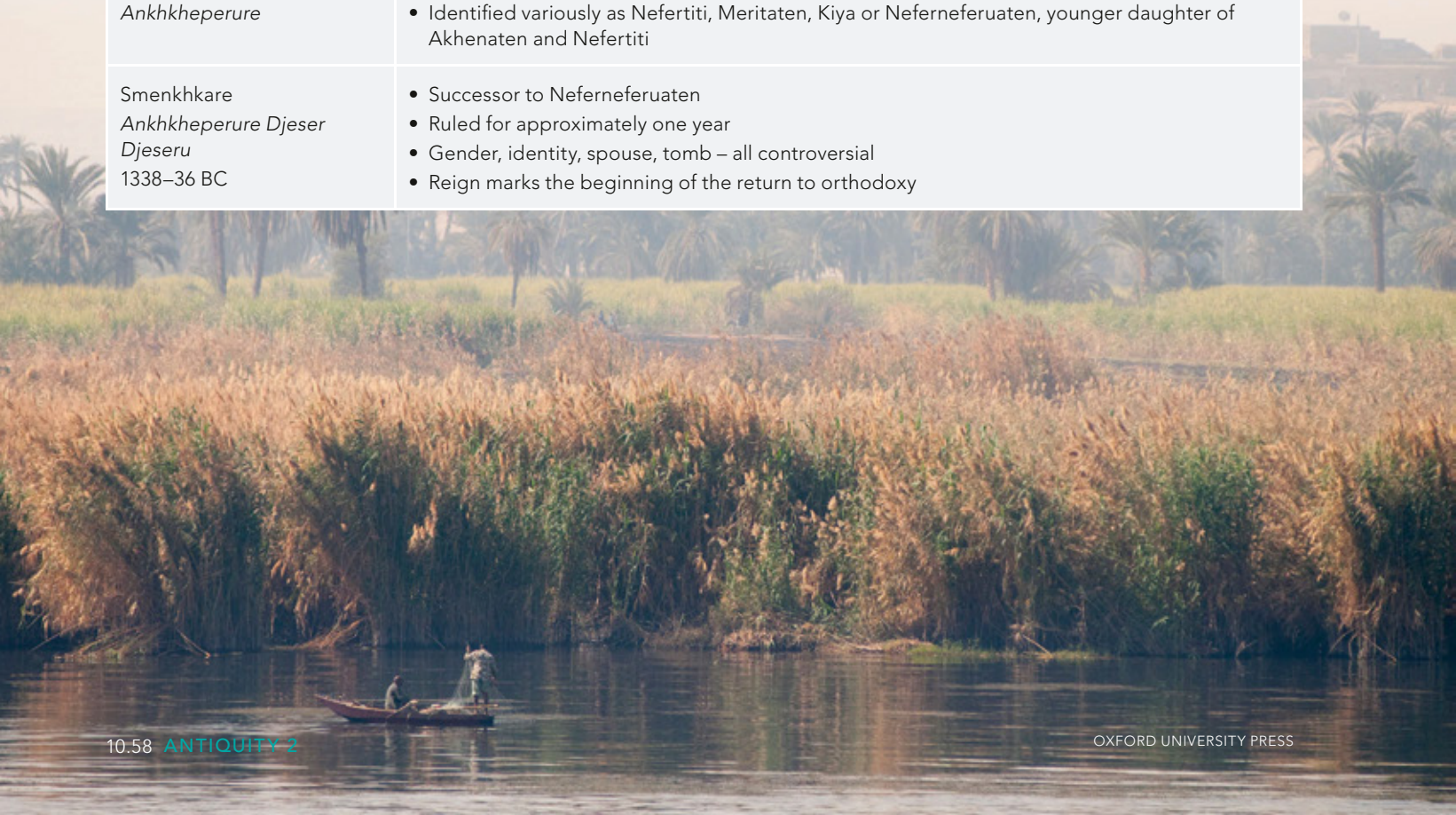
1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What were the aims of the Ramesside pharaohs in Syria–Palestine?
   - **b** How effective were the military campaigns of Seti I and Ramesses II?
   - **c** What were the results of Egypt's peace treaty with the Hittites?
2 Summarise the main developments in Egypt's changing relations with the Mitanni and the Hittites throughout this period by constructing a table using the following headings: Pharaoh, Relations with the Mitanni, Relations with the Hittites, Evidence, Significance.
3 Writing tasks:
   - **a** Explain Egypt's changing relations with the Mitanni and the Hittites in this period.
   - **b** Assess the military and diplomatic achievements of Seti I and Ramesses II in this period.
   - **c** Explain the significance of the 'warrior pharaoh' image during this period.
   - **d** Discuss the success of the pharaohs of this period in maintaining the Egyptian 'empire'.

10.19 The role and contribution of kings from Amenhotep III to Ramesses II

This section requires you to synthesise what you have learnt about the key developments and issues that have shaped this historical period. In particular, you will need to consider the ways in which the pharaohs of this period have contributed to the development of New Kingdom Egypt. Most of the information that you will need for this section is in the relevant parts of the chapter. Supplement this text with your own reading. To get you started, the following overview of each pharaoh's reign is provided. The throne name chosen by each pharaoh is shown in italics.

SOURCE 53 The role and contribution of New Kingdom pharaohs from Amenhotep III to Ramesses II

PHARAOH	HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REIGN
Amenhotep III *Nebmaatre* 1390–52 BC	• Egypt's economy booms; wealth from trade and goldmining • Pre-eminence of Amun of Thebes as state cult; beginnings of Atenism • Magnificent building projects and artistic achievement • Great royal wife, Tiye, plays a prominent role • Diplomacy and marriage feature in foreign policy • One campaign in Nubia
Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV) *Neferkheperure Wa'enre* 1352–36 BC	• Cult of Aten, the sun-disc, established as the state religion, replacing Amun of Thebes • State capital moved to Akhetaten; a new city is built • Nefertiti wields unprecedented power as queen and co-regent • All forms of art characterised by a revolutionary style
Neferneferuaten *Ankhkheperure*	• Co-regents of/successors to Akhenaten • Identified variously as Nefertiti, Meritaten, Kiya or Neferneferuaten, younger daughter of Akhenaten and Nefertiti
Smenkhkare *Ankhkheperure Djeser Djeseru* 1338–36 BC	• Successor to Neferneferuaten • Ruled for approximately one year • Gender, identity, spouse, tomb – all controversial • Reign marks the beginning of the return to orthodoxy



PHARAOH	HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REIGN
Tutankhamun *Nebkheperure* 1336–27 BC	• Nine-year-old Tutankhamun ascends throne and reigns for 9 years • Transitional reign featuring aspects of both Amarna and traditional religious and artistic forms • Egypt's political capital returns to Memphis • Thebes re-established as centre of state cult of Amun • Ay and Horemheb manage affairs of state • Extensive building works at the temples at Karnak and Luxor
Ay *Kheperkheperure* 1327–23 BC	• Brief reign continuing re-establishment of traditional practices
Horemheb *Djeserkheperure Setepenre* 1323–1295 BC	• Consolidation of re-established traditional practices • Dismantling of Aten temples at East Karnak; desecration of the Amarna Royal Tomb and Ay's tomb possibly carried out at this time • Reorganisation of internal administration
Ramesses I *Menpehtyre* 1295–94 BC	• Brief reign marking the beginning of the Nineteenth Dynasty • Co-regency with son, Seti I
Seti I *Menmaatre* 1294–79 BC	• Art, architecture and culture reach new heights, a return to Eighteenth Dynasty standards of excellence • Resurgence of aggressive military activity in Asia, Libya and Nubia • Emphasis placed on many traditional gods, particularly Osiris
Ramesses II *Usermaatre Setepenre* 1279–13 BC	• One of the longest reigns – 67 years – and the most prosperous • Construction of unprecedented numbers of temples, colossal statues and obelisks; Memphis rejuvenation program • Capital re-established in Nile Delta at Pi-Ramesse, modern Tell el-Dab'a • Foreign policy dominated by confrontation with Hittites • Peace treaty and diplomatic marriage • Libyan threat to Nile Delta contained by garrisons

10.19 Check your learning

1 Use the information in this chapter and Source 53 together with what you have learnt from your own reading and research to complete the following activities:

a Complete a table using the following headings: Pharaoh, Religious policy, Aims and extent of building program, Foreign policy, Specific contribution.

b Writing task: Use the information you have compiled in the table to plan and write a response to the following: Assess the contribution of (name of pharaoh) to the development of New Kingdom Egypt.

To help plan your response:

- identify the important areas of development in the pharaoh's reign
- use these features to structure your answer – avoid a purely narrative structure
- make judgements of the relative important of these features
- use specific evidence to support your assessment
- refer to relevant historiographical issues.

Chapter conclusion

This era in New Kingdom Egypt was a significant period of continuity and change. It opened with Egypt at the culmination of a long period of dynastic establishment and consolidation. It closed at the end of the long reign of Ramesses II, stable and prosperous, but perhaps lacking the brilliance and splendour of former times. A major force that shaped the period was religious change. The Amarna 'revolution' was a significant watershed. In the thousands of years of Egyptian history, this short 20-year period had an impact far beyond its time. The restoration of Amun and the other gods was a dominating feature of post-Amarna reigns. However, lessons had been learnt from the Amarna experiment – Amun returned, but never quite regained the political dominance of earlier times.

In foreign affairs, the period opened with Egypt at the height of its influence and prestige. For the remainder of the period it was a question of either maintaining or regaining the 'empire'. Ramesses II should be given credit for negotiating the first recorded peace treaty in world history. This treaty with the Hittites ushered in a long period of peace and prosperity for Egypt.

obook

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare student for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test students' comprehension

11

The Greek world 500–440 BC

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1 What were the origins of the Persian Wars?
2 What factors were important in determining the course and outcome of the Persian Wars?
3 What contribution did significant Greeks and Persians make to the Persian Wars?
4 How was the Delian League transformed into the Athenian Empire?
5 What were the key democratic developments in Athens in this period?
6 What impact did the Persian Wars have on relations between Athens and Sparta in this period?

FOCUS CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Cause and effect

Cause and effect are important concepts in this chapter. Some aspects to consider include an understanding that significant historical events, for example the Persian Wars and the development of Athenian imperialism, are rarely the result of simple or single causes, but rather that such developments are usually driven by multiple, often interrelated causes. It is also important to consider the contribution that significant individuals make to historical causation compared with the various social, political, economic and cultural forces that have shaped the conditions or historical context in which events occur.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1 Explain the origins of the Persian Wars.
2 Discuss the factors that determined the course and outcome of the Persian Wars.
3 Assess the contribution of significant Greeks and Persians to the Persian Wars.
4 Account for the transformation of the Delian League into the Athenian Empire.
5 Assess the significance of key democratic developments in Athens in this period.
6 Analyse the impact of the Persian Wars on relations between Athens and Sparta.

SOURCE 1 A modern representation of the Battle of Thermopylae, part of a monument erected in the 1950s at the site of the ancient battle

11.1 Historical context

At the beginning of the 5th century, the major power in the Mediterranean region was Persia. It had begun as a small landlocked state in the Near East, and during the 6th century BC embarked on a series of military conquests absorbing nearby states and kingdoms into its empire. By 500 BC its power reached to the Aegean Sea, and the next step in its imperial expansion was the addition of Greece.

city-state
a sovereign state, consisting of a single city and its dependent territories

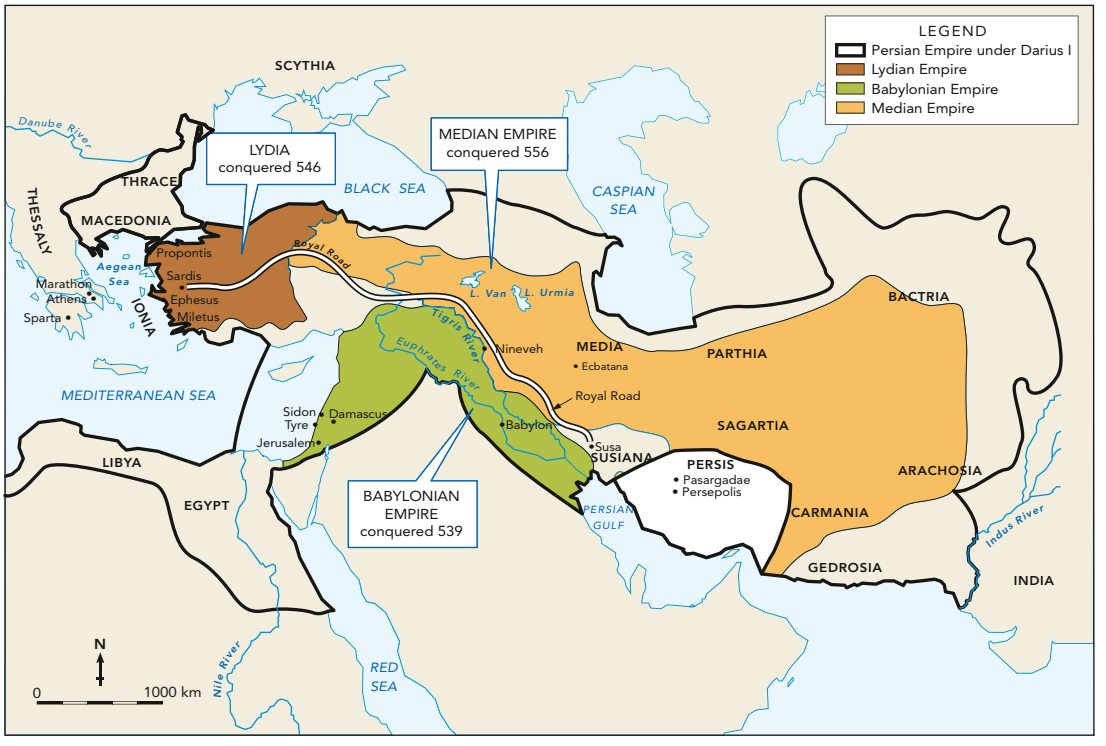
hoplite warfare
an ancient Greek form of battle in which foot soldiers fought in tight, highly disciplined formation with overlapping shields

In 500 BC, Greece comprised a number of independent **city-states**, often in conflict with each other. The concept of a Greek national identity did not yet exist. While they shared a common language and religion, people of this time considered themselves as Spartans, Athenians or members of their respective city-states. Athens and Sparta were the leading city-states at this time. The Spartans were generally regarded as the superior military force, having developed to a high degree the art of **hoplite warfare**.

Geographical context

The Persians had originally settled in the territory that today is Iran. These tribes took their names from the areas in which they settled – the Medes in Media and the Persians in Persia. The eastern territories shown in Source 2 had once been ruled by many great conquering peoples, including the Hittites, the Assyrians and the Babylonians. Persia's westward expansion is outlined in the timeline in Source 4. Note especially in Source 2 the relative size of the Persian Empire in comparison to Greek territory.

MEDITERRANEAN AND NEAR EAST, C. 500 BC



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 2 Persia, Greece and the Mediterranean world in 500 BC

The Persian Wars

In the years between 490 BC and 479 BC, Persia and Greece fought in a series of battles known as the Persian Wars. The first Persian invasion of 490 BC resulted in a Greek victory at the Battle of Marathon. Ten years later, in 480–479 BC, the Persians launched a second invasion and, despite an early success at the Battle of Thermopylae, were defeated in the following naval battle at Salamis and the final battles of Plataea and Mycale. The Greek victory was celebrated in sculpture, pottery, plays, songs, literature and the arts in general. The Persian Wars had a powerful impact on the Greek world of the 5th century and left a legacy that has continued down to our own times.

Ancient sources for the Persian Wars

The major written and archaeological sources for the Persian Wars are all Greek. The Persians left virtually no record of these events. This raises questions about the construction of history and the nature of sources and their strengths and limitations for the historical investigation being undertaken. The analysis of sources for this purpose is called historiography.

Herodotus

The Histories is regarded as the chief primary source for the Persian Wars. Herodotus wrote his work within a generation of the end of the wars and stated that his aim was 'to record the astonishing achievements both of our own and of other peoples; and more particularly, to show how they came into conflict'. He made use of contemporary records, including those of surviving participants and eyewitnesses. His account is generally regarded as reliable in its main narrative. However, it is not without limitations. For example, he tended to exaggerate troop numbers. Modern military historians have difficulty reconstructing the details of some battles based on his descriptions. Most importantly, he wrote mainly from a Greek, particularly an Athenian, perspective.

Aeschylus

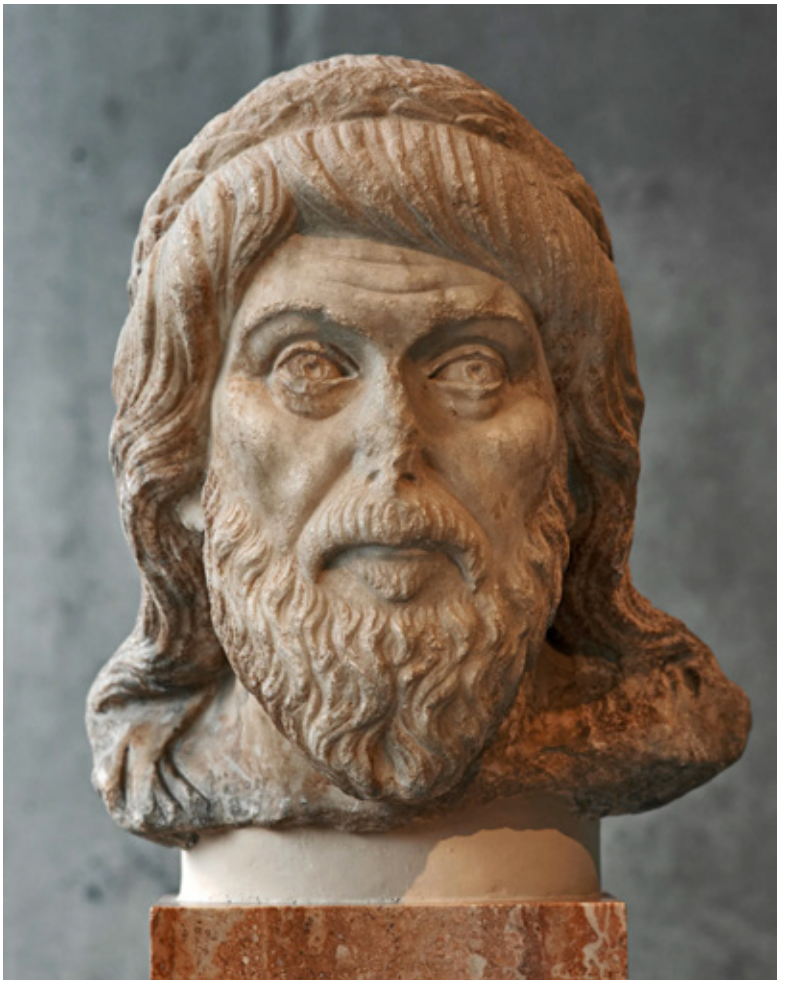
The Persians is a play by the Athenian playwright Aeschylus, who had served in the war. The play was written in 472 BC, only seven years after the events it describes, and is a celebration of the Greek victory over the Persians in the Battle of Salamis. Aeschylus' audience, who watched the performance of *The Persians* at the festival of the **Dionysia** at Athens, was therefore very familiar with the events of the play.

Thucydides

The *History of the **Peloponnesian** War* was written by the historian Thucydides some 80 or more years after the end of the Persian Wars. Thucydides gives only a brief and highly selective treatment of the Persian Wars in an introduction designed to sketch the origins of the Peloponnesian War of his own times. His main focus is on the development of Athenian imperialism, which he regarded as a major cause of the Peloponnesian War.

Dionysia
an Athenian dramatic festival from which Greek comedy and tragedy developed; it was held to honour the god Dionysus

Peloponnesian
belonging to the Peloponnese, a peninsula in southern Greece



SOURCE 3 Plutarch

Plutarch

Lives of the Greeks and Romans was written hundreds of years later, in the 1st century AD. Plutarch was a Greek biographer. His 'parallel lives' of famous Greeks and Romans focused on their common moral virtues or failings. He also included some fascinating, if dubious, detail about the lives of his subjects. Although he was writing much later than the people and events of his biographies, it is understood that Plutarch had access to original manuscripts now lost.

Archaeological sources

Archaeological evidence from this period includes the battle sites of the Persian Wars and any finds from them. Other major sources are the buildings and monuments together with their statuary and sculptured reliefs for which this period of Greek history is famous. Fifth-century vase paintings constitute yet another useful source of information, particularly about weapons and armour.

11.1 Check your learning

1. Conduct further research on the lives and historical contexts of the historians referred to here.
2. Discuss the following:
   - **a** What is the significance of the fact that all the sources for this period are Greek?
   - **b** What appear to be the strengths and limitations of the sources mentioned above for a historian investigating the Persian Wars?
3. Summarise your discussion by completing a table like the one below. In the last column, 'Historiographical issues', make a note of any details that may affect the value of the source for our understanding of this historical period.

WRITER/SOURCE	CONTEXT	DATE OF TEXT	SUBJECT	HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ISSUES

4. Most of the written ancient history texts mentioned here are available online in the Perseus Digital Library.

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11.2 Origins of the Persian Wars

The origins of the conflict can be traced to the emergence of Persia and its expansion during the 6th century BC. Cyrus the Great, 'king of the Medes and Persians, king of kings', founded the Persian Empire in mid century. In the 50 years that followed, he and his successors expanded the empire to both the east and the west. Its westward expansion eventually brought it into contact – and conflict – with the Greek world. The key stages in the westward expansion of the Persian Empire are shown in the timeline in Source 4.

Achaemenid dynasty relating to the hereditary rulers in Persia from Cyrus I to Darius III (553–330 BC)

SOURCE 4 A timeline of Persian imperial expansion

DATE BC	EVENT
556	Conquest of Media by Cyrus the Great, king of Persia and founder of the **Achaemenid dynasty** Establishment of Persian Empire
546	Conquest of Lydia
539	Conquest of Babylonian Empire
525	Conquest of Egypt by Cambyses, successor of Cyrus
513	Conquest of Thrace in Scythian expedition led by Darius I, successor of Cambyses
499	Outbreak of Ionian Revolt
494	End of Ionian Revolt; Ionians defeated
492	Expedition led by Persian general Mardonius conquers Thasos, Thrace and Macedonia
490	Persian expedition to Greek mainland led by Datis and Atarphernes, Battle of Marathon

Persian conquest of Ionia

Ionia was the last frontier between Persia and mainland Greece. When the kingdom of Lydia was conquered in 546 BC, all of its territories, including Ionia, were destined to become part of the Persian Empire.

The people of Ionia had strong ties with mainland Greece. In the 9th and 8th centuries BC, many mainland Greeks had migrated across the Aegean and settled on the coast of Asia Minor and on the small islands off the coast. Their cities – including Miletus, Mycale, Ephesus, Chios, Samos, Naxos and Cos – were known collectively as 'Ionian cities' and the people as 'Ionian Greeks'. Ties of kinship were maintained with the peoples of mainland Greece, especially the Athenians, who belonged to the same cultural group. The Ionian cities became rich trading centres, some possessing powerful fleets. The Ionian Greek cities on the coast of Asia Minor and the islands off the coast were ruled by Greek tyrants, men who exercised absolute power. Back then, the word 'tyrant' simply meant the leading man, a member of the city's elite. It did not have the negative connotation or meaning it has today.

Having conquered Lydia, Cyrus now sent troops to seize the Ionian cities. Some welcomed Persian rule, others fled. Many Greeks were sold into slavery, while others were forced to serve as mercenaries in the Persian army. The fleets of the cities became part of the Persian navy. The Persians retained many of these tyrants as rulers of the cities. However, they were obliged to obey Persia, pay taxes, and provide ships and men for the Persian navy and army. Most of Persia's control of Ionia was conducted through the local Persian governor, the satrap, who supervised the local tyrants. The satrap's headquarters were at Sardis, the chief city of Ionia. By 500 BC, the Ionian Greeks' discontent with Persian domination was widespread.

Sources for the Ionian Revolt

Our chief source is the Greek historian Herodotus, who gives a detailed account of the revolt and those involved on both the Persian and the Greek side. Unfortunately, we have no Persian account of these events.

Herodotus, as you will see, places the lion's share of the blame for the revolt on Aristagoras, but the extent to which a single individual can be held responsible needs to be questioned. In considering causation in History it is important to understand that causes are often complex. Look for other explanations in Herodotus' narrative: political, social and economic ones, that might help to explain why the Ionians revolted from Persian rule.

Key individuals in the Ionian Revolt

Some of the key people involved in the Ionian Revolt are identified below.

Greek

- *Histiaeus* – Ionian Greek tyrant of Miletus, detained at Susa by Darius before the Ionian Revolt. According to Herodotus, Histiaeus sent a slave with a message tattooed on his scalp to Aristagoras.
- *Aristagoras* – Ionian Greek tyrant of Miletus, son-in-law of Histiaeus. Herodotus says his failure at Naxos was largely responsible for the Ionian Revolt.

Persian

- *Darius I* – the Persian king
- *Artaphernes* – the satrap of Ionia at the time of the Ionian Revolt. He approved of Aristagoras' plan to help the **oligarchs** on the island of Naxos.
- *Megabates* – a Persian general. He was supposed to help reinstate the oligarchs in Naxos.
- *Mardonius* – the general in charge of mopping up operations after Ionian Revolt. He led an abortive (failed) attack on Greece in 492 BC; the Persian fleet was destroyed off Mount Athos.

oligarch
a member of an oligarchy, a government in which all power is vested in a few persons or in a dominant class or clique

Causes of the Ionian Revolt

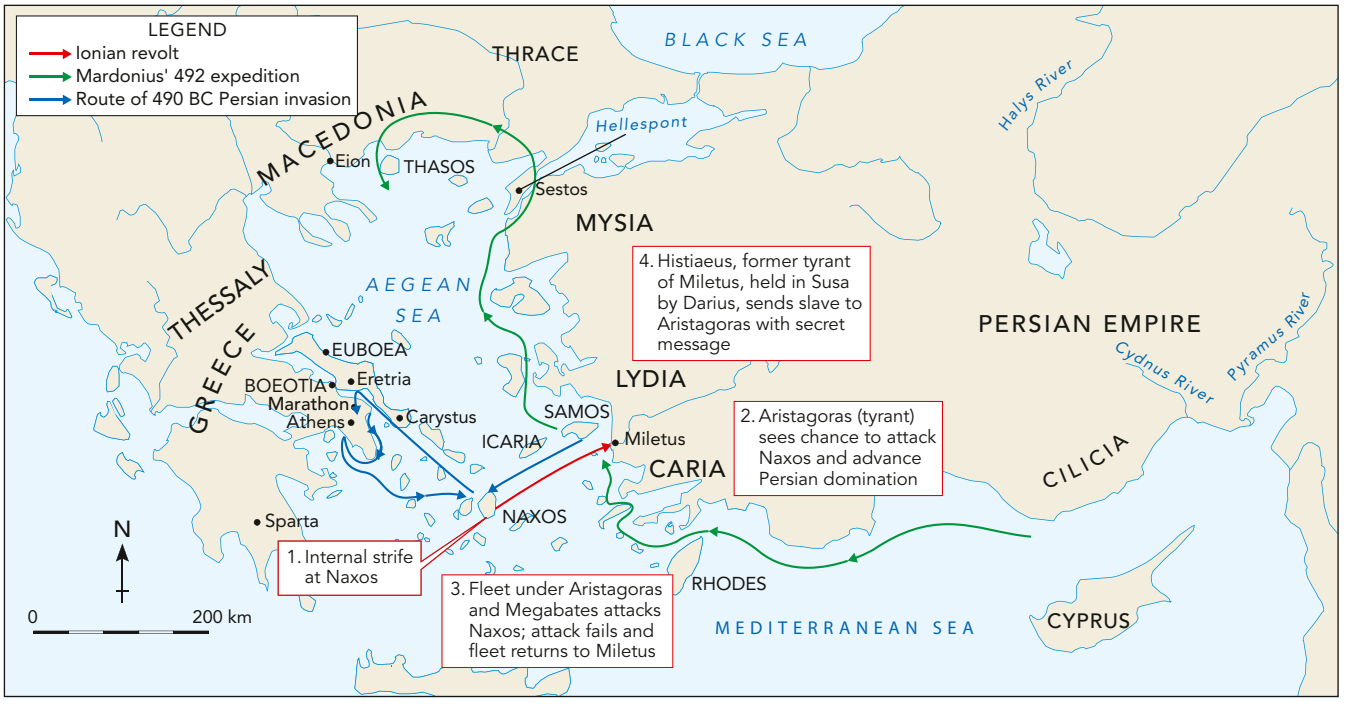
A brief summary of Herodotus' account of the events leading to the outbreak of the Ionian Revolt follows.

- There was internal strife on the island of Naxos between oligarchs and democrats.
- The oligarchs fled to Miletus, where they asked Aristagoras the tyrant for help in their plan to reinstate themselves at Naxos.
- Aristagoras, perhaps seeking to increase his own power and favour with his Persian masters, suggested to the oligarchs that Naxos be captured and used as a base for further expansion. This would open the way to Persian domination of the Aegean.
- Artaphernes approved of this plan, and a fleet of 200 **triremes** and a force of Persians and Ionians, under the joint command of Megabates and Aristagoras, attacked Naxos.
- The attack on Naxos failed – Megabates had given the Naxians forewarning. According to Herodotus, Megabates had quarrelled with Aristagoras.
- A four-month siege led to stalemate; the fleet withdrew from Naxos and returned to Asia Minor.

trireme
a galley with three rows or tiers of oars on each side, one above another, used chiefly as a warship

- Aristagoras now sought to extricate himself from a very difficult situation. Fearing Persian reprisals for the Naxos attack, he decided to lead a full-scale revolt of the Ionian Greeks.
- Aristagoras travelled to both Sparta and Athens to seek support for the planned revolt.
- Histiaeus was being held in Susa by Darius and attempted to contact his son-in-law, Aristagoras (see Source 6).

PERSIA, IONIA AND GREECE, 499–490 BC



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 5 Map showing the location of the events of Ionian Revolt and the routes of Persian operations from 492 BC to the Battle of Marathon in 490 BC

SOURCE 6

Something else occurred to confirm his [that is, Aristagoras'] purpose: this was the arrival from Susa of a slave, sent by Histiaeus, the man with the tattooed scalp, urging him to do precisely what he was thinking of, namely, to revolt. Histiaeus had been wanting to make Aristagoras take this step, but was in difficulty about how to get a message safely through to him, as the roads from Susa were watched; so he shaved the head of his most trustworthy slave, pricked the message on his scalp, and waited for the hair to grow again. Then, as soon as it had grown, he sent the man to Miletus with instructions to do nothing when he arrived except to tell Aristagoras to shave his hair off and look at his head. The message found there was, as I have said, an order to revolt. What prompted Histiaeus to do this was his distress at being detained in Susa, and he hoped that, if a rebellion were started, he might be sent down to the coast to deal with it, whereas if nothing of the sort occurred he had little expectation of ever seeing Miletus again. With this purpose in mind he sent off the messenger; and so Aristagoras found himself faced with a combination of circumstances, all of which urged him in the same direction.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book V, 33
(trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972)

In Source 7, the modern scholar J.A. Fine suggests another explanation for the outbreak of the revolt.

SOURCE 7

The enthusiasm with which the Greeks in the fleet responded to the idea of revolt and the rapid spread of the insurrection [uprising] reveal clearly that the reasons for the outbreak were much more fundamental than the machinations [plotting or scheming] of Aristagoras and Histiaeus. Beyond the hampering of Greek trade because of Persian control of Egypt, the Hellespont and the Bosporus, the basic cause of discontent was the system of tyrants established by the Persians … The Greek tyrants [in the Ionian cities] were appointees of the Persians who had selected them in the hope that they would be loyal to their masters. These tyrants … ruled their cities absolutely.

J.A. Fine, *The Ancient Greeks: A Critical History*, Harvard University Press, 1983, p. 271

11.2 Understanding and using the sources

Source 6

1. Why did Aristagoras attack Naxos? What was the outcome?
2. According to this account, why did Aristagoras decide to lead a revolt of the Ionian Greeks?
3. The story of the message on the slave's scalp is a colourful detail. How likely is it to be true?
4. Is it likely that the whole of Ionia would revolt at the request of Aristagoras? What other factors contributed to the revolt?

Source 7

5. What reasons for the outbreak of the revolt are suggested by J.A. Fine?
6. Why does he disagree with Herodotus' account of the reason for the outbreak?
7. What judgement would you make about the strengths and limitations of Sources 6 and 7 for an understanding of the causes of the revolt?

11.2 Check your learning

1. Read Herodotus' account of these events in his *Histories*, Book V, 29–37; 97–107; and Book VI, 1–35. A translation of these chapter sections can be found online in the Perseus Digital Library.
2. What political and economic reasons are suggested to explain why the Athenians were willing to lend their support?
3. Use the knowledge you have gained from this section and from your own reading of Herodotus to write paragraph responses to the following:
   - **a** Explain the reasons for the outbreak of the Ionian Revolt.
   - **b** Why and how did Athens become involved in the Ionian Revolt?
   - **c** Assess the strengths and limitations of Herodotus' account of the cause of the Ionian Revolt.

11.3 The Ionian Revolt 499–490 BC

The first action of the revolt was to drive out all the tyrants in the Ionian cities and set up democracies in their place; even Aristagoras resigned his position. The tyrant of Mytilene was so hated that he was stoned to death. Athens promised to send 20 ships and the nearby city of Eretria on the island of Euboea to send five. In 498 BC, the Ionian allies attacked Sardis, the headquarters of the Persian satrap. They managed to occupy the city but were unable to capture the citadel. A fire broke out and Sardis was destroyed. In their retreat to the coast the Ionians clashed with a Persian force at Ephesus and were defeated. The Athenians immediately returned home and took no further part in the revolt.

The burning of Sardis was a significant event. Herodotus reports that Darius, when told of the Athenians' actions, asked who they were and vowed to punish those who were to blame. He instructed a servant to recite to him the words, three times a day, 'Sire, remember the Athenians'.

The revolt now spread throughout the Ionian world; many cities threw off Persian rule. Despite the deaths of Aristagoras and Histiaeus, the revolt culminated in the siege of Miletus in 494 BC. This city was blockaded by a Persian fleet of 600 ships. The Ionian Greek fleet of 350 ships took up a position off the island of Lade. The ensuing sea battle proved disastrous for the Greeks. The ships from Lesbos and Samos deserted and Miletus was captured by the Persians. The city was sacked, the male population slain, and the women and children sent to Susa as slaves. The temple of Apollo at Didyma was destroyed.

The revolt was now faltering. Persia proceeded to reconquer many of the cities that had revolted and the navy took control of the Hellespont. In Athens the fall of Miletus and the disastrous end of the revolt caused much consternation. Athenian involvement in the sack of Sardis was to make Athens a target for future Persian revenge.

Aftermath of the Ionian Revolt – the 492 BC campaign of Mardonius

The Persians had taken four years to defeat the Ionians, and much Persian territory had been lost. Darius' aim was to recapture the lost Ionian cities and re-establish Persian control. He entrusted this task to his son-in-law, Mardonius, who assembled a large fleet and army. In 492 BC, he sailed along the Ionian coast to the Hellespont, re-establishing Persian rule. In doing this he deposed the Ionian tyrants and replaced them with democracies – a most surprising action. He also fixed the amount of **tribute** that the Ionian cities were to pay to Persia. After crossing the Hellespont he marched into Europe – a move that the Athenians and Eretrians saw as a threat to themselves. At first the expedition was successful. The island of Thasos was captured; Thrace was again subjugated (conquered) and Macedonia was added to the Persian Empire. The expedition, however, ended in disaster near the island of Thasos (see the route of the expedition in Source 5). The Persians were nonetheless intent on punishing the Athenians for their interference in the Ionian Revolt, and 2 years later in 490 BC they embarked on the first invasion of Greece, which marked the opening chapter of the Persian Wars.

tribute
money or valuables paid to a state or ruler to acknowledge submission

11.3 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What was the first action taken by the Ionians when they revolted against Persia? What does this indicate about the causes of the revolt?
   - **b** How well-prepared were the Ionians for the revolt? Why were they eventually defeated?
   - **c** What role did the Athenians play in the revolt?
   - **d** Apart from revenge, what other reason might Persia have had for planning a future invasion of the Greek mainland?

2 Read Herodotus' account of Mardonius' 492 BC expedition (Book VI, 43–44).
   - **a** What were the aims of this expedition?
   - **b** What political and economic measures did the Persians take to settle the affairs of Ionia? What do these measures suggest about the possible causes of the revolt in the first place?
   - **c** What was the disaster that ended the expedition?
   - **d** Herodotus mentions 'monsters' that devoured shipwrecked sailors. Is he exaggerating? What might these man-eating monsters have been?

3 Writing task: Explain the causes of the Persian Wars.

   To help you plan your response:
   - identify the key forces and events leading to the outbreak of the wars
   - use these to help structure your response
   - indicate the main features of each and show how they are related
   - use relevant sources to support your points
   - integrate discussion of relevant historiographical issues.

SOURCE 8 The ruins of Miletus

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11.4 The Persian invasion of 490 BC

It is generally believed that the Persians attacked Greece in 490 BC in order to seek revenge against Athens and Eretria for the part they played in the Ionian Revolt, and in particular the burning of Sardis. Indeed, Herodotus claims that the main objective of Mardonius' expedition of 492 BC was to punish Athens and Eretria. It is worthwhile to note, however, that regardless of the revenge motive, an attack on Athens would most likely have been made sooner or later as part of Persian imperial expansion.

We also know from Herodotus' narrative that to facilitate this plan, the Persians may have been intending to install the Athenian ex-tyrant Hippias to look after Persia's interests once Athens had been conquered and punished. Hippias had been an unpopular tyrant in Athens, and when he was expelled in 510 BC he had travelled to the Persian court seeking military backing for his return to Athens. He accompanied the 490 BC expedition of Datis and Artaphernes as a guide, and he had supporters in Athens who would welcome his return.

Persian strategy

Darius now sent envoys to Greece to secure the traditional tokens of submission – earth and water. Supplying some of their local 'earth' and 'water' to the Persian king meant that a state surrendered before the war began. In exchange for being spared from destruction, the state would be required to furnish men and supplies for the Persian army or navy. Sparta and Athens put the envoys to death: a serious breach of the **diplomatic protocol** of the times and a defiant gesture to Persia.

diplomatic protocol official procedure or rules governing affairs of state or diplomatic occasions between different states

However, the Aegean islands in direct line of attack immediately submitted, as did many other city-states, including Thessaly and Boeotia. Remembering the disasters encountered off Mount Athos in 492 BC, Darius now planned a different strategy. Instead of following a northern course around the coast of Thrace as Mardonius had done in 492 BC, the Persian force of 600 ships, including transports for horses, sailed directly across the Aegean via Samos and Naxos. Mardonius had been seriously wounded in 492 BC, and so the command was given to Datis, an experienced Median soldier, and Artaphernes, the son of the satrap of Sardis and Darius' nephew. (See the route taken by the 490 BC expedition in Source 5.)

The Persian fleet first attacked and captured Naxos, whose temples were burnt in retaliation for the burning of temples at Sardis during the Ionian Revolt. The next target was the island of Euboea where the city of Eretria was betrayed to the Persians after a short siege. We know from Herodotus that, again, the temples were burnt in revenge for the burnt temples of Sardis, and that the inhabitants were carried off as prisoners.

Persian and Athenian preparations for battle

The Persian fleet landed at the Bay of Marathon, 42 kilometres north of the city of Athens. There were several reasons for the choice of this site:

- It offered an unopposed landing.
- The Persians were guided by Hippias, the ex-tyrant of Athens.
- Herodotus claims that this site was the best place for the cavalry to manoeuvre.
- Marathon offered shelter and protection for the Persian ships.

SOURCE 9
A Greek hoplite dressed for battle

SOURCE 10
A Persian soldier dressed for battle

The Marathon runner

When news of the Persian advance reached Athens, a runner was hastily despatched to Sparta to seek assistance. This runner, Pheidippides, reached Sparta approximately 36 hours later, having covered a distance of 225 kilometres. The Spartans, however, were engaged in a religious festival and could not send troops until the moon was full.

Athenian preparations

A council of war was held in Athens. Callimachus was the commander-in-chief, or polemarch, but according to Herodotus, it was Miltiades, one of the 10 generals, who was given the glory for the decisions made at this time. He persuaded Callimachus and the other Athenian commanders to march out and meet the invading Persians at Marathon, rather than wait for a Persian attack on Athens.

The Athenians took up a position in the foothills of Mount Agriliki at the southern end of the plain of Marathon, barring the way to Athens. Here they were joined by a force of 1000 hoplites from the nearby town of Plataea. The support requested from Sparta had not yet arrived. The Athenian camp was defended by a stockade of felled trees, to prevent cavalry attacks. The Persians were camped on the plain of Marathon, on the bank of the Charadnos River and to the west of the Great Marsh (see Source 12).

The opposing armies

The Greek force numbered approximately 10 000 Athenian hoplites, with a force from the town of Plataea making a total of 11 000. The Persian force was roughly three times larger, with their infantry estimated to have been 25 000 and their cavalry approximately 5000.

Weapons and armour

The Greeks wore heavy defensive armour that included greaves (armour to protect the lower legs), a cuirass (a breastplate made of many layers of linen) and a helmet. Each hoplite was armed with a spear and sword, and carried a shield or *hoplon* (Source 9). The shield covered the left side of the bearer's body and the right side of the hoplite standing in line beside him. They fought hand-to-hand.

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The Persians, on the other hand, fought from a distance, using the bow as their main weapon. Because they did not grapple in hand-to-hand fighting, they wore little or no armour and carried only wicker shields (Source 10). The Persians had brought the cavalry to fight in Greece, and this force, combined with their archers, posed a grave threat to the Greeks.

SOURCE 11

[The Persians] had perfected the bow, their weapon par excellence, both in its range and in the effectiveness of the arrows. The uppermost limit to their firing range was 400–500 metres, while their most effective range was up to 200 metres. When the enemy came within range, the Persians would fire thousands of arrows [for example, 48000 men could fire 200000 arrows in one second, according to the calculations of M. Boucher] and they mowed the enemy down. Then they would order their cavalry forward to complete the victory.

K. Kontorlis, *The Battle of Marathon*, K.P. Kontorlis, Athens, 1973, p. 23

11.4 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 9–11

1. How was the Greek hoplite equipped both for attack and defence?
2. What was the main strength of the hoplite force?
3. How were the Persians equipped for battle?
4. What were the main differences between Greek and Persian equipment? How do these differences reflect the different fighting tactics of the two armies?

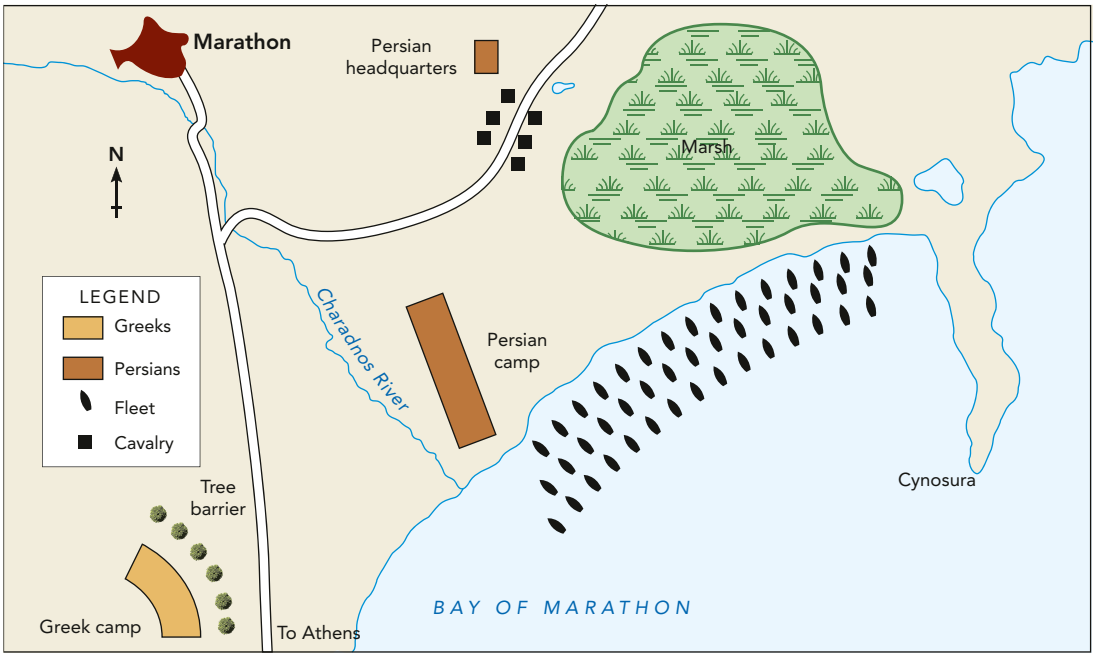
11.4 Check your learning

1. Why was the demand for 'earth and water' part of Persian strategy?
2. What was the size of the 490 BC Persian invasion force?
3. What was the purpose of taking horses?
4. For what reasons was the route across the Aegean chosen?
5. Find Naxos on the map in Source 5. What does its location suggest about its strategic importance in Persia's plans for expansion?
6. Carry out further research on Greek hoplite armour, weapons and fighting tactics (e.g. the phalanx). (See 4.5 The Spartan army.)
7. Watch the online documentary film *Hoplite Spartan Phalanx: Historical real tactics* for a re-enactment of the phalanx formation.
8. Writing task: Write paragraph responses to the following:
   a. Describe traditional Persian fighting methods.
   b. Describe the Greek phalanx and explain how it was used in battle.
   c. Explain the main differences between Greek and Persian tactics.

11.5 The Battle of Marathon

For several days before the Battle of Marathon a stalemate prevailed. Neither side was prepared to give battle. As it turned out, it was the Greeks who initiated the battle. Why would the Greeks, with much smaller numbers and in a strong defensive position, take such a risk? This has become an important historiographical issue for modern historians. Herodotus tells us that opinion among the Athenian commanders was divided. Some opposed giving battle because the Greek force was heavily outnumbered, but others including Miltiades urged it. Miltiades made a stirring speech about saving Athens in her hour of need and, apparently, it was Miltiades' urging that persuaded Callimachus to cast his deciding vote in favour of battle.

BATTLE OF MARATHON



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 12 Greek and Persian forces at Marathon

Greek tactics at Marathon

Herodotus' account of the Battle of Marathon is provided in Source 13. The deployment of forces and tactics adopted by the Greeks during the battle are shown in Source 14.

SOURCE 13

One result of the disposition of Athenian troops before the battle was the weakening of their centre by the efforts to extend the line sufficiently to cover the whole Persian front; the two wings were strong, but the line in the centre was only a few ranks deep. The dispositions made, and the preliminary sacrifice promising success, the word was given to move, and the Athenians advanced at a run towards the enemy, not less than a mile away. The Persians seeing the attack developing at the double, prepared to meet it, thinking it suicidal madness for the Athenians to

risk an assault with so small a force – rushing in with no support from either cavalry or archers … Nevertheless, the Athenians came on, closed with the enemy all along the line, and fought in a way not to be forgotten. They were the first Greeks, so far as I know, to charge at a run, and the first who dared to look without flinching at Persian dress and the men who wore it; for until that day came, no Greek could hear even the word Persian without terror.

The struggle at Marathon was long drawn out. In the centre, held by the Persians themselves and the Sacae, the advantage was with the foreigners, who were so far successful as to break the Greek line and pursue the fugitives inland from the sea; but the Athenians on one wing and the Plataeans on the other were victorious. Having got the upper hand, they left the defeated enemy to make their escape, and then, drawing the two wings together into a single unit, they turned their attention to the Persians who had broken through in the centre. Here again they were triumphant, chasing the routed enemy, and cutting them down until they came to the sea and men were calling for fire and taking hold of the ships.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, VI, 111–12 (trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972)

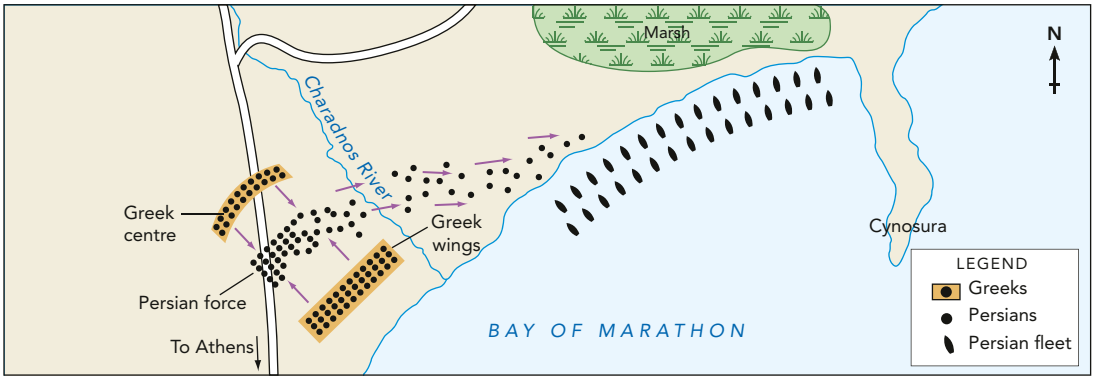
Some of the fleeing Persians were forced into the marsh, while others fled to the beach. The Persian fleet now sailed around Cape Sounion to Athens, hoping to attack the city before the Athenian army could march back and defend it. When the Persian fleet arrived the next morning at Phaleron (the harbour of Athens), the Athenian troops were drawn up, ready and waiting. The Persians lay at anchor for a while off Phaleron and then sailed home.

The 2000 Spartans arrived after the full moon. Herodotus tells of their haste and eagerness to view the Persian dead. That done, they complimented the Athenians on their good work and returned home.

BATTLE OF MARATHON

Phase 1

Phase 2



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 14 Greek tactics at Marathon: Phase 1 and Phase 2

Greek strategy at Marathon

Modern scholars have presented different interpretations to explain why the Athenians, outnumbered as they were by the Persian forces, chose to initiate the fighting at Marathon. The modern scholar Ehrenberg suggests that the Athenian decision was a military one based on the absence of the Persian cavalry from the battle. (Remember that Herodotus had previously told us that a Persian cavalry force was disembarked at Marathon from the horse-transports included in the fleet of 600 ships.) Another scholar, Sealey, suggests that the Athenian decision to fight was dictated by the political necessity of preventing Athens from being betrayed to the Persians by supporters of the ex-tyrant Hippias.

Read the interpretations of the two modern scholars in Sources 15 and 16 and draw your own conclusions about this contested issue.

SOURCE 15

Datis now … chose a strategy … to keep the Greek army where it was and meanwhile move against the undefended city [that is, Athens]. To achieve his aims he had to move before the Spartans arrived. Now, Herodotus in his story of the battle never mentions the Persian cavalry. As it was in many ways the most important part of the army, on which the whole expedition with its horse transports was based, the sole explanation is that the horsemen actually had no share in the final fighting. This could be explained by the fact that cavalry was useless against the elevated position of the Greeks. That is confirmed by a very late source, the only source that explains what Datis' intentions were. In the Byzantine lexicon of the Suda [a 10th-century AD encyclopaedia of the ancient Mediterranean world], a Greek proverb 'the horsemen are away' is discussed with reference to the Battle of Marathon, when some Ionians from the Persian side revealed to the Greeks that the cavalry had embarked or was embarking. This could only happen during the night, and before daylight part of the Persian fleet with the cavalry on board … was sailing south to round Attica and enter the Saronic Gulf …

V. Ehrenberg, *From Solon to Socrates: Greek History and Civilization during the Sixth and Fifth Centuries BC*, 2nd edn, Methuen, London, 1973, pp. 139–40

SOURCE 16

Herodotus provides a hint [that is, about the Athenian decision to initiate the battle] in the speech with which he makes Miltiades persuade Callimachus. The speech may be a free invention by the historian, but it must conform to his beliefs about the strategic and political situation. Miltiades is represented as saying 'If we do not attack, I expect that some great conflict will arise among the Athenians and disturb their views, so that they will join the Persian cause'. To put the matter another way, the grounds for the Athenian decision were political not military; the commanders feared that, if they postponed fighting longer, there might be treachery among the Athenians. Had not Eretria been betrayed to the Persians a few days before? Even after the victory, it was possible to allege in the next years that some Athenians were still loyal to the memory of the Peisistratidae. [Note: The Peisistratidae included Hippias, the former tyrant of Athens, and his family and friends still living in Athens. Remember that Hippias was travelling with the Persian forces and hoped to be reinstated as tyrant of Athens after the war].

R. Sealey, *A History of the Greek City States: 700–338 BC*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1976, p. 191

The significance of Marathon

The victory at Marathon had enormous significance not only for Athens but for the rest of Greece. The Athenians received much honour and glory for their defeat of 'the barbarian'. At that time, Sparta was considered the leading military state – but the Spartans had taken no part in this battle – and so the reputation of the Athenians was greatly enhanced. The poet Pindar lauded Athens as 'Bulwark [defence] of Hellas … city of godlike men'. Marathon loomed large in the Athenian psyche (soul or spirit); the men of Marathon were regarded as heroes. As Australia remembers and honours the original Anzacs, so the Athenians and the rest of Greece honoured the Marathon warriors. A war memorial consisting of two burial mounds was established at the site of the battle: one for the 192 Athenians and one for the fallen Plataeans.

SOURCE 17 The burial mound of the Athenians at Marathon

The contribution of Miltiades

It is clear from Herodotus' account that Miltiades played a significant role in the battle of Marathon. He also played a key role in events before and after the battle. As a former tyrant in Ionia, he would have had first-hand knowledge of Persian tactics; this might help to explain why Callimachus was prepared to listen to his advice at Marathon.

However, the extent of his influence has been questioned. For example, it has been assumed that it was Miltiades' idea to deploy the Greek phalanx with strong wings and a weak centre at Marathon – the tactic which won the day – but it should be noted that Herodotus does not say so. The modern scholar J.F. Lazenby has suggested that his reputation may have been exaggerated. He explains that in the years following the Persian Wars, Miltiades' son, Cimon, became the leading man in Athens. So perhaps the father's military deeds were embellished to enhance the son's reputation.

11.5 Understanding and using the sources

Source 12

1 Study the topography and position of the opposing forces. Why might the Persians have delayed giving battle, despite their superior numbers?

2 What reasons might the Greeks have had for delaying?

Sources 13 & 14

3 Why did the Athenians weaken their centre before the battle? Why did this prove to be an important decision in the context of the battle that followed?

4 What manoeuvre did the Athenian and Plataean wings make, and what was the result?

5 What was the fate of the Persians fighting in the centre ranks?

6 What elements of this account indicate Herodotus' Greek bias?

Sources 15 & 16

7 Explain the military (Source 15) versus the political reason (Source 16) why the Greeks chose to initiate the battle.

8 Discuss the plausibility of these two interpretations in light of what we know about the battle. Is one more acceptable than the other?

11.5 Check your learning

1 Investigate the career of Miltiades, before, during and after the Battle of Marathon. Read the following sections from Herodotus:
- before Ionian Revolt – Book VI, 35–40, 137; Book IV, 13
- during and after Ionian Revolt – Book VI, 137–40, 107
- Battle of Marathon – Book VI, 107, 109–17, 117
- after Marathon: Book VI, 133–6.

2 Writing tasks

a Assess the contribution of Miltiades to the course of the Persian War.

To help you plan your response:
- identify the main events in which Miltiades played a role
- make a judgement about the value/quality/outcome of his contribution
- use sources to support your judgements
- integrate discussion of any relevant historiographical issues.

b Account for the Greek victory at the Battle of Marathon.

Be careful to avoid a narrative response; that is, merely recounting the events. A possible structure for your response is shown in the mind map below. The box labelled 'Other?' may be used to consider another aspect of the victory. Be sure to make specific reference to sources in your response.

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11.6 The inter-war period 490–480 BC

In the 10 years after Marathon, Darius prepared to avenge the defeat, but he died in 486 BC. His son Xerxes was determined to continue with Darius' planned invasion of Greece, but he had first to deal with the revolts in Egypt and Babylon, two important subject states.

Persian preparations for the invasion of Greece

Xerxes' preparations for the invasion involved a change of strategy. After the failure of the 490 BC invasion, it was decided that a combined land and sea offensive was needed. This required a large army to march from Persia to Greece, accompanied by a navy to provide support and communication. This was an enormous logistical exercise and involved nearly four years of preparation. The main features of the Persian preparations were:

- bridging the Hellespont and the Strymon River for the passage of men and supplies
- construction of a canal at Mount Athos for the safe passage of the navy
- equipping supply depots (with food and provisions) at strategic places along the route
- recruiting an army and a navy from the vast Persian Empire
- sending diplomatic embassies to enemy states to make the traditional Persian demand of local earth and water as tokens of submission.

