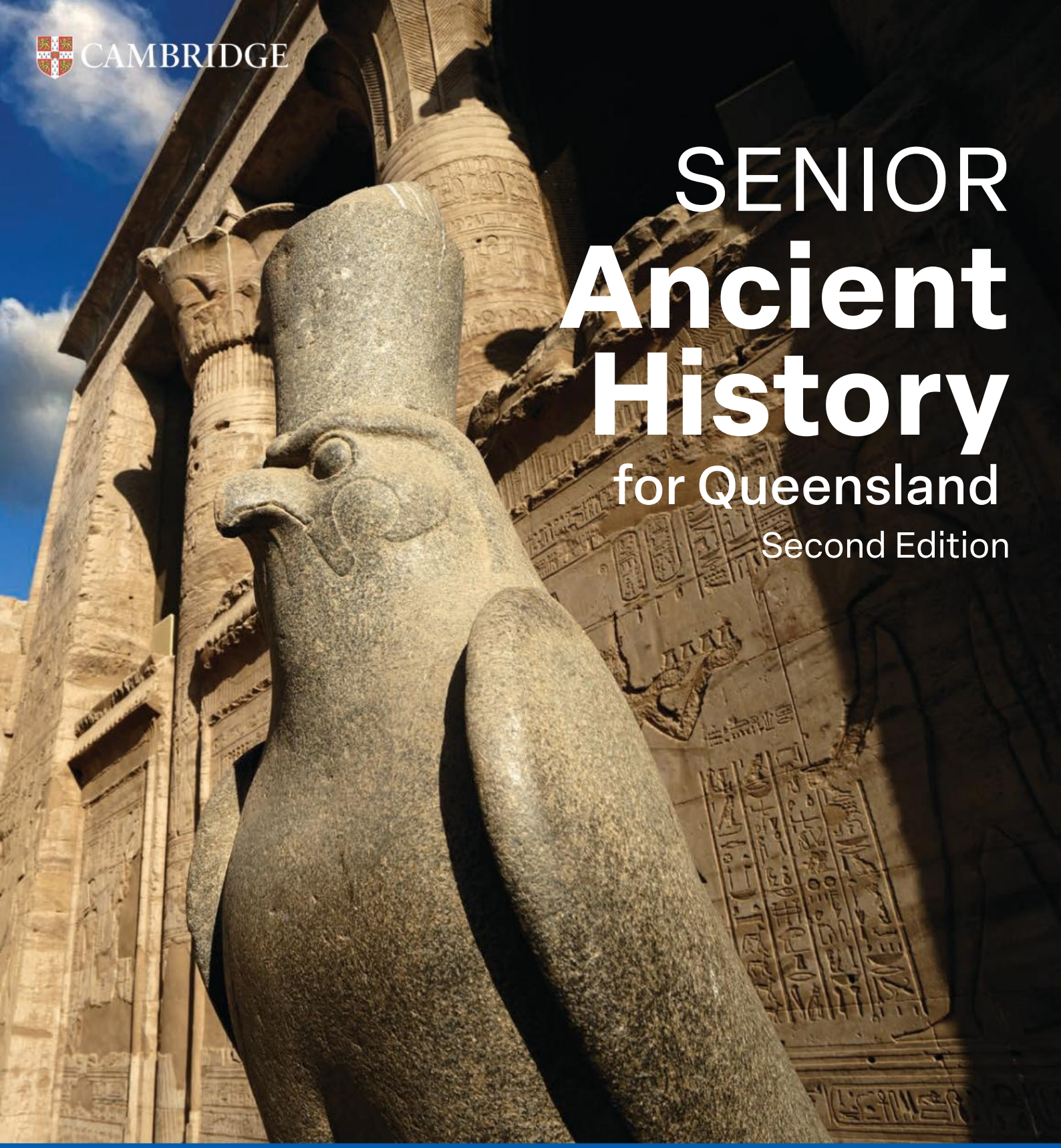


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SENIOR Ancient History

for Queensland

Second Edition

Alan **Barrie** • Sarah **Coleman** • Simon **Corvan** • Glenn **Davies**
Jenna **Haywood** • Ben **Hegerty** • Diana **Platt** • Georgia **Williams**
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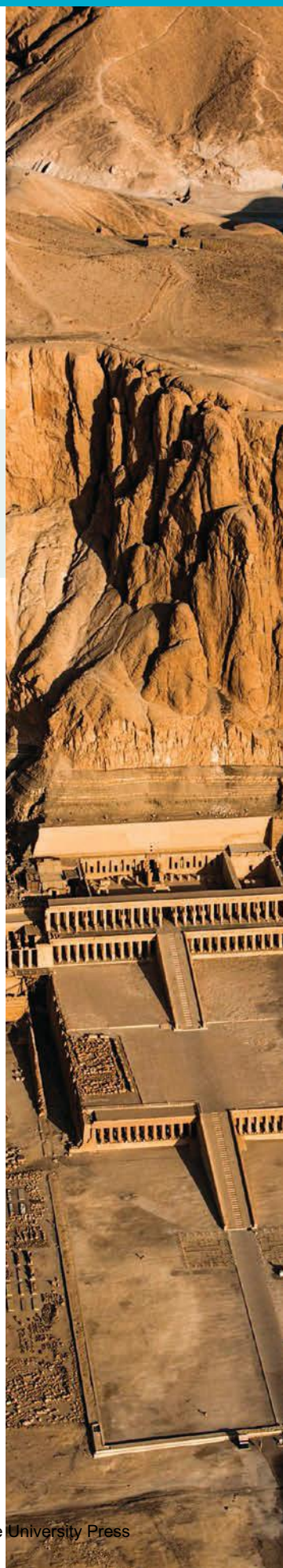
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (available for download from Cambridge GO)
Historical Skills Toolkit – providing further analysis of Objectives and tips for assessment.
For a list of links to all the websites referred to in this book, go to www.cambridge.edu.au/snrancientqld2ed



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HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

Unit and topic openers

Each Unit of *Senior Ancient History for Queensland* begins with an opener that contains the unit description, unit objectives, key conceptual understandings and key inquiry questions from the Ancient History Senior Syllabus. It also shows a list of the chapters contained within the Unit.

Each topic opener lists the topic description and subject matter from the syllabus.



Chapter openers

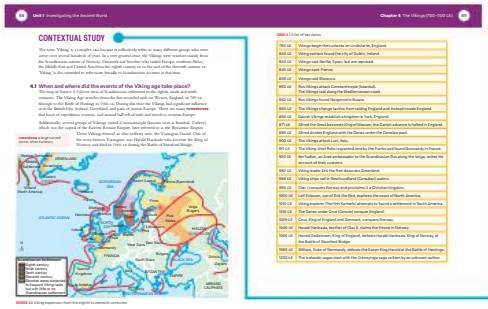
Each chapter opener contains:

- syllabus references
- key inquiry questions
- a 'Focus' section explaining why this content is important to this day.



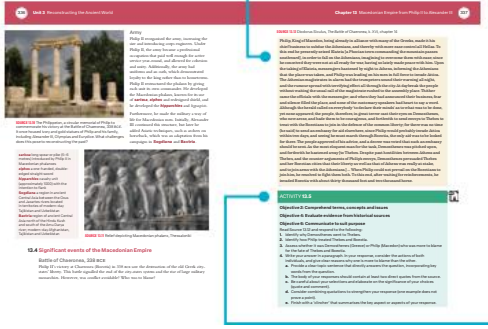
Historical narrative

Each chapter is structured to focus on a historical narrative and is divided into three sections: a Contextual Study, a Depth Study and a Concluding Study.



Sources

In line with the inquiry approach, the book contains a wide array of primary and secondary sources, both textual and visual.



Activities

Activity questions help you engage with the sources, with questions that support you in developing skills across all the objectives. Each activity lists the objectives relevant to the questions.

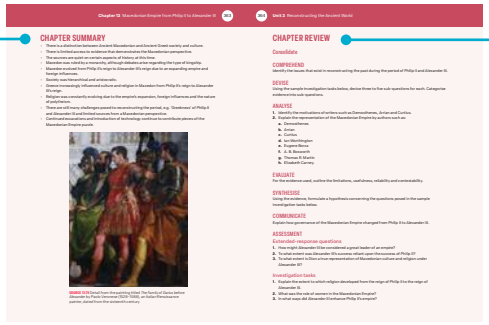
Activities are also available as Word files, **downloadable** from Cambridge GO or within the Interactive Textbook.

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End-of-chapter sections

At the end of each chapter you will find a:

- **chapter summary** – outline of the main ideas covered in the chapter
- **chapter review** – a set of Consolidate questions, aligned to the objectives, as well as examination-style questions and assessment tasks.



Additional digital chapters and resources

The book contains seven full digital-only chapters, available within the Interactive Textbook, or for offline use.

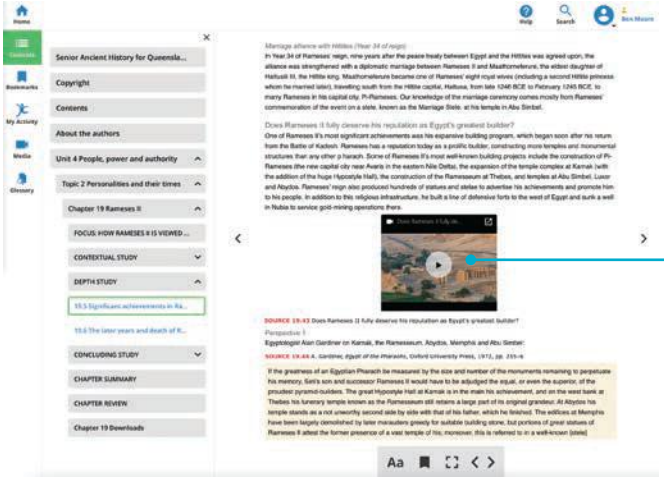
Also included is the Historical Skills Toolkit, an extensive document to help prepare for assessment items.



Interactive Textbook

The online Interactive Textbook contains the full text of the print book, plus the six digital-only chapters. In addition, it includes:

- additional **sources** and **activities** to extend on material in the print version
- the ability to **zoom** in on maps, for a closer examination.



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FOREWORD

Welcome to this Second Edition of *Cambridge Senior Ancient History for Queensland*. The writing and publishing team have all done an exceptional job in bringing this publication to you. You will note a few changes from the First Edition. Firstly, the structure of the chapters follows a more conventional method, based around Context, Depth, and Concluding studies, rather than objectives, to augment the historical narrative in each topic. The skills focus has now been directed towards the activities, with explicit thinking skills and links to particular objectives a feature in each task. Secondly, the Historical Skills Toolkit (available through the Interactive Textbook), in which step-by-step advice is given towards the achievement of Objectives, has been significantly updated. Thirdly, the publication has been updated to reflect all the changes made in version 2 of the QCAA Ancient History syllabus, for implementation beginning for Unit 1 in 2025.

You will find several new chapters, and all other chapters have been updated to reflect recent developments in issues and academic scholarship. Each chapter begins with a 'hook', designed to capture interest and showcasing its relevance for further inquiry, especially in linking topics to reflect contemporary themes and issues.

In a sense, my role and function within this project has not necessarily been one of a 'lead writer', or 'team leader', but more like a 'first amongst equals' (pardon the pun). All decisions and ideas have flowed from a collaboration between writers and Cambridge project managers and editors. In particular, I especially wish to thank Cameron Pikó of Cambridge University Press for his enthusiasm, expert advice and constant support, along with the very professional editing contributions of Amy Robson and Helen Koehne.

Finally to the writing team. It is unique for a textbook to be written by practising teachers. Because of their understanding of curriculum and assessment design, love and passion of all things 'history', their enthusiasm, passion and willingness to take the necessary time to commit to such an undertaking as this; this textbook is all the better for it. Sarah, Simon, Glen, Jenna, Ben, Diana, Georgia, and to the previous writers whose work has been built upon, Michael, Rashna and Simon, my most heartfelt and warm gratitude to you all. It is more than a pleasure working with you; it is a privilege.

Alan J Barrie

The authors and publisher would like to thank the Mithaka Aboriginal Corporation RNBTC for kindly supplying images and feedback for the case study on Indigenous-led archaeology.

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GUIDE TO INTERCONNECTED TOPICS

Due to the structure of the course, many different Units and Topics build upon each other. Below lists how chapters in this book interconnect, allowing you to focus on topics of interest and to apply different approaches to assessment.

Egypt

New Kingdom

- Chapter 6: Egypt during the Ramesside period (19th and 20th Dynasties)
- Chapter 7: Hatshepsut
- Chapter 9: Akhenaten
- Chapter 19: Rameses II

Ptolemaic Kingdom

- Chapter 13: Macedonian Empire from Philip II to Alexander III
- Chapter 20: Cleopatra

Greece

Bronze Age

- Chapter 1: Digging up the past (Troy case study)
- Chapter 2: Digging up the past: Further case studies (Mycenae case study)

Classical Age

- Chapter 2: Digging up the past: Further case studies (Elgin Marbles)
- Chapter 5: Sparta (900–371 BCE)
- Chapter 10: Perikles
- Chapter 12: Fifth-century Athens (BCE)
- Chapter 18: The Persian Wars

Macedonia

- Chapter 13: Macedonian Empire from Philip II to Alexander III

Rome

Republic

- Chapter 3: Roman society (753–133 BCE)
- Chapter 17: Ancient Rome: Civil war and the breakdown of the Republic
- Chapter 21: Julius Caesar

Empire

- Chapter 2: Digging up the past: Further case studies (Pompeii case study)
- Chapter 8: Agrippina the Younger
- Chapter 11: Boudica
- Chapter 14: Early imperial Rome from Augustus to Nero
- Chapter 15: Pompeii and Herculaneum

Medieval

- Chapter 4: The Vikings (700–1100 CE)
- Chapter 16: The medieval Crusades

Persia

- Chapter 13: Macedonian Empire from Philip II to Alexander III (King Darius III)
- Chapter 18: The Persian Wars (Kings Darius I and Xerxes I)

Women and power

- Chapter 7: Hatshepsut
- Chapter 8: Agrippina the Younger
- Chapter 11: Boudica
- Chapter 20: Cleopatra

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Unit 1

INVESTIGATING THE ANCIENT WORLD

UNIT DESCRIPTION

In Unit 1, students investigate how historians construct understandings of the Ancient World. Students examine evidence from historical sources (including archaeological evidence) from the ancient past and how they have been interpreted over time. Students focus on issues relevant to the investigation of the Ancient World and develop the skills of historiography. Students study issues related to evidence from the Ancient World. Through an examination of the evidence, students develop an understanding of the social, political and economic institutions, and other significant features of societies.

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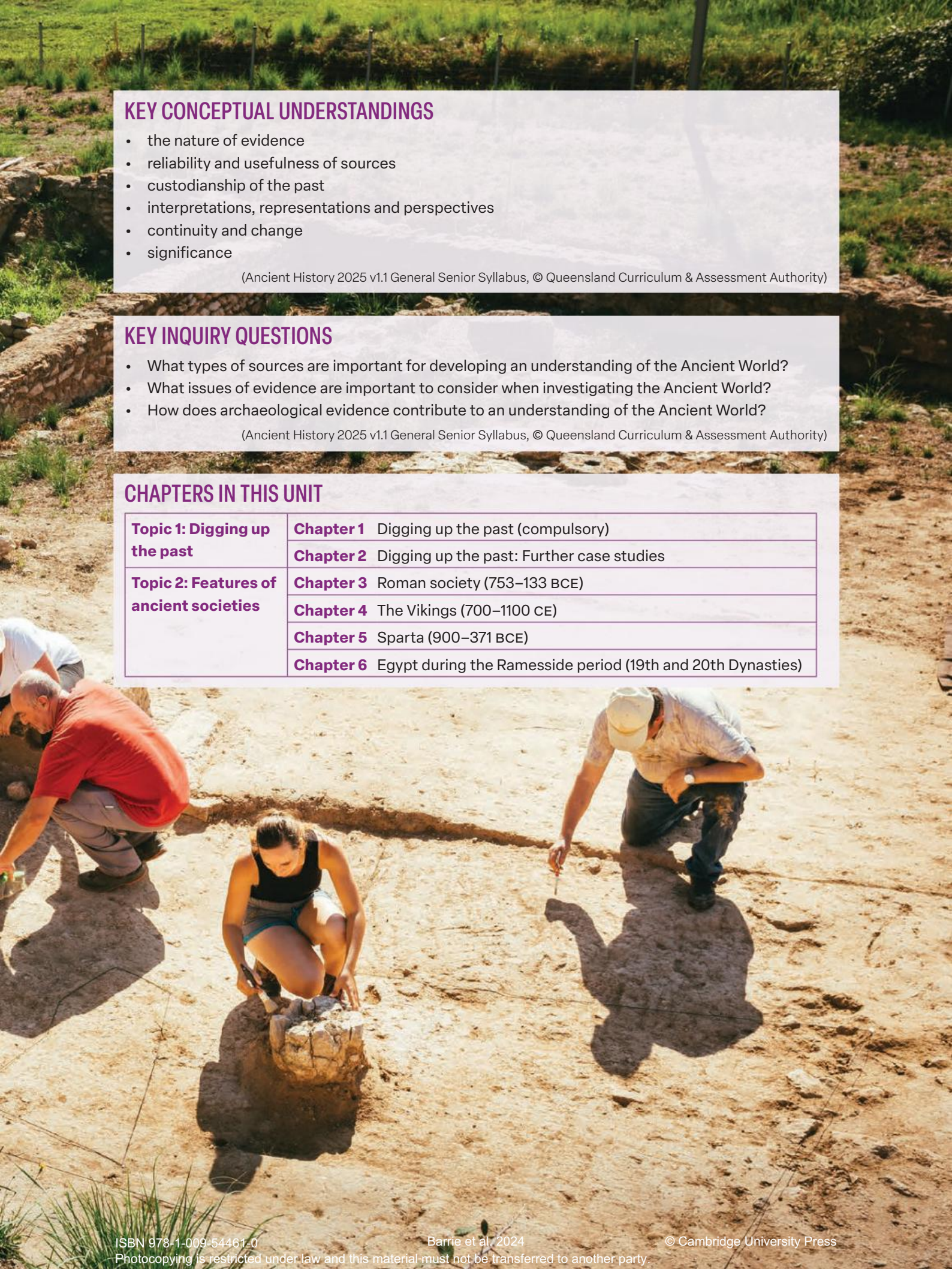
UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to the Ancient World.
2. Comprehend terms, concepts and issues about the Ancient World.
3. Analyse evidence from historical sources about the Ancient World.
4. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of evidence from historical sources about the Ancient World.
5. Synthesise evidence from historical sources to develop historical arguments and decisions about the Ancient World.
6. Create responses that communicate to suit purpose about the Ancient World.

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Archaeologists on-site

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KEY CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- the nature of evidence
- reliability and usefulness of sources
- custodianship of the past
- interpretations, representations and perspectives
- continuity and change
- significance

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KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What types of sources are important for developing an understanding of the Ancient World?
- What issues of evidence are important to consider when investigating the Ancient World?
- How does archaeological evidence contribute to an understanding of the Ancient World?

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CHAPTERS IN THIS UNIT

Topic 1: Digging up the past	**Chapter 1** Digging up the past (compulsory)
	Chapter 2 Digging up the past: Further case studies
Topic 2: Features of ancient societies	**Chapter 3** Roman society (753–133 BCE)
	Chapter 4 The Vikings (700–1100 CE)
	Chapter 5 Sparta (900–371 BCE)
	Chapter 6 Egypt during the Ramesside period (19th and 20th Dynasties)

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Topic 1
DIGGING UP THE PAST

TOPIC DESCRIPTION

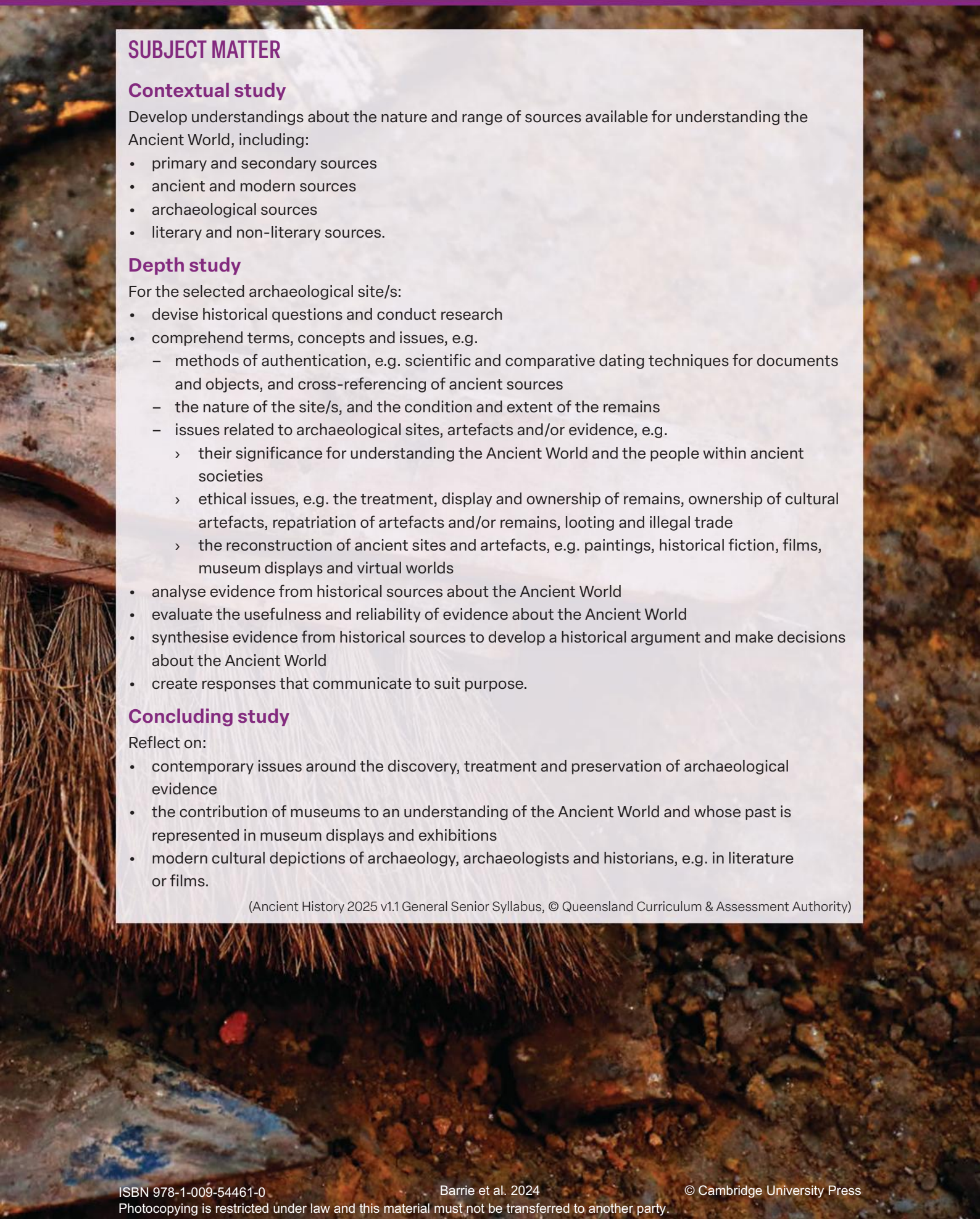
In Topic 1, students examine one or two archaeological sites to construct an understanding of the ancient past. The archaeological sites selected should allow students to explore how evidence from historical sources has been interpreted to construct an understanding of the ancient past.

One of these sites will develop students' understanding of Aboriginal peoples in Ancient Australia.



An archaeologist's tools

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SUBJECT MATTER

Contextual study

Develop understandings about the nature and range of sources available for understanding the Ancient World, including:

- primary and secondary sources
- ancient and modern sources
- archaeological sources
- literary and non-literary sources.

Depth study

For the selected archaeological site/s:

- devise historical questions and conduct research
- comprehend terms, concepts and issues, e.g.
  - methods of authentication, e.g. scientific and comparative dating techniques for documents and objects, and cross-referencing of ancient sources
  - the nature of the site/s, and the condition and extent of the remains
  - issues related to archaeological sites, artefacts and/or evidence, e.g.
    - their significance for understanding the Ancient World and the people within ancient societies
    - ethical issues, e.g. the treatment, display and ownership of remains, ownership of cultural artefacts, repatriation of artefacts and/or remains, looting and illegal trade
    - the reconstruction of ancient sites and artefacts, e.g. paintings, historical fiction, films, museum displays and virtual worlds
- analyse evidence from historical sources about the Ancient World
- evaluate the usefulness and reliability of evidence about the Ancient World
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to develop a historical argument and make decisions about the Ancient World
- create responses that communicate to suit purpose.

Concluding study

Reflect on:

- contemporary issues around the discovery, treatment and preservation of archaeological evidence
- the contribution of museums to an understanding of the Ancient World and whose past is represented in museum displays and exhibitions
- modern cultural depictions of archaeology, archaeologists and historians, e.g. in literature or films.

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Chapter 1

DIGGING UP THE PAST (COMPULSORY)

Syllabus reference: Unit 1, Topic 1: Digging up the past

DIANA PLATT AND GEORGIA WILLIAMS

First Nations readers are advised that this chapter discusses potentially sensitive materials.

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What types of sources are important for developing an understanding of the Ancient World?
- What issues of evidence are important to consider when investigating the Ancient World?
- How does archaeological evidence contribute to an understanding of the Ancient World?

(Adapted from Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 1.1 Great Sphinx of Giza, 1931

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FOCUS: WHY STUDY ARCHAEOLOGY?

History is often associated with the work of **historians**. However, a comprehensive understanding of the past cannot be achieved via the assessment of literary sources alone. Text is only one form of evidence that can be used to understand the past. People have always used 'things', whereas not everyone in the past could read and write. **Archaeologists excavate** and analyse evidence of human lives and stories from the deep past, piecing together stories that may have never been textually documented. Archaeologists also provide complementary evidence for the work of historians. For thousands of years, we have left our mark on the landscape in the form of stone tool scatters, rock art scenes and the ruins of once magnificent cities. Archaeologists uncover and make sense of the physical world and its millennia of occupants.

It is important for everyone to understand, appreciate and ultimately learn from the past. As such, archaeologists have an important role in contemporary society because they must assist communities, including Indigenous peoples, to protect and conserve **cultural heritage**. New **archaeological** discoveries are being made around the world every year, and each discovery delivers more insight into lives of the ancient past.

Countries have specific legal protection for their cultural heritage values. In Australia, cultural heritage legislation is the responsibility of the state and territory governments. In Queensland, there are separate Acts covering Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and modern or European heritage. However, having legal protocols in place does not guarantee the protection of cultural heritage, as was the case with the 2020 destruction of the 46 000-year-old Juukan Gorge rock shelter in the Pilbara region of Western Australia by Rio Tinto. The future of archaeology and the preservation of sites and **artefacts** is in your hands. You could be a part of the next generation of archaeologists digging up the past.

historian an expert in history, specifically that of a particular period, geographical region, or social phenomenon; can also refer to a student of history

archaeologist a person who studies the physical aspects of the human past, including landscapes, archaeological sites and artefacts

excavate the process of removing layers of earth to discover what lies beneath

cultural heritage refers to tangible artefacts or sites and intangible practices, like storytelling and music, that are intrinsic to the values and customs of a particular people or society

archaeology the study of the human past through the excavation of sites and the analysis of physical remains

artefact an object made by a human, typically of cultural, social and historical importance



SOURCE 1.2 Juukan Gorge before it was blasted by Rio Tinto

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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

historical source relates to or focuses on the study of the past; in Ancient History, historical sources are often categorised into ancient and modern sources, and primary and secondary sources

context often includes the place of discovery or information regarding artefacts or authors and assists in providing meaning about purpose to assist in interpretation

ancient source written or non-written source created from the earliest human communities until the end of the Middle Ages, used to investigate the past

primary source an object or document created or written during the time being investigated

secondary source an account about the past that was created after the time being investigated and which often uses or refers to primary sources and presents a particular interpretation

modern source written or non-written material created after the end of the late Middle Ages that can be used to investigate the ancient past

authenticity refers to the genuine nature of a site or artefact: is it real, dated to the correct period in history and geographic location?

preservation maintaining material, artefacts and sites in their original or current state

conservation methods used to preserve material, artefacts and sites

Introduction

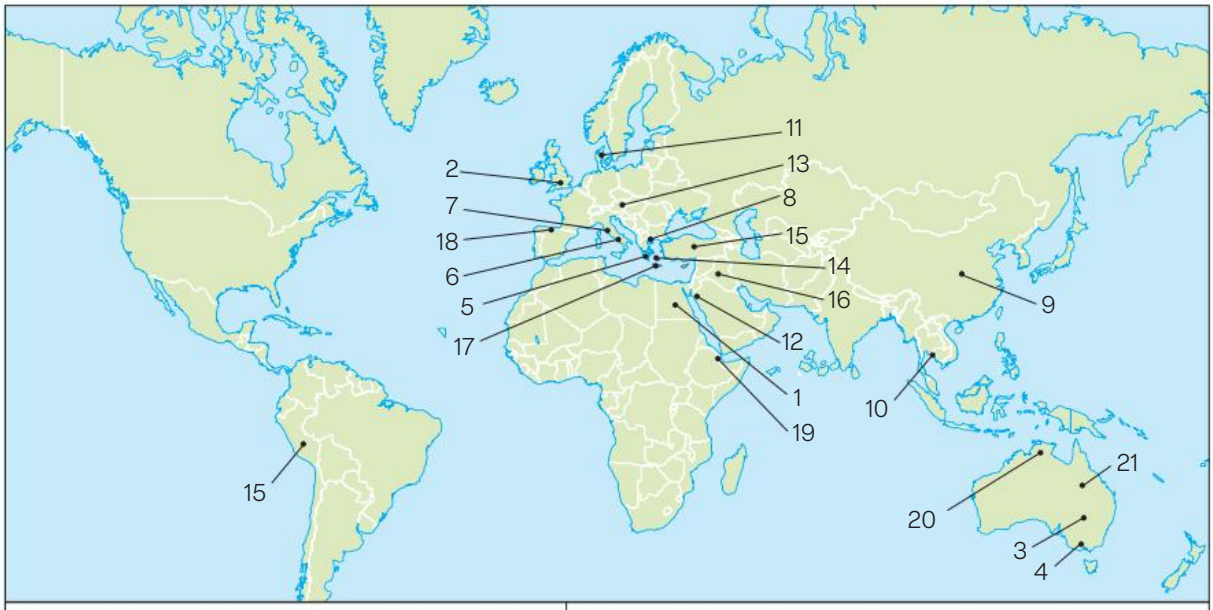
As historians of the Ancient World, we rely on a range of different **historical sources** to help our understanding. The use of both written and non-written evidence provides a broad data set from which to create our interpretations and conclusions. 'Digging up the past' must therefore symbolise a joint undertaking by both historians and archaeologists and a reliance upon the findings from both disciplines.