(See 7.10 Xerxes' role in the invasion of the Greek mainland for further details of Persian preparations.)

Developments in Greece

In Athens after the great victory at Marathon, the idea of renewed war with Persia was the last thing on anyone's mind. There was intense political rivalry during the years 490–480 BC, and Athens was also involved in a trade war with the nearby island of Aegina. An Athenian emerged at this time who was to play a pivotal role in events – his name was Themistocles.

Themistocles' naval policy

According to Herodotus, Themistocles believed that Athens' future lay in being a sea-trading power. He proposed improvements to Athens' harbour and a major shipbuilding program. As early as 493 BC, Themistocles had suggested fortifying the Piraeus peninsula, which had three natural harbours (see Source 54). Athens' harbour had been the Bay of Phaleron, but Themistocles suggested fortifying the entire peninsula with a wall and a citadel. This work had been interrupted by the Persian attack in 490 BC.

Themistocles used the war against Aegina to point out that Athens needed a large fleet to control sea routes. In 483–482 BC, Themistocles persuaded the Athenians to pay for the building of a fleet, using the silver from the mines at Laurium.

Greek preparations for the invasion

The Greek preparations – unlike the Persian – were rather hasty. When news came of Xerxes' planned invasion, delegates from Greek states met in 481 BC to plan for defence. The Hellenic

League was established, it was agreed that all disputes between Greek states should cease and that a united effort be made against the Persians. However, the prospects for unity were dubious. Most of the city-states were concerned only with their own defence. Themistocles, however, realised the importance of unity and agreed that Sparta should have command.

The Peloponnesian states advocated a strategy based on defence of the Isthmus of Corinth (see Source 26). This would result in the sacrifice of the northern states to the Persians; indeed, many of these states had already submitted to Xerxes.

The Delphic Oracle

Delphic Oracle the priestess of Apollo, in his sanctuary at Delphi; she uttered prophecies on behalf of Apollo, the god of prophecy

In 481–480 BC, the Athenians sought advice from the **Delphic Oracle** about what to do in the face of the imminent Persian invasion. It was customary in the Greek world, before undertaking important missions, to consult the god Apollo, at his sanctuary at Delphi. The answer given, in the form of a prophecy, was delivered via the priestess of the god, the Pythia.

On this occasion, the Oracle's response was pessimistic and advised the Athenians to abandon all resistance to Persia. Not satisfied with the first oracle, the Athenians requested a second reading. This time the Oracle gave a different answer, advising them to look to their wooden walls. There was much dispute in Athens about the meaning of 'wooden walls': did this mean the walls around the citadel of Athens on the **Acropolis** or did it refer to the fleet of wooden vessels, the Athenian navy – as Themistocles tried to persuade the Athenians?

Acropolis a fortified hilltop in ancient Athens, containing the Parthenon and other notable buildings, mostly dating from the 5th century BC

The meeting of the Hellenic League: 480 BC

Xerxes' huge army was on the march. In 480 BC, a second meeting of the Hellenic League, attended by delegates from 31 states, was held at Corinth. It is estimated that they could have deployed 40 000 hoplites and 70 000 lightly armed troops. The navy consisted of 400 warships. According to Herodotus, Xerxes brought an army of approximately 5 million to invade Greece. Modern historians have tended to divide this figure by 10. Such a huge force – 500 000 – left the Greeks hopelessly outnumbered. The Greeks realised that their best form of defence would be to fight in confined spaces – narrow mountain passes and sea straits – to neutralise the Persians' numerical superiority.

With invasion imminent, the people of Thessaly, a state in northern Greece in the direct line of attack, appealed to the League for help. A force of 10 000 troops led by Themistocles was dispatched north. The strategy was to defend the Pass of Tempe, but the Greeks soon realised that this was impossible. Tempe was abandoned and the Greeks returned to the Isthmus.

11.6 Check your learning

1. What was the naval policy of Themistocles?
2. What was the Hellenic League? What preparations were made for the coming war?
3. Read the full account in Herodotus of the advice given by the Oracle of Delphi to the Athenians (*The Histories*, Book VII, 141).
4. Writing task: Compare the preparations for war by the Persians and the Greeks in the period of 490–480 BC. What were the strengths and weaknesses of each side?

11.7 The invasion of 480–479 BC

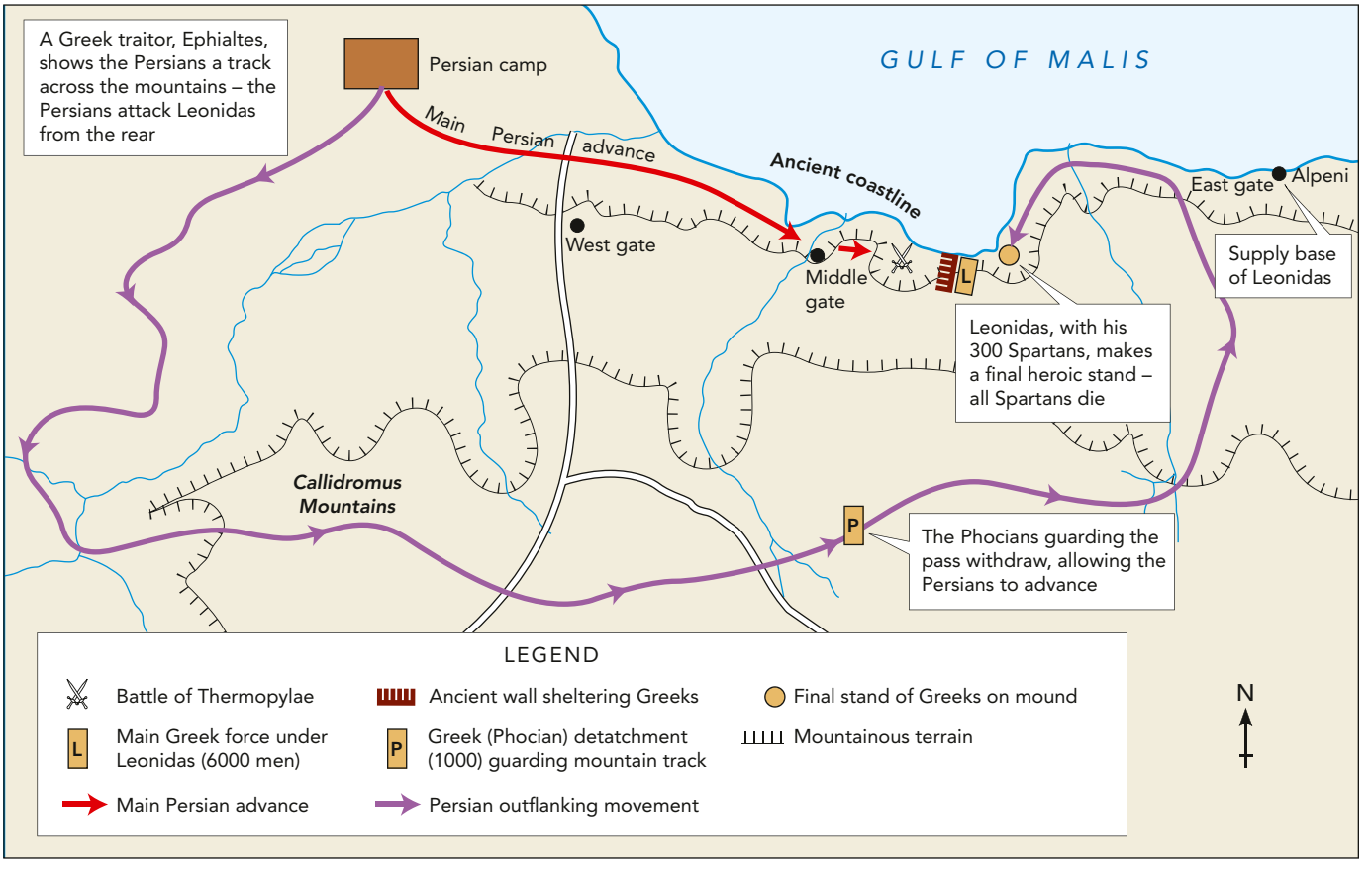
Another meeting of the League was held to discuss strategy. Herodotus tells us that it was decided to defend the mountain pass of Thermopylae because it was narrower than the pass into Thessaly. It was also decided to send the fleet to Artemisium on the north coast of the island of Euboea at the same time. Artemisium was close to Thermopylae, so communication would be easy.

Battles of Thermopylae and Artemisium

The battles of Thermopylae and Artemisium are usually regarded as a joint action. It was probably intended that the Greek navy at Artemisium would support their land forces by preventing the Persian navy from landing troops behind the Greek position at Thermopylae. It was no doubt also intended to prevent – or at least delay – the Persian navy from sailing south to attack southern Greece.

The story of Thermopylae is one of the most graphic accounts in Herodotus' narrative. The heroism of the small Spartan force of 300, led by their king Leonidas and supported by a force of roughly 7000 other local Greeks facing the huge Persian army, has become legendary.

BATTLE OF THERMOPYLAE



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 18

The legacy of Thermopylae

Herodotus tells of the honours that were paid to the Spartans and other Greeks who defended Thermopylae. The dead were buried where they fell and inscriptions later set up at the site (Source 19). The Battle of Thermopylae has gone down in history as one of the great battles of antiquity. It has inspired artists, poets, novelists and, more recently, filmmakers as in the 2007 film *300* (Source 20). In Australian history, Thermopylae has often been compared with the Anzac campaign at Gallipoli in 1915.

SOURCE 19

epitaph
words written in memory of a person who has died, especially as an inscription on a tombstone

Epitaph for the Greeks

Four thousand here from Pelops' land, against three million once did stand.

Special epitaph for the Spartan

Go tell the Spartans, traveller passing by, that here, obedient to our laws, we lie.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VII, 227
(trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972)

SOURCE 20 A poster advertising the 2007 film *300*, a fictionalised recount of the Battle of Thermopylae. The film was based on the graphic novel *300* by Frank Miller and, with its special effects, belongs to the genre of 'historical fantasy'.

Role and contribution of Leonidas

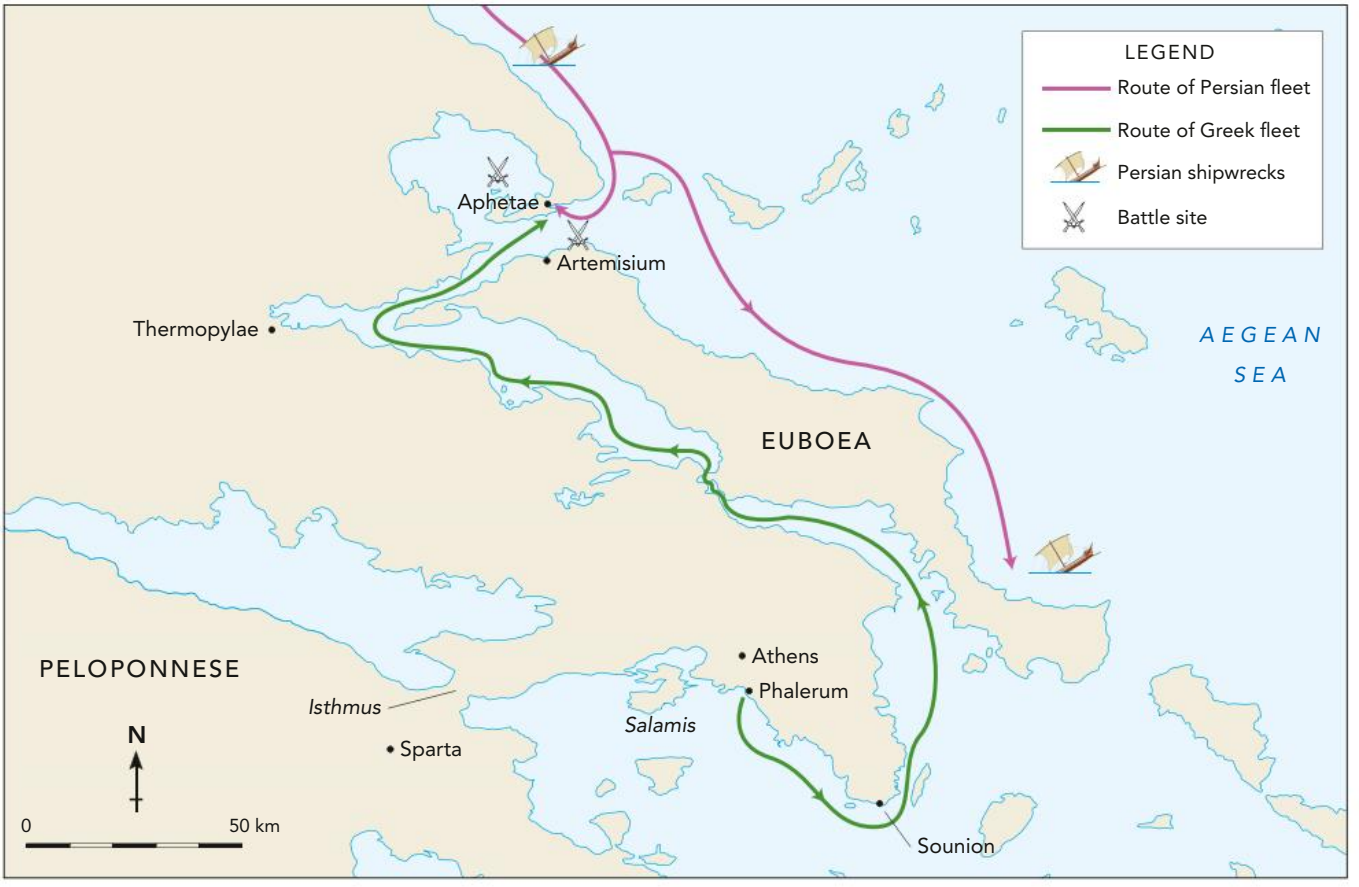
Leonidas was king of Sparta from 490 BC until his death at Thermopylae in 480 BC. The main details of his family background and military career are recorded by Herodotus – his major contribution being his leadership of the Greek forces at the Battle of Thermopylae. Forty years after the battle, his remains were exhumed from their burial place at Thermopylae and brought back to Sparta for ceremonial reburial. The Spartans also established a hero-shrine in his honour.

Naval engagement at Artemisium

While the Persian and Greek forces were fighting at Thermopylae, inconclusive naval encounters took place in the waters of Cape Artemisium to the north of Euboea. The Persian fleet, comprising 1200 ships (according to Herodotus), had sailed south from Therma to support the army, which was advancing on Thermopylae. Off the rocky coast of Magnesia a violent storm raged for three days, destroying up to 200 Persian ships.

The Greek navy, consisting of 271 triremes, sailed north to meet the Persian advance. With better knowledge of local weather conditions, the Greeks were able to ride out the storm in the sheltered waters of the Euripus Channel between Euboea and the mainland. When the storm finally abated, the Persian fleet took up its position at Aphetae, while the Greeks occupied a position off Artemisium. The Persians, hoping to encircle the Greek fleet, sent a squadron of 200 ships to sail south around Euboea but it was destroyed in yet another summer storm.

BATTLE OF ARTEMISIUM



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 21 Key sites in the Battle of Artemisium

Three battles at Artemisium

Over the next few days the Persian and Greek fleets fought three battles:

1 The Persians with their superior numbers and lighter, more manoeuvrable ships, attempted to surround the Greek fleet in the open waters between Aphetae and Artemisium. However, the Greeks used the defensive tactic called the *kyklos*, in which their smaller force formed a close circle with their rams pointing outwards, preventing the enemy ships from disrupting their formation. At a given signal, the Greek ships charged the Persian ships head-on, stopping them from adopting either offensive or defensive manoeuvres. Herodotus tells us that the Persians lost 30 ships in this encounter.

2 During the night, further storm damage to the Persian ships anchored off Aphetae encouraged the Greeks to sail across the channel and raid part of the Persian fleet engaged in repairing their ships.

3 In the final encounter, the Persian ships sailed across towards the Greek position at Artemisium and formed an offensive semicircle, which the Greeks attacked head-on. Both sides sustained heavy casualties and the Persians, recognising that little was to be gained, withdrew. Neither side had gained a clear victory in this battle.

It was at this point that the Greeks received news of the disaster at Thermopylae. Realising the danger facing southern Greece, they retreated down the Euripus Channel to Athens, the Persian navy in pursuit.

The consequences of Artemisium

The Greek navy was able, if only briefly, to prevent the Persians from assisting their land forces at Thermopylae and thus interrupted the Persian strategy of combined naval and military operations. Most significantly, the reduced size of the Persian fleet meant they could not send naval detachments to attack other parts of the Greek mainland. The destruction of the fleet would mean the end of Xerxes' campaign as originally conceived.

11.7 Understanding and using the sources

Source 19

1 How would you explain the exaggeration in the numbers of the Persian forces as recorded by Herodotus in the first inscription?

11.7 Check your learning

1 What particular laws or code of ethics were the Spartans obeying as referred to in the second inscription in Source 19? (See Chapter 4.)

2 What features of the Spartan action at Thermopylae can be compared with the Gallipoli campaign of 1915?

3 A detailed outline of the Battle of Thermopylae is given in Chapter 7. Study the sequence chart and discuss the questions in 7.11 Artemisium and Thermopylae.

4 Discuss these questions about the battle at Artemisium:
   - **a** What did the Greeks hope to achieve by sending a fleet to Artemisium?
   - **b** What does this battle reveal about Greek naval tactics?
   - **c** What caused the most damage to the Persian fleet during this battle?
   - **d** Why did the Greek fleet immediately withdraw from Artemisium when they heard the news of the defeat of Leonidas' forces at Thermopylae?
   - **e** Was anything achieved by the naval engagement at Artemisium?

5 Referring to Herodotus (Book VII, 101–238), make notes on Leonidas' role in the Thermopylae campaign, including:
   - his march to Thermopylae with a hand-picked force of Spartans
   - military tactics of Greek forces to prevent the Persians from taking the pass
   - his decision to dismiss the remainder of the Greek force once the Greek position could no longer be defended
   - the decision to fight to the death with his 300 Spartans
   - his death and the fight over his body
   - his burial and epitaph at Thermopylae.

6 Writing task: Assess Leonidas' contribution to the Persian Wars.

   Consider, for example:
   - his leadership of the Greek force at Thermopylae and his role in the battle
   - the impact of the Thermopylae campaign on subsequent events during the Persian invasion of 480–479 BC.

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11.2 Profile

The Decree of Themistocles: Greek strategy in the Persian Wars

The aims of Greek strategy at Thermopylae and Artemisium are the subject of ongoing historical debate. In 1960 a farmer at Troezen in Attica discovered an inscribed marble stela, now known as the Decree of Themistocles (also called the Troezen Inscription). A study of the inscription caused great excitement when it was found to be a decree issued by Themistocles during the Persian Wars, and that it contained evidence about the strategy for the Greek defence before the battles of Thermopylae and Artemisium. However, some problems relating to the authenticity and reliability of the decree have since emerged.

Historiographical issues

The information in the decree appeared to contradict the version of events recorded in Herodotus. His narrative suggests that the evacuation of Athens after the battles of Thermopylae and Artemisium was a panic-stricken reaction to the news of the unexpected Greek defeat, whereas the evidence provided by the decree (Source 23) suggests the opposite – that the evacuation was a carefully planned operation in the expectation that the Greeks would be defeated.

The authenticity of the decree became an issue when it was discovered that the inscription had been carved in the early 3rd century BC, 200 years after the events it describes. Other concerns about the style of language and some anachronisms in the use of phrases have also been raised.

SOURCE 22

DECREE OF THEMISTOCLES

To entrust the city to Athena the Mistress of Athens and to all the other gods to guard and defend from the barbarian for the sake of the land. The Athenians themselves and the foreigners who live in Athens are to send their children and women to safety in Troezen, their protector being Pittheus, the founding hero of the land. They are to send the old men and their movable possessions to safety on Salamis. The treasurers and priestesses are to remain on the acropolis, guarding the property of the gods. All the other Athenians and foreigners of military age are to embark on the 200 ships that are ready and defend against the barbarian for the sake of their own freedom and that of the rest of the Greeks along with the Lakedaemonians [Spartans], the Corinthians, the Aeginetans and all the others who wish to share the danger.

The generals are to appoint, starting tomorrow, 200 trierarchs [officers in command of triremes], one to a ship, from among those who have legitimate children and who are not older than fifty; to these men the ships are to be assigned by lot. They are to enlist marines, ten to each ship, from men between the ages of twenty and thirty, and four archers … the Council and the generals are to man all the 200 ships, after sacrificing a placatory offering to Zeus the Almighty and Athena and Nike and Poseidon the Securer.

SOURCE 23 The Decree of Themistocles, discovered in 1960, is now in the Epigraphical Museum in Athens.

When the ships have been manned, with 100 of them, they are to meet the enemy at Artemisium in Euboea, and with the other 100 they are to lie off Salamis and the coast of Attica and keep guard over the land. In order that all Athenians may be united in their defence against the barbarians, those who have been sent into exile for ten years are to go to Salamis and to stay there until the people come to some decision about them, while those who have been deprived of citizen rights are to have their rights restored.

Cited in D. Kagan, *Problems in Ancient History*, Vol. 1, Macmillan, New York, 1971, p. 285

Herodotus suggests that a combined defence by land and sea was to be made at Thermopylae and Artemisium – the Peloponnesian army marching north to defend the northern Greek states. According to Herodotus, however, the defeat at Thermopylae and Artemisium was unexpected, and the Athenians and northern Greeks were betrayed by the Peloponnesians who did not send the expected number of troops north. Instead, northern and central Greece were defeated and abandoned to the Persians. The Athenians were forced to evacuate their city while the Spartans fortified the Isthmus.

The Decree of Themistocles suggests that the Athenians had agreed to abandon their city and to fight at the Isthmus before the events at Thermopylae and Artemisium took place. These two battles would be delaying actions, designed to reduce the numbers of the enemy and to give the Athenians time to evacuate their city. Only the Isthmus was to be seriously defended.

This may help to explain why so few Spartan troops were present at Thermopylae, and why no more were forthcoming. It also reflects Spartan military policy. The Spartans were unlikely to have subjected their main army to overwhelming odds so far north in Boeotia – this was to risk the prospect of devastating defeat. However, the strategy to abandon Athens and fight delaying actions at Artemisium and Thermopylae puts a different light on the cooperation of Athens and Sparta. It suggests that they had formulated a unified, well-planned strategy against the Persians.

The account in Herodotus, written some 50 years later when Athens and Sparta were at war, paints the Spartans in a negative light. They had let Athens down badly by not sending more troops north and by selfishly wanting to defend only the Peloponnese. It might also explain why only 100 ships were sent to Artemisium. If the Themistocles Decree is authentic, it suggests a bold and courageous plan, with both Athens and Sparta carrying out their agreed tasks – the Athenians sacrificing their city and Leonidas giving his life.

11.7 Profile tasks

1 Using Source 22, answer the following questions:

- **a** Who is 'the barbarian' referred to in the opening lines?
- **b** What were the people of Athens instructed to do?
- **c** What were the men of military age instructed to do?
- **d** Which lines of the decree make it obvious that the battles of Thermopylae and Artemisium have not yet taken place?
- **e** Sum up in your own words the evidence that indicates this was a pre-planned evacuation not a panic-stricken retreat.

2 For discussion:

- **a** If, as the decree indicates, the Greeks expected to be defeated at Thermopylae and Artemisium, why would they have bothered to send an army and a navy north to meet the Persians?
- **b** Consider again the prediction of the Oracle of Delphi. Some scholars have argued that this evidence supports the authenticity of the decree. Why? Do you agree?
- **c** What does this decree suggest about the influence of Themistocles as an Athenian leader at this time?
- **d** How might you explain the problems of evidence associated with the Themistocles Decree; that is, the conflict with Herodotus' account and the date of the inscription?

3 Were the Greek actions at Thermopylae and Artemisium just a heroic waste of time? Was anything achieved? From your study of the battles and the Themistocles Decree, was one battle meant to be more important than the other? Give reasons for your answer.

4 What conclusions could you draw about the strengths and weaknesses of the Themistocles Decree for a historian investigating Greek strategy in the Persian Wars?

5 For a more detailed discussion and assessment of the historiographical issues associated with the Themistocles Decree, see any of the following:

- J. Fine, *The Ancient Greeks: A Critical History*, Harvard University Press, 1983, pp. 305–11
- R. Sealey, *A History of the Greek City States: 700–338 BC*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1976, pp. 213–17
- M. Chambers, 'The authenticity of the Themistocles Decree', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 67, No. 2, pp. 306–16

SOURCE 24 A view of Athens today, with the Acropolis in the foreground

11.8 The Battle of Salamis

After his victory at Thermopylae, Xerxes marched south with no resistance. The evacuation of Athens was completed, while the ships that had returned from Artemisium lay off the island of Salamis. The Greek fleet at Salamis was still under the overall command of the Spartan leader, Eurybiades. It numbered 380 ships, half of which were Athenian. The other half comprised contingents of ships from Peloponnesian states such as Corinth, Megara and other smaller states. The size of the Persian fleet has been estimated at around 500 ships.

A council of war was held with Eurybiades calling for suggestions as to where the fleet should best engage the Persians. Most were in favour of defending the Peloponnese and therefore fighting at the Isthmus of Corinth. Any action at Salamis was considered to be far too risky. While this council was meeting, news arrived that the Persians 'had entered Attica and that the whole country was ablaze'. The Acropolis, on which a few 'diehards' had barricaded themselves, was soon taken; those who remained were butchered, the temples stripped of their treasures and the city set on fire.

Greek strategy at Salamis

In Source 25, Herodotus recounts the plan of Themistocles for the Battle of Salamis in a conversation between Themistocles and Eurybiades, the Spartan commander of the allied fleet.

SOURCE 25

It is now in your power [says Themistocles] to save Greece, if you take my advice and engage the enemy's fleet here in Salamis, instead of withdrawing to the Isthmus … Let me put the two plans before you and you can weigh them up and see which is better. Take the Isthmus first: if you fight there, it will have to be in the open sea, and that will be greatly to our disadvantage, with our smaller numbers and slower ships. Moreover, even if everything else goes well, you will lose Salamis, Megara and Aegina. Again, if the enemy fleet comes south, the army will follow it; so you will yourself be responsible for drawing it to the Peloponnese, thus putting the whole of Greece in peril.

Now for my plan: it will bring, if you adopt it, the following advantages: first, we shall be fighting in narrow waters and there, with our inferior numbers, we shall win, provided things go as we may reasonably expect. Fighting in a confined space favours us but the open sea favours the enemy. Secondly, Salamis, where we have put our women and children will be preserved; and thirdly – for you the most important point of all – you will be fighting in defence of the Peloponnese by remaining here just as much as by withdrawing to the Isthmus – nor, if you have the sense to follow my advice, will you draw the Persian army to the Peloponnese. If we beat them at sea, as I expect we shall, they will not advance to attack you on the Isthmus.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VIII, 59
(trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972)

PERSIAN WARS BATTLE SITES

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 26 Greece: showing Attica, the Peloponnese and battle sites of the Persian Wars

Naval tactics in the Battle of Salamis

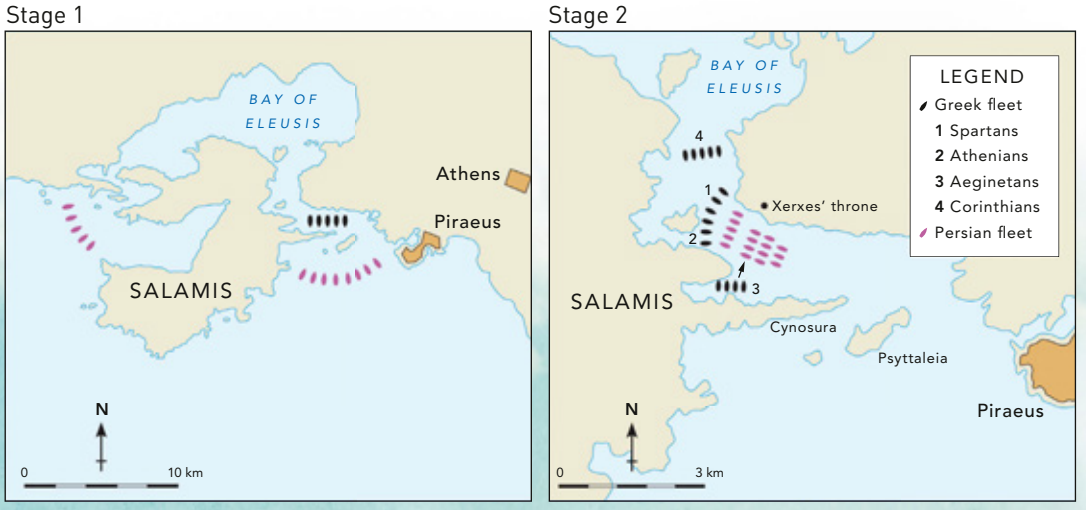
The warship used by both the Greek and Persian navies at this time was the trireme, a ship with three banks of oars, one above the other. We know that a Greek trireme was manned by about 200 men – 170 rowers, plus marines, deckhands, the captain and a flautist who piped time for the rowers. The Persian fleet was made up largely of ships from Phoenicia, Egypt and Ionia. Our knowledge of Persian ships is very limited, but we do know that some were built with higher sterns and decks than their Greek equivalents, and that they carried more marines. Because of their higher decks, the Phoenician ships were faster than those of the Greeks, but were less stable and harder to manoeuvre in narrow waters and gusty weather conditions.

The Persian tactic was to maintain close formation and row alongside the enemy ship, before crashing into its side. In these close quarters the Persian marines would rain missiles upon the enemy crew, leaping aboard the disabled ship to intensify the combat. The extra marines carried by Persian ships were for this purpose.

Greek naval warfare relied more heavily on a tactic of ramming the enemy ship. The forward keel of each Greek trireme was equipped with a bronze-plated ram, situated below the water line. Effective use of the ram required considerable skill and manoeuvrability; consequently, the Greek fleet kept a relatively open formation. A very effective manoeuvre-and-ram tactic employed by the Greek ships at Salamis was the *periplus*, a flanking manoeuvre in which the Greeks disabled their opponents by side-swiping them and shearing off their oars. The rest of the Greek fleet was then in a position to advance.

At the Battle of Salamis, the Greek flanking ships were lying in ambush behind the Cynosura headland (Source 27, Stage 2). The large Persian fleet was crowded into the narrow strait between Cynosura and the mainland. Because of this, the leading ships were disabled by the ramming tactics of the Greeks and were forced back onto the ships following closely behind. The Persian ships ended by ramming each other and provided an easy target for the Greeks, who were then able to ram them at will. See 7.12 From Thermopylae to Salamis, for a more detailed description of the key developments of the Battle of Salamis.

BATTLE OF SALAMIS



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 27 Stage 1: The Persian fleet blockades the exits from the Bay of Eleusis. Stage 2: Entering the strait, the Persians are attacked at the flank and rear by the Aeginatans – the Greeks take advantage of the confined space and rout the Persian fleet.

SOURCE 28 An artist's impression of a 5th-century BC naval battle

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

The significance of Salamis

The Battle of Salamis was significant for a number of reasons:

- It was a turning point in the war – the Persian fleet was largely destroyed.
- The Persian strategy of combined land and sea operation was now impossible as the destruction of the Persian fleet meant that Persia's supply line was broken.
- The loyalty of the Ionian Greeks (who comprised the bulk of the Persian navy) was weakened; without a navy the Persians could not maintain control of Ionia (which revolted again successfully in 479 BC – the following year).

However, the Persian army under Mardonius had not yet suffered a defeat – the Persians still held all of northern Greece and would fight another day.

11.8 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 25 & 26

1 Study the map of Greece in Source 26. Locate the Isthmus of Corinth on the map and explain its strategic importance for the Peloponnesians.

2 Were the reasons for Themistocles' strategy to fight the Persians at Salamis rather than the Isthmus sound ones? Explain your answer.

11.8 Check your learning

1 Read the account of the Battle of Salamis answer the accompanying source questions in 7.12 From Thermopylae to Salamis.

2 Read at least two of the following accounts of the Battle of Salamis. What are the main similarities and differences between these accounts? How would you explain the similarities and differences?

- Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VIII, 56–92
- Aeschylus, *The Persians*, lines 350–515
- Plutarch, *The Rise and Fall of Athens*, Chapter 3 'Themistocles'.

You can find online versions of these texts in the Perseus Digital Library.

3 Writing tasks:

a Use the knowledge you have gained from your study of the events leading up to the Battle of Salamis and the battle itself to provide short-answer responses to the following questions:

i Why was a battle fought between the Greeks and Persians at Salamis?

ii What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Greeks and Persians before the battle? (For example, consider the location and topography of the battle site, the size of the fleets, the design of the ships and the naval tactics traditionally used by each side.)

iii Explain the strategy adopted by both sides in the battle.

b 'It was the Battle of Salamis that determined the outcome of the Persian Wars.'

To what extent is this an accurate assessment of the significance of the Battle of Salamis in the Persian Wars?

11.9 Contribution of Themistocles and Eurybiades

Two important men, Themistocles of Athens and Eurybiades of Sparta, made significant contributions to the course of the Persian Wars.

Themistocles

SOURCE 29
A bust of Themistocles (c. 524–460 BC), Athenian statesman and general. This is a Roman copy of a lost original Greek portrait bust of c. 450 BC.

In Herodotus' narrative, Themistocles is given the main credit for the strategy and victory at Salamis. We learnt from Source 25 that it was Themistocles' strategy to fight at Salamis, which won the day against the Peloponnesian plan to defend the Isthmus of Corinth. Herodotus also tells us that Themistocles, wishing to bring on the battle – and so prevent the Greek fleet from deserting the cause at Salamis and sailing for the Isthmus – sent his slave Sicinnus to the Persian camp to tell Xerxes that 'the Greeks are at daggers drawn with each other and will offer no resistance'. The Persians apparently believed the story and prepared immediately for battle. To prevent any Greek ships from escaping, a large contingent of Persian ships was sent to blockade the exit at the western channel (Source 27, Stage 1).

The result of the next day's battle was a resounding victory for the Greeks and Themistocles was justly praised as the hero of the hour. But consider how differently his role in bringing on the battle would have been viewed if the Greeks had lost!

After the battle, the highest award for valour went to the island of Aegina. The highest honour to an individual went to Themistocles. Herodotus says, 'Themistocles' name was on everyone's lips, and he acquired the reputation of being by far the most able man in the country' (Book VIII, 223). See Source 30 for assessments of Themistocles from the ancient sources.

SOURCE 30 Ancient writers' assessments of Themistocles

ASSESSMENT: POSITIVE	SOURCES
Greece was 'surely saved by the Athenians' (a description of Themistocles' role in the defence of Greece)	Herodotus, VII, 139
'Natural genius … intelligence and foresight … supreme at doing precisely the right thing at precisely the right moment'	Thucydides, 1, 138
'The only man who had the courage to suggest that the revenue from the Laurium silver mines be used to build triremes' 'as a man of intellect, foresight and cunning', Themistocles 'stood alone'	Plutarch, 'Themistocles', 3
Praises Themistocles' role in building Athens' naval policy and his leadership and ingenuity at Salamis. When the Persian messenger arrives at Persian court with news of the Persian defeat at Salamis he is asked how the puny Greeks could have defeated the mighty Persian force; the reply is 'they have a vein of silver treasured in their soil' – Podlecki (modern historian) says this was an unmistakable reference to Themistocles' role in the development of the navy and his Salamis strategy (indirect reference to his use of the silver from the Laurium mines to build the Athenian navy).	Aeschylus, *The Persians*, lines 331 ff.
The Themistocles Decree (or the Troezen Inscription) – Themistocles' role in planning Greek strategy	Themistocles' Decree

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SOURCE 30 *(continued)*

ASSESSMENT: NEGATIVE	SOURCES
Based on political opposition from conservative opponents who disliked his populist policies (e.g. his naval policy appealed to the lowest class of citizens – the *thetes* who manned the ships in the fleet and who would have voted for his naval program)	Plutarch, 'Themistocles', 4
His political opponents (e.g. Aristides) were men of the older aristocratic families who supported the hoplite classes and closer relations with Sparta after the Persian Wars.	Plutarch, 'Themistocles', 5
References to his unbounded ambition	Plutarch, 'Themistocles', 5
References to his willingness to accept bribes	Herodotus, VIII, 112

Eurybiades

Eurybiades, the Spartan commander-in-chief of the Greek navy at the battles of both Artemisium and Salamis, played an important role in the Greek defence, although, in Herodotus' narrative, it has tended to be overshadowed by that of Themistocles. He was chosen as commander-in-chief because the Peloponnesian allies refused to serve under an Athenian commander. His dealings with Themistocles in both the battles of Artemisium and Salamis suggest a strong working relationship between the two, and perhaps some mutual respect developed – despite the tensions evident between the Athenian and Peloponnesian contingents of the Greek force. After the Battle of Salamis, Herodotus tells us that the Spartans awarded Eurybiades the prize of valour – a wreath of olive – although a similar award was given to Themistocles when he visited Sparta.

11.9 Check your learning

1 For discussion:
   - **a** Was Themistocles' role in urging the Persians to fight at Salamis (i.e. the message via his slave to Xerxes) the action of a clever strategist or a reckless gambler, taking a huge risk with his city's fate? Could there be another explanation for his action?
   - **b** What questions could be asked about the willingness of Xerxes to believe the message brought to him by Themistocles' slave on the eve of the battle?

2 Construct a career profile for Themistocles that includes notes on:
   - his family background and early career
   - his role in the development of Athens and its navy before the Persian invasion of 480 BC
   - his roles in the battles of Artemisium and Salamis
   - his post-war career.

3 Writing task: Using the information and sources in this section, assess the contribution of Themistocles to the course of the Persian Wars. In your response, be sure to integrate information from relevant sources and discuss the strengths and limitations of sources.

4 Review the sections of Herodotus' narrative that deal with Eurybiades, particularly his actions at Artemisium and Salamis.
   - **a** Make a point-form summary of Eurybiades' role in these battles.
   - **b** For discussion: As commander of the Greek fleet at the Battle of Salamis, do Eurybiades (and the Spartans) deserve more credit for the victory than Herodotus has given them?

5 Writing task: Assess the contribution of Eurybiades to the course of Persian Wars.

11.10 The battles of Plataea and Mycale

After Salamis, Xerxes returned to Persia, but the Persian army under the command of Mardonius remained in Greece and was so far undefeated in the Persian Wars. The destruction of the Persian fleet at Salamis left the Persian army without an adequate supply line. However, Xerxes had carried out an important part of his and his predecessor Darius' mission: the city of Athens had been punished.

Mardonius now moved his army to Thessaly for the winter, and attempted to use diplomacy and bribery to break up the alliance of Greek states. Alexander of Macedon was sent to offer the Athenians an alliance with the Persians in return for Persian gold to rebuild their city. The Spartans, afraid that the Athenians might accept, offered to assist Athens, but did not make good their promise. When the Athenians refused the Persian offer, Mardonius marched against Athens. The people of Athens evacuated their city once again and sent messages to the Spartans seeking their support. The Spartans eventually responded to the challenge and sent out a force under the command of their leader, Pausanias.

Persian and Greek forces at Plataea

After the second destruction of Athens, Mardonius left Attica and moved to the territory of Thebes, where he would be able to use his cavalry. He constructed a palisade and took up a position along the Asopus River, near Plataea.

The Persian forces

Although Herodotus claims that the Persian force, commanded by Mardonius, numbered 300 000, a figure of 35 000 infantry and 12 000 cavalry is more likely. They included:

- heavily armed cavalry
- cavalry contingents from Persia, Media, Scythia, Bactria and India
- Greek cavalry from Macedonia, Boeotia and Thessaly
- an infantry component of 10 000 Immortals – the Persian king's elite division, so called because their number was always kept at 10 000
- some hoplites from the states of central Greece.

The Greek forces

Modern estimates suggest that 8000 Athenians and about 30 000 Peloponnesians made up the Greek contingent. The major contingents of the Greek forces commanded by the Spartan king, Pausanias, included:

- 5000 Spartiates, 5000 ***perioikoi*** and 35 000 **helots**
- 8000 Athenians, commanded by Aristides
- 600 Plataeans, 3000 Megarians, 500 Aeginetans
- smaller contingents from other Greek states.

perioikoi
free but non-citizen residents of Sparta

helots
the enslaved population of Sparta

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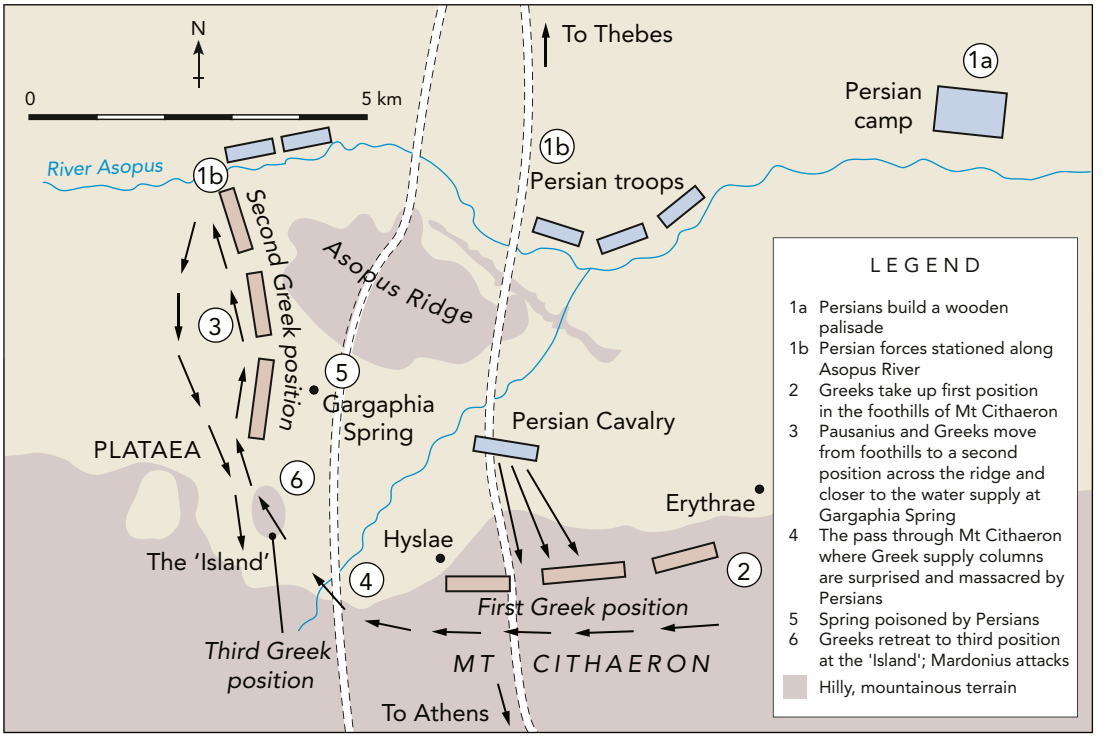
The Battle of Plataea

From Herodotus' account, it appears that Plataea was a drawn-out battle, taking place over a number of weeks, in a number of stages and over a wide area. The Persians were the more mobile force, having the advantage in cavalry and archers. The Greek were superior in infantry, and would therefore have had the advantage in any close fighting.

Stage 1

- The Greeks under Pausanias took up a position in the foothills of the Cithaeron Ranges. For a considerable time (estimates vary from 12 days to 3 weeks), the two forces faced each other across the Asopus River.
- Mardonius tried to lure the Greek forces down from the foothills so he could use his cavalry against them.
- The Greek forces refused to offer battle so Mardonius sent his cavalry under the command of the Persian officer Masistius to attack them, inflicting heavy casualties in the process.
- Pausanias responded by sending a contingent of skilled Athenian archers who shot Masistius' horse from underneath him and hacked him to death.
- They put Masistius' body on a cart and paraded it along the lines.
- The death of Masistius, a distinguished Persian officer, gave heart to the Greek cause, but was the cause of great grief and consternation in the Persian camp.

BATTLE OF PLATAEA – STAGES 1 AND 2



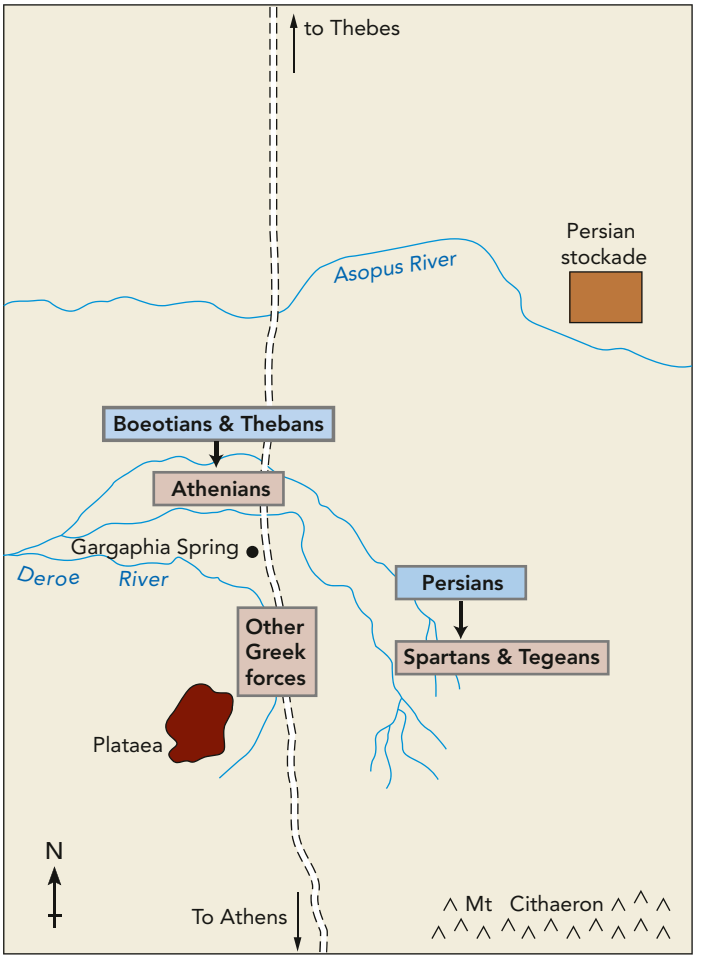
Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 31

Stage 2

- Pausanias moved down from the foothills (probably under cover of darkness to avoid detection by the Persians) and took up a position across the Asopus ridge, close to Plataea. Here he had better access to water at the Gargaphia Spring.
- Both sides waited, neither willing to risk an engagement. Although Greek reinforcements continued to arrive, the Greeks faced constant Persian attacks by the Persian cavalry, both on their position and on their supply lines.
- Both sides faced supply problems. The Greek supply column of 500 mules was intercepted by Persian forces; Mardonius was dependent for food on the Thebans and other pro-Persian states.
- The Persian cavalry continued to attack the Greeks.
- The Persians poisoned the Gargaphia Spring, leaving the Greeks without a water supply and with dwindling food rations. They could not retreat during daylight because of the Persian cavalry.
- Pausanias decided to withdraw to the foothills closer to Plataea. The Greeks were to take up position at a place called 'the Island', where they would have access to water and protection from Persian cavalry attacks. Half of the army was to head for the Island, while the other half was to move to the Cithaeron foothills and relieve the food convoys.
- For some unknown reason, the withdrawal was begun but not completed during the night.

BATTLE OF PLATAEA – STAGE 3



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 32

Stage 3

- At dawn, Mardonius was surprised to see that the Greeks were in retreat.
- He ordered his army to engage. The Persians, whose sight of the Greeks was obscured by the hills, believed that they had them on the run and streamed forwards in a disorganised mass.
- At this point, the battle became divided: the Greek allies of the Persians – the Thebans and Boeotians – cut off the Athenians on the left wing and fought a pitched battle. The Thebans were defeated.
- In the final phase of the battle, the Lakedaemonians (Spartans) and Tegeans on the right wing fought alone against the onslaught of the Persian infantry. See Sources 32 and 33 for the final stage and outcome of the battle.

SOURCE 33

… the Persians had made a barricade of their wicker shields and from the protection of it were shooting arrows in such numbers that the Spartan troops were in serious distress … Then … the Tegeans sprang forward to lead the attack … At this, the Spartans, too, at last moved forward against the enemy, who stopped shooting their arrows and prepared to meet them face to face.

First there was a struggle at the barricade of shields; then, the barricade down, there was a bitter and protracted fight, hand to hand, close by the Temple of Demeter, for the Persians would lay hold of the Spartan spears and break them; in courage and strength they were as good as their adversaries, but they were deficient in armour, untrained and greatly inferior in skill … they fell upon the Spartan line and were cut down.

They pressed hardest at the point where Mardonius fought in person – riding his white charger, and surrounded by his thousand Persian troops, the flower of the army. While Mardonius was alive they continued to resist and to defend themselves, and struck down many of the Lakedaemonians; but after his death, and the destruction of his personal guard – the finest of the Persian troops – the remainder yielded to the Lakedaemonians and took to flight. The chief cause of their discomfiture was their lack of armour, fighting without it against heavily armed infantry.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book IX, 61 (trans. A. de Sélincourt, Penguin, London, 1972)

Aftermath of the battle

The remainder of the Persian forces retreated behind the wooden palisades. Pausanias and the Spartans, together with the Athenians, forced their way into the Persian stockade, where a great slaughter took place.

To give thanks for their victory at Plataea, the Greeks melted the bronze items captured after the battle to make an 8-metre-high Serpent Column. It was dedicated to Apollo at his temple in Delphi and was inscribed with the names of the 31 Greek cities of the Hellenic League who had fought in the Persian Wars.

SOURCE 34 An artist's representation of the final stage of the Battle of Plataea with the Greeks in phalanx formation (right) attacking the Persians

Contribution of Pausanias

SOURCE 35

The victory at Plataea was a remarkable achievement for the Greeks. If Themistocles and the Athenians were primarily responsible for saving Greece at Salamis, Pausanias and the Spartans and other Peloponnesian contingents played that role at Plataea. When one tries to envisage the difficulties Pausanias faced in holding together for weeks an army consisting of over 100000 men from some twenty-four cities, plagued by dissension, insubordination and lack of food and water, as well as the difficulty of warding off the constant threat of the excellent Persian cavalry, one can only applaud Herodotus' judgment … that at Plataea, 'the finest victory in all history known to me was won by Pausanias …'

J. Fine, *The Ancient Greeks: A Critical History*, Harvard University Press, 1983, p. 320

The Battle of Mycale

Following on from their naval victory at Salamis and at about the same time or shortly after the Greek land forces were fighting at Plataea, a Greek fleet of 250 ships set sail under the command of the Spartan king, Leotychides. They made their way initially to Samos, the headquarters of the Persian fleet in Ionia. However, on reaching Samos, they found that the remnants of the Persian fleet had sailed further along the coast to Mycale.

The Greek force at Mycale numbered 6000. The Persian numbers are uncertain. The Greeks disembarked from their ships and attacked the Persians, who positioned themselves behind a barricade of shields. An Athenian contingent advanced across the flat ground of the beach, while the Spartans took a more difficult route over rough terrain. At first, the Persians stood firm against this onslaught. Then the Athenians burst through the barricades and successfully defeated the Persians. The Spartans and other Greek contingents arrived to finish the battle.

The significance of Mycale

In the previous battles of the Persian Wars, the Greeks had been on the defensive. At Mycale, they carried the war into Persian territory. Despite the victory at Mycale, the Greek forces were unable to hold Asia Minor, and the Ionian Greeks were still not secure from the Persian threat. Mainland Greeks, however, had valiantly repulsed the massive Persian invasion. The Aegean waters and the important trade routes through the Hellespont to the Black Sea were now opened up to Greek trade. The Athenians, in particular, saw the advantages of trade in this region and seized the opportunity to fill the vacuum created by the Persian defeat.

11.10 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 33–36

1 According to these sources, what were the advantages and disadvantages of both Greeks and Persians in this phase of the battle?

2 What do Sources 33 and 35 reveal about Pausanias' leadership in this battle?

11.10 Check your learning

1 For discussion:
   - **a** List the various difficulties faced by the Greek forces throughout the Battle of Plataea.
   - **b** Considering these difficulties, how do you account for the final Greek victory?
   - **c** How important a factor was leadership on both the Persian and Greek sides in this battle?
   - **d** Was Plataea a more decisive battle than Salamis in the Persian Wars? Give reasons for your answer.
   - **e** Do you agree with Herodotus that 'the finest victory in all history known to me was won by Pausanias' in the Persian Wars?

2 Find Mycale on the map in Source 36. What is significant about its location in comparison to the other battles of the Persian Wars?

3 What role did the Battle of Mycale play in the final outcome of the Persian Wars?

11.11 Assessing the Persian Wars

There are some important issues to consider in making judgements about the Persian Wars. Some questions for discussion and assessment include:

- What was the relative importance of key factors in determining the course and outcome of the wars, for example leadership, unity, size of opposing forces, tactics, nature of weapons and armour?
- Does one city-state, for example Athens or Sparta, deserve more credit for the final outcome?
- What impact did the wars have on those involved? Consider events during and after the Persian Wars to reach a conclusion about this question.

If asked in an examination question to account for the Persian defeat, it is necessary to consider the Persian perspective, such as strengths and weaknesses of the Persian war effort. Avoid writing narrative recounts of battles. For example, if asked to account for the Greek victory at Marathon, consider the factors that contributed to the outcome, such as topography, leadership, tactics and weaponry.

The activities below will help you review the main developments in the Persian Wars and develop arguments for essays. Note that a question where no dates are indicated requires a consideration of the whole Persian Wars period from 490 BC to 479 BC. Where specific dates are given, your response must focus on that period, for example either 490 BC or 480–479 BC.

11.11 Check your learning

1 Revision: For each battle of the Persian Wars, create a table like the following and summarise the key information for each battle.

BATTLE: _____	GREEK	PERSIAN
Date		
Location/topography/relevant natural features		
Leader(s)		
Troop contingents/numbers		
Weapons/armour		
Tactics		
Outcome and significance		

2 Writing tasks: Choose from the following HSC-style essays.

a Structure responses to questions i and ii using these themes: Leadership, Strategy and tactics, Unity/disunity, Weapons and armour, Other factor(s).

i Account for the Greek victory in the Persian War of 480–479 BC.

ii Account for the Persian defeat in the Persian War of 480–479 BC.

b How important was Sparta's contribution to the Greek victory in 480–479 BC?

c To what extent is Herodotus justified in the following assessment of Athens' contribution to the outcome of the Persian Wars?

'One is surely right in saying that Greece was saved by the Athenians.' (Book VII, 139)

11.12 Development of Athens and the Athenian Empire

Athens rose to prominence in the years following the Persian Wars and became the leading city in the Greek world. A maritime confederation, the Delian League, was formed. It comprised the newly liberated Ionian and other Greek states under the leadership of Athens. League members enjoyed benefits such as protection from attack and increased trading opportunities. However, over time, Athens increased her control, often at the expense of allied members – so that what began as a league of allies was transformed into an empire dominated by Athens.

Origins of the Delian League

The maritime alliance formed in 478 BC is referred to by modern scholars as the 'Delian League', but the Greeks themselves called it the 'Athenians and their allies'. Athens was the *hegemon*, or leader. The League was formed in the aftermath of the Greek victory at Mycale.

DELIAN AND PELOPONNESIAN LEAGUES

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 36

At this time, the Spartan king Leotychides and the Peloponnesian allies returned home. The Athenians, however, under the command of Xanthippus and with the help of the Ionian Greeks, remained in Ionia to drive out the Persians. Their first action was to capture the Persian stronghold of Sestos at the entrance to the Hellespont.

Leadership and aims of the Delian League

Pausanias, after the victory at Plataea, was appointed leader of the Greek forces in Ionia. However, he made himself extremely unpopular with the Greeks and Ionians under his command and was soon recalled to Sparta to face charges of corruption. Sparta was reluctant to continue the war in any case. Her interests lay in the Peloponnese, and as a self-supporting agricultural state, Sparta was not dependent on Aegean trade. So for these reasons and because of the goodwill that existed between Athens and Sparta at that time, the Spartans were happy to relinquish the command to Athens.

The courteous behaviour of the Athenian general Aristides, by contrast with the overbearing conduct of Pausanias, earned him the respect of the Ionians. The leaders of the Ionian cities, including the important islands of Chios, Samos and Lesbos, urged him to accept the supreme command of the allied forces. Aristides and his Athenian colleague, Cimon – who was soon to play a major role in the development of the Delian League, were happy to accept the leadership of the League.

SOURCE 37

AIMS OF THE DELIAN LEAGUE

[The Athenians'] objective being to compensate themselves for their losses by ravaging the territory of the king of Persia.

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, I, 96 (trans. R. Warner, Penguin Classics, Harmondsworth, 1974)

[The Greeks'] aims probably included also their determination to protect those Greek states which had already revolted from Persia and to liberate those still under Persian rule.