As archaeologists uncover and analyse ancient sites and artefacts, they can reveal hidden stories about things and individuals deemed too mundane or insignificant for textual documentation. Nevertheless, historians can contribute written sources, if available, which allows a fuller, multifaceted picture of the past to emerge. Historians provide much-needed **contextual** information about cultures, events, pastimes and social commentary that archaeologists cannot obtain from artefacts and sites alone.

Students of ancient history note that there are **ancient sources**, which can be **primary** or **secondary**, as well as **modern sources**. As such, the role of source analysis is of paramount importance to the study of ancient history and a reliable and balanced representation of the past. Interpretations of the past are not static, but subject to change. The practice of archaeology has evolved over the centuries into a systematic and scientific endeavour irreconcilable with the overenthusiastic and destructive activities of early amateurs and professionals. Archaeological methods have also advanced alongside technology, meaning artefacts and sites can be scientifically dated and analysed. New techniques have also emerged that allow archaeologists to map the landscape and see beneath the Earth's surface without needing to break ground. Despite these advancements, various issues remain relevant when digging up the past, including the nature, condition and **authenticity** of sources; the ethics of interacting with human remains; the importance of **preservation** and **conservation** for the world's cultural heritage; and the role of museums and correcting common archaeological misconceptions.

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1.1 When and where did the events of this topic take place?



	Discovery	Location
1	Tutankhamun's Tomb	The Valley of the Kings, Egypt
2	Grave of Richard III	Leicester, England
3	Mungo Man and Mungo Woman	Willandra Lakes, New South Wales, Australia
4	Budj Bim	South-west Victoria, Australia
5	Mycenae	Argolis, north-eastern Peloponnese, Greece
6	Pompeii	Near Naples, Italy
7	Herculaneum	Ercolano, Campania, Italy
8	Tomb II Vergina	Vergina, Imathia, Macedonia
9	Terracotta Army	Xi'an, China
10	Angkor Wat	Krong Siem Reap, Cambodia
11	Tollund Man	Jutland peninsula, Denmark
12	Petra	Southern Jordan
13	Ötzi the Iceman	Ötzal Alps, Austria
14	Akrotiri, Thera	Santorini, Greece
15	Machu Picchu	Machu Picchu, Peru
16	Royal Tombs of Ur	Desert, Iraq
17	Palace of Knossos	Heraklion, Greece
18	Cave of Altamira	Santillana Del Mar, northern Spain
19	Lucy (hominin fossil)	Afar Triangle, Ethiopia
20	Majedbebe	Kakadu National Park, Northern Territory, Australia
21	Mithaka	Channel Country, Queensland, Australia

SOURCE 1.3 Map of major archaeological discoveries

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TABLE 1.1 A list of key dates

1748 CE	Ruins of Pompeii are discovered. The destruction of the ancient Roman city by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE left the city trapped in time.
1784 CE	An early scientific excavation (a systematic investigation aimed to answer clear questions, and published findings) is undertaken by Thomas Jefferson at a Virginian Indian burial mound.
1819 CE	**Three-age system** is developed by Danish scholar Christian J. Thomsen.
1827–1900 CE	General Pitt-Rivers develops organised excavations in southern England.
1859 CE	Theory of evolution is developed by Charles Darwin.
1860–70 CE	Pompeii is excavated by Giuseppe Fiorelli.
1868 CE	The Paleolithic cave of Altamira is discovered by a hunter, in the modern town Santillana Del Mar of the Cantabria region in northern Spain.
1870 CE	German Heinrich Schliemann begins excavating what he believes to be Troy in the Turkish town of Hisarlik.
1876 CE	Heinrich Schliemann conducts the first excavations of Mycenae.
1878 CE	Palace of Knossos, Crete, is rediscovered by Minos Kalokairinos.
Nineteenth century CE	Stratification is developed by geologists, then further developed and used by Petrie in 1890; Schliemann 1871–90; General Pitt-Rivers; and pioneered by Giuseppe Fiorelli 1860 in Pompeii.
1880s CE	Oscar Montelius refines the concept of seriation (typology) different from those developed by Pitt-Rivers and Petrie.
1900 CE	The 35-year excavation of the Palace of Knossos by Arthur Evans begins.
1911 CE	Incan citadel Machu Picchu is discovered by Hiram Bingham III in Peru.
1922 CE	Tutankhamun's tomb is discovered by Howard Carter. Sir Leonard Wooley excavates the Royal Tombs of Ur, an ancient Sumerian city.
1930–35 CE	Mortimer and Tessa Wheeler develop the box grid excavation technique (**Wheeler box-grid**)
1949 CE	Willard F. Libby develops **radiocarbon dating**.

three-age system naming and categorising artefacts according to their material, which became the basis of the archaeological cultures of the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages

Wheeler box-grid grid excavation method using squares of 2 x 2 metres surrounded by unexcavated baulks; developed by Sir Mortimer Wheeler

baulk the unexcavated ground between the trenches on an excavation site, often used as a section face

radiocarbon dating method used to determine the age of organic material by testing the residual level of carbon-14

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1950 CE	The remains of Tollund Man are discovered in the peat in the Jutland, a peninsula in Denmark.
1952–58 CE	Kathleen Kenyon refines the method of excavation (**Wheeler-Kenyon method**) developed by Mortimer and Tessa Wheeler.
1960 CE	Underwater archaeology is developed with the discovery of the Bronze Age Cape Gelidonya shipwreck off the coast of Turkey by George Bass.
1967 CE	Akrotiri, Thera, a Minoan Bronze Age settlement is discovered. Similar to Pompeii, the Theran eruption of 1627 BCE preserved the town.
1969 CE	Mungo Man and Mungo Woman are discovered at Lake Mungo, New South Wales, and confirms the ancient origins of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia. Settlement at Lake Condah, Victoria, is discovered.
1970s CE	**Dendrochronology** is developed.
1974 CE	Farmers in Xi'an, in the province of Shaanxi, China, discover the Terracotta Army of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China. **Paleoanthropologists** discover 'Lucy', the skeletal remains of a female *Australopithecus afarensis* in the Afar Triangle, Ethiopia.
1977 CE	Tomb II at Vergina is discovered by Professor Manolis Andronikos. It is believed to be the burial site of Philip II of Macedon.
1991 CE	Hikers in the Italian Alps discover the remains of 'Ötzi' or the Iceman.
2009 CE	The Staffordshire Hoard is discovered, Anglo-Saxon treasure containing approximately 3500 pieces – the largest Anglo-Saxon hoard ever found.
2012 CE	The University of Leicester's archaeology team discover the grave of Richard III, last of the Plantagenet dynasty and House of York, under a car park.
2017 CE	Research collaboration between Mithaka Aboriginal Corporation and Australian archaeologists begins.

Wheeler-Kenyon method grid excavation method of trenches (squares) usually 5 x 5 metres, bound by unexcavated sides, called baulks; the method was refined by Kathleen Kenyon, based on her mentor Sir Mortimer Wheeler's box-grid

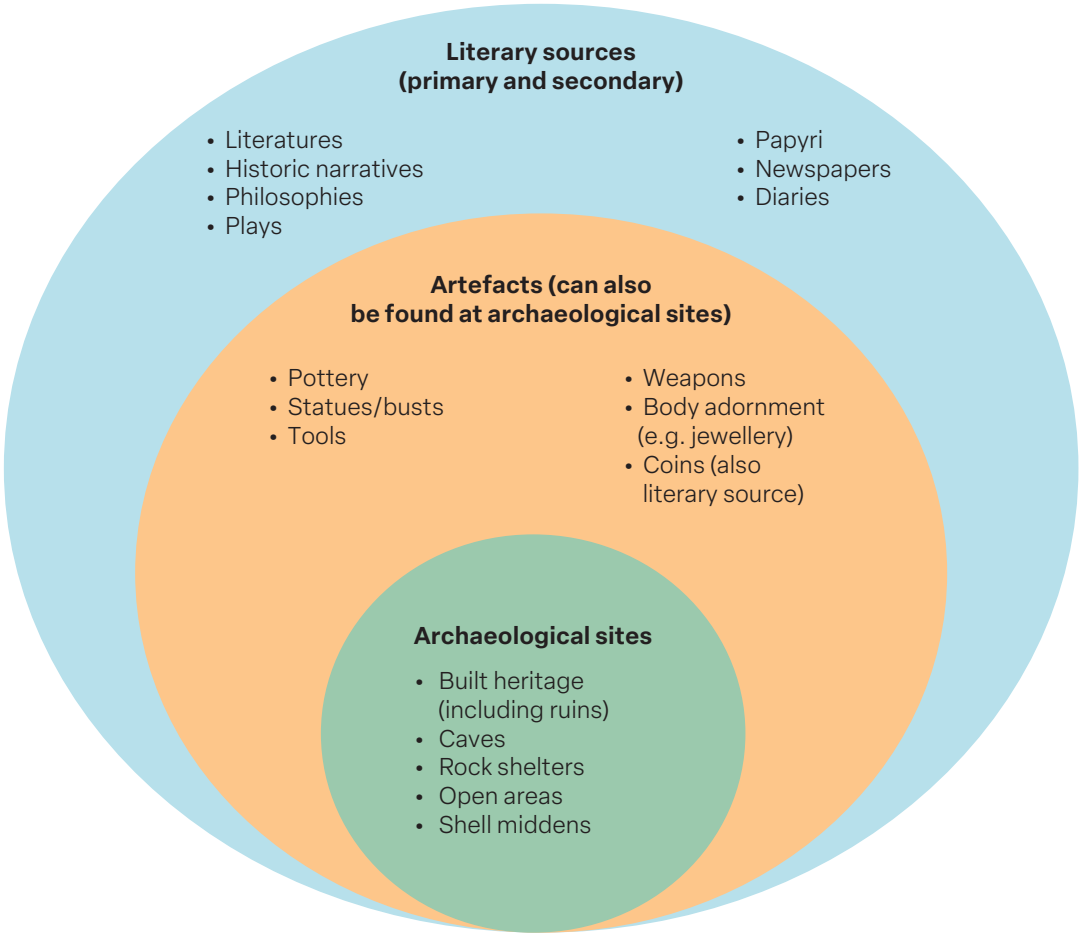
dendrochronology dating method based on the cross-section of trees using the tree rings, which are indicative of annual growth as well as environmental factors

palaeoanthropology the study of the origins and traits of the genus *Homo* (humans are *Homo sapiens*) and our immediate ancestors over millions of years

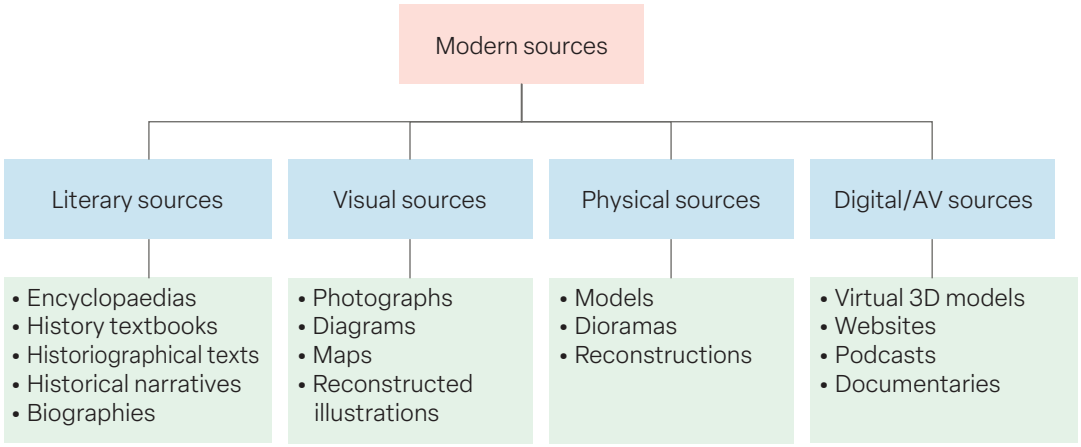
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1.2 The nature and range of sources available for understanding the Ancient World

The study of history relies on distinguishing the types of sources used, which can be ancient or modern.



SOURCE 1.4 Ancient sources for studying the Ancient World



SOURCE 1.5 Modern sources for studying the Ancient World

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ACTIVITY **1.1**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

For each of the following sources, identify it as either ancient or modern, and name its source type.

a.



SOURCE 1.6 Roman coins

b.



Growth of the ancient Greek kingdom of Macedon (4th century BCE) after Philip's expansion

SOURCE 1.7 Map of the Macedonian Empire

c. **SOURCE 1.8** Herodotus, *The Histories*, 1:1:0, from A.D. Godley, *Herodotus, With an English Translation*, Harvard University Press, 1920

> This is the display of the inquiry of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, so that things done by man not be forgotten in time, and that great and marvelous deeds, some displayed by the Hellenes, some by the barbarians, not lose their glory, including among others what was the cause of their waging war on each other.

d.



SOURCE 1.9 Terracotta Army

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DEPTH STUDY

Note that additional case studies are accessible in Chapter 2 online.

1.3 Approach to archaeology

Archaeologists

Archaeologists collaborate with various other researchers and community stakeholders to locate and uncover archaeological sites and artefacts. A priority for archaeologists is locating sites and artefacts to ensure their protection and preservation for the benefit of future generations. Archaeological evidence provides an important window into the past, highlighting not just the riches and treasures of elite social classes but the ordinary things everyday individuals would have once used. Pottery, for example, is one of the most common artefact types found across archaeological sites internationally. Pottery was not often a highly prized item unless it was specifically well made or decorated; rather, it was used as vessels for water, wine and various other purposes. Pottery was a ubiquitous feature of ancient life for many cultures, meaning it was found everywhere, like plastic today! Pioneering Egyptologist Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie developed a technique known as **seriation** to assist archaeologists date pottery. Seriation is an example of a **relative dating** technique, which archaeologists use in conjunction with **absolute dating** to learn about when in the past artefacts and sites were created, used and occupied.

No two archaeological projects are the same. Every archaeological excavation is unique in that it presents evidence of human activity at a particular place and time. Different archaeological methods for excavation, and artefact analysis and dating, are used depending on the nature of the site. Early archaeological excavations, specifically during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, often sacrificed attentiveness for speed, wanting only to uncover the large, shiny artefacts deemed to be the most valuable. Contemporary archaeologists are more rigorous and focused on gathering as much information and evidence as possible. This attention to detail is crucial, as once a site has been excavated it can never be studied again. A common adage within the discipline states archaeology is like reading a book only to burn the pages right after. Due to archaeology's inherently destructive nature, issues relating to preservation, conservation and the role of museums in protecting and displaying the past are prominent.

seriation a dating method that establishes a timeline based on the frequency of sites or artefacts as a result of defining features, such as decoration, shape, function or method of creation

relative dating orders artefacts and sites into a chronology, based on something being older (or younger) relative to something else

absolute dating refers to scientific techniques that can calculate the age, in years, of different artefacts or sites

State Parties countries that have adhered to the World Heritage Convention

properties the official UNESCO term used for any archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, monuments or other cultural heritage nominated or inscribed on the World Heritage List

UNESCO World Heritage

An international movement focused on the protection of global heritage emerged after World War I and II. However, the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention) was only adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO on 19 November 1972. **State Parties** can nominate **properties** within their national territory for consideration for the World Heritage List. As of 2024, there were 195 State Parties and 1199 properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. A World Heritage listing is the highest global recognition a cultural heritage property can receive.

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SOURCE 1.10 The aquaculture system at Budj Bim in south-west Victoria was added to the World Heritage List in 2019 because of its cultural significance to the Gunditjmara People. The weir, channels and ponds are at least 6000 years old.

A property can be nominated for both **tangible** and **intangible** heritage values. The acknowledgement of the many forms and mediums of cultural heritage allows for a greater appreciation of the values and customs of a particular people or society. Nevertheless, World Heritage properties must be of outstanding universal value to humanity. Therefore, the property's importance transcends the boundaries of a single country or culture, and its protection is considered vital for the appreciation and enjoyment of future generations across the world. If a property is successfully inscribed onto the World Heritage List, the State Party responsible for the nomination must make contributions to the preservation of the property. The **World Heritage Fund** also provides approximately US$4 million annually to support requested activities by State Parties. Achieving World Heritage status also boosts a property's likelihood of receiving private donations and other funding.

tangible something perceptible by touch (for example, an artefact)

intangible something that does not have a physical presence (for example, a spoken story)

World Heritage Fund established in 1977; State Parties to the World Heritage Convention contribute to the fund, which is supplemented by voluntary contributions from governments, charities, the private sector and the general public

ACTIVITY 1.2

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Visit the UNESCO Criteria for Selection website and explain the significance of gaining World Heritage status.

Role of museums

The role of museums in preserving the past is important yet complex. Museums can be perfect platforms for the public display of artefacts and the dissemination of information about archaeology and the ancient past. Many artefacts remain in storage or in university laboratories. However, museums provide opportunities for a wider audience to engage with the material remains of civilisations and cultures.

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repatriation the return of objects or human remains to their original homeland

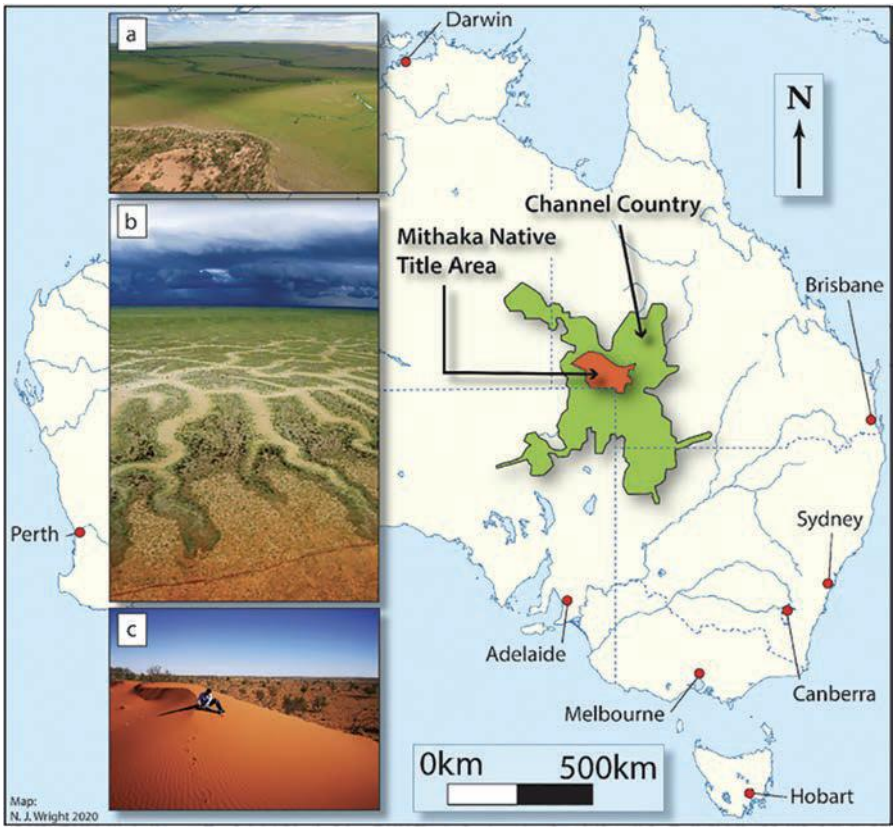
Questions concerning who owns the past are louder than ever. Hence, **repatriation** remains a key issue. The world-renowned British Museum is marketed as a unique experience showcasing the cultures of the world under one roof. For decades, the British Museum has also been portrayed as a global standard for cultural heritage preservation, and artefacts were considered safest under the museum's care. But arguments of visitor convenience and artefact safety are no longer being accepted by nations whose cultural heritage resides in the British Museum (and other similar institutions). Though museums and governments across the world are beginning to develop policies and procedures relating to the repatriation of cultural heritage, there is a long road ahead. Furthermore, due to the revenue received by museums like the British Museum (over 47 million pounds in the 2022/23 financial year), this may never be resolved. While it is undeniable that museums play an important role in preserving and showcasing the past to the world, several ethical issues still remain contentious.

1.4 Mithaka case study: Indigenous-led archaeology

Please note that this case study contains an illustration of a deceased Aboriginal person.

Indigenous communities across the world are taking the lead on projects concerning their tangible and intangible heritage. This leadership ensures that research agendas and outcomes align with community aspirations and highlight continuing connections to culture and place. Mithaka determined **Country** is a 33 000-square-kilometre area in far west Queensland also known as Channel Country, a region of extensive stream systems draining to Lake Eyre. These are among the last largely untouched internally draining river systems globally, and comprise three main rivers: the Georgina River, Diamantina River and Cooper Creek.

Country the land of a particular First Nations community or Traditional Custodian group



SOURCE 1.11 Map showing the determined Mithaka Native Title Area in brown (55 000 square kilometres) and the larger Channel Country region in green (approx. 300 000 square kilometres). Inset photographs also show the Channel Country landscape. (Map: N.J. Wright, 2022)

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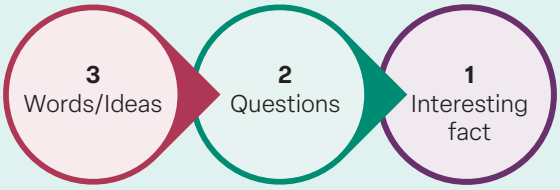
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ACTIVITY **1.3**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Before going any further, complete a 3-2-1 bridge.

The 3-2-1 elements are completed before and after a learning experience to identify what might have changed (bridge). Identify 3 words or ideas that stood out; 2 questions you have and 1 interesting fact.



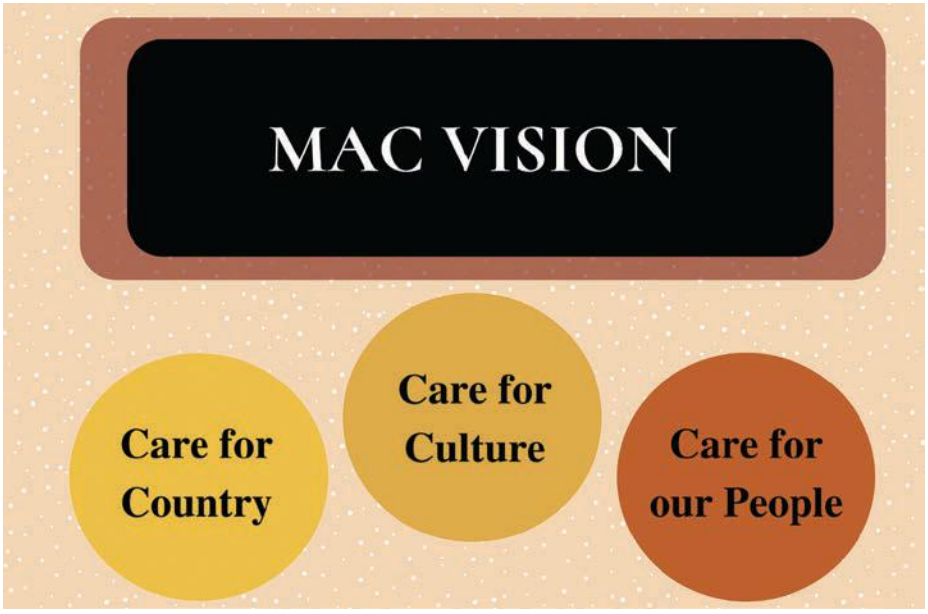
The Traditional Custodians were awarded **Native Title** on 27 October 2015. Since then, the Mithaka Aboriginal Corporation (MAC) revises a strategic plan every five years, outlining key community goals and objectives. The 2021–2026 Strategic Plan presents a 'MAC vision' intertwining 'Care for Country, Care for Culture and Care for our People'. Care for Culture can be achieved 'through Research and Education to ensure the sustainability of our Culture'. Key strategies include:

- Document and communicate our cultural heritage.
- Celebrate and strengthen our living culture and language.

In 2017, the Mithaka Research Framework was launched with the tagline 'Ngali Wanthi' (We search together). This phrase highlights the Mithaka's dedication to engaging in collaborative and **reciprocal** knowledge exchanges with a broad team of experts.

Native Title as set out by the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), the recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have rights and interests to lands and waters according to traditional cultural practices and customs

reciprocal done, given or felt equally by both sides; modern archaeological research with Indigenous communities prioritises this two-way exchange of knowledge



SOURCE 1.12 The Mithaka Aboriginal Corporation Strategic Plan (2021–2026)

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ethnographic account the written description of a culture's beliefs, practices and language, often by an observer who does not belong to the culture; for example, ethnographic accounts were often written by European colonialists about Australian Aboriginal communities

Several **ethnographic accounts** have recorded cultural activities of Mithaka People, but there has been a lack of archaeological investigations to further document and explore traditional practices. Therefore, a collaborative research initiative was developed to provide meaningful knowledge to educate local community members as well as the broader public. Preliminary findings appear to support ethnographic evidence, in addition to providing some unexpected yet exciting new information concerning cultural practices. As this research partnership is still ongoing, new results will continue to be published over the coming years.

ACTIVITY 1.4

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Consider the Mithaka site. Complete a circle of viewpoints by identifying how Mithaka and the archaeologists view the project.

A circle of viewpoints is a thinking strategy that gets students to take on the role of another to understand perspectives.



cultural landscape associated with the sub-discipline of landscape archaeology, which analyses how people use, and interact with, the environment around them; incorporates several individual archaeological sites into a broader understanding of cultural practices and past landscape use

1.5 Nature of the site

A team of archaeologists was taken on a field survey of Mithaka Country in 2017 by Mithaka Elder George Gorringe, and several sites of interest were recorded on the surface of the landscape. For Mithaka People, no one site was of specific interest, but rather they wanted a greater understanding of their broader **cultural landscape**.

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This means that Mithaka want to understand how several sites, though spatially separated by distance on the ground, are connected by Mithaka **lore**, **songlines**, **Dreaming** and ancient **trade routes**. Due to the remote location of Mithaka Country, the landscape remains rich with cultural and archaeological information, and it has not been heavily disturbed by resource industry activities, such as mining.

Once a meaningful collaborative partnership had been established, Mithaka were able to guide the archaeological team to some of the sites, allowing them to map the locations. Archaeology will never present a complete picture of the ancient past as not everything will be preserved. However, the evidence that does survive still has the potential to reveal incredible insight into traditional Mithaka practices and landscape use.

lore customs and traditions that govern all aspects of life, passed down through generations by practices such as song, story and dance

songlines songs sung on Country that act as navigational guides, including information about landscape features, directions and plant and animal species

Dreaming an explanation of how life came to be, including several Creation Stories and beliefs; it exists within a continuum of past, present and future

trade routes used by Indigenous communities to transport goods, such as stone tools, across vast distances; many were then used by Europeans and have shaped the way we travel around Australia today

quarry a spot on the landscape where a particular raw material is retrieved for cultural use, such as a type of stone for the creation of stone tools

1.6 Significant finds

While Mithaka are interested in understanding more about the connection between various site types and the broader story that can be told from cultural heritage on the landscape, it is important to briefly examine the different sites present on Mithaka Country. The 2017 archaeological site survey recorded quarries, dwellings and burial sites. Each is explained in detail below.

Quarries

Several **quarries**, of sandstone particularly, have been identified on Mithaka Country. Their initial discovery was unexpected, as sandstone procurement and use are not mentioned in the detailed ethnographic records of Mithaka Country. Nevertheless, the archaeological team used satellite imagery to find 179 potential quarry site locations over a 33 800-square-kilometre area.