J. Fine, *The Ancient Greeks: A Critical History*, Harvard University Press, 1983, p. 333

Organisation of the Delian League

It is uncertain which states joined the Delian League at its outset. Large island states such as Chios, Lesbos and Samos were founding members, as were most of the Ionian city-states in the northern Aegean and along the coast of Asia Minor. In 478–477 BC, the Athenians held a meeting for all interested parties on the island of Delos. This island was an important cult centre of the Greek god Apollo and it also possessed an excellent harbour. A League council or synod was established, which included all members who voted in council meetings at Delos on policies and actions of the League. It is not clear if all members had an equal vote in decisions or whether the Athenians, as leaders, exercised greater power.

According to the ancient sources, League members swore an oath that they would have the 'same enemies and the same friends as the Athenians'. To seal this contract, iron weights were cast into the sea. It was understood that the contract was binding until the iron weights rose to the surface.

The tribute

To fund the alliance and carry out the purposes of the League, an annual tax or tribute in the form of both money and ships was required and all member states were expected to contribute. The larger island states contributed ships and crews for service in the League fleet; smaller states contributed money. Athenian officials, called Hellenic treasurers, were appointed to collect the annual tribute, which was stored in the treasury on Delos.

SOURCE 38

[The Greeks] applied to the Athenians for the services of Aristides and appointed him to survey the various territories and their revenues, and then to fix their contributions according to each member's worth and ability to pay … he drew up the list of assessments not only with scrupulous integrity and justice, but also in such a way that all the states felt they had been appropriately and satisfactorily dealt with … The tax which Aristides imposed amounted to 460 talents.

Plutarch on Aristides, in *The Rise and Fall of Athens: Nine Greek Lives* (trans. I. Scott-Kilvert, Penguin Books, London, 1960)

11.12 Understanding and using the sources

Source 36

1 Using the map, suggest a reason why the location of Delos might have been a factor in its choice as League headquarters.

Source 37

2 Summarise the aims of the Delian League as outlined in Source 37.

3 What Athenian 'losses' are alluded to by Thucydides?

4 Based on your knowledge of the history of Athenian relations with Ionia, what other aims, not mentioned in these sources, might the Athenians have had for the Delian League?

Source 38

5 What was the purpose of the tribute? What were the allies expected to contribute?

6 Who assessed the tribute? Who collected it?

7 What does this source indicate about Aristides' contribution to the Delian League?

11.12 Check your learning

1 Read about Pausanias' career after the Battle of Plataea in Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book I, 128–33.

2 See Plutarch, *The Rise and Fall of Athens*, Chapter 4, for an account of Aristides' career and his role in the formation of the Delian League.

3 What was the significance of casting iron weights into the sea as part of the oath taking of members?

4 In what ways did Athens appear to have greater influence in the League from the outset?

5 Writing task: Explain the origins, aims and organisation of the Delian League.

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11.13 Delian League: Activities to the Battle of the Eurymedon River

The League was fully occupied in its first 10 years, carrying out its major aims of continuing the liberation of Ionia and ejecting the Persians from their bases in the Aegean and elsewhere. However, in time, the nature and purpose of these activities underwent some important changes. See Source 39 for an outline of League action in these years.

SOURCE 39 A timeline of key developments to the Battle of the Eurymedon River

DATE/EVENT	DETAILS
479–478 BC End of Persian Wars	• Pausanias expelled Persians from Byzantium and Cyprus • Capture of Sestos • Pausanias disgraced and recalled
Delian League founded	• Athens assumed leadership under Cimon and Aristides • Membership: Athens (*hegemon*), most of Aegean islands and Ionian cities, cities in Propontis, Thrace and Euboea
477 BC Capture of Byzantium and Sestos	• Cimon led an expeditionary force to recapture these two cities after the disgrace and recall of Pausanias
476 BC Capture of Eion	• Persians expelled from their base in Thrace – added advantage for Athens and League in access to mineral, timber and trading opportunities of the region
474 BC Capture of Scyros	• Cimon and League expelled Dolopian pirates and colonised it themselves • This freed Aegean from piracy, ensuring free flow of trade • Value of Scyros on corn route from Hellespont to Athens • Capture of Scyros signalled 'flexibility' in League's aims
472 BC Carystus forced to join Delian League	• A campaign against fellow Greeks – not in original charter of League • Carystus had not joined League but was benefiting from League activities without contributing • Athens benefited from this action as Euboea was an important city on corn route from Hellespont
469 BC Revolt of Naxos	• A clear turning point in the League's activities – first time League was used against a member state. Thucydides says 'Naxos was the first allied city to be enslaved, contrary to established usage.' (*History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book I, 98)
468 BC Battle of Eurymedon River	• Cimon and League forces won a major victory over the Persians at the mouth of Eurymedon River in southern Asia Minor • This victory removed the Persian threat from the Aegean – thus the major aim of the League had been accomplished • It is probably from this time onwards that many allies began to pay their tribute in money rather than ships • Athens became increasingly harsh in ensuring payment and in punishing allies who defaulted on payment or revolted • 'Consequently the Athenian fleet grew strong with the money which the allies themselves contributed, while whenever the allies revolted, they were ill-prepared and inexperienced for war.' (Thucydides, Book 1, 99)

While Aristides was instrumental in the early organisation of the League, another Athenian involved in the early naval actions of the League was Xanthippus, the father of Pericles. But by far the most significant contribution in these years was made by Cimon, a member of the Athenian aristocracy and the son of Miltiades, the hero of Marathon. As leader of the League forces, Cimon pursued an anti-Persian policy with dedication and energy.

Around 469 BC the war against the Persians reached a climax with Cimon's victory over them in the Battle of the Eurymedon River. It marked the pinnacle of his military career. The League appeared to have accomplished its aims.

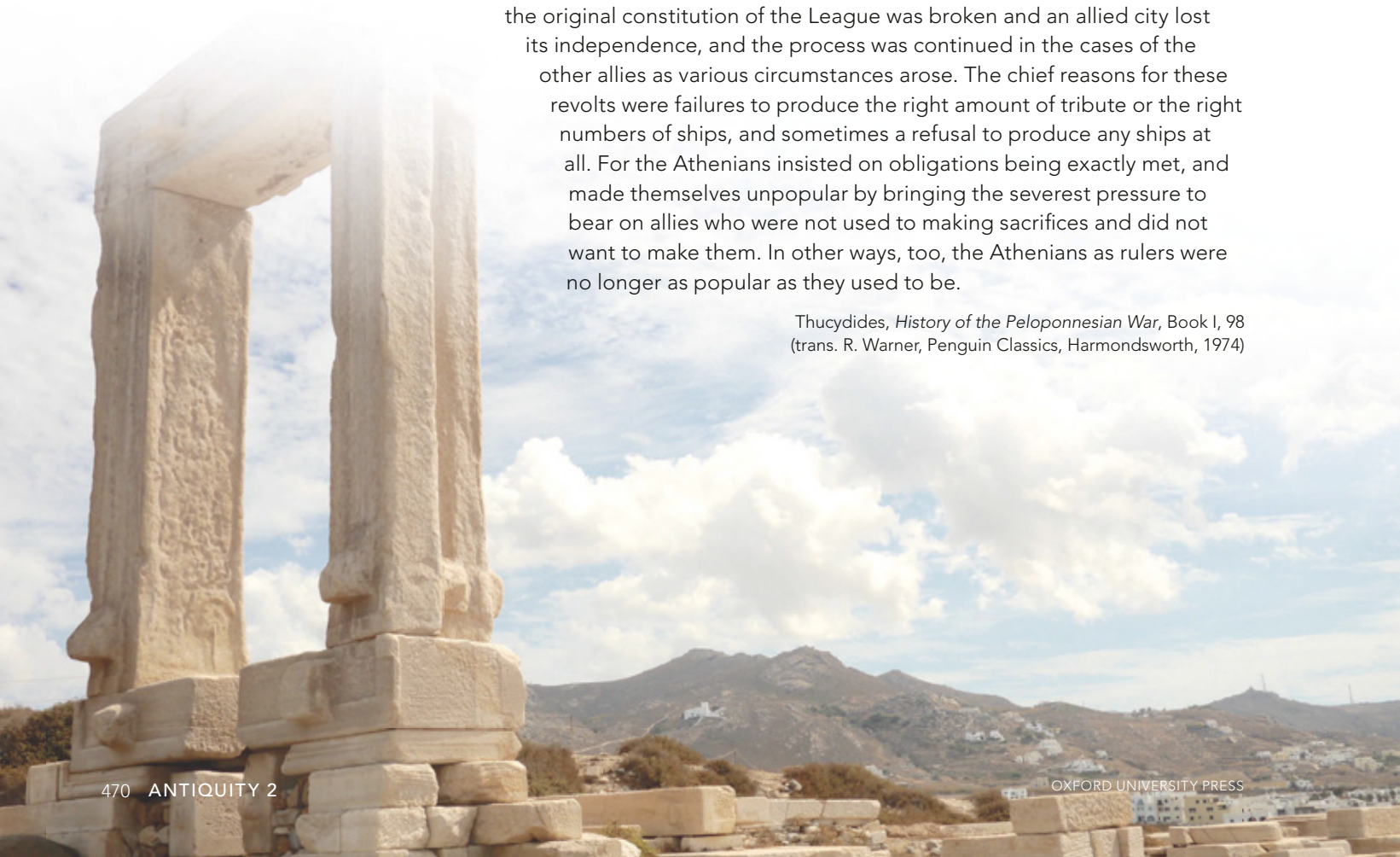
Over a period of time, more members preferred to pay their tribute as a monetary contribution rather than consume resources and manpower in building ships and maintaining huge numbers of crew on active service for indefinite periods. It is worth remembering that each trireme in the fleet was operated by up to 200 men – 170 rowers and other crew members.

As the Persian threat diminished, some League members, especially the larger, wealthier ship-contributing states, resented having to pay tribute when they felt there was no longer any need. But no provision had been made for members to leave the League and the Athenians were not inclined to relax the rules. When Naxos attempted to secede from the League, Athens responded by using League forces under Cimon to besiege Naxos and force it to submit (Source 40).

The revolt of Naxos

SOURCE 40

> … Naxos left the League and the Athenians made war on the place. After a siege Naxos was forced back to allegiance. This was the first case when the original constitution of the League was broken and an allied city lost its independence, and the process was continued in the cases of the other allies as various circumstances arose. The chief reasons for these revolts were failures to produce the right amount of tribute or the right numbers of ships, and sometimes a refusal to produce any ships at all. For the Athenians insisted on obligations being exactly met, and made themselves unpopular by bringing the severest pressure to bear on allies who were not used to making sacrifices and did not want to make them. In other ways, too, the Athenians as rulers were no longer as popular as they used to be.
>
> Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book I, 98
> (trans. R. Warner, Penguin Classics, Harmondsworth, 1974)



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SOURCE 41 Benefits of membership of the Delian League

BENEFITS FOR ALLIES	BENEFITS FOR ATHENS
• *Trade:* A strong League protected the trading interests of all members. The capture of Scyros (note its position in the Aegean on the corn route to the Hellespont) early in the League's history and the expulsion of its pirates is evidence of this. The Piraeus, with facilities for unloading ships and storing grain, became the port of the empire. • *Protection:* The strong fleet of the Delian League protected members against the renewed threat of the Persians. • *Government:* Athens encouraged members to establish democracies as their form of government. The allies had access to Athenian law courts. • *Spoils:* At the beginning of the League the allies received booty from attacks on Persian territory (e.g. the sale of slaves).	• *Power:* Athens had access to, and control of, a large and powerful alliance of wealthy states. This was sometimes used to benefit Athens rather than the League, e.g. the long siege and destruction of Thasos in 465–463 BC. • *Wealth:* In 478 BC, Athens received one-sixtieth of total tribute as repayment for organising the League and half the booty collected from campaigns against the Persians. Sale of slaves also brought added revenue. • *Trade:* Piraeus became main Aegean port. After 449 BC, tribute was used to fund building of new docks, storehouses and harbour facilities. • *Employment:* Naval initiatives stimulated employment for rowers, shipbuilders, dock workers and builders. • *Cleruchies (colonies):* When a state revolted against the League, Athens often settled Athenian citizens there to look after her interests.

Delian League: disadvantages for the allies

- *Loss of autonomy:* The allies could not secede (leave).
- *Distance:* Allies were unwilling to travel long distances to the Athenian law courts.
- *Payment of tribute/ships:* This continued even after the Persian threat ended. (Later there was great resentment when tribute was used by the Athenians to beautify the city of Athens.)
- *Cleruchies:* These types of colonies or settlements were established by the Athenians, but were resented by the allies because they felt they had spies in their midst. Many cleruchies also had garrisons of soldiers attached to them.

11.13 Understanding and using the sources

Source 39

1 Which actions of the League in these years were consistent with the original aims of the League?
2 Which actions were not based on the original aims of the League?
3 What were some of the reasons for these actions?

Source 40

4 Why does Thucydides think the action against Naxos is a significant development?
5 According to this source, how have Athens' relations with her allies changed since the early days under Aristides?
6 Why was the Battle of the Eurymedon River an important turning point in the League's history?
7 If the League had accomplished its aims, would it be reasonable to expect that the League be dissolved? What are the arguments for and against?

Source 41

8 Of the various benefits of League membership, which in your opinion were the most significant for the allies and for Athens?

11.14 Transformation: Delian League to Athenian Empire

In the years after the victory at Eurymedon River, the League continued to grow in strength. The Athenians kept a strong hold over allies, especially in areas of former Persian control. The following are significant developments in the 30-year period between the Battle of the Eurymedon River and 440 BC. How do they help explain how Athens built an empire?

- *The revolt of Thasos:* In 465 BC, Thasos, the largest ship contributor of the League, revolted over Athenian interference in its goldmining operations. The Athenians defeated the Thasians in a naval battle, and besieged Thasos for three years. When Thasos surrendered, the Athenians forced the Thasians to pull down their city walls; they also confiscated their ships and mining interests, and made the Thasians pay tribute.
- *First Peloponnesian War:* Between 461 and 445 BC, the Athenians tried to build a land empire in central Greece and even used League forces to fight a series of land and sea battles against Sparta and her Peloponnesian allies.
- *The Egyptian campaign:* In 459 BC, the Delian League supported an Egyptian revolt against Persia. But by 454 BC, the Persians regained control and destroyed the Greek forces. The Persians, taking advantage of this disaster, became active once again in Aegean waters, trying to regain control of the League allies in Asia Minor. The Athenians moved the League treasury from Delos to Athens. No further meetings of the Delian League were held on Delos.
- *Peace with Persia (?):* There is some suggestion, although the evidence is inconclusive, that Athens may have made peace with Persia in 449 or 448 BC. This coincided with the death of Cimon in a battle against the Persians in Cyprus. Athens was also hard-pressed in the first Peloponnesian War and may have decided to cut her losses. Despite the end of hostilities with Persia, the Athenians continued to consolidate control over League members. They used League forces to suppress revolts and imposed severe penalties. From this time, the evidence of decrees regulating relations between Athens and these rebellious allies indicates an increasingly interfering and harsh Athenian attitude.
- *Revolts of Euboea and Samos:* In 447 BC, the island of Euboea revolted, but was reclaimed by Athens a year later. By 440 BC, only Chios, Lesbos and Samos among the larger states were still independent. In 440 BC, Samos also revolted.

Athens' changing relations with allies

The main sources of evidence for Athens' relations with her allies in this period are:

- written sources of Thucydides and Plutarch's biographies of Cimon and Aristides
- **epigraphical** evidence of the Athenian Tribute Lists – these are stone stelae containing the lists of allied cities and the amount of their annual contribution to the League; those lists that have survived are often badly damaged
- epigraphical evidence of decrees – these contained the terms of 'agreements' between Athens and her allies, and were inscribed on stone stelae (similar to the Decree of Themistocles in Source 22). They were set up in the **Agora** at Athens and in the allied cities. However, many decrees are damaged, dates are often missing and the text is difficult to read.

epigraphical
relating to the study of inscriptions on stone or metal

Agora
a public open space in ancient Athens used for assemblies and markets

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Thucydides tells us that when the Delian League was first established in 479 BC, the allies were glad to recognise Athens' leadership. However, by 440 BC the situation was very different. Changing relations between Athens and her allies reveals a growing imperialism on the part of Athens. Developments after the Battle of the Eurymedon River are particularly significant, because this marked the end of the war with Persia – the main reason for the formation of the League.

Instruments of empire: evidence of the decrees

Apart from using the League navy to suppress allies who revolted, Athens used military (e.g. the installation of garrisons) as well as political, economic and judicial measures. Source 42 is a decree made between Athens and Erythrae, a coastal city of Ionia, dating to the 460s – 450s BC.

SOURCE 42

THE ERYTHRAE DECREE

There shall be a council of 120 men chosen by lot. These men are to be examined by the Council. He may not serve who is an alien or of less than 30 years old. No one shall serve more than once on the council in each four years.

Each councillor shall swear – 'I will deliberate as well and justly as I am able for the common people of Erythrae and Athens and their allies. I will not revolt from the Athenian people or their allies myself or under the persuasion of others, nor shall I receive any person at all who has gone into exile, not obey those who take refuge with the Persians without the consent of the people of Athens, nor expel anyone who remains without the consent of the people of Athens'.

If any Erythraen kills another he is to die if convicted, but if he is condemned he is to be exiled from the whole Athenian alliance.

If any Erythraean shall betray Erythrae to tyrants, he and his children shall die.

C. Fornara (ed.), *Archaic Times to the End of the Peloponnesian War*, Vol. 1, Cambridge University Press, London, 1983, p. 71

11.14 Understanding and using the sources

Source 42

1. What evidence of military, political, economic or judicial measures of Athenian control of her allies can be found in this source?
2. What is the significance of the reference to Persians and tyrants?

11.14 Check your learning

1. Explain how Athenian actions between the Revolt of Thasos to the Peace with Persia can be regarded as evidence of empire building.
2. What were the Tribute Lists? Find an example of a Tribute List from this period and explain what it reveals about Athens' relations with her allies.
3. A number of decrees regulating Athens' relations with her allies date to this period. They include the Papyrus Decree, the Decree of Cleinias and the Colophon Decree. Investigate one or more of these decrees. Explain what they reveal of Athens' behaviour in this period.

11.15 The nature of Athenian imperialism

By 440 BC, many former allies were subjects of Athens; the tribute paid into the Athenian treasury was being used not only to maintain the fleet, but to suppress members and non-members of the League and beautify the city of Athens. The scholar Christian Meier claims that by this time the Delian League had become the Athenian Empire (Source 43).

SOURCE 44 The Athenian silver owl, symbol of 5th-century Athens. The owl represented Athena, the patron goddess of the city.

SOURCE 43

The Delian League had long possessed the trappings of an empire, but at this point [440 BC] it clearly became an empire, or, to use the Greek term, an *arche*. In the official documents we even find a reference to the 'Athenians and those over whom they rule'…

Relations within the Delian League can be deduced from the speeches Thucydides included in his history and also from a number of inscriptions, including tribute lists and various treaties [that is, decrees]. In the speeches, what is most striking is the tyrannical power Athens exercised over its allies … They assert that the foundations of this power were laid when Athens, at the request of its allies, assumed leadership in the war against Persia. The Athenians had kept the alliance alive for three reasons, the same three that motivate most powerful men – honour, wealth, and fear. The Athenians, like the Spartans, had only one choice, either to rule by might or to put their own position in jeopardy.

C. Meier, *Athens: A Portrait of the City in its Golden Age*, Metropolitan Books, 1998, p. 358

11.15 Understanding and using the sources

Source 43

1. What were the 'trappings of empire' evident in the Delian League?
2. How are the tribute lists and the decrees evidence of Athens' imperialist policy?
3. How do 'honour, wealth and fear' help to explain why Athens built an empire?
4. Do you think there was a defining moment in the transition from League to empire? Explain your answer.

11.15 Check your learning

1. Many sources regard the empire as having been a universally despised master. Why might some members have been happy with continued membership of the League?
2. Read the speech in Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book I, 76. What are the main arguments in defence of the empire in this speech?
3. Writing tasks:
   - **a** What were the advantages and disadvantages of League membership?
   - **b** Account for the changing relations between Athens and her allies in this period.
   - **c** How was the Delian League transformed into the Athenian Empire?
   - **d** What do the ancient sources reveal about the nature of Athenian imperialism?

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11.16 Democratic developments in Athens

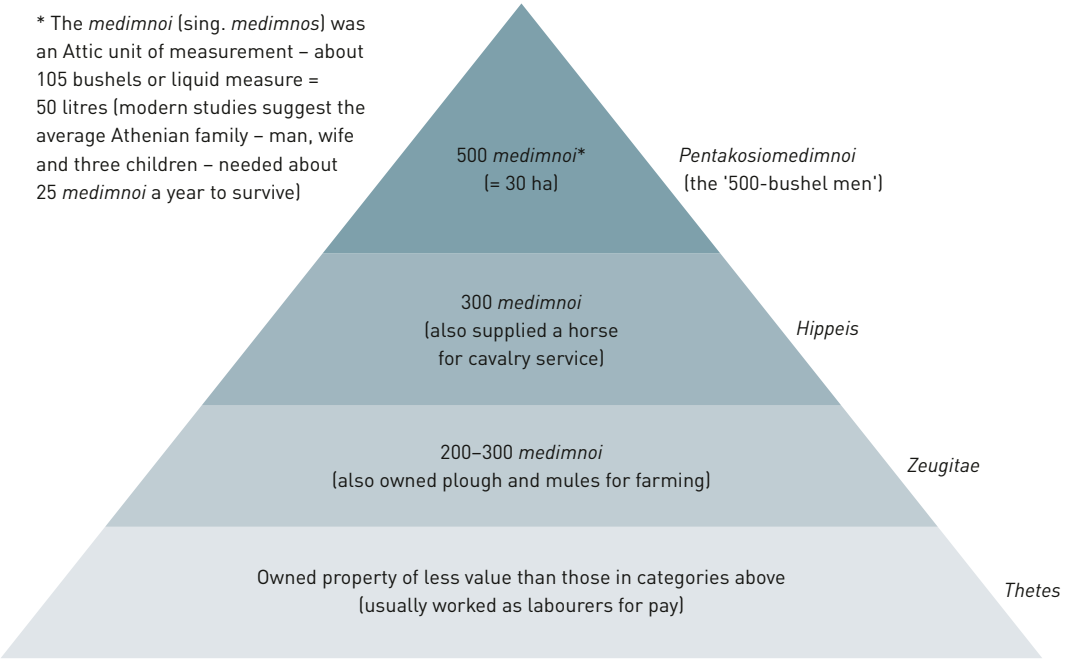
democracy government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or their elected representatives

During the 30 years after the Persian Wars, when the Delian League was being transformed into the Athenian Empire, Athens underwent important political, social and economic changes. The result of all this change was the radical **democracy** of the mid-5th century BC.

It is important to remember that most of the democratic developments of this period were directly related to the outcome of the Persian Wars and the development of the Athenian Empire. Successful generals (*strategoi*) such as Themistocles and Aristides enjoyed great popularity with the voters after the war. In 5th-century BC Greece it was common for a *strategos* to be both an able military leader and a successful politician. Men such as Themistocles, Cimon, Aristides and Pericles were all outstanding generals and politicians of their time.

The influence of the *thetes*

The other group that became increasingly important after the Persian Wars was the *thetes*, the lowest – and largest – class in Athenian society. Unlike Athenians of the upper classes, they owned no landed estates but worked for wages. The *thetes* were the rowers in the Athenian navy. They had manned the fleet at Salamis – a key turning point in the war. After the war, they were also the men who rowed the ships that built the empire – the empire that turned Athens into the wealthiest and most influential city in the Mediterranean world. Because of the important role they played, they demanded more and more say in the political decision-making process. Any ambitious man wanting to be elected as a *strategos* by his tribe could not ignore the 'people power' of the *thetes*.



SOURCE 45 Athenian property classes

Athenian democracy at the beginning of the 5th century BC

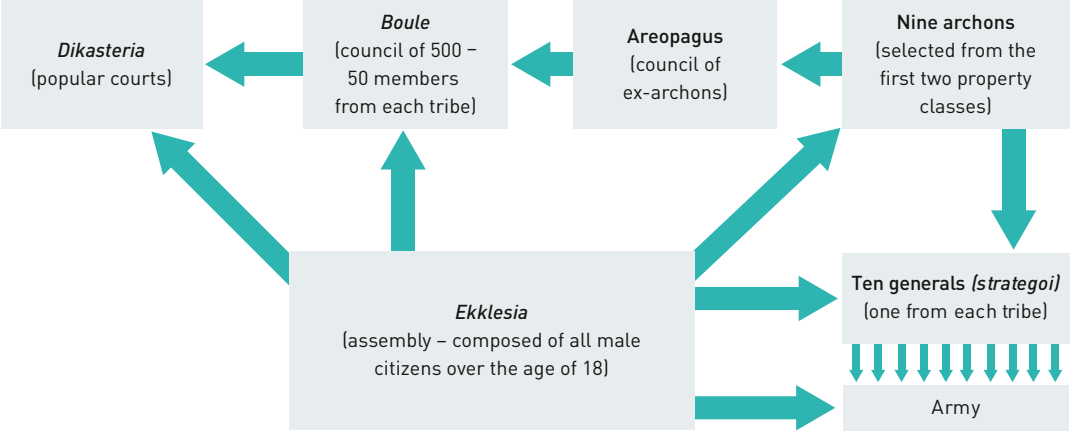
Just before 500 BC, the foundations of 5th-century Athenian democracy were laid by the reforms of the statesman Cleisthenes. He broke the power of the old aristocratic families by a system of electoral redistribution that reorganised the 139 demes (villages) of Attica into 10 new tribes, replacing the former four tribes. The essential feature of 5th-century Athenian democracy is the gradual transfer of political power from the old aristocratic families, represented by the top property classes of the state, to the mass of the population, including the lowest class, the *thetes*.

Structure of Athenian government

The institutions of 5th-century BC Athenian government through which this transfer of power occurred were the *Boule* (the council of 500), the *Ekklesia* (assembly) and the *Dikasteria* (the jury courts). Members of the *Boule* and the *Dikasteria* were chosen by lot from a list of all the citizens in their tribes. The number of those who served – 500 for the *Boule* each year and more than 6000 (600 from each of the 10 tribes) for jury courts throughout the year – meant that many Athenians participated in the government of their city-state.

Every male citizen over the age of 18 was expected to attend meetings of the *Ekklesia* where the whole citizen body met to propose, debate and pass laws. The *Ekklesia* met 40 times per year and was the sovereign body; its decisions were final. It was the most powerful and the most democratic organ of government.

The members of the *Boule* had the job of preparing the agenda for the meetings of the *Ekklesia* and carrying out its decisions. The *strategoi* were regarded as the leaders of the state, and the members of the *Ekklesia* looked up to them and could be swayed by their policies and speeches, but they had no special powers. Source 46 shows the general structure of 5th-century BC Athenian government.



SOURCE 46 The structure of Athenian government at the beginning of the 5th century

Archonship
office of the nine chief magistrates (archons) of ancient Athens

Areopagus
aristocratic council comprising ex-archons

At the beginning of the 5th century, the **Archonship** and **Areopagus** – the two aristocratic features of government – were still very influential. However, by 440 BC, after 50 years of democratic reforms as outlined in Source 47, most of their powers had been whittled away or transferred to the *Boule*, *Dikasteria* or *Ekklesia*.

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The traditional aristocratic idea that political office should be exercised only by men of wealth and class gave way to the radical ideal that there should be equal involvement of all, except in military affairs. Direct election, therefore, was still used for officials whose roles required special expertise, such as *strategoi* (generals), architects and public works supervisors.

SOURCE 47 Reforms of 5th-century BC Athenian democracy

DATE (BC)	DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT	SIGNIFICANCE
501	*Strategoi* (elected) took over some functions of the archons	*Strategoi* more important than archons
487	Archons no longer elected, but selected by lot Archonship open only to top two property classes	Office of archon and Council of Areopagus (aristocratic body of ex-archons) began to decline in prestige
487	Introduction of use of **ostracism**	Served as check and balance, but could have both positive and negative impact
462–1	Transfer of powers of prosecuting magistrates from Council of Areopagus to the *Boule*, *Ekklesia* and *Dikasteria*	Areopagus could no longer overrule the magistrates
457	Archonship opened to third property class, *zeugitae*, and later to *thetes*, lowest property class	Further decline in prestige and influence of archons; increased participation of lower classes
457	Introduction of payments for jurors in the law courts	The poorest Athenians now able to participate
451	Introduction of citizenship law	Limitation of citizenship rights to Athenians with both parents having Athenian citizenship

Citizenship law of Pericles

In 451 BC, the Athenian statesman Pericles introduced a citizenship law that decreed that 'a person should not have the rights of citizenship unless both his parents had been citizens'. The growing power of Athens at this time was a source of pride, and Pericles wanted to restrict civic benefits to Athenians. Among the poor it was common for Athenians and non-Athenians to marry. This law also improved the position of Athenian women, for the men were now forced to marry within their own state in order for their children to be citizens.

By 450 BC, Athens was the centre of an expanding empire, and the city itself was becoming crowded. A measure to strengthen the citizenship law was Pericles' establishment of cleruchies, settlements of Athenian citizens in the cities and islands of the empire. Plutarch, in his *Life of Pericles*, tells us that: 'Pericles dispatched 1000 settlers to the Chersonese, 500 to Naxos, 250 to Andros, 1000 to Thrace … In this way he relieved Athens of a large number of idlers and agitators, raised the standards of the poorest classes …'

ostracism
in classical Athens, banishment of a citizen for 10 years by popular vote; the name of the person to be ostracised was written on a broken piece of pottery called an *ostrakon*

11.16 Check your learning

For discussion:

1. Who were the *thetes*? What influence did they have on democratic developments?
2. How did selection by lot make Athenian government more democratic?
3. How did Athens benefit from the citizenship law and the establishment of cleruchies?
4. What does the introduction of a citizenship law suggest about the impact of the Athenian Empire on Athens?

11.17 Democracy then and now

Twenty-first century AD citizens of the Western world are very familiar with the term 'democracy'. However, the concept has undergone considerable change in the 2500 years since it was first introduced.

In modern society, the word 'democracy' generally has a positive connotation. The Greek word *demokratia*, meaning the 'sovereign power of the people', was not used to describe democracy until late in the 5th century BC. Before this time, the Athenians referred to their government as *isonomia* meaning 'equality before the law'. To the Athenians, the word *demos*, meaning 'the people', could be used in a number of ways. Technically it referred to all the Athenian citizens meeting in the *Ekklesia*, and conveyed the idea of 'the majority'. The word was also used in an emotive and negative sense to mean 'the common people', the lower classes, the poorer citizens, or just 'the mob'.

Power had been exercised in pre-democratic Athens by men who were well born, usually wealthy landowners. Terms for these men included 'the best men' (*aristoi* – hence the term 'aristocracy'), 'the well-born' (*eugeneis*) and 'the men of note' (*gnorimoi*). Athens' 'best men' feared that democratic changes would lead to domination of the state by the common people. The political contests of this period were often between the supporters of the *demos* and the supporters of 'the men of note' or between democrats and oligarchs (from *oligoi* – the few); that is, members of the former aristocratic, conservative elites.

Other important differences between ancient Athenian and modern democracy can be seen in the limited franchise (right to vote) of democratic Athens, where only citizen men had political rights. Excluded from any participation were women, slaves and resident foreigners; the bulk of the Athenian population. Athens was also a direct democracy requiring the active participation of all citizens in the decision-making process, whereas in modern times, citizens generally rely on elected representatives to look after their interests.

Perspectives on Athenian democracy

Athenian democracy was not without its critics. Source 48 is an excerpt from an anonymous pamphlet, which modern historians refer to as the 'Old Oligarch'. It is believed to date to the 420s BC and expresses the writer's dislike of the system.

SOURCE 48

As for the constitution of the Athenians, their choice of this type of constitution I do not approve, for in choosing thus they choose that thieves should fare better than the elite. This then is why I do not approve. First of all, then, I shall say that at Athens the poor and the commons seem justly to have the advantage over the well-born and the wealthy; for it is the poor which mans the fleet and has brought the state her power, and the steersmen and the boatswains and the shipmasters and the lookout-men and the shipwrights – these have brought the state her power much rather than the hoplites and the best-born and the elite.

'Old Oligarch', *Ancient History Sourcebook: The Polity of the Athenians, c. 424 BC*, Fordham University

We could compare this perspective on Athenian democracy with that of Pericles, Athenian statesman and author of many of the democratic reforms of this period. Source 49 is an excerpt from his famous speech, the 'Funeral Oration', delivered to Athenian people in 430 BC at the end of the first year of the great Peloponnesian War. He is consoling the citizens on the loss of loved ones in the war and reminding them of the greatness of the city that they are fighting for.

SOURCE 49

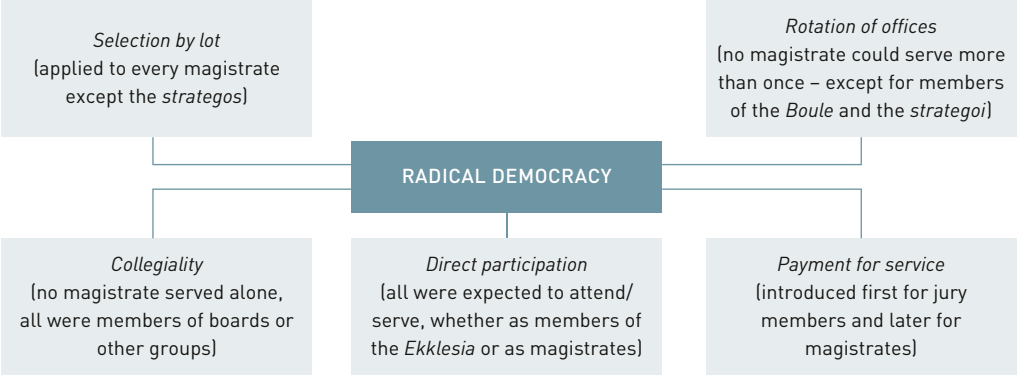
Let me say that our system of government does not copy the institutions of our neighbours. It is more the case of our being a model to others, than of our imitating anyone else. Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the whole people …

Here each individual is interested not only in his own affairs but in the affairs of state as well; even those who are mostly occupied with their own business are extremely well-informed on general politics – this is a peculiarity of ours: we do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics is minding his own business; we say that he has no business here at all …

Pericles, in Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book II, 37, 40
(trans. R. Warner, Penguin Classics, Harmondsworth, 1974)

The radical democracy of mid 5th-century BC Athens

By the middle of the 5th century BC, Athens had become a radical democracy, in which sovereignty, or ultimate control over state affairs, rested with the masses. The Athenians, through the initiatives of reformers such as Cleisthenes, Ephialtes and Pericles, had transferred the bulk of political decision-making to bodies made up of ordinary male citizens – the *Boule,* the *Ekklesia* and the jury courts. The 'radical' features are summed up in Source 50.



SOURCE 50 Features of radical democracy

11.17 Understanding and using the sources

Source 48 & 49

1. What different perspectives on Athenian democracy are represented in these sources?
2. How do the different contexts of each of these men help to explain the differences?
3. Evaluate the strengths and limitations of these sources for a historian investigating 5th-century BC attitudes to Athenian democracy.

11.17 Check your learning

1. How was the concept of 'democracy' different in 5th-century BC Athens compared to its use in our own times?
2. What are the major similarities and differences between 5th-century BC Athenian and 21st-century democracies?
3. Writing tasks. Use the information in this section to plan and write essay responses to the following:
   a. Explain the development of Athenian democracy during this period.
   b. Why was Athens considered a 'radical' democracy by the mid-5th-century BC?

11.17 Profile

Use of ostracism

Athenians used ostracism for the first time in 487 BC. Ostracism involved exiling a politician for a period of 10 years. It offered the people a choice between their leaders, and was used by Athenian leaders to get rid of their political opponents. Each year in their assembly, the Athenians voted on whether they wished to hold an ostracism. If they voted yes, then an ostracism was held 2 months later. As originally conceived, possibly by Cleisthenes, its purpose was to protect the young democracy from a return to the days of the tyrants – but in the hands of ambitious 5th-century BC politicians, it became a two-edged sword.

prytany
a period of 5 weeks for which each of the prytanies (the 10 divisions of the Athenian Council of 500) presided in turn

SOURCE 51

Cleisthenes enacted new [laws] with the aim of winning the people's favour. Among these was the law of ostracism …

When, in the twelfth year after these innovations, in the archonship of Phaenippus, they had won the victory of Marathon, and when two more years had passed after that battle, and the common people gained greater self-confidence, they employed for the first time the law concerning ostracism. This law had been enacted because of their suspicion of those in power …

In the sixth ***prytany*** … they also decide by vote whether there is to be a vote on ostracism or not …

Aristotle's Constitution of Athens and Related Texts, trans. K. von Fritz & E. Kapp, Hafner Press, New York, 1974, p. 91

SOURCE 52

This sentence of ostracism was not in itself a punishment for wrongdoing. It was described for the sake of appearances as a measure to curtail and humble a man's power and prestige in cases where these had grown oppressive; but in reality it was a humane device for appeasing the people's jealousy, which could thus vent its desire to do harm, not by inflicting some irreparable injury, but by a sentence of ten years' banishment …

Each voter took an *ostrakon*, or piece of earthenware, wrote on it the name of the citizen he wished to be banished and carried it to a part of the market-place which was fenced off with a circular paling. Then the archons first counted the total number of votes cast, for if there were less than 6000, the ostracism was void. After this they sorted the votes and the man who had the most recorded against his name was proclaimed to be exiled for ten years, with the right however, to receive the income from his estate.

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The story goes that on this occasion, while the votes were being written down, an illiterate and uncouth rustic handed his piece of earthenware to Aristides and asked him to write the name Aristides on it. The latter was astonished and asked the man what harm Aristides had ever done him. 'None whatever,' was the reply, I do not even know the fellow, but I am sick of hearing him called 'The Just' everywhere!' When he heard this Aristides said nothing, but wrote his name on the *ostrakon* and handed it back.

Plutarch on Aristides, in *The Rise and Fall of Athens: Nine Greek Lives by Plutarch* (trans. I. Scott-Kilvert, Penguin Books, London, 1960)

Victims of ostracism

The following men were victims of ostracism during the 5th century BC in the years given:

488 – Hipparchus, member of the Peisistratid clan, relative of the ex-tyrant, Hippias

487 – Megacles, son of Hippocrates, member of the Alcmaeonid clan

486 – Callixenus, son of Aristonymus, member of the Alcmaeonid clan

485 – Xanthippus, prosecutor of Miltiades

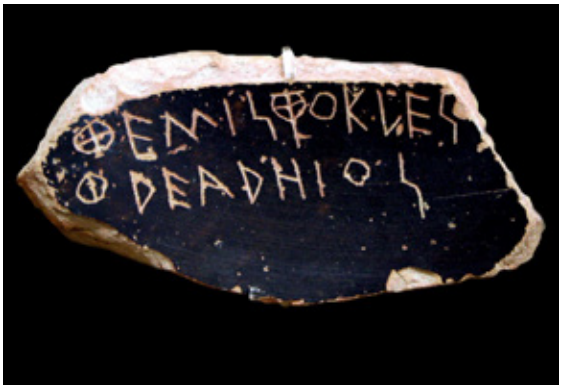
484 – Hippocratres, son of Alcinaeonides

483–482 – Aristides

472 – Themistocles

462–461 – Cimon

443 – Thucydides, son of Milesias.



SOURCE 53 A 5th-century Athenian *ostrakon*

11.17 Profile tasks

1. Using Sources 51–53, answer the following questions:
   - **a** What do the sources indicate was the original purpose of ostracism?
   - **b** How was it used by politicians against their rivals?
   - **c** How was an ostracism conducted? What was the result?
   - **d** What does the anecdote about Aristides the Just reveal about ostracism?
   - **e** Whose name appears on the *ostrakon* shown in Source 53?
2. Find out some details about one or more of the victims of ostracism and the reasons for their ostracism.
3. Discuss the following:
   - **a** In what way could ostracism be regarded as a two-edged sword?
   - **b** Imagine (for a moment) that ostracism is part of the Australian democratic system. How would our politicians organise an ostracism?
4. Writing task: Assess the significance of ostracism in the development of Athenian democracy.

11.18 Athens and Sparta

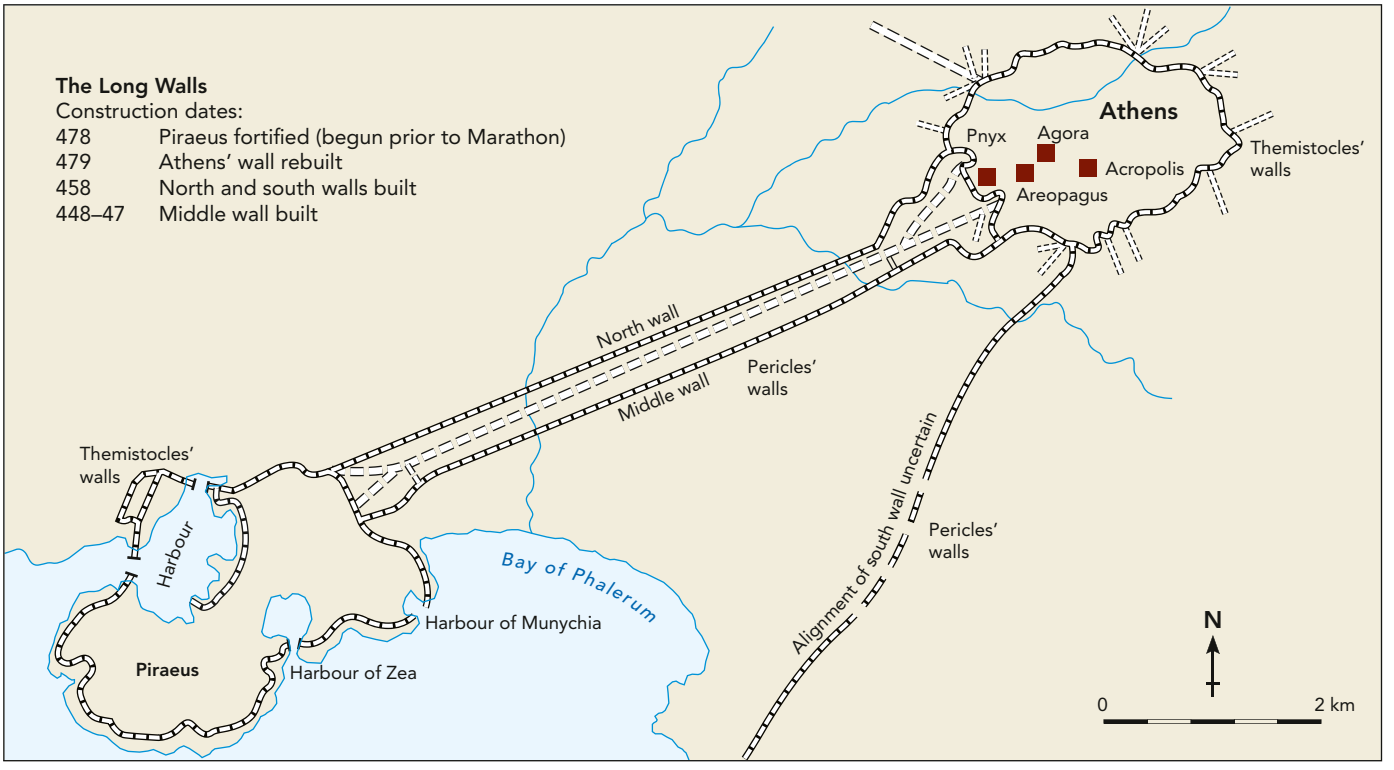
In 500 BC, Athens and Sparta had emerged as the leading city-states in Greece. Sparta had a reputation as the leading military state in Greece. This was based on a history of successful warfare against her Peloponnesian neighbours, her leadership of the Peloponnesian League, and the development of a highly disciplined, military way of life. At a time when other city-states, such as Athens, were moving towards more democratic systems of government, the Spartans remained staunchly conservative and oligarchic.

The traditional rivalry between Athens and Sparta is colourfully related in the section of Herodotus' *Histories* before the outbreak of the Persian Wars. But Athens and Sparta had much in common: they spoke the same language, worshipped the same gods and when the occasion demanded – as Xerxes' 480–479 BC invasion demonstrated – they could find common cause against the enemy.

Impact of the Persian Wars

Once the danger was past, each state returned to its own affairs. The Spartans expected to return to the status quo of the period before the Persian Wars, with other Greek states deferring to their traditional leadership. But the wars had changed the military and political dynamic. The Athenians had shown an equal, if not superior, claim to leadership and were naturally keen to develop it.

ATHENS, 5TH CENTURY BC



Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 54 The long walls of Athens and the Piraeus

Rebuilding of the long walls

The tension between the two can be clearly seen in the incident immediately after the war when the Spartans requested the Athenians to abandon the rebuilding of their fortifications, particularly the long walls between Athens and her harbour, which protected the city from attack. The Athenians, on the advice of Themistocles, delayed replying to the Spartan request until the fortifications were finished.

The Delian League

The most important impact of the Persian Wars for Athenian-Spartan relations was the development of the Delian League. The Spartans, focused on Peloponnesian affairs, were not keen to involve themselves in the Aegean and so let the leadership of the League pass to the Athenians. For the time being, the cordial relations of the war years were maintained. But as time went on, Sparta grew increasingly uneasy at the growth of Athenian imperialism.

Cimon's pro-Spartan policy

Cimon, Athenian statesman and commander of the Delian League forces during its formative years, pursued a policy of friendly cooperation with Sparta. He believed that Athens and Sparta could share power in Greece – the Spartans would continue to be a land-based power, while Athens would dominate the seas. His policy was successful for a time, but this was soon to change.

Spartan responses to Athenian imperialism

- *Revolt of Thasos:* When the island of Thasos revolted from the Delian League in 465 BC, the people of Thasos appealed to Sparta to help them by invading Attica. The Spartans promised to do so, but were prevented by an earthquake and a simultaneous revolt of their Messenian helots, which took them 10 years to suppress. Meanwhile, the Athenians defeated the Thasians and imposed harsh terms on them.
- *Messenian revolt:* The helots revolted and fled to Mount Ithome where the Spartans besieged them but were unable to dislodge them. The Spartans eventually appealed for help to their allies, including the Athenians. Cimon, the leading Athenian of the time, and a friend of Sparta, led an Athenian expedition to help Sparta. However, the Spartans rebuffed the Athenian offer of help, which was also a major insult to Cimon (see Source 55).
- *The eclipse of Cimon:* Cimon's role in Athens' humiliation over the rebuff from Sparta gave his political rivals ammunition against him. For this reason, and also because of his opposition to democratic reform, Cimon's popularity declined. He was ostracised in 461 BC.
- *461 BC:* This year marks an important turning point in relations between Athens and Sparta. Cimon's pro-Spartan policy had been thoroughly discredited. Pericles, who now rose to prominence, pursued a more ambitious, imperialist policy. He aimed to extend Athens' power not only on the Greek mainland, but also to open up new routes and markets for Athenian maritime trade. Athens was especially interested in extending her influence to the Corinthian Gulf. This brought Athens into conflict with Sparta's chief ally Corinth, a wealthy city with extensive trading interest in Sicily and the west. Within a short time, Athens and Sparta – supported by her Peloponnesian allies – were at war.
- *First Peloponnesian War (461–445 BC):* The key developments in this conflict are briefly summarised in the timeline in Source 59.

SOURCE 55 The Messenian Revolt 464 BC

This expedition was the occasion for the first open quarrel between Athens and Sparta. The Spartans failing to capture Ithome by assault, grew afraid of the enterprise and the unorthodoxy of the Athenians: they reflected too that they were of a different nationality and feared that, if they stayed on in the Peloponnese, they might listen to the people in Ithome and become the sponsors of some revolutionary policy. So while keeping the rest of their allies, they sent the Athenians home again … The Athenians … were deeply offended. They considered that this was not the sort of treatment that they deserved from Sparta, and as soon as they returned, they denounced the original treaty of alliance which had been made against the Persians and allied themselves with Sparta's enemy, Argos.

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book II, 102
(trans. R. Warner, Penguin Classics, Harmondsworth, 1974)

Role and contribution of Cimon

Cimon was an outstanding Athenian leader of this period. Pursuing a fierce anti-Persian policy, he made probably the most significant contribution to the development of the Delian League and its transition to empire. In the early years after the Persian Wars, his pro-Spartan policy was largely responsible for preserving the peace between Athens and Sparta.

In politics he was a conservative and clashed with popular leaders such as Ephialtes and Pericles. This, together with the eventual failure of his pro-Spartan policy, saw him fall victim to ostracism in 461 BC. Ten years later in 451 BC, Athens was hard-pressed in its war with the Peloponnesians. Cimon returned from exile and negotiated a five-year truce with Sparta. Shortly after, in 449 BC, he was killed campaigning in Cyprus against the Persians.

11.18 Understanding and using the sources

Source 55

1 According to Thucydides, why was the rejection of Athenian help and the insult to Cimon a significant turning point in Athenian-Spartan relations?
2 What was the original treaty of alliance mentioned here?
3 How would the Athenian alliance with Argos threaten Sparta? (Find Argos on the map in Source 36.)

11.18 Check your learning

1 Use the following structure to construct an annotated timeline of Cimon's career:
   - family background and early career
   - military career: role in development of the Delian League and Athenian Empire, Battle of the Eurymedon River, death during Cyprus campaign
   - political career: support for conservative politics (e.g. Areopagus), friendship with Sparta, ostracism, negotiation of Athens' five-year truce with Sparta (451 BC).

   Useful ancient sources include:
   - Plutarch, *The Rise and Fall of Athens*, Chapter 5, 'Cimon', 141–63
   - Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book I, 98–112.
2 Writing task:

   '*Cimon was as brave as Miltiades and as intelligent as Themistocles. In all the qualities which war demands he was fully their equal and in statesmanship he showed himself immeasurably their superior*': Plutarch

   To what extent is this assessment of Cimon's career justified?

11.19 Sparta and the Peloponnesian League

The Peloponnesian League was a confederation of states allied to and led by Sparta, the leading city-state of the Peloponnese (see Source 36). The name used by the ancient Greeks was 'the Lakedaemonians and their allies'.

SOURCE 56 Hoplites in phalanx formation, a form of warfare perfected by the Spartans and their allies

Origins and nature of the Peloponnesian League

SOURCE 57

[In] the middle of the 6th century BC … Sparta concluded with Tegea and later with other states, treaties of alliance which bound her partners to military support in time of war, while they remained free and autonomous, even to a large extent in foreign policy. From such individual treaties a league was gradually built up. Instead of trying to conquer the Peloponnese, Sparta became its hegemon. In the end the whole peninsula was included, with the exception of Argos … and Achaea … The Peloponnesian League … emerged as a loose confederation of autonomous states, without constitutional bonds but providing a safe instrument of power politics under Spartan leadership, largely directed against democracy and *tyrannis*. The influence exercised by some of the allies, especially by Corinth, was sometimes strong, but what really counted were Sparta's military strength and her great prestige.

V. Ehrenberg, *From Solon to Socrates: Greek History and Civilization during the Sixth and Fifth Centuries BC*, 2nd edn, Methuen, London, 1973, pp. 46–7

Members' roles and obligations

- Members were allied to Sparta but not necessarily to each other.
- Alliances were either for all time or of indefinite duration – secession was legally impossible.
- Allies could go to war even against each other if there was no League war at the same time.
- They swore an oath 'to have the same friends and the same enemies as Sparta and to follow the Spartans whithersoever they may lead'.
- Each ally had one vote in the League Congress, which met to decide policy, for example to declare war on an enemy. Decisions of the congress were binding on all allies.

Sparta's role and obligations

- Sparta did not make the same oath of loyalty as its members, but did bind itself to give military assistance to any member state that was attacked by a third party.
- Only Sparta could summon a League Congress, over which it presided.
- Sparta was not bound to any policy decided by the allies of which it did not approve, but a majority vote of the congress was needed to implement any joint policy.
- In war, Sparta held the command and appointed Spartan officers to raise and command allied contingents. Sparta also decided the number of troops an ally would provide and the strategy to be employed.

Source 58 contains the partially restored text of the first inscribed classical Spartan treaty. It was made with the Erxadieis, a people from Aetolia on the Corinthian Gulf. The treaty almost certainly dates to the 5th century BC and was set up on the Spartan acropolis.

SOURCE 58

Treaty with the Aetolians. On the following terms there is to be friendship and peace towards the Aetolians for ever and alliance … They shall follow wherever the Spartans lead both by land and by sea, having the same friend and the s[ame enemy] as the Spartans. They will not put an end to the war without the Spartans and shall send fighters to the same [opponent] as the Spartans. They shall not receive exiles who have participated in crimes. If anyone [leads an expedition against the] land of the Erxadieis for the purpose of making war, the Spartans shall assist them with all the streng[th in their power]; and if anyone leads an expedition against the land of the Spartans for the purpose of making war, the Erxadieis shall assist them [with all the strength in their power.]

R. Meiggs & D. Lewis, 'A Spartan treaty with Aetolia', in *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions: To the End of the Fifth Century BC*, No. 67, Clarendon Press, 1989

Activities of the Peloponnesian League 461–446 BC

The major activities of the Peloponnesian League in this period involved battles against Athens and her allies. The first Peloponnesian War between 461 and 446 BC was largely a response by Sparta and her allies to Athenian imperialist activities in central Greece. The main actions of this war are summarised in Source 59.

SOURCE 59 An outline of main events of the First Peloponnesian War

DATE (BC)	EVENT
461	• Athens made alliances with Argos and Thessaly, Sparta's traditional enemies • Megara, a strategically important member of the Peloponnesian League, defected and joined the Athenians • Athens helped her build walls connecting the ports of Nisaea and Pagae on the Saronic and Corinthian Gulfs (see Source 60)
459–458	• Athens went to war against her old enemy, Aegina • Sparta did not support her allies at this point, and in 457 Aegina surrendered, losing her navy and becoming a tribute-paying subject of Athens
450s	• Athens gained a considerable land empire in central Greece, which included Boeotia, Phocis and Locris • This caused conflict with Sparta and the Peloponnesian League • Athens however, had difficulty in maintaining control of such a wide area and in fighting on so many fronts
451	• Athens made a 5-year truce with Sparta (negotiated by Cimon who had returned from 10 years in exile)
447	• Battle of Coronea in Boeotia between Athens and Sparta • Athens was defeated and their leader, Tolmides, was killed • As a result, the cities of Euboea (Athenian subjects) revolted, Sparta attacked Attica; Athens lost control of Megara
446–445	• Thirty-year peace treaty between Athena and Sparta • A humiliating defeat for Athens, which abandoned plans for a land empire in central Greece

CENTRAL GREECE AND THE PELOPONNESE

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 60

11.19 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 36, 57 & 58

1 Study the map (Source 36) and list the states that were members of the Peloponnesian League.

2 What is the meaning of the term 'hegemon' in Source 57? According to this source, how had Sparta earned this role?

3 How did the Spartans exercise their leadership of the Peloponnesian League?

4 What does the text of the treaty with the Aetolians reveal about the nature and purpose of the Peloponnesian League?

Sources 59 & 60

5 From your knowledge of the operation of the Peloponnesian League, why was Sparta – which was not directly threatened by Athens – going to war?

6 Apart from treaty obligations with Sparta, what reasons would Corinth have had for going to war against Athens?

7 Locate Megara on the map and explain its strategic importance.

8 Why would Sparta be alarmed by Megara's defection to Athens?

9 What advantage could Athens gain from linking the ports of Nisaea and Pagae?

10 Locate Thessaly, Boeotia and Phocis on the map. How would Athens' control of these places threaten Sparta and her allies?

11 What was the outcome of the First Peloponnesian War?

11.19 Check your learning

1 For discussion:
   - **a** Compare the roles and obligations of member states of the Peloponnesian League with those of the Delian League. What are the main similarities and differences?
   - **b** How was Spartan leadership of the Peloponnesian League similar to or different from the role played by Athens in the Delian League?

2 Writing tasks: Choose one or more of the following:
   - **a** Compare the aims and organisation of the Peloponnesian and Delian leagues during this period.
   - **b** Assess the impact of the Persian Wars on Athenian-Spartan relations.
   - **c** How did Sparta and her allies respond to Athenian imperialism?

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Chapter conclusion

The 5th century BC had opened with the great struggle between Greece and Persia. The causes of that struggle were the result of complex factors, both long- and short-term ones. The consequences were far-reaching in political, economic, social and cultural terms. In many ways the Persian Wars shaped the history of the Greek world for the century that followed. This was particularly the case for Athens, whose successes at Marathon and Salamis gave an important impetus to the development of her fledgling democracy. Naval superiority and democratic development went hand in hand with the emergence of empire. In 440 BC, where our study of this period closes, the empire and the radical democracy had made Athens the pre-eminent city-state of the Greek world. But it had come at a cost. Athenian imperialism led to conflict with her old rival, Sparta.