SOURCE 1.13 Assayed cobbles, which can be used to create stone tools, on Mithaka Country (Photograph by N.J. Wright)

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Quarries were, and still are, important natural resource deposits for Indigenous communities. Having abundant resources, like sandstone, meant that Mithaka Peoples would have been able to produce surplus stone tool technology that would have been incorporated into extensive trade and exchange networks with other Aboriginal groups. Stone tools discovered during recent investigations on Mithaka Country include knives, **flakes**, **cores**, **tulas** and **grindstones**.

flake stone chips produced by striking the edge of a stone with another hard material

core the stone from which one or more flakes have been removed

tula a stone tool used for wood working (e.g. scraping) and butchery

grindstone a stone tool used to process (grind and crush) plant foods and other materials



SOURCE 1.14 Mithaka Country and the vast amount of stone on the landscape (Photograph by N.J. Wright)



SOURCE 1.15 Several blades found on Mithaka Country (Photograph by N.J. Wright)



SOURCE 1.16 Tula stone tool found on Mithaka Country (Photograph by N.J. Wright)



SOURCE 1.17 Grindstone fragment found on Mithaka Country (Photograph by N.J. Wright)



SOURCE 1.18 Sandstone millstone and muller found on Cuddapan Station, Mithaka Country (Photograph by D. Williams, scale per block is 10 centimetres)

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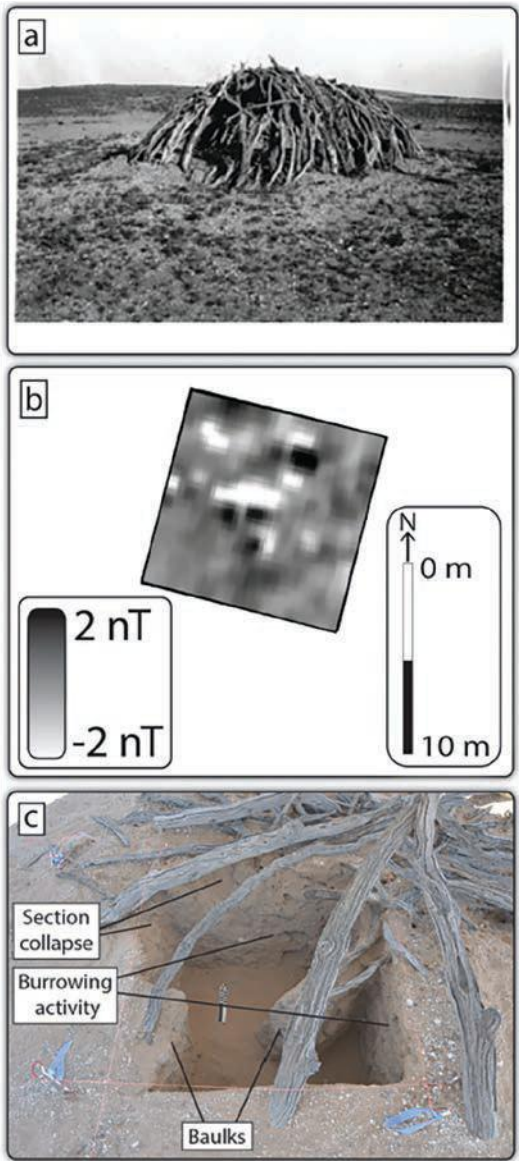
SOURCE 1.19 A large density of stone tools found on Mithaka Country (Photograph by N.J. Wright)

Dwellings

Ethnographic sources have recorded the presence of Indigenous villages on Mithaka Country. This information undermines the stereotype of Aboriginal **hunter-gatherers** who continuously wander the landscape. The Channel Country is just one example of an Indigenous community exhibiting **sedentary** behaviours.

There is some archaeological evidence for **gunyah** stone foundations in northern Channel Country. However, it is difficult to observe Indigenous dwellings in Australian archaeological records because they were often made from wood, which is vulnerable to destruction from intense weather events and other factors like decay. The archaeological team investigated a location on Mithaka Country that was reported to have had 103 hut structures in 1871, only to find no remaining evidence of these features.

The archaeological team completed an excavation of previously recorded standing gunyahs at Durrie Station on Mithaka Country. A **magnetic gradiometry** survey was undertaken and revealed several anomalies consistent with the presence of combustion features, otherwise known as hearths or campfires. This technique can be used to detect past **anthropogenic** burning, such as the use of fire for cooking, heating and landscape management, and may be able to indicate campfires that were once used outside of dwellings.



SOURCE 1.20 a) Photograph of gunyah two at Durrie Station take in 1937 (courtesy of the National Libraries of Australia); b) magnetic gradiometry survey results with low and high values highlighted; c) excavation of anomalies within the gunyah (Figure by N.J. Wright)

hunter-gatherer people who consistently move across the landscape and rely on the hunting of animals and the foraging and collecting of plants and other resources

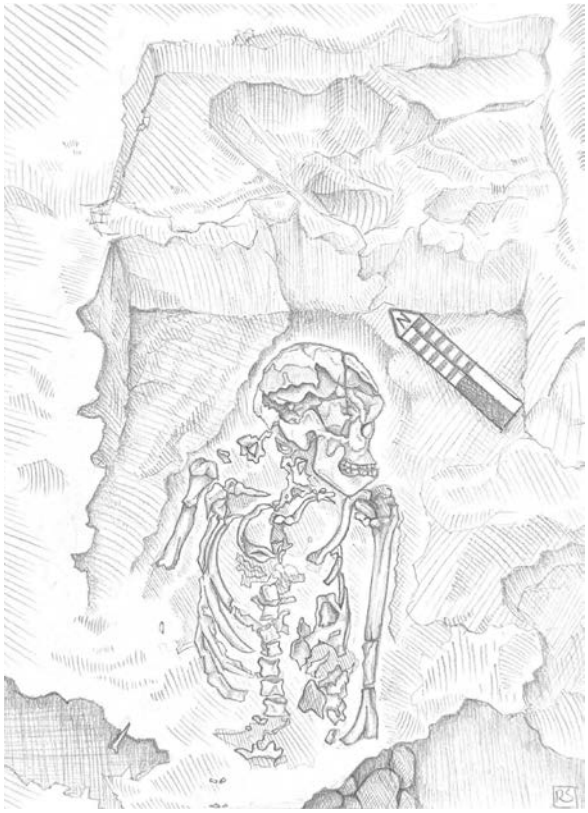
sedentary the practice of living in one place for an extended period of time

gunyah a type of Aboriginal hut or shelter

magnetic gradiometry remote sensing technology that can detect materials rich in iron and thermoremanent magnetisation, which occurs after an event has taken place, such as burning

anthropogenic originating via human activity

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SOURCE 1.21 Illustrated drawing of the burial of a young Aboriginal male at the Eight Mile site (Drawn by R. Stanley and included with permission from Mithaka Aboriginal Corporation)

Burial sites

At the request of Mithaka Aboriginal Corporation, the archaeological team undertook a rescue excavation of a known Aboriginal burial site. Initial **bioarchaeological** analyses suggest the individual had skeletal adaptations from strenuous labour activities. Evidence indicates that this could have been from seed processing with grindstones, an activity that was ethnographically mainly undertaken by women. However, recent research found proteins that indicated this person was male. Is it possible that in the more ancient past men undertook seed grinding also?

These archaeological discoveries provide insight into community practices and activities, while also indicating their connection to broader, intangible systems of cultural value and spirituality. The presence of quarries showcases the technological capabilities of Mithaka People to create a variety of stone tool types. These creations were also used in instances of trade and exchange, thus providing insight into ancient Aboriginal economic practices. Evidence of dwellings on Mithaka Country challenges traditional understandings of hunter-gatherers and encourages new perceptions of Aboriginal ways of life. Finally, the excavation of the burial site provides insight into Mithaka food processing activities and cultural **mortuary practices**.

ACTIVITY 1.5

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Consider Sources 1.13–1.21, and check out some three-dimensional stone-tool models from Australia at the Museum of Stone Tools website. Evaluate the usefulness of these sources in challenging the traditional understanding of Aboriginal technological achievements.

1.7 Issues

bioarchaeological bioarchaeological analysis refers to the subdiscipline of bioarchaeology and the analysis of human remains to determine key characteristics such as cause of death, age and sex

mortuary practices cultural practices relating to the death of an individual

Elder a First Nations community member who is highly respected due to the level of cultural knowledge they have received over time; recognised as a Custodian of their Country and able to disclose information about their Country and its practices, when appropriate

Research ethics

In the past, particularly during the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, European explorers, ethnographers and even Australian archaeologists undertook research about First Nations communities but failed to work respectfully with these communities. Though local Indigenous **Elders** or knowledge holders provided vital information, sometimes freely and other times under duress, their co-authorship was almost never sufficiently acknowledged, and financial compensation was rare.

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This failure to recognise Indigenous contributions to research projects has been an ongoing issue in Australian ethnographic and archaeological research. It has also created a level of mistrust between Indigenous communities and researchers due to negative past experiences. Despite this, the Mithaka Research Framework is an example of Indigenous-led research. The document has been generated by Mithaka People and prioritises community benefit and the discovery and preservation of cultural knowledge. The framework also emphasises the diverse expertise of Mithaka Elders, community members, archaeologists and other scholars.

Research debates

The Mithaka archaeological research project is generating findings that are relevant to overarching academic debates surrounding Aboriginal food production and lifestyles. The Channel Country has a rich ethnographic record. However, there are issues associated with the use of ethnographic sources in modern research contexts. Traditionally, Aboriginal peoples did not document their past via written records. Therefore, the first narratives of Indigenous Australian cultures and practices were written by Europeans and contain **biases**, including a **Eurocentric** perspective. It is important to consider this when reading these texts, as they may be describing certain behaviours or activities without acknowledging the broader context of Indigenous lifeways. Additionally, the activities and behaviours recorded can only directly reflect the time in which they were written. Thus, while ethnographic sources can be used to **infer** the presence of activities and behaviours before European arrival, Indigenous cultures are not **static**, and change over time should be expected. Furthermore, the lack of written documentation does not mean Indigenous communities were not undertaking other activities or practices.

bias demonstration of prejudice or the preference of a particular world view or group of people over others

Eurocentric assuming the superiority of European culture and history

infer a well-informed guess or deduction based on available evidence or reasoning

static lacking in movement or change

The use of ethnographic sources is central to the controversy surrounding the 2014 publication of *Dark Emu* by Bruce Pascoe. The book used early European ethnographic accounts to argue some Aboriginal communities were undertaking agriculture. It is difficult, and perhaps impossible, to define ancient Aboriginal practices by relatively modern and European standards. Indigenous peoples would not have defined their systems of food production as 'agriculture' as this is a European term developed in the mid-fifteenth century CE. However, the term 'hunter-gatherer', which is traditionally used to define Aboriginal lifestyles, is often considered to be inferior and simplistic when compared to agriculture. Archaeologists do not see 'hunter-gather' and 'agriculture' as mutually exclusive terms, in which only one can occur at a single time. The most likely case is that different Aboriginal communities utilised a combination of practices that eludes one particular definition.

As historians, we must understand that some words can be associated with connotations beyond their literal meaning. Though 'hunter-gather' and 'agriculture' are used to define two different lifestyles and systems of food production, both terms are often placed on one continuum and used as markers of human progress, complexity and civilisation. This does not have to be this way. There is nothing simple or unsophisticated about the diverse range of land use and food production strategies employed by Aboriginal communities.

The presence of gunyahs in the ethnographic and archaeological records suggests that Mithaka People were using semi-permanent dwellings.

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archaeobotanical an archaeological sub-discipline that is the study of ancient plant remains

agriculture the practice of farming, including the growing of crops and the use of animals to provide food, wool and other products

cultivation care, loosening and breaking up of soil to encourage the growth of plants

Laboratory analysis from archaeological excavations of two gunyahs at Durrie Station is focusing on the **archaeobotanical** remains to see what Mithaka People were consuming, and if evidence can be found to support Aboriginal **agricultural** or **cultivation** practices. Archaeologists also argue Mithaka People had strong **aquaculture** practices, which involved managing water resources via netting and trapping fish during flood times and the use of **weirs**. Research on Mithaka Country is not only beneficial for the local community but it will also inform important research debates that will better shape understandings and appreciation for Aboriginal lifeways.

1.8 Preservation and conservation

The preservation of Mithaka Country is the proud responsibility of Mithaka People. The community is actively involved in a process of intergenerational knowledge sharing, which can ensure future generations of Mithaka community members learn and engage with their culture and cultural heritage. Some Mithaka Elders no longer live on Country and, due to its remote nature, visiting Country is not always viable. The Mithaka Aboriginal Corporation is dedicated to ensuring their older community members and Elders can get back on Country when possible so their cultural knowledge can be recorded, preserved and passed on.

aquaculture breeding, rearing and harvesting of organisms, like fish, in water environments

weir a small barrier built across a stream or river to control the water level, which can also assist with the trapping of fish

In 2019, the Mithaka Aboriginal Corporation partnered with the University of Queensland to develop a museum exhibition titled Kirrenderri, Heart of Channel Country. In March–August 2022, more than 6000 visitors explored a collection of archaeological artefacts, and historic and contemporary photographs and maps that were displayed at the University of Queensland Anthropology Museum in Brisbane. The exhibition began a multi-year regional tour in 2023, visiting towns like Birdsville, Winton, Biloela, Longreach, Cairns and Coffs Harbour.

This depth study is uniquely powerful as the project is being led by living descendants, including two Mithaka co-curators, Shawnee Gorringe and Tracey Hough, with the involvement of Elder Rainy McKellar. This exhibition is an example of multi-generational, Indigenous-led engagement. Often in ancient history, the cultures being researched have long since become obsolete. However, for several surviving Indigenous communities, including those in North America, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, a thread of continuity connects them with their ancestors who once walked the Earth. This collaborative research undertaking is important as it represents a strong partnership between an Indigenous community and academic researchers.

1.9 Mithaka case study: Summing up

The Mithaka cultural landscape is archaeologically complex and diverse since it consists of several sites. For Mithaka People, intangible and tangible heritage are intertwined. While there are several different site types across Mithaka Country, including stone quarries, dwellings and burials, it is their intangible connection that links them all together. While you may not be able to see it on the landscape, each site is linked to overarching systems of Mithaka culture and lore. It is important to note that the archaeological research project is being led by the Mithaka Aboriginal Corporation. In previous centuries, non-Indigenous academics would dictate the focus of research projects, and the contribution of Indigenous communities was not valued. 'Ngali Wanthi' (We search together) reiterates the importance of reciprocal and sincere research collaboration.

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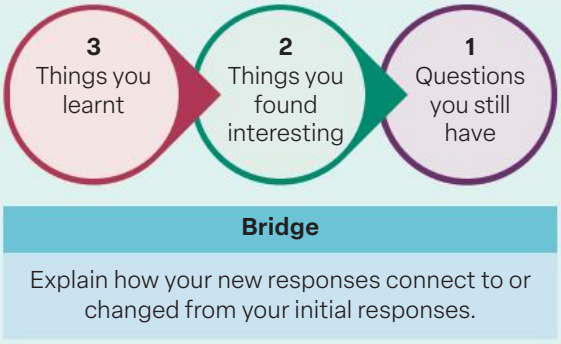
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Mithaka People are primarily working towards preserving their cultural heritage for future generations; however, museum displays like Kirrenderri, Heart of Channel Country allow the broader public to also gain insight into the richness of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

ACTIVITY **1.6**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Complete a new 3-2-1 then compare it to the one you completed in Activity 1.3 by completing the bridge:



1.10 Hisarlik case study: Is it the legendary Troy?

The archaeological site of Troy can be found in modern-day Hisarlik, Turkey. Henrich Schliemann first drew attention to the site when he began excavations in 1870; however, Hisarlik had already been associated with Troy since earlier that century. Schliemann was a German amateur archaeologist who was fascinated by the existence of Troy as discussed by Homer in his *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Although the historical accuracy of Homer's poems has often been questioned, many believe the tales were based on kernels of truth. Upon arriving in Hisarlik in 1868, Schliemann encountered fellow amateur archaeologist and English expatriate Frank Calvert. Calvert shared Schliemann's obsession with uncovering material evidence of Homer's epics and had already completed excavations in the area, uncovering city walls and parts of an ancient temple. Though Calvert was short on funds, he managed to purchase a portion of Hisarlik in hopes of discovering Troy.



SOURCE 1.22 Map showing the location of Hisarlik

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Calvert, subsequently unable to finance his own excavation, encouraged Schliemann to focus his energy and funds on this particular area. Schliemann ultimately heeded Calvert's advice and became famous, or rather infamous, for his discoveries at the site.

Conduct at the site raised many ethical issues, such as appropriate excavation methods, looting and forgery under Schliemann. These issues have lasting effects with the current Turkish head of excavations, Professor Rüstem Aslan, fighting for the repatriation of artefacts removed from the site since initial excavations.

tell a raised mound created by repetitive building of earth and stone constructions

adobe compacted clay that was dried in the sun and used as building material

kiln a type of oven used for firing clay

stratify the division of soil into different layers or deposits, according to natural or cultural events

principle of superposition a key archaeological assumption that assumes the order in which the different parts of a site have been laid down will reflect the sequence of events that occurred at the site in the past; more recent deposits will be laid down on top of older ones

circa otherwise written as c.; refers to an approximate and uncertain date

palimpsest something reused or altered but still bearing visible traces of its earlier form

citadel a fortress, used in times of warfare for citizens to shelter from danger

1.11 Nature of the site

Troy is an archaeological **tell** site. In Middle Eastern archaeology, tells are common due to the prevalence of a specific ancient construction technique. Structures were created using a combination of mud, **adobe** and eventually, sun-dried or **kiln**-baked bricks. These structures were vulnerable to extreme weather events and other forms of destruction. When these structures crumbled and collapsed, new ones were built directly on top. Therefore, tells are often **stratified** and, following the archaeological **principle of superposition**, the lowest layers are usually the oldest.

Initial measurements recorded by Schliemann suggest that, at its highest point, the tell stood approximately 40 metres above sea level. The base of the site measured approximately 215 metres by 300 metres, and the tell's summit measured approximately 164 metres by 120 metres. Archaeologists have identified nine main stratified layers; each representing a period of occupation from **circa** 2950–2350 BCE (Troy I) to 20 BCE–c. 500 CE (Troy IX).

Distinct material remains and specific references from literary sources accompany each occupation period, from the Early, Middle and Late Bronze Ages to the Iron Age. After Troy VII, the site appears to be unoccupied for hundreds of years until it re-emerges as a Greek city (Troy VIII) and then finally a town of the Roman Empire (Troy IX). Thousands of years of history lying atop the other is tricky to wrap your head around! As such, Troy can be described as a **palimpsest**. Snapshots of each occupation layer have been uncovered but this process has been incredibly difficult, spanning several excavation seasons, archaeological teams and decades. Excavating Troy is like dissecting a large, nine-layer cake!

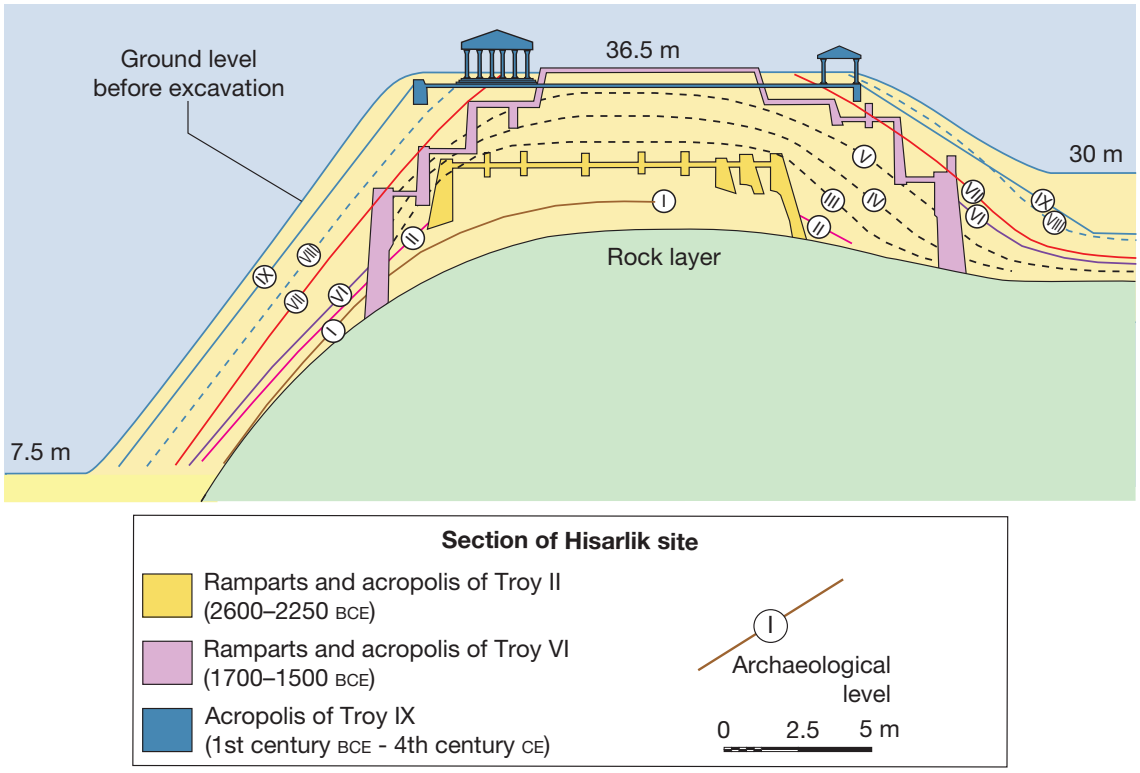


SOURCE 1.23 Remains of Troy VIII and Troy IX, Hisarlik, Turkey (UNESCO World Heritage List, 1998)

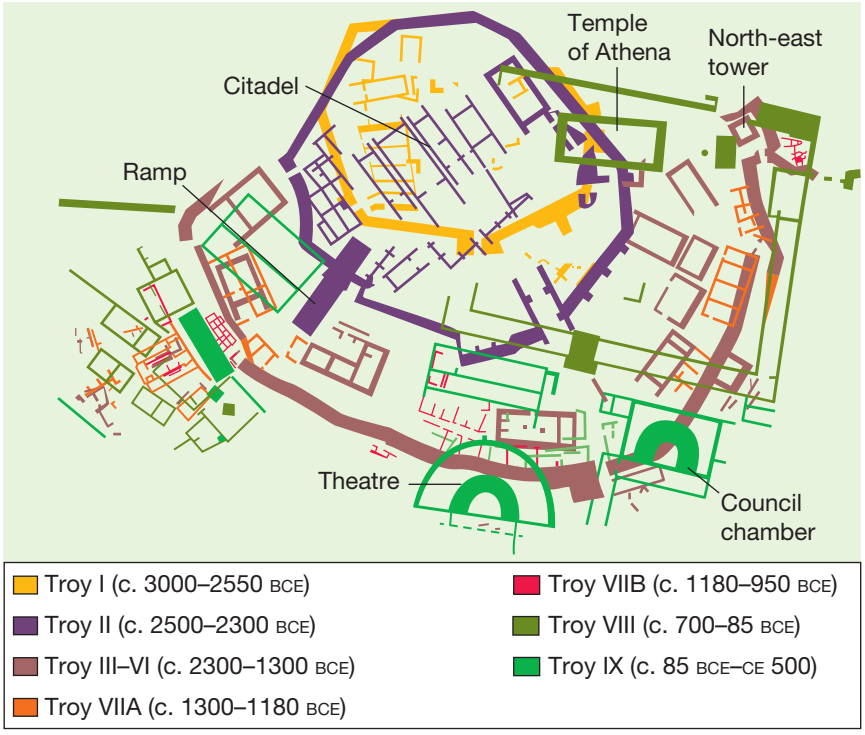
Archaeological findings at Troy have revealed the continuous presence of a **citadel** and lower town in each period of occupation, including gates and defensive walls; however, each layer has its own unique features.

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A key topic of debate among archaeologists and ancient historians over the centuries has concerned the search for evidence of Homer's Troy within Hisarlik. Are they one and the same? Should mythological tales be used to guide archaeological endeavours?



SOURCE 1.24 Diagram demonstrating the cross-section of the Hisarlik site



SOURCE 1.25 Diagram demonstrating nine distinct settlements on the site. The city of Homer's *Iliad* is thought to correspond to Troy VI–VIIA.

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1.12 Significant finds

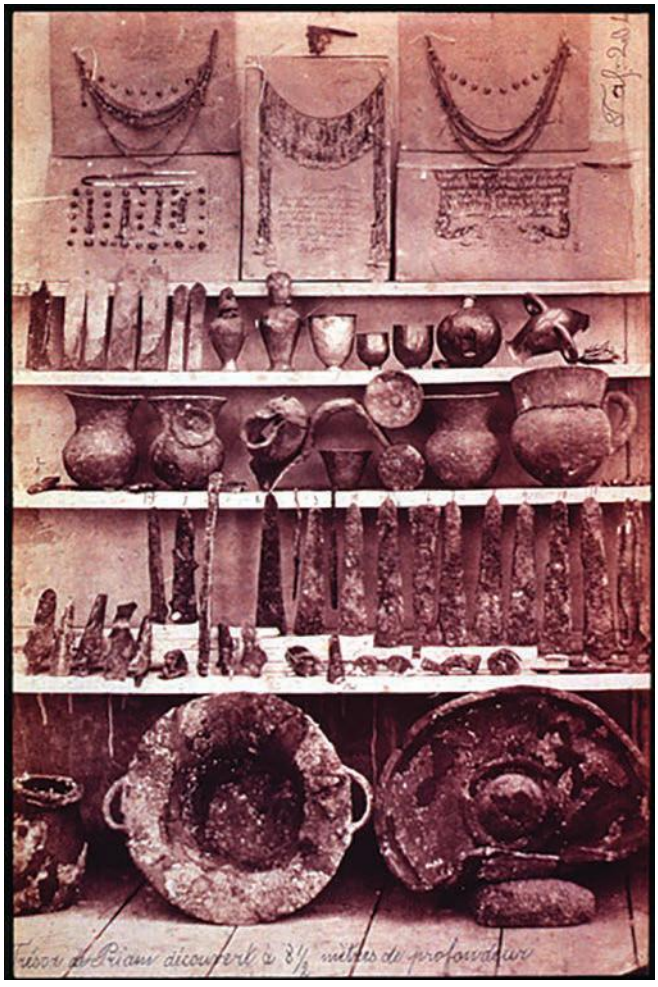
Perhaps the most significant, and controversial finds associated with Troy are Priam's Treasure. Schliemann was adamant that he had uncovered Homer's Troy, the Kingdom of Priam, in one of the earliest occupation periods of the tell (Troy II) in 1873. His justification hinged on his discovery of a large **cache** of artefacts in the city wall, which Schliemann named 'Priam's Treasure'. The collection included approximately 10 000 artefacts, including two gold **diadems**, thousands of gold rings and several other golden, silver, copper and **electrum** artefacts.

cache an archaeological term used to refer to a deposit of artefacts purposely buried in the ground

diadem a jewelled crown or headband

electrum a material made from the mixture of gold, silver and copper

Schliemann's critics are sceptical that this cache was entirely real, and suggest that it was possibly gathered by Schliemann from across the site. Several archaeologists have since debunked Priam's Treasure as proof of Homer's Troy, as Troy II has now been dated to nearly 1000 years prior to the Trojan War, probably from the Mycenaean period. Thus, while the credibility of Schliemann's work has suffered under professional scrutiny, the artefacts still associated with Priam's Treasure are incredible finds and remain subject to their own ongoing controversy.



SOURCE 1.26 Items from the Troy II treasure, Priam's Treasure, discovered by Heinrich Schliemann. The collection was divided in 1880, so this photo must have been taken prior to this. Could this really be Priam's treasure?



SOURCE 1.27 Advertisement for a viewing of Trojan artefacts, discovered by Heinrich Schliemann, at the South Kensington Museum in London, 29 December 1877

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SOURCE 1.28 Necklace from Priam's Treasure, Neues Museum, Berlin

SOURCE 1.29 T. D. Seymour, *Commentary on Homer's Iliad, Books I–III*, Ginn and Company, 1891, 2.229. Thomas Day Seymour (1848–1907) was an American classical scholar. He was a professor of Greek at Yale University and his published works focused on Homer.

> Gold was rare in Greece before the Persian wars, but was abundant in Asia Minor. Schliemann, however, has found treasures of gold ornaments not only at Hisarlik (which many think to be the site of the ancient Ilios) but also at Mycenae.

ACTIVITY **1.7**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Investigate Thomas Day Seymour and his commentary on Homer's *Iliad*.

	Source 1.29
Content: explicit/implicit from the source	
Origin	
Motives	
Perspectives	
Audience	
Context	
Text type	

2. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of Thomas Seymour's comments on Schliemann's discoveries.

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ACTIVITY **1.8**

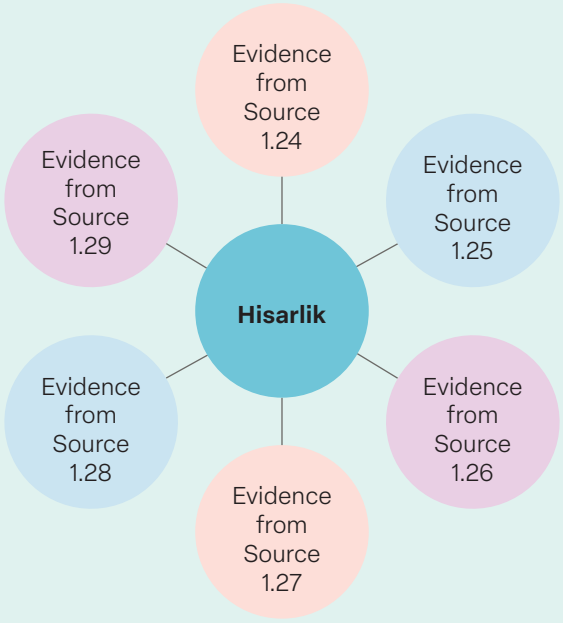
Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. Using the sources, create a concept map for the discoveries at Troy.



2. Make connections between the evidence listed by drawing lines between evidence, and annotating the diagram.
3. Devise questions for an inquiry into the archaeological site.
4. Investigate the site at Hisarlik further in order to select evidence to answer question 5.
5. Write a paragraph in response to the question ensuring you use evidence from the sources and references: 'To what extent do the finds at Hisarlik contribute to an understanding of the ancient past?

1.13 Issues

Though the tell of Troy retains evidence for thousands of years of history and the presence of several cities and civilisations, much of the focus has remained on finding evidence for Homer's Troy. Archaeologists have since confirmed that, if present at all, Homer's Troy would have existed in Troy VI.

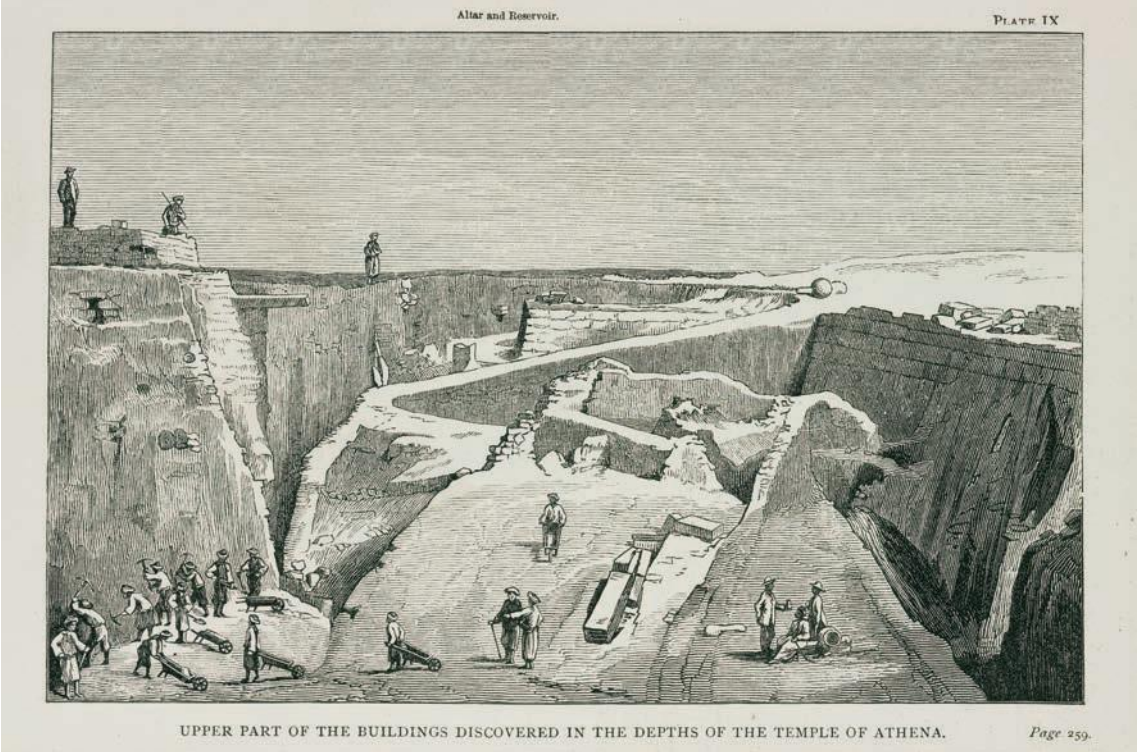
Excavating a tell is incredibly complex. If an archaeologist is not paying attention, they can easily continue excavating into the next occupation layer. Entirely different periods of time, spanning hundreds or thousands of years, can be conflated. The key to excavating a complex site like this is attention to detail. Archaeologists must look out for small changes in soil colour and texture, in addition to types of artefacts and structures, their styles and frequency.

Ancient historians and archaeologists then must refer to Homer's writings and other ancient literary sources to find points of corroboration linking text with material remains.

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However, this is not an easy undertaking. For example, the archaeological remains of Troy VI include large limestone walls, which would have acted as citadel fortifications once reaching over 9 metres tall, several citadel gates, towers and the ruins of several terraced buildings. These features are broadly consistent with Homer's writings of Troy. While the presence of these features provides some authentication of Homer's work in the archaeological record, these features are not unique to Troy and are common across many other Bronze Age sites.

Reference to Troy has also been found in sources from the Anatolian (modern-day Turkey) Hittite Empire. The Hittites mention conflicts with the 'Ahhiyawa' (Greeks) over 'Wilusa' (Troy). Ancient historians suggest these conflicts may represent the real Trojan War. Though this evidence does not undeniably prove Homer's tales, it confirms that Homer may have drawn from, and embellished, actual historical events.



SOURCE 1.30 Illustration from Schliemann's *Troy and its remains: A narrative of researches and discoveries made on the site of Ilium, and in the Trojan Plain*, published in 1875 based on his excavations

SOURCE 1.31 N. Sheldon, 'Digging up Hisarlik – Part III: The Search for Homer's Troy', *History and Archaeology Online*, 2019

Specific details from ancient Hittite texts (Ahhiyawa texts) verify certain information from Homer's poem. The documents record treaties made with a city named Wilusa in 1295 BC. The capital of a late Bronze Age Anatolian kingdom, Wilusa was also known as Ilios – an alternative name for Troy. Wilusa's kingdom was powerful and mention is made of its rivals elsewhere in the Mediterranean world – rivals who could have been the Mycenaean Greeks...

... However, names alone are tenuous evidence for a historical basis for the Trojan war. Those in the Ahhiyawa texts are tenuous at best and could simply have been interpreted to fit the desired context rather than providing clear evidence.

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ACTIVITY **1.9**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Identify how the authenticity of Hisarlik as Troy has been supported and questioned.
2. Write questions to assist in exploring the issues of authenticity for Hisarlik as the site of Homer's Troy.
3. Investigate these issues and record your findings in a PMI chart.

Plus: Evidence that supports the site as Troy	Minus: Evidence that contradicts the site as Troy	Interesting

4. Decide and argue your case in response to the question: Is Hisarlik the legendary Troy discussed by Homer?

antiquarian someone who studies or collects things from the past but does not engage with the systematic and scientific practices of modern archaeology

looting the act of stealing goods or artefacts

provenance information concerning the artefact's origin and history

A persistent issue with many archaeological sites excavated in the nineteenth century was the prevalence of artefact looting and illegal trade. Early archaeologists can be called **antiquarians**, as they were primarily concerned with finding and collecting valuable artefacts. These individuals, including Schliemann, believed they gained a sense of ownership over the finds they uncovered. This sense of entitlement meant they had no qualms about **looting** artefacts from their country of origin to keep or sell to museums and private collectors. Stealing and selling artefacts erases **provenance**. The loss of this vital information limits archaeological understandings of an artefact, which in turn can impact the understanding of the broader public. This is one of the main reasons why looting and subsequent trade of artefacts is frowned upon and illegal in most countries. The saga of Priam's Treasure explores the long-term impacts of artefact looting and illegal trade.

Issues with Schliemann

Archaeologists must read the landscape, and interpret the evidence and data available to them. Schliemann was so focused on finding Homer's Troy that he was willing to destroy evidence of the ancient past, because it was not specifically related to his interest. Schliemann's actions provide an example of the consequences that ensue when archaeology is used for the wrong reasons. Schliemann's methods were savage and brutal. He ploughed through layers of soil and everything in them without proper record keeping – no mapping of finds, few descriptions of discoveries. Single-mindedly Schliemann chopped his way towards Troy.

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SOURCE 1.32 Extract from M. Solly, 'The many myths of the man who "discovered" – and nearly destroyed – Troy', *Smithsonianmag,* 2022

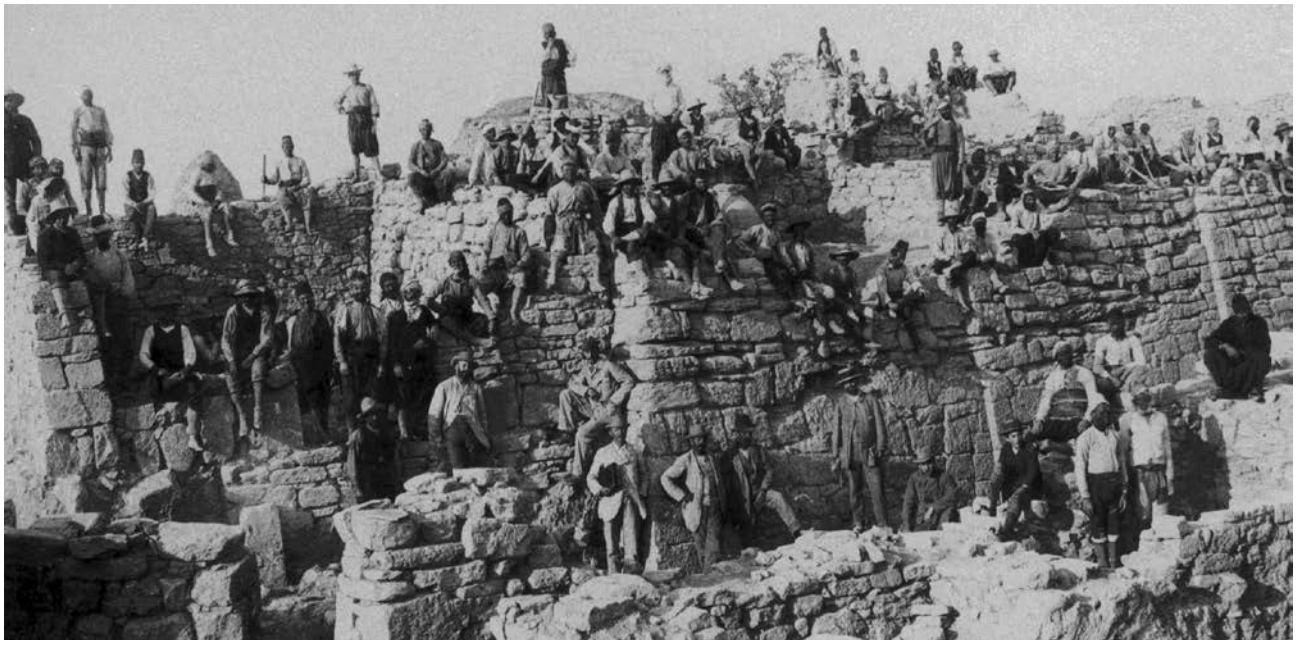
When German businessman Heinrich Schliemann discovered a cache of ancient artifacts in the place now known as Hisarlik, Turkey, in 1873, he was quick to identify the gold jewelry, silver vases and other precious objects as the treasure of Priam, the legendary king of Troy. An amateur archaeologist with a penchant for embellishment, Schliemann smuggled the trove out of Anatolia and touted it as proof of his claim that Hisarlik and Troy, the besieged city immortalized in Homer's ***Iliad***, were one and the same ...

... Assuming that Priam's kingdom lay at the lowest level of the archaeological site, the adventurer rushed excavation of the upper layers, inadvertently destroying almost all traces of the very city he'd set out to find. As classicist Kenneth Harl jokes in the Great Courses' Great Ancient Civilizations of Asia Minor series, Schliemann accomplished what the Greeks could not, finally leveling the walls of Troy.

... Low on funds, Calvert convinced the wealthy Schliemann to focus his search on the mound; the German entrepreneur began excavations in 1870, without bothering to secure a permit from local authorities.

... When Turkish authorities realized that Schliemann had smuggled the so-called Priam's Treasure out of the country, they mounted a legal case against him, demanding the return of the looted artifacts and temporarily barring him from returning to the dig site. In the interim, the amateur archaeologist turned his attention to another mythical ruler: Agamemnon, king of Mycenae and brother of Menelaus.

Schliemann intended to have replicas of the Mycenaean treasures made in Paris. However, when his plans became widely known, they raised suspicions about the authenticity of finds like the Mask of Agamemnon, leading to claims that some items may have been forgeries. Various scholars accused Schliemann of deceit, suggesting he mixed artefacts from different excavation years and potentially fabricated evidence. This scrutiny, along with revelations of inconsistent excavation practices and reporting, irreparably damaged Schliemann's archaeological reputation.



SOURCE 1.33 The excavation team in Troy c. 1890s

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SOURCE 1.34 J. Rubalcaba & E.H. Cline, *Digging for Troy: From Homer to Hisarlik*, Charlesbridge, 2011, p. 30

Schliemann smuggled Priam's Treasures out of Turkey, without the permission of the local authorities, to Berlin. While temporarily loaned for display to London's South Kensington Museum in 1877, the artefacts went on permanent display at the Royal Museums of Berlin in 1881. Russian forces took the assemblage during World War II, and though maintaining denial for several decades, some of the artefacts were identified in a collection of Moscow's Pushkin Museum in 1993. German authorities requested their return. Where do the artefacts belong?

SOURCE 1.35 Adolf Furtwängler (1853–1907), a German archaeologist, teacher, art historian and museum director, wrote about Schliemann's visit to the Archaeological Society in Berlin in 1881. This was taken from a letter to his mother on 13 July 1881.

There is a tremendous reception for Schliemann here. Nonetheless, he is and remains a half-crazy and confused human being, who has no idea whatsoever of the meaning of his excavations.

ACTIVITY **1.10**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Read Source 1.35 and answer the questions below.

1. Identify issues that arise with the use of this source as evidence for Schliemann's ethics.
2. Analyse the source using the features of evidence.
3. Identify the strengths and limitations of the source regarding reliability and usefulness.
4. Make a judgement about how reliable and useful the source is. Be sure to include evidence to support your judgement.
5. Explain how the use of sources like this could affect the way the Ancient World is understood.

Cultural heritage unites tangible artefacts and sites with intangible practices, like storytelling and music. In the case of Hisarlik and Troy, the site's connections to Homer and his influential literary works tie in with the capacity for cultural heritage to encompass both tangible remains and intangible cultural memories and spirituality. Due to its importance, Troy was inscribed onto the World Heritage List in 1998.

ACTIVITY **1.11**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Refer to the UNESCO website listing for Troy and explain how the site meets the criteria for World Heritage status.

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Many, if not most, of the artefacts that Troy is famous for are no longer kept in Turkey. Instead, these finds have been spread across the world, largely due to the antics of Schliemann. The repatriation of artefacts looted prior to the establishment of national and international regulations relating to the ownership of antiquities is now a prominent issue within the cultural heritage sector.

ACTIVITY 1.12

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Explain why Schliemann's discoveries are controversial.

1.14 Preservation and conservation

The preservation of Troy for future generations is vital as it presents a material record of various civilisations across a time period of over 4000 years. The Superior Council of Immovable Cultural and Natural Property, under the authority of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, designated Troy a historic site in 1968. The site is considered State property and no works may be carried out without the appropriate authorisation.

Troy's protection and conservation is orchestrated by the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums. Collaborating institutions that assist with site management include the regional Çanakkale Council for the Preservation of the Cultural Heritage, the Governorship of Çanakkale and the Çanakkale Museum. The new on-site museum, completed in 2018, boasts a comprehensive collection of artefacts and an immersive 3D virtual experience projected onto the museum's external facade, depicting the events of the Trojan War.

Excavations at Troy over the centuries have been led by foreign archaeologists. However, in 2014 a precedent was set. A multi-disciplinary team led by William Aylward and the University of Wisconsin was replaced by a new research initiative directed by Professor Rüstem Aslan and the University of Çanakkale, with support from a private company. Despite Troy having been investigated and excavated for almost 200 years, the first Turkish-led research project of Troy only commenced a decade ago. It is important that local archaeologists have opportunities to excavate at local sites. The archaeological discipline in each nation can only thrive when local professionals are engaged with their nation's archaeological record.

SOURCE 1.36 J. Hammer, 'In search of Troy', *Smithsonianmag*, 2022

These days, Aslan spends much of his time trying to persuade museums to return Trojan artifacts, currently dispersed, he says, among 45 collections around the world. This has placed him at the forefront of the international movement to repatriate cultural materials.

...

Priam's Treasures were hardly the only relics Schliemann brought out of Troy. Between 1870 and 1890 he packed everything from bronze kettles to ceramics to gold jewelry into crates and shipped them to Europe. Some valuables found their way to museums and private collections; others went to Schliemann's friends. And that inventory does not include objects stolen from the Imperial Museum in Constantinople or pilfered by workers from the digs and sold overseas.

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(The Smithsonian holds more than 100 Trojan artifacts, which were part of Schliemann's personal collection, and were donated to the institution by his wife in 1893, after the archaeologist's death. Turkey has never approached the Smithsonian about repatriation, but Sabrina Sholts, curator of anthropology, says that under the institution's framework for deciding on the ethical return of objects they may be valid candidates for consideration.)

...

Aslan has approached the Neues Museum in Berlin, which has thousands of Schliemann's artifacts, including silver ceremonial cups and other objects of silver and bronze, and the British Museum, which has 300 pieces from the Troad, including 200 from Troy. But the talks have led nowhere. 'They say, "If the politicians say to give them back, I will give them back,"' Aslan told me. 'They all insist it is a political decision.'

Nineteenth century
- Calvert (English)
- Schliemann (German)

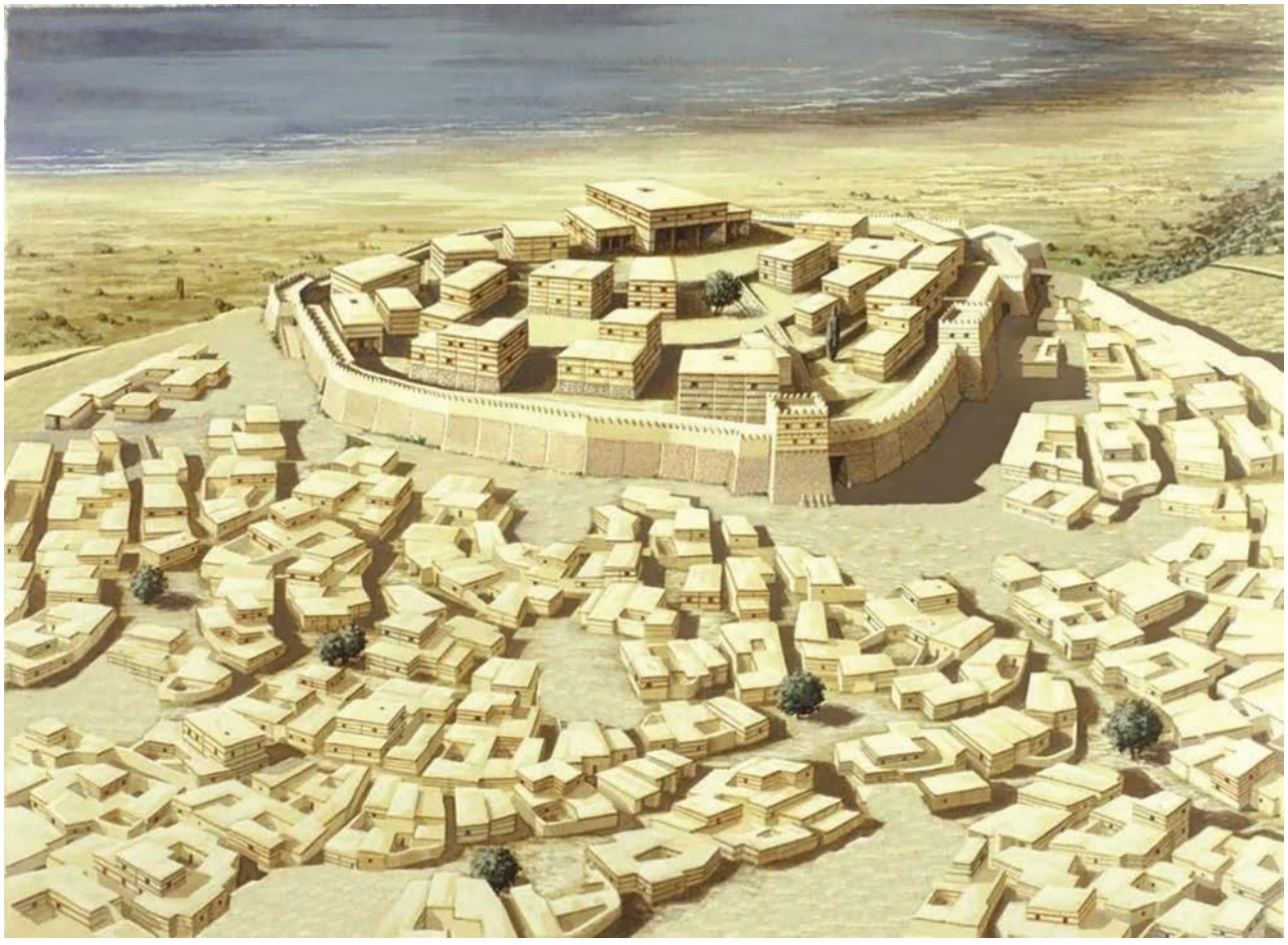
→

Twentieth century
- Carl Blegen (American)
- Manfred Korfmann (German)

→

Twenty-first century
- William Aylward (American)
- Professor Rüstem Aslan (Turkish)

SOURCE 1.37 Key archaeologists at Hisarlik over the centuries



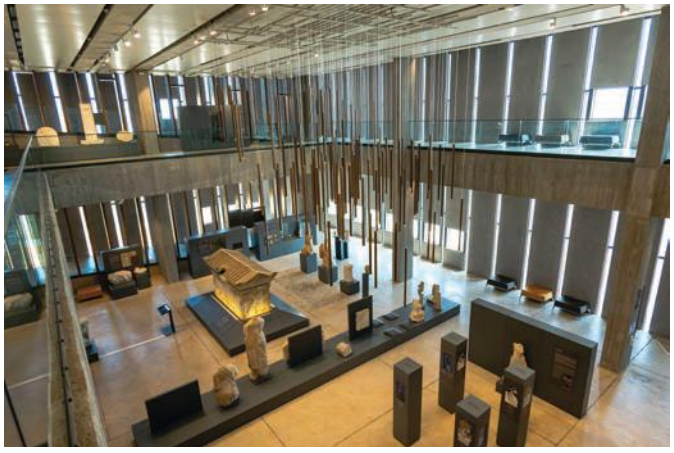
SOURCE 1.38 An illustration depicting Troy more than 3000 years ago, corresponding with the era described by Homer

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This depth study has highlighted the complex role museums can play in the preservation of archaeology and the ancient past. The recent completion of the Troy Museum at Hisarlik provides tourists with a bonus experience after completing a walking trail of the site's ruins. However, populating this new museum with artefacts has come at the cost of removing artefacts from the collections of other Turkish museums. Additionally, the absence of certain artefacts, still held in overseas collections, is made known by several illuminated images and a plaque declaring that these pieces are 'Trojan artefacts longing to be reunited at home'. Professor Aslan's well-documented battle over artefact repatriation remains ongoing. The role of museums can often provide a public platform for the display of artefacts of the ancient past, but in this example, museums can also act as roadblocks to artefacts returning to their country of origin.

SOURCE 1.39 J. Hammer, 'In search of Troy', *Smithsonianmag*, 2022

The Troy Museum, an $8 million showcase adjacent to the ruins that spans 5,000 years of history, opened in October 2018. Its four floors are filled with jewelry, sculptures, sarcophagi and other objects, including the Hittite treaty tablet, in handsome exhibition spaces surrounding an airy and brightly lit 50-foot atrium. Aslan worked with Turkey's Ministry of Culture and Tourism to secure much of the collection from museums in Canakkale, Istanbul and Ankara. The process met with grumbling from museums asked to hand over treasured artifacts, but it has produced a rich tableau of items.



SOURCE 1.40 The Troy Museum, located on-site, showcases the city's 5000-year history. It includes illuminated images of prized historic objects held abroad that the museum hopes will be returned.

SOURCE 1.41 'Troy Museum', *Turkish Archaeological News*, 2020

With the opening of the new Trojan Museum, the visitors to Troy now have a possibility to gain much more information about this archaeological site and put its history into a much broader perspective. Most of the artefacts displayed in the museum had been previously exhibited in the Archaeological Museum in the centre of Çanakkale, far away from the site of Troy. The new arrangement makes it much easier to see these objects, and the visit to the museum is an excellent introduction to the tour of Troy.

1.15 Troy case study: Summing up

Troy is an archaeologically complex and rich site, offering an insight into several civilisations from the Early Bronze Age to the Roman Empire. Though the site is often associated with the work of Schliemann, it is important to understand that his practices were ethically and methodologically flawed and unrepresentative of modern archaeology. The impact of Schliemann's antics is ongoing, as current site director Professor Rüstem Aslan continues to fight for the repatriation of artefacts from museums around the globe.

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CONCLUDING STUDY

1.16 Nefertiti Bust

There is a long history in archaeology of remains being excavated and then taken to the country of the archaeologist, rather than remaining the property of the country in which they were found. The Nefertiti Bust raises many controversies such as looting, fakes and forgeries and who owns the past. Therefore, the debate continues:

- Did German archaeologist Ludwig Borchardt legally remove the bust?
- Is the bust a genuine one created in the time of Nefertiti? How do we know?
- Should the Neues Museum return the bust to Egypt?
- Should the Neues Museum keep the bust?
- Is there a compromise or solution to the debate?
- Who are the winners and losers?

SOURCE 1.42 'Nefertiti Bust', *Joy of Museums Virtual Tours*, 2023

The 'Nefertiti Bust' represents the Great Royal Wife of the Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaten and Egypt's Queen during 1370 BC – 1330 BC.

The statue is renowned for the skill of the sculptor Thutmose, the well-preserved coloring, and the beauty of Nefertiti herself.

The bust is a painted stucco-coated limestone work, believed to have been crafted in 1345 BC by the sculptor Thutmose, because it was found in his workshop in Amarna, Egypt.

It is one of the most copied works of ancient Egypt. As a result, Nefertiti has become one of the most famous women of the ancient world and an icon of feminine beauty.

The bust served in the workshop of the Tuthmosis, as a model for artists producing portraits of the queen. Nefertiti is shown as a woman with a subtle beauty.

The folds under the eyes and chin and the slightly sunken cheeks do not diminish her beauty...

... The bust was discovered by German archaeologists in 1912 when they excavated the Thutmose's workshop in Egypt.

The German expedition was digging under license at the time from the government in Egypt, which was ruled by the Ottoman Empire.

Is this Nefertiti – or a 100-year-old fake?



SOURCE 1.43 Screenshot of headline article appearing in *The Guardian*

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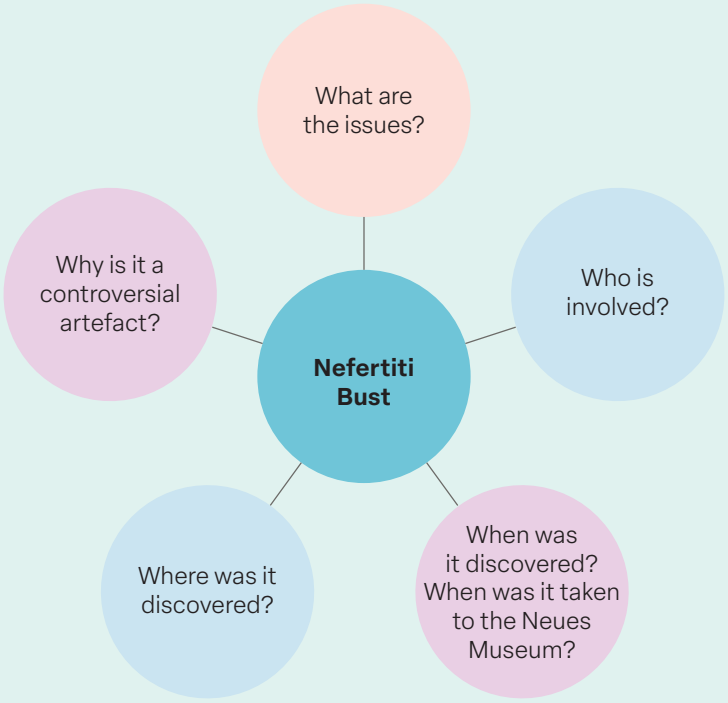
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ACTIVITY **1.13**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

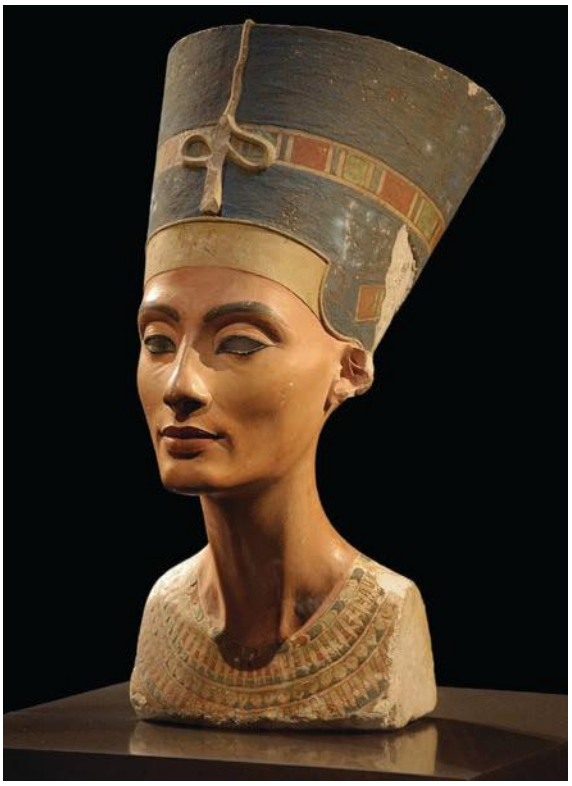
1. Identify possible issues relating to authenticity and/or repatriation.
2. Investigate the issue further. Complete a cluster diagram as shown below.