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare students for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

12

The Augustan Age 44 BC – AD 14

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1 What does a survey reveal of the chronological, geographical and political context of Rome?

2 How was the Augustan principate established and what were its main features?

3 What was the significance of Augustus' reforms and building programs?

4 What was the significance of literature and propaganda in the Augustan principate?

5 What roles were played by significant individuals and groups?

6 How was the empire established, maintained and governed in the Augustan Age?

FOCUS CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Continuity and change

In studying the Augustan Age it is necessary to explore aspects of Roman life that have remained the same and those that have changed over time. Not everything changes; despite times of civil and military unrest, some institutions, traditions and values remain constant, maybe appearing in another form. Those who rid themselves of one oppressive leader or form of government might end up with a new one that is not essentially different. The many changes that occurred during Augustus' reign must be explored, explained and evaluated for an understanding of the nature of power and authority in this period. The conditions and factors that caused the change must be identified, as well as the effects of the changes on Roman society.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1 Explain the chronological, geographical and political context of Rome.

2 Account for the establishment of the Augustan principate and its main features.

3 Evaluate Augustus' reforms and building programs.

4 Assess the significance of literature and propaganda in the Augustan principate.

5 Analyse the roles played by significant individuals and groups.

6 Discuss the establishment, maintenance and government of the empire in the Augustan Age.

SOURCE 1 A marble statue of Roman emperor Augustus from Herculaneum

12.1 Political and geographical context of Rome

Late Republic
c. 146 BC – 31 BC, the last stage in the evolution of Rome from Republic to Empire

The Augustan Age of Rome arguably began with the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 BC. Caesar had been the most powerful man in the **Late Republic**, and his death caused political and social upheaval in Rome. Augustus, as he would become known, was not even in Rome at the time, but he would go on to change everything by establishing one-man rule, or autocracy, as the political system of the empire. At the same time, however, there would be no fundamental change in the political and social structure of the empire he would rule. Change and continuity are indeed the focus historical concepts for this period.

Roman government under the Late Republic

To understand the changes instituted by Augustus it is essential to understand the political context in which he ruled. This requires a knowledge of Roman government during the Late Republic. *Res publica* means 'public things' or what concerned the public – to the Romans, the Republic meant 'the state'. In this period the state was governed by:

- the people – Roman citizens who met in various assemblies to elect magistrates and officials
- the magistrates – elected by the people to carry out specific duties
- the Senate – mainly drawn from the aristocratic classes of Rome and from ex-magistrates.

Initially an advisory body, the Senate during the Late Republic had become the most powerful institution, wielding legislative, economic, social and executive authority. At this time it numbered 900 senators.

The *cursus honorum*

There was a strict order of offices and magistracies that Roman men were expected to undertake, called the *cursus honorum*. As magistrates were elected, they progressed in order up this 'ladder' of offices, holding each position for one year only. The pinnacle of a man's career was the office of consul. *Potestas* is the term for the power held by magistrates, which gave them legal authority to carry out their duties. Higher order magistrates – praetors, consuls, military tribunes and dictators – held supreme administrative power called *imperium*. This gave the holders authority on matters such as law, military command, policy making, life and death. After their term as consuls and praetors, men were sent to govern the provinces, and were called proconsuls and propraetors.

plebeian
a free Roman citizen who was not a patrician

In the republican period, the tribune of the people represented the needs of the ordinary people of Rome (the **plebeians**) against the power of the consuls. The tribunes' right of veto meant that they could challenge any official. Their power was called the *tribunicia potestas*, and could be used only in the city of Rome. Part of their official function was to summon the Senate and introduce legislation.

Geographical context

Italy was located strategically in a position that divided the Mediterranean into western and eastern halves. Rome, once in control of Italy, was able to unite the Mediterranean under its rule. Source 3 summarises Rome's relationships and contact with key powers in the region.

THE ROMAN WORLD IN THE AUGUSTAN AGE

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 2

WEST

Germania
- Areas adjacent to Rhine and Danube rivers
- Tribes – Germanic, Celts, Balts, Scythians
- Some parts under Roman rule, others with ongoing hostilities

Gaul
- Celtic tribes
- Series of campaigns led by Julius Caesar
- All under Roman rule after 50 BC

Spain (Hispania)
- Rome present since 218 BC
- Conquest incomplete until time of Augustus

EAST

Parthia
- Ongoing conflict with Rome
- Parthian victory at Battle of Carrhae 53 BC
- Loss of Roman standards

Syria
- Annexed by Rome in 64 BC

Egypt
- Governed by Rome since 30 BC
- Special status as main source of Rome's grain supply

SOURCE 3 Rome's relationships with the West and the East

The written sources

There is a wealth of written evidence for this period, though it is important to be aware of the bias of the writers and of the nature of the times in which they wrote. Source 4 summarises the main sources and their authors.

SOURCE 4 Written sources for the Augustan Age

WRITER	BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS AND DATE	TEXT	NATURE OF SOURCE AND PERSPECTIVE ON THE PERIOD
Augustus	*Princeps* AD 14	*Res Gestae Divi Augusti*	• Augustus' autobiography • Aimed to portray himself and his achievements as he wanted them to be remembered
Tacitus	Senator and historian AD c. 56 – c. 117	*The Annals of Imperial Rome*	• A year-by-year account of the reigns of the Julio-Claudian emperors • Describes events in Rome and the provinces • An important source for this period, though often biased
Suetonius	Roman biographer AD c. 71 – c. 135 Served under two emperors	*The Twelve Caesars*	• An account of the lives of Roman rulers, from Caesar to Domitian • Relates personal anecdotes and describes the sexual habits of the Romans • Provides some valuable information
Cassius Dio	Roman historian from Bithynia, of Greek heritage AD c. 150 – c. 235 Senator, consul and proconsul who served three emperors	*Roman History*	• Much is lost, though the text covering the years 68 BC to AD 47 has survived • The only comprehensive and continuous narrative of the Augustan principate
Velleius Paterculus	Roman historian c. 19 BC – AD c. 31 Contemporary of Augustus, and friend and client of Tiberius	*Compendium of Roman History*	• Admirer of the new Augustan regime • Fragmentary text consists of two books, which cover in detail the period from the death of Caesar to the death of Augustus • Lacks historical insight but generally reliable in reporting facts

12.1 Check your learning

1. Find a diagram of the *cursus honorum* as it was during the Republic. You can use it to compare the changes made by Augustus. Search online for 'Roman Government – VRoma'.
2. Find some more information about the major written sources for this period, shown in Source 4.

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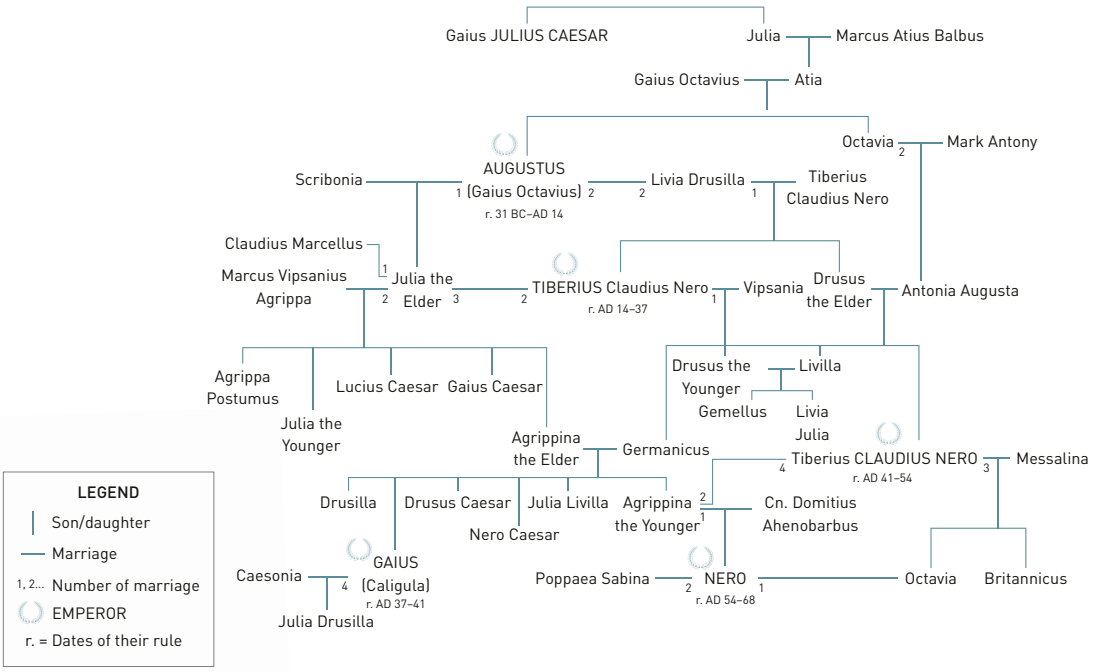
12.2 Establishment of the principate

When supporters of the Republic assassinated Julius Caesar on 15 March 44 BC, they set in train a series of events that would culminate in the establishment of a form of rule that became known as the principate. Source 5, a genealogical table of the Julio-Claudian family, shows the principal players in the Augustan Age and those who would succeed Caesar in the principate system.

veteran
a soldier who has completed his army service



SOURCE 5 A genealogical table of the Julio-Claudian family

Impact of the death of Julius Caesar

The assassination had significant ramifications for Caesar's great-nephew, Gaius Octavius. Caesar's will nominated Octavian (the name commonly used by historians) as his chief heir and adopted son. On hearing the news of the assassination, the 18-year-old Octavian immediately left Macedonia, where he had been preparing for a campaign against Parthia with Caesar. He headed to Rome to claim his inheritance and avenge Caesar's murder.

En route to Rome, Octavian presented himself to Caesar's **veterans** in Campania and secured their support by giving them large donations. This act suggests that Octavian had already decided to become Caesar's military and political heir. On arrival in Rome he accepted the legacy left to him by Caesar and took his name, becoming Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus.

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Octavian's early career

Rome was in a state of political upheaval following Caesar's assassination. Marcus Antonius, or Mark Antony as he is known, Caesar's friend and second-in-command, had seized Caesar's property and assumed leadership of the Caesarian party. His support, however, was not universal and he lost much of what he had gained by using his position as consul to pass laws in his own favour. Octavian responded by announcing that he would avenge his adopted father's death, pay Caesar's bequests to the Roman people that Antony had ignored, and celebrate games in Caesar's honour. His resulting popularity caused Antony to withdraw from Rome to seek support in the provinces.

Octavian now demonstrated his growing political skill. Realising that the Senate, led by the pro-Republican Marcus Tullius Cicero, needed an army, he placed his troops, Caesar's veterans, at their disposal. In return he was granted command of the army and a commission to march against Antony. Octavian defeated Antony at Mutina in northern Italy in 43 BC. The two consuls who had accompanied Octavian were killed in the battle so he absorbed their armies into his own, greatly increasing his military strength. He used it by marching on Rome and demanding that the Senate make him a consul. As a result he was formally elected consul on 19 August 43 BC.

SOURCE 6 A Roman **aureus** featuring the heads of Mark Antony and Octavian issued in 41 BC to commemorate the Second Triumvirate

aureus
a gold Roman coin of the Augustan period, worth 25 silver denarii

The problem posed by Antony, however, had not been solved by his defeat. Antony fled to Gaul, where he gained the support of the governor, Aemilius Lepidus, and other governors of the region. Together, they prepared to march on Rome to seize power. Octavian was now forced to negotiate a solution.

The Second Triumvirate

Octavian negotiated a deal with his opponents. Instead of prosecuting a civil war, they formed a legally sanctioned alliance called a triumvirate in 43 BC. Their absolute power came from the offices and titles granted them by the vote of the Roman people and their collective strength of 33 legions. Treating the western part of the Roman Empire as their personal property, they divided it into three parts:

- Octavian – Africa, Sicily, Sardinia
- Lepidus – Gallia Narbonensis (Narbonese Gaul) and Spain
- Antony – Gallia Comata (Transalpine Gaul) and Gallia Cisalpina (Cisalpine Gaul).

The division left Antony in the strongest position. Octavian had little use for Sicily and Sardinia, and Africa was not easily reached because the seas were controlled by the pirate Sextus Pompeius.

Although the stated aim of the triumvirate was to reconstruct the state, the triumvirs used their powers as **dictators** to rid themselves of political opponents and avenge Caesar's murder. The first was achieved by proscription; that is, their opponents were declared outlaws who could be legally killed for a reward. Once dead, their assets were seized by the triumvirs. Over 2000 men, including 300 senators, were proscribed at this time, including Cicero. As a result, the senatorial class was decimated, some families being completely eliminated. Their places were taken by supporters of the triumvirate.

dictator
in ancient Rome, a magistrate with the authority to deal with a military emergency or to undertake a specific duty

12.2 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What shows that Octavian was willing to follow in his adopted father's political footsteps? How?
   - **b** If Mark Antony and Octavian were both supporters of Caesar, why were they opponents?
   - **c** Why was Octavian willing to collaborate with the Republicans if they had supported Caesar's assassination?
   - **d** In what ways did Octavian benefit from Antony's defeat at Mutina?
2 Use the map in Source 2 to locate the places mentioned so far.
3 Research Julius Caesar and his time in power. Why was he assassinated?
4 Sextus Pompeius was the son of Pompey the Great. Find out who Pompey the Great was and his role in the events that led to the end of the Roman Republic.

SOURCE 7 A denarius of 42 BC showing Lepidus and Octavian

12.3

Civil war: Octavian vs Mark Antony

In 42 BC Brutus and Cassius, the main instigators of Caesar's murder, had assembled their forces, 19 legions, at Philippi in Macedonia. Antony and Octavian met them with 28 legions. The armies engaged twice, with Antony being victorious both times, while Octavian played little part in either battle. Following their defeat, Brutus and Cassius committed suicide, leaving the Republicans with neither leaders nor army. As a result, the triumvirs further divided the empire:

- Lepidus received only a part of Africa because he was suspected of intriguing with Sextus Pompeius who controlled Sicily.
- Octavian received Spain in addition to Sardinia and Africa.
- Antony kept watch on Italy by his control of Gaul. He also proceeded to the East to raise money for the Parthian campaign and to settle the eastern provinces.

Octavian's manoeuvres

Octavian was now faced with the problem of settling the tens of thousands of veteran soldiers from both sides who were discharged after the victory against the Republicans. Italy was considered to be the only appropriate place for this, as the grateful veterans would provide potential military support. However, there was little state-owned land left. Octavian solved the problem by confiscating land – creating new settlements by evicting entire populations from towns.

The resulting opposition to this move was led by Fulvia, Mark Antony's wife, and Lucius Antonius, his brother. Many senators who opposed Octavian joined forces with them at the town of Perusia. Octavian besieged the town in 40 BC, defeating and massacring the citizens. Lucius Antonius was spared in deference to his powerful brother, but Fulvia was forced to return to Mark Antony in Greece with her children, where she subsequently died.

triumph
a ceremonial procession through Rome to celebrate and dedicate a general's victories and completion of foreign wars

The Treaty of Brundisium

The events at Perusia did not solve the volatile political situation in Italy where Octavian operated entirely as he wished. Both Octavian and Antony attempted to ally themselves with Sextus Pompeius because of his power in the western Mediterranean. The key to his power was his ability to prevent the much-needed grain grown in Egypt from reaching Rome. Octavian's move was to marry Scribonia, daughter of Sextus Pompeius' father-in-law. Antony attempted to get the upper hand by besieging Octavian's forces at Brundisium but failed. As a result, a new treaty was negotiated by which Octavian ceded Africa to Lepidus in return for all the western provinces. Antony retained all the eastern provinces. Although Italy was left open to all, Octavian had most power there once Antony returned to the east. This new Treaty of Brundisium was cemented by a marriage between Antony and Octavia, Octavian's sister.

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The Treaty of Tarentum

Despite the Treaty of Brundisium, peace was not achieved, largely because Sextus Pompeius still controlled the Mediterranean and the blockade of Italy. Octavian needed Antony's support to defeat him, while Antony needed Octavian's cooperation to help him recruit more experienced troops in Italy for his campaign against the Parthians. The need to renegotiate the terms of the expired triumvirate led to a formal agreement at Tarentum in September 37 BC. The terms of the treaty required Antony to provide 120 ships for Octavian to use against Sextus Pompeius, while Octavian agreed to provide Antony with 20 000 legionaries. Antony kept his side of the bargain immediately, but Octavian later sent only a tenth of what he had promised. By 36 BC Octavian had defeated Sextus Pompeius, who was later executed.

SOURCE 8 A gold medal minted by Octavian to commemorate his victory over Sextus Pompeius

Consequences of Sextus Pompeius' defeat

The defeat of Sextus Pompeius meant that Octavian now had more soldiers than he needed. His solution was to settle veterans outside of Italy for the first time. After returning to Rome he was given the honour of a **triumph** for his defeat of Sextus Pompeius. At this time, Octavian announced the end of the civil wars. As a result, the Senate granted him the immunity usually given to a tribune of the people, *sacrosanctitas*. His wife, Livia, and sister, Octavia, were also granted this special privilege.

Octavian subsequently eliminated Lepidus from the triumvirate on the charge that he tried to undermine his legions. Lepidus was stripped of all offices except that of *pontifex maximus* (high priest of the cults of all gods in ancient Rome), which he held until he died in 12 BC. These actions simultaneously brought the triumvirate to an end and enabled Octavian to show his respect for Roman tradition.

SOURCE 9 A damaged 1st-century bust of Mark Antony

SOURCE 10 Bust of Cleopatra VII wearing a royal diadem, mid-1st century BC, from the Altes Museum, Berlin

Mark Antony in the East

While Antony was in the East, he began the relationship with Cleopatra VII of Egypt that was to define the rest of his life. He needed her military and financial support in his campaign against the Parthians. However, Rome was still the centre of power, and Antony's absence lost him the political initiative there. Octavian was able to exploit Antony's infatuation with Cleopatra and the East to feed the propaganda war he was waging against him in Rome.

The final struggle for power

With Lepidus out of the picture, the scene was set for the final struggle between Octavian and Antony. Antony's defeat in his Parthian campaign and losses of troops, territory and **booty** seriously weakened his position. When Octavian sent him only a fraction of the troops he had promised, Antony had no choice but to seek help from Cleopatra. Her command of the resources of Egypt was now vital if he was to succeed against Octavian. However, they came at a cost: Antony's rejection of his Roman wife, Octavia, Octavian's sister, for his Egyptian lover. Antony's subsequent actions played into Octavian's hands, giving him ascendancy in the propaganda war between the two leaders.

First, Antony made one of his sons by Cleopatra king of Armenia. Then he gave Cleopatra herself the title 'Queen of Kings'. When Antony formally recognised Caesarion (Cleopatra's son by Julius Caesar) as the legitimate heir of Caesar and the co-ruler of Egypt, it was a direct threat to Octavian's position. Octavian cleverly used Antony's behaviour to sway public opinion in Rome. He published Antony's will, which left parts of the empire to Cleopatra and their children. It also stated that Antony wished to be buried in Alexandria next to Cleopatra.

In 32 BC, the alliance between Antony and Octavian completely broke down when Antony formally renounced his marriage to Octavia. The Senate stripped Antony of his powers and declared war against Cleopatra on the grounds that her troops were a threat to Roman interests.

12.3 Check your learning

booty
the spoils of war, including goods and people captured from the defeated enemy

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What was the significance of Fulvia and Lucius Antonius' leadership of opposition to the resettlement of veterans and their subsequent defeat?
   - **b** Why were both Octavian and Antony keen to secure Sextus Pompeius as an ally? Why was his defeat important?
   - **c** How were the treaties of Brundisium and Tarentum significant?
   - **d** Who was more successful in the propaganda war – Octavian or Antony? Why?
2 Find out more about the relationship between Mark Antony and Cleopatra and its significance in the struggle between Octavian and Antony.

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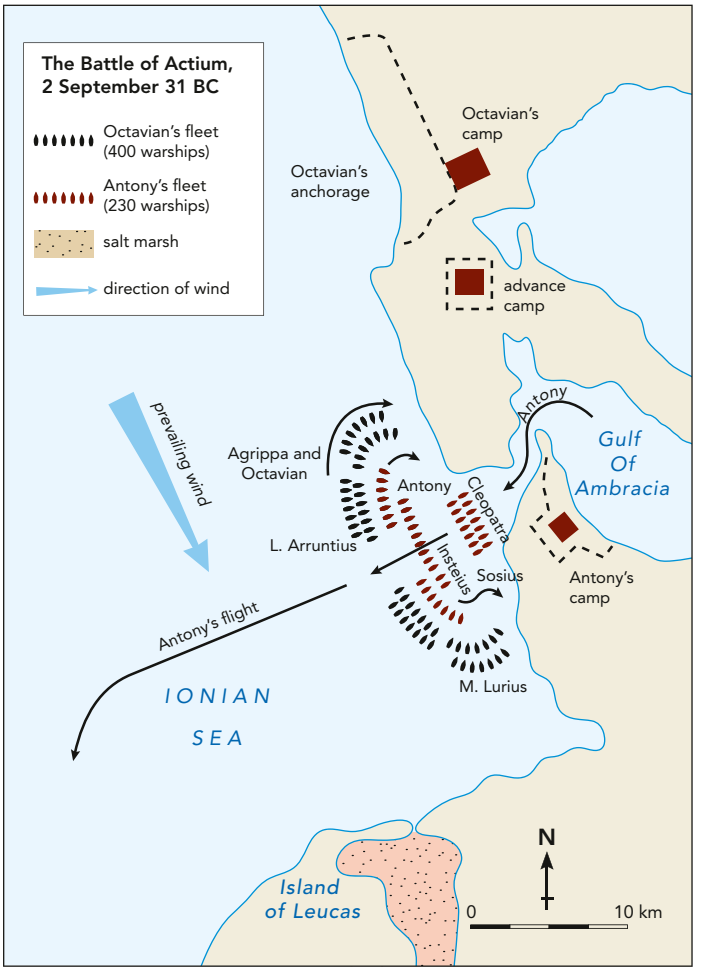
12.4 The Battle of Actium

The Battle of Actium was to be decisive in the struggle between the two Roman leaders. Octavian was keen to prevent the war against Antony and Cleopatra being fought in Italy. To achieve this, he transferred both his troops and those of his general, Marcus Agrippa, to northern Greece in 31 BC, where Antony's army had assembled near the Gulf of Ambracia. Both armies trapped Antony's troops on land while Agrippa's fleet cut off any chance of retreat to Egypt. This caused over half of Antony's army to desert, which, combined with the defection of his chief supporters, left him in an untenable position. He had no choice but to attempt to break the blockade.

In the naval battle that followed, Antony was unable to outmanoeuvre Agrippa's superior fleet. When Cleopatra realised that a victory was unlikely, she forced her fleet, which had been waiting in the Gulf of Actium, through the battle and fled. Antony's remaining ships closely followed her. This undignified retreat signalled both a victory for the Roman navy and the beginning of the end for Antony and Cleopatra.

BATTLE OF ACTIUM



SOURCE 11

Source: Oxford University Press

Consequences and significance of the Battle of Actium

Antony and Cleopatra's retreat meant that Octavian had to deal with them in Egypt. In 30 BC he defeated Antony's army at Alexandria. Antony committed suicide and Cleopatra did the same a short time later. Whether this was to avoid being led through Rome as part of Octavian's triumph remains unknown.

SOURCE 12 A 1st-century AD Roman relief of the Battle of Actium

Octavian was now the supreme ruler of the Roman world. Victory over Cleopatra enabled him to add Egypt as a rich new province to the Roman Empire. Cleopatra's personal wealth was also his and he used it to reward his supporters.

Octavian's victories in the Battle of Actium and the ensuing brief campaign in Egypt brought two decades of civil war to a decisive end. Octavian had overcome all opposition and was now the unchallenged ruler of the Roman Empire. Rome, however, was no longer what it had been during the Republic. Many of the old families no longer existed and had been replaced by new men who had chosen, either wisely or fortuitously, to link their fortunes with those of Octavian.

In 29 BC, Octavian closed the doors of the Temple of Janus, the two-faced god of boundaries, in the Roman Forum. This symbolic act was the signal that the empire was now at peace and that a new era had begun. (The doors were opened only in times of war.)

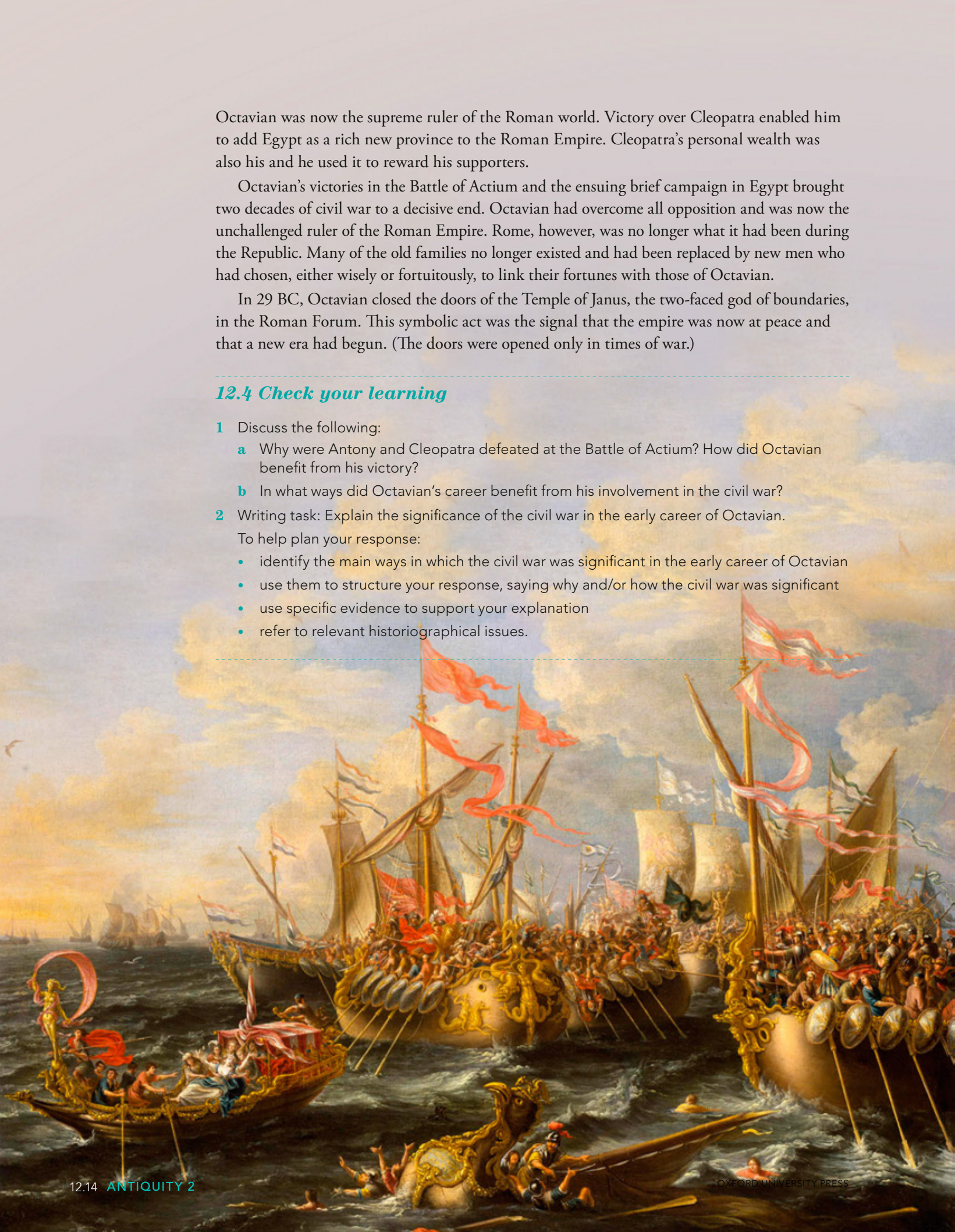
12.4 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** Why were Antony and Cleopatra defeated at the Battle of Actium? How did Octavian benefit from his victory?
   - **b** In what ways did Octavian's career benefit from his involvement in the civil war?

2 Writing task: Explain the significance of the civil war in the early career of Octavian.

To help plan your response:

- identify the main ways in which the civil war was significant in the early career of Octavian
- use them to structure your response, saying why and/or how the civil war was significant
- use specific evidence to support your explanation
- refer to relevant historiographical issues.



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12.5

Development of the principate

Having emerged as the unrivalled ruler of the Roman Empire, Octavian needed to consolidate his position. The task that lay before him required immense skill because he had to satisfy his own political needs as well as the needs of the Roman people. Octavian's two main priorities were:

- establishment of a stable, centralised government while legally maintaining his dominant position
- projecting a positive image to avoid being seen as a tyrant and risking assassination like Julius Caesar.

Octavian adopted a number of strategies to encourage support for his program:

- His name was included in all prayers offered by the priests of the state cult.
- Holidays were granted both for Octavian's birthday and for the victory at the Battle of Actium.
- Household prayers were to include sacrifices to Octavian's ***genius***.
- Temples and shrines within Rome were restored.
- The first census (a register of Roman citizens and their property) for 40 years was held.
- New men were elevated to the ranks of the **patricians**.
- In 28 BC all emergency measures from the civil war years that contravened the law were annulled.

genius
the divine element and creative force that resided in the emperor and guided him like a guardian angel

patrician
a member of the Roman noble class

The First Settlement – 27 BC

In 27 BC, Octavian handed back the unofficial powers he had held during the civil war to the Senate and people of Rome. Source 13 is Cassius Dio's version of the address Octavian made to the Senate on this occasion.

SOURCE 13

Yet for all that, I shall lead you no longer, and nobody will be able to say that all the actions of my career to date have been undertaken for the sake of winning supreme power. On the contrary, I lay down my office in its entirety and return to you all authority absolutely – authority over the army, the laws and the provinces – not only those territories which you entrusted to me, but those which I later secured for you. Thus my deeds in themselves shall also bear witness to the fact that from the very beginning I had no desire to rule …

Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 53.4
(trans. I. Scott-Kilvert, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1987, p. 129)

In his *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, Augustus' account of his life, he states the situation from his perspective (see Source 15).

SOURCE 14 The *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* inscribed on the Temple of Roma and Augustus in Ankara, Turkey. The text was inscribed in both Latin and Greek.

SOURCE 15

In my sixth and seventh consulships, after I had extinguished civil wars, and at a time when with universal consent I was in complete control of affairs, I transferred the republic from my power to the dominion of the Senate and people of Rome.

Augustus, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: The Achievements of the Divine Augustus*, 34, in P. Brunt & J. Moore (eds), Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 35

The significance of Octavian's action is clear: in returning his powers, he gave up his absolute authority in the provinces as well as his control of the legions that were stationed there, the basis of his power. These powers had been secured in extreme circumstances and most had never been sanctioned by the Senate. Source 16 is an interpretation of Octavian's actions.

SOURCE 16

Octavian did indeed formally return the government to the Senate and the people of Rome, who were legally sovereign. In theory they once again became the final authority for important decisions. In reality, however, they had very little authority to decide anything, as they lacked the power to initiate legislation – to introduce any bills for debate. More importantly, however, Octavian's relinquishment of his provinces and their army did not reduce him to the status of an ordinary citizen. He remained consul, for he did not resign the consulship he shared with Marcus Agrippa in 27 BC, and thus continued to possess the foremost power of initiative in the state. In addition he possessed the loyalty not only of the soldiers currently serving in the legions, but also of the veterans. He had countless clients and adherents – people who depended on his patronage – in every part of the realm, and his financial resources were unrivalled. This translated into power at all levels of politics and society, as all senators were well aware.

W. Eck, *The Age of Augustus* (trans. D. Schneider, Blackwell Publishing, 2003, p. 45)

The Senate's response

The Senate's response was to plead with Octavian to reverse his decision. Despite his initial refusal, Octavian eventually relented and accepted their offer of what would now be totally legal powers, sanctioned by the Senate. Source 17 summarises the main features of the First Settlement.

SOURCE 17 The First Settlement

DATE	POWER HELD BY OCTAVIAN	OFFICE HELD	SIGNIFICANCE
27 BC	Proconsular *imperium*: • for 10 years • over Spain, Gaul, Syria, Cilicia, Cyprus and Egypt • had the right to appoint legates (commanders of legions), make war and conclude treaties	Proconsul	• These parts of the empire that needed most defence were now under the command of one man. • The legions stationed in these provinces represented the main part of the Roman army and were now under Octavian's command.
	Consular *imperium*: • authority over Rome and Italy	Consul – elected annually	• Octavian used this *imperium* to claim power over the proconsuls of the provinces belonging to the Roman people. • He could dictate policy to the Senate and assembly of the plebeians in Rome.

Power and *auctoritas*

Octavian was able to guide the administration of the senatorial provinces through his *auctoritas*. This is a vital term for understanding the nature of his power. Not easily defined, it is often translated as 'influence' and 'prestige'. In the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, Chapter 34, Augustus distinguishes between power and *auctoritas*. He wanted the Romans to believe that he did not rule through power or force, but rather that his every word was obeyed because of the authority that he possessed. In fact, what actually counted was the power that stood behind his *auctoritas*, his command of the army.

At this time the Senate conferred a new name on Octavian: 'Augustus', the revered one. This title bore religious overtones, suggesting someone who was sacred and holy. Octavian, apparently pleased with this title, took it as his name from 27 BC on.

12.5 Understanding and using the sources

Source 13

1 What does Cassius Dio's version of Octavian's speech suggest about his motives in handing his unofficial powers to the Senate?

2 Check the information given on Cassius Dio in Source 4. How reliable is his version?

Source 15

3 What version of his actions does Augustus give in his autobiography? How far can you trust what he says?

Source 16

4 According to Eck, what was the real position of the Senate and people of Rome after Octavian's actions in 27 BC?

5 Why was Octavian's status not that of an ordinary citizen?

6 Explain in your own words the reality of the situation in Rome after 27 BC.

12.5 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What motives would Augustus have had for handing back to the Senate the powers he had held during the civil war?
   - **b** How did the Senate and people of Rome respond? How would you explain this response?

12.6 The Second Settlement – 23 BC

Augustus spent time in the provinces between 27 BC and 23 BC. His absence provided the opportunity for some senators to express the ill feeling that his ongoing tenure of the consulship provoked. There was clearly a bottleneck at the top of the *cursus honorum* that curtailed their career opportunities. A conspiracy against Augustus, apparently planned by his fellow consul, Varro Murena, was discovered and the participants were tried and executed.

In 23 BC, Augustus fell seriously ill. On his recovery, he relinquished his consulship, a step that necessitated a reorganisation of the political structures established in the First Settlement. The main features of the Second Settlement are summarised in Source 18.

SOURCE 18 The Second Settlement

DATE	POWER	OFFICE	SIGNIFICANCE
23 BC	*Maius imperium proconsulare:* • renewed when necessary	Proconsul	• Augustus' proconsular *imperium* was made superior (*maius*) to that of other proconsuls. • He was exempted from the rule that would have terminated his proconsulship when he returned to Rome.
	Tribunicia potestas: • granted for life • could be held alone or with a colleague	(Augustus did not hold the office of tribune as he was of the patrician class)	Augustus now had: • the power to convene the Senate at any time and to speak first • personal immunity or *sacrosanctitas* • the right to give aid to citizens who were mistreated by the magistrates • the right to veto decisions of the Senate and magistrates • the right to introduce measures into the Senate • the right to compel reluctant citizens to obey. His tribunician power was used to date the years of his reign and was referred to in the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti,* rather than his proconsular *imperium.*

Further reorganisation

The resignation of his consulship meant that Augustus no longer held any *imperium* within the boundary, or *pomerium*, of Rome. It seems that in 19 BC the Senate extended his proconsular *imperium* to the city of Rome and Italy. At this time, Augustus was also given the right to use the most significant symbols of the former Roman Republic:

- the *sella curulis*, or curule chair of a consul, on which he could sit between the two current consuls
- the protection of 12 **lictors** carrying the *fasces*, or bundles of rods.

This reorganisation established the final form of Augustus' political position. The same set of powers would be used by his successors.

lictors men carrying the official emblems of public office – the *fasces* – who walked before Roman magistrates to clear a path through the crowd so that they could pass

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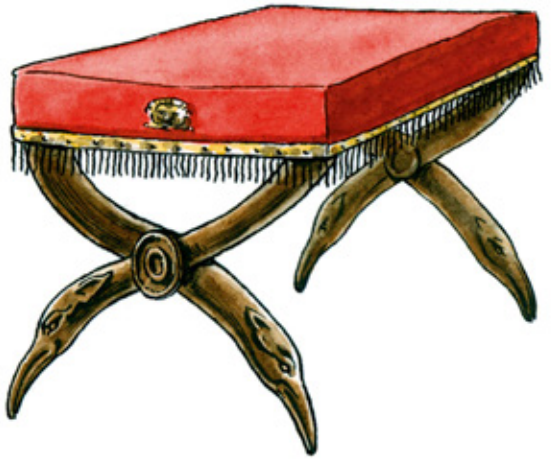

SOURCE 19 A *sella curulis*, or curule chair: the seat of senior magistrates with *imperium*

SOURCE 20 *Fasces*, or bundles of rods: the symbols of a magistrate's authority

A historiographical issue: The nature of Augustus' rule

What was the true nature of the principate system initiated by Augustus? Following are some ancient and modern sources that offer opinions on this question.

SOURCE 21

After this time [28–27 BC], I excelled all in authority, although I possessed no more official power than others who were my colleagues with me in the several magistracies.

Augustus, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: The Achievements of the Divine Augustus*, 35.3,
in P. Brunt & J. Moore (eds), Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 37

SOURCE 22

Through this process the power both of the people and of the Senate was wholly transferred into the hands of Augustus, and it was from this time that a monarchy, strictly speaking, was established. It would certainly be most truthful to describe it as a monarchy, even if at a later date two or three men held the supreme power at the same time. It is true that the Romans hated the actual name of monarch so vehemently that they did not refer to their emperors either as dictators or kings or anything similar.

Cassius Dio, Augustus, 17,
in *Roman History* (trans. I. Scott-Kilvert, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1987, p. 140)

SOURCE 23

He gave up the title of Triumvir, emphasizing instead his position as consul; and the powers of a tribune he proclaimed, were good enough for him – powers for the protection of ordinary people. He seduced the army with bonuses, and his cheap food policy was successful bait for civilians. Indeed, he attracted everybody's goodwill by the enjoyable gift of peace. Then he gradually pushed ahead and absorbed the function of the Senate, the officials, and even the law.

Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome* (trans. M. Grant, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986, p. 32)

SOURCE 24

The big question in those early days was simple: how was he going to devise a form of rule that would win hearts and minds, defuse the opposition not wholly extinguished by the end of the war and allow him to stay alive? Part of the answer came down to the language of power. For obvious Roman reasons, he did not call himself king … Instead he chose to frame all his powers in terms of regular Republican office holding … Then, from the mid 20s BCE he arranged to be granted a series of formal powers that were modelled on those of traditional Roman political offices but not the offices themselves … Whatever the later allegations of hypocrisy, he can hardly have been using these comfortable , old-fashioned titles to pretend that this was a return to the politics of the past. Romans were not, by and large, so unobservant that they would have failed to spot the autocracy lurking behind the fig leaf of 'the rights of a consul'. The point was that Augustus was cleverly adapting the traditional idioms to serve a new politics, justifying and making comprehensible a new axis of power by systematically reconfiguring an old language.

M. Beard, *SPQR: A History of Ancient Rome*, Profile Books Ltd, London, 2015, p. 369

12.6 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 21–24

1. Explain the claim Augustus makes about his official position. How accurate is it?
2. Cassius Dio refers to Augustus' new regime as a 'monarchy'. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.
3. What is Tacitus' account of Augustus' principate? How reliable is it? (Refer to Source 4.)
4. What does Mary Beard identify as Augustus' dilemma in the early days of his principate? How does she explain the solution he adopted?

12.6 Check your learning

1. Discuss the following:
   - **a** Why did Augustus resign the consulship in 23 BC? What powers did the Senate give him in return?
   - **b** How important was the *tribunicia potestas* to Augustus? How do you know?
   - **c** Why did Augustus deliberately avoid any mention of his *maius imperium proconsulare* in the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*?
   - **d** What was the significance of Augustus' right to use lictors and the curule chair?
2. Writing task: Explain the transition from Republic to principate during this period.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the key steps in the transition from Republic to principate, for example the triumvirate, and the First and Second Settlements
   - use them to structure your response – be careful to avoid a purely narrative structure
   - use specific evidence to support your explanation
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

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12.7 Titles and honours of the *princeps*

The Senate and Roman people expressed their gratitude for delivery from the years of civil war by conferring numerous honours and titles on Augustus. The actual name Augustus was one of the earliest ones. He records his own honours in the following extract from the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*.

SOURCE 26 Augustus wearing the civic crown awarded by the Senate

SOURCE 25

For this service of mine I was named Augustus by decree of the senate, and the door-posts of my house were publicly wreathed with bay leaves and a civic crown was fixed over my door and a golden shield was set in the Curia Julia [the Senate House in Rome], which, as attested by the inscription thereon, was given me by the senate and the people of Rome on account of my courage, clemency, justice and piety.

Augustus, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: The Achievements of the Divine Augustus*, 34.2 in P. Brunt & J. Moore (eds), Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 35

Source 27 summarises the titles and honours awarded to Augustus.

SOURCE 27 Augustus' titles and honours

Imperator (30 BC) • used as a name in the eastern provinces • suggested unlimited *imperium*	Augustus (27 BC) 'Revered one' • conferred by the Senate • was an honorific – did not give power	*Pontifex maximus* (12 BC) • chief of the state religion • head of all the priesthoods
Princeps senatus (28 BC) • Augustus was first in the list of senators • he had the right to give his opinion first	*Princeps* (27 BC) • short for *princeps civitatis* (first citizen) • a term used during the Republic • did not give power but implied authority, supremacy and some form of equality	*Pater patriae* (2 BC) 'Father of the country' • Augustus saw this as his 'highest ambition' (*Res Gestae*) • gave Augustus patronage of all Roman citizens

Images of the *princeps*

An important aspect of Augustus' leadership was his public image, which is reflected in the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* and in Augustan literature and monuments. When he came to power in 27 BC he realised that because of actions in his early career – the formation of the triumvirate with Antony, the proscriptions, his lacklustre performance in battle, his treachery towards friends – he had to cultivate his public image carefully. Augustus tried to change his image from that of tyrant to that of father of his country. He wished to be remembered as:

- a triumphant general
- a saviour of citizens' lives
- a bringer of peace
- a religious leader
- a traditionalist
- the saviour of the city of Rome.

As early as 36 BC, Augustus insisted that his speeches be written down. In 13 BC, he listed his achievements thus far, and read them to the Senate. The very first sentence of the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* shows this new image of Augustus. Here he portrays himself as a private citizen who has taken on the whole burden of government. He lists games and circuses and the money that he spent on Rome because he wished to prove that he was a champion of the common people.

SOURCE 28

At the age of nineteen, on my own responsibility and at my expense, I raised an army, with which I successfully championed the liberty of the republic when it was oppressed by the tyranny of a faction.

Augustus, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: The Achievements of the Divine Augustus*, 1, in P. Brunt & J. Moore (eds), Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 19

Hellenistic relating to Greek and Mediterranean history between 323 and 31 BC

SOURCE 29 A portrait of young Octavian – Arles, c. 39 BC

Augustus recognised that there were different types of propaganda for different types of people:

- Art and architecture would appeal to everyone.
- Slogans on coins and visual representations would impress the masses.
- Poetry and history would influence the literate upper classes.

Augustus' visual images

Statues of Augustus reflect the different ways in which he wanted to be portrayed during his reign. They clearly depict him as a general, as a statesman, as a religious leader and as a god. His early portraits show a **Hellenistic** influence, while those from later in his reign follow the Roman artistic traditions.

The Prima Porta statue of Augustus found at the villa of Livia, his wife, at Prima Porta near Rome, clearly depicts Augustus as a victorious general. It celebrates him as the mighty conqueror of the Parthians. The statue shows Augustus dressed in military regalia: he wears a cuirass, or breastplate, holds a spear and wears footwear associated with heroes and gods rather than mortals. The ceremonial cloak he wears on his hip was associated with the deified Julius Caesar.

SOURCE 30 Different images of Augustus

In Source 31, Paul Zanker comments on what he calls the Prima Porta portrait type.

SOURCE 31

A new portrait of Caesar Augustus (as he was now commonly known) must have been created at about this time … The face is now characterized by a calm, elevated expression, and the spontaneous turn of the head in the youthful portrait has given way to a timeless and remote dignity. Instead of the tousled hair over the forehead, each lock has been carefully arranged according to classical principles of symmetry … It was reproduced in every part of the Empire and fixed the visual image of Augustus for all time, although it had little to do with his actual appearance … The new portrait type is indeed the visual equivalent of the title 'Augustus' and exploits all the best possible associations of the name. Augustus's extraordinary position in the Roman state is here defined in art.

P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, University of Michigan Press, 1990, pp. 98–9

SOURCE 32
A gold medallion, minted for Augustus to commemorate his victory over Sextus Pompeius

Augustus and coins

Augustus used coins as a propaganda tool. They were used to promote his main themes:

- peace
- victory and military successes
- his family and the establishment of the dynasty
- his titles and honours
- his great generosity.

12.7 Understanding and using the sources

Source 25

1 Check your understanding of the terms 'courage', 'clemency', 'justice' and 'piety'. Why did the Romans value these qualities?

2 Considering what you have learnt about Augustus so far, identify occasions when he has or has not displayed these qualities.

3 The civic crown was traditionally given to someone who had saved Roman citizens from death. Was Augustus a worthy recipient?

Source 31

4 What does Zanker consider to be the importance of the Prima Porta portrait style?

5 How was it 'the visual equivalent of the title "Augustus"'?

12.7 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** Why did Augustus assume the title *princeps*?
   - **b** What was the significance of Augustus receiving the title *pontifex maximus* in 12 BC?
   - **c** Why did Augustus value the title *pater patriae* so highly?

2 Augustus refused to take the offices of dictator and censor in 19 BC. Suggest reasons why.

3 Find out some more information about the Prima Porta statue.
   - **a** What event does the statue celebrate and what was its significance?
   - **b** What gods are represented on the cuirass and what is each one's significance?
   - **c** How does the statue link Augustus to Julius Caesar? What is the reason for this?
   - **d** How is Zanker's comment, 'Augustus's extraordinary position in the Roman state is here defined in art' in Source 31 demonstrated in the statue?

4 How are the terms '*gravitas*', '*auctoritas*' and '*dignitas*' communicated in Augustus' images? (*Gravitas* was one of the virtues required in a Roman leader, who would be serious and dignified, and possess depth of character.)

5 Writing task: Explain the significance of the titles, honours and images of Augustus.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify ways in which Augustus' titles, honours and images were significant
   - use these to structure your response – be careful to avoid a purely narrative or descriptive structure
   - use specific evidence to support your explanation
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

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12.8 The Augustan principate

The principate was a new regime gradually put into place through changes instituted by Augustus. His hand was in the transformation of the Senate, the magistracy and the army. His thinking was behind the new laws and the rebuilding of Rome. His literature and propaganda served to secure his position in Rome.

Augustus and the Senate

By the time Augustus had attained his full powers, the Senate was quite different from what it had been before the civil war. The main difference was in its composition. First, many of the old families had been eliminated in Augustus' proscriptions and some had died out. Some were now financially dependent on the *princeps* and as such were no longer independent.

Second, Augustus had followed the precedent established by Julius Caesar in making his supporters members of the senatorial class. Many of these were new men, whose families were not the old, established ones who had founded the Republic. They came from parts of Italy such as Etruria and Umbria. In addition to these, Augustus elevated qualified men from the provinces of Gaul and Spain to senatorial rank.

Once his powers had been regulated, Augustus used traditional methods like the census to control the size of the Senate. There were two main culls:

- 29–28 BC – some senators were asked to leave, mainly Augustus' political opponents and those whose backgrounds were no longer acceptable
- 18 BC – more than 300 senators were removed, most by forced resignation.

In 11 BC and AD 4, Augustus reduced the Senate's numbers still further by voluntary resignation and force, eventually bringing its number to 600.

Reforms of the Senate

sesterce
a bronze or silver Roman coin valued at a quarter of a denarius; also referred to as a 'sestertius'

equestrian class
one of two aristocratic classes of ancient Rome, ranking below the patricians

Augustus introduced new qualifications for membership of the senatorial class: prospective members had to possess at least one million **sesterces** in assets, putting the senatorial class out of reach of the **equestrian class** (*equites*). As a result of this reform, freeborn Roman citizens could no longer reach the Senate via the *cursus honorum*. Now, only those men who were already of senatorial rank could stand for political office.

Augustus was keen to restore the prestige of the Senate. He wanted to make it a responsible and dignified body that could be treated with respect. Senators were required to make offerings at the commencement of sessions and were fined for not attending Senate meetings. Sessions were reduced to two per month and a quorum or minimum required number of members was established for various types of business. Augustus himself attended meetings of the Senate regularly. It is clear, though, that he could make laws independent of the Senate, because his letters, instructions and formal edicts were all treated as if they were law.

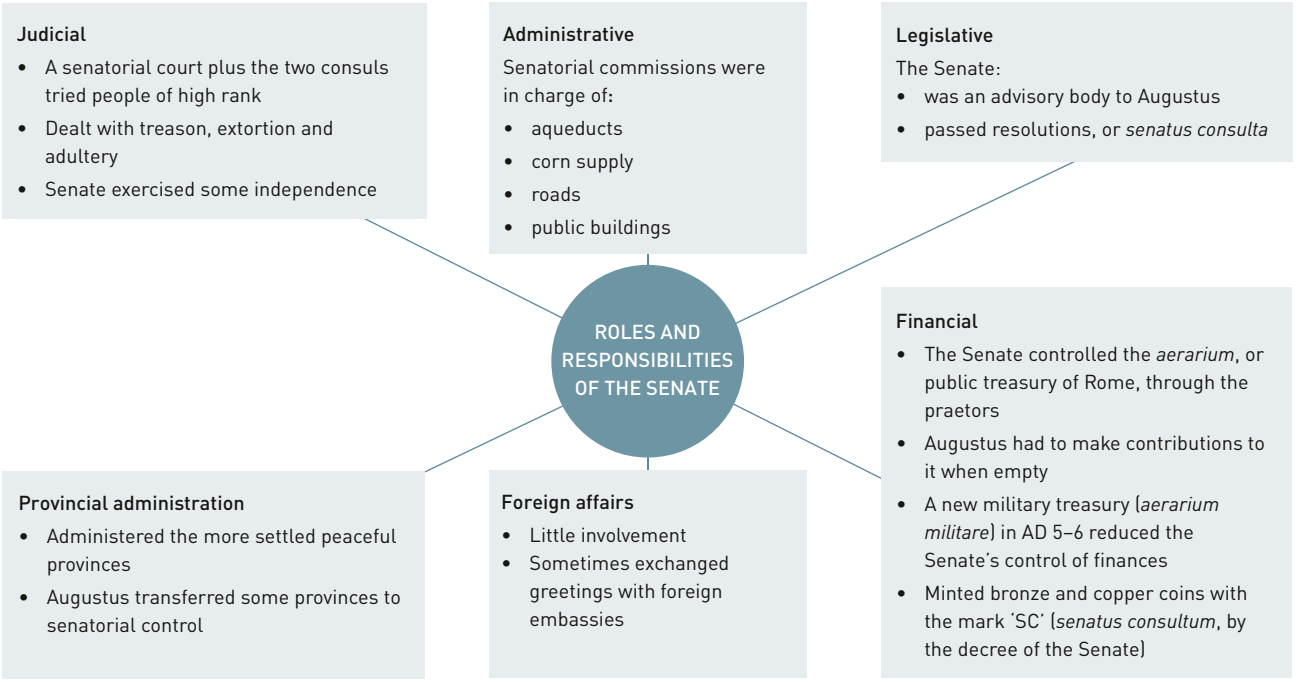
The *consilium*

Augustus changed the mode of operation of the Senate by introducing the *consilium* or senatorial council. The *consilium* was made up of Augustus and Agrippa, the two consuls, a representative of each of the magistrates and 15 extra senators. After 6 months, the

lower-ranking members were rotated. Augustus used the *consilium* to preview and discuss matters he wanted brought before the Senate. In AD 13 the *consilium* was enlarged to include Augustus' stepson, Tiberius; his two adopted grandsons, Gaius and Lucius Caesar; the consuls designate; and an additional five senators chosen by lot.

Roles and responsibilities of the Senate

Source 33 summarises the roles and responsibilities of the Senate.



SOURCE 33 Roles and responsibilities of the Senate

12.8 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** In what ways was Augustus' Senate different from the one before the civil war?
   - **b** Why did Augustus want to reduce the size of the Senate?
   - **c** What was the benefit of making new men eligible for membership of the Senate?
   - **d** What was the result of introducing asset qualifications for membership of the senatorial class? Why was this significant?
   - **e** Why did Augustus think it necessary to improve the dignity of the Senate?

2 Identify some positives and negatives of Augustus' reforms of the Senate.

3 Writing task: To what extent did the roles and responsibilities of the Senate change during the Augustan principate?

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the key ways in which the roles and responsibilities of the Senate changed
   - use them to structure your response – avoid a purely narrative structure
   - make judgements about the extent of change in the Senate
   - use specific evidence to support your assessment
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

12.9 Roles of magistrates and officials

Even though the *cursus honorum* was now open only to those already of senatorial rank, the Senate itself could still be reached by election. A result of Augustus' growing power as *princeps*, however, meant that fewer people actually voted. After 19 BC, there is little evidence at all of contested elections. Augustus could influence elections by accepting or rejecting candidates and by supporting particular candidates. An outcome of the *princeps*' involvement was a reduction in the number of candidates for the magistracies, especially for quaestor and tribune of the people. This meant that equestrians were sometimes required to take these positions. Eventually, electoral commissions were established to sort and recommend candidates for these positions who were then automatically elected.

Augustus' use of the magistracy system enabled him to develop what was to become, in effect, a civil service – the magistrates formed the senatorial sector of this new body. Source 34 summarises the roles of magistrates.

SOURCE 34 The roles of magistrates

MAGISTRATE	ROLES
Tribunes	• Could no longer propose legislation or exercise the veto, so positions now difficult to fill
Quaestor	• This rank was a requirement for entry into the Senate • Six served in the provinces • Others helped Augustus and the consuls
Aediles	• Lost traditional roles (i.e. management of corn supply, public games, water supply and fire control) • City responsibilities were limited by the appointment of a *praefectus urbi* (prefect of the city)
Praetors	• Numbers increased to 12 and expanded roles • Two managed the state treasury (*aerarium*) • Three ex-praetors managed the military treasury (*aerarium militare*) • Took over organisation of games and festivals from the aediles • Propraetors (praetors with extended powers) gained military commands and governorships of senatorial provinces
Consuls	• Dealt with appeals from the provinces • Heard requests from foreign envoys in minor matters • Ex-consuls managed administrative areas such as supervision of grain and water supplies, public works and roads; some talented ones became imperial legates, governing the provinces of the *princeps* • Proconsuls (consuls with extended powers) governed the important provinces of Asia and Africa • Length of office shortened to 6 months, which produced two pairs of consuls per year: *consules ordinarii* (first half of the year) and *consules suffecti* (second half of the year)

Source 35 is a comment on the effects of Augustus' changes to the Senate and magistracies.

SOURCE 35

In sum then, under Augustus virtually all the men who occupied positions of power and responsibility in politics, the army, and government administration were at the same time members of the Senate, just as they had been under the republic. All the conditions were thus fulfilled for the Senate to maintain its role as the centre of political power, yet paradoxically, the opposite occurred. After the late 20s BC the Senate ceased to be the body that initiated policy; the impulses that shaped politics no longer originated within it.

W. Eck, *The Age of Augustus*, trans. D. Schneider, Blackwell Publishing, 2003, pp. 75–6

Praetorian Guard an elite unit of the imperial Roman army who served as bodyguards to the emperor and his family

SOURCE 36 A procession of the imperial family and senators on the north side of the *Ara Pacis Augustae*, the Altar of Augustan Peace, Rome

SOURCE 37 The career path introduced for equestrians

OFFICIAL	ROLE
Military tribune (*praefectus*)	• A period of army service
Procurator – there were grades of these	• Running of businesses • Tax collection • Financial control of a province
Governor	• Running of a province selected by the *princeps*
Prefect	• Control of a range of prefectures responsible for areas crucial to the stability of Rome (in order of importance): - corn supply (*praefectus annonae*) from AD 8 – in charge of imports of grain from the provinces - fire brigade from AD 6 (*praefectus vigilum*) – in charge of seven cohorts of 500 firemen who fought the constant outbreaks of fire in Rome - the city (*praefectus urbi*) – in charge of maintaining public order, judging cases of freedmen and lower class citizens accused of crimes, and the 500-strong police force - **Praetorian Guard** (*praefectus praetori*) – in charge of the activities of the guardsmen - imperial province of Egypt (*praefectus Aegypti*) – in charge of the affairs of Egypt

Roles of officials: The new civil service

Augustus' new civil service also had an equestrian sector. Augustus recognised the financial and business expertise of the equestrian class and harnessed it for the use of the state. To accomplish this he completely reorganised the order and devised a career path for it that mirrored the one available for the senatorial class (see Source 36). Like the property qualification of the senators, entry to the equestrian order was set at 400 000 sestercii.