SOURCE 1.44 'Greece Nazi Occupation: Athens asks Germany for €279bn', *BBC News*, 7 April 2015

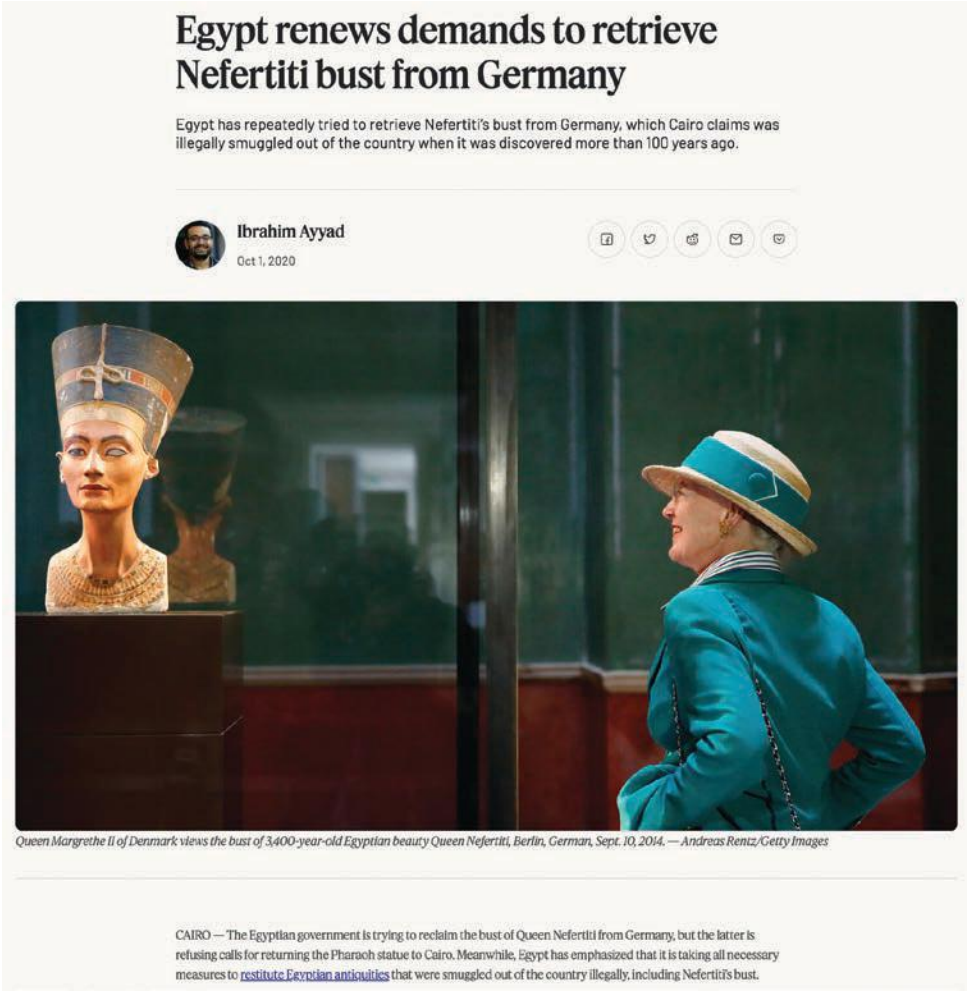
The Greek government says Germany owes Greece nearly €279bn (£204bn; US $303bn) in war reparations for the Nazi occupation during World War Two. It is the first time Greece has officially calculated what Germany allegedly owes it for Nazi atrocities and looting during the 1940s. However, the German government says the issue was resolved legally years ago.

Greece's radical left Syriza government is making the claim while struggling to meet massive debt repayment deadlines.



SOURCE 1.45 Bust of Nefertiti at the Egyptian Museum in Berlin

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Egypt renews demands to retrieve Nefertiti bust from Germany

Egypt has repeatedly tried to retrieve Nefertiti's bust from Germany, which Cairo claims was illegally smuggled out of the country when it was discovered more than 100 years ago.

Ibrahim Ayyad
Oct 1, 2020

Queen Margrethe II of Denmark views the bust of 3,400-year-old Egyptian beauty Queen Nefertiti, Berlin, German, Sept. 10, 2014. — Andreas Rentz/Getty Images

CAIRO — The Egyptian government is trying to reclaim the bust of Queen Nefertiti from Germany, but the latter is refusing calls for returning the Pharaoh statue to Cairo. Meanwhile, Egypt has emphasized that it is taking all necessary measures to restitute Egyptian antiquities that were smuggled out of the country illegally, including Nefertiti's bust.

SOURCE 1.46 Screenshot of headline article appearing in *Al-Monitor*, an independent media coverage for the Middle East



Museums
News

No plans to return Berlin's star museum attractions Nefertiti and Pergamon Altar, German official says

Statement comes after Berlin state secretary for diversity and anti-discrimination spoke out in favour of restituting the artefacts to their countries of origin

James Jackson
20 January 2023

Share

SOURCE 1.47 Screenshot of headline article appearing in *The Art Newspaper*, an online and print publication that covers the international art world

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ACTIVITY **1.14**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Complete a tug-of-war for the dilemma: Who should own the bust of Nefertiti?



Keep the Nefertiti Bust in Berlin OR Return the Nefertiti Bust to Egypt.
Be sure to think of reasons on the other side of the dilemma as well.

1.17 You call this archaeology?

Popular media, such as video games and adventure films, characterise archaeologists as galivanting heroes, rescuing treasures from nefarious gangs. While these portrayals were developed in the 1980s and 1990s and remain entertaining to this day, little archaeology actually takes place. Despite the archaeological discipline never resembling these common stereotypes in real life, these misconceptions along with several others, limit the general public's engagement with and understanding of contemporary archaeology.

Archaeologists don't study dinosaurs

Perhaps the most inaccurate assumption people make about archaeology is that it involves the study of dinosaurs. The confusion between archaeology and palaeontology is extremely common. While the two disciplines share many of the same principles and techniques, it is important to distinguish archaeology and the study of the human past (and our closest biological ancestors), from palaeontology and the study of fossilised organisms, plants and animals preserved in rock millions of years before humans emerged on the landscape.

The archaeological record is incomplete

The archaeological record is not frozen in time or a perfect material recollection of past cultures and societies. Instead, the archaeological record is fragmentary in that not everything is preserved. While archaeologists can still piece together a picture of a site and ancient life from the artefacts they uncover, there will always be some missing puzzle pieces that will never be found. For example, it is rare for organic matter to be preserved. Artefacts and sites are exposed to a myriad environmental conditions, wet and dry, cold and hot, which can support preservation or accelerate the process of decay and deterioration over time. Not everything can be preserved in a physical form. This is where the work of historians is vital, for they might be able to track down ancient or modern sources that may record the practice of intangible activities like music, dancing and storytelling. While archaeology can reveal many things about the material world, some things are ultimately lost and, therefore, the archaeological record is incomplete.

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Archaeology is not a treasure hunt

As the case studies from this chapter have reiterated, archaeology is more than just a quest for treasure. The notion of 'value' is a tricky one to interpret because different cultures and societies will have placed importance and meaning on different items for reasons we may never know or understand. While Schliemann might have been vindicated by the golden riches he uncovered, these finds represent a minority of individuals who once lived. Contemporary archaeologists uncover the stories of those who have not been immortalised in text. Though the faces and names of countless individuals who lived in the past will never be known, archaeologists work to honour their existence by gathering information about their lives via the objects they used.

Archaeology is more than excavation

While this chapter has highlighted the potential for archaeologists to excavate and uncover incredible discoveries from the ancient past, archaeology is much more than just the physical process of excavation. Archaeology does not even start with excavation! Rather, the archaeological process begins with consultation, collaboration and research. Identification of a possible site can involve the use of satellite imagery, drone technology, non-invasive sub-surface detection techniques like ground penetrating radar and the use of archival records.

An archaeological project can commence a number of ways.

- An archaeologist who is employed by an academic institution like a university can undertake specific research in an area or topic that interests them once they have acquired the necessary funding.
- An archaeological project can be a reactive process, often triggered by development and the unexpected discovery of archaeology. For example, in 1990 when construction work began on a 34-storey government office tower in Lower Manhattan, New York City, the astonishing initial discovery of 390 burials revealed the existence of an African American burial ground, one of the largest and earliest sites associated with eighteenth-century slavery in the United States.
- Archaeological discoveries can also be made accidentally, as was the case with Australian geologist Jim Bowler stumbling upon the human remains of Mungo Man while riding his motorbike across the Willandra Lakes region in New South Wales.
- Archaeological projects can also be pursued by a passionate community, like the Richard III Society undertaking the 'Looking for Richard' project and successfully locating the remains of the lost king underneath a car park in Leicester in 2012.

Specifically, within Australian archaeology, collaboration with First Nations communities is vital, as was discussed in the Mithaka case study. Across Australia today, there are more than 300 spoken Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages connecting groups, clans and nations across immense, culturally complex land and seascapes. All archaeology in Australia occurs on the Country of First Nations communities.

Consultation and collaboration with relevant stakeholders does not stop once the project has commenced and the site has been located. A common thread of the examples listed above is the prominent involvement, or in some cases project leadership, from local community groups. Archaeologists do not own the past. Therefore, archaeologists ultimately work within a larger team of specialists, such as geologists, historians, other scientists and community representatives. Once the excavation has been completed, the process of artefact analysis and overarching site interpretation can take several years or decades. Furthermore, archaeologists must find ways to disseminate their findings because everyone in the world has a responsibility to know and care about our shared humanity and its past.

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ACTIVITY **1.15**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Select one of these significant archaeological discoveries:
   - discovery of Tutankhamun's Tomb
   - discovery of Rosetta Stone
   - discovery of Pompeii
   - discovery of Dead Sea Scrolls
   - discovery of Terracotta Army
   - discovery of Tollund Man
   - discovery of Ötzi
   - discovery of Ur.
2. Consider this key inquiry question: Why is this discovery significant to the field of archaeology?
3. What questions (and sub-questions) would you need to develop to answer the key inquiry question?
4. Find six sources (using the library or the internet) that demonstrate a balance of ancient and modern, literary and non-literary sources that are relevant to your questions. Ensure an appropriate reference, with a context statement, is included with each source.
5. Investigate your chosen significant discovery to respond to the questions you have devised.
6. Identify the issues faced in the investigation process.
7. Explain how you did (or could) overcome these issues.

ACTIVITY **1.16**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Go to the UNESCO website and choose one of the World Heritage List sites.
2. Frame a key inquiry question that focuses on the issues of conservation and preservation of sites of World Heritage significance.
3. Using this inquiry question, create a case study for the site that includes:
   - description of the site
   - rationale for inclusion on World Heritage List
   - issues of conservation or preservation
   - map of site
   - cultural significance.
4. Evaluate the cultural significance of the site to its people.
5. Evaluate any archaeological issues surrounding the site.

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- There are ancient and modern sources that can be literary and non-literary.
- Ethics in archaeology includes historic issues of methods used to excavate and record findings and looting. Modern issues include custodianship, repatriation, conservation, interpretation and management of cultural heritage.
- Evidence can assist people in understanding life in the past through analysis and evaluation.
- The Mithaka Aboriginal Corporation has led the research project.
- Mithaka People are dedicated to collaborative research and reciprocal exchange of knowledge.
- There is collaboration of ethnography, cultural knowledge by Elders, historians and archaeologists.
- The site demonstrates evidence of occupation, which contradicts assumptions of hunter-gatherer stereotypes.
- There are different types of sites on Mithaka Country, such as stone quarries, dwellings and burial sites.
- The Mithaka case study uses a combination of physical objects and connection to culture, lore and spirituality.
- It is a complex site covering over 3000 years of occupation.
- Schliemann was convinced that Hisarlik was the site of Homer's Troy.
- In efforts to find Troy and its treasures, Schliemann destroyed and dug right through the potential Troy layer.
- Controversy exists over the methods used by Schliemann as well as accusations of forgery and looting.
- The current director of the site, Aslan, continues to fight for repatriation of artefacts stolen at the time of Schliemann's discoveries.
- Debate and controversy continue regarding the authenticity and ownership of the Nefertiti Bust.
- Popular culture has created many myths about archaeology and the work of archaeologists.
- Debunked myths demonstrate that archaeology is based on incomplete records, it is more than excavating and treasure hunting, and archaeologists do not study dinosaurs.

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND

1. Identify key concepts around the discovery, treatment and preservation of archaeological evidence.
2. Describe the discovery, treatment or preservation of an archaeological site.

DEVISE

Devise a key inquiry question into the ethics of archaeology. Investigate one of the following case studies in response to your question:

a. Nazi Germany in Greece
b. the Ishtar Gate
c. the Koh-i-Noor diamond, India
d. the imperial treasures, China.

ANALYSE

1. Choose one source from this chapter. Consider the source's condition (for example, if it is translated, damaged or incomplete) and the impact of its use as evidence (because of its perspective, bias or accuracy).
2. Compare the condition of similar sources across archaeological sites, e.g. tomb or building.
3. Compare the origins of artefacts found at the same site. What does that suggest about the site?

EVALUATE

1. Consider the ethical issues for any archaeological site.
2. Judge the reliability of a source.
3. Compare the reliability of 2–3 sources from the same archaeological site.
4. Consider the usefulness of artefacts to understanding the past of a site.

SYNTHESISE

1. Consider which of the two sites investigated is of greater value to humanity.
2. To what extent is archaeology redundant in modern society?

COMMUNICATE

Why must Australian archaeologists work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities during excavation and research projects?

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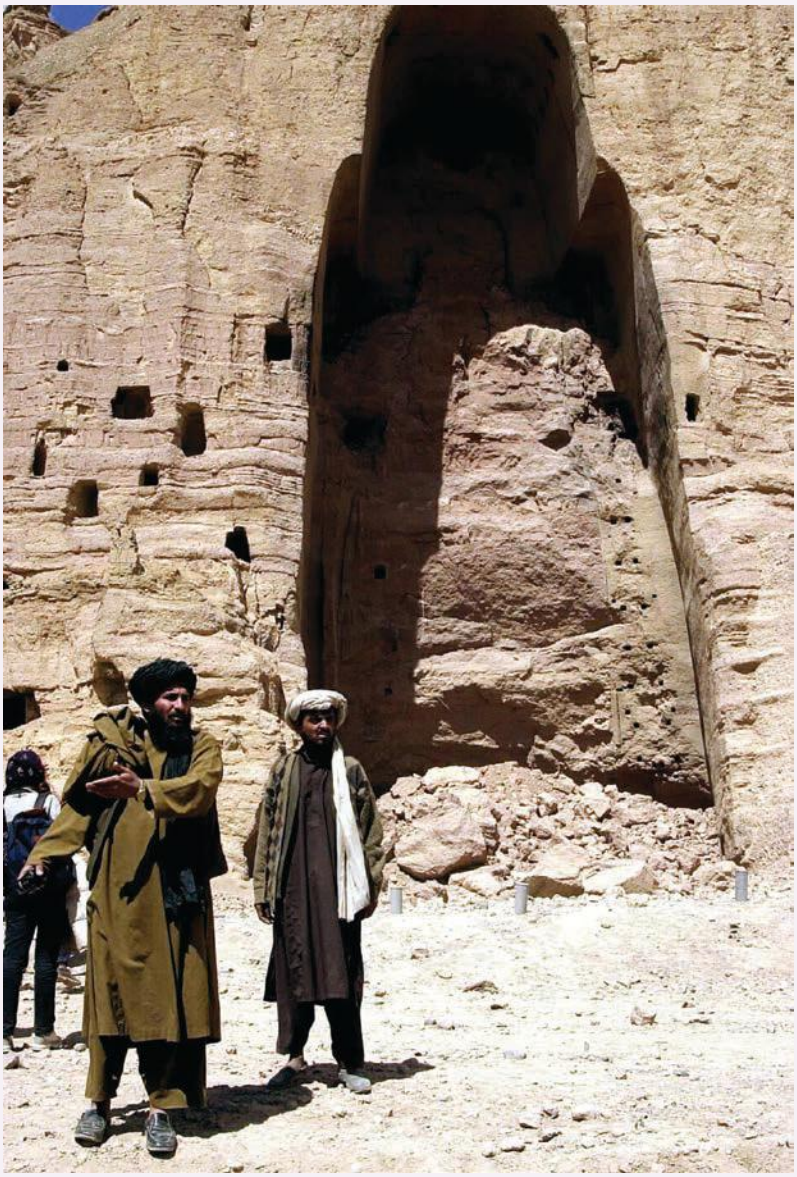
ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions

1. Explain the impact of looting on repatriation.
2. Explain how advancements in technology have improved the field of archaeology.
3. Justify the importance of systematic excavation and recording of finds for the preservation of the ancient past.

Investigation tasks

1. Choose an archaeological site and investigate it to evaluate the effectiveness of methods used to preserve the past.
2. Choose an artefact at the centre of a repatriation debate. Explore the repatriation debate for the artefact and propose a solution.



SOURCE 1.48 Afghan Taliban militia's officials stand in front of the completely destroyed tallest standing Buddha statue in Bamiyan city, in central Afghanistan, 26 March 2001

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Chapter 2

DIGGING UP THE PAST: FURTHER CASE STUDIES (DIGITAL)

Syllabus reference: Unit 1, Topic 1: Digging up the past

DIANA PLATT AND GEORGIA WILLIAMS

This chapter is available in the digital version of this resource.



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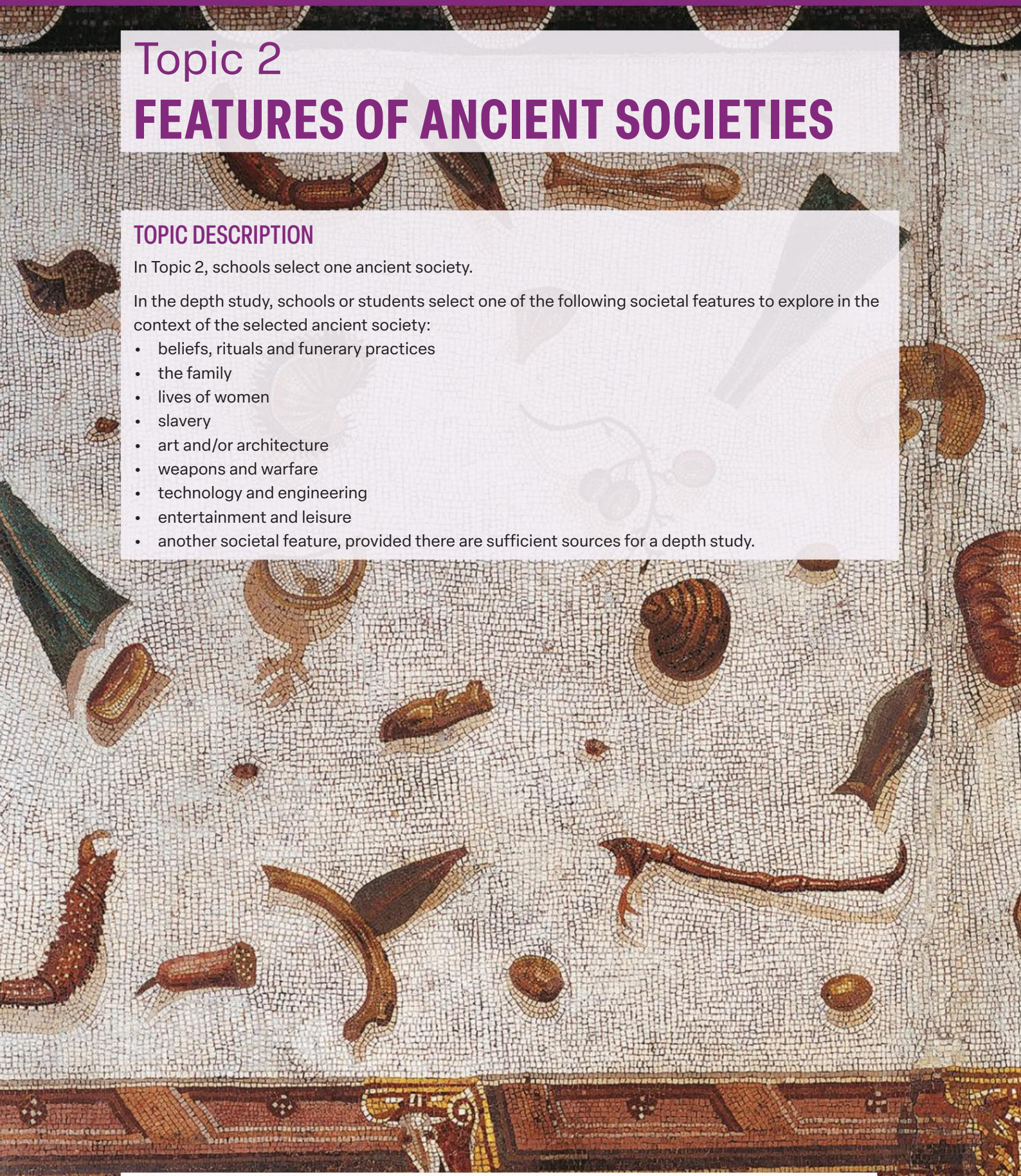
Topic 2
FEATURES OF ANCIENT SOCIETIES

TOPIC DESCRIPTION

In Topic 2, schools select one ancient society.

In the depth study, schools or students select one of the following societal features to explore in the context of the selected ancient society:

- beliefs, rituals and funerary practices
- the family
- lives of women
- slavery
- art and/or architecture
- weapons and warfare
- technology and engineering
- entertainment and leisure
- another societal feature, provided there are sufficient sources for a depth study.



The Asàrotos òikos mosaic (unswept room), depicting a mouse feeding on food remains on the floor. Rome, c. second century CE

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Subject matter

Contextual study

Develop understandings about:

- the origins of the society up to the period that is the focus for the historical inquiry, through a broad chronological overview
- the geographical location of the society, the nature of the environment and its influence on the society
- society and culture, political institutions and economic activities
- key historical sources for the society, including primary and secondary sources, ancient and modern sources, archaeological sources, and literary and non-literary sources.

Depth study

For the selected ancient society:

- devise historical questions and conduct research related to one feature of the selected ancient society, e.g. beliefs, rituals and funerary practices
- comprehend terms, concepts and issues related to one feature of the selected ancient society, e.g. beliefs, rituals and funerary practices
- analyse evidence from historical sources about one of the societal features, e.g. beliefs, rituals and funerary practices
- evaluate the usefulness and reliability of evidence from historical sources for understanding the feature of the selected ancient society, e.g. beliefs, rituals and funerary practices
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to develop a historical argument and make decisions about a feature of the selected ancient society, e.g. beliefs, rituals and funerary practices
- create responses that communicate to suit purpose.

Concluding study

Reflect on:

- the significance, impact or legacy of particular societal features.

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Chapter 3

ROMAN SOCIETY (753–133 BCE)

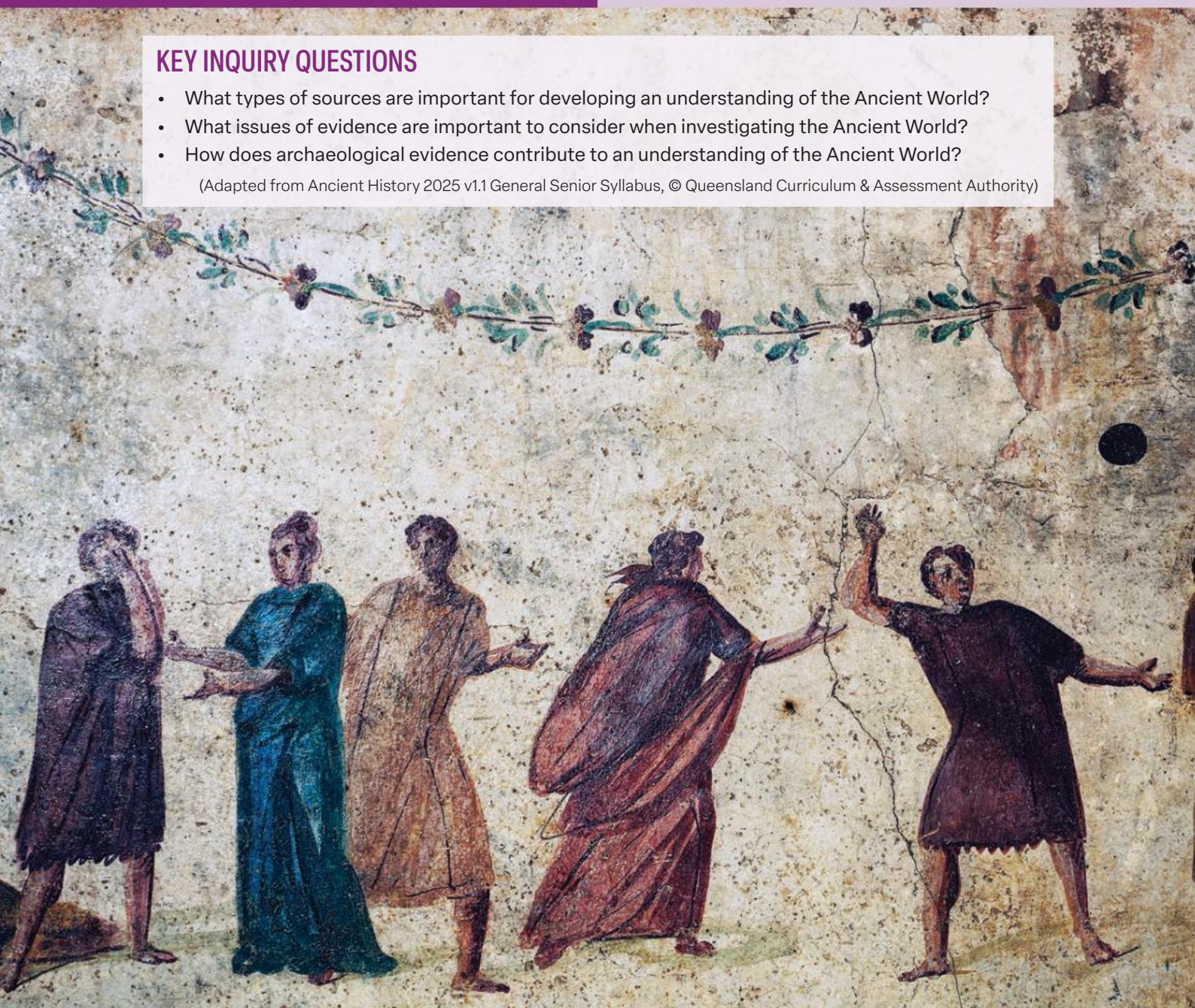
Syllabus reference: Unit 1, Topic 2: Features of ancient societies

GLENN DAVIES

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What types of sources are important for developing an understanding of the Ancient World?
- What issues of evidence are important to consider when investigating the Ancient World?
- How does archaeological evidence contribute to an understanding of the Ancient World?

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SOURCE 3.1 Fresco from an underground tomb, first century CE

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FOCUS: WHY STUDY SLAVERY IN ROMAN SOCIETY?

Most modern nations banned slavery about 150 years ago. The 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* states: 'No one shall be held in slavery or servitude: slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all forms.' However, slavery still exists today on every continent and in many countries in the forms of forced labour, people trafficking, debt bondage and child marriage.

Slavery was a normal part of life in the Ancient World. It existed in one form or another in most ancient cultures. In *Politics*, the Greek philosopher Aristotle said that slavery was 'a fundamental feature of civilised life' and it occurred to few people of his time to doubt this fact. This was because not many Romans thought that slavery should be abolished. Any who did, worried about stopping the harshness of slavery rather than the system itself.

Slavery is a human invention; it is not found in nature. Indeed, another human invention, war, is what provided the bulk of slaves during Roman times, but slaves were also the bounty of piracy or the product of breeding. The Romans realised that slavery was contrary to natural law but that was not sufficient reason for them to abolish it. Slaves were not only cheap to purchase but in abundant supply through wars, piracy and the slave trade. As more and more free men were drawn from agriculture into the army during the wars of the second century BCE, the rich purchased slaves, who were exempt from military service. Cato the Elder was one of many men who purchased slaves out of the captives taken in war to work on his large estate, his ***latifundia***. The potential for slaves to revolt in the second century BCE was high.

latifundia extensive Roman rural estates that used slave labour

Slavery became a pillar of Roman society for almost a thousand years. In the modern world, slavery has been outlawed but, as mentioned, it still exists in many places in one form or another.



SOURCE 3.2 Slaves slaughtering an animal in preparation of a meal, c. 100–150 CE

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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

3.1 When and where did the events of Ancient Rome take place?

TABLE 3.1 A list of key dates

753 BCE	Mythical founding of the city of Rome by Romulus and Remus
Late seventh and sixth centuries BCE	Etruscans dominant in central Italy
509 BCE	The establishment of the Roman Republic
496–275 BCE	The social and political structure of the republic gradually evolves, and slavery becomes more common as Rome increased its territorial holdings throughout Italy
451–450 BCE	The Laws of the Twelve Tables introduced
264 BCE	First Roman gladiator contest held at a funerary games
264–241 BCE	First Punic War
218–201 BCE	Second Punic War
167 BCE	Roman general Aemilius Paullus sacks the city of Epirus and captures 150000 people as slaves
c. 160 BCE	Cato the Elder writes *De Agricultura* (On Agriculture)
146 BCE	Rome destroys Corinth and Carthage
135–132 BCE	First slave revolt, Sicily
133 BCE	Tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus

The Etruscan legacy: Rome under the Kings

The Etruscans were the dominant society in central Italy during the late seventh and sixth centuries BCE. As they expanded their influence, they brought Rome under their control and supplied perhaps three of Rome's six kings. The Etruscans did much for Rome but, by the end of the sixth century BCE (the traditional date is 509 BCE), the Romans rid themselves of their king and founded a republic.



SOURCE 3.3 Two young Etruscan athletes box, while a judge interferes with a rod.

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SOURCE 3.4 Extent of Roman Republic in the early second century BCE. In 100 years, Roman territory doubles in size. What impact might that have on Rome itself?

The Etruscan lifestyle was quite sophisticated and luxurious. They hunted, made war, banqueted and enjoyed festivals at which there would be dancing and mimed 'plays', and held funerary games, which would involve human sacrifices in the form of a fight to the death. These were the forerunner of Roman gladiatorial combats in the arena. On the vase in Source 3.3, two young Etruscan athletes box, while a judge interferes with a rod.

In the late first century BCE, Nicolaus of Damascus stated where he believed the gladiators and gladiator games originated:

SOURCE 3.5 Nicolaus of Damascus, Athletics 4.153

> Romans presented the games of gladiators ... a practice they were given by the Etruscans.

The Roman writer Livy places the first Roman gladiator contest in 264 BCE at the funeral games held in honour of the aristocrat Brutus Pera. Pera's two sons organised three pairs of gladiators to fight to the death in Rome's Forum Boarium (cattle market). This was known as a ***gladiatora munera***, a commemorative duty owed by the person's descendants, where gladiators fought during funeral games.

gladiatora munera a commemorative duty owed by the person's descendants where gladiators fought during funeral games

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SOURCE 3.6 Etruscan gladiators shown on the base of an Etruscan grave marker with reliefs about funerary games, early fifth century BCE



SOURCE 3.7 First Roman gladiator contest, nineteenth-century engraving



SOURCE 3.8 Etruscan tomb painting of a slave being attacked by dogs at funeral games

ACTIVITY **3.1**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. In Source 3.5, where does Nicolaus of Damascus state the concept of gladiators originated?
2. The Etruscans did not leave any written accounts of fighting sports or funeral games. However, the Etruscan fighting sports have been documented through vases, bronze artworks and tomb paintings, which depict wrestling scenes, including boxers. Write two or three sentences on what type of ancient source (written or non-written) would be considered more valuable for this topic and why.
3. Look at Sources 3.3 and 3.6–3.8. What do they show about the purpose of funerary games?
4. According to Livy, when was the first Roman gladiator contest?
5. Explain the purpose of a *gladiatora munera*.
6. The funeral games held in 264 BCE were for a Roman aristocrat. Look closely at Source 3.6. Why do you think only wealthy Romans would hold a *gladiatora munera*?

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The rise of the Roman Republic

The Latins were farmers who settled in the plain of Latium, just south of the River Tiber. They gradually formed into city-states, one of which was Rome. Legend describes Rome as founded in 753 BCE by Romulus who was raised by a she-wolf. At first Rome was ruled by kings with the help of a council of respected men called the Senate. There were seven kings in all. The last king, Tarquin the Proud, was so harsh towards his people that he was driven from the city of Rome in 509 BCE. The hated name of *rex*, or king, was never used again. Rome became a republic.

The story about Romulus and Remus is the legend of the beginning of Rome.

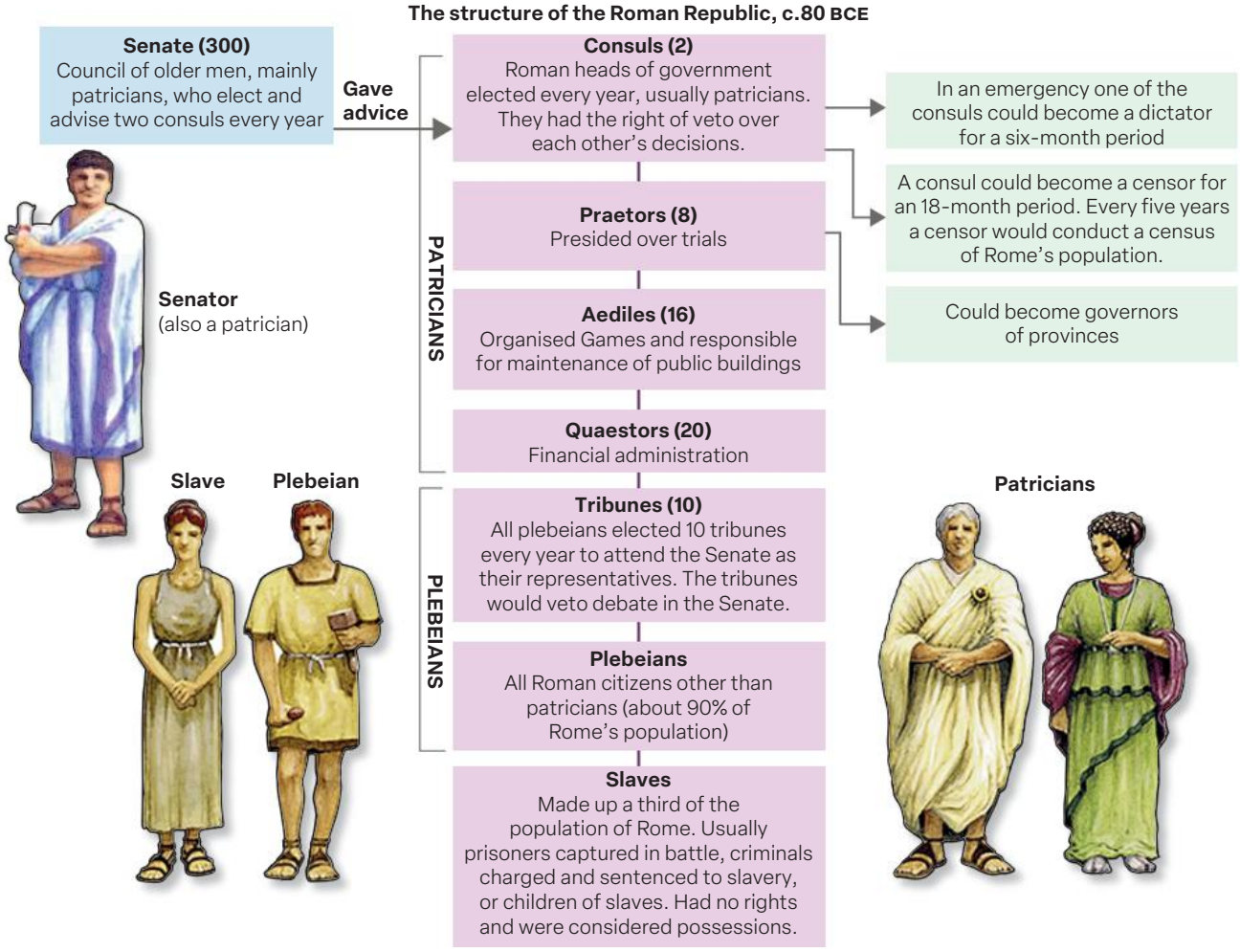


SOURCE 3.9 The Capitoline She-Wolf statue with Romulus and Remus, Rome's adopted cubs

The people of Rome formed an elected government called a republic to rule over them and deal with their enemies. The word 'republic' comes from the Latin term *res public,* which means 'public business'. In other words, anything that concerned the people was the business of the government. The Roman Republic worked well until the fourth century BCE. However, during the next two hundred years, there was a struggle for power between the aristocracy (patricians) and commoners (plebeians). A compromise was reached with the senatorial aristocracy having, perhaps, the greater say in most matters of state but the plebeians having obtained certain rights and privileges.

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SOURCE 3.10 Ancient Roman hierarchy

During the next few centuries, Rome extended its influence first over the plain of Latium and then, in a time of near-constant warfare, over all of Italy except the northern plain of the Po River. After a period of expansion during the third and second centuries BCE, Rome conquered most of the peoples around the Mediterranean Sea, including an enormous struggle against North African Carthage and its great leader, Hannibal. The Roman aristocracy emerged from this period with undisputed strength over the Republic. A number of wealthy patrician and plebeian families managed to keep control of the Roman government, and the constitution ensured their continued control. The position of tribunes had been created during the time of the plebeians' struggle for power as the representative of the people in the government. However, the tribunes had come to identify their interests with those of the ruling families as they aimed for higher political positions and did nothing to upset the way the government was functioning. Tradition and convenience made sure that most everyday matters remained under the influence and control of the Senate, and the senatorial aristocracy.

Cursus Honorum

In the Roman Republic, the pursuit of power was not for wealth but for glory. The pursuit of fame and glory for himself and his family was a respectable activity for a Roman man of the senatorial class. The unwritten law for a Roman man was to equal or better the status of his father, or highest-ranking ancestor. If one generation fell below standard, the next was expected to raise the family back to its former position.

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This placed a great burden on families with a long history of providing consuls and leaders. There was no moral dilemma about whether or not one should be ambitious. Indeed, ambition was seen as a virtue not a fault. During the late Republic, a Roman man's status increased with the rank of his political office. As he achieved each rung of the *cursus honorum* (ladder of offices) he won lifelong status. The ***cursus honorum*** was formalised in the *Lex Villia Annalis* in 180 BCE and modified by the dictator Sulla. Any aspiring young politician was expected to proceed up the *cursus honorum* by first spending at least 10 years in some military position, then taking the steps in ascending order to *quaestor* (financial officials) at 30 years of age, *aedile* (administrators of public works and entertainment), *praetor* (judge and army commanders) at 39, and then finally, consul (supreme heads of the state) at 42. The Roman constitution demanded a two-year interval between the holding of consecutive offices and a 10-year interval between holding the same office.

cursus honorum the ladder of offices that an aspiring politician was expected to climb, which had age limits and set periods between the holding of consecutive offices by one person

To climb the *cursus honorum* and become consul at the minimum age of 42 gained the politician the highest *dignitas* (personal worth). The consulship awarded status not only on the man who won it, but also upon his family. The descendant of a consul belonged to a select group in Roman society. He was called a *nobiles*, a possessor of *nobilitas*. The *nobiles* inherited all the *dignitas* of his ancestors and was therefore immediately more worthy than the *novus homo*, or 'new man' who had to emphasise his superior personal talents and worth.

ACTIVITY 3.2

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. What does the term *rex* mean? Explain why it was not used in Rome after 509 BCE.
2. Look at Source 3.9. What do you think may have been the purpose of making the statue depicting the legendary founding of Rome seem unrealistic?
3. Identify in the Roman republican system shown in Source 3.10 examples of 'checks and balances'. Why do you think this would be beneficial to Rome?
4. Write a short paragraph using the information on climbing the *cursus honorum* to make a judgement on the importance of *dignitas* in Roman society.

3.2 Family life in Ancient Rome

Family life was the central element of Roman society. The father was called ***paterfamilias***, father of the house, and was firmly in control of the family. A Roman family consisted of the father, his wife, his sons and unmarried daughters. If his sons were married, their wives and children were also part of the household, as were slaves.

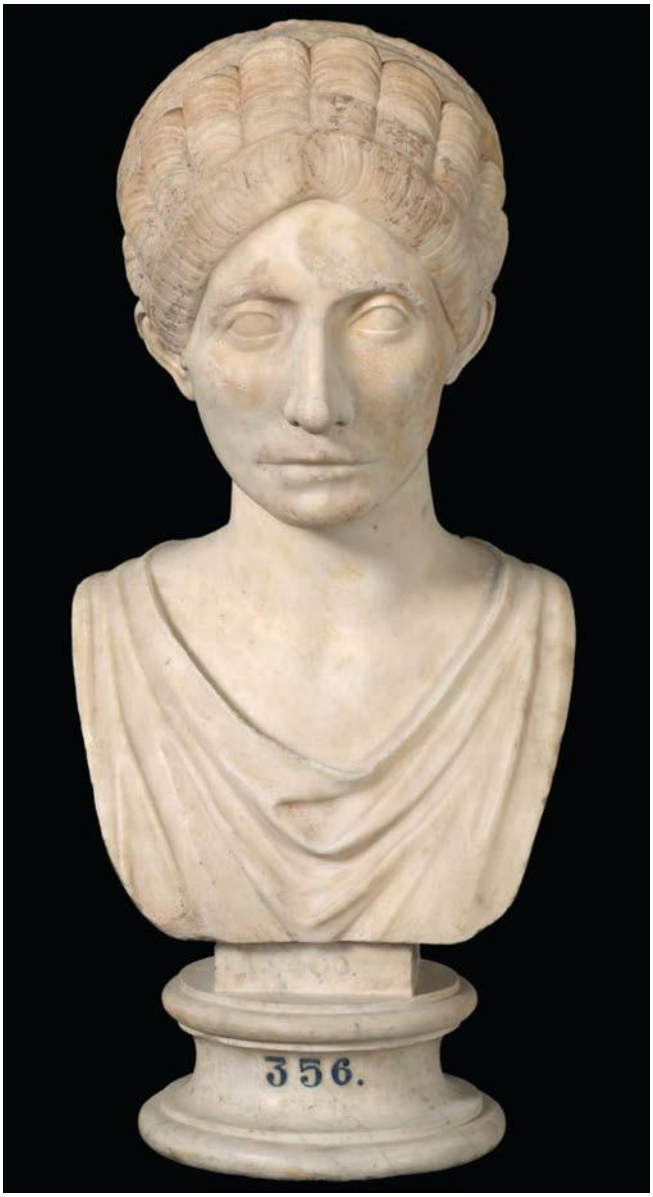
The Roman word for household was ***familia***. In early Rome, the *paterfamilias* could legally execute any member of his household if they went against his authority. From birth, a child could, if the father wished, face exposure. The newborn was placed at the father's feet. If he picked it up, he recognised it as his own, or he could withhold his recognition by leaving it where it was. (Queen Cleopatra VII of Egypt famously did this to Julius Caesar with their son, Caesarion.) If rejected, the infant was either thrown into the Tiber River, abandoned to the river, left to die by starvation, or was brought up as a slave.

paterfamilias 'father of the family'; eldest male within a family group held absolute authority over their wife, children, certain other relatives, clients and slaves; his responsibilities were guided by *mos maiorum*

familia family or household

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SOURCE 3.11 Roman matron portrait



SOURCE 3.12 Family on your finger – a Roman ring

Romans loved to live with their relatives around them. The model Roman family consisted of three generations of men who lived under the one roof, all subject to the authority of the great-grandfather. Upon his death, the family would split into as many new families as there were men of the next generation. Three generations was considered the amount of time that corresponded to what Romans called *memoria*, or memory. This was the amount of time considered to be within anyone's living memory. Few Romans survived beyond the birth of their great-grandchild.

A woman's role in Ancient Rome was to be a good daughter, wife and mother. The Roman *matrona*, or matron, was tasked with housekeeping, child bearing and being devoted to her husband. Roman marriages were often arranged with the objective of uniting political factions or noble families. Only men held citizenship and were permitted to be involved in politics. Women exerting political opinion and activity was frowned upon.

What's in a name?

An essential part of Roman life was the name to which a person was entitled. Each Roman had a forename *(praenomen)*, as well as a family name *(nomen)* indicating the group of families or clan to which the person belonged. In addition, they usually had a surname *(cognomen)*. Freedmen had their owner's forename and name (often adding their own *cognomen* at the end) while women were given a feminine form of their father's *nomen*. Their *cognomen* indicated their position in the family. Slaves, however, were usually called by their own single *cognomen*.

Men and women had rings and brooches with stones specially carved to show family symbols. Rings were used when sealing important letters and documents. Wax would be melted and used to seal the edges of a scroll of paper, then the ring would be pushed into the wax to show who had written the document.

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Praenomen	*Nomen*	*Cognomen*	Full Name
Gaius	Julius	Caesar	Gaius Julius Caesar
Lucius	Cornelius	Sulla	Lucius Cornelius Sulla
	Julia	Tertia	Julia Tertia
	Cornelia	Secunda	Cornelia Secunda

SOURCE 3.13 The nature of Roman identity was focused in a person's name.

ACTIVITY 3.3

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Define the term *paterfamilias*.
2. Describe the process by which a Roman father would recognise a child as his own.
3. What information is implicit in Sources 3.11–3.13?
4. Based on these three sources, draw a conclusion on the place of women in Ancient Roman family life.

3.3 Slavery as a Roman institution

There was a struggle for power within the early Roman Republic between the aristocrats (the patricians) and the commoners (the plebeians). In 451–450 BCE, a compromise was reached and codified in the Laws of the Twelve Tables, with the aristocratic Senate having the greater say in most matters of state, but the plebeians having also obtained certain rights and privileges. The Roman constitution evolved over time rather than being written down. These Twelve Tables set out the customs and legal practices of early Rome, and became the basis of Roman civil law and a continuing source for its interpretation.

In the first century BCE, Greek historian Dionysius of Halicarnassus wrote in the first two volumes of his *Roman Antiquities* that slavery in Rome began with the legendary founder, Romulus, who gave to Roman fathers the right to sell their own children into slavery.

While some changes to the slave's place in Roman society were inevitable, some features of society remained constant, such as the importance of the *familiae* and its patriarchal nature (control by a leading male, the *paterfamilias*). The Roman family included several generations, from the oldest couple to their married sons' families and their unmarried sons and daughters. Slaves were usually prisoners of war and could be freed by the *paterfamilias* (a process called **manumission**). They were then called 'freedman', or ***liberti***, and became clients of their former master. Clients were considered dependants and enjoyed some of the privileges of the family. They were granted land and protection by their patron/former master, in return for economic and political services. Any children born of freedmen were classified as freeborn.

manumission the process of freeing a slave
liberti freedmen and freedwomen

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The Royal Laws of Romulus

Roman tradition speaks of a body of royal laws, or *leges regiae,* promulgated by the first Roman king, Romulus, and the succeeding kings, and codifying the reign of the last king, Tarquinius Superbus. The Royal Laws of Romulus are outlined in the following sources.

SOURCE 3.14 N. Lewis and M. Reinhold (eds), *Roman Civilization, Selected Readings, Volume 1: The Republic and the Augustan Age* (3rd edn), Columbia University Press, New York, 1990, pp. 66–7

[These laws] gave virtually full power to the father over his son during his whole life, whether he thought proper to imprison him, to scourge him, to put him in chains and keep him at work in the fields, or to put him to death, and this even though the son were already engaged in public affairs, though he were numbered among the highest magistrates, and though he were celebrated for his zeal for the commonwealth … And not even at this point did the Roman lawgiver stop in giving the father power over the son, but he even allowed him to sell his son, without concerning himself whether this permission might be regarded as cruel and harsher than was compatible with natural affection … He even gave leave to the father to make a profit selling his son as often as three times, thereby giving greater power to the father over his son than to the master over his slaves. For a slave who has once been sold and has later obtained his liberty is his own master ever after, but a son who had once been sold by his father, if he became free, came again under his father's power, and if he was a second time sold and a second time freed, he was still, as at first, his father's slave; but after the third sale he was freed from his father.

The Twelve Tables, Rome's oldest legal code, had their origins in what Romans called the *mos maiorum*, the tradition of the ancestors. These ancestral laws came about as a result of the long social struggle between patricians and plebeians, known as the 'conflict of the orders'. The laws were drawn up by a commission at the request of the plebeians in 451–449 BCE. The Twelve Tables were published on 12 bronze tablets in the Roman Forum and were never abolished. The excerpt in Source 3.15 refers to slavery and indicates that the institution was of long standing.

SOURCE 3.15 Excerpt from the Laws of the Twelve Tables

Table IV

If a father surrenders his son for sale three times, the son shall be free from his father.

Table VIII

Slaves caught in the act of theft shall be flogged and thrown from the [Tarpeian] Rock.

Table XII

2. If a slave shall have committed theft or done damage … arising from [wrong doing] committed by children and slaves of a household … actions for damages are appointed whereby the father or master shall be allowed either to undergo an assessment of damage or hand over the delinquent to punishment …

Table XII

If a slave steals or does damage, he must be handed over as compensation.

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Nexum was basically debt – slavery, whereby a free man could pledge himself, or his children, as a bond slave (*nexus*), as collateral for a loan. The bondsman could expect to face some sort of humiliation and abuse but, as a legal citizen, he was supposed to be exempt from corporal punishment. *Nexum* was abolished in 326 BCE. Livy records a story that provides insight into how the Romans viewed the potential problems with *nexum*.

nexum a contract in the early Roman Republic where a free man pledged himself as a bond slave

Livy recalls the story of the patriotic soldier:

SOURCE 3.16 Livy, *The History of Rome*, Book 2.23

A certain person advanced in years threw himself into the forum with all the badges of his miseries on him. His clothes were all over squalid, the figure of his body still more shocking, being pale and emaciated. In addition, a long beard and hair had impressed a savage wildness on his countenance; in such wretchedness he was known notwithstanding, and they said that he had been a centurion, and compassionating him they mentioned openly other distinctions (obtained) in the service: he himself exhibited scars on his breast, testimonies of honourable battles in several places. To persons repeatedly inquiring, whence that garb, whence that ghastly appearance of body, (the multitude having now assembled around him almost like a popular assembly,) he says, 'that whilst serving in the Sabine war, because he had not only been deprived of the produce of his land in consequence of the depredations of the enemy, but also his residence had been burned down, all his effects pillaged, his cattle driven off, a tax imposed on him at a time very distressing to him, he had incurred debt; that this debt, aggravated by usury, had stripped him first of his father's and grandfather's farm, then of his other property; lastly that a pestilence, as it were, had reached his person. That he was taken by his creditor, not into servitude, but into a house of correction and a place of execution'. He then showed his back disfigured with the marks of stripes still recent. At the hearing and seeing of this a great uproar takes place. The tumult is now no longer confined to the forum, but spreads through the entire city. Those who were confined for debt, and those who were now at their liberty, hurry into the streets from all quarters and implore the protection of the people.



SOURCE 3.17 Funeral urn of two slaves, second century BCE

ACTIVITY 3.4

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Source 3.15 lists all the references to slavery in the Twelve Tables. In what way are the Twelve Tables different from the Royal Laws of Romulus?
2. Summarise the story in Source 3.16. Why would Livy have used this as a cautionary tale?
3. Hypothesise why two slaves had a funeral urn such as the one in Source 3.17 in the second century BCE.

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DEPTH STUDY

3.4 How do we know about Ancient Roman society today?

Problems with Ancient Roman sources on slavery

The scope of this topic on Ancient Roman slavery is from the establishment of Rome as a city in 753 BCE until the tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus in 133 BCE. However, it is only towards the end of the second century BCE that slavery became established as part of the mass economy of Rome. For the majority of this period, slavery was not a dominant feature of Roman society and so there is not a significant amount of source material available. The sources that are available consist mainly of evidence from the rich and patrician class. This is important because these people not only had the most slaves, but they also created fashionable opinion and changed laws.

TABLE 3.2 The written sources historians have used to gain information about the institution of slavery in Roman history

Author	Title and description
Plutarch c. 46–120 CE	*Lives of Cato*: a brief account of how Cato treated his slaves
Polybius c. 200–118 BCE	*Histories:* details of Rome's conquests in the third–second centuries BCE
Diodorus Siculus c. 60–30 BCE	*Bibliotheca Historica:* written between c. 60 and 30 BCE, it is the full story of the first slave revolt in Sicily and conditions of those who worked in the mines
Livy c. 59 BCE–17 CE	*From the Foundation of the City:* the Carthaginian and Macedonian Wars
Cato the Elder 234–149 BCE	*De Agri Cultura* (On Agriculture): outlines how to manage farm slaves
Columella 4–70 CE	*Res rustica* (On Rural Affairs): reveals his attitude to slaves and describes how to house them

Ancient Roman writers rarely discussed slavery in terms of morals as their society did not view slavery as the moral issue we do today. The history of Roman slavery is at an extra disadvantage as there are no surviving written records, if any ever existed, of what life was like from a slave's point of view. This difficulty is compounded by the problem that, although there are material remains available, it is often difficult to identify individual men, women and children as slaves in sculptures, reliefs and paintings. As a result, it is almost impossible to identify representations of individual slaves or to know their views on the institution of slavery in Ancient Rome.
In addition to this, the majority of material remains and written records on the institution of Roman slavery date from after 133 BCE, particularly in the late Roman Republic writings of Cicero, and the gladiatorial schools and events in the Roman Colosseum during the Roman Imperial period.

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ACTIVITY **3.5**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

1. According to Table 3.2, which written sources would be the best to consult for:
   - **a.** the conditions of rural slaves
   - **b.** the place of domestic slaves with the family
   - **c.** the slave revolts
   - **d.** rights and obligations of a slave under the law?
2. What do you think are the difficulties faced by a historian researching Roman slavery?
3. The source material on the topic of Roman slavery is almost all material records. Why do you think this would be a challenge for historians?

3.5 The nature of Roman slavery

As the Romans became more dependent on the services of slaves, especially towards the late Republic, the government made more laws regarding their treatment.



SOURCE 3.18 Relief from Smyrna (present-day Izmir, Turkey) depicting a Roman soldier leading captives in chains. Describe three different possible outcomes for the 'captive in chains'.

Slavery was an institution of the *ius gentium* (natural law innate in all people) where someone is subject to the *dominium* of another, contrary to nature. Through warfare, the victor had the right to enslave a defeated population. If a diplomatic settlement led to a formal surrender, however, the people were to be spared violence and enslavement.

Slaves in Ancient Rome were individuals owned by another person and deprived of most, if not all, of their rights. In principle, and sometimes in practice, the slave master had the power to put the slave to death.

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Slaves had no rights. They were bought and sold in the slave market where they were put on display for buyers to inspect them. Healthy, strong slaves were purchased as labourers or, after the second century BCE, as gladiators. Women and children were used as house servants. Educated slaves were employed to carry out administrative tasks, and many teachers, doctors, accountants and entertainers were slaves. A slave born within a household, *familia*, on a family farm, agricultural estate or villa was called ***servus***.

Slaves were the result of capture through war, kidnapping through raids (or bought from pirates who prospered through the slave trade), and child abandonment. Roman society legally considered slaves personal property. If they ran away, or attempted to do so, they could be branded.

A slave was seen as their master's shadow, their double, who never left their master's side. Roman sources are full of accounts of slaves who remained faithful to their masters in times of trouble. Rome allowed freed slaves to become citizens.

servus a slave born into a household, family farm or agricultural estate
damnati in metallum slaves condemned to work in the mines
servus publicus public slaves

Freedmen constituted a numerous and important class in the life of the Roman Empire. It became almost customary for a master to free at least part of his slave household in his will, as a means of showing gratitude for faithful service. In addition, even during their master's lifetime, slaves were frequently able to purchase their freedom with the savings they were allowed to accumulate, and many were granted manumission as a free gift. A male slave who had belonged to a Roman citizen could also gain active political freedom, which included the right to vote. The master of a slave who had acquired *libertas* became his patron. However, a freedman was not entitled to hold public office, or enter the Senate.

Types of slaves

Living conditions of slaves depended on the type of work that they were assigned to. Slaves involved in exhausting activities such as agriculture and mining, and galley slaves, did not have good prospects, whereas household slaves could expect more humane treatment.

Five categories of slaves

1. *Household slaves* were under the direct power of the master. Some households had just a few slaves while, in the late Republic, wealthy Romans could have hundreds (often just to show off their own power and wealth).
2. *Urban crafts and services slaves* could be skilled or unskilled.
3. *Agricultural slaves* usually worked on large estates called *latifundia*. The workforce produced cereals, cattle, wine and olives, and were managed by an overseer who was often a slave himself. For most, life was miserable. They were usually crowded into barrack buildings (like a prison), worked in chain gangs, and could expect a short life.
4. *Mining and quarrying slaves* were owned by the State. They were public slaves, known as ***damnati in metallum*** (those condemned to work in the mines), and numbered in the tens of thousands. Their legal status was different from other slaves, as they could not buy their own freedom, be sold or be set free. It would not be an exaggeration to suggest that to be a mine slave was a fate worse than death.
5. A ***servus publicus*** was also a slave owned by the State, rather than a private individual, but had a much better standard of living than other slaves. These slaves served in temples (religious duties) and public buildings (administrative duties), and worked as accountants and secretaries for political magistrates and other officials.

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Pliny the Elder reported the arduous conditions of slaves who worked in mines:

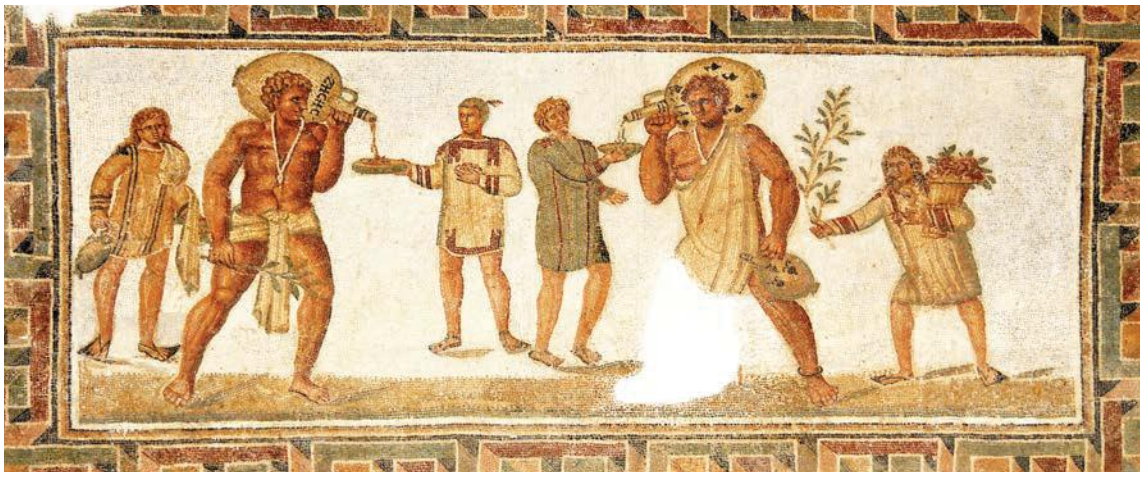
SOURCE 3.19 No daylight for months: Pliny the Elder, 'Chapter 21.4: How gold is found', *The Natural History*

> **Mountains are excavated by the light of torches, the duration of which forms the set times for work, the workmen never seeing the light of day for many months together … not unfrequently clefts are formed on a sudden, the earth sinks in, and the workmen are crushed beneath; so that it would really appear less rash to go in search of pearls and purples at the bottom of the sea, so much more dangerous to ourselves have we made the earth than the water!**

The following two sources are mosaics: artworks made from assembling small pieces of coloured glass, stone or other material.