Note: For the role of equestrians in the administration of the provinces see 12.16 Augustus and the empire.

Significance of equestrians

Augustus was keen to use talented members of the equestrian order as part of his new civil service. By including them in his patronage he was able to develop a group of professional administrators who would manage the empire competently. Significantly, many were directly appointed by Augustus, so were responsible to him and reliant on his favour.

The equestrian class also enabled Augustus to revive the traditions of Republican Roman society. First was their old link with the military – the equestrians had originally been horse-riding knights. Augustus showed his respect for tradition by restoring their military role; military service now became the first step in the new equestrian career path. He also restored the annual review of knights and their horses by the consuls. The equestrians were given symbols of their new status:

- a tunic with a narrow purple stripe
- the right to sit in the first 14 rows at the theatre
- the right to wear a gold ring
- the right to sit on the jury courts
- a horse at public expense.

Freedmen or *liberti*

These were slaves whose masters had given them their freedom. Augustus wanted to maintain the value of Roman citizenship by restricting their numbers. Several laws were introduced to regulate manumission; that is, the freeing of slaves:

- 17 BC (*lex Iunia*) – gave freedmen 'Latin' status but restricted their social, financial and political rights; however, their children were allowed to have Roman citizenship
- 2 BC (*lex Fufia Caninia*) – limited the number of slaves that could be freed by a master
- AD 4 (*lex Aelia Sentia*) – introduced age limits (i.e. for a manumission to be valid a master had to be 20 years old and a slave 30 years old).

Freedmen, who were often intelligent, educated men, played an important role in Augustus' administration. Many carried out the secretarial work they had done as slaves. In particular, Augustus' personal freedmen managed his private affairs, including his finances. They administered the estates that had come into his possession in all parts of the empire. These ranged from the estates of Cleopatra in Egypt to private estates in Achaea (Greece). Freedmen acting in this role were called procurators.

It is easy to see how these freedmen who were acting as private managers for the *princeps* would assume a type of official authority. One of Augustus' freedmen even had his name included on a coin minted at Knossos in Crete. Augustus also used his freedmen to carry out some administrative duties in the imperial provinces; that is, the ones that were under his direct rule. Regardless of the significant roles he gave his own freedmen, Augustus barred them from holding public office or serving in the legions.

In the religious sphere, *collegia* of freedmen were created to manage the worship of the cult of Augustus in the cities of the empire. Called *Augustales*, these freedmen formed an elite group that mirrored the elite groups of freeborn Roman citizens.

12.9 Understanding and using the sources

1 Explain the paradox to which Eck refers in Source 35.

12.9 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:

- **a** What explanation could there be for the lack of evidence of contested elections? What was Augustus' role?
- **b** Compare the roles of the magistrates in Augustus' principate with their roles during the Republic. What are the main differences? What is the significance of the differences?
- **c** How were equestrians dependent on Augustus' patronage? Why was this significant?
- **d** How did Augustus use the equestrian class to further his aims?
- **e** Why did Augustus enact laws restricting the manumission of slaves?
- **f** What roles did freedmen play in Augustus' administration? How were these significant?
- **g** Why were the *Augustales* an important group?

2 Celadus and Licinus were two freedmen of Augustus. Find out who they were and their roles.

3 Writing tasks:

- **a** How important were magistrates and officials in the Augustan principate?

  To help plan your response:

  - identify the key ways in which the roles of magistrates and officials were important in the Augustan principate, and use these to structure your response
  - make judgements about the importance of the roles.
- **b** Explain the significance of equestrians and freedmen in the Augustan principate.

  To help plan your response:

  - identify the areas where equestrians and freedmen played significant roles, and use these to structure your response
  - say why and or how equestrians and freedmen played significant roles.

For each writing task, use specific evidence to support your assessment, and refer to relevant historiographical issues. Avoid a purely narrative structure.

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12.10 Augustan reforms

To understand Augustus' reforms, it is necessary to return to the concepts of continuity and change. Despite agreement among historians that he was a great innovator, particularly in the areas of political power, morality and literary patronage, there remains the appearance of everything staying the same. The social structures that had always existed were still there.

Political

Political reforms are changes to the basis of power in the state, as determined by the holders of various offices, as well as the nature and extent of their authority and influence. Augustus' political reforms can be clearly seen in his reorganisation of the magistracies as discussed in the previous sections.

Social

Augustus' concern for the status of the family and the morality of the Roman people led him to introduce a number of social reforms. When he came to power he recognised many social problems; for example, the declining birth rate among the upper ruling classes and decay in family life and values. Many wealthy Romans engaged in riotous living and were reluctant to marry. His purpose was to redress these social ills.

In 19–18 BC, Augustus introduced a series of bills (*leges Iuliae*) before the Senate designed to encourage the upper classes, in particular, to marry and rear families:

- the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* – penalised those who did not marry
- the *ius trium liberorum* – enabled men of senatorial rank who did marry and fathered three or more children to have their careers rapidly promoted
- the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* – penalised adultery and defined the circumstances under which Romans could be divorced.

Source 38 outlines the severity of the last of these.

SOURCE 38

The other law of 18–17, the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*, made sexual laxity, hitherto mainly confined to the privacy of the family court, a public crime to be adjudicated on by a permanent jury-court specially created for the purpose. The law applied both to *adulterium*, illicit intercourse by and with a respectable married woman, and to *stuprum*, fornication with a widow or unmarried free woman who was not a prostitute. The *adulterium* part could be committed only by wives and their lovers; a husband's extra-marital affairs did not create problems of legitimacy. The punishment was banishment to an island and partial forfeiture of property.

R. Bauman, *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome*, Routledge, London, 1992, pp. 105–6

Wealthy Romans spent fortunes on banquets and property, and ignored the *simplicitas* (simplicity) of former times. Legislation was passed to curtail the excesses of the upper classes

and to limit how much could be spent on houses and food. When Augustus inherited the luxurious house of Vedius Pollio, a man who had helped him rise to power, he had it razed to the ground because it contravened the sumptuary laws (laws made to restrain luxury or extravagance). Augustus pre-empted criticism of this legislation by himself living simply. Both his home in Rome and his country villa on the island of Capri were modest.

The *lex Papia Poppaea*

The *lex Papia Poppaea*, passed in AD 9, supplemented the previous laws. This moral and social legislation was not popular and ultimately rebounded on Augustus himself. These laws:

- forbade the marriage of members of the senatorial class with freedmen or freedwomen, entertainers or prostitutes
- prevented unmarried people from accepting inheritances except from close relatives
- promoted marriage by placing penalties on those who remained celibate after a certain age
- required widows to remarry within one year from the death of a husband, and divorced women to remarry within 6 months from the time of the divorce.

By the provisions of this law, candidates for election to office who had several children were preferred to those with fewer children. Special privileges were available to freedmen with large families, for example release from obligations to patrons. The law also imposed penalties on the childless, who could take only half of an inheritance left to them. In passing such laws, Augustus changed the functions of the state; instead of permitting families and individuals to be responsible for their private behaviour he made them answerable to the state.

Legal

Augustus' changes to the legal system itself were an important part of his reform program. Two main reforms were his reorganisation of the criminal code and strengthening of the appeals process. Augustus also:

- reorganised legal procedures to reduce the lengthy delays that characterised the system
- created new courts to take the pressure off the general courts
- appointed more judges so that more cases could be heard
- instituted severe penalties for evading jury duty.

Augustus acted as a role model for other judges by hearing cases himself. According to Suetonius, Augustus was a hard-working judge, frequently attending court for the entire day. Illness did not prevent his hearing cases, as he would convene the court in his house and preside from his sickbed.

Religious

Augustus instituted a policy of religious revival. He aimed to restore the belief that *pietas*, the proper observation of the old ceremonies and rituals, would underpin the new age for Rome. This was part of his emphasis on old-fashioned values. He restored old shrines and temples, and revived old priesthoods and **cults**. Source 39 summarises the main aspects of Augustus' religious reforms.

cult
a system of religious devotion associated with a particular god

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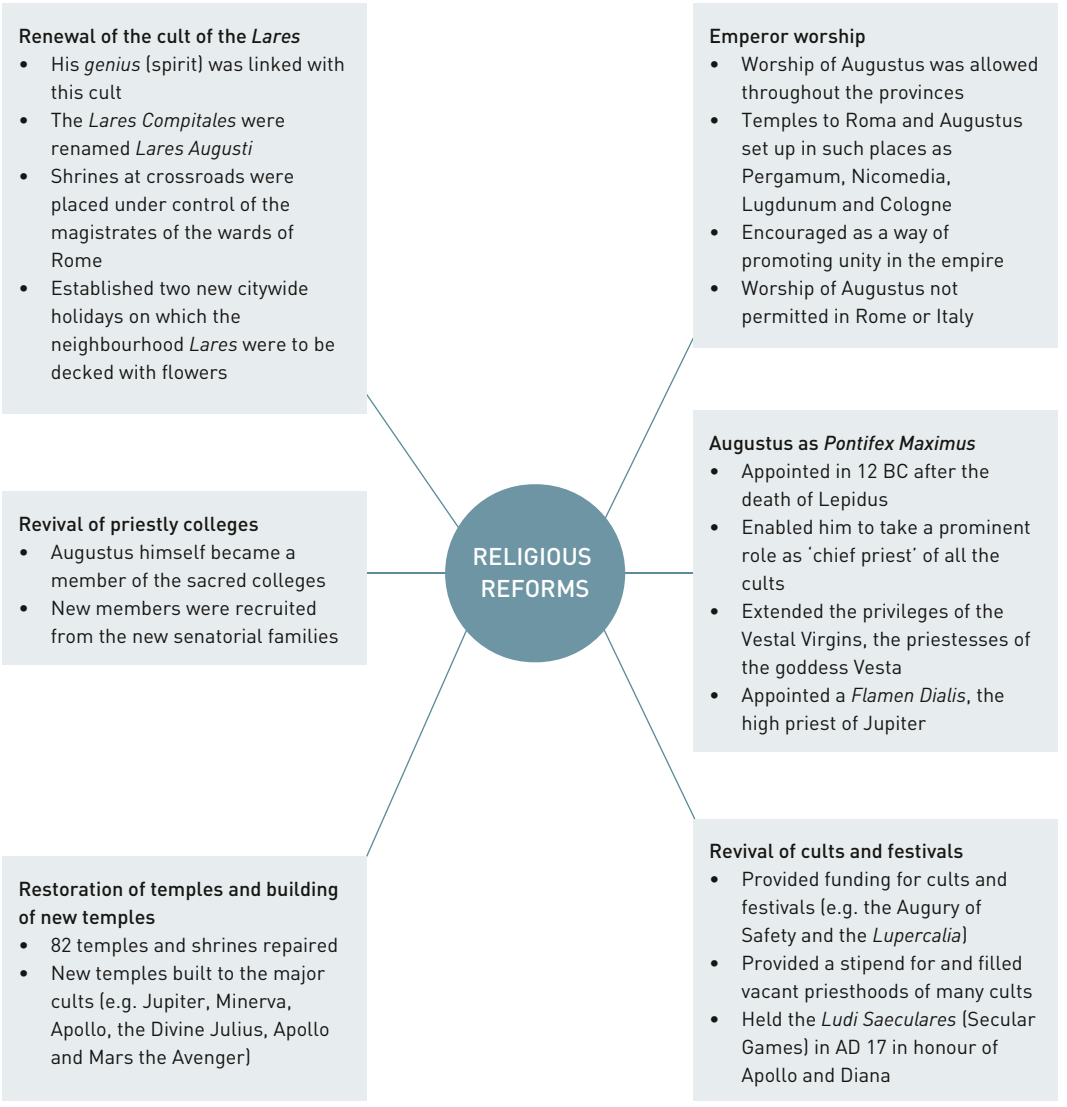

SOURCE 39 Augustus' religious reforms

Administrative

As part of the census conducted in 8 BC, Augustus reorganised the city into 14 regions, each of which was administered by a praetor, aedile or tribune chosen by lot. In addition, he mandated the annual selection of a college of four *magistri vici* (leaders of the city) drawn from each neighbourhood's residents. These magistracies particularly appealed to freedmen. Duties of the colleges of magistrates included:

- maintenance of the local *compitum* (a shrine at crossroads) and its cult
- coordination of security and fire prevention (until AD 6)
- liaison between the residents of the *vici* and the regional magistrates.

Augustus' concern for defining the place of the lower classes, especially freedmen, in politics and society can be seen in these reforms. They also demonstrate ability to mix innovation (e.g. the 14 regions) with the restoration of traditional practices (such as the selection of *magistri*) that had fallen into disuse during the period of the civil wars.

12.10 Understanding and using the sources

Source 38

1 How did Augustus' new law change the way adultery was legally regarded?

2 Why could *adulterium* only be committed by wives and their lovers, and not husbands?

12.10 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** Identify the political reforms of the magistracies that Augustus carried out. What evidence do these reforms provide about political power and who possessed it in the principate?
   - **b** Where do the First and Second Settlements figure in the political reforms?
   - **c** Why did Augustus introduce his social reforms?
   - **d** Why did he have difficulty enforcing morality?
   - **e** Why did Augustus allow himself to be worshipped in the provinces but not in Rome? How was the problem solved?
   - **f** Why did Augustus revive cults and festivals?
   - **g** What did Augustus hope to achieve by holding the Secular Games?
   - **h** What advantage would Augustus have gained by reviving the priestly colleges?

2 Research the following:
   - **a** What was the *Iuvenes* or *Iuventus*? What did Augustus aim to achieve by giving it his encouragement? How were his grandsons Gaius and Lucius connected?
   - **b** What were the *Lares Compitales*? Why did Augustus associate himself with them?
   - **c** What were the vestal virgins? Why did Augustus extend their privileges?
   - **d** What were the Augury of Safety and the *Lupercalia*?
   - **e** What was the significance of the *Ludi Saeculares* (Secular Games)? How did Augustus change them to suit his own agenda?

3 Construct a table in which you record as many of Augustus' legal reforms as you can. You could use headings such as Law, Details and Significance.

4 Administration is the process of managing a government, or the activities undertaken by a government to exercise its powers and duties. With this definition in mind:
   - **a** re-read the sections on Augustan reforms, and identify the administrative reforms
   - **b** list them in a diagram
   - **c** identify the ways in which each reform assisted Augustus' government to exercise its powers and duties.

5 Writing task: Assess the significance of Augustus' reform programs.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the key areas of reform during the Augustan principate
   - use them to structure your response – avoid a purely narrative or descriptive structure
   - make judgements about the significance of the reforms
   - use specific evidence to support your explanation
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

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12.11 Opposition to Augustus

The following Roman sources give differing perspectives on opposition to Augustus.

SOURCE 40

Opposition did not exist. War or judicial murder had disposed of all men of spirit. Upper-class survivors found that slavish obedience was the way to succeed, both politically and financially. They had profited from the revolution, and so now they liked the security of the existing arrangements better than the uncertainties of the old regime. Besides, the new order was popular in the provinces.

Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, 1.1
(trans. M. Grant, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986)

SOURCE 41

When Augustus presided (over the Senate) on this second occasion he is said to have worn a sword and steel corselet beneath his tunic, with ten burly senatorial friends crowding around him … the senators were not even then permitted to approach Augustus' chair, except singly and after the folds of their robes had been carefully searched.

Suetonius, *Augustus*, 35,
in *The Twelve Caesars* (trans. R. Graves, Penguin Books, London, 1979, p. 74)

Evidence exists of opposition to Augustus and his regime during the principate. Scholars are divided as to whether this was constant or sporadic. From a modern perspective, however, reasons for opposition can be seen – it was a time of substantial political and social change. However, Augustus was an astute reader of the political climate and was capable of reassessment of his acts if it appeared that he had been too forceful or rapid in introducing change.

Some notable examples of opposition to Augustus include the following:

- *Gallus* – this prefect of Egypt and poet was prosecuted for treason in the Senate after losing Augustus' favour. He had possibly offended Augustus by boasting about his campaigns deep into Nubia (a region along the Nile River, to the south of Egypt) without giving due recognition to his *princeps*. Gallus was convicted and committed suicide to avoid confiscation of his assets by the state.
- *Marcus Primus* – as proconsul of Macedonia, he was charged with an unauthorised attack on a Thracian tribe, a tribal group from a large area in eastern and south-eastern Europe. Primus argued that he was acting under Augustus' orders, which Augustus denied. Marcus Primus was convicted, but the verdict was not unanimous. Augustus' presence in court was seen as an infringement of senatorial authority.
- *Fannius Caepio and Varro Murena* – these two men apparently conspired against Augustus in 23 BC. After being denied the opportunity to go into voluntary exile, both were executed. Their case appeared worse as it took place during a time of famine and plague.
- *G. Cornelius Cinna Magnus* – this grandson of Pompey plotted to assassinate Augustus, but was pardoned following a plea from Livia. This is an unusual example of Augustus' *clementia* (clemency).

- *Julia, daughter of Augustus* – some scholars argue that Julia's banishment was a result of her conspiracy against her father (see 12.14 Profile).

12.11 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 40 & 41

1 What reasons does Tacitus give for the lack of opposition to Augustus?
2 What does Suetonius suggest about opposition to Augustus?

12.11 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   a What do the cases described have in common?
   b What do they reveal about the nature of opposition to Augustus?
   c Explain Augustus' clemency to G. Cornelius Cinna Magnus.
   d Why was Augustus not prepared to grant clemency to Julia, his daughter?
2 Read the accounts of these examples of opposition to Augustus as recorded by the ancient sources.
   - Gallus: Suetonius, 'Augustus', 66.1–2
   - Primus: Cassius Dio, 54.3.1–3
   - Caepio and Murena: Cassius Dio, 54.3.4–8; Velleius Paterculus, 2.91.2; Suetonius, 'Tiberius' 8.1
   - Cinna: Cassius Dio, 55.14.1–55.22.2.
3 The famous poet Ovid was exiled during Augustus' principate. Find out what you can about this intriguing example of opposition to Augustus. Search online for 'Ovid and the censored voice'.

SOURCE 42 Theatre of Marcellus, Rome

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12.12 Augustus' building program

Augustus understood the role that architecture could play in both his own promotion and that of the Roman Empire. However, besides glorifying himself and the Julian family, he also aimed to meet the needs of the Roman people. Source 43 gives Suetonius' account of the motives behind Augustus' building program. Suetonius, however, does not record that a large part of Augustus' building program was carried out by Agrippa (his friend) and Tiberius (his stepson). Citizens were also encouraged to devote their wealth to the embellishment and maintenance of Rome.

Source 44 gives Augustus' own account of his building program.

SOURCE 43

Aware that the city was architecturally unworthy of her position as capital of the Roman Empire, besides being vulnerable to fire and river floods, Augustus so improved her appearance that he could justifiably boast: 'I found Rome built of bricks; I leave her clothed in marble.'

Suetonius, Augustus, 28,
in *The Twelve Caesars*, (trans. R. Graves, Penguin Books, London, 1979)

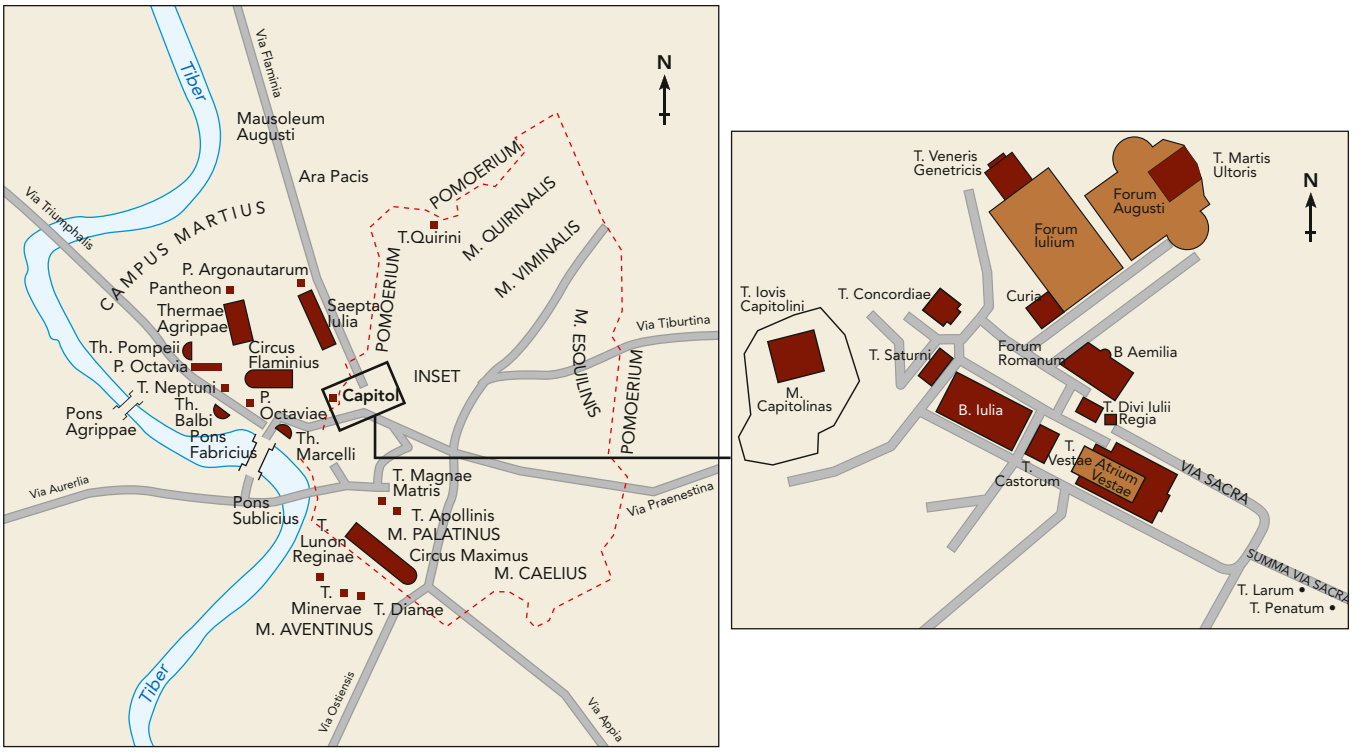
SOURCE 44

I built the Senate-House [Curia Julia] and the *Chalcidicum* [type of porch] which adjoins it and the temple of Apollo on the Palatine with porticoes [roofs supported by columns], the temple of divine Julius, the Lupercal [an underground chamber reputed to be where a she-wolf suckled Romulus and Remus, legendary founders of Rome], the portico at the Flaminian circus [race track], which I permitted to bear the name of the portico of Octavius, after the man who erected the previous portico on the same site, a *pulvinar* [state box] at the Circus Maximus, the temples on the Capitol of Jupiter Feretrius (Subduer) and Jupiter the Thunderer, the temple of Quirinus, the temples of Minerva and Queen Juno and Jupiter Libertus (Liberator) on the Aventine [one of the seven hills of Rome], the temple of the *Lares* [household gods] at the top of the Sacred Way, the temple of the *Di Penates* [household gods] on the Velia, the temple of Youth, and the temple of the Great Mother on the Palatine [central hill of the seven hills of Rome].

I rebuilt the Capitol and the theatre of Pompey, both works of great expense without inscribing my own name on either. I restored the channels of the aqueducts, which in several places were falling into disrepair through age, and I brought water from a new spring into the aqueduct called Marcia, doubling the supply. I completed the *Forum Julium* [forum of Julius Caesar] and the basilica [large building] between the temples of Castor and Saturn … In my seventh time consulship, I restored the Via Flaminia from the city as far as Rimini …

I built the temple of *Mars Ultor* and the *Forum Augustum* on private ground from the proceeds of booty. I built the theatre adjacent to the temple of Apollo on ground in large part bought from private owners, and provided that it should be called after Marcus Marcellus, my son-in-law. From the proceeds of booty I dedicated gifts in the Capitol and in the temples of the divine Julius [i.e. Julius Caesar], of Apollo, of Vesta, and of *Mars Ultor*; this cost me about 100 000 000 sesterces.

Augustus, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: The Achievements of the Divine Augustus*, 19–21,
in P. Brunt & J. Moore (eds), Oxford University Press, 1967, pp. 27, 29



SOURCE 45 The city of Rome in the Augustan Age showing the buildings erected as part of Augustus' building program – the Capitol area is shown enlarged at right

SOURCE 46 The *Forum Augustum* showing the remains of the marble-covered staircase that led to the podium of the temple of *Mars Ultor*

Forum Augustum or Augustus' Forum

According to Suetonius, Augustus' Forum, dedicated in AD 2, was built to accommodate the recent increase in lawsuits caused by the rising population. As a powerful piece of political propaganda, the Forum enabled Augustus to simultaneously promote both his leadership and the contribution to Rome of his mythical and divine ancestors.

The focus of the *Forum Augustum* was the temple of *Mars Ultor*, Mars the Avenger. This was a clear reference to Augustus' avenging of Caesar's murder with his defeat of Brutus and Cassius. Within the temple stood a cult statue of Mars, as well as a colossal statue of Augustus and statues of Aeneas, Romulus, Venus and the Divine Julius. Niches surrounding the main precinct of the temple contained statues of leading Roman citizens. On one side were members of Augustus' family with Aeneas in the centre, while on the other side, grouped around a statue of Romulus, were statues of men who had contributed to the development of Rome. The centrepiece was a statue of Augustus riding in a chariot in his role as *pater patriae*.

The *Ara Pacis Augustae*, or Altar of Augustan Peace

The *Ara Pacis Augustae* was built on the *Campus Martius* between 13 BC and 9 BC. It was commissioned by the Senate to give thanks for Augustus' safe return from the provinces of Spain and Gaul. It is an important Augustan monument because it is a visual representation of the values of the reign – *pax* (peace), *gravitas* (authority), *humanitas* (humane character) and *familia* (family). It is also a significant piece of Augustan propaganda because it depicts the moral and religious tenets, or main principles, of Augustus' reign as well as his dynastic hopes; that is, continued rule by his descendants. The altar is a U-shaped, stepped platform surrounded by panelled walls on which mythical and historical scenes are carved.

SOURCE 47 The *Ara Pacis* or Altar of Peace housed in a modern museum in Rome

Other buildings

- *Campus Martius* – in Augustan times, the 'Field of Mars' was included within the city and Agrippa was given the responsibility for the area's development. Under his direction it was made into a precinct of lawns, baths, temples and parks. He converted the swamp into a lake known as the *Stagnum Agrippae*.
- Pantheon – this was built by Agrippa as a temple to all the gods. It was dedicated during Agrippa's third consulship, following the Battle of Actium. It was built as an *ovatio* ('non-military triumph') to Augustus.
- Mausoleum of Augustus – from the outset, Augustus envisaged it as the burial place of his family and heirs. Julius Caesar had been buried at the *Campus Martius* and Augustus was continuing the family tradition. Inside the mausoleum was a central circular corridor, in which were funerary urns containing the ashes of dead members of Augustus' family.

SOURCE 48 The Mausoleum of Augustus

12.12 Understanding and using the sources

1 Complete the following table to help you record the information given by Augustus in Source 44. The first one has been done to help you.

TYPE OF BUILDING	DEDICATED TO (IF APPLICABLE)	LOCATION	OTHER DETAILS	SIGNIFICANCE
Senate House (Curia Julia)	Julius Caesar	Forum Romanum	An adjoining *chalcidicum*	Enabled Augustus to show his respect for the Senate

2 How did these buildings and public works enable Augustus to show his *pietas* (respect for the gods and fellow men), *humilitas* (modesty), *gravitas* (authority), care for his family, respect for tradition and care for the future?

12.12 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** Who was Aeneas? Why would Augustus want to be connected to him?
   - **b** Who was Romulus? How would being connected to him have benefited Augustus?
   - **c** What was Agrippa's role in Augustus' building program?
   - **d** How do these buildings show Augustus as a bringer of peace? As a victorious general?
   - **e** How do all these features of Augustus' building program display Augustus' dynastic ambitions?
   - **f** How do these buildings show Augustus' desire to promote and restore Roman traditions?
   - **g** What are the main propaganda features of these buildings?

2 Find out more about the mythical and historical scenes depicted on the *Ara Pacis*. How do they reflect the aims of Augustus' building program?

3 Writing task: Assess the importance of Augustus' building program in the Augustan Age.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the main areas of Augustus' building program
   - use them to structure your response – be careful to avoid a purely narrative or descriptive structure
   - make judgements about the importance of each area
   - use specific evidence to support your assessment
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

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12.13 Literature and propaganda

The Augustan Age, the so-called 'golden age', produced some of the greatest works of Latin literature. Writing was a precarious occupation, and to earn a living it was necessary to have a patron – such as Augustus himself. Other well-known patrons of this time included Maecenas, Marcus Agrippa, Asinius Pollio and Marcus Valerius Messalla. As patrons, Maecenas and Augustus actively encouraged the writers of the time, rewarding them with estates and riches. In return, they were expected to celebrate Augustus' heroic military deeds. Moreover, as clients of the state, these writers were expected to publicise government policies and promote the values and aims of the new Augustan Age.

Three writers, Virgil, Horace and Livy, became enthusiastic, loyal supporters of Augustus from the days of the triumvirate to the early principate. Their poetry, highly regarded for its literary value, influenced public opinion in a similar way to the role played today by television and the media. Source 49 provides information about the major writers.

SOURCE 49 The major writers of the Augustan Age

WRITER	CONTEXT OF WRITER
Virgil (Publius Vergilius Maro) 70–19 BC	• Considered to be the greatest of all Roman poets • Client of Asinius Pollio, and later came under the patronage of Maecenas • Friend of the poet Horace • Enjoyed the patronage of Augustus from 29 BC until his death • Most famous works: the *Eclogues* (pastoral sketches, i.e. stories set in an idealised version of country life), *Georgics* (a poem advising farmers on cultivation) and the *Aeneid*; his work is regarded as the epitome of the golden age of literature
Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus) 65–8 BC	• One of the most famous Latin poets • Through Maecenas was offered the post of secretary to Augustus • Works: *Epodes*, *Satires*, *Odes*, *Epistles* and *Ars Poetica* • His ode *Carmen Saeculare*, of 17 BC, honours his imperial patron, Augustus
Livy (Titus Livius) 64 or 59 BC – AD 12 or 17	• Roman historian • Enjoyed the patronage of Augustus • Main work: a history of Rome called *Ab Urbe Conditi* ('From the Foundation of the City'), a narrative of the period from Rome's earliest days to the death of Drusus in 9 BC (142 books in all)

Examples of Augustan literature

Virgil

The *Aeneid* is a national epic covering the history of the Romans from their origins with Aeneas, the Trojan War hero, to the Augustan Age. In Source 50, Virgil describes a shield made for Aeneas by the gods, which was decorated with historical scenes – in this case, the Battle of Actium.

SOURCE 50

Upon this shield the fire-god, with knowledge of things to come,
Being versed in the prophets, had wrought events from Italian history
And Roman triumphs …
Centrally were displayed two fleets of bronze, engaged in
The battle of Actium; all about Cape Leucas you saw
Brisk movement of naval formations; the sea was a blaze of gold.
On one side Augustus Caesar, high up on the poop [rear deck], is leading
The Italians into battle, the Senate and people with him,
His home-gods and the great gods: two flames shoot up from his helmet
In jubilant light, and his father's star [the comet of the Divine Julius] dawns over its crest.
Elsewhere in the scene is Agrippa – the gods and the winds fight for him.

Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book 8,
in K. Chisholm & J. Ferguson, *Rome: The Augustan Age*, Oxford University Press, 1981, pp. 222–3

Horace

Horace composed the *Carmen Saeculare* in 17 BC at the command of Augustus. It is a choral hymn designed to be performed at the *Ludi saeculares* or secular games. According to a marble inscription recording the ceremony, a choir of 27 boys and 27 girls sang this prayer addressed to Apollo and Diana commemorating the achievements of Augustus.

SOURCE 51

Thy age, great Caesar, has restored
To squalid fields the plenteous grain,
Given back to Rome's almighty Lord
Our standards [banners], torn from Parthian fane,
Has closed Quirinian Janus' gate,
Wild passion's erring walk controll'd,
Heal'd the foul plague-spot of the state,
And brought again the life of old,
Life, by whose healthful power increased
The glorious name of **Latium** spread
To where the sun illumes the east
From where he seeks his western bed.
While Caesar rules, no civil strife
Shall break our rest, nor violence rude,
Nor rage, that whets the slaughtering knife
And plunges wretched towns in feud.
…
And Troy, Anchises, and the son
Of Venus [Julius Caesar] on our tongues shall dwell.

Latium
the region of central western Italy in which the city of Rome was founded

Horace, *Carmen Saeculare*,
in J. Conington (trans.), *The Odes of Horace in English*, 3rd edn, George Bell & Sons, London, 1882

Livy

Livy wrote *History of Rome*, or *Ab Urbe Condita*, a history of ancient Rome, between 27 and 9 BC. It covers the period from the legends concerning the arrival of Aeneas and the refugees from the fall of Troy to the reign of the emperor Augustus.

SOURCE 52

He was told that the people were Trojans and their leader Aeneas, son of Anchises and Venus; that their city had been burnt, and that, driven from home, they were looking for a dwelling-place and a site where they might build a city. Filled with wonder at the renown of the race and the hero, and at his spirit, prepared alike for war or peace, he gave him his right hand in solemn pledge of lasting friendship. The commanders then made a treaty, and the armies saluted each other. Aeneas became a guest in the house of Latinus; there the latter, in the presence of his household gods, added a domestic treaty to the public one, by giving his daughter in marriage to Aeneas. This event removed any doubt in the minds of the Trojans that they had brought their wanderings to an end at last in a permanent and settled habitation.

Livy (Titus Livius), *Ab Urbe Condita,* Book 1
(trans. B.O. Foster, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1919)

The role of Maecenas

Gaius Maecenas was one of Augustus' 'faction of friends' along with Marcus Agrippa. He is mentioned briefly by both Nicolaus of Damascus (a Greek historian and philosopher who wrote *Life of Augustus*) and Plutarch (a Greek biographer and author of *Parallel Lives*, in which he compares the lives of prominent Greeks and Romans). Maecenas' main contributions to the Augustan Age were as a literary patron and as an adviser of Augustus.

He made his first appearance in the ancient sources when he was recorded as arranging Octavian's marriage with Scribonia. He also helped to negotiate the peace of Brundisium and Octavian's reconciliation with Mark Antony. Later, Maecenas was left in charge of Rome on several occasions, particularly when Octavian left for Greece before the Battle of Actium. With Octavian and others of their circle, he was involved in the beautification of Rome. As a man of considerable wealth he was able to make a substantial contribution in this area.

The ancient sources speak of Maecenas' talents in diplomacy and administration. As a confidant of Augustus he no doubt played a role in the changes associated with the new regime. Velleius Paterculus describes Maecenas in Source 53.

SOURCE 53

Gaius Maecenas, of equestrian rank, but none the less of illustrious lineage, a man who was literally sleepless when occasion demanded, and quick to foresee what was to be done and skilful in doing it, but when any relaxation was allowed him from business cares would almost outdo a woman in giving himself up to indolence and soft luxury. He was not less loved by Caesar [Augustus] than Agrippa, though he had fewer honours heaped upon him, since he lived thoroughly content with the narrow stripe of the equestrian order. He might have achieved a position no less high than Agrippa, but had not the same ambition for it.

Velleius Paterculus, *Compendium of Roman History*, 2.88
(trans. F.W. Shipley, Loeb Classical Library, 1924)

SOURCE 54 A painting by Charles Francois Jalabert in 1846 depicts Virgil, Horace and Varius at the house of Maecenas.

Patron of the arts

Maecenas' involvement as a patron of the arts enabled him to make his most significant contribution. His main literary clients were:

- Virgil, who wrote the *Georgics* in honour of Maecenas
- Horace, who addressed his patron at the beginning of the first poem of his *Odes* (*Odes* 1.1); Maecenas gave him extensive financial support and an estate in the Sabine mountains.

12.13 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 50–52

1 What impression does Virgil give of Augustus' role in the Battle of Actium? Why is Agrippa given a secondary role?
2 How is Augustus' rule depicted by Horace?
3 Why does Horace allude to Troy, Anchises and Venus?
4 How does Horace's ode contribute to Augustus' propaganda?
5 Why does Livy begin his *History of Rome* with an account of the arrival of Aeneas and the Trojans in Italy?

Source 53

6 List the qualities of Maecenas mentioned by Velleius Paterculus.
7 Why did Augustus value these qualities?

12.13 Check your learning

1 The Augustan poets have been called 'purchased propagandists'. Do you agree with this comment? Give reasons for your answer.
2 Read more of the famous works of the writers of the Augustan Age online. You could start with Ovid's *Fasti*, Book 3. You could also look for Tibullus Albius (54–19 BC) and Propertius (50–15 BC).
3 Writing task: Assess the importance of literature and propaganda in the Augustan Age.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify ways in which literature and propaganda were important in the Augustan Age
   - use these to structure your response – be careful to avoid a purely narrative or descriptive structure
   - make judgements about the importance of literature and propaganda
   - use specific evidence to support your assessment
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

12.14 The imperial family and the succession

From the beginning of his reign, Augustus was concerned about the future of Rome after his death. Apparently adamant that only someone of the Julian bloodline should follow him, he initially promoted Julians and ignored the Claudians. Unfortunately, Augustus had no sons by either of his wives. His marriage to Livia provided him with two stepsons: Drusus and Tiberius. His only child was a daughter, Julia. So, from the outset, the succession presented problems. These were solved initially by marriage alliances and adoptions, only to be foiled by premature deaths. Julia was used as a dynastic tool by her father, married first to her cousin Marcellus, then to Agrippa and finally to Tiberius.

SOURCE 56 A marble head of Tiberius

Significant roles in determining the succession were played by two prominent imperial women: Octavia, Augustus' sister and mother of Marcellus, and Livia, wife of Augustus and mother of Tiberius and Drusus. Livia won when Augustus adopted Tiberius and gave him powers equal to his own.

Source 55 gives Tacitus' account of Augustus' attempts to ensure the succession.

SOURCE 55

To safeguard his domination Augustus made his sister's son Marcellus a priest and a curule aedile [a Roman magistrate responsible for maintenance of city infrastructure] – in spite of his extreme youth – and singled out Marcus Agrippa, a commoner but a first-rate soldier who had helped to win his victories, by the award of two consecutive consulships; after the death of Marcellus, Agrippa was chosen by Augustus as his son-in-law. Next the emperor had his stepsons Tiberius and Nero Drusus hailed publicly as victorious generals. When he did this, however, there was no lack of heirs of his own blood: there were Agrippa's sons Gaius Caesar and Lucius Caesar. Augustus had adopted them into the imperial family. He had also, despite pretended reluctance, been passionately eager that, even as minors, they should be entitled Princes of Youth and have the consulships reserved for them. After Agrippa had died, first Lucius Caesar and then Gaius Caesar met with premature natural deaths – unless their stepmother Livia had a secret hand in them. Lucius died on his way to the armies in Spain, Gaius while returning from Armenia, incapacitated by a wound. Nero Drusus was long dead. Tiberius was the only surviving stepson; and everything pointed in his direction. He was adopted as the emperor's son and as partner in his powers (with civil and military authority and the powers of a tribune) and displayed to all the armies.

Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, 1.2
(trans. M. Grant, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986, pp. 32–3)

12.14 Understanding and using the sources

1. List the main contenders to succeed Augustus in chronological order. How was each one connected to Augustus?
2. What role did marriage alliances play in the organisation of the succession?
3. What roles did adoption play?
4. How did Augustus prepare his prospective heirs? What powers, training and publicity did he give them?
5. How did Tiberius become the legitimate successor?

12.14 Check your learning

1. Discuss the following:
   a. What does Augustus' ability to choose his successor indicate about the extent of his power?
   b. What is the significance of Tiberius' emergence as Augustus' successor?
2. Find out more about the roles in the succession played by Octavia, Livia, Julia, Agrippa, Germanicus and Agrippa Postumus.

   Useful sources include:
   - R.A. Bauman, *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome*, Routledge, London, 1992, pp. 100–5
   - D. Shotter, *Augustus*, Routledge, London, 1991, pp. 71–7
   - W. Eck, *The Age of Augustus*, trans. D.L. Schneider, Blackwell Publishing, 2003, pp. 113–20.
3. Writing task: Assess Augustus' attempts to ensure the succession.

   To help plan your response:
   - identify the main attempts made by Augustus to ensure the succession
   - use these to structure your response
   - make judgements about the effectiveness or success of these attempts
   - use specific evidence to support your assessment
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

Role of imperial women

The women of Augustus' family were raised in the palace under the strict supervision of Augustus. Their education was traditional. These women had to set a positive example to society and were important in the formation of dynastic marriages. Part of the Augustan program of reform was to restore traditional Roman values such as the importance of marriage and family. Roman women, therefore, especially those of the imperial family, were expected to be modest, to marry young, to have large families and, as Roman matrons (married women), to exhibit the feminine form of *gravitas*.

Livia

Livia played an important symbolic role in the Augustan Age. Symbolism was very important in Rome; for example, the *fasces* were the symbols of power and the closing of the gates of the Temple of Janus symbolised newly won peace. Livia symbolised womanhood. As Augustus

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was *pater patriae*, so Livia was the imperial mother. There are, however, contradictory images of Livia: the promoter of family unity and the destroyer of the imperial family.

Born Livia Drusilla in 58 BC, she married Tiberius Claudius Nero in 42 BC. Her husband was a supporter of Julius Caesar's assassins and later of Mark Antony. Her son Tiberius was born in November 42 BC. In 40 BC, the family fled Italy because of their allegiance to Mark Antony, but an amnesty permitted their return two years later. When Augustus fell in love with Livia, he divorced his wife, Scribonia, who was pregnant with Julia, and they were married early in 38 BC after special dispensation was granted. Livia gave birth to her son Drusus, by her first husband, 6 months later. The marriage of Livia and Augustus lasted for the next 51 years, despite the fact that they had no children.

SOURCE 57 A statue of Livia Drusilla from Paestum, Italy

Livia, wife of Augustus

Livia was granted many privileges as wife of the *princeps*:

- In 35 BC she was given the sacrosanctity (immunity) of a tribune. This was the first time it had been given to a woman who was not a vestal virgin.
- She was also exempted from the *lex Voconia*, a law that limited the amount that women could inherit. Her significant personal wealth included financial interests in Italy, mines in Gaul and estates in Asia Minor and Egypt.
- In 35 BC she was given the unprecedented honour of managing her own finances.
- In 9 BC she was exempted from Augustus' guardianship because she had three children (she had miscarried her third child, fathered by Augustus).

After Augustus' death in AD 14, Livia was given the title 'Julia Augusta' and was formally adopted into the Julian family. She died in AD 29, aged 86. In AD 42 she was deified by the emperor, Claudius – women could then take oaths in the name of Livia.

Livia and religion

Livia ably assisted Augustus in his plans to revitalise Roman religion and society. Augustus was associated with the chief god Jupiter and Livia was associated with Juno, his wife. She was also associated with all the female deities and cults connected with women – chastity, marriage, childbirth and family life. Livia dedicated a shrine on 11 June, a day dedicated to the festival of

Matralia, which honoured the goddesses Fortuna Virgo and Mater Matuta. These deities were connected with the traditional childbearing and domestic roles of women. Livia also honoured Concordia as goddess of married love.

In a significant way, Livia gave religious justification for the Augustan ideals. She encouraged women to take up the old Roman values by honouring childbirth and marriage. Following the moral legislation, Augustus and Livia tried to show by their example that marriage was beneficial for the life of Rome, acting as role models for all Roman households. They lived modestly in their house on the Palatine Hill in Rome. As a noble Roman *matrona*, or matron, Livia wore unobtrusive jewellery and simple clothing. As well, she managed the household, is said to have made Augustus' clothes herself, and ignored his unfaithfulness to her.

Livia built temples and other monuments, such as the Porticus of Livia, which had an interior garden, art collection and trellised walkways.

Livia's political activity

Livia undertook an active role advising Augustus and interceding on behalf of others, such as Cinna Magnus (a conspirator). She received entreaties from people such as the exiled Ovid, and acted on behalf of foreign cities and embassies. In addition, she asserted significant influence over all members of the imperial family.

12.14 Profile

Julia

Julia was the only daughter of Augustus and Scribonia, and had been brought up strictly by her stepmother, Livia. In 25 BC, at the age of 14 she was married to her cousin Marcellus, who died in 23 BC. Two years later Augustus married Julia to Agrippa, who was in his forties at this time. She bore five children during this marriage, the last one born after Agrippa's death. Augustus was proud of his daughter, whom he considered to epitomise the essential Roman *matrona*. When Agrippa died, Augustus immediately married Julia to his stepson, Tiberius. Tiberius was forced to divorce his wife, Vipsania, for this to take place. It is clear that Julia's role in the imperial family was to contribute to the succession.

The marriage of Julia and Tiberius was apparently happy at first, but relations between them soured after

SOURCE 58 A marble bust of Julia, daughter of Augustus and wife of Marcellus, Agrippa and Tiberius

the death of their son in 10 BC and ended in Tiberius' retirement to Rhodes. According to the sources, in 2 BC Julia took advantage of her father's preoccupation with her sons, and her husband's removal to Pannonia to indulge in an orgy of scandalous behaviour. The writer Seneca provides the details in Source 59.

SOURCE 59

The emperor banished his daughter and made public the scandals of his House. She had received lovers in droves. She had roamed the city in nocturnal revels, choosing for her pleasures the Forum, the very Rostrum [speakers' platform] from which her father had proposed his adultery law. Turning from adultery to prostitution, she had stationed herself at the statue of Marsyas, seeking gratification of every kind in the arms of casual lovers. Enraged beyond measure, Augustus revealed what he should have punished in private. Later he regretted not having drawn a veil of silence over matters of which he had been unaware until too late.

Seneca, *On Benefactions*, 6, 1–2, cited in R. Bauman, *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome*, Routledge, London, 1992

The scandal that followed resulted in Julia's arrest and trial for adultery and treason, under her father's own laws. The result was her immediate divorce from Tiberius and her banishment to the island of Pandateria in 2 BC. She was accompanied into banishment by her elderly mother, Scribonia. Augustus later moved her from the island to Rhegium where she died of malnutrition in AD 14.

A historiographical issue

What really happened in the Julia affair? Some questions arise immediately:

- Could Augustus have really been ignorant of his daughter's adulteries before they were made public? Why might he have hesitated to accuse her?
- What role did his laws against adultery play in his treatment of Julia?
- Of what significance were the identities of her lovers? Sempronius Gracchus and Iullus Antonius (Mark Antony's son) were two among many who were important men in Rome.
- Was Julia planning a conspiracy against her father?
- What events in her early life might explain her subsequent rebellious behaviour?
- What evaluation can be made of the accounts of Julia's behaviour during Augustus' reign by writers such as Seneca?

Source 60 offers a modern interpretation of the issue.

SOURCE 60

But we do not need to invent a separate political conspiracy cloaked as a sexual scandal to understand why Augustus called this treason and punished it more severely than was called for in his own law. Augustus was heavily invested in defining himself as the protector of Roman morality and the Roman family … his family had become

practically and symbolically the most important part of Roman society. Disloyalty to that family, particularly in a manner so changed in Augustan social and political discourse, was disloyalty to the state, or treason.

B. Severy, *Augustus and the Family at the Birth of the Roman Empire*, Routledge, New York & London, 2003, p. 82

12.14 Profile tasks

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** List the accusations Seneca makes against Julia. How credible are they?
   - **b** How does Seneca describe Augustus' reaction?
   - **c** What does Severy see as Julia's main crime?
   - **d** Do you agree that it is unnecessary to interpret her actions as part of a conspiracy? Give reasons for your answer.
   - **e** What explanations can be offered for Julia's behaviour?
   - **f** What is the most likely explanation for Julia's exile?
   - **g** Explain the significance of the Julia affair in the reign of Augustus.

2 Who is Seneca? How does his context explain his perspective on Julia?

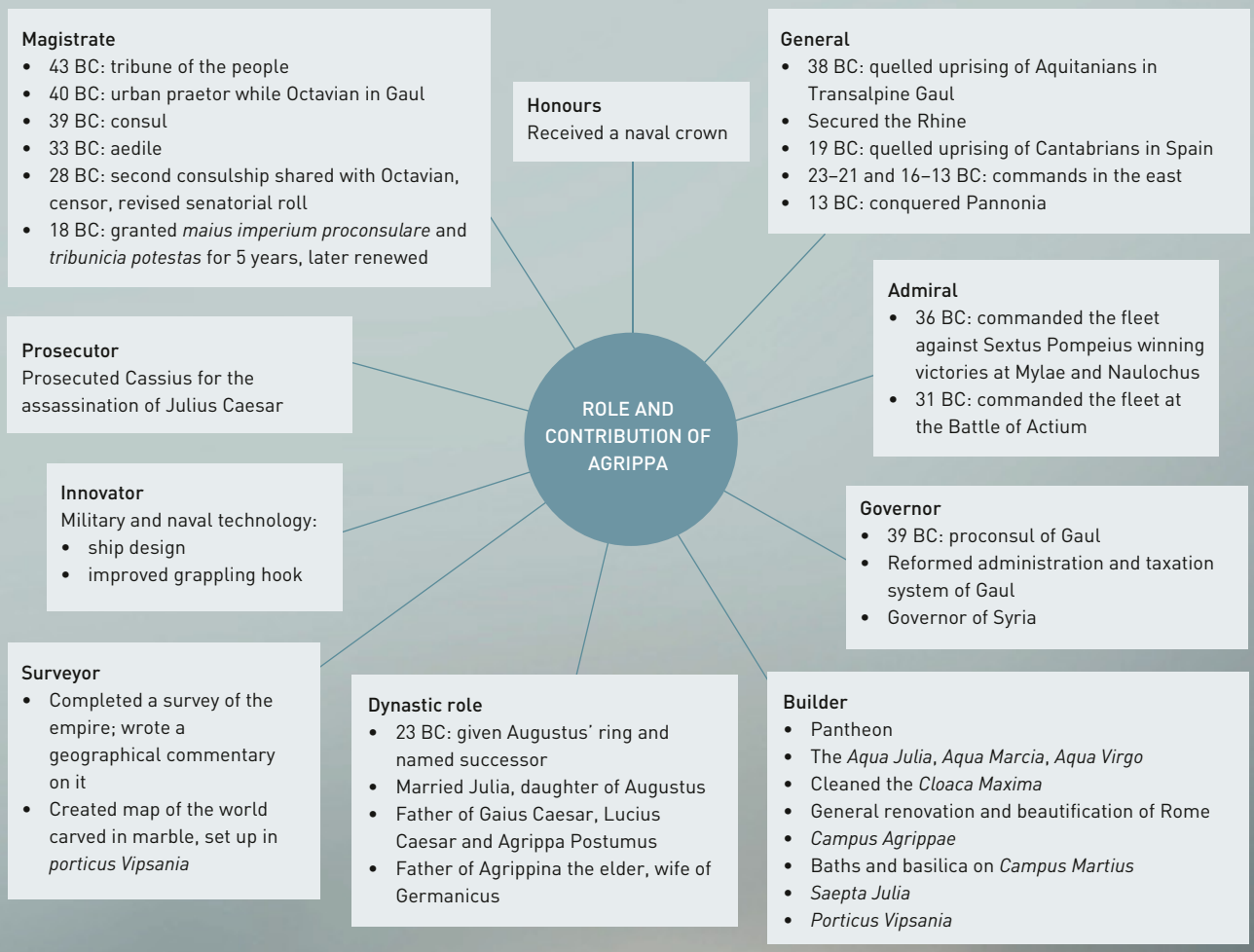
3 Read what Tacitus and Suetonius have to say about Julia. What are their assessments of her and how reliable are they?
   - Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, 1.53
   - Suetonius, Augustus, *The Twelve Caesars*, 64

4 Writing task: Having read the section titled 'Social' in 12.10 Augustan reforms, and now the profile of Julia, Augustus' daughter, assess the success of Augustus' social reforms. To help plan your response:
   - identify the key social reforms of the Augustan principate
   - use them to structure your response – avoid a purely narrative structure
   - make judgements about the success of the reforms
   - use specific evidence to support your assessment
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

12.15 Role and contribution of Agrippa

Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa played a significant role in the principate of his friend and father-in-law, Augustus.

Source 61 sums up the main features of his role and contribution.



SOURCE 61 The role and contribution of Agrippa

SOURCE 62 A marble bust of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, from the Altes Museum, Berlin

SOURCE 63 A reconstructed Roman world map, *Orbis Terrarum*, as commissioned by Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa

12.15 Check your learning

1. Using the headings in Source 61, find out more details about Agrippa's role and contribution. Don't forget to look at what the ancient sources say about him. For example:
   - Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Chapters 53 and 54
   - Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, 1.1.
2. Writing task: Assess the role and contribution of Agrippa in the principate of Augustus.

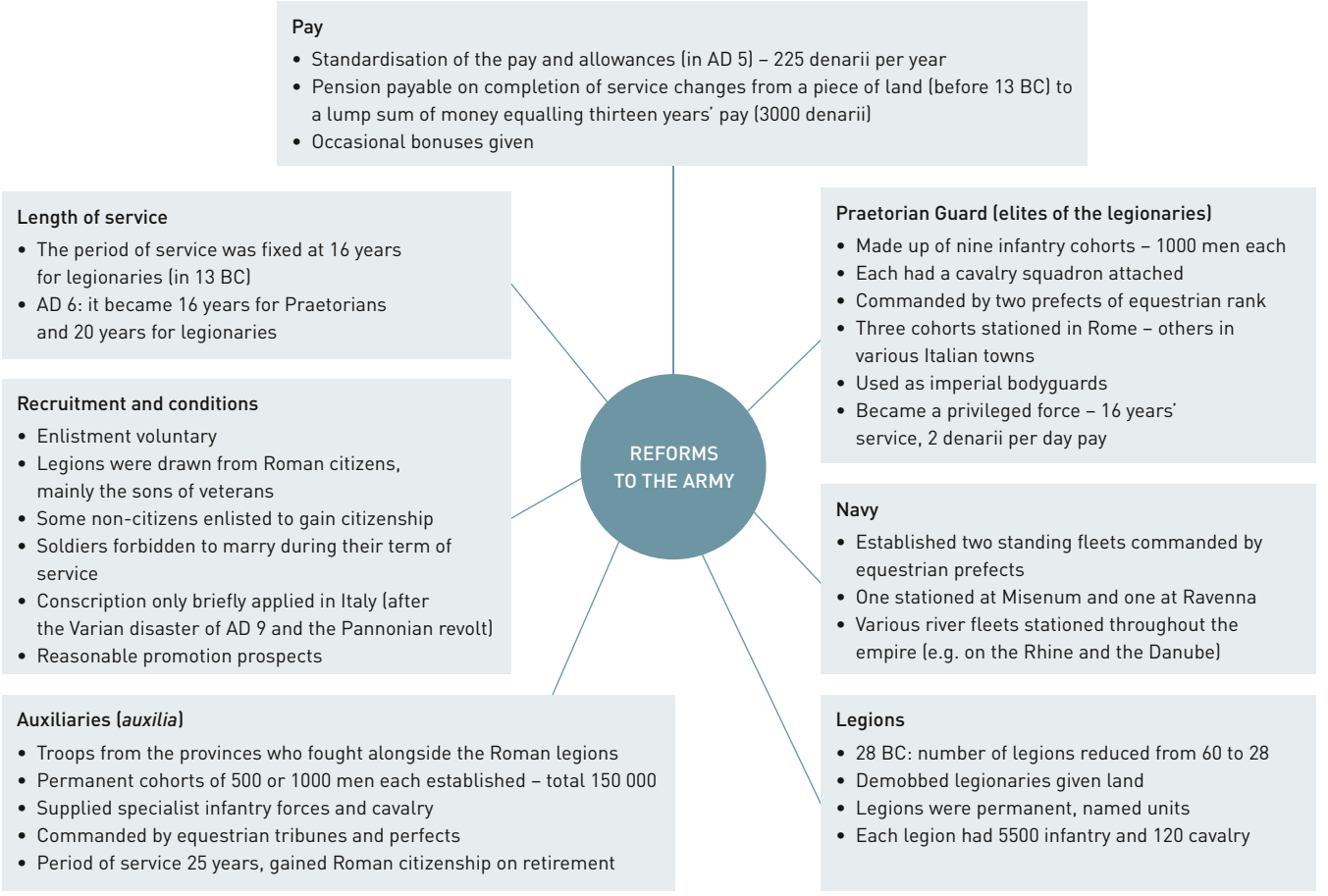
   To help plan your response:
   - identify the key areas of the role and contribution of Agrippa
   - use these to structure your response – be careful to avoid a purely narrative or descriptive structure
   - make judgements about the importance or significance of Agrippa's role and contribution
   - use specific evidence to support your assessment
   - refer to relevant historiographical issues.