SOURCE 3.20 Mosaic showing a Roman matron and her household slaves, National Museum of Carthage



SOURCE 3.21 Mosaic of slaves pouring wine, Bardo National Museum, Tunisia

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SOURCE 3.22 Always watching the slaves: this fragment of a wall painting shows Roman workers building a wall while the slave taskmaster watches on.

When the city of Epirus, on the western Greek coast, was captured by Roman soldiers in 168 BCE, the entire population of 150 000 people was sold into slavery. Slaves were usually prisoners captured in battle or from conquered lands, criminals charged and sentenced to slavery, or children of slaves. By the first century BCE, slaves made up one-third of the population of Rome.

The Roman historian Livy describes how, as Rome conquered other countries, captured men, women and even children were made into slaves.

SOURCE 3.23 Livy, *The History of Rome, Book 45.34.4–7*

> The signal was given to the soldiers to sack the cities. So great was the amount of booty secured that 400 denarii were distributed to each cavalryman and 200 to each foot soldier, and 150 000 human beings were carried off. Then the walls of the plundered cities, some seventy in number, were destroyed, the booty sold and the proceeds furnished … to the [Roman] troops.

ACTIVITY 3.6

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. What is *liberti*?
2. Create a table from the information in Sources 3.19–3.22 summarising the different types of slaves in Ancient Rome.
3. Write one or two sentences comparing the lives of slaves in Sources 3.19 and 3.20.
4. Why do you think the slave master is watching the slaves in Source 3.22?
5. What are the limitations of mosaics in understanding Roman slavery?
6. The previous section states: 'By the first century BCE, slaves made up one-third of the population of Rome'. Consider what different methods would be required to ensure the masters stayed in control as slave numbers swelled.

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3.6 Rights and responsibilities of slaves

Slave masters could be sadistic and cruel; others could be kind and generous. The following sources present a range of attitudes towards slaves.

The Roman playwright Plautus's comedy *Pseudolus* was first performed in 191 BCE. In it, Plautus describes the treatment slaves were likely to receive at the hands of their master Ballio.

SOURCE 3.24 Plautus, *Pseudolus or The Cheat*, Act 1, Scene 2

Ballio: Get out, come, out with you, you rascals; kept at a loss, and bought at a loss. Not one of you dreams minding your business, or being a bit of use to me, unless I carry on thus!

[He strikes his whip around on all of them]

Never did I see men more like asses than you! Why, your ribs are hardened with the stripes. If one flogs you, he hurts himself the most.

[Aside] Regular whipping posts are they all, and all they do is pilfer, purloin, prig, plunder, drink, eat, and abscond! Oh! they look decent enough; but they're cheats in their conduct.

[Addressing the slaves again] Now, unless you're all attention, unless you get that sloth and drowsiness out of your breasts and eyes, I'll have your sides so thoroughly marked with thongs that you'll outlive those Campanian coverlets in colour, or a regular Alexandrian tapestry, purple-broidered all over with beasts. Yesterday I gave each of you his special job, but you're so worthless, neglectful, stubborn, that I must remind you with a good basting.

Some slaves had collars placed around their necks, with instructions on where to return them. Source 3.25 shows an inscription on such a collar.

SOURCE 3.25 Slave collars: J.C. McKeown, 'Select Latin inscriptions 8727', *A Cabinet of Roman Curiosities: Strange Tales and Surprising Facts from the World's Greatest Empire*, Oxford University Press, 2010

I am Asellus, slave of Praeiectus, who is an official in the Department of the Grain Supply. I have escaped from my post. Detain me, for I have run away. Take me back to the barber's shops near the temple of Flora.

Branded as a FUG

Slave owners commonly struggled with the problem of their slaves running away. In order to prevent this, slave owners would hire professional slave catchers known as ***fugitivarii***. For a fee, *fugitivarii* would track down missing slaves, capture them and return them to their owners. Some of the punishments for more serious slave crimes included:

- flogging
- putting the slave in chains
- torturing
- imprisoning
- fitting the slave with an inscribed metal collar, which described the misdemeanour
- branding the slave on the forehead with the letters FUG, for *fugitivus*.

fugitivarii professional slave catchers



SOURCE 3.26 Slaves were shackled to prevent them running away. Why do you think it would be important to ensure slaves did not run away?

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SOURCE 3.27 Roman relief of a scene showing a slave pouring wine



SOURCE 3.28 Different view of slavery, relief of a Roman woman at her morning toilette being assisted by four female slaves



SOURCE 3.29 Relief depicting the manumission of slaves, marble, first century BCE

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Historian Laura Hayward is a scholar focussed on the ancient world, and in the excerpt below, describes the range of relationships between Roman slaves and their masters.

SOURCE 3.30 Laura Hayward, 'Slavery in Ancient Rome: The Journey to Freedom', *The Collector.com*, 21 September, 2021

Slavery in ancient Rome was subject to various laws, mostly drawn up in favor of masters, rather than slaves. Slave owners had legal dominium over their slaves, which essentially amounted to the power of life and death. Some slaves tried to resist servitude and ran away or attacked their masters. The punishments for those who were caught were very harsh. If a slave attacked or murdered a master then not only the perpetrator but the entire household of slaves could be executed.

It was, arguably, in a master's interest to treat his slaves fairly and most probably found that this resulted in a more productive workforce. This is not to say that Roman slaves led happy lives but benefits were sometimes granted, such as a small allowance (peculium). Pliny tells us that he even permitted informal marriage pacts and the making of wills.

Some slaves developed close relationships with their masters built on mutual respect, including, for example, the famous orator and politician, Cicero, and his personal secretary, Tiro. The following extract is taken from a letter sent by Cicero's brother to Cicero on hearing that Tiro was to be set free. It highlights the genuine affection held for Tiro throughout the family.

> 'I am truly thankful for what you have done with regard to Tiro, in judging his former status to be below what he deserved and preferring us to have him as a friend rather than a slave.'
>
> (Cicero, Letters to Friends 16:6)

ACTIVITY **3.7**



Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. How were runaway slaves tracked down? Describe what could happen to a runaway slave.
2. What other fate could await a slave accused of a more serious crime?
3. Source 3.28 shows a relief of a Roman woman at her morning toilette being assisted by four female slaves. In what way does this scene appear different from the many ancient written sources on Roman slaves?
4. In what way do Sources 3.27–3.29 show different aspects of Roman slavery?
5. Are plays valid sources about society? What might be the strengths or weaknesses of this kind of source?

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3.7 Independent source investigation on Ancient Roman slavery until 133 BCE

ACTIVITY **3.8**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Task instructions

You are required to use a research process to find and evaluate four historical sources that will help you answer a chosen inquiry question. This independent source interrogation is an opportunity for you to demonstrate a range of historical skills by selecting sources with different points of view.

What is not a good source

To succeed in this task, you need to find primary and secondary sources that are relevant, accurate and reliable. To determine this, you need to identify the name and background of each source's creator. Wikipedia and random websites are not good sources to use, primarily because you cannot find the author of the page or the author is not well known enough for you to discover anything about them.

Step 1: Develop an inquiry question

Today, we tend to see slavery as an immoral and inhumane institution. However, there is no evidence of any serious questioning of the morality of slavery in Roman society before 133 BCE. Why did all major economic, social and legal forces in Ancient Rome conspire to make slavery a perpetuated system?

Step 2: Do some background research

The purpose of background research is to improve your background knowledge. Encyclopaedias or Wikipedia (in this instance) help give you some background to a topic.

1. Who was involved?
2. What were the main events and when did they occur?
3. Where were the important locations?
4. What new words or phrases do you need to know?

Step 3: Create sub-questions

Break your inquiry question into smaller questions in order to answer it sufficiently.

1. What were the economic pressures upon Ancient Rome around ownership of slaves?
2. What were the social implications on Ancient Roman society of the different types of slaves?
3. What were the legal issues around the rights and responsibilities of Ancient Roman slaves?

Step 4: Research your sources

Once you know what inquiry question you need to answer, start finding primary and secondary sources that will help you answer the sub-questions.

Step 5: Critique your research sources

Once you have completed your research and source evaluation, answer the following question in paragraph format (topic sentence, explanation, evidence and concluding sentence): Why are these four sources highly valuable in answering your inquiry question?

(In order to successfully answer this question, you need to draw upon what you have said about the sources' *relevance*, *reliability* and *accuracy* in your source research from Step 4.)

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3.8 Roman brutality

From 496 to 275 BCE the Roman Republic extended its influence, at first over Latium and then, in a time of near-constant warfare, over all of Italy except the northern plain of the Po River. With more expansion came more slaves.

The Romans became engaged in a series of wars against the Carthaginian Empire in the western Mediterranean: the First Punic War (264–241 BCE) and the Second Punic War (218–201 BCE). During the wars of conquest, a very large number of prisoners of war were brought to Italy to be sold as slaves. They came from all the regions where fighting took place: Africa, Spain, Greece, Asia Minor and northern Italy itself.

When the wars came to an end, drying up that source of slaves, the demand was satisfied by breeding slaves in Italy and also via a very active slave trade with its eastern centre on the island of Delos. Piracy, kidnapping and the purchase of slaves from the barbarian fringe of the Hellenistic East supplied the Delian market.

In the 50 years after the Second Punic War, Rome became involved in events in Macedon (four wars) and in Greece. In 167 BCE, the Roman general Aemilius Paullus captured 150 000 people in Epirus. The Punic Wars and the Macedonian Wars flooded Rome and Roman territories with new slaves. Rome had slave labour before the second century BCE, but the influx now of such massive numbers saw a major shift in the Roman economy from a labourer economy to a slave economy.

The two events that changed the Ancient Roman world were the destructions of Carthage and Corinth in 146 BCE in the Third Punic War. These events were to have a big impact on the Roman Republic, as slaves replaced plebians in many labour roles, leading to an increase in unemployment and mass movement into Rome itself.

Carthage and Corinth were maritime empires based on trade. As such, they were competitors to Roman ships and traders. (Carthage had already lost its Sicilian and Spanish territories after its defeat in the Second Punic War). By 146 BCE, Roman aggression and expansion led to the destruction of both these cities. With their fall, Rome gained access to vast wealth and huge numbers of slaves. It has been estimated that about 250 000 prisoners of war were taken by the Romans in the first half of the second century BCE.

The historical record, naturally, shows little of life from a slave's perspective, and comes from ancient writers such as Plutarch and Cato, who represented the slave-owning classes. However, the use and abuse of slaves is demonstrated through a series of slave revolts. The Servile Wars were a series of three slave revolts in the late Roman Republic: the First Servile War (135–132 BCE) was in Sicily, led by Eunus, a former slave claiming to be a prophet, and Cleon from Cilicia. Some 70 000 slaves rose up in revolt, and it took several years for the Roman army to subdue them. After being defeated, some 20 000 slaves were crucified in act of retribution. The Second Servile War (104–100 BCE) was also in Sicily, led by Athenion and Tryphon. Its number rose to nearly 25 000, before being repressed. The 1000 slaves who surrendered were sent back to Rome to fight in the arena for the amusement of the Roman people, either against beasts or against each other. Apparently, in a last act of heroic defiance, they refused to fight and killed each other quietly with their swords. The last one left then fell onto his own blade. Finally, the most famous slave rebellion was the last. The Third Servile War (73–71 BCE) was on mainland Italy, led by a Thracian gladiator called Spartacus. It was described by the great Enlightenment philosopher, Voltaire, as 'the only just war in history'.

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SOURCE 3.31 Gustave Boulanger, *The slave market*, nineteenth century

The policy of slavery

Of all the changes brought to Rome as a result of the wars of expansion, the introduction of mass slave labour was undoubtedly the most negative. Slavery was not only abhorrent in itself, but also inflicted great damage on the economic structure of Roman society and gave later Rome that peculiar, unpleasant stamp. Livy describes the new brutal foreign policy of Rome when, in 167 BCE, the city of Epirus was sacked by the Romans:

SOURCE 3.32 Livy, *History of Rome*, XLV, xxxiv, 5

> **150 000 human beings were led away into slavery.**

After this new mass slavery policy, Valerius Maximus describes how the Roman army ranks were replenished with slaves.

SOURCE 3.33 Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Deeds and Sayings*, vii, vi, i

> **For during the Second Punic War the Roman youth of military age having been drained by several unfavourable battles, the Senate, on motion of the consul Tiberius Gracchus, decreed that slaves should be bought up out of public moneys for use in repulsing the enemy. After a plebiscite was passed on this matter by the people through the intervention of the tribune of the plebs, a commission of three men was chosen to purchase 24 000 slaves, and, having administered an oath to them that they would give zealous and courageous service and that they would bear arms as long as the Carthaginians were in Italy, they sent them to the camp. From Apulia and Paediculi were also bought 270 slaves for replacements in the cavalry ... The city which up to this time had disdained to have as soldiers even free men without property added to its army as almost its chief support persons taken from slave lodgings and slaves gathered from shepherd huts.**

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SOURCE 3.34 The lettering SPQR refers to the government of the Roman Republic: *Senatus Populusque Romanus*, or 'The Senate and People of Rome'

Cato the Elder, who lived in the second century BCE, was a harsh Roman statesman who was the most persistent advocate for the total destruction of Carthage. He is remembered for his repetitive statement, ***delenda est Carthago***, or 'Carthage must be destroyed', which he uttered every time he rose to speak in the Senate.

delenda est Carthago 'Carthage must be destroyed'; the phrase used by Cato the Elder whenever he spoke in the Roman Senate

In this extract, Polybius records the Roman attitude to Carthage prior to its destruction in 146 BCE.

SOURCE 3.35 Polybius, *The Histories*, Book XXXVI.2, Affairs of Greece, 8

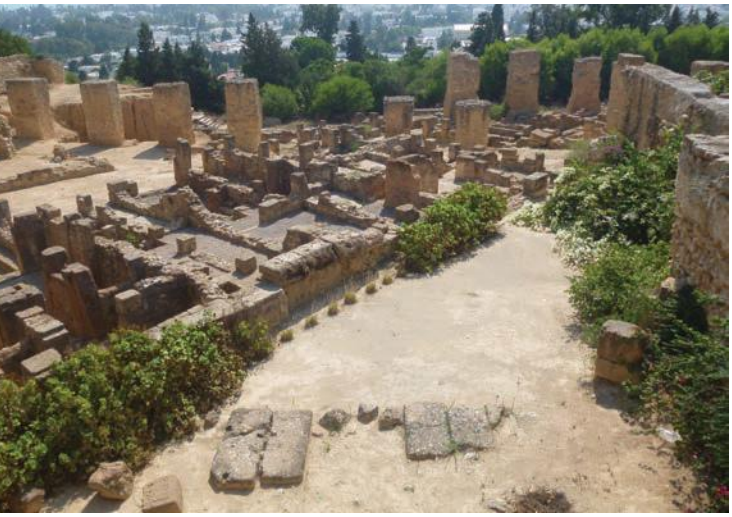
For the Carthaginians had been guilty of no immediate offence to Rome, but the Romans had treated them with irremediable severity, although they had accepted all their conditions and consented to obey all their orders.



SOURCE 3.36 Carthage and its harbour today

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SOURCE 3.37 The ruins of Carthage today



SOURCE 3.38 The remains of Carthage

Pausanias describes the storming of Corinth, when the Greek city was taken in 146 BCE.

SOURCE 3.39 Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, Book 7, xvi. 5.7–8

> Though the gates stood open, Mummius hesitated at first to enter the city, for he suspected that an ambush might be lurking inside the walls. But on the second day after the battle he stormed the city and set it on fire. Most of the people found in it were massacred by the Romans, and Mummius sold the women and children. He sold also such of the liberated slaves as had fought in the ranks of the Achaeans [Greeks], and had not met their death on the battle-field. The most admired monuments of piety and art he carried off.



SOURCE 3.40 Ruins of Corinth

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ACTIVITY **3.9**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Look at Source 3.31 and identify the slaves in the painting. Explain your choices.
2. What role did the island of Delos in the Aegean Sea play in Rome's slave trade?
3. In reference to Source 3.33, why did Rome purchase slaves to replenish the Roman army? Do you agree that Rome could be referred to as a hypocrite in regards to slavery? Expand on your answer using Sources 3.31–3.34.
4. How would Cato the Elder's repetitive statement *delenda est Cathago*, correlate with Polybius's comment in Source 3.35?
5. Polybius (author of Source 3.35) was a Greek hostage in Rome for 17 years but mixed with the top members of Roman society and was present at the sack of Carthage. Evaluate Polybius's reliability as a source on Roman history.
6. What four things does Pausanias attribute to the Roman general Mummius in his treatment of Corinth in 146 BCE (Source 3.39)?
7. Use the images in Sources 3.36–3.38 and 3.40 to create a brief graphic story.

3.9 Slave revolts

The first serious slave uprising against the Romans occurred in Enna, on the island of Sicily in 135–132 BCE. The potential for slaves to violently resist their masters in the late second century BCE was enormous and constant. Only the opportunity and the slaves' resolve were necessary for the potential to be realised.

Diodorus Siculus (Diodorus of Sicily) was a Greek historian who lived in the first century BCE. He wrote his monumental history, *Bibliotheca Historica* in c. 60–30 BCE. He explains the reason for the first slave revolt:

SOURCE 3.41 Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, Book 34.2–2 and 4

> But their masters were very strict and severe with them, and took no care to provide either necessary food or clothing for them, so that most of them were forced to rob and steal, to get these necessities: so that all places were full of slaughters and murders, as if an army of thieves and robbers had been dispersed all over the island.
>
> The slaves therefore being in this distress, and vilely beaten and scourged beyond all reason, were now resolved not to bear it any longer. Therefore, meeting together from time to time as they had opportunity, they consulted how to free themselves from the yoke of servitude they lay under, until at length they really accomplished what they had previously agreed upon.

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SOURCE 3.42 View of Hill Town, Calscibetta, Enna, Sicily

A Syrian slave named Eunus was the leader of the slave revolt in 135–132 BCE in Enna, Sicily. It is said that Eunus presented himself as a prophet and claimed to have a number of mystical visions.



SOURCE 3.43 Statue of Eunus breaking his chains, Enna, Sicily



SOURCE 3.44 A map of Sicily, showing the town of Enna, where the first slave revolt occurred in 135–132 BCE

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ACTIVITY **3.10**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. What does 'servile' mean?
2. What does Diodorus of Sicily identify in Source 3.41 as the reasons for the first revolt?
3. Is it reasonable to judge the institution of slavery by twenty-first-century standards and understanding of human rights? Explain your answer.
4. Research the first slave revolt of 135–132 BCE. Find answers to the following questions.
   a. What was the specific cause of the uprising?
   b. Who led the revolt?
   c. What actions did he and his supporters take?
   d. How did the Romans react?
   e. How was the revolt finally quelled?

   Refer to Sources 3.41 and 3.43 in your answers, and reflect on Eunus's represention.

3.10 Mass slavery and the Roman Republic during the second century BCE

Slavery was directly responsible for the ruin of the small independent farmer in Italy, previously the backbone of Roman society and the army, and for the development of a volatile 'urban mob'. Both of these developments became critical during the tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus in 133 BCE. The plebeians, 90 per cent of the Roman population, were mostly farmers, craftsmen and labourers, working the land for a decent wage. In the Second Punic War, when Hannibal destroyed Roman farms and killed their owners, thousands of acres were designated public land. With no land, the Roman plebeians had no work and so began to flood the cities. Throughout the second century BCE, the wealthy, who had grown wealthier because of the spoils of war, bought up the farmlands and created huge plantations (*latifundia*), which were worked on by slave gangs, replacing plebian labour and small farmers who could not compete. Unemployed farmers drifted to Rome, but could not find proper work there either. Soon they became the core of the Roman mob, which later played a disastrous role in Roman politics.

Many farmers-turned-soldiers had no desire to take up the hard life of the small farmer again and so the land was sold off in big tracts to the landholders of the senatorial class. The wealthy landowners purchased great numbers of slaves to work on their *latifundia*, where they specialised in cash crops such as olives and vines, although the majority became cattle ranchers. It was land investment and agricultural production that generated great wealth in Italy at this time. So many slaves were brought to Italy that by the end of the second century, the majority of the population in Italy were slaves. Ancient Rome was no longer an economy with slaves but a slave economy.

Slaves also came from outside Rome to furnish this slave economy. Greek hostages from city-states and Greek slaves became effective agencies of **Hellenisation** in Rome at this time; the latter being eagerly sought by rich Romans, particularly as tutors for their children or as secretaries. In addition, free Greeks began to flock to Rome to earn their livings: teachers, doctors, book publishers and tutors in rhetoric all found employment and acceptance. In general, Greek migrants were welcomed by the upper-class Romans. Foremost among the *philhellenes* was Scipio Aemilianus whose home was opened to the Greek historian Polybius. A 'scipionic circle' of aristocratic Romans was particularly receptive to Greek culture. Although there always remained among the Romans some suspicion of Greek motives, Greek culture was quickly absorbed by Rome.

Hellenisation the adoption of Greek culture by Roman society

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Unlike Greek slaves, the slaves from the barbarian lands had a very desperate existence and seldom gained their freedom. They were bought for work on the big farms of the wealthy or in the labour gangs of the contractors who carried out the public building projects for the State. Since the supply of such slaves was plentiful and the price cheap, their owners paid very little attention to the health and wellbeing of their human tools. When the slaves were worn out, replacement was easy.

Agriculture was the chief source of income and the chief occupation in the Ancient World. The Romans and other Italians were convinced they owed their empire to their hardy peasant stock. They loved to tell how in the early days of the Roman Republic, Cincinnatus was called from the plough to command the army. Slave management is a topic included in many surviving Roman handbooks about farming, such as those by Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 BCE), and Cato the Elder in his *De Agricultura* (On Agriculture), a manual on farm management for absentee landowners, written c. 160 BCE., which is especially important for its evidence on the beginnings of plantation slavery in Italy. In the text, Cato describes slaves as if they are stock or machinery. Behind his attitudes was an ever-present desire to make a profit no matter the result: 'Be sure that a farm is like a man, that however much it brings in, if it pays much out, not a great deal is left.' In his manual he sets out the work done and the rations for his slaves, as well as discussing the growing of crops. Cato ventures the opinion, in his usual forthright way, that grazing is the preferred way of making a living for the gentleman farmer, and slave labour is preferable to the labour of freemen.

As Roman law insisted that its soldiers must own some land, the dispossession of the small landowner farmers lessened the number of recruits available for enlistment into the Roman army, and so the quality of the legions declined.

Pliny the Elder laments the time of the early Republic when Italy produced sufficient produce for its needs and prices were cheap. By the second century BCE everything had changed.

SOURCE 3.45 Pliny, *Natural History*, XVIII.iv

What, then, was the cause of this great fertility? Why, the fact that in those days the lands were tilled by the hands of the very generals, the soil exulting beneath the plowshare crowned with wreaths of laurel and guided by a husbandman graced with triumphs ... But today these same lands are tilled by slaves whose legs are in chains, by the hands of malefactors and men with branded countenance ... And we are surprised that the yields from the labour of workhouse slaves are not the same as from the honest toil of warriors!

Appian writes how the wealthy owners of the *latifundia* employed slaves rather than freemen.

SOURCE 3.46 Appian, *Civil Wars*, 1.7–8

The rich, getting possession of the greater part of the undistributed lands, and being emboldened by the lapse of time to believe that they would never be dispossessed, and adding to their holdings the small farms of their poor neighbors, partly by purchase and partly by force, came to cultivate vast tracts instead of single estates, using for this purpose slaves as laborers and herdsmen, lest free laborers should be drawn from agriculture into the army. The ownership of slaves itself brought them great gain from the multitude of their progeny, who increased because they were exempt from military service. Thus the powerful ones became enormously rich and the race of slaves multiplied throughout the country, while the Italian people dwindled in numbers and strength, being oppressed by penury, taxes, and military service. If they had any respite from these evils they passed their time in idleness, because the land was held by the rich, who employed slaves instead of freemen as cultivators.

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Diodorus Siculus, who wrote about the Servile Wars, gives here some information of the treatment of slaves employed in the mines.

SOURCE 3.47 Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, Book 5, 38

> But to continue with the mines, the slaves who are engaged in the working of them produce for their masters' revenues in sums defying belief, but they themselves wear out their bodies both by day and by night in the diggings under the earth, dying in large numbers because of the exceptional hardships they endure. For no respite or pause is granted them in their labours, but compelled beneath blows of the overseers to endure the severity of their plight, they throw away their lives in this wretched manner, although certain of them who can endure it, by virtue of their bodily strength and their persevering souls, suffer such hardships over a long period; indeed, death in their eyes is more to be desired than life.

Livy describes the triumph of Gnaeus Manlius Vulso in 187 BCE and the beginnings of the introduction of foreign luxury into the city.

SOURCE 3.48 Livy, *History of Rome*, Book 39.6

> The cook, whom the ancients regarded and treated as the lowest type of slave, was rising in value, and what had been a servile task began to be looked upon as a fine art.

ACTIVITY **3.11**



Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. What action during the second century BCE allowed the *latifundia* to become the dominant form of farming in Ancient Rome?
2. Pliny the Elder lamented that everything had changed since the early Republic. Why do you think it was unrealistic for things to stay the same?
3. Why does Appian argue in Source 3.46 that the wealthy owners of the *latifunda* would prefer to have slave workers rather than freemen?
4. What problems, according to Pliny and Appian in Sources 3.45 and 3.46, did the *latifundia* create?
5. Apart from the reason stated by Appian in Source 3.46, what other factors probably made slave labour more attractive to landowners than free labour?
6. Why does Diodorus Siculus suggest in Source 3.47 that those who worked in the mines preferred death to life?
7. Why would Livy suggest in Source 3.48 that slaves who could prepare food would be rising in value?
8. Why do you think Rome adopted a new brutal foreign policy of mass slavery?
9. Use Sources 3.45–3.48 to write a well-structured paragraph in response to the statement: Ancient Rome was no longer an economy with slaves but a slave economy. In your response, consider that the introduction of mass slave labour was undoubtedly the most negative of all the changes brought to Rome as a result of the wars of expansion.

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CONCLUDING STUDY

3.11 Cato's attitudes to slavery

In addition to being a senator and a historian, Cato the Elder was also the owner of a large agricultural property and many slaves. Although he did not advocate deliberate cruelty, Cato's *De Agricultura* records his impersonal attitude to treat his slaves 'according to cold regulations, like so many expensive cattle'. He gave advice on keeping slaves continually at work, on reducing rations when they were sick, and recommended that old and sick slaves should be expelled from the house. Cato wrote in the second century BCE of his admiration for the farming class.

SOURCE 3.49 Cato the Elder, *De Agricultura*, 1–19

> **It is from the farming class that the bravest men and sturdiest soldiers come, their calling is most highly respected, their livelihood is most assured … and those who are engaged in that pursuit are least inclined to be disaffected.**

The Roman poet Virgil described in the *Georgics* the hard, almost unremitting labour and rustic festivities of the farmer's life, expressing his view of the importance of the agricultural tradition.

SOURCE 3.50 Virgil, *Georgics*, Book II, 513–535

> **But still the farmer furrows the land with his curving plough:**
>
> **The land is his annual labour, it keeps his native country, His little grandson and herds of cattle and trusty bullocks …**
>
> **Such was the life the Sabines lived in the days of old, And Remus and his brother: so it was beyond all question**
>
> **That Tuscany grew to greatness. Rome became queen of all the world, Ringing her seven citadels with a single wall.**

Plutarch discusses the attitude of Cato towards slaves.

SOURCE 3.51 Plutarch, *Life of Cato the Elder*, xxi

> **Cato purchased a great many slaves out of the captives taken in war, but chiefly brought up the young ones, who, like whelps and colts, were still capable of being reared and trained. None of these ever entered into another man's house unless sent either by Cato himself or his wife. If anyone of them was asked what Cato did, he answered only that he did not know. When at home, a slave had to be either at work or asleep. Indeed, Cato greatly favoured the sleepy ones, accounting them more docile than those who were wakeful, and more fit for anything when refreshed with slumber than those who lacked it … He always contrived, too, that his slaves should have some dissension and difference among themselves, always suspecting and fearing harmony among them. Those who were thought to have committed an offence worthy of death he had judged by the entire body of slaves, and put to death if convicted.**

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In Cato's *De Agricultura* he lists what a slave is allowed to have on a well-managed *latifundia*.

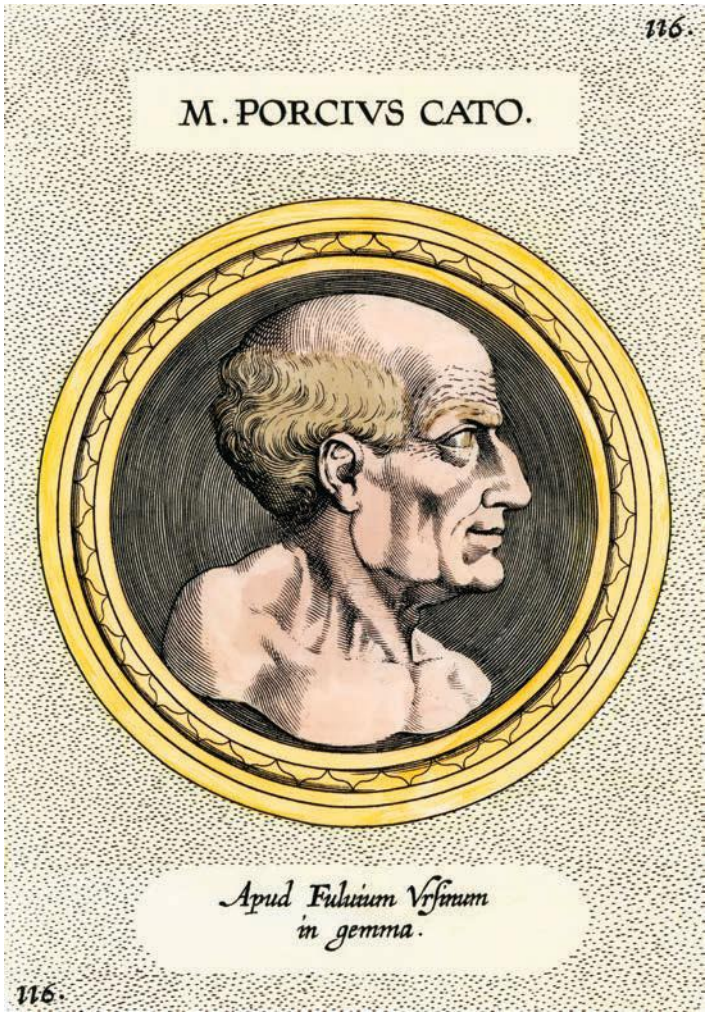
SOURCE 3.52 Cato the Elder, *De Agricultura*

> Bread rations for the slaves
>
> Wine for the slaves
>
> Relishes for the slaves
>
> Clothing for the slaves

Columella was the most important writer on the agriculture of the Roman Empire. After a career in the army, he turned to farming, and his *Res Rustica* (Farm Topics), in 12 volumes, provided information on the qualities needed in rural slaves and particularly their slave overseers, and the best form of treatment. Columella offers his advice to slave owners.

SOURCE 3.53 Columella, *Res Rustica*, Book 1, 15–16

> Nowadays I make it a practice to call them [his rural slaves] into consultation on any new work, as if they were more experienced, and to discover by this means what sort of ability is possessed by each of them and how intelligent he is. Furthermore, I observe that they are more willing to set about a piece of work on which they think that their opinions have been asked and their advice followed … Again, it is the established custom of all men of caution to inspect the inmates of the workhouse, to find out whether they are carefully chained, whether the places of confinement are quite safe and properly guarded, whether the overseer has put anyone in fetters or removed his shackles without the master's knowledge. For the overseer should be most observant of both points – not to release from shackles anyone whom the head of the house has subjected to that kind of punishment, except by his leave, and not to free one who he himself has chained on his own initiative until the master knows the circumstances.



SOURCE 3.54 The severe Cato. What impression of Cato do you have when you view this source? Is your view corroborated or not by Source 3.51?

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SOURCE 3.55 Agriculture workers

Cato the Elder believed that the acceptance of Greek sophistication and culture would destroy forever the Roman virtues of *gravitas* (responsibility), *pietas* (dutifulness) and *simplicitas* (simplicity). Perhaps he had forgotten that corruption had already gained a hold over the senatorial class. In any case, opposition was ineffective and the flood of Greek cultural influence on Rome could not be stemmed. This has often been described as the 'Hellenisation of Rome'.

The Roman poet Horace's poem in Source 3.56 neatly expresses the influence of the Greeks on Rome, for although the Romans had begun to experience Greek influences as early as the sixth century BCE, it was after Rome's conquest of Hellas (the name of Greece in Ancient Greek) that the captives began to have a profound effect on their new masters.

SOURCE 3.56 Horace, *Epistles*

> **Captive Greece took captive her proud conqueror and instilled her arts into rustic Latium.**

Plutarch described the opposition of Cato the Elder towards Greek culture.

SOURCE 3.57 Plutarch, *Life of Cato the Elder*

> **Cato wholly despised philosophy, and out of a patriotic zeal mocked all Greek culture and learning ... And to prejudice his son against anything that was Greek, in a rasher voice than became one of his age, he declared, as it were with the voice of a prophet or seer, that the Romans would lose their empire when they began to be infected with Greek literature. But indeed time has shown the vanity of this prophecy of doom, for while the city was at the zenith of her empire she made all Greek learning and culture her own.**

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Cicero wrote in his *De Re Publica*:

SOURCE 3.58 Cicero, *De Re Publica*, Book 93, XIX

> **For not a gentle stream flowed from Greece into this city, but an abundant flood of arts and knowledge.**

Source 3.59 shows a terracotta image of a comedy actor in a comic mask from a Greek play. It represents a slave who has run away and found sanctuary in a temple.



SOURCE 3.59 Runaway slave as depicted by an actor in a comic mask

ACTIVITY **3.12**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. What is hypocritical about the views held by Cato and Virgil in Sources 3.49 and 3.50?
2. How does Plutarch describe the ways Cato treated his rural and domestic slaves in Source 3.51? Why did Cato prefer the 'sleepy' slaves? Does this source corroborate Source 3.52?
3. In your own words, describe how Columella treats his rural slaves in Source 3.53.
4. Cato the Elder was the strongest supporter for the destruction of Carthage. Make a list of three pros and three cons to support this position.
5. Define the phrase 'the Hellenisation of Rome'.
6. Explain in your own words the paradox in Horace's poem in Source 3.56.
7. Plutarch appears to mock Cato in Source 3.57. How is Plutarch's position supported by Cicero's comment in Source 3.58?
8. Source 3.59 represents the often pivotal character of the comic Greek slave in Greek plays and demonstrates the Roman embrace of Greek literary culture. What do you think would be the purpose of Greek plays having a pivotal comic slave character?

3.12 Slavery in Ancient Rome: Academic historiography

The following is a list of noted academic historians who have written on the topic of slavery in Ancient Rome: R. H. Barrow, K. R. Bradley, P. Cartledge, W. W. Buckland, M. I. Finley, W. Fitzgerald, Peter Garnsey, K. Hopkins, G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, Theresa Urbainczyk, J. Vogt, A. Watson, W. L. Westermann, R. Zelnick-Abramowitz.

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- The Roman Republic worked well until the fourth century BCE. During the next two hundred years, the Roman Republic saw a struggle for power between the aristocracy (patricians) and commoners (plebeians). A compromise was reached with the senatorial aristocracy having, perhaps, the greater say in most matters of state but the plebeians having obtained certain rights and privileges.
- To climb the *cursus honorum* and become consul at the minimum age of 42, gained a politician the highest *dignitas* (personal worth).
- An essential part of Roman life was the name by which you were entitled to be known. Each male had a *praenomen* or personal name, a family name or *nomen*, and usually a surname or *cognomen*. Slaves, however, were usually called by their own single *cognomen*.
- Slaves were used in all areas of Roman life, except in positions of elected public office. Five major categories were household slaves, urban crafts and service slaves, agricultural slaves, mining and quarrying slaves, and public slaves.
- The written sources present a range of attitudes towards slaves.
- The evidence shows that Roman slaves demonstrated their opposition to slavery in a number of ways.
- Etruscan funerary games were the forerunner of Roman gladiatorial combats in the arena.
- Following the Second Punic War, many small farmers sold off their land to wealthy landowners, who used slave labour to work the land.
- The first serious slave uprising was in Sicily in 135–132 BCE.
- Cato's *De Agricultura* is evidence of the beginnings of plantation slavery in Italy.



SOURCE 3.60 Bronze coin issued by the rebel slave leader Eunos Antiochus (135-132 BCE)

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
Define 'manumission'.

DEVISE
Outline in dot points the changing attitudes towards slavery as documented in Ancient Roman law, including the power of *pater familias*.

ANALYSE
To what extent do the Ancient Roman written sources reveal a pro-slavery attitude?

EVALUATE
Ancient Rome was an agrarian economy concerned with feeding its growing number of citizens and legionaries. What effect do you think this may have had on its foreign policy?

SYNTHESISE
Modern historians have to rely on evidence from the Ancient Roman slave-owning classes about how slaves felt about their servitude because very few sources from Roman slaves survive today. How does the source material demonstrate that Roman slaves managed to show their opposition to slavery in a variety of ways?

COMMUNICATE
Romans always feared slave revolts. To what extent can a study of slavery in Ancient Rome inform an understanding of the continuation of global slavery today?

ASSESSMENT
Extended-response questions
1. To what extent was the institution of slavery a critical pillar of society during the Roman Republic?
2. Why did the Ancient Romans appear to feel no guilt about slavery?
3. What can the material remains tell us about the treatment and punishment meted out to runaway slaves?

Investigation task
How did Rome establish itself as a mass slave economy in the second century BCE? Respond with reference to ancient sources and modern historians.

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Chapter 4

THE VIKINGS (700–1100 CE)

Syllabus reference: Unit 1, Topic 2: Features of ancient societies

SIMON CORVAN

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What types of sources are important for developing an understanding of the Ancient World?
- What issues of evidence are important to consider when investigating the Ancient World?
- How does archaeological evidence contribute to an understanding of the Ancient World?

(Adapted from Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 4.1 Viking ships arriving in Britain, c. 1130 CE

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FOCUS: THINKING CRITICALLY ABOUT THE VIKINGS

Vikings Scandinavian seafaring raiders, explorers and conquerors

Norse loosely translates as 'north' and refers to Scandinavians

longship Viking ships, also known as *drakkars* (dragon) for the shape of the prow

Scandinavia the countries of Norway, Denmark and Sweden

Imagery of the **Vikings** is complex and often appropriated for modern movements. Since the Nazi period, far right movements have been trying to project their beliefs onto the past. Viking history and symbolism have been wilfully misinterpreted to push agendas around nationalism, racial purity and White supremacy. In 2021, Jake Angeli, AKA the 'Qanon Shaman', who led the 6 January assault on the US Capitol, proudly exposed his tattoos of Nordic symbols, including a stylised Mjölnir (Thor's hammer), Ygdrasil (the 'world tree') and the Valknut (interlocking triangles). In the 2017 the 'Unite the Right' rally in Charlottesville, Virginia utilised Nordic symbols on banners and shields. Norwegian man Anders Breivik killed 77 people in 2011, and had carved the names of **Norse** gods into his guns. In the 2019 massacre in Christchurch, New Zealand, the shooter had Norse insignia on his possessions and wrote 'See you in Valhalla' (the afterlife) on his social media.

All of this ignores the historical records. While it is true that the Vikings were highly successful raiders who used **longships** and advanced sailing skills to engage lightning-fast attacks on coastal and riverside communities, these patterns of raiding shifted over time, and many Vikings engaged in complex and extensive trade networks that extended from Russia to Canada. Viking settlers also moved into many areas of northern Europe, western Russia and even the coast of North America. There is also archaeological evidence that Vikings reached Baghdad and engaged in trade with the Arabs. The connections and diffusion of Viking culture came to shape many aspects of European history, and introduced cultural influences, such as Christianity, to **Scandinavia**. There's significant skeletal DNA evidence that the Vikings intermarried with many different ethnicities. Additionally, archaeology reveals the Vikings embraced many different cultures and religions. The challenge for students of history is to be broad in their reading and critical in their thinking.



SOURCE 4.2 The Overhogdal Tapestry, an example of Viking textiles dated between 800 CE and 1100 CE

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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

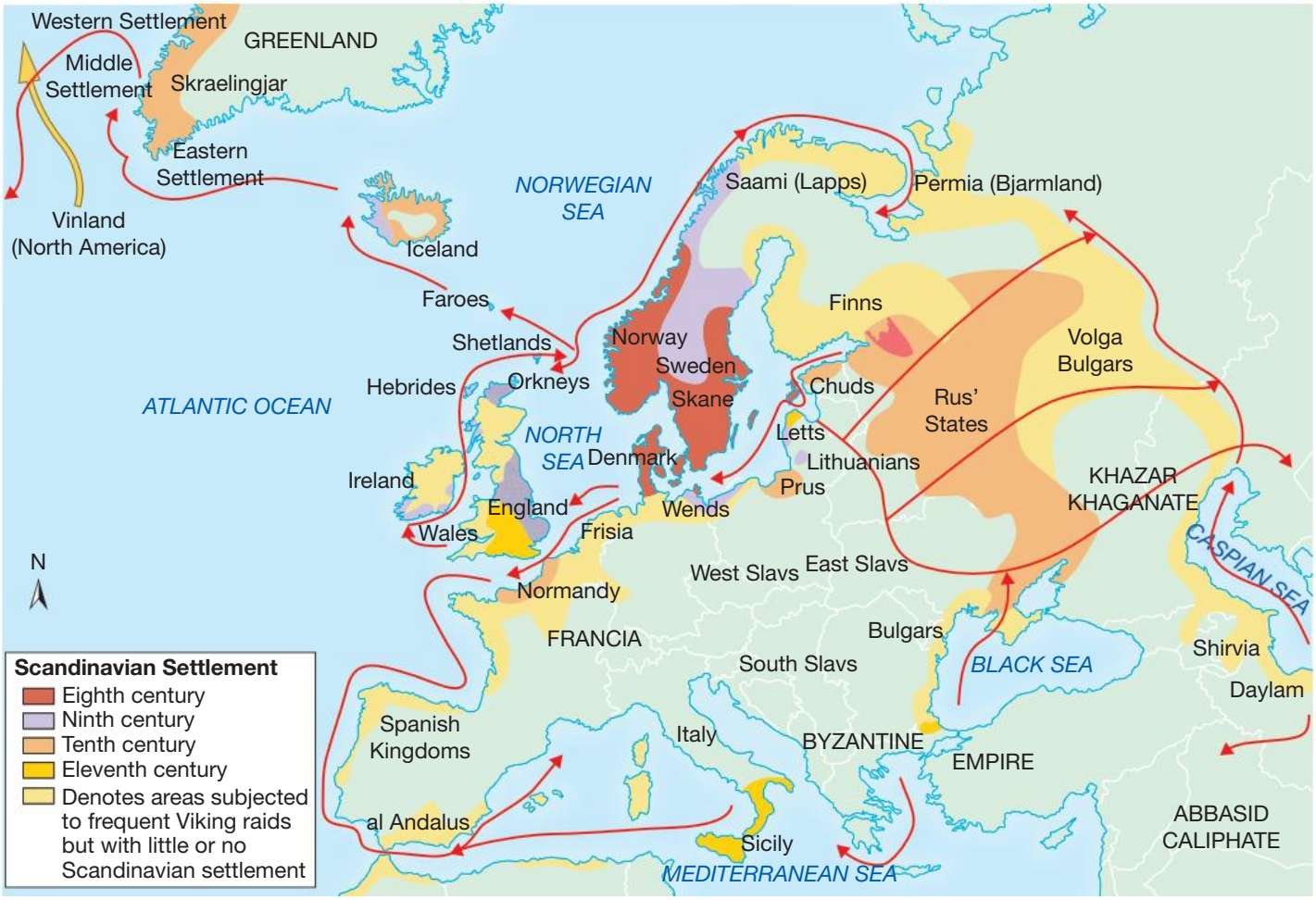
The term 'Viking' is a complex one because it collectively refers to many different groups who were active over several hundreds of years. In a very general sense, the Vikings were warriors mainly from the Scandinavian nations of Norway, Denmark and Sweden who raided Europe, northern Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia from the eighth century CE to the end of the eleventh century CE. 'Viking' is also extended to refer more broadly to Scandinavian societies at that time.

4.1 When and where did the events of the Viking age take place?

The map in Source 4.3 shows areas of Scandinavian settlement in the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries. The Viking Age stretches from the first recorded raids on Wessex, England, in 789 CE through to the Battle of Hastings in 1066 CE. During this time the Vikings had significant influence over the British Isles, Iceland, Greenland, and parts of eastern Europe. There are many **runestones** that boast of expeditions overseas, and around half tell of raids and travels to western Europe.

Additionally, several groups of Vikings visited Constantinople (known now as Istanbul, Turkey), which was the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, later referred to as the Byzantine Empire. These Vikings formed an elite military unit, the Varangian Guard. One of the most famous Varangians was Harald Hardrada who became the King of Norway and died in 1066 CE during the Battle of Stamford Bridge.

runestone a large carved stone, often funerary



SOURCE 4.3 Viking expansion from the eighth to eleventh centuries

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TABLE 4.1 A list of key dates

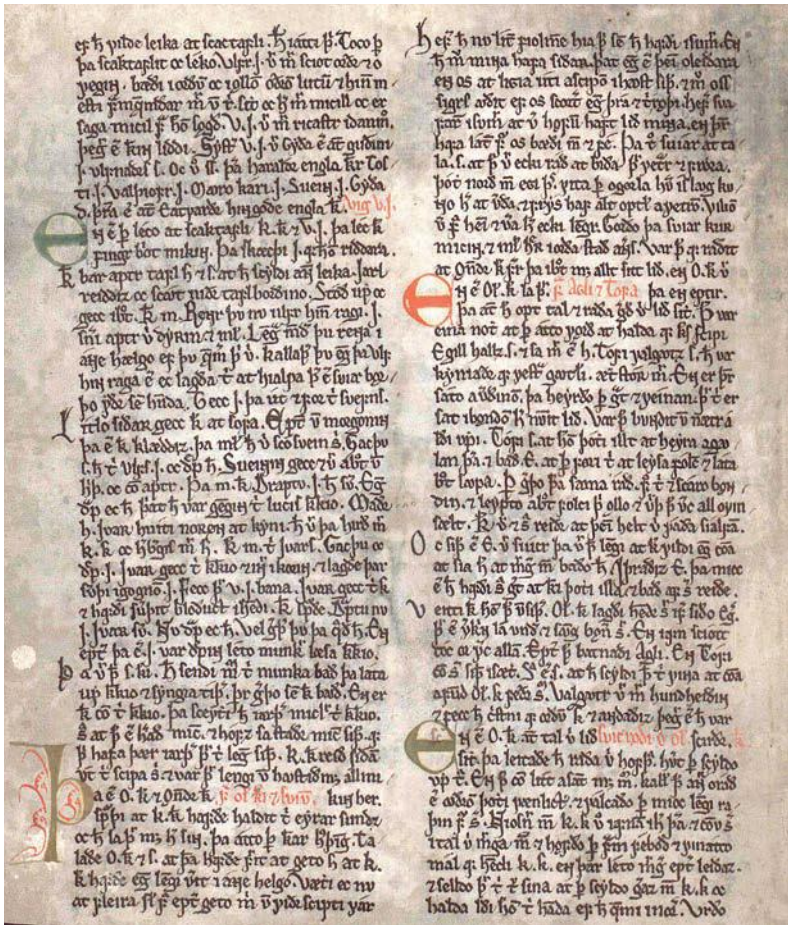
793 CE	Vikings begin their attacks on Lindisfarne, England.
840 CE	Viking settlers found the city of Dublin, Ireland.
844 CE	Vikings raid Seville, Spain, but are repulsed.
845 CE	Vikings sack France.
859 CE	Vikings raid Morocco.
860 CE	Rus Vikings attack Constantinople (Istanbul). The Vikings raid along the Mediterranean coast.
862 CE	Rus Vikings found Novgorod in Russia.
865 CE	The Vikings change tactics from raiding England and instead invade England.
866 CE	Danish Vikings establish a kingdom in York, England.
871 CE	Alfred the Great becomes King of Wessex; the Danish advance is halted in England.
886 CE	Alfred divides England with the Danes under the Danelaw pact.
900 CE	The Vikings attack Luni, Italy.
911 CE	The Viking chief Rollo is granted land by the Franks and found Normandy in France.
922 CE	Ibn Fadlan, an Arab ambassador to the Scandinavian Rus along the Volga, writes his account of their customs.
982 CE	Viking leader Erik the Red discovers Greenland.
986 CE	Viking ships sail in Newfoundland (Canadian) waters.
995 CE	Olav I conquers Norway and proclaims it a Christian kingdom.
1000 CE	Leif Eriksson, son of Erik the Red, explores the coast of North America.
1010 CE	Viking explorer Thorfinn Karlsefni attempts to found a settlement in North America.
1016 CE	The Danes under Cnut (Canute) conquer England.
1028 CE	Cnut, King of England and Denmark, conquers Norway.
1046 CE	Harald Hardrada, brother of Olav II, claims the throne in Norway.
1066 CE	Harold Godwinson, King of England, defeats Harald Hardrada, King of Norway, at the Battle of Stamford Bridge.
1066 CE	William, Duke of Normandy, defeats the Saxon King Harold at the Battle of Hastings.
1200 CE	The Icelandic sagas start with the Orkneyinga saga written by an unknown author.

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4.2 How do we know about the Vikings today?

One of the most abundant sources for understanding Viking society comes from the poems and heroic stories, known as **sagas**. Most of these sagas are Old Norse works of literature written in Iceland in the early thirteenth century. The work is believed to have been written or compiled by the Icelandic scholar and historian Snorri Sturluson around the year 1220 CE. The veracity of the sagas is contested by modern historians and many of them contain highly mythical elements for which there is no evidence.

saga semi-historical and mythical tales



SOURCE 4.4 Kringlublaðið (the Kringla leaf) is a vellum manuscript leaf dated c. 1260 CE from the historical sagas known as Heimskringla. The leaf was the only one to survive from a manuscript called Kringla that was destroyed in the 1728 great fire of Copenhagen.



SOURCE 4.5 Hagby Runestone. The translation reads, 'Sveinn and Ulfr had the stones raised in memory of Halfdan and in memory of Gunnarr, their brothers. They met their end in the east.'

Those who were raided by the Vikings also provide historians with information about the nature of the Vikings. This kind of source needs to be contextualised as the authors were under attack by the Vikings and took a significantly biased view of their activities.

Many archaeological sources from the Vikings themselves also remain. Often these are runestones such as the collection of Hagby Runestones. These are memorial in nature, opportunities for people to commemorate the lives of loved ones or powerful political figures. An example of this is the Danish Queen Thyra whose accomplishments were mentioned in four different runestones.

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DEPTH STUDY

Introduction

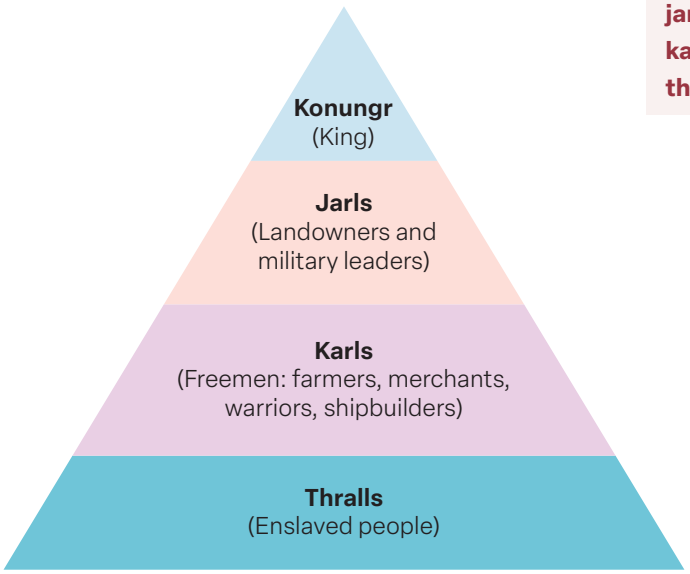
To understand the Vikings, it is important to gain an overall picture of their social structure, warriors, the lives of women, their technologies and trade networks.

4.3 Society and culture

Society

Viking society was very broadly divided into the four classes: konungr (king), **jarls**, **karls**, and **thralls**. The Norse poem *Rigsthula* explains that it was the god Rig who created humans and the four social classes. This poem is part of a collection of story poems and likely composed around the tenth century, before the Vikings converted to Christianity.

jarl upper-class Vikings
karl farmer and craftsmen Vikings
thrall Viking slaves



SOURCE 4.6 The social hierarchy of Viking society

Thralls were the lowest ranking class and were effectively slaves. The *Rigsthula* describes the first thrall:

SOURCE 4.7 The first thrall, described by A. Somerville and R. McDonald, *The Viking Age: A Reader* (2nd edn), University of Toronto Press, 2010, pp. 22–3

> **The skin was wrinkled and rough on his hands, knotted his knuckles, thick his fingers, and ugly his face, twisted his back, and big his heels. He began to grow, and to gain in strength, soon of his might good use he made.**

While slavery is abhorrent by modern standards, it was critical to Viking society. Thralls were construction workers or farmhands and were considered goods to be bought and sold. The karls and jarls used the thralls for all major physical labour. The *Rigsthula* makes it clear that the thralls were looked down on. Vikings gained new thralls via conquest and raids in which people were captured and enslaved. There was a strong trade with the Arabs in which thralls were exchanged for silver.

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The second social class were known as karls. The karls were free peasants who owned land and were usually farmers. The *Rigsthula* describes the first karl:

SOURCE 4.8 The first karl, described by A. Somerville and R. McDonald, *The Viking Age: A Reader* (2nd edn), University of Toronto Press, 2010, pp. 22–3

> **He was ruddy of face, and flashing his eyes. He began to grow, and to gain in strength, oxen he ruled, and plows made ready, houses he built, and barns he fashioned, carts he made, and the plow he managed.**

The third social class were the jarls, who were the nobility of Viking society. Jarls were usually wealthy, owning large estates and many thralls. The jarls were the political class who ran villages and towns. The *Rigsthula* describes the first jarl:

SOURCE 4.9 The first jarl, described by A. Somerville and R. McDonald, *The Viking Age: A Reader* (2nd edn), University of Toronto Press, 2010, p. 25

> **Blonde was his hair, and bright his cheeks, grim as a snake's were his glowing eyes ...**
>
> **Shields he brandished, and bow-strings wound, bows he shot, and shafts he fashioned, arrows he loosened, and lances wielded, horses he rode, and hounds unleashed, swords he handled, and sounds he swam.**



SOURCE 4.10 Viking warrior



SOURCE 4.11 Viking craftsman



SOURCE 4.12 Karl Viking woman

The final social class described is that of the king. As with many ancient societies, kings were exceptionally powerful. The *Rigsthula* poem ascribes many supernatural elements to the first king, Konungr. It is important to remember that this story should not be treated as literal truth. Early Norse kings were warriors who took control of lands by force rather than supernatural powers. Later kings were often hereditary in nature, inheriting from their parents.

SOURCE 4.13 'The birth of king' in *Rigsthula*

> **King the youngest alone knew runes, runes eternal and runes of life. Yet more he knew, – how to shelter men, to blunt the sword-edge and calm the sea: he learnt bird language, to quench the fire flame, heal all sorrows and soothe the heart; strength and might of eight he owned.**

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Description by outsiders

The Muslim diplomat and traveler Ahmad ibn Fadlan, who visited the European state Volga Bulgaria in 922 CE, described the **Rus** Vikings:

SOURCE 4.14 Ahmad ibn Fadlan in G. Jones, *A History of the Vikings*, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 164

I have seen the Rus as they came on their merchant journeys and encamped by the Itil [river]. I have never seen more perfect physical specimens, tall as date palms, blonde and ruddy; they wear neither tunics nor caftans, but the men wear a garment which covers one side of the body and leaves a hand free. Each man has an axe, a sword, and a knife, and keeps each by him at all times. The swords are broad and grooved, of Frankish sort. Each woman wears on either breast a box of iron, silver, copper, or gold; the value of the box indicates the wealth of the husband. Each box has a ring from which depends a knife. The women wear neck-rings of gold and silver. Their most prized ornaments are green glass beads. They string them as necklaces for their women.

Berserker warriors

While Viking warriors were certainly intimidating, there are also claims that elite, rage-filled warriors known as berserkers existed. The earliest surviving reference to the term is in *Haraldskvædi*, a skaldic poem by Thórbiörn Hornklofi in the late ninth century. The poem was composed in honour of King Harald Fairhair, and the berserker were referred to as *ulfhednar* (men clad in wolf skins). This translation from the *Haraldskvædi* saga describes Harald's berserkers:

Rus Swedish Vikings who invaded and settled in eastern Europe

berserker a Viking warrior who fought with uncontrollable anger

Odin the Allfather, king of the Viking gods

SOURCE 4.15 Thórbiörn Hornklofi, *Haraldskvædi*

I'll ask of the berserks, you tasters of blood, those intrepid heroes, how are they treated, those who wade out into battle? Wolf-skinned they are called. In battle they bear bloody shields. Red with blood are their spears when they come to fight. They form a closed group. The prince in his wisdom puts trust in such men who hack through enemy shields.

Note: The 'tasters of blood' in this passage are thought to be ravens, which feasted on the dead.



SOURCE 4.16 A seventh-century Swedish image of a **berserker** created from a bronze dye used to stamp images onto helmets. **Odin** is shown on the left with two ravens on his helmet, while a berserker wearing a wolf or bearskin is on the right.

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The Icelandic historian and poet Snorri Sturluson (1179–1241) wrote the following description of berserkers in his *Ynglinga* saga:

SOURCE 4.17 Snorri Sturlson, *Ynglinga*, chapter 6

> They went without shields, and were mad as dogs or wolves, and bit on their shields, and were as strong as bears or bulls; men they slew, and neither fire nor steel would deal with them; and this is what is called the fury of the berserker.

The twelfth century Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus (c. 1160–1220) described a berserk rage in which a warrior killed his own men:

SOURCE 4.18 Saxo Grammaticus, *The Danish History*, Book VII

> a demoniacal frenzy suddenly took him; he furiously bit and devoured the edges of his shield; he kept gulping down fiery coals; he snatched live embers in his mouth and let them pass down into his entrails; he rushed through the perils of crackling fires; and at last, when he had raved through every sort of madness, he turned his sword with raging hand against the hearts of six of his champions. It is doubtful whether this madness came from thirst for battle or natural ferocity.

The Lewis Chessmen, currently in the British Museum, probably made in Norway about 1150–1200 CE, depict warriors biting their shields in a manner consistent with the *Ynglinga* saga and Saxo Grammaticus's work.



SOURCE 4.19 Lewis Chessmen

ACTIVITY **4.1**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Consider the evidence