12.16 Augustus and the empire

Augustus' military conquests and victories are a main topic of his *Res Gestae*. He catalogues the territories he added to the empire, none of which could have taken place without the reformed army of which he was commander-in-chief.

Augustus and the army

The army had been instrumental in helping the Romans acquire and maintain their vast empire. Augustus understood the importance of keeping direct control over the army and of making it an instrument of the state rather than a weapon to be used by individual generals. Under his reforms, the Roman army became a permanently organised professional standing army, replacing the militia arrangements of the Republic. Soldiers during the Republic had depended on their generals for pay and rewards. Generals such as Pompey and Caesar often used their armies for their own political ends. Augustus was keen to separate the military and political roles that the army could play. Soldiers now received their pay and rewards from Augustus himself, and later from the military treasury. This reduced their dependence on the commanding generals and hence weakened the patron–client relationship that existed between generals and soldiers. The army was reliant on Augustus and now became his client. It was stationed permanently in the provinces in areas of greatest need. Source 64 sums up Augustus' reforms to the army.



SOURCE 64 Military reforms

SOURCE 65
A re-enactment of a military manoeuvre by modern 'Roman legionaries'

12.16a Check your learning

1 Discuss the following.
   - **a** How was the Roman army under Augustus different from what it had been in the Republic?
   - **b** Comment on the pay and conditions in the Roman army.
   - **c** What advantages were there for Augustus in using auxiliaries from the provinces?
   - **d** Why was it in Augustus' interests to create an elite Praetorian Guard?

2 Writing task: Assess the role of the army in the Augustan principate.

To help plan your response:
- identify the key areas of the role of the army in the Augustan principate
- use these to structure your response – be careful to avoid a purely narrative or descriptive structure
- make judgements about the importance or significance of the army's role
- use specific evidence to support your assessment
- refer to relevant historiographical issues.

Provincial government

Provinces were those areas conquered and settled by the Romans. They fell into two groups – senatorial and imperial, as shown in Source 66.

SOURCE 66 Features of senatorial and imperial provinces

SENATORIAL PROVINCES	IMPERIAL PROVINCES
• These were mainly peaceful • Governed by proconsuls, selected by lot from senatorial ranks • Term: served 1-year terms • Relationship to Augustus: independent and retained military command • Numbers: varied but there was a standard number of 10 senatorial provinces towards the end of Augustus' reign	• These were mostly frontier provinces with legions stationed in them • Governed by legates with rank of praetor (*legati Augusti pro praetore*) • Term: decided by Augustus, often up to 3 years • Relationship to Augustus: they governed for Augustus, who chose his legates personally • Numbers: 13 by the end of Augustus' reign

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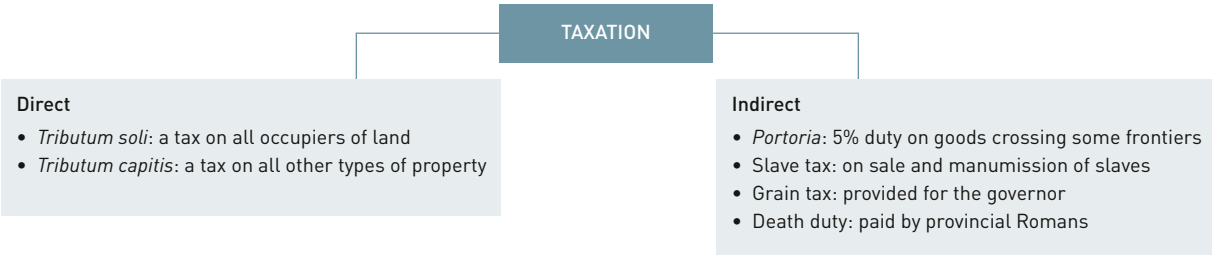
Administration of the provinces

Augustus made some significant changes to the administration of the provinces to make it a much more efficient system.

Taxation

To enable taxation to be shared more equitably, Augustus conducted a number of censuses to determine the extent of the resources of the empire. These took place over a long period of time; for example, three are recorded for Gaul in 27 BC, 12 BC and AD 14. Taxation was then based on the census returns. Taxes levied were both direct and indirect.



SOURCE 67 Direct and indirect taxation

Taxes had to be collected, a process that had been the source of much corruption during the Republic. Augustus revised the system to restrict opportunities for exploitation. An imperial procurator, an equestrian, would collect direct taxes in imperial provinces. Indirect taxes were still collected by *publicani*, or private contractors, who were now strictly supervised. In senatorial provinces, *publicani* continued to collect taxes under the supervision of the quaestor, who was responsible for finances.

Choice of governors

In the new system, governors were provided with a salary and a travel allowance. This reduced the need to exploit the province to make enough money to pay off the debts that governors had incurred on their way up the *cursus honorum*. A governor's chances of promotion now depended on competence and efficiency. Obviously, corruption did not disappear overnight; however, imperial officials could be recalled immediately and punished by Augustus himself. The Senate was responsible for dealing with corrupt officials in senatorial provinces.

Monitoring performance

Improvements to communications, road systems and postal services during the Augustan principate meant that a closer watch could be kept on the administration of the provinces. Provincial councils (*consilia*), bodies set up to conduct the imperial cult of Roma and Augustus, were able to keep an unofficial eye on the provincial governors. Their annual meetings provided a forum for the discussion of provincial matters of all kinds. They were empowered to communicate problems involving maladministration. Augustus' procurators, who were in charge of the financial affairs of the provinces, were also able to monitor the activities of the provincial governors. As they were independent, they travelled from province to province, sometimes even into senatorial provinces, and could report directly to Augustus.

Augustus himself made extensive tours of the provinces to inspect their operation. Cassius Dio tells us that he was in Gaul and Spain between 27 BC and 24 BC, the eastern provinces between 22 BC and 19 BC, and in Gaul again between 15 BC and 13 BC.

Provincial communities

Existing structures of local self-government and administration continued to be used during the Augustan principate. Many provinces already had magistrates and senates that continued to operate. Regions lacking these soon copied what existed elsewhere. Urbanisation on the Roman model was encouraged and was a major vehicle for Romanisation of the provinces. Colonies of veterans, demobbed legionaries, added to the process. As well as providing a trained military presence that would be available when needed, they brought Roman culture to the areas where they were settled. Source 68 is a comment on the relationship between Augustus and the provinces.

SOURCE 68

In Augustus those subjects had a political patron whose duty it was to take care of the whole empire, and who would not ignore disturbances in subject territories for the sake of tax contractor's profits. The same holds for senatorial proconsular governors and their opportunities for exploitation. While Augustus could not treat them as his direct subordinates, he could exert influence, and if a conflict arose, the interests of the whole provincial town would probably take priority over his sense of loyalty toward one senator. Augustus' political patronage in this sense offered the provinces protection from excessive demands, and is the real cause behind the decisive transformation of the administrative system.

W. Eck, *The Age of Augustus* (trans. D. Schneider, Blackwell Publishing, 2003, p. 84)

12.16 Understanding and using the sources

1 How did the patron–client relationship between Augustus and the provinces work?
2 What does Eck see as the reason for the transformation of the provincial administrative system? Why?

12.16b Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** How did senatorial and imperial provinces differ?
   - **b** In what ways was the new taxation system fairer and more efficient than before Augustus' reforms?
   - **c** What advantages were there in the new system of appointing governors?
   - **d** What means were at Augustus' disposal to check on the running of the empire?
   - **e** What were the strengths and weaknesses of the provincial administration under Augustus?
2 Egypt was an atypical province. Find out how it was administered and what special provisions operated there. Why were they necessary? Search online for 'Roman Egypt Metropolitan Museum of Art'.

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12.17 Augustan frontier policy

The Augustan poets praised Augustus for extending the Roman Empire and bringing great glory and wealth to Rome. Augustus promoted several images of himself, including that of a world conqueror and bringer of peace. This claim of peace actually applied only to the area within the borders of the empire; beyond the borders were barbarian areas that experienced warfare throughout the reign of Augustus. In the 40-year period of Augustan rule, Rome gained more territory than at any other time.

Source 69 is Augustus' claim from the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* and Source 70 is the view of Velleius Paterculus.

SOURCE 69

I extended the boundaries of all the provinces which were bordered by races not yet subject to our empire. The provinces of the Gauls, the Spains, and Germany, bounded by the ocean from Gades to the mouth of the Elbe, I reduced to a state of peace.

Augustus, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, 26, 106–7
(trans. F.W. Shipley, Loeb Classical Library, 1924)

SOURCE 70

These, then, were the provinces, so extensive, so populous, and so warlike, which Caesar Augustus, about fifty years ago, brought to such a condition of peace, that whereas they had never before been free from serious wars, they were now …

Velleius Paterculus, *Roman History*, 90.4
(trans. F.W. Shipley, Loeb Classical Library, 1924)

It remains to see whether the evidence supports these views. The aim of Augustus' frontier policy appears to have been twofold:

- to win new territory for the empire
- to consolidate the territory already gained.

Rome and the East

At the time of his assassination, Julius Caesar had been planning a campaign against Parthia. For his own reasons, Augustus chose not to continue this plan. Instead, the tactics used on this frontier included:

client king
a ruler of a client state or kingdom that is politically or militarily subordinate to a more powerful state

- *reliance on* ***client kings*** – these rulers, who owed allegiance to Rome, used their own troops to protect the borders. They acted as buffers to protect the eastern territories from the Parthians. Client kingdoms were established in Cappadocia, Commogene and Chalcis
- *diplomacy* – negotiations occurred at different times, backed up by a Roman army in Syria. Syria was strengthened as an imperial province by the addition of part of Cilicia. A pro-Roman king, Tigranes, was installed on the Armenian throne. Gaius Caesar, Augustus' grandson and adopted son, negotiated a new agreement when both Tigranes and the Parthian king died

SOURCE 71 A 1st-century AD statue of *Mars Ultor* (Mars the Avenger), the cult created by Augustus to mark the defeat of the assassins at Philippi and the return of the standards lost to the Parthians

SOURCE 72 A silver denarius of Augustus issued to celebrate the return of the standards lost to the Parthians

- *support for his stepson, Tiberius* – his negotiations for the return of the battle standards lost by the general Crassus at Carrhae in 53 BC were successful. These became the centre of a public relations exercise in Rome. A triumphal arch was erected in the Forum Romanum and the Temple of *Mars Ultor* was built to house the standards. It became a centre for military rituals.

In North Africa the main aims of Augustus' frontier policy were to establish Egypt's southern borders and secure the coastline regions. To accomplish these aims:

- the prefects of Egypt were ordered to campaign in southern Egypt and on the Arabian peninsula. Despite Augustus' claim that his troops went further south than any previous Roman army, little was actually achieved
- in Judaea, Augustus deposed King Herod's successor in response to an appeal by the citizens. In AD 6 it was made part of the province of Syria, governed by an equestrian prefect
- the provinces of Cyrene and Africa were established, both of which were major suppliers of grain to Rome
- Mauretania, under the rule of Juba, became a client kingdom in 25 BC.

Rome and the West

The main theatres of war in the time of Augustus were in the West, along the Danube and the Rhine. His first objective was to secure control of Spain. He put together a large force of seven legions to effect this. Fighting continued until 19 BC during which newly won territory was included in the provinces of Lusitania and Hispania Tarraconensis. The newly acquired mineral deposits and mines in north-western Spain were now available for investment in further campaigns. Consolidation was based on:

- urbanisation
- resettlement of the native populations
- establishment of veteran colonies in strategic areas.

In Gaul, Augustus and Agrippa appear to have planned an offensive campaign. Early defeats strengthened their resolve to fight a large-scale war of conquest. As a result, the kingdom of Noricum was absorbed into the province of Pannonia and an adjoining part of the Alps became the province of Raetia. Significantly, Italy no longer bordered unconquered tribes; the main territory of the Romans was protected.

Two important offensives were undertaken in 12 BC, no doubt as pre-emptive (preventive) moves against potential unrest:

- by Tiberius, against the Pannonian tribes in Illyricum – this required a 4-year war but resulted in conquest of the region
- by Drusus, Tiberius' brother, in Germania, east of the Rhine – he gained new territory and subdued many of the German tribes. Unfortunately this resulted in his death, when he fell from his horse.

Archaeological evidence of a Roman presence in this region, in the form of military camps and bases, suggests that the Romans planned on staying.

SOURCE 73 The remains of the *tropaeum Alpium*, at La Turbie, France, a monument erected by the Senate to glorify Augustus' achievement in incorporating the peoples of the Alps into the Roman Empire

Two setbacks

Two major challenges to Roman authority occurred in the early years of the new century:

- An uprising in Pannonia by a combined force of tribes was dealt with by Tiberius, who was placed in command of 10 legions and 80 auxiliary units, provincial troops recruited to supplement the Roman army. Despite suffering significant losses he was able to put down the revolt by AD 9. The quashing of this revolt put severe strain on both the financial and military resources of the empire.
- Three legions and nine auxiliary units were wiped out in AD 9 by Germanic tribes east of the Rhine; they were led by Arminius, a tribal prince and apparent Roman ally. Varus, the governor of Germania committed suicide as a result. The battle, known as the Battle of the Teutoberg Forest or the Varian disaster, led to near panic in Rome and, according to Suetonius, caused Augustus to lament the loss of his legions for some time to come. The legion numbers XVII and XIX, lost in the disaster, were never used again. It has been suggested that the disaster caused Augustus to discontinue his expansionist policy in Germania; however, his replacement of the lost legions and increase in troops along the Rhine indicate that this was not the case. Tiberius retaliated against the rebellious tribes and Germanicus, Drusus' son, was victorious over them in AD 13.

Assessing Augustan frontier policy

Some scholars conclude that Augustus' response to the Varian disaster was to abandon his expansionist policy. However, as seen above, evidence argues against it. It was left to Tiberius as emperor to alter the policy of expansion.

Despite the resources and manpower invested on the frontier, Augustus was unable to achieve complete success. Frontier disputes in Egypt, Germania and Parthia were never fully resolved. Source 74 gives an assessment of Augustus' frontier policy.

SOURCE 74

The imperial policy of Augustus varied from region to region, adjusted for circumstances and contingencies. Aggression alternated with restraint, conquest with diplomacy, advance with retreat. Acquisitions and annexations occurred in some areas, consolidation and negotiation in others … The regime persistently projected the impression of vigour, expansionism, triumph and dominance.

E. Gruen, 'Imperial Policy of Augustus', in K. Raaflaub & M. Toher (eds), *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and His Principate*, University of California Press, 1993, p. 416

12.17 Understanding and using the sources

Sources 69 & 70

1 What claims do these sources make about Augustus' frontier policy?

2 Are the claims supported by the evidence?

Source 74

3 Find examples to support or reject this assessment of Augustus' frontier policy.

4 To what extent to you agree or disagree?

12.17 Check your learning

1 Draw up a table like the one below. Use it to summarise the main features of Augustan frontier policy.

REGION	AIM	DETAILS	SIGNIFICANCE

2 Writing task: Discuss the effectiveness of Augustus' frontier policy.

To help plan your response:

- identify the key areas of Augustus' frontier policy
- use these to structure your response – be careful to avoid a purely narrative or descriptive structure
- give points for and against the effectiveness of Augustus' provincial policy
- use specific evidence to support your assessment
- refer to relevant historiographical issues.

12.18 Death of Augustus

Augustus progressively withdrew from public life as he advanced in age. By AD 13, Tiberius was installed as his successor, possessing both proconsular *imperium* and tribunician power. In AD 14, Augustus accompanied Tiberius on his trip to visit the legions in Illyricum as far as Nola in Campania. This was the town where his father had died. Augustus died peacefully there on 19 August. Both Livia and Tiberius were at his side, the latter having been summoned by his mother.

Augustus' funeral, according to the ancient sources, was magnificent. He was cremated on a pyre that had been built on the *Campus Martius*. Following the funeral he was interred in the mausoleum he had built over 30 years earlier. The Senate announced that he was now *Divus Augustus*, a member of the Roman **pantheon**. Augustus' will left 1000 sesterces to each member of the Praetorian Guard and 500 to each member of the **urban cohorts**, as well as 300 to each **legionary**.

pantheon
all the gods of a particular country or culture

urban cohorts
a body of troops garrisoned at Rome to provide security for the emperor and city in general and act as a police force

legionary
a professional heavy infantryman of a legion of the Roman army

SOURCE 75 A relief depicting the apotheosis, or elevation to divine status, of Augustus

The patronage of Augustus

Augustus as *princeps* and *pater patriae* was symbolically the patron of all Roman citizens. The unique nature of Augustus' patronage was that, as Augustus and the state were one, to be in Augustus' patronage was to be patronised by the government. Augustus' patronage extended into all areas of the principate. Many of these have been mentioned already in this chapter.

12.18 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** Why was Tiberius' presence at Augustus' death significant? Why did Livia summon him to attend?
   - **b** Why did the Senate give Augustus divine status?

2 Watch a dramatisation of the death of Augustus online in Granada Television's *The Caesars* (1968). How accurate is the depiction?

Chapter conclusion

The Augustan Age established the principate, the new political system devised to meet the challenge of a new set of circumstances. At the same time there was a desire to preserve the best features of the Republican system, although the motives for this need to be examined. In studying the Augustan Age, we have to assess the degree to which there was both continuity and change, in both the political and the social spheres. Augustus emerged victorious from the conflict that followed the assassination of Julius Caesar, but with new imperatives. How could he restore political stability to Rome without compromising his own position of power? How could he extend the sovereignty of the Roman people and also consolidate the empire? How could he reorganise the provinces of the empire to make them operate more efficiently? Most importantly, how could he achieve lasting peace for Rome and the empire? By the end of his lifetime, Augustus had irrevocably changed the Roman political system and created a dynasty. He revived traditional Roman religion and values, brought peace to the empire after years of civil war. He changed the way that Romans regarded their rulers.

obook assess

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare students for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

13

The Julio-Claudians AD 14–69

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1 What is the chronological, geographical and political context of Rome?
2 How did the principate develop and what were its main features?
3 How did the role of the *princeps* change under the Julio-Claudian rulers?
4 How were the reforms and policies of the Julio-Claudian rulers significant?
5 What roles were played by significant individuals and groups?
6 How was the empire consolidated, maintained and administered in the Julio-Claudian period?

FOCUS CONCEPTS & SKILLS

Continuity and change

The Roman emperors of the Julio-Claudian period were heirs to the wide range of changes introduced by Augustus. They were faced with the task of continuing the transition from the Republic to the new autocratic system of government, which they achieved with varying degrees of success. Most of the significant changes occurred at the centre of government in Rome, while at the same time many of the structures and systems in the empire at large were maintained and even improved.

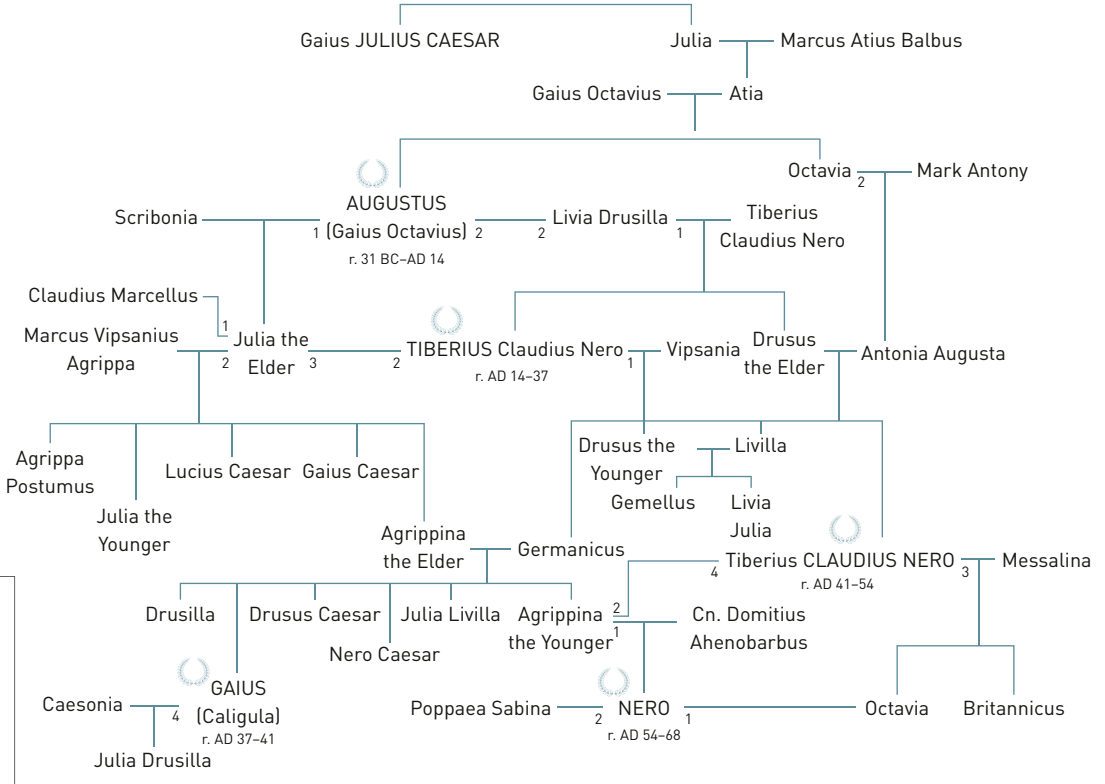
LEARNING OUTCOMES

1 Understand the chronological, geographical and political context of Rome.
2 Explain the development of the principate and its main features.
3 Analyse the changing role of the *princeps* under the Julio-Claudian rulers.
4 Assess the significance of the reforms and policies of the Julio-Claudian rulers.
5 Evaluate the roles played by significant individuals and groups.
6 Discuss the consolidation, maintenance and administration of the empire in the Julio-Claudian period.

SOURCE 1 A marble statue of Roman emperor Claudius from Herculaneum

13.1 The historical context of Rome

The emperors Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius and Nero, the successors of Augustus, are known as the Julio-Claudian dynasty. This is because they combined two prominent Roman families: the Julii and the Claudii. The Julian members of the dynasty were descendants of Augustus, who became a Julian when he was adopted by his great uncle, Julius Caesar. The Claudians were descendants of Tiberius Claudius Nero and his wife Livia, who later married Augustus. A combination of blood ties, marriage and adoption made the dynasty a complicated one. However, the Roman law of inheritance recognised the claims of a range of family members, so throughout the period there were many men who might have a claim to lead the family of Augustus because of their blood or marriage links to him, and thereby to rule Rome in the absence of a direct heir.



SOURCE 2 Genealogical table of the Julio-Claudian family

Geographical context

Italy was located strategically in a position that divided the Mediterranean into western and eastern halves. Rome, once in control of Italy, was able to unite the Mediterranean under its rule. Source 3 summarises Rome's relationships and contact with key powers in the region at the beginning of the Julio-Claudian period.

WEST

Rhine – Danube

- Rhine frontier – provinces of Raetia, Noricum and Alpes Maritimae established
- Danube frontier – provinces of Pannonia and Moesia established

Gaul

- Provinces of Aquitania, Lugdunensis and Belgica established
- Lyons – administrative and commercial centre

Spain (Hispania)

Conquest completed by Augustus

EAST

Asia Minor

- Roman standards lost to Parthia at Battle of Carrhae in 53 BC regained by Tiberius
- Pro-Roman king in Armenia – a buffer zone between Rome and Parthia
- New province of Galatia in central Asia Minor
- Client kingdoms established in Cappadocia, Commagene and Chalcis

Syria

An imperial province incorporating part of Cilicia

Egypt – North Africa

- Egypt made an imperial province – had special status as main source of Rome's grain supply
- Provinces of Cyrene and Africa established
- Mauretania made a client kingdom

SOURCE 3 Rome's relationships with key powers in the region

THE ROMAN WORLD IN THE JULIO-CLAUDIAN PERIOD

Source: Oxford University Press

SOURCE 4

The written sources

Source 5 summarises the main sources for this period and their authors.

SOURCE 5 Written sources for the Julio-Claudians

WRITER/TEXT	BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS	NATURE OF SOURCE AND PERSPECTIVE ON THE PERIOD
Tacitus *The Annals of Imperial Rome*	Senator in the reign of Domitian and historian (AD c. 56 – c. 117)	• A year-by-year account of the reigns of the Julio-Claudians • Describes events in Rome and the province • An important source for this period, though often biased • The tyrannical reign of Domitian is thought to have influenced his opinion of the principate system and of Tiberius in particular, whom he considered a tyrant
Suetonius *The Twelve Caesars*	Roman biographer (AD c. 71 – c. 135) Served under two emperors	• An account of the lives of Roman rulers from Caesar to Domitian • Relates personal anecdotes and describes the sexual habits of the Romans
Cassius Dio *Roman History*	Roman historian from Bithynia, of Greek heritage (AD c. 150 – c. 235) Senator, consul and proconsul (governor) who served three emperors	• Much is lost, though the text covering the years 68 BC to AD 47 has survived • The only comprehensive and continuous narrative of the Augustan principate
Velleius Paterculus *Compendium of Roman History*	Roman historian (c. 19 BC – AD c. 31) • Contemporary of Augustus • Friend and client of Tiberius	• Admirer of the new Augustan regime • Served under Tiberius in Germany and Pannonia • Work covers a period from the fall of Troy to the death of Livia • Praises both Tiberius and Sejanus • Lacks historical insight but generally reliable in reporting facts
Titus Flavius Josephus *Jewish Antiquities*	Romano-Jewish scholar, historian (AD 37 – c. AD 100) • Fought in First Jewish-Roman War • Captured, became slave and interpreter of Vespasian; later freed	• Visited Rome during reign of Nero • Work gives a detailed narrative of the assassination of Gaius and its aftermath; seen as an example of the providence of God

13.1 Understanding and using the sources

Source 2

Make a copy of the family tree and use two different colours – one for Julians and one for Claudians – to complete the following tasks.

1. Highlight the people on the family tree who are directly descended from (a) Augustus (i.e. Julians) and (b) Tiberius Claudius Nero, husband of Livia Drusilla (i.e. Claudians).
2. Whose marriage first joins the two families? Use both colours to identify the Julio-Claudians who follow.
3. Identify the five emperors. In what ways have they combined the two families?
4. What do the large number of marriages in the family tree indicate about the importance of marriage links to accessing power?

13.1 Check your learning

1. Read as much of the ancient written sources as possible. Search for online versions by author and title.

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13.2 Development of the principate

The period of Roman history from the accession of Augustus in 27 BC until late in the 3rd century AD is referred to as the principate. This includes the reigns of the Julio-Claudian emperors who, as the heirs of Augustus, continued the development of the Roman Empire from the Republic to an autocracy. They had the model that Augustus had established to follow, but also the problems that remained unresolved at his death.

Impact of the death of Augustus

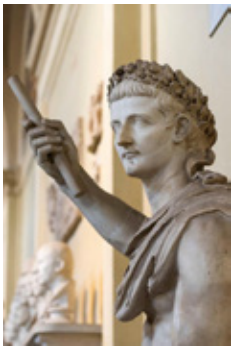
Augustus died on 19 August AD 14, a little short of his 76th birthday. His will, when read out to the Senate, made it clear that his successor was to be Tiberius, his adopted son, the son of his wife Livia. The will explained that the deaths of his grandsons Gaius and Lucius, the children of Augustus' daughter Julia and her husband Agrippa, had necessitated Tiberius' adoption. Tiberius had been summoned by his mother to Augustus' deathbed in Nola, which enabled him to take possession of the family on Augustus' death. This possession also ensured his succession as emperor. His acceptance as *princeps* was marked by the oaths of loyalty taken by the senators, magistrates and people of Rome. He wrote to inform all the Roman armies that he was the new *princeps*.

The matter of Agrippa Postumus

Augustus had adopted his grandson Agrippa Postumus, son of his daughter Julia and his friend Marcus Agrippa, at the same time as he had adopted Tiberius. Agrippa Postumus was then banished to an island in AD 8 or 9. The cause of his offence is unclear, but he remained there until his grandfather's death. Shortly after, either on the orders of Tiberius or Augustus himself before he died, Agrippa Postumus was executed by his guards. Whatever the reason for this, the execution was, according to Tacitus, the first charge against the new regime.

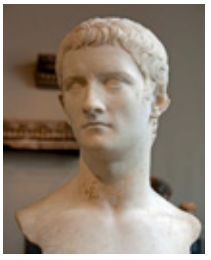
Who were Augustus' successors?

Tiberius



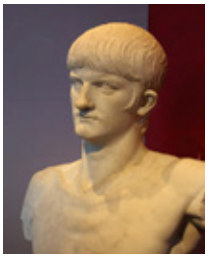
SOURCE 6 Tiberius

Born Tiberius Claudius Nero on 16 November 42 BC, he was the son of Tiberius Claudius Nero and his wife Livia Drusilla, who went on to become the wife of Augustus. Tiberius made his name as a general during the principate of Augustus with military successes in the Alps, Transalpine Gaul, Pannonia and Germania. He also had some diplomatic success when he secured from the Parthians the return of the standards (banners or other symbols identifying Roman military units) lost by Crassus at the Battle of Carrhae in 53 BC. In 6 BC, despite occupying a position of power in Rome second only to Augustus, Tiberius retired from public life to the island of Rhodes, where he remained until AD 4, when he was adopted by Augustus and given a share in his powers. In AD 13 his powers were made equal to those of Augustus and he became in effect the 'co-*princeps*'. He succeeded Augustus the following year, his reign lasting for the next 22 years.



SOURCE 7
A bust of Gaius

SOURCE 8 Claudius shown as Jupiter, wearing the civic crown of oak leaves



SOURCE 9
A marble bust of Nero

Gaius

Born Gaius Julius Caesar Germanicus on 31 August AD 12, he was known as Caligula or 'Little Boots', the nickname given to him as a child. His parents, Agrippina the Elder and Germanicus, used to dress him as a soldier when the family was accompanying Germanicus on campaign in Germania. Gaius was the only male to survive the feud between his mother and Tiberius, following his father's sudden death in the East in AD 19. He was taken under the protection of his uncle, Tiberius, his adoptive grandfather. When Tiberius died in AD 37, Gaius succeeded to the principate. He was assassinated by officers of the **Praetorian Guard** in AD 41.

Claudius

Born Tiberius Claudius Drusus on 1 August 10 BC, he was the son of Drusus and Antonia Minor. His physical infirmities (a limp and a speech impediment) kept him from public office until AD 37 when he shared the **consulship** with Gaius, his nephew. Clearly, he was not regarded as a threat at **court**, which no doubt ensured his survival. Following Gaius' assassination, he was declared emperor by the Praetorian Guard. Claudius' principate is notable for his building, his successful invasion of Britain and his use of freedmen (former slaves) for the administration of the empire. He married Agrippina the Younger, his niece, and adopted her son Nero. Claudius died on 13 October 54 AD, possibly the victim of poison.

Nero

Born Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus on 15 December AD 37, to Agrippina the Younger and Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus, he was later adopted by Claudius, his great-uncle. The Praetorian Guard was involved in his succession and his mother played a dominant role in his early principate. He was strongly guided by Seneca, his tutor, and Burrus, prefect of the Praetorian Guard. Successful wars were fought at this time and a rebellion in Britain was successfully put down. The latter part of his reign was notable for excesses and accusations of tyranny. He is even accused of murdering Agrippina. Nero committed suicide on 9 June AD 68 after being condemned to death as a public enemy by the Senate.

Praetorian Guard
an elite unit of the imperial Roman army who served as bodyguards to the emperor and his family

consulship
the position of a consul, one of the two chief magistrates of the ancient Roman Republic

court
a ruler's council of ministers, officers and state advisers, sometimes including the family and retinue (followers)

13.2 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** Why was Tiberius able to succeed Augustus without dispute?
   - **b** Who was Agrippa Postumus? What problem did he pose for Tiberius? How does this help to explain his execution?

2 Draw up a table like the one shown. Use it during your study of this chapter to record important features of each principate. When you have finished the chapter, rearrange the information into the syllabus topics listed under 'Development of the principate' and 'The empire'.

TIBERIUS	GAIUS	CLAUDIUS	NERO

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13.3 Changing role of the *princeps* under the Julio-Claudian rulers

maius imperium proconsulare the power of a proconsul or governor that was applicable throughout the empire and superior to that held by the other proconsuls

tribunicia potestas the power of a tribune, a magistrate who originally protected the people; it was granted to Augustus and subsequently to later emperors

Augustus adopted the term *princeps* to refer to his role as ruler of Rome. He maintained that he was *princeps civitatis* – first among the citizens. He also possessed the ***maius imperium proconsulare*** and the ***tribunicia potestas***. Some contemporary historians saw Augustus as a monarch; modern historians are more likely to regard the *princeps* as an autocrat (a ruler with absolute power) or even a military dictator. Despite the continuation of the magistracies, the civil and administrative offices of the Roman government that were so important in the Republic, Augustus concentrated all the major decision-making in his own hands; the magistrates and officials were answerable to Augustus alone. Under his successors, they were answerable to the *princeps* of the day. Continuity with the system of the Republic was only an illusion.

Augustus' successors, the Julio-Claudian rulers, were responsible for several changes to the role of the *princeps*.

Tiberius

Tiberius was granted the *imperium*, or power to command the army, and the *tribunicia potestas* by Augustus in AD 12 when he was made virtual co-*princeps*, so he began his rule with the same powers as his adopted father. According to Velleius Paterculus he was reluctant to take on the title *princeps*, favouring *aequalis civis* or equal citizen, but was eventually persuaded to accept it.

Even though Tiberius seems to have been keen to follow Augustus' template for the principate, under his rule, the role of the *princeps* became more autocratic than it had been before. This can be seen in two areas:

- *legislation* – there was a distinct lack of significant legislation. Often Tiberius issued an imperial decree, rather than act on the wishes of the people who had publicly discussed an issue in the assembly and voted on it
- *elections* – even though elections still existed, they were transferred from the *comitia*, the people's assembly, to the Senate. Because Tiberius could nominate candidates, those who were successful were inevitably the candidates he preferred, so the Senate was less of an elected body than it had been before.

Gaius

client king a ruler of a client state or kingdom that is politically or militarily subordinate to a more powerful state

The role of the *princeps* became even more autocratic during Gaius' principate. He increasingly dispensed with the Senate, relying more on his use of traditional patronage. Patronage refers the relationship between a wealthy, influential Roman (a patron) and a free client. The *princeps* was the most important patron in the Roman Empire. His friends, or *amici*, were given help and support, for example in elections. **Client kings** are an example of the way in which the *princeps* could use his patronage, and Gaius was active in this area. For example, he put his friends on the thrones of several client kingdoms: Cotys was given Lesser Armenia, Antiochus became king of Commagene, and Agrippa became king of Palestine.

After the illness he suffered in the first year of his reign, Gaius seems to have decided to dispense with Augustus' pretence of the continuity of the Republic. For the first time the

princeps became a living god. This new manifestation of the role of the *princeps* brought him into open conflict with the Senate. Gaius' feud with the Senate is treated in more detail in 13.5 The Senate and later Julio-Claudians.

Claudius

Two notable changes in the political role of the *princeps* occurred with the accession of Claudius. One was the dependence of the *princeps* on the Praetorian Guard for his power (see 13.7 Political roles of the Praetorian Guard) From now on, the *princeps*' prime concern could be seen as keeping the loyalty of the military, rather than maintaining a government firmly based on law and consensus.

Another change in the political role of the *princeps* was Claudius' establishment of what amounted to a court. Philip Matyszak comments on this in Source 10.

SOURCE 10

Augustus and his successors had companions and a retinue [advisers and assistants]. Claudius had a court. And with this came the obscure internecine [mutually destructive] scheming and jockeying for position which were an integral part of such institutions. This suited two parties in particular. One was Messalina and her successors, for an imperial wife could influence her husband and be persuaded to influence him for others. The other group was the freedmen of the imperial household.

P. Matyszak, *The Sons of Caesar: Imperial Rome's First Dynasty*, Thames & Hudson, London, 2006, p. 205

Claudius' two most prominent freedmen were Narcissus, his secretary, and Pallas, his treasurer. The fact that Claudius gave the power and responsibility that had once belonged to the Senate to his freedmen substantially changed the role of the *princeps*. He was now the employer of a group of men who acted like civil servants, and who would carry out the increasing load of day-to-day tasks inherent in the running of the empire. Significantly, these men had no connection to the Senate and had not been elected by anyone, let alone the people. The only person to whom they owed loyalty was the *princeps*, their employer, through whom they could, and did, become very rich. The *princeps* owed them no loyalty at all and could remove them at will.

Nero

Nero maintained the changes to the role of the *princeps* introduced by Claudius. He employed a number of freedmen to take civil service roles. Significantly, it was his freedman Helius who was left in charge of Rome when Nero went on his year-long trip to Greece in the latter part of his reign. Cassius Dio records that Helius was left with the power to confiscate, banish and execute men of all ranks. Helius himself went to Greece in AD 66 to recall Nero when it was clear that the survival of the *princeps* demanded his presence in Rome.

Nero's autocratic style seems to have followed the model established by Augustus and embellished by his successors – Tiberius, Gaius and Claudius. Even though he had shown respect for the constitutional aspects of government in the early years of his reign, while he was under the influence of Agrippina, Seneca and Burrus, things changed when they were no longer present. The later part of Nero's reign, characterised in the sources by murder and unrestrained 'madness', indicates that the role of the *princeps* was now dependent on the whim of the man himself.

Changing image of the *princeps*

Source 11 summarises some features of the changing image of the *princeps*: how he was represented by the sources, how he wished to portray himself and how he was seen by the people.

13.3 Understanding and using the sources

Source 10

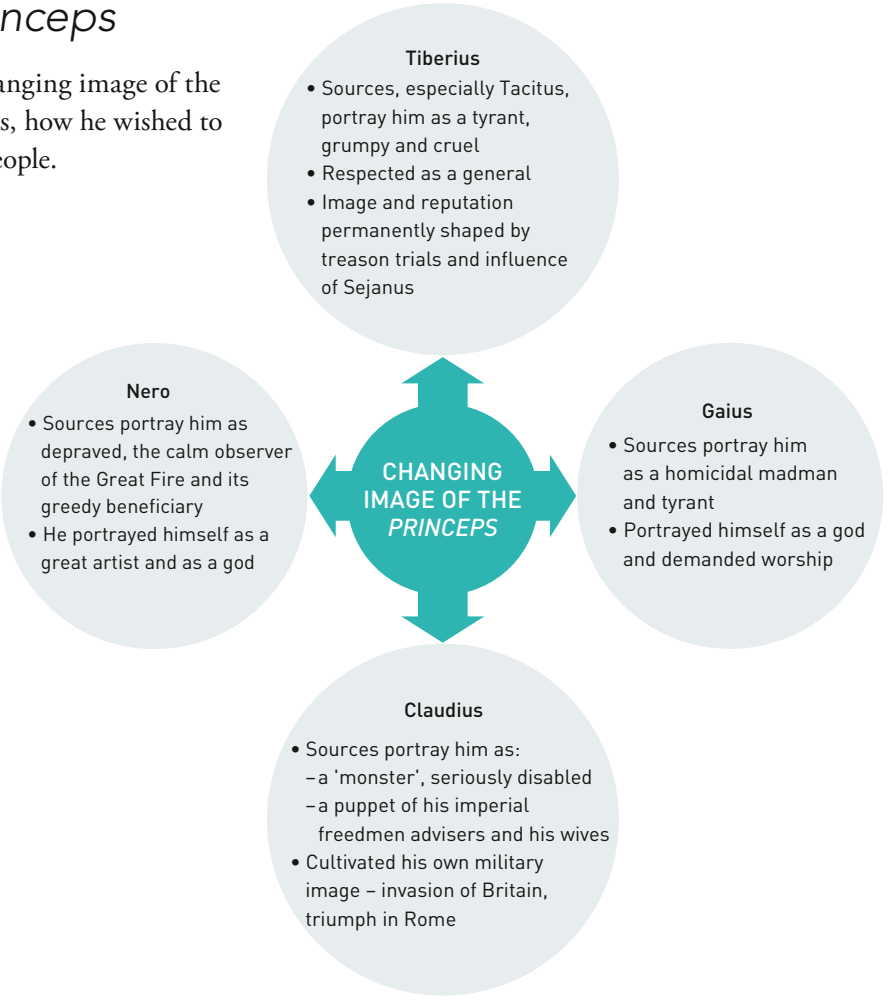
1 What is the difference between 'companions and a retinue' and a court?

2 What were the parties at Claudius' court?

13.3 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** How did Tiberius change the role of the *princeps*?
   - **b** How did Claudius' accession change the role of the *princeps*?
   - **c** What was the significance of Gaius' feud with the Senate in the changing role of the *princeps*?
   - **d** How do the actions of Helius demonstrate the changing role of the *princeps*?

2 Research Nero's freedmen and the roles they played in his principate. Look for Pallas, Pythagorus, Sporus, Epaphroditos, Phaon and Neophytus.



SOURCE 11 A mind map summary of the changing image of the *princeps*

3 Use the mind map in Source 11 as a starting point for your own record of the changing image of the *princeps*. Add more information from your own research.

4 Make a collection of pictorial representations of each *princeps* – mostly statues and images on coins. In a table, record each example by name and include the evidence that suggests how the *princeps* wished to be presented and why. An example has been provided.

PRINCEPS	REPRESENTATION	DETAILS	SIGNIFICANCE
Claudius	Statue as Jupiter (Source 8)	Claudius is shown as Jupiter, wearing the civic crown of oak leaves	• Depiction as Jupiter, king of the gods – wanted to be seen as divine and the chief ruler • The civic crown was the second highest military decoration a Roman citizen could receive; Claudius was emphasising his role as a successful military leader

5 Writing task: In what ways did the role of the *princeps* change under the Julio-Claudians?

To help you plan your response:
- identify and explain the aspects of the changing role of the *princeps*
- use these aspects to structure your response
- make clear the why and/or how of the ways in which the role changed
- support your response with relevant information from sources.

13.4 Changing role and responsibilities of the Senate

The roles and responsibilities of the Senate changed dramatically under Augustus. He reduced its numbers from 900 to 600 members, and made changes in an attempt to restore the dignity and prestige it had enjoyed during the Republic. However, it was not the independent body it had been before the civil war. Augustus made it a type of advisory body through his introduction of the *consilium*, a committee composed of the *princeps*, consuls, representatives of the magistrates and 15 senators chosen by lot. The senate's theoretical role of assisting the emperor in matters of legislation changed to one of simply approving the proposals submitted to it. The Senate would undergo further change throughout the years of the Julio-Claudian emperors.

Tiberius and the Senate

The tension between the *princeps* and Senate that was characteristic of the Julio-Claudian period began in Tiberius' reign. He recognised that he needed the cooperation of the Senate to rule the empire and tried to restore its former executive responsibility, consulting it on every issue. Suetonius, in *Tiberius* 30.1, comments on his respectful treatment of the consuls and his consultation on national revenue, building repair, troop movements and foreign policy.

Changes to the Senate did occur in his principate, however. A significant one was his transfer of elections for magistracies from the *comitia*, the people's assembly, to the Senate. Tiberius was able to nominate candidates and, as would be expected, those of whom he approved were elected. He only nominated a few candidates, though, which enabled an authentic contest for official positions without the opportunity for bribery. He also abolished the *consilium* established by Augustus and replaced it with a council of his friends, instead of a selection of magistrates, plus a group of 20 men chosen by the Senate.

vestal virgin
a priestess of Vesta, Roman goddess of the hearth

Some issues on which the Senate acted decisively include:

- the choice of a new **vestal virgin** in AD 19
- the rights of the *flamen Dialis*, the high priest of Jupiter, in AD 22
- the election of a replacement priest in AD 24.

Senatorial commissions were set up to deal with the flooding of the Tiber River, the care of public buildings, the maintenance of public records and the investigation of catastrophes, such as the collapse of the amphitheatre in AD 27 and periodic earthquakes.

Despite Tiberius' policy of deferring to the Senate, including standing respectfully in the street when magistrates and their entourage passed by, relations between them deteriorated. Tacitus tells us that over time Tiberius became increasingly frustrated with the servility or slavishness of the Senate, as seen in Source 12.

SOURCE 12

Tradition says that Tiberius as often as he left the Senate-House used to exclaim in Greek, 'How ready these men are to be slaves.' Clearly, even he, with his dislike of public freedom, was disgusted at the abject abasement [humiliation] of his creatures.

Tacitus, *Annals*, 3.65 (trans. A.J. Church & W.J. Brodribb, Random House, 1942)

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Discontent within the Senate had its origins in the senators' resentment of Tiberius and the powerful role of the Julio-Claudian family. In the face of opposition from the Senate it seems that Tiberius looked to Lucius Aelius Sejanus, his prefect of the Praetorian Guard, for support. The system of *delatores*, or professional informers, enabled him and, consequently, Tiberius to know about any senator suspected of *maiestas*. This was the charge of bringing the Roman Empire and emperor into disrepute, which was to play an important role later in his reign.

SOURCE 13 This coin, a Roman *as*, struck to mark the consulship of Sejanus, has had the latter's name, Lucius Aelio Seiano, removed following his fall.

In AD 21, Tiberius retired to the island of Capri, which removed the centre of government from Rome. This development was to have serious consequences:

- Tiberius could no longer control what happened in the Senate. This opened up the opportunity for the infamous treason trials of his principate. Many senators made accusations of *maiestas*, or treason, in order to get rid of rivals, or get a share of their forfeited property (25 per cent of property would go to an accuser as a reward) and to win the favour of the *princeps*.
- Sejanus was able to control access to the *princeps*. Tiberius communicated with the Senate via letters carried by Sejanus, or senators travelled to Campania in the hope of an audience with him. Sejanus' role caused much resentment among senators, especially when Tiberius held his fifth consulship with him in AD 31.

Eventually Tiberius was alerted to the danger posed by Sejanus' ambition. He was summoned before the Senate and denounced. The Senate condemned him and all of his family to death. Tiberius took the opportunity to purge the Senate of those members opposed to him, putting 20 senators on trial. Five were acquitted. The Senate now existed primarily to do the bidding of the *princeps*.

13.4 Understanding and using the sources

Source 12

1 What did Tiberius dislike about the behaviour of the senators?
2 What does this source reveal about Tacitus' attitude to Tiberius? Why does he have this view? (See Source 5.)

13.4 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What was the significance of Tiberius' transfer of elections of magistrates from the *comitia* to the Senate?
   - **b** What was the *consilium*? How significant were Tiberius' changes to Augustus' *consilium*?
   - **c** What was the impact of Tiberius' retirement to Capri? What does this reveal about (i) the role of the *princeps* and (ii) the power of Sejanus?

13.4 Profile

Treason trials in Tiberius' principate

Tiberius' principate has been seen as a reign of terror, largely because of the treason trials. The *lex maiestatis*, or law of treason, had existed in Rome since the Republic, but then, only actual acts were tried, while what people said was not punished. Any offence against Rome was considered to be *maiestas*. By the time of Augustus and the Julio-Claudian rulers, the person of the *princeps* embodied the state and, therefore, any insult or offence against him or his family was open to the charge of *maiestas*. The Romans had no public prosecutor; charges were brought by informers, or *delatores*, and cases were tried in the Senate, which acted as a court. Successful *delatores* were rewarded with one-quarter of the convicted person's property.

SOURCE 15 A statue of Tiberius, now in the Vatican Museum, Rome

In AD 25, there was a proposal that *delatores* should not receive their reward if the accused committed suicide before the trial finished. Tiberius stopped this measure before it was passed, insisting that the law remain as it was. Tacitus interpreted this as support for *delatores*, but it can be interpreted as Tiberius' respect for the law. Roman citizens were also reluctant to help the defendants in a *maiestas* case because they too could be accused of treason. Tacitus accuses some senators of becoming informers themselves.

SOURCE 14

It was, indeed, a horrible feature of the period that leading senators became informers even on trivial matters – some openly, many secretly. Friends and relatives were as suspect as strangers, old stories as damaging as new. In the Forum, at a dinner party, a remark on any subject might mean prosecution. Everyone competed for priority in marking down the victim. Sometimes this was self-defence, but mostly it was a sort of contagion, like an epidemic.

Tacitus, *Annals*, 6.7
(trans. M. Grant, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986)

Tacitus gives a detailed account of the 'reign of terror'. He portrays Tiberius as a tyrant and clearly exaggerates the number

of treason trials in his reign, particularly in the aftermath of Sejanus' downfall, to prove his point, writing of a 'conspicuously monotonous glut of downfalls' (*Annals* 4.33). An examination of the figures tells a different story, however. There were 86 *maiestas* cases during the 'reign of terror', but at least 30 of those charged were acquitted. There were 18 executions, but the majority of these were for conspiracies, not treasonous slander of Tiberius. Tiberius also quashed many convictions and reduced the severity of others. An example is given in Source 16.

SOURCE 16

Marcus Aurelius Cotta Maximus Messallinus was accused of uttering reflections on Gaius' manliness; of describing a priest's banquet, which he himself had attended on the Augusta's birthday, as a funeral feast; and when complaining of the influence of Marcus Aemilius Lepidus and Lucius Arruntius, his opponents in a money-dispute, he was said to have added: 'The senate will back them. My sweet little Tiberius will back me!' The charges were brought home and pressed by outstanding figures; but Cotta appealed to the emperor. Soon afterwards Tiberius wrote to the senate. In self-defence he traced back to its beginning his friendship with Cotta, whose many services he recalled, urging that words, maliciously distorted, or loosely uttered at table, should not be regarded as damning evidence.

Tacitus, *Annals*, 6.5
(trans. M. Grant, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1986)

The Senate must bear some responsibility for the treason trials, for many of the cases were brought by the senatorial class in order to win favour or get rid of rivals. Many of the trials occurred when Sejanus was in charge of Rome. It does appear that there were more prosecutions after Sejanus' death, when the Senate took the opportunity to eliminate his supporters. Towards the end of his reign, Tiberius himself convicted a few people – probably because his experience of Sejanus had made him insecure and fearful. One of those convicted was Sextus Paconianus, who was charged with writing satires of Tiberius.

13.4 Profile tasks

1. Using Source 14, list the things Tacitus accuses senators of doing in this period.
2. In Source 16, what was Marcus Aurelius Cotta Maximus Messallinus accused of?
3. Why would these acts have attracted the charge of *maiestas*?
4. How are Tiberius' actions presented by Tacitus?
5. Read Tacitus' accounts of the trials of the following: Libo Drusus, Appuleia Varilla, Calpurnius Piso, L. Ennius, Silius Caecina and Claudia Pulchra. Record the charges against each one and the outcome of their trial.
6. What part did Tiberius or Sejanus play in these trials?

13.5 The Senate and the later Julio-Claudians

The role and responsibilities of the Senate had changed substantially during the principate of Tiberius. More changes were to come with his successors.

Gaius

Following Tiberius' death in AD 37, Gaius was acclaimed by the Senate, supported by Macro, the new prefect of the Praetorian Guard. Gaius supported the Senate's annulment of Tiberius' will naming Gaius and Tiberius Gemellus, Tiberius' grandson, as equal heirs. Gaius, however, adopted Tiberius Gemellus and made him *princeps iuventutis* (literally, 'prince of youth'). The annulment of Tiberius' will set the precedent for the property of a dead emperor to pass to his successor. Initially, Gaius treated the Senate with great respect. Cassius Dio records his first meeting with the Senate in Source 17.

SOURCE 17

… he at first showed great deference to the senators on an occasion when knights [***equites*** or **equestrians**] and also some of the populace were present at their meeting. He promised to share his power with them and to do whatever would please them, called himself their son and ward. He was then twenty-five years of age, lacking five months and four days.

Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 59.6 (trans. E. Carey, Loeb Classical Library, 1924)

equestrians (*equites*) one of two aristocratic classes of ancient Rome, ranking below the patricians; equestrians were entitled to wear a gold ring and a tunic with a narrow black band

These measures won Gaius popularity:

- sharing a consulship with his uncle, Claudius
- the abolition of the charges of *maiestas* and discontinuation of the use of *delatores*
- a recall of all senators exiled during Tiberius' reign
- the introduction of a fifth panel of jurors to deal with outstanding legal business due to Tiberius' absence at Capri
- the return of elections to the people.

After AD 37, Gaius' behaviour towards the Senate changed markedly, perhaps as a result of a serious illness. There was now a struggle for power between the Senate and the *princeps*. Notable changes in Gaius' treatment of the Senate included:

- the renewal of the laws of *maiestas*
- the removal of the Senate's right to mint coins and the relocation of the mint to Rome
- the command of the African legion removed from a senatorial proconsul and given to an imperial legate appointed by the *princeps*.

Clearly, Gaius was centralising power on himself. In a passionate speech to the Senate in AD 39 he accused senators of plotting against him and his family during Tiberius' reign. The Senate now granted Gaius more honours, hoping to avoid his accusations. Those eliminated during his 4-year rule include: Tiberius Gemellus, Macro, Marcus Junius Silanus and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus.

Gaius' relations with the Senate continued to deteriorate, culminating in his assassination in AD 41, the result of a conspiracy led by members of the Praetorian Guard.

Source 18 gives a modern interpretation of Gaius' behaviour.

SOURCE 18

Ancient writers explained the paradox of Caligula's early promise and later execration [denunciation] as a 'tyrant' as due to a sudden change of character, variously ascribed to escape from the restraints imposed by his grandmother and sister, to illness, or to the effects of over-indulgence. Such a distinction is invalid. From the start, Caligula did not hesitate to eliminate anyone who threatened him.

T. Wiedemann, *The Julio-Claudian Emperors: AD 14–70*, Bristol Classical Press, London, 2002, p. 38

Claudius

After Gaius' assassination, the Senate debated whether to restore the Republic. They decided against restoration and agreed that the new emperor should come from their numbers. However, the decision was taken out of their hands by the Praetorian Guard who proclaimed Claudius emperor. This marked an abrupt increase in the significance of the Praetorian Guard at the expense of the Senate. Matyszak comments on the implications of this in Source 19.

SOURCE 19

The senate remained as a consultative body which formalised legislation and acted as a pool from which administrators and generals were drawn. It was still immensely important, but perceptions had irrevocably shifted. Rome was now an autocracy that happened to have a senate rather than a senatorial government which happened to have an emperor.

P. Matyszak, *The Sons of Caesar: Imperial Rome's First Dynasty*, Thames & Hudson, London, 2006, p. 205

Claudius tried to establish good relations with the Senate, as seen in the following:

- amnesties for all involved in Gaius' assassination, except for the actual murderers
- recall of exiles and repeal of Gaius' laws
- consulships granted to those with republican sympathies
- abolition of the charge of *maiestas* (to be revived later in his rule)
- assurances to the Senate of his complete non-divinity.

Claudius displayed respect for the Senate, standing in its presence and restoring its control of election of magistrates. He also restored its right to mint coins. He attempted to restore the Senate's prestige by encouraging its members to take their responsibilities seriously as a forum for discussion and legislation. There were more *senatus consulta* (senatorial decrees) passed in his reign than in that of any other *princeps*.

However, some of Claudius' actions aroused the hostility of the Senate. His reliance on a centralised administration system encroached on senatorial areas of responsibility. This was exacerbated by his use of freedmen such as Pallas, Narcissus and Polybius in the administrative affairs of the principate. Not surprisingly, the Senate felt marginalised. A further problem was Claudius' interference in traditional areas of senatorial responsibility. For example, he removed the imperial treasury, the *aerarium*, from the control of the Senate and nominated two **quaestors** to administer it for 3 years. He also appointed **procurators** to look after the emperor's finances, to control inheritance tax and have jurisdiction over financial matters in senatorial provinces.

quaestor
a Roman magistrate responsible for management of state finances

procurator
an officer of the Roman Empire responsible for the financial and administrative affairs of a province as an agent of the emperor

SOURCE 20 The Lyons Tablet, which records Claudius' speech to the Senate proposing the admission of senators from Gaul

A major source of senatorial resentment was Claudius' change to its composition. Taking the role of **censor**, he revised the Senate, removing members who were no longer qualified and admitting qualified men from the provinces, particularly Gaul. A bronze tablet found near Lyons in the 16th century records a speech given by Claudius to the Senate, proposing the admission of senators from Gaul.

Nero

Nero, under the influence of Seneca and Burrus, established good relations with the Senate at the beginning of his rule. In his first speech to the Senate, composed by Seneca, Nero promised:

- the Senate would exercise its traditional functions
- there would be no more treason trials
- the freedmen and court favourites would be controlled
- he would model his leadership on that provided by Augustus
- he would end all secret trials.

censor
a Roman magistrate responsible for maintaining the census, supervising public morality and checking some parts of government finance

The evidence suggests that Nero did respect the Senate in the first five years of his reign, later referred to as the *quinquennium Neronis*.

- There were no executions of senators until AD 62.
- Gold and silver coins were again minted by the Senate.
- Nero accepted the Senate's offer of the title *pater patriae* (literally, 'father of the country'), declining a new title 'perpetual consul'.
- Until AD 61, the leading consuls came from families prominent in the Republic.
- There was an increase in the number of senatorial decrees, dealing with more significant matters.
- The Senate dealt with the riots in Pompeii after the gladiatorial games of AD 59; ringleaders were exiled and the games were banned for 10 years.

SOURCE 21
This gold aureus from AD 54 bears the legend *EX S[enatus] C[onsulto]* ('By Order of the Senate'), and features Nero with Agrippina in an equal position to her son.

After Agrippina's death in AD 59, the death of Burrus in AD 62 and the retirement of Seneca, Nero's relations with the Senate deteriorated. His growing interest in the arts apparently led to his neglect of his imperial duties. The revival of the treason trials by Tigellinus, the new Praetorian prefect, marked a downward turn in the treatment of the Senate. Many prominent senators were executed or forced to commit suicide after the Pisonian conspiracy in AD 65. Others were exiled. The lowest point was reached when the Senate declared Nero a public enemy in AD 68.

13.5 Understanding and using the sources

Source 17

1 According to Dio Cassius, how did Gaius treat the Senate after his accession?

Source 18

2 How do ancient writers explain Gaius' behaviour?

3 What is Wiedemann's perspective? Can it be supported?

Source 19

4 What role does the Senate now have under Claudius' rule?

5 Explain Matyszak's comment regarding Rome, autocracy and the Senate.

13.5 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - a Why did Gaius' early actions make him popular with the Senate?
   - b Why did Claudius give amnesties to those involved in Gaius' assassination?
   - c What was the significance of Claudius' changes to traditional senatorial responsibilities?
   - d What role did the Senate play in Nero's reign?

2 Research the executions of Macro, Tiberius Gemellus, Marcus Junius Silanus and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus. What justification, if any, did Gaius have for each one?

3 Read Suetonius' account of Gaius' principate and decide whether his account of the treatment of senators is trustworthy. Search online for 'Suetonius, Life of Caligula'.

4 Read a translation of Claudius' speech recorded on the Lyons Tablet. Search online for 'Claudius – Internet History Sourcebooks'.

5 Find out more about the Pisonian conspiracy of AD 65. What did the conspirators wish to achieve and what happened to them? Search online for 'Pisonian conspiracy'.

6 Summarise the changing role and responsibilities of the Senate by completing a table with the following headings: *Princeps*, Main changes to the Senate, Significance.

7 Writing task: Analyse the changing role and responsibilities of the Senate in the Julio-Claudian period.

   To help you plan your response:
   - identify the areas in which the role and responsibilities of the Senate changed
   - use these to structure your response
   - draw out and relate the implications of the changing role and responsibilities
   - support your analysis with relevant information from sources.

13.6 Reforms and policies of Julio-Claudian rulers

The Julio-Claudian rulers carried out specific reforms in some areas and followed clear policies in others. Source 22 summarises some of these.

SOURCE 22 Reforms and policies of Julio-Claudian rulers

REFORM/ POLICY AREA	*PRINCEPS*	FEATURES
Political	Tiberius	• Encouraged a strong and independent Senate – little success • Elections moved from people's assembly to Senate • Ruthless punishment of opponents, often by exile • Transfer of significant power to Sejanus
	Gaius	• Restoration of elections to the people's assembly – to return responsibility for staging of games to election candidates • Elections eventually returned to Senate – people lost electoral power
	Claudius	• Maintained loyalty of the military – Praetorian Guard now had political influence
	Nero	• Maintained political power of Praetorian Guard by paying donative or gift of money of 15000 sesterces • Declined a perpetual consulship
Social	Tiberius	• Cut expenditure on gladiatorial games; restricted public generosity
	Gaius	• Distributed 75 sesterces to all citizens on his accession • Showed his *pietas* or duty to his family – gave a eulogy for Tiberius; escorted his ashes to the mausoleum of Augustus; retrieved the remains of his mother and brother and interred their ashes; promoted his uncle Claudius to the Senate and shared a consulship with him • Exhibited more than lawful number of gladiators • Restored gladiatorial games – scattered tickets for prizes at random • Promoted extravagant spectacles (e.g. mock battles)
	Claudius	• Decreed free surviving slaves left to die at the temple of Aesculapius • Slave owners who killed sick slaves would be charged with murder • Introduced legislation requiring quaestors to subsidise two-thirds of the costs of gladiatorial games for their communities
	Nero	• After the Great Fire in AD 64, paid for new homes for displaced people • Reform of the building code to reduce flammability and assist firefighting
Legal	Tiberius	• Used law of *maiestas* as a weapon against senators accused of treason • Death penalty a likely outcome with exile refused as an alternative • Property of the guilty confiscated; names removed from public record
	Gaius	• Ended *maiestas* trials then reinstated them • A fifth panel of jurors instituted to deal with the backlog of legal business
	Claudius	• Personally judged many legal cases; judgements not necessarily sensible, impartial or according to the law • Reduced backlog of cases by lengthening summer and winter terms of the court and reducing traditional breaks • Minimum age for jurors raised to 25
	Nero	• Took judicial duties seriously • Abolished secret and discretionary procedures • A verdict had to be delivered on the same day of a trial • Tried to limit lawyers' charges • Distressed when forced by law to have all 400 slaves belonging to Lucius Pedanius Secundus put to death when one murdered him • Reduced remuneration for *delatores* (informers)

REFORM/ POLICY AREA	*PRINCEPS*	FEATURES
Religious	Tiberius	• Continued the imperial cult; became *divi filius*, son of a god, when Augustus was deified; paid public tribute to his adoptive father and built a temple for his worship; made sacrifices to Augustus in private • Did not tolerate Jews in Rome; ordered Jews who were of military age to join the Roman army in AD 19; those remaining were banished
	Gaius	• Grandmother, Antonia Augusta, given privileges of a vestal virgin • Sisters granted honours of vestal virgins; included in annual oaths • Deified while he was still alive • Drusilla deified on death in AD 38; Senate made her goddess, Panthea • Accused of anti-Semitism, but received Jewish delegation to Rome; upset Jews in Judaea by ordering his statue in the Temple in Jerusalem
	Claudius	• Restored the original number of days to festivals; removed extra celebrations added by Gaius • Expelled foreign astrologers • Banned Druidism in Gaul • Attempted to control worship of foreign cults in Rome • Reaffirmed the rights of all Jews in the empire
	Nero	• Persecuted Christians following the Great Fire; punished as arsonists
Administrative	Tiberius	• Kept good governors in office for longer than the traditional year • Stopped extortion in provinces by using imperial procurators • All governors made answerable to *princeps*
	Gaius	• Introduced new taxes to pay for his extravagances (e.g. tax on brothels)
	Claudius	• Established imperial bureaucracy, staffing it with educated freedmen • Freed the island of Rhodes from Roman rule for their loyalty • Gave Troy exemption from taxation • Resolved ongoing dispute between Greeks and Jews in Alexandria – evidence is 'Letter to the Alexandrians'
	Nero	• Appointed two imperial prefects to head the *aerarium* (treasury) • Provincial governors prohibited from extorting money to pay for gladiatorial shows in Rome • Safeguarded Rome's food supply by appointing competent officials and completing harbour at Ostia (see 13.8 Julio-Claudian building programs) • Devalued the currency to pay for rebuilding after the Great Fire: - the weight of a denarius was reduced - the purity of silver in coinage was reduced from 99.5% to 93.5% - the weight of the gold aureus was reduced

13.6 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** Why does policy concerning gladiatorial games feature in each *princeps'* reign?
   - **b** What was the significance of Gaius' deification?
   - **c** How important was policy regarding the Jews?
   - **d** How important was Nero's devaluation of the currency?
   - **e** What do the reforms and policies reveal about the priorities of each reign?

2 Read about Nero's reforms to the building code, in Tacitus' *Annals* 15.43.

3 Find out more about Claudius' letter to the Alexandrians.

13.7

Political roles of the Praetorian Guard

cohort
a Roman military unit made up of six centuries (usually around 100 men) and equivalent to one-tenth of a legion

The Praetorian Guard had a significant impact in the Julio-Claudian period. Under Augustus their responsibility was to safeguard both the city and the imperial family. While nine **cohorts** were initially stationed outside of Rome, three units were always on duty in the capital to secure the palace and buildings of the city. Other units were based in the towns surrounding Rome. Augustus appointed two Praetorian prefects from the equestrian order to take charge of the guards.

Tiberius

The rule of Tiberius saw the beginnings of the increasing political role the Praetorian Guard would play throughout the Julio-Claudian period. Sejanus, prefect of the Praetorian Guard, took a leading role in this largely due to the close relationship he developed with Tiberius. In AD 15, Sejanus became sole prefect after previously sharing the role with his father.

SOURCE 23 The Praetorian Relief, once part of the Arch of Claudius erected in AD 51 to commemorate the conquest of Britain, depicts members of the Praetorian Guard. It is now in the Louvre Museum in Paris.

Sejanus was ambitious and his actions have been interpreted as designed to secure the principate for himself. These include:

- the suggestion attributed to him that the Praetorian Guard be stationed in a single camp – the camp was established in AD 23, just outside Rome near the Porta Viminalis
- the murder of Drusus in AD 23 – Sejanus is blamed for inducing Livilla, with whom he was having an affair, to poison her husband, Drusus
- his request to be allowed to marry Livilla, now Drusus' widow – such a marriage would have made him the stepfather of Tiberius Gemellus, Tiberius' grandson and heir. If Tiberius died, Sejanus could have governed the empire until Tiberius Gemellus came of age
- his rescue of Tiberius when the roof of the grotto at Spelunca collapsed during the journey to Capri.

Tiberius held his fifth consulship with Sejanus as his colleague, but Antonia Minor, widow of Tiberius' brother Nero Claudius Drusus, had decided to act. Once she had convinced the emperor that Sejanus was a threat, he was denounced in the Senate and immediately executed. His children were also executed and his wife committed suicide. Sejanus was succeeded by Quintus Naevius Cordus Sutorius Macro as Praetorian prefect.

Gaius

The Praetorian Guard played an important role in Gaius' reign. Macro, the new prefect, was closely involved in Tiberius' death, perhaps, as suggested by Tacitus, helping Gaius to smother him when he would not die on cue. Macro also played an important role in persuading the Senate to annul Tiberius' will. Cassius Dio records that Gaius inspected the Praetorians while they were drilling, and distributed the 1000 sesterces apiece they had been bequeathed by Tiberius, adding the same amount in his own name.

Despite Macro's assistance, Gaius appears to have feared his influential status and relieved him as prefect of the Praetorian Guard on the pretext that he would be made prefect of Egypt instead. Macro was arrested and stripped of his office in AD 38, after which he and his wife committed suicide. Gaius appointed two prefects to replace Macro: Marcus Arrecinus Clemens and Lucius Arruntius Stella.

Gaius' relationship with the Praetorian Guards, which had started well, broke down in the later part of his reign when conspiracies against him became numerous. The tribune of the Guard, Cassius Chaerea, led the conspiracy that was eventually successful. Apparently Gaius was in the habit of teasing him for his high voice and would give him provocative watchwords for the Guard. Josephus gives a detailed account of the planning and execution of the assassination that took place on 24 January AD 41. Source 24 is his account of the event.

SOURCE 24

So Chaerea asked him for the watchword; and when Gaius gave another ridiculous word, Chaerea promptly cursed him, and drawing his sword gave him [Gaius] a fearsome, yet not quite fatal blow … Gaius was stunned by the pain from his wound. The sword had hit him exactly between the shoulder and the neck, and the first bone on his chest had stopped the blade from going any further … He groaned from the pain, and dived forward to escape … Then all of them surrounded him, stabbing with their swords, and shouting encouragement to each other to keep stabbing.

Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 19.1.14 (in P. Matyszak, *The Sons of Caesar: Imperial Rome's First Dynasty*, Thames & Hudson, London, 2006, p. 191)

Gaius' death was quickly followed by the murder of his wife and baby daughter. Assassins who were not quick enough to leave the scene were killed by Gaius' German bodyguard.

Claudius

The Praetorian Guard was directly responsible for Claudius' elevation to the position of emperor. While the Senate debated who should succeed Gaius, Claudius, either independently, or taken by the guardsmen who had found him hiding in the palace, went to the Praetorian Guard's camp, presented himself as the successor and was acclaimed (hailed) emperor. That Claudius accepted supreme power from the Praetorian Guard was highly significant. From now on, the power of the Caesars rested on the Praetorian Guard, not on the Senate.

Claudius remained very aware of the debt he owed the Praetorian Guard. According to Suetonius, he promised each guardsman 150 gold pieces, while Cassius Dio records that he paid them 100 sesterces annually. This donative, or gift of money, became a traditional first act of a new *princeps*. Gold and silver coins minted at the time of Claudius' accession show him shaking hands with an officer of the Guard in open recognition of his debt (see Source 25). At the same time, the guardsmen responsible for the assassination of Gaius, Chaerea and Cornelius Sabinus, were executed.

SOURCE 25 An aureus from AD 41–42 struck in Rome, depicting Claudius and an officer of the Praetorian Guard shaking hands

Subsequent prefects of the Praetorian Guard played prominent roles during Claudius' principate. Rufrius Pollio and Catonius Justus served together, the former being honoured by a seat next to Claudius on public occasions and a role in the expedition to Britain, accompanying Claudius and the cohorts of the Guard. Justus appears to have been caught up in the affairs of Claudius' wife, Messalina, and was executed in AD 43.

Rufrius Crispinus and Lucius Geta, their successors, were also involved in Claudius' domestic affairs. Rufrius Crispinus was a strong supporter of Messalina and assisted her in getting rid of her enemies, being well rewarded for his efforts. When Agrippina the Younger became Claudius' wife, she fired both prefects and replaced them with one of her clients, Sextus Afranius Burrus, in AD 51.

Nero

During the reign of Nero, Burrus, as sole prefect, and his successor, Gaius Ofonius Tigellinus, took the influence of the Praetorian Guard to the next level. Burrus and Seneca, as Nero's advisers, wielded unprecedented power. However, it was power that was linked initially to the power of Agrippina, Nero's mother. Following the death of Claudius, Nero secured the loyalty of the Praetorian Guard by a donative of 15 000 sesterces per man. Tacitus recorded what happened in Source 26.

SOURCE 26

> At last, at midday, on the thirteenth of October, the palace gates swung suddenly open, and Nero, with Burrus in attendance, passed out to the cohort, always on guard in conformity with the rules of the service. There, at a hint from the prefect, he was greeted with cheers and placed in a litter … Nero was carried into the camp; and, after a few introductory words suited to the time, promised a donative on the same generous scale as that of his father [i.e. Claudius], and was saluted as Imperator [Emperor].
>
> Tacitus, *Annals*, 12.69 (trans. J. Jackson, Loeb Classical Library, 1937)

SOURCE 27 A coin depicting Nero addressing the Praetorian Guard accompanied by one of his prefects, Ofonius Tigellinus or Faenius Rufus

During the early part of Nero's reign, while Agrippina's influence over her son was still strong, she was given a squad of Praetorian guardsmen as a personal bodyguard. Nero even used 'the best of mothers' as a watchword for the Guard. However, when he began to assert his independence from his mother, her Praetorian bodyguard was removed.

The death of Agrippina on her son's order saw the end of the power and influence of Burrus and Seneca. Seneca retired and Burrus died in AD 62. He was replaced by two prefects, Ofonius Tigellinus and Faenius Rufus, the first of whom has been blamed, perhaps unfairly, for subsequent events. Rufus supported the Pisonian conspiracy that arose after the Great Fire in AD 64 and was subsequently put to death. Nero's revenge on the conspirators saw Piso, Seneca and the poet Lucan killed. Nero now used Tigellinus in his role as prefect of the Praetorian Guard to identify and eliminate all suspects. The Praetorian Guard was purged of all who were loyal to Agrippina's memory; the rest were rewarded with a substantial donative.

When Tigellinus fell ill in AD 68, Nymphidias Sabinus, his co-prefect, took over the Guard as sole commander. Tigellinus, however, remained loyal to Nero and did not desert him until the last days when the whole Praetorian Guard withdrew their support in favour of Galba. After Nero's suicide, Galba appointed Cornelius Laco to replace Tigellinus, which apparently prompted Nymphidias to declare himself as successor to Nero. He claimed to be an illegitimate son of Gaius. The Praetorian Guard decided to back the new emperor and killed Nymphidias before Galba arrived in Rome.

13.7 Understanding and using the sources

Source 23

1 Why did Claudius feature the Praetorian Guard on his triumphal arch?

Source 26

2 What is the significance of Nero being accompanied by Burrus as he left the palace?

3 What was Burrus' role?

4 Why was the donative significant?

13.7 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** What were the advantages of locating the Praetorian Guard in a single camp just outside Rome? What disadvantages would there be? For whom?
   - **b** Why did Gaius personally distribute Tiberius' legacy to the Praetorian Guard and double it at his own expense?
   - **c** Why did Gaius increase the prefects to two after Macro's death?
   - **d** Why did Claudius reward the Praetorian Guard after Gaius' assassination, but execute Chaerea and Sabinus?
   - **e** How does Nero's reign demonstrate that the power of the Caesars depended on the Praetorian Guard?
   - **f** What is the significance of the Praetorian Guard backing Galba in AD 68?

2 Read Tacitus' full account of Sejanus' rise and fall in *Annals* 4.2.

3 Find out more about the prefects mentioned in this section. Was being an officer of the Praetorian Guard a good career path in Julio-Claudian Rome? Explain your answer, citing evidence.

4 Draw up a table summarising the roles of the Praetorian Guard in the principates of Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius and Nero. You could use headings like the ones below.

PRINCEPS	OFFICERS OF THE PRAETORIAN GUARD; RANK	INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRINCIPATE	SIGNIFICANCE

5 Writing task: Analyse the role played by the Praetorian Guard in the Julio-Claudian period.
To help you plan your response:
- identify the key roles of the Praetorian Guard in this period
- use these to structure your response
- draw out and relate the implications of the roles in this period
- use specific evidence to support your analysis.

13.8 Julio-Claudian building programs

The building programs of each *princeps* in this period can be assessed in terms of how well they satisfied the needs of the Roman people within and outside of Rome. The primary motives driving imperial building programs included:

- promotion of the *princeps* and his family
- promotion of the gods
- food and water supply
- entertainment of the people.

SOURCE 28 Remains of the Domus Tiberiana in the Roman Forum

Tiberius

Tiberius does not have the reputation of a great builder; however, this is contradicted by the evidence. We know that he completed projects begun by Augustus, as well as carrying out restoration works of public buildings from the Republican era. These included the Theatre of Pompey, a basilica and several temples. Among building projects he initiated himself are a temple to the Divine Augustus, arches dedicated to various family members and the camp of the Praetorian Guard mentioned in 13.7 Political roles of the Praetorian Guard.

Tiberius appears to have been more interested in building palaces. He began a palace for himself on the Palatine Hill, the Domus Tiberiana, and a luxurious villa on the island of Capri, the Villa Jovis, where he spent a great deal of his principate.

Gaius

Gaius was more interested in private than public building. He finished several buildings left incomplete by Tiberius, including the Temple of Augustus and the Theatre of Pompey. Two aqueducts were begun, the Aqua Claudia and the Aqua Anio Novis, which were completed by Claudius. A new circus, known as the Circus of Gaius and Nero, was constructed, as well as additions to Tiberius' palace, including a bridge to provide direct access from the palace to the Forum. He began a series of villas outside of Rome and maintenance work on roads and temples in the provinces.

Gaius' most infamous building project was his bridge at Baiae. It was, in effect, a pontoon of boats that stretched across the bay. Suetonius records that at its opening, Gaius crossed the bridge on a warhorse and also drove a chariot across.

Claudius

Claudius returned to the Augustan model of providing numerous public buildings for the people of Rome. A major contribution was the artificial harbour he constructed at Ostia, the port of Rome. The existing river harbour was limited by a sand bar at the entrance. Shallow-draught boats were able to moor at the quays on the Tiber, but large ships carrying essential grain and other goods had to moor offshore while the goods were transferred to smaller ships. This was not satisfactory for Rome's growing requirements. Suetonius describes the new port in Source 29.

SOURCE 29

At Ostia, Claudius constructed a new port by throwing out curved breakwaters on either side of the harbour and built a deep-water mole [a pier or breakwater] by its entrance. For the base of this mole he used the ship in which Caligula had transported a great obelisk from Heliopolis; it was first sunk, then secured with piles, and crowned with a very tall lighthouse – like the Pharos at Alexandria – that guided ships into the harbour at night by the beams of a lamp.

Suetonius, *Claudius*, 20
(in *The Twelve Caesars*, Penguin Books Ltd, London, 1987, pp. 197–8)

Claudius' other public works included:

- the completion of two aqueducts – the Aqua Claudia and the Aqua Anio Novis, opened in AD 52. He also restored the Aqua Virgo built by Agrippa during Augustus' principate
- the draining of the Fucine lake – this was to provide more arable land and make the nearby river navigable throughout the year. Unfortunately, the project failed despite the excavation of a long tunnel, which proved to be too narrow to carry the water
- the construction of roads and canals throughout Italy and the provinces – examples are a road between Italy and Germany, and canals between the Rhine and the sea and between Rome and the new port at Ostia.

SOURCE 30 A coin of Nero depicting Claudius' new harbour at Ostia

SOURCE 31 The Aqua Claudia aqueduct

Nero

Any treatment of Nero's building program must be dominated by the Great Fire of AD 64. Regardless of how it began, Nero's conduct in directing the firefighting, taking measures to prevent looting, and accommodating the victims left homeless on the Campus Martius deserves credit. In the aftermath, he took the opportunity to reconstruct Rome, planning broad, colonnaded streets to replace the haphazard building that had characterised the growth of the city. He established a compensation scheme to reward those who rebuilt their houses using stone rather than timber.

Nero himself benefited from the fire, using some of the land it cleared for the site of his Domus Aurea or Golden House. The complex, which included the imperial residence and a park, occupied an area stretching from the Palatine to the Esquiline Hill. Suetonius describes it in Source 32.

SOURCE 32

Of its dimensions and furniture, it may be sufficient to say thus much: the porch was so high that there stood in it a colossal statue of himself a hundred and twenty feet in height; and the space included in it was so ample, that it had triple porticos a mile in length, and a lake like a sea, surrounded with buildings which had the appearance of a city. Within its area were corn fields, vineyards, pastures, and woods, containing a vast number of animals of various kinds, both wild and tame. In other parts it was entirely over-laid with gold, and adorned with jewels and mother

of pearl. The supper rooms were vaulted, and compartments of the ceilings, inlaid with ivory, were made to revolve, and scatter flowers; while they contained pipes which shed unguents [sweet-smelling ointments] upon the guests. The chief banqueting room was circular, and revolved perpetually, night and day, in imitation of the motion of the celestial bodies. The baths were supplied with water from the sea and the Albula [Tiber]. Upon the dedication of this magnificent house after it was finished, all he said in approval of it was, 'that he had now a dwelling fit for a man.'

Suetonius, *Nero* 31
(trans. A. Thomson & ed. T. Forester, G. Bell & Sons, London, 1893)

SOURCE 33 The decoration in one of the rooms in the Golden House or Domus Aurea of Nero

13.8 Understanding and using the sources

Source 29

1. What were the main features of Claudius' harbour at Ostia?
2. Why was it a valuable public work?

Source 33

3. List the features of the Domus Aurea.

13.8 Check your learning

1. In what ways did the building programs of the Julio-Claudian emperors benefit themselves and the Roman people?
2. Read what the ancient sources have to say about the Great Fire in Rome and Nero's subsequent building and treatment of the Christians.
   - a. Suetonius, *Nero* 31
   - b. Tacitus, *Annals* 15.38
   - c. Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Epitome of Book LXII, 16 (or 62.16)

   What do they agree on? How do they differ? What is the most likely course of events?
3. Read about the project to excavate and restore the Domus Aurea led by the Archaeological Superintendency of Rome. Search online for 'Golden House of an Emperor – Archaeology Magazine'.
4. Writing task: Assess the significance of the building programs of the Julio-Claudian rulers.

   To help you plan your response:
   - identify the areas of significance of the building programs (e.g. self-promotion)
   - use these to structure your response
   - make critical judgements about the significance of building programs in each area
   - support your response with relevant information from sources
   - use appropriate concepts and terms.

13.9 Imperial family and problems of the succession

The transmission of power in the Julio-Claudian period, as it was in the time of Augustus, was fraught with trouble and uncertainty. There was no template for a certain, peaceful succession.

SOURCE 34

Augustus was trying to invent from scratch a system of dynastic succession, against the background of a fluid set of Roman rules about the inheritance of status and property. Crucially, there was no presumption in Roman law that the firstborn son would be the sole or principal heir … A successful claim to power also rested on behind-the-scenes manoeuvres, on the support of key interest groups, on being groomed for the part and on the careful manipulation of opinion. It also depended on being in the right place at the right time … [m]ost of the allegations of poisoning under the Julio-Claudians present the murder not as part of a plot to spring some new candidate into power but as an attempt to get the timing right and to ensure a seamless takeover for the man already marked out as the likely successor.

M. Beard, *SPQR: A History of Ancient Rome*, Profile Books, London, 2015, pp. 415–16

A man could become 'marked out as the likely successor' in a number of ways. Augustus had always wanted to be succeeded by a descendant of his own, but had to settle for a son by adoption, Tiberius. During the principates of his successors, being a descendant of Augustus could be a two-edged sword: it could mark you as a possible successor or as someone the incumbent *princeps* had to get rid of.

The women of the Julio-Claudian family played influential roles in the succession. Although they were unable to succeed to the throne themselves, they could promote their sons into positions from which they could gain the throne. They could also become the leaders of political factions, the members of which hoped to use their support and family connection to rise to the top. The outcomes for the men associated with these groups were not always happy, nor were the imperial women likely to enjoy any power they gained for long.

SOURCE 35 Livia, wife of Augustus and mother of Tiberius

Another factor playing a part in imperial succession was the Praetorian Guard (see 13.7 Political roles of the Praetorian Guard).

Tiberius and the succession

Tiberius came to power after the death of Augustus because he had been the *princeps*' adopted son and was named successor in his will. More importantly, he was on hand at Augustus' bedside to take possession of Augustus' household at the moment of death. Livia played an important role here in having summoned Tiberius to Nola, in Campania, when it became apparent that the *princeps* would not survive. Tacitus even reports that she withheld the news of Augustus' death until Tiberius was present, or perhaps manipulated his time of death by means of poison to coincide with Tiberius' arrival. The fact

that Tiberius immediately wrote to the army to inform them of his new status, shows clearly the instrumental roles of both the imperial women and the army in the succession at this time.

SOURCE 36 Germanicus

Germanicus

Germanicus was the son of Tiberius' brother, Drusus, and Antonia Minor, daughter of Mark Antony and Octavia. Augustus had stipulated that Tiberius adopt him at the same time as his own adoption by the *princeps*. Germanicus was married to Agrippina the Elder, daughter of Julia, Augustus' daughter, and Agrippa. Their six children were all Augustus' great-grandchildren.

Tacitus and Agrippina the Younger, in her lost memoir, both portray Germanicus as a potentially perfect ruler and he enjoyed enormous popularity among the Roman people. Germanicus was seen as a great general and is praised by Tacitus for his successful campaigning in northern Germany in AD 14. His award of a **triumph** in AD 17 and joint consulship in AD 18 marked him as Tiberius' successor.

triumph
a ceremonial procession through Rome to celebrate and dedicate a general's victories and completion of foreign wars

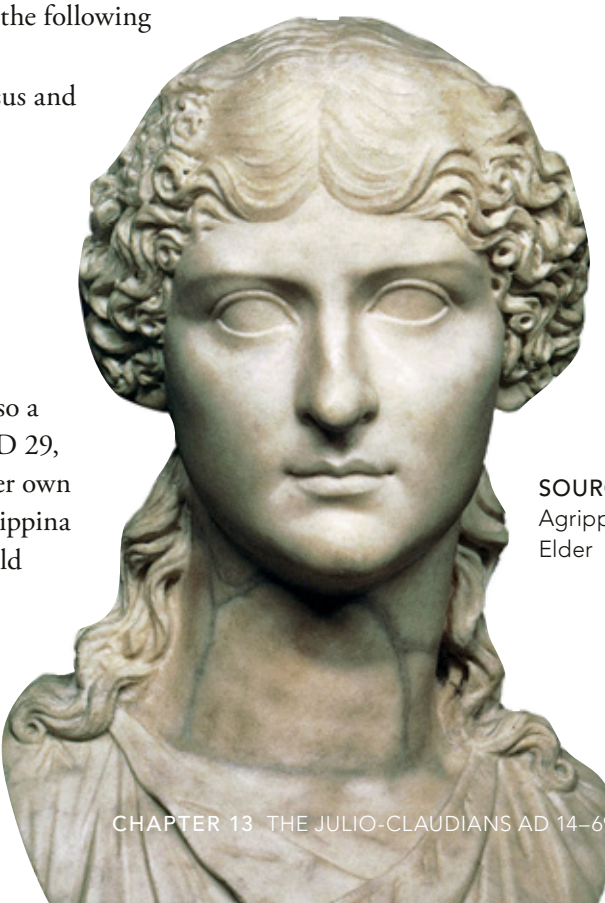
Tiberius sent Germanicus to the East where he enjoyed diplomatic success. However, his big mistake was to visit Egypt, a province forbidden to all without the *princeps*' permission, such was its importance to Rome. Tiberius had appointed Calpurnius Piso, the legate of Syria, as adviser to Germanicus; however, the two quarrelled and Germanicus renounced the friendship between the Caesars (emperors) and Piso. Piso had to leave Syria, but tried to return on hearing of Germanicus' serious illness. On his death in October AD 19, a distraught Agrippina the Elder accused Piso of poisoning her husband. He committed suicide. Agrippina the Elder, convinced that Tiberius was behind her husband's death, returned to Rome and became a thorn in Tiberius' side for some time.

Tiberius' son Drusus became his successor, but he died the following year. Candidates for the succession now included:

- Tiberius Gemellus – the survivor of twins born to Drusus and his wife in AD 22
- Nero and Drusus – the two eldest sons of Germanicus
- Claudius – Germanicus' brother.

Agrippina the Elder

Agrippina the Elder, as mother of potential successors to Tiberius, was in opposition to Livilla, widow of Drusus, also a mother of a potential successor. Livia, until her death in AD 29, promoted the interests of Agrippina the Elder's children, her own great-grandchildren. Tiberius was loath to allow either Agrippina the Elder or Livilla to remarry because their husbands would be a threat to his position. After Livia's death, Agrippina the Elder and her eldest son Nero were accused of plotting Tiberius' death. Along with Drusus, they were imprisoned without trial until their deaths.



SOURCE 37 Agrippina the Elder

SOURCE 38 Valeria Messalina with Britannicus

SOURCE 39 Agrippina the Younger

Messalina

Valeria Messalina, a great-grandniece of Augustus, was Claudius' third wife. She bore him two children, Octavia and Britannicus.

Messalina's role in the succession was focused on protecting her own position and promoting that of her son. The sources refer to her jealousy of both Agrippina the Younger and Julia Livilla. Political rivalry played a part as both were descended directly from Augustus, so their husbands could claim the throne and remove both Claudius and Messalina herself. She had charges brought against Julia, who eventually starved to death in exile.

Messalina was instrumental in securing the execution of several prominent Romans, for example Gnaius Pompeius Magnus and his father. It is likely that they were executed because Pompeius was married to Claudius' daughter Antonia and could have claimed the throne on Claudius' death. This would remove Messalina's son, Britannicus, from the succession. Messalina had a reputation for serial adultery; however, it was her 'marriage' to her lover, Gaius Silius, that brought about her downfall. Such a marriage, as well as being bigamous, would have put Claudius' position into jeopardy, so he had her and her new husband executed.

Agrippina the Younger

Agrippina the Younger, Gaius' surviving sister, married her uncle Claudius in AD 49. This both consolidated Claudius' legitimacy and the succession. Claudius adopted her son, Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus, from now on Nero Claudius Caesar. He was promoted as successor by becoming *princeps iuventutis* and by marrying Octavia in AD 53. The inevitable rivalry between the supporters of Nero and those of Britannicus arose. Agrippina removed two of the latter, the freedman Narcissus and Britannicus' grandmother, Domitia Lepida, by having them executed.

Claudius died before Britannicus reached adulthood, either from natural causes or from accidental or deliberate poisoning. Agrippina's son Nero could now succeed him without challenge. He was:

- a great-great-grandson of Augustus
- an heir of Gaius through his mother
- Claudius' adopted son
- husband of Claudius' daughter Octavia, the great-great-grandniece of Augustus.

Agrippina's involvement with the succession did not end with Nero's elevation to the principate. Other relatives could threaten his position; most obviously, Britannicus. Agrippina sealed his fate by threatening to transfer her support to him when Nero began

to assert his independence from her. Britannicus was poisoned in AD 55. Agrippina's relationship with Nero declined to the point where he ordered her execution following a failed attempt to kill her in a shipwreck in the Bay of Naples.

13.9 Understanding and using the sources

Source 34

1 What were the problems involved in the succession in Julio-Claudian times?
2 How could someone make a successful bid for power?
3 How does Beard explain the allegations of poisoning under the Julio-Claudians?

13.9 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   a How could women influence the succession?
   b What role did Livia play in Tiberius' succession?
   c What was the status of Germanicus, Agrippina the Elder and their six children? Why is this significant to the succession?
   d How did Messalina's bigamous marriage threaten Claudius' position as *princeps*?
   e Why did Agrippina the Younger's marriage to Claudius consolidate his legitimacy? Check Agrippina's genealogy in Source 2 if you are unsure.
2 Read the full story of what happened to Agrippina the Elder at the hands of Tiberius and Sejanus. Search online for 'Agrippina the Elder'. Do the same for more detailed accounts of Messalina and Agrippina the Younger.
3 Draw up a table like the one below to summarise the roles played by Livia, Julia, Germanicus, Agrippina the Elder, Messalina and Agrippina the Younger in the succession.

MEMBER OF THE JULIO-CLAUDIAN FAMILY	ROLE PLAYED IN THE SUCCESSION	SIGNIFICANCE

4 Writing task: Evaluate the roles played by the imperial family in the succession in the Julio-Claudian period.

   To help you plan your response:
   - identify the types of roles played by the imperial family (e.g. connecting the candidate to Augustus)
   - use these to structure your response
   - make critical judgements about the value of the roles played in the Julio-Claudian period
   - use information from sources to support your response
   - use appropriate concepts and terms.

13.10 Role and contribution of Seneca

Lucius Annaeus Seneca was a Roman philosopher and dramatist who played a significant role in the Julio-Claudian period. He was born in Cordoba in Hispania, at some time between 4 and 1 BC, and moved to Rome as a child. His education included training in **rhetoric** and philosophy. Source 40 summarises his role and contribution.

rhetoric
the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing

SOURCE 40 Role and contribution of Seneca

PRINCEPS	ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION
Gaius	• Seneca was exiled in AD 49, charged with adultery with Julia Livilla.
Claudius	• Agrippina the Younger used her influence to have him recalled from exile. • Chosen by Agrippina as a tutor for her young son, Nero; his loyalty, therefore, was with her. • Responsible for designing the future emperor Nero's education. • Given the office of **praetor**. • Shared role of tutor with Burrus, prefect of the Praetorian Guard.
Nero	• Seneca and Burrus became the young *princeps*' advisers on his succession. • Seneca's influence can be seen in Nero's speech to the Senate on his succession. • Both Seneca and Burrus are credited with directing Nero through the early years of his reign. • Tacitus refers to their collaboration in 'controlling the emperor's perilous adolescence; their policy was to direct his deviations from virtue into licensed channels of indulgence' (*Annals* 13.2). • Both Tacitus and Cassius Dio suggest that the early years of Nero's rule, the so-called 'good years' when he ruled as a competent *princeps*, were the result of Seneca's and Burrus' influence: – Senate was given more power of decision, e.g. in dealing with the rioting after the gladiatorial games in Pompeii. – Provincial governors were punished for abuses of office. – Nero handled trouble in the East by putting Corbulo in charge of the Roman troops. • Less positive roles played in Nero's personal life. Their attitudes to his lovers must be seen in the light of Agrippina's role in her son's affairs and his desire to be free of his mother's restrictions as he grew older. As Agrippina's men, they were committed to support her: – Acte, a slave girl – Seneca saw Nero's affair with her as a harmless sexual dalliance. – Poppaea Sabina, wife of Otho – Agrippina's jealousy of Poppaea, according to the sources, led her to offer herself to her son in his lover's place. Seneca sent Acte to warn Nero against accepting her offer and Nero banished his mother from Rome. • Nero's elaborate scheme to murder Agrippina by drowning is evidence that Seneca and Burrus had lost Nero's trust. This would remove both Agrippina and her men, his advisers, from his life. • Nero turned to them for advice on what to do next after Agrippina's survival. According to Tacitus, Seneca advised that Agrippina be executed. • New role following Agrippina's death: to convince the Roman people that Nero had acted as a private person in the affair and that regardless of what had happened, the Caesars were good for Rome. • After Burrus died, Seneca asked Nero's permission to retire. • Seneca's final role came in AD 65 when he was caught up in the aftermath of the conspiracy led by Calpurnius Piso to assassinate Nero and was ordered to commit suicide.

praetor
a Roman magistrate with chiefly judicial functions, ranked next after a consul

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SOURCE 41
Seneca as part of a double-herm (double-headed) statue of Seneca and Socrates from the Pergamon Museum, Berlin

13.10 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** How successful were Seneca and Burrus in influencing Nero to rule well? What evidence is there?
   - **b** How did Seneca's allegiance to Agrippina affect his attitude to Nero's lovers?
   - **c** How was Seneca involved in Agrippina's death? How was this significant?

2 Read Tacitus' account of Seneca's suicide in his *Annals*, Book 15.

3 Read some of Seneca's works that refer to the Julio-Claudian period, for example:
   - *Apocolocyntosis* or 'The Pumpkinification of Claudius', a satire
   - *De Clementia* or 'Of Clemency', written to Nero
   - *De Ira* or 'Of Anger', Book 3.18, refers to Gaius' treatment of senators.

   Search for 'Seneca – Wikisource, the free online library'.

4 Writing task: Evaluate the role and contribution of Seneca in the Julio-Claudian period.
   To help you plan your response:
   - identify the areas where Seneca was involved in this period and use them to structure your response
   - make judgements about the value and importance of Seneca's role and contribution
   - support your response with relevant information from the sources.

13.11 Consequences of the death of Nero

The events leading to Nero's death signalled the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. With Rome unable to see past a Julio-Claudian *princeps*, the challenge came from the provinces. The first revolt came from Vindex, governor of Gallia Lugdunensis, who raised a force of 100 000 men. He was supported by Galba, governor of Hispania Tarraconensis; Otho, governor of Lusitania in Spain; Caecina, quaestor of Baetica; and Macer, legate in Africa.

Vindex was defeated by the armies of the Rhine, commanded by Verginius Rufus, which remained loyal to Nero. He committed suicide. Verginius Rufus' troops offered him the principate, but he refused. Nevertheless, it was clear that Nero no longer enjoyed the loyalty of the legions. At this stage, Nero committed suicide and both the Senate and the Praetorian Guard chose Galba as the new *princeps*.

The main consequence of Nero's death was that it left Rome without a plan for the succession. There was no early identification of a successor as there had been with Augustus. In Source 42, Matyszak comments on what happened.

SOURCE 42

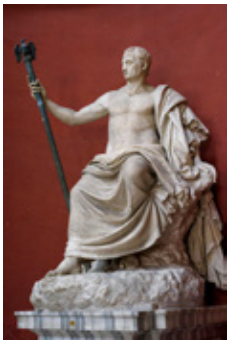
Here the precedent set by Julius Caesar and Augustus showed itself true a century later – in the absence of any candidate with an uncontested right to power, the person with the best army secured the job. When its social and philosophical trappings were stripped away, as they were after Nero's death, the principate was revealed as what it had always been – a naked military dictatorship.

P. Matyszak, *The Sons of Caesar: Imperial Rome's First Dynasty*, Thames & Hudson, London, 2006, p. 275

A new precedent was set: emperors could now be made outside of Rome. All a candidate needed was a strong army to choose and support him. A further, highly significant consequence was that the *princeps* no longer had to be of the Julio-Claudian family. With Nero's death in AD 68, there were no Julio-Claudians left.

Year of the Four Emperors

AD 69, known as the Year of the Four Emperors, was a transition year, one in which successive candidates attempted to assume the principate. Four emperors in one year indicates how difficult that task had become in such a highly unstable political landscape.



SOURCE 43
Emperor Galba

Galba

Servius Galba was already over 70 years of age when he became *princeps*. He was connected to the Julio-Claudians through his adoption by Livia and marriage into the Lepidus family. An efficient and loyal Roman, he had had a distinguished career as governor of Upper Germany, North Africa and Hispania Tarraconensis, the largest of Spain's three provinces.

Although keen to style himself 'Caesar', Galba found that he was not equipped to juggle the conflicting demands of the Roman aristocracy, citizens and army. Galba's choice of Piso as his successor caused Otho to switch from being Galba's supporter to his enemy. Two months after his succession, Galba, along with Piso, was killed by the Praetorian Guard.

Otho

Marcus Salvius Otho mounted a successful coup against Galba in January AD 69 in the hope of restoring political stability to the empire. In this he was singularly unsuccessful, lasting only two months as *princeps*. Like his predecessor he tried to please aristocracy, citizens and army alike. However, the Rhine army marched on Rome to install their own candidate, Vitellius. The resulting Battle of Bedriacum ended in the defeat of Otho's forces. Realising that he risked a bloody civil war if Vitellius' troops reached Rome, Otho committed suicide.

SOURCE 44 Marcus Otho Caesar Augustus, originally Marcus Salvius Otho

Vitellius

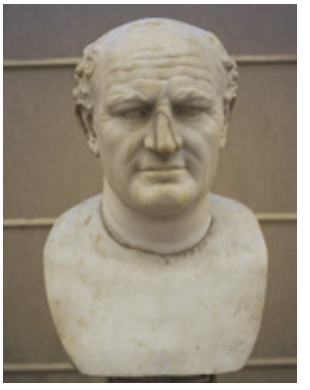
Aulus Vitellius had been a successful public figure during the reign of Claudius. He was a curator of public works in Rome, and also proconsul of North Africa. Following Otho's suicide, the army in Rome as well as the Senate gave their allegiance to Vitellius. He had to travel to Rome from Gaul and arrived in July. He refused to take the title *princeps*, but undertook a lifetime consulship. He showed an understanding of the need to placate both the Senate and the Roman people, but it was his treatment of the military that caused trouble. He returned Otho's legions to the provinces and replaced the existing Praetorian Guard and urban cohorts with troops from the German armies.

In only a few weeks his ascendancy was over. The legions in Egypt established a rival emperor, Vespasian, the governor of Judaea. They were joined by the Danube legions of Otho, which marched on Italy. Vitellius' forces were unable to hold them and were defeated at the Second Battle of Bedriacum. When the Flavian army reached Rome, Vitellius was captured, killed and thrown into the Tiber River.

SOURCE 45 A bronze and marble statue of the Emperor Vitellius

Vespasian

Titus Flavius Vespasianus' arrival in Rome in AD 70 signalled the end of the instability that had consumed Rome following the death of Nero. Unlike his predecessors, Vespasian had the ability to be the *princeps* that Rome needed. The Senate passed the *lex de imperio Vespasiani,* a law that made him legal heir to the Julio-Claudians, but he was the first emperor of the Flavian dynasty.



SOURCE 46
Emperor Vespasian

13.11 Understanding and using the sources

Source 42

1 What precedent does Matyszak refer to?

13.11 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** Why did the challenge for leadership of Rome come from the provinces? Why was this significant?
   - **b** Why was the army so important at this time?
   - **c** What were the major challenges facing each new *princeps*?

2 Research Vespasian's military career. Why was he able to succeed where the other aspiring emperors failed?

13.12 Expansion and consolidation of the empire

The Roman Empire consisted of both the provinces and the frontiers. The provinces were the areas that had been conquered and settled; the frontiers were the areas on the borders of the empire.

Augustus had intended to conquer the whole world, or at least to create the impression that he had. He projected the image of a world conqueror, a bringer of peace, the ruler of foreign kings. He extended the empire in some areas, but suffered a major setback in Germany with the loss of Varus' legions (see 12.17 Augustan frontier policy).

For a large part of the Julio-Claudian period, Augustus' policy of consolidation of the empire by maintaining the frontiers and improving the government of the provinces was followed by his successors. Expansion was to occur in the later Julio-Claudian period with Claudius' conquest of Britain.

The frontiers of the empire were fluid, moving frequently as initiatives expanded and contracted. The varying political and geographical conditions meant that a single strategy was insufficient to control the entire empire. Various means were employed:

- military conquest
- diplomacy
- buffer zones (neutral areas) made up of **client states**
- the traditional method of divide and conquer, whereby emperors fostered internal conflicts.

client state
a state or kingdom that is politically or militarily subordinate to a more powerful state

Parthian Empire
an ancient empire that reached from the north of the Euphrates in modern Turkey to eastern Iran, and came into conflict with the Roman Empire in the late Republic and early empire period

Two areas of particular concern throughout this period were the Rhine–Danube frontier in the west and the Syria–Asia Minor region that bordered on the **Parthian Empire** in the east. Armenia was a strategic kingdom that figured in several reigns. Gaul, Africa and, later, Britain were other regions of interest to the Julio-Claudian emperors.

Tiberius

Following his accession, Tiberius neither visited the provinces nor left Italy. He followed the Augustan policy of consolidation of empire.

The Rhine–Danube frontier

Before becoming *princeps*, Tiberius spent 28 years abroad playing a major role in stabilising the northern frontier. After the mutiny of the German legions following Tiberius' succession, Germanicus crossed the Rhine and campaigned extensively in the territory between the Rhine and the Elbe. Germanicus' military successes in this region went a long way to restore Rome's reputation after Varus' devastating defeat in the Teutoberg Forest in AD 9. Germanicus retrieved two of the three lost standards, making him very popular with the troops and with the Roman people. Tiberius recalled him to Rome, granted him a triumph and reassigned him to the opposite side of the empire.

Following this, Tiberius maintained the northern frontier at the Rhine. With the threat of the legions gone, the tribes to the north fought among themselves, leaving Maroboduus as the leader of the last resistance against Rome. He sought Tiberius' help and was given protection for the next 18 years until his death. Further threat to the frontier was minimal.

Along the Danube, Tiberius chose to leave the rebellious tribes to fight among themselves. To maintain the frontier he used a native leader, Catualda, to watch the upper Danube on Rome's behalf. He strengthened the Danube area in AD 15 when Achaea and Macedonia were made imperial provinces, including Moesia, governed by the imperial legate Poppaeus Sabinus. Tiberius replaced the two Thracian kings in the lower Danube region and appointed a local Roman to supervise them. The Danube was also strengthened by improved roads and river fleets.

The East and Africa

Germanicus settled the question of kingship in the East. A new treaty was negotiated with Parthia, and Artaxes was installed as the new king of Armenia. In AD 17 the client kingdoms of Cappadocia and Commagene were annexed and became provinces of Rome.

Relations with Parthia were peaceful for most of Tiberius' reign; however, the frontier became unstable again after AD 35. Tiridates, a Roman choice, was installed as king of Parthia after a short war.

Africa was an important senatorial province because it supplied two-thirds of Roman grain needs. A Berber auxiliary soldier, Tacfarinas, deserted and led revolts in Africa in AD 17. He was unsuccessful against the legionaries of the 3rd Augusta Legion, but successfully used guerrilla tactics to harrass the legions. He eventually sought a settlement, which Tiberius ignored, sending another legion to deal with the rebels. Tacfarinas and his followers survived until AD 24, when they were defeated by Junius Blaesus and Cornelius Dolabella. Tacfarinas committed suicide and his troops were assimilated into the Roman army.

SOURCE 47

One thing that was notable about the foreign affairs of the empire under Tiberius was the part played by the old nobility of the Republic. Names glorious since the founding of the Republic – Camillans, Valerians and Cornelians – were allowed to command Rome's armies in the field. In the campaign against Tacfarinas, Tiberius even permitted a Scipio [a member of the Cornelli Scipiones, one of the distinguished families of the Roman Republic] to seek glory in the region where his ancestor had conquered Hannibal. This was evidently a deliberate policy. Tiberius, the traditionalist, saw no reason why the great aristocracies could not serve his Empire as they had in the Republic. It was only a later and lesser generation of Caesars who saw the glory of these houses as a threat to their own.

P. Matyszak, *The Sons of Caesar: Imperial Rome's First Dynasty*, Thames & Hudson, London, 2006, p. 159

Gaius

Gaius was inconsistent in his imperial policies; however, the empire was mainly peaceful under his leadership. He was influenced by his eastern friends and rewarded them with client kingdoms, hoping to ensure their loyalty. Commagene became a client kingdom again and Gaius established client kingdoms in Thrace, Pontus and Armenia Minor. These measures were well received and Claudius maintained them.

The Rhine

Gaius went to the Rhine region to secure the loyalty and discipline of the army and may even have been contemplating a campaign in Germany. He led some successful expeditions across the Rhine himself. Gaius took his sisters Agrippina and Julia Livilla with him to the upper Rhine, concerned that one of the Rhine commanders, Lepidus, was in league with them in a conspiracy. Lepidus was put on trial and executed. Servius Sulpicius Galba was appointed governor of Germany and commander of the Rhine army and spent a number of years successfully securing the frontier against the Germans.

Gaul

In AD 39, Gaius visited Gaul. It is believed that he planned an invasion of Britain to install Adminius, a local ruler, as king. In preparation, Gaius raised two new legions and built a lighthouse at Boulogne. What happened next is a contested issue. The soldiers were apparently told to line up on the shore of the English Channel, fire their catapults into the sea and collect seashells. Possible explanations include:

- the soldiers had refused to make the crossing
- Gaius needed to make a show of military force to support a diplomatic request for support from the Britons
- Gaius was punishing the ocean for sinking the army of his father, Germanicus, in a storm while it was being transported up the German coast.

There is also an argument that the story about gathering seashells, ridiculous as it sounds, comes from a misunderstanding by the later writers of the Latin word *musculi*, which means 'shells', but also means 'military huts'. It could be that the soldiers were merely ordered to pack up their accommodation ready for the withdrawal. Even though the invasion of Britain did not eventuate, Gaius announced Britain's annexation.

Africa

Mauretania was brought into the empire during Gaius' reign. This region had been divided into the Roman province of Africa and the client kingdom ruled by Ptolemy, a descendant of Mark Antony. Ptolemy was ordered to Rome and executed in preparation for the annexation. This was a very provocative action on Gaius' part and led to civil war in Africa.

The East

Gaius restored dispossessed friendly kings to their former thrones and found kingdoms for others he favoured. He encountered fierce resistance from the Jews when he reversed Augustus' policy of religious tolerance in Judaea. Riots broke out when the Greeks erected an altar to Gaius only to have it torn down by the Jews. Gaius responded by ordering the Jews to set up a statue of him in the Temple in Jerusalem, which was to become a centre for worship of the emperor as part of the imperial cult. This caused considerable unrest in Judaea for a long period of time and ended only in a compromise brokered by the Jewish king Herod Agrippa.

In Parthia, the Romans sought to maintain their authority with minimal military effort. Gaius reversed Augustan policy towards Parthia, enabling it to regain its influence in Armenia.

Claudius

Claudius reversed Augustan policy of consolidation and adopted a policy of expansion. He wanted to be remembered as the 'extender of empire'. He can be credited with:

- gaining new territory for Rome's empire, in particular Britain
- assimilating the inhabitants of newly acquired territory
- stressing the military role of the *princeps*.

The Rhine–Danube frontier

Claudius maintained Tiberius' defensive and diplomatic policy on the Rhine–Danube frontier. To reinforce the frontier, fleets patrolled the Danube and roads were improved. Noricum became an imperial province governed by an **equestrian procurator**. Further south, the provinces of Achaea and Macedonia were returned to the control of the Senate.

Early in his reign Claudius accepted accolades for the achievement of the army. Cassius Dio reports that Galba and Gabinius had both defeated tribes in Germany and had even recovered the remaining eagle yet to be found from those lost in the Varian disaster. As a result Claudius was given the title *imperator*. In AD 47, Claudius prevented the general, Corbulo, from conducting any further aggressive and expansionary campaigns in Germany.

equestrian procurator
a governor of a small, but potentially difficult province, who came from the equestrian order, a property-based class ranking below the senatorial class in ancient Rome

Britain

In AD 43, Claudius annexed Britain. The factional fighting of the British chieftains provided Claudius with an excuse for the invasion. He was keen to enhance his military image and popularity with the army and to gain the riches of Britain. Aulus Plautius, legate of Pannonia, completed most of the conquest before giving way to Claudius, who took formal possession of Britain. He established a colony of veterans at Camulodunum, and trade and business activity began in the town of Londinium, the headquarters of the imperial governor. By AD 54 the Romans controlled the south while the fringes of the British frontier were guarded by the client kingdoms of the Iceni, Regni and Brigantes tribes.

The conquest of Britain was an important achievement for Claudius as he had successfully extended the boundaries of the empire. It was a highly organised campaign, even to the extent of using elephants to terrify the Britons. Claudius celebrated a triumph in AD 44 and Aulus Plautius was granted an ovation, the first non-Caesar to have one since Augustus' principate. (An ovation is a form of Roman triumph granted for a general's success in lesser wars or when the army had not been seriously threatened.) The conquest was commemorated on coins, architecture and in literature. A series of commanders, including Vespasian fought a number of challenging campaigns to extend Roman control throughout Claudius' reign.

The East

In Judaea, Claudius diffused the trouble Gaius had caused with the Jews by reversing his policies. He mediated between the Jews and the Alexandrian Greeks in an attempt to curb ill-feeling between the two groups. Claudius installed Herod Agrippa as ruler of Judaea, but

when Agrippa died in AD 44, it became an imperial province as it had previously been. Other changes in the East included:

- Commagene was restored to Antiochus IV, its king, who had been deposed by Gaius.
- Claudius initially strengthened his influence over Armenia and Parthia, but Parthia regained control near the end of his reign when Vologeses I became king of Parthia and his brother, Tiridates, king of Armenia.

Nero

Nero maintained the Roman frontiers but was not interested in expansion like his predecessor, Claudius. There were three areas of potential trouble: Armenia, Judaea and Britain.

The East

Nero attempted to annex Armenia when the Parthian king put his brother Tiridates on the throne. Corbulo captured the Armenian capital, causing Tiridates to flee. As a result the Romans gave the Armenian throne to Tigranes, a descendant of Herod the Great. When the Parthians attacked him, Nero sent Lucius Caesennius Paetus, a consul, to help. However, he proved incompetent and surrendered to the Parthians in a humiliating loss. Corbulo negotiated a settlement with the Parthians by which Tiridates regained the Armenian throne but had to travel to Rome to be crowned personally by Nero. This established peace in the East for the next 50 years.

In AD 64, the client kingdom of Pontus was annexed. As a result of this move, Asia Minor and the Black Sea area came under direct Roman control.

Gessius Florus was made procurator of Judaea and increased tensions in the area by exacting heavy taxes. Eventually the Jews rebelled and defeated the Roman forces. Nero appointed a new governor of Syria and Vespasian, a competent general, was sent to regain Judaea for the Romans. His campaign in Palestine was interrupted by Nero's death.

Britain

The south-east of the province of Britain was peaceful, but there was trouble on the frontiers. Suetonius Paulinus, who was sent as governor in AD 59, successfully attacked the island of Anglesey or Mona, as it was known then, the headquarters of the Druids. This was eclipsed, however, by the revolt of the Iceni, led by their queen, Boudicca. The Iceni were motivated to revolt by:

- their heavy tax load
- Roman confiscation of lands Claudius had granted to tribal nobles
- the whipping of Boudicca and rape of her daughters after the death of Prasutagus, the king.

The rebels conquered Camulodunum, butchering all Roman survivors and defeating the Ninth Legion. Suetonius Paulinus defended Londinium, where, although heavily outnumbered, his forces overwhelmed Boudicca and her army. Nero sent a new governor to Britain after Suetonius Paulinus had been persuaded to reduce the severity of his reprisals.

13.12 Understanding and using the sources

Source 47

1 What was Tiberius' policy concerning his choice of army commanders?
2 What, in Matyszak's opinion, does it reveal about Tiberius?

13.12 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   a What would have motivated Tiberius to limit the empire to the Rhine frontier?
   b Why would he recall Germanicus to Rome and send him to Parthia?
   c What was positive about Gaius' creation of client kingdoms?
   d How successful was Claudius' policy of expansion?
   e How successfully did Nero meet the challenges of consolidating the empire?
2 Summarise this complex topic by creating a table like the following:

	THE RHINE – DANUBE	THE EAST – AFRICA	BRITAIN
Tiberius			
Gaius			
Claudius			
Nero			

3 Writing task: To what extent did the Julio-Claudian rulers successfully expand and consolidate the empire in this period?

   To help plan your response:
   - decide how you will structure your response: *princeps* by *princeps* or region by region
   - make judgements about the success or lack of success in expansion and consolidation
   - support your response with information from relevant sources.

SOURCE 48
Boudicca, queen of the Iceni

13.13 Relationship of the *princeps* and the army

The army had been instrumental in helping Rome acquire and maintain its vast empire. Augustus understood the importance of keeping direct control over the army and of making it an instrument of the state rather than a weapon to be used by individual generals. His reforms had made the army a professional standing body, which it would continue to be for the next few centuries. It became an important part of Roman tradition for the ruler to be seen as a capable military figure. When the rulers ignored the power of the army and failed to project a military presence, as Nero did, they ran the risk of being overthrown.

Tiberius

Tiberius had enjoyed a long and distinguished military career before he became *princeps*. On his accession in AD 14, the armies in Pannonia and Germany mutinied. Velleius Paterculus, an experienced soldier, wrote that 'the army … wanted a new leader, a new order of things, and a new republic … They even dared to threaten to dictate terms to the Senate and to the emperor' (*Roman History* 2.125.1–2). However, rather than opposition to Tiberius, the mutinies were more the actions of legionaries who wanted an improvement in pay and conditions and were taking advantage of the accession of a new emperor to make their grievances heard. In particular they were concerned about their length of service; the usual 20 years was often prolonged to 30 or even 40 years. They also complained of the severity of their treatment at the hands of the centurions. Tiberius' son, Drusus, was sent to deal with the army in Pannonia, accompanied by two cohorts of the Praetorian Guard. He handled the mutineers skilfully, commending their controlled behaviour and promising to take their concerns to his father. Tacitus records that he executed the leaders of the mutiny and returned to Rome.

SOURCE 49 Drusus (Drusus Julius Caesar), son of Tiberius

Germanicus, Tiberius' designated successor, was sent to deal with the mutiny of the legions of the Lower Rhine in Germany. The legionaries here also complained about their length of service, but were particularly upset about not receiving the bonuses they had been promised by Augustus. They demanded a pay increase, a reduction of their service duration and an end to their cruel treatment by the centurions. Germanicus rejected the troops' offer to proclaim him emperor and negotiated a resolution. The terms of service were amended so that legionaries could obtain a full discharge after 20 years and dispensation from heavy duties after 16 years; in addition, Augustus' legacy was to be doubled. This was paid by Germanicus himself from his own funds. The ringleaders were executed by his general, Severus. Despite being displeased by the settlement, Tiberius gave the same privileges to the legionaries in Pannonia.

Tiberius made no visits to troops serving on the frontiers, relying on the depth of loyalty to him that had built up in the army over his long career. He followed closely the measures that Augustus had put in place for the army. However, by AD 23 he began recruiting soldiers from the Romanised people in the provinces and the descendants of veterans because he felt that the Italian recruits were inferior.

An important strategy of Tiberius was to delegate military campaigns to able generals. For example, Junius Blaesus defeated a revolt by the Numidian warlord Tacfarinas, while he was proconsul of Africa, for which he earned a triumph. Unfortunately, he was a casualty of the downfall of Sejanus, his nephew.

Tiberius provided reliable military leadership and cultivated his ties with the legions. His success as a military commander stands in contrast to the inexperience of his successors.

Gaius

Gaius enjoyed great popularity with the army because he was the son of Germanicus. He understood the need to have a military image and a relationship with the army. This was probably the reason why he doubled the 500 sesterces left to each soldier in Tiberius' will.

In AD 39–40, Gaius went to Gaul where he was acclaimed seven times, even though he fought no battles. Suetonius records several inexplicable actions he took to make it look like he was a great general. For example, he chose deserters from the Gauls to dress up as defeated German tribesmen and paraded them in one of his triumphs.

Also in AD 39, the governor of Germany, Lentulus Gaetulicus, a former associate of Sejanus, was executed for treason. Gaetulicus had treated his four legions very well and may have been seen as a threat. He was replaced by Servius Sulpicius Galba, who reversed Gaetulicus' indulgent practices.

Claudius

Despite what the sources tell us about his scholarly pursuits, lack of military experience and unmilitary appearance, Claudius cultivated the army throughout his reign, realising the importance of a military image. Claudius did not have a personal relationship with the army when he became *princeps*, so he needed to act quickly to develop one. Two events assisted him:

- Early in his reign he faced a crisis when the governor of Dalmatia, Scribonianus, led a revolt against Claudius. However, Scribonianus' legions refused to follow him, causing the revolt to fail. Claudius rewarded the legions with the title *Claudia pia fidelis*, which means 'Claudius' own loyal and true'.
- Claudius personally led his troops to subdue Britain in AD 43. He held a triumph on his return to Rome.

SOURCE 50 A gold aureus minted in AD 46–47 depicting Claudius with his title *imperator*. The reverse shows an equestrian statue on his triumphal arch, which is inscribed 'De Britann'.

Claudius cultivated his military image through coins, statues, buildings and on every public occasion. His invasion of Britain was acknowledged by the erection of a triumphal arch. This arch is shown on coinage of the period that also bears Claudius' title *imperator*. He was saluted as *imperator* on 27 occasions.

Claudius treated his troops well. He rewarded them with titles and grants of citizenship, and began the practice of awarding certificates for honourable discharge of soldiers. In AD 45 he granted soldiers the privileges enjoyed by married men. This meant that soldiers now had the right to give legacies to their children. In general, the army was well disciplined and content during Claudius' reign. He chose capable men as generals: Galba, Corbulo, Vespasian, Suetonius Paulinus.

SOURCE 51
A sestertius of Nero showing the Temple of Janus with its closed doors, signifying peace

Nero

Nero made little attempt to build a military image or cultivate the army as Claudius had done. He rarely showed concern for his soldiers, allowing their pay and rewards to fall into arrears. However, he did found veteran settlements in AD 57 at Capua and Nuceria, which shows that he had some understanding of the need to keep the army onside.

Despite inheriting competent generals who had served under Claudius (Corbulo, Vespasian and Suetonius Paulinus), Nero made some serious mistakes in the choice of military leaders. For example, the new legate of Cappadocia, Caesennius Paetus, was given the task of imposing Roman authority in the east after the unsuccessful invasion of Parthia by Tigranes, the Roman client king of Armenia. He suffered a humiliating defeat at Rhandeia, leaving Corbulo to resolve the situation.

Even though Corbulo had served with distinction in the East, and was referred to as Nero's 'most loyal slave' by Tiridates, king of Armenia, Nero ordered him to commit suicide. His son-in-law had been involved in a conspiracy, but Corbulo had maintained his loyalty to Nero. Vespasian was appointed to take command in the East.

Nero's extravagant behaviour and emphasis on his artistic pursuits did not find favour with the army. He did, however, attempt to increase his military prestige by promoting the visit of Tigranes to Rome in AD 66 when he was awarded the throne of Armenia. Coins from this time proclaimed 'The closing of the Temple of Janus with peace attained by land and sea'.

The ultimate evidence of Nero's lack of support from the army comes from the events at the end of his reign. The revolts of Vindex in Gaul and Galba in Spain, the withdrawal of support by Macer and the legion in Africa and the legions in Germany indicate clearly the decisive role the army played in Nero's downfall.

13.13 Check your learning

1 Summarise this section by creating a table like the one shown below.

PRINCEPS	POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ARMY	NEGATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ARMY	EVIDENCE
Tiberius			
Gaius			
Claudius			
Nero			

2 Writing task: Discuss the relationships of the *princeps* with the army in the Julio-Claudian period.

To help you plan your response:

- identify issues involved in this topic and use them to structure your response
- give points for and/or against (e.g. a *princeps* had a good relationship with the army or did not have a good relationship with the army because …)
- support your response with information from relevant sources.

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13.14 Administration of the empire

The provinces of the Roman Empire were divided into senatorial and imperial units of administration. Augustus had assigned provinces that were peaceful and free from warfare to the Senate. Troops were rarely stationed there. Insecure provinces, mostly on the frontiers, were kept in the hands of the *princeps* and administered by a legate. During the Julio-Claudian period little was done to change the system of provincial government, and most provincial Romans enjoyed physical security, a reasonable system of justice and a working economy.

Source 52 summarises the main features of the administration of the empire under the Julio-Claudians.

SOURCE 52 Main features of the administration of the empire

PRINCEPS	FEATURES OF ADMINISTRATION OF EMPIRE	EVIDENCE
Tiberius	Made important innovations to provincial government during his principate	• Extension of the tenure of provincial governors • Centralisation of the system of administration
	Wanted the provinces to be governed by men of merit, so allowed legates and governors to remain in their provinces for longer than the traditional year	C. Poppaeaus Sabinus served in Moesia for 24 years
	Centralised the provincial administration by allowing some governors to govern their provinces from Rome	L. Aelius Lamia fulfilled the office of legate of Syria from Rome
	Imperial procurators charged with looking after the *princeps'* financial affairs in each province hindered the extortionate raising of taxes by the public tax companies	• Tiberius told the prefect of Egypt that he wanted his sheep shorn, not flayed (i.e. skinned) (Suetonius, *Tiberius* 32.3) • Remitted the taxes of 12 cities of Asia Minor that had been hit by earthquakes
	Governors made directly answerable to the *princeps* instead of the Senate	During Tiberius' principate there were 11 prosecutions of provincial officials
Gaius	Selected capable provincial governors	• Galba – Germany • Vitellius – the East
	Administrative trouble concerning the Jews	• Recalled governor of Egypt, Flaccus, after anti-Jewish riots broke out in Alexandria; later executed • Riots between Jews and Greeks in Judaea exacerbated by Gaius' order to convert the temple in Jerusalem to the imperial cult
Claudius	Responsible for establishing what has been called an imperial civil service. The administrative departments included: • correspondence – *ab epistulis* • finance – *a rationibus* • petitions to the emperor – *a libellis* • judicial cases – *a cognitionibus* • literary matters and patronage – *a studiis* Outcome: • greatly improved administrative efficiency • department heads wielded enormous power and amassed considerable personal wealth	• Narcissus – secretary of imperial correspondence: – Claudius' own former slave, so trusted with great responsibility – composed letters to governors, commanders and others – dealt with the substantial correspondence between the *princeps*, officials and citizens throughout the empire – responsible for the granting of Roman citizenship and military promotions • Pallas – head of finance: – former slave of Claudius' mother, Antonia Minor, then a client of Claudius – managed provincial revenue and Claudius' imperial estates – responsible for grain supply, public works and the army payroll

SOURCE 52 (*continued*)

PRINCEPS	FEATURES OF ADMINISTRATION OF EMPIRE	EVIDENCE
Claudius	• Rearranged the senatorial and imperial provinces depending on their circumstances • These provinces governed by a *procurator Augusti*, personally accountable to Claudius • Centralisation of control was a feature of Claudius' reign	• Senatorial provinces – Macedonia and Achaea were returned to senatorial control • Imperial provinces – Mauretania (divided into two), Britain, Thrace (made a province in AD 46), Judaea
	Romanisation improved the infrastructure of the empire	• Via Claudia Augusta, a road 525 kilometres in length, linked Augsberg to Trent in the Danube region • Towns and colonies, such as Cologne and Triers, built throughout the empire • Roman colonies established: Britain, Gaul, Mauretania, Germany, Thrace, Cappadocia and Syria
	Many provincials were granted Latin rights or, in some cases, full Roman citizenship – caused much alarm in some quarters of Roman society	• The whole Anauni tribe granted citizenship in AD 46 • In AD 48, some Gallic nobles (i.e. from Gaul) allowed to enter the Roman Senate
Nero	Minimal interest in the administration of the provinces	• Gave Roman citizenship rights to the people of Alpes Maritimae
	A level of discontent with his administration	• The final move to overthrow him came from the provinces

Romanisation integration and assimilation of provincial people into the Roman Empire

13.14 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - a What does the evidence suggest about Tiberius' administration of the empire?
   - b In what ways did Claudius change the administration of the empire?
   - c What parts of Roman society would have been alarmed at Claudius' measures to Romanise the empire? Why?

2 Writing task: Discuss the success of the Julio-Claudians in administering the empire.

To help you plan your response:
- identify issues involved in this topic and use them to structure your response
- give points for and/or against (e.g. a *princeps* was successful in administering the empire because …)
- support your response with information from relevant sources.

13.15 Development of the imperial cult

Emperor-worship became established during the principate of Augustus. Since 42 BC he had been *Divi filius*, the son of a god, after the deification of his adoptive father, Julius Caesar. Signs of his divinity included:

- a public holiday to celebrate his birthday
- libations (liquid offerings) poured in his honour at private and public banquets
- the addition of his name to those of the gods in hymns.

During Augustus' principate, the imperial cult was discouraged in Rome. Here and in the western part of the empire, he permitted the worship of his ***numen*** and ***genius***, and statues and altars were erected for his own genius and that of his family. He allowed **municipal cults** to develop where his genius was associated with the worship of the Lares, gods of the Roman household. Outside of Rome, particularly in the east, however, Augustus became associated with the worship of the goddess Roma, the personification of the Roman state. Pergamum and Nicomedia were given permission to dedicate temples to Roma and Augustus in AD 29. Augustus deliberately introduced the imperial cult in the west to encourage loyalty and unity in the provinces. Altars to the cult were erected at Lugdunum (Lyons) and Ubiorum (Cologne).

After Augustus' death, he became a god, more like the ones we are familiar with, such as Jupiter and Mars. His cult was run by a college of priests, or *flamines*, who were made up of freedmen, and given the special title *Augustales*.

numen
the spirit or divine power present in a person, thing or place

genius
the divine element and creative force that resided in the emperor and guided him like a guardian angel

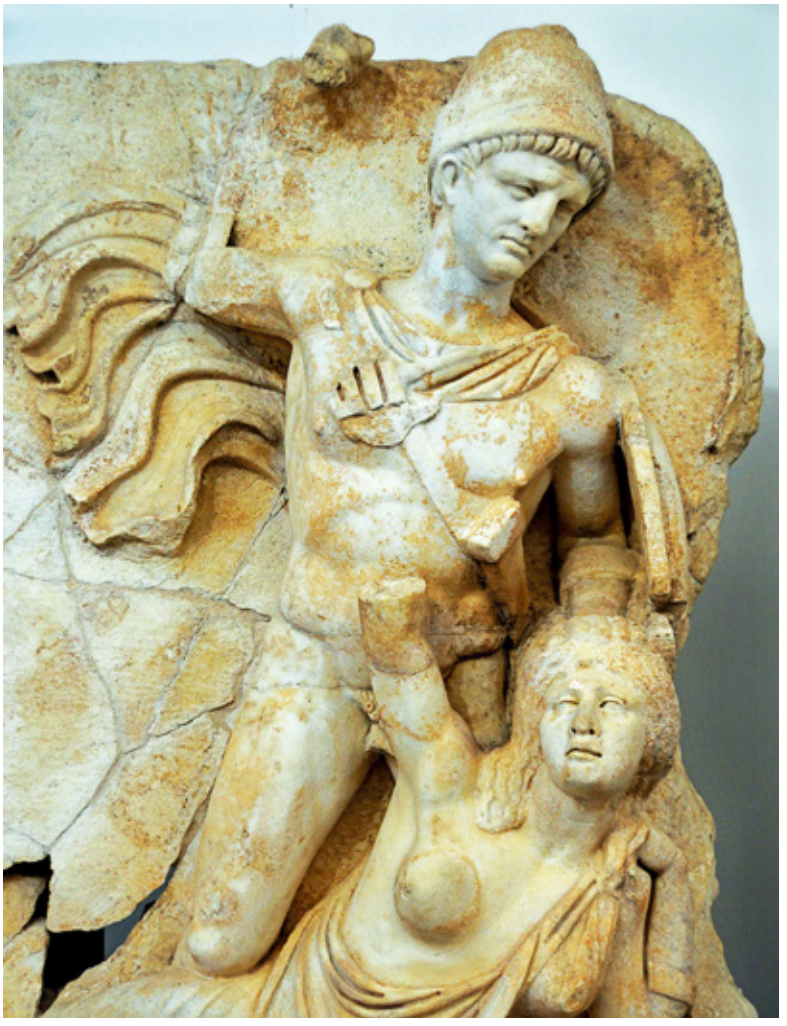
municipal cults
cults established by cities in the Roman Empire in honour of both living and deceased emperors

SOURCE 53 The *Gemma Augustea*, a cameo depicting the apotheosis or deification of Augustus. The emperor sits next to the goddess Roma with their feet resting on the armour of defeated enemies.

The imperial cult became an important instrument of Romanisation within the empire after Augustus. It was followed by army units throughout the empire and also by individuals in the provinces. The imperial cult was used to consolidate the loyalty of local elites, whose members were responsible for both the priesthood and the provincial administration. It was also a key tool of propaganda. For example, the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias in Turkey, erected in the Julio-Claudian period, bears sculptures of the emperors Claudius and Nero conquering the regions brought into the empire. Claudius is depicted with a defiant but defeated Britannia (Source 54), while Nero looms over a slumped female figure representing Armenia.

Tiberius

Tiberius did not encourage the imperial cult with respect to himself; however, in AD 26 he was persuaded to allow a temple in Smyrna in Asia, dedicated to himself and the genius of the Senate. The cult statue depicted him



SOURCE 54 Claudius conquering Britannia, from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias in Turkey

wearing a toga, veiled for sacrifice and holding a *patera*, a shallow dish used in Roman religious rituals. However, he refused to allow a temple to be built in his name and that of Livia in the province of Hispania Ulterior. Tacitus records that he considered it would be 'presumptuous and arrogant' to be worshipped among the gods in every province. His letter continues in Source 55.

SOURCE 55

As for myself, senators, I emphasize to you that I am human, performing human tasks, and content to occupy the first place among men. That is what I want later generations to remember. They will do more than justice to my memory if they judge me worthy of my ancestors, careful of your interests, steadfast in danger and fearless of animosities incurred in the public service. Those are my temples in your hearts, those my finest and most lasting images.

Tacitus, *Annals*, 4.38
(trans. M. Grant Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1971)

After the downfall of Sejanus, thanksgiving for the preservation of Tiberius was offered in Umbria and Crete. The Senate refused to deify Tiberius after his death.

Gaius

Gaius demanded that he be worshipped as a god from early in his reign, apparently insisting that he was the incarnation of Jupiter. The Greek states sent him congratulations, referring to him as 'the new god Augustus'. A temple was dedicated to him in Miletus in Asia, and Cassius Dio claims that Gaius was planning to appropriate the temple being built for Apollo for his own worship. After the death of his sister Drusilla in AD 38, Gaius had her deified. Suetonius and Cassius Dio report that a cult of Gaius was set up in Rome; however, there are no inscriptions existing to support this.

Two events caused trouble in the East. First, the Alexandrian Greeks ordered statues of Gaius to be set up in the synagogues of Alexandria in Egypt. A delegation of Jews complained to the emperor, pointing out that they regarded him as a saviour and benefactor, but could not worship him. Further trouble arose when Gaius ordered that the Jewish temple in Jerusalem be converted to a shrine for the imperial cult, featuring a huge bronze statue of himself. The Syrian legate, Publius Petronius, was ordered to implement the order, using force if necessary. He appears to have deliberately delayed, which gave Herod Agrippa time to

negotiate a compromise: Gaius would forgo being worshipped in the temple if the Jews would give up their interference in the imperial cult in other places. Gaius' assassination put an end to the issue. He was not deified by the Senate.

Claudius

Claudius was in the habit of refusing divine honours, but he did permit the erection of statues to himself and his family throughout Rome (see Source 8). He also permitted divine honours for his grandmother, who became Livia Augusta. Evidence for the imperial cult in the reign of Claudius comes from two areas of the empire:

- Britain – the imperial cult here appears to have been centred in Camulodunum (Colchester) where the Temple of Claudius was built during Claudius' lifetime. This temple was the largest classical temple in Britain, on a par with temples built in Rome. A bronze head of Claudius found in Suffolk in 1907 is thought to have been part of a life-size statue of the emperor. It might have occupied an important public space in the *colonia* or settlement at Camulodunum.
- Egypt – two pieces of evidence attest to Claudius' involvement in the imperial cult in this province. First, in Alexandria the local citizens chose the cult officials for the sanctuary of Augustus in their city. A letter from Claudius to the Alexandrians advised them on the procedure they should follow for the election of these officials, indicating the direct connection between the sanctuary and the emperor. Second, the remains of an imperial chapel have been found at the Temple of Amun at Karnak near the first pylon. The bases of 14 statues of Roman emperors were found in the *cella*, the inner area of the temple, three of which are ascribed to Claudius.

On his death, Claudius was deified and the cult of Divus Claudius established. Agrippina the Younger was its chief priestess and the cult temple was erected on the Caelian Hill, a less than respectable part of Rome.

Nero

Nero was granted divine honours by the Senate from an early age. It is clear that he liked to associate himself with the gods, particularly Apollo; however, this is not proof that he was elevating himself to divine status as has been argued. Some of the coins issued at this time suggest that he considered himself to be divine, for example the *tetradrachms* and *dupondii* showing Nero wearing the sun crown with radiating beams, suggesting his association with Apollo. However, many of his other coins were traditional in style.

Tacitus records that the Senate erected a statue of Nero in the Temple of Mars Ultor (Mars the Avenger), the first time that an emperor had been directly associated with a god in Rome. Nero rejected a temple dedicated to himself as 'the divine Nero', but erected a colossal statue of himself wearing the sun crown, somewhere in his Domus Aurea. Acclamations by which he was greeted both in Rome and in the East, recorded by Cassius Dio, indicate that he was given divine status, for example 'O, Divine Voice'. Nero had his wife, Poppaea Sabina, and his 4-month-old daughter, Claudia, deified on their deaths.

SOURCE 56
Tetradrachm of Nero, depicting him wearing the radiate sun crown with radiating beams. Poppaea Sabina is on the reverse.

13.15 Understanding and using the sources

Source 55

1 What impression does Tiberius' letter give of his attitude to the imperial cult?

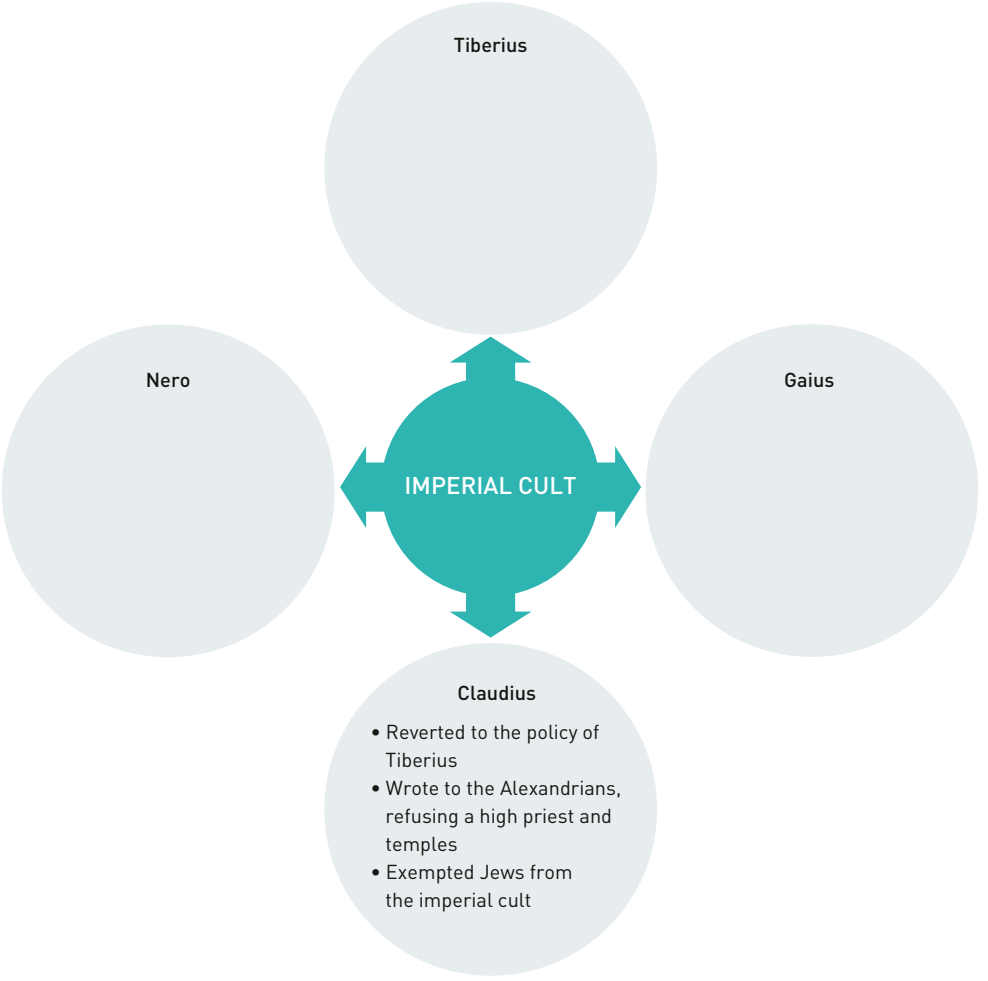
2 Considering Tacitus' known dislike for Tiberius, comment on his inclusion of the text of the letter in his *Annals*.

13.15 Check your learning

1 Discuss the following:
   - **a** Why did Augustus discourage the imperial cult in Rome?
   - **b** How could the imperial cult promote Romanisation in the empire?
   - **c** Why was Gaius' order to have a statue of himself erected in the temple at Jerusalem an inflammatory act?
   - **d** Why was Claudius' cult temple erected in a lesser area of Rome?
   - **e** What does the deification of some emperors and their family members suggest about the Roman people's attitudes to the gods?

2 Research the *Gemma Augustea* and the Sebasteion in Turkey. What does each reveal about the Julio-Claudian period?

3 Summarise this section by completing a mind map like the one below. An entry on Claudius has been started for you.



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Chapter conclusion

By the end of AD 69, it must have appeared to Roman citizens that the veneer of republicanism that Augustus had endeavoured to preserve was gone. Nero was followed by a succession of, literally, short-lived emperors who gained the highest office through the power of their armies, not the people. Nero's death in AD 68 ended the Julio-Claudian dynasty and created a power vacuum that was eventually filled by the last man standing, Vespasian. His survival of the Year of the Four Emperors began a new dynasty, the Flavians, who would rule Rome for the next 37 years.

obook assess

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

HSC practice exam
Comprehensive test to prepare students for the HSC exam

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension

Glossary

A

Achaemenid dynasty
relating to the hereditary rulers in Persia from Cyrus I to Darius III (553–330 BC)

Acropolis
a fortified hilltop in ancient Athens, containing the Parthenon and other notable buildings, mostly dating from the 5th century BC

adze
a tool similar to an axe, with an arched blade at right angles to the handle

aedile
a magistrate whose duties included maintenance of town infrastructure

Aegean Bronze Age
the Bronze Age period of the civilisations that arose around the Aegean Sea, c. 3000–1050 BC

aesthetic
concerned with beauty or the appreciation of beauty

Agora
a public open space in ancient Athens used for assemblies and markets

Akkadian
a Semitic language spoken in Mesopotamia from the 3rd to the 1st millennium BC; used as the language of diplomacy in the region

Ahmose
a popular name in this period, used by both men and women

alabastron
an elongated jar with a narrow neck, flat-rimmed mouth and rounded base, often requiring a stand and used for fragrant ointments

Amarna Letters
diplomatic correspondence between Egyptian rulers and their fellow rulers and vassals, inscribed on clay tablets

Amarna period
an era of the Eighteenth Dynasty of New Kingdom Egyptian history when the pharaoh Amenhotep IV changed his name to Akhenaten, adopted the Aten as the sole state god and moved the capital of Egypt to Akhetaten

Amarna physiognomy
the distinctive facial features of Akhenaten and his family as represented in reliefs and sculptures of the time

amphora (*pl.* amphorae)
a two-handled pottery storage jar with an oval body tapering to a point at the base

androgynous
partly male and partly female in appearance

annals
a record of events, usually year by year

anthropomorphic
displaying animals, gods and objects with human features

Apis bull cult
Egyptian worship of a bull sacred to the city of Memphis

architrave
the frame around a doorway or window

Archonship
office of the nine chief magistrates (archons) of ancient Athens

Areopagus
aristocratic council comprising ex-archons

arthritis
a disease that causes painful inflammation and stiffness of the joints

Aryan
referring to an ancient people who spoke an Indo-European language; they invaded northern India in the 2nd millennium BC

Asiatic
a term used by the ancient Egyptians to refer to any people native to the areas east of Egypt, including Syria–Palestine

Augusta
an honorific title, first awarded to Livia, wife of Augustus, and later given to emperors' wives and honoured women of the imperial families

aureus
a gold Roman coin of the Augustan period, worth 25 silver denarii

austerity
simplicity, even severity, of lifestyle as opposed to luxury and comforts

autonomous
having the freedom to act independently

awl
a small pointed tool used for piercing holes in materials such as leather

B

ba
Egyptian afterlife concept relating to the spirit force of an individual, usually represented as a human-headed bird

barque
a boat similar to a common Nile boat; divine barques were used to transport sacred objects between temples

Behistun Inscription
an inscription recording the victories of Darius I against those who rebelled against his rule

benben
a sacred pyramid-shaped stone representing the solar cult of ancient Egypt; it originated in Heliopolis, the precinct of the sun god Re

bezel
the slightly convex oval face of a gold ring, typically engraved or stamped for use as a seal

booty
the spoils of war, including goods and people captured from the defeated enemy

bothros
a hole or pit for pouring libations to the gods

bow drill
a prehistoric drilling tool worked by a bow and string

breccia
rock composed of angular fragments of older rocks melded together

bureaucracy
a system of administration through government officials

burin
a stone tool with a head like a chisel

C

cache
valuable items concealed in a hiding place

cambered
having a slightly arched surface

cameo
a piece of stone jewellery with the subject carved in relief to stand out from and contrast with its background, which is usually a different colour

canopic chest
a wooden case containing jars in which the ancient Egyptians preserved the interior organs of a deceased person, usually for burial with the mummy

capital
the top part of a column

caries
tooth decay or cavities

carpentum
a two-wheeled carriage in which women of the Roman imperial family were sometimes allowed to ride

cartouche
an oval shape containing the hieroglyphs representing the names of a pharaoh

cataract
a section of the Nile River where huge granite outcrops force the water into a narrow channel, making navigation difficult

cenotaph
a monument or tomb commemorating someone who is buried elsewhere or does not have a tomb

censor
a Roman magistrate responsible for maintaining the census, supervising public morality and checking some parts of government finance

chalice
a large cup or goblet

chattel
a slave or an item of property

chine
a cut of meat across or along the backbone

chthonic
relating to the deities and other beings that dwell beneath the earth

city-state
a sovereign state, consisting of a single city and its dependent territories

Classical period
the period of Greek history from c. 500 to 323 BC

classicist
a person who studies the classics, i.e. ancient Greek and Roman language, literature, art, architecture or culture

client king
a ruler of a client state or kingdom that is politically or militarily subordinate to a more powerful state

client state
a state or kingdom that is politically or militarily subordinate to a more powerful state

codpiece
a bag covering the male genitals

cohort
a Roman military unit made up of six centuries (usually around 100 men) and equivalent to one-tenth of a legion

collared rhyton
a pear-shaped ritual vessel with a beaded collar and narrow neck

colonnade
a row of columns

concubine
a secondary wife, usually ranking lower than official wives in a king's household

consort
the spouse of a reigning monarch

consul
one of two annually elected chief magistrates in the Roman political system

consulship
the position of a consul, one of the two chief magistrates of the ancient Roman Republic

corbelled
when each course of stones in a building projects inwards, forming a beehive shape

co-regency
a system where rule is shared by two monarchs; in Egypt usually between senior and junior partners

co-regent
one partner in a system where rule is shared by two monarchs

course
a continuous row of masonry such as brick or stone

court
a ruler's council of ministers, officers and state advisers, sometimes including the family and retinue (followers)

crook and flail
the symbols of Egyptian kingship, originally representing the god Osiris

cudgel
a short, thick stick used as a weapon

cult
a system of religious devotion associated with a particular god

cuneiform
a system of wedge-shaped writing on clay tablets first developed by the ancient cultures of Mesopotamia and Persia

Cycladic
relating to the Bronze Age civilisation of the Cycladic Islands, c. 3000–1050 BC

D

deified
elevated to the status of a god

Delphic Oracle
the priestess of Apollo, in his sanctuary at Delphi; she uttered prophecies on behalf of Apollo, the god of prophecy

democracy
government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or their elected representatives

diadem
a jewelled crown or headband worn as a symbol of sovereignty

dictator
in ancient Rome, a magistrate with the authority to deal with a military emergency or to undertake a specific duty

Dionysia
an Athenian dramatic festival from which Greek comedy and tragedy developed; it was held to honour the god Dionysus

diplomatic marriage
in ancient Egypt, marriage arranged between the Egyptian pharaoh and the daughter of a neighbouring king in order to cement political ties between their two countries

diplomatic protocol
official procedure or rules governing affairs of state or diplomatic occasions between different states

doorjamb
the vertical post of a door frame

Dorian
referring to the earliest inhabitants of the Peloponnese, ancestors of the Spartans

Doric column
a type of ancient Greek column featuring a smooth or fluted column and a smooth, round capital

dressed block
stone that has been worked to a desired shape, with smooth faces ready for installation

dysentery
infection of the intestines resulting in severe diarrhoea

E

ecstatic
involving an experience of mystic self-transcendence, i.e. when a person overcomes the limits of the individual self by means of spiritual contemplation

electrum
a naturally occurring alloy of gold and silver with some trace elements (e.g. copper)

embossing
carving, moulding or stamping a design on an object, causing it to stand out in relief

ephor
one of five annually elected magistrates in the Spartan government

epigraphic/epigraphical
relating to the study of inscriptions on stone or metal

epiphany
a ritual associated with Minoan religious practice that is designed to summon the deity to the presence of the worshippers

epitaph
words written in memory of a person who has died, especially as an inscription on a tombstone

epithet
a word or phrase describing a particular quality or characteristic of a person

equestrian (*equites*)
one of two aristocratic classes of ancient Rome, ranking below the patricians; equestrians were entitled to wear a gold ring and a tunic with a narrow black band

equestrian procurator
a governor of a small, but potentially difficult province, who came from the equestrian order, a property-based class ranking below the senatorial class in ancient Rome

ethos
the set of attitudes and beliefs typical of an organisation or group of people

eunuch
a man who has been castrated, employed in the courts of ancient eastern rulers to guard the women's living areas, sometimes rising to become a royal adviser

exacerbated
made a problem or situation worse

F

façade
the front of a building that faces onto a street or open space

faience
a material made from powdered quartz, usually covered with a transparent blue or green glaze

figure-of-eight shield
a large shield made of bull's hide in the shape of a figure of eight

filigree
a metalwork technique used in jewellery, where gold or silver threads are twisted together and soldered to the surface of a metal object in an artistic arrangement

forum
the original marketplace of Rome; the site of popular elections

Fourth Style
one of the four styles of Pompeian art described by August Mau; characterised by the painting of framed scenes, often featuring human figures and architectural motifs

frankincense
an aromatic gum resin from certain trees, used chiefly for burning incense in religious rituals

fresco
painting on wet plaster on walls or ceilings

frontality
the depiction of the front view of figures or objects in a work of art

fulminant shock
a cause of death associated with intense heat

G

games
ancient Roman spectacles, including chariot races, theatrical performances and gladiatorial shows

gargoyle
a carving of an ugly human or animal head or figure projecting from the gutter of a building, acting as a spout

garrison
troops stationed in a fortress or town to defend it

garum
thick, salty fish sauce

genius
the divine element and creative force that resided in the emperor and guided him like a guardian angel

geopolitical
relating to politics as influenced by geographical factors

gold of valour
in early New Kingdom Egypt, a military decoration for bravery in the form of a golden fly

graffito
an inscription on a wall or other surface

granulation
a jewellery manufacturing technique in which a surface is covered in tiny spheres or granules of gold

greave
armour worn to protect the lower leg

griffin
a mythical creature with the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion

guilds
associations of craftsmen or merchants

gypsum
a soft white substance that looks like chalk and is used to make plaster

H

harem
an establishment housing the pharaoh's secondary wives, both Egyptian and foreign, their servants and children

heart scarab
an Egyptian amulet in the shape of the scarab beetle bearing magical spells; these amulets were placed in the wrappings of mummies approximately over the heart to ensure the deceased's acceptance into the afterlife

Heb-Sed
an ancient Egyptian ceremony celebrating the continued rule of a pharaoh; the name is taken from the name of an Egyptian wolf god, one of whose names was Wepwawet or Heb-Sed

Helladic
relating to the Bronze Age cultures of mainland Greece, c. 3000–1050 BC

Hellenic
relating to Greece; from Hellas, the Greek word for their country

Hellenistic
relating to Greek and Mediterranean history between 323 and 31 BC

helots
the enslaved population of Sparta

heresy
belief contrary to orthodox or traditional doctrine

herm
a rectangular, tapered stone base supporting a carved head or bust

hookworm
a parasite of the intestines

hoplite
citizen soldier

hoplite phalanx
a Greek battle formation in which the hoplites, citizen soldiers, lined up in ranks with their shields locked together, and their spears projecting, presenting a shield wall and a mass of spear points to the enemy

hoplite warfare
an ancient Greek form of battle in which foot soldiers fought in tight, highly disciplined formation with overlapping shields

humerus
the long bone in the arm of humans extending from the shoulder to the elbow

Hyksos
a Semitic people (i.e. speakers of Hebrew, Arabic or Aramaic) who ruled Egypt in the Second Intermediate period (c. 1782–1570 BC) from the city of Avaris (modern Tell el Dab'a) in Lower Egypt

hypocaust
an ancient Roman heating system whereby air heated by furnaces was directed into hollow spaces beneath the floors of buildings

hypostyle hall
a hall in a temple, with two central rows of columns taller than those on either side of it creating a raised central roof area to admit light

I

iconography
the study and interpretation of the visual images and symbols used in a work of art

ideology
a system of ideas and ideals

ideology of kingship
a set of beliefs or principles relating to the state of being a king

imperator
a Latin word originally meaning commander, but later incorporated into the titles of the emperor

imperial cult
worship of the emperor during his reign (as in the eastern provinces), or in Rome after his death

infrastructure
the basic facilities and systems serving a city or town, such as water supply and roads

ingot
metal cast into a convenient shape for storage or transportation

inhumation
the act of burial

***insula* (*pl.* *insulae*)**
a multi-storeyed apartment or tenement block with taverns, shops and businesses on the ground floor and living space on the higher floors; the name also refers to a block of various buildings at Pompeii surrounded on four side by streets

J

joinery
the wooden parts of a building, such as stairs, doors and window frames, viewed collectively

judiciary
the part of a country's government that is responsible for its legal system

juniper
an evergreen shrub or small tree that bears purple, berry-like cones

K

Karneia
a religious festival of ancient Sparta

khepesh
a sickle-shaped battle axe

Khepri
a solar deity who took the form of a scarab beetle who pushed the rising sun over the horizon at dawn; also associated with creation and rebirth

Khnum
an ancient Egyptian god of fertility, associated with water and with procreation

krater
a large Greek vase for mixing water and wine

king's son of Kush
the king's viceroy or deputy in charge of Nubia

kylix
a drinking cup with two looped handles and a shallow bowl fixed to a slender centre stem

L

larnax (*pl.* larnakes)
a small closed coffin or box used as a container for human remains

Late Bronze Age
the latter part of the period when bronze was used for tools and weapons, c. 1600–1200 BC

Late Republic
c. 146 BC–31 BC, the last stage in the evolution of Rome from republic to empire

Latium
the region of central western Italy in which the city of Rome was founded

legionary
a professional heavy infantryman of a legion of the Roman army

Levant
the lands bordering the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea

libation
a liquid offering such as wine, oil or water that is poured onto a religious object (e.g. an altar)

libation formulae
religious inscriptions on cups, ladles and other vessels used in the offerings of oil and other liquids

lictors
men carrying the official emblems of public office – the *fasces* – who walked before Roman magistrates to clear a path through the crowd so that they could pass

lintel
a horizontal support of timber or stone across the top of a door or window

logistics
the equipping and supplying of an army while it is on campaign

loincloth
a garment, made of a single piece of cloth, worn around the hips and covering the groin

lost-wax technique
a metal-casting method in which the figure is first moulded in wax and then covered in plaster; when the plaster is set, the wax is melted out and replaced by metal

lustral basin
a sunken room accessed by a short flight of steps, possibly for ritual use

M

ma'at
the ancient Egyptian concept of truth, order, harmony and justice

mace
a blunt, club-like weapon with a heavy stone or metal head on a wooden or metal handle

maius imperium proconsulare
the power of a proconsul or governor that was applicable throughout the empire and superior to that held by the other proconsuls

martial ideology
a system of ideas relating to warfare

mercenary
a professional soldier hired to serve in a foreign army

mess
a gathering of men in barracks to share meals and socialise

microcosm
a place regarded as representing in miniature form the characteristics of something much larger

Middle Kingdom
the period of significant development in ancient Egyptian history comprising the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties

militarism
a strong military spirit or policy

monotheistic
relating to a religion in which one god is worshipped

moratorium
a temporary prohibition of an activity

mortuary temple
a religious building dedicated to the funerary cult of a deceased person

motif
a decorative image or design, usually repeated to form a pattern

mummiform coffin
a human-shaped coffin with a face resembling the deceased person contained within

municipal cults
cults established by cities in the Roman Empire in honour of both living and deceased emperors

murex
a carnivorous sea snail, commonly called 'murex' or 'rock snail'

Mycenaean
relating to the late Bronze Age Greek civilisation originating at the site of Mycenae on mainland Greece; it flourished between 1600 and 1100 BC

myrrh
an aromatic resinous sap from certain plants, used for incense and perfume

N

naophorous statue
a block statue image of a male figure combined with a shrine

natron
a salt mixture used as a preservative in the embalming process

necropolis
a cemetery; from Greek, literally meaning 'city of the dead'

nemes
a striped royal Egyptian headdress with lappets or hanging pieces on either side of the face, gathered at the back into a tail

Neolithic
relating to the New Stone Age, which began about 10000 years ago

New Kingdom
the period of ancient Egyptian history between the 16th century BC and the 11th century BC, comprising the Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties

niello
a black metallic alloy of silver, copper, lead and sulphur used to fill designs that have been engraved on the surface of a metal object

Nine Bows
a term used by the ancient Egyptians to represent the traditional enemies of Egypt

nomarch
a governor in charge of an Egyptian nome, a district of Egypt

nome
one of 42 administrative districts of ancient Egypt: 22 in Upper Egypt and 20 in Lower Egypt

nuées ardentes
French for 'burning clouds', these are white-hot clouds of gas, ash and lava fragments ejected from a volcano, typically as part of a pyroclastic flow

numen
the spirit or divine power present in a person, thing or place

Nut
Egyptian goddess of the sky, one of the nine gods of the Heliopolitan Ennead who played an important role in the story of creation

O

***oba* (*pl. obai*)**
a village

obelisk
a tapering, four-sided monolithic shaft of stone, with a pyramid-shaped capstone called a pyramidion; sacred symbol of the sun god Re

Old Kingdom
the period of ancient Egyptian history that occurred in the 3rd millennium BC, comprising the Third to the Sixth Dynasties

oligarch
a member of an oligarchy, a government in which all power is vested in a few persons or in a dominant class or clique

***Opet* festival**
an annual Theban festival involving a journey of Amun and his family from Karnak to Luxor, with ceremonies focusing on rebirth and renewal of kingship

oracle
a communication from a god indicating divine will; a prophecy

orthostat
a rectangular stone block built into the lower portion of a wall so that it seems to 'stand upright' rather than lie on its side

Osiride
representing Osiris, god of the dead; Osiride statues of deceased kings depict them with arms crossed on their chest, a crook and flail in each hand, and wearing a false beard

osteoarchaeology
student of ancient bones

osteoporosis
a bone disease that causes the body to make too little bone, resulting in weak bones, which often break easily from a fall

ostraca (*s.* ostracon)
broken pieces of pottery with drawings or writing on them

ostracism
in classical Athens, banishment of a citizen for 10 years by popular vote; the name of the person to be ostracised was written on a broken piece of pottery called an *ostrakon*

P

palaeopathology
study of ancient diseases

paleodisease
disease known to have existed in the ancient past

pantheon
all the gods of a particular country or culture

Parthian Empire
an ancient empire that reached from the north of the Euphrates in modern Turkey to eastern Iran, and came into conflict with the Roman Empire in the late Republic and early empire period

patrician
a member of the Roman noble class

peak sanctuary
a religious site situated on a high mountain ridge

pediment
a decorative architectural feature, usually a triangular shape placed above doors and windows

Peloponnese
a peninsula in southern Greece, separated from the mainland by the Isthmus and the Gulf of Corinth

Peloponnesian
belonging to the Peloponnese, a peninsula in southern Greece

perioikoi
free but non-citizen residents of Sparta

peristyle
a row of columns enclosing a court or other space, or the space surrounded by these columns

Persepolis Fortification Archive and Persepolis Treasury Archive
two groups of clay administrative archives found in Xerxes' capital at Persepolis

personal piety
a religious development in New Kingdom Egypt in which a personal relationship or devotion was established between the god and his worshippers

pharaonic
relating to the period when pharaohs ruled Egypt

pictorial ideogram
a simplified picture that by agreement or custom becomes a fixed pictorial symbol of an object or concept

pier-and-door partition
a system of square piers and folding double doors that separated a large room into two smaller parts; this enabled flexibility in the admission of light and ventilation as well as control and facilitation of movement

***pithos* (*pl. pithoi*)**
a very large, wide-mouthed earthenware pot used by the Minoans for storing liquids and grain, and occasionally for the burial of the dead

placate
to calm or soothe

plebeian
a free Roman citizen who was not a patrician

plinth
a square slab at the base of a column

polytheistic
relating to a religion in which many gods are worshipped

polythyron (*pl.* polythyra)
meaning 'many doors'; a large room with pier-and-door partitions

praetor
a Roman magistrate with chiefly judicial functions, ranked next after a consul

Praetorian Guard
an elite unit of the imperial Roman army who served as bodyguards to the emperor and his family

praetorian prefect
an equestrian official in charge of the Praetorian Guard, an elite army corps

prerogative
a right claimed by a particular person or group of people

primeval
belonging to the earliest times

primeval waters of chaos
in the Egyptian myth of creation, these were the stormy waters from which the first life emerged

primogeniture
the right of succession belonging to the firstborn child

primordial
referring to or existing from the very beginning of time

principate
the form of government established by Augustus, based on the old republican system

procurator
an officer of the Roman Empire responsible for the financial and administrative affairs of a province as an agent of the emperor

programmata
public notices advertising candidates in forthcoming elections

proscenium
the stage area of an ancient Greek or Roman theatre

prytany
a period of 5 weeks for which each of the prytanies (the 10 divisions of the Athenian Council of 500) presided in turn

Ptolemaic
relating to the dynasty that ruled Egypt from the death of Alexander the Great (323 BC) to the death of Cleopatra VII (30 BC)

pylon
large processional gateway in a temple

pyramidion
the small pyramid-shaped capping stone on the top of an obelisk or pyramid

pyroclastic flow
a dense, hot, dry avalanche of ground-hugging molten rock, pumice and gas that moves more slowly than a surge, reaching up to 50 km per hour

pyroclastic surge
a low-density turbulent cloud of hot ash and rock that billows over the ground travelling at incredibly high speeds of up to 300 km per hour

Q

quadriporticus
a rectangular area surrounded on all sides by a colonnade or covered walkway

quaestor
a Roman magistrate responsible for management of state finances

quintessential
representing the most perfect or typical example of a quality or class

R

Ramesside
relating to the Nineteenth Dynasty established by Ramesses I

rampant
a heraldic term describing an animal represented in profile, standing on its hind feet with its forefeet in the air and tail raised

regent
a person who rules in the place of a monarch who is a minor or incapable of ruling

register
a band of decoration containing inscriptions and paintings; the wall paintings of Egyptian tombs were usually depicted in registers

repository
a place, room or container where things can be deposited or stored

rhetoric
the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing

rhyton (*pl.* rhyta)
a type of jug, often conical in shape, but sometimes in the form of an animal head, made of pottery or stone and used for pouring liquid offerings

rite of passage
a ceremony or event marking an important stage in someone's life

Romanisation
integration and assimilation of provincial people into the Roman Empire

run a gauntlet
a type of punishment, in which the offender has to run between two rows of people who strike with weapons

S

sarcophagus
an inscribed or sculpted stone coffin

satrapy system
the system used by the Persian kings to govern the empire, based on regions run by provincial governors or satraps

schist
a coarse-grained metamorphic rock that can be split into thin, irregular plates

scudding knife
a semi-circular knife used to remove the 'scud' (i.e. fat, lime salts, wool pigments etc.) from skins in the process of making leather

seal
a small, intricately carved stone, used to indicate ownership or for adornment

sealing
an impression left in clay from the application of a carved stone seal; also known as a seal impression

secular
unconnected to religious or spiritual matters

Sed
an ancient Egyptian ceremony celebrating the continued rule of a pharaoh; the name is taken from the name of an Egyptian wolf god, one of whose names was Wepwawet or Sed

sedentary
with limited physical activity

Senenmut
a chief official of Hatshepshut

serfdom
slavery, bondage

serpentine
a dark-green stone

sesterce
a bronze or silver Roman coin valued at a quarter of a denarius; also referred to as a 'sestertius'

shabti
a small statuette included in Egyptian funerary goods that was believed to work for the deceased in the afterlife

shekel
an ancient unit of weight or a coin; records from the Persian Empire range from 2 shekels per month for unskilled labour to as many as 7–10 shekels per month

Silk Road
an ancient network of trade routes through regions of Europe and Asia connecting the East and West

sistrum
an ancient percussion instrument designed to rattle when shaken

slag
stony waste matter separated from metals during the smelting or refining of ore

slingers
lightly armed troops in ancient armies who fought using slingshots

slip
a mixture of clay, water and pigment used for decorating the surface of pottery

solar barque
the sun boat that carried the sun god Re across the sky in the daytime and through the realms of the underworld at night

solar theology
religious beliefs and practices based on sun worship

Spartiate
male citizen of Sparta

stalagmite
a column rising from the floor of a cave, formed of calcium salts deposited by dripping water

state cult
the cult of the god who was worshipped and promoted by the Egyptian pharaohs as their particular god; in the New Kingdom this was Amun-Re of Thebes

steatite
a greyish-green talc or soapstone

stela (*pl.* stelae)
an upright slab of stone or sometimes wood, bearing inscriptions, reliefs or paintings; often placed in temples and tombs

stelophorous statue
a statue type where the figure holds a stela or inscribed stone slab

stirrup jar
a pottery container for oil or wine featuring a spout and small handles on either side of the neck

strata (*s.* stratum)
the layers of material built up or deposited at a site

strategy
the long-term planning or overall objectives of a campaign or series of campaigns

stratigraphic
relating to the order or arrangement of strata or layers, in this case the layers of volcanic ash deposited on Pompeii

stucco
a fine plaster used for decoration of interior walls, floors and benches

stucco bas relief
a render applied wet to a sculpture in low relief, in which the forms project slightly from the background

stylised
represented with an emphasis on a particular style, especially one in which there are only a few simple details

supplicant
a person who asks humbly for favours

syllabic
relating to or based on syllables

syncretism
the merging of different religions, cultures or schools of thought

T

tableau (*pl.* tableaux)
a scene usually presented on a stage by silent and motionless costumed people

tactics
the specific methods used to achieve short-term objectives, for example in a particular battle

talatat
small sandstone blocks averaging 55 x 25 x 25 cm, used to construct buildings during Akhenaten's reign; usually decorated with scenes representing religious and daily life

tangs
projections designed to hold an object firmly in a base

Tefnut
Egyptian goddess of moisture, humidity and water; one of the nine gods of the Heliopolitan Ennead who played an important role in the story of creation

temenos
an area within the enclosure wall of a temple

tetanus
an often fatal infectious disease caused by a bacterium that enters the body through a puncture, cut or open wound

thalassocracy
the government of a nation having control over large expanses of the seas; a maritime empire

theocratic
relating to a form of government in which a deity is recognised as the supreme ruler

theology
the study of the nature of god and religious beliefs

thermal shock
a large and rapid change in temperature that can have dangerous effects on living organisms

***thermopolium* (*pl. thermopolia*)**
food stalls

tholos
a circular-shaped building from the ancient world

***tholos* tomb (*pl. tholoi*)**
a type of Minoan tomb that was usually round in shape with one short entrance, popular in the Prepalatial and First Palace periods

Thucydides
an ancient Greek historian who wrote *History of the Peloponnesian War*, c. 460–400 BC

Thutmosid
referring to the New Kingdom Egyptian dynasty established by Thutmose I

titulary
the standard titles or naming convention taken by Egyptian kings

travertine
a type of marble used for building

tree altar
a religious structure bearing tree branches or palm fronds

trephination
a surgical procedure in which a hole is drilled, cut or scraped into the skull by means of simple surgical tools

tribunicia potestas
the power of a tribune, a magistrate who originally protected the people; it was granted to Augustus and subsequently to later emperors

tribute
money or valuables paid to a state or ruler to acknowledge submission

trireme
a galley with three rows or tiers of oars on each side, one above another, used chiefly as a warship

Triton
a Greek god, messenger of the sea, son of Neptune and Amphitrite

triton
a large mollusc that has a tall spiral shell

triumph
a ceremonial procession through Rome to celebrate and dedicate a general's victories and completion of foreign wars

tufa
volcanic ash hardened with water

Turin Canon
an ancient Egyptian papyrus recording the names of the pharaohs and the lengths of their reigns

tutelary
relating to protection

tyrant
an absolute ruler

U

ubiquitous
appearing or found everywhere

ulna
the thinner and longer of the two bones in the human forearm, on the side opposite to the thumb

unconstitutional
not in accordance with the political constitution or with procedural rules

unguents
oils or ointments

uraeus
a protective device on the front of a pharaoh's headdress in the form of a cobra

urban cohorts
a body of troops garrisoned at Rome to provide security for the emperor and city in general and act as a police force

usurped
took a position of power or importance, illegally

V

vassal
a person or country in a subordinate position to a superior power

vestal virgin
a priestess of Vesta, Roman goddess of the hearth

veteran
a soldier who has completed his army service

viceroy
king's deputy

vignette
a small illustration accompanying a text

vizier
a chief minister and king's deputy in ancient Egypt

votive offering
an object deposited in a sacred place for religious purposes

W

wadi
a dry river bed

wet nurse
a woman employed to suckle another woman's child

window of appearance
an architectural feature in a temple or palace where a pharaoh, sometimes accompanied by his family, appears to the population

Z

zealot
a person who is extreme and uncompromising in pursuing their religious, political or other goals

Zeus
the king of the gods in Greek mythology

Zoroastrian
related to Zoroastrianism, the world's oldest monotheistic religion, founded by the prophet Zoroaster in ancient Iran (Persia) about 3500 years ago

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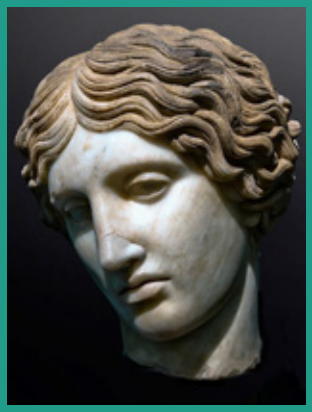

Wounded Amazon

Capitoline Museums, Rome, Italy

This statue head is of a wounded Amazon. In Greek mythology, the Amazons were a tribe of female warriors from Asia and daughters of the god of war, Ares. Made of Greek marble, this statue is likely to be a Roman copy of the bronze original. A passage written by Pliny the Elder (Roman author and natural philosopher, 23–79 AD) records the presence of five bronze statues of Amazons in the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus – a city said to be founded by the Amazons. His explanation for this was that from 440 to 430 BC, an artistic competition was held at Ephesus between five sculptors, each with their own style. This copy was discovered in the gardens of Gaius Maecenas – a patron of the arts during the Augustan era – in Rome, 1874.

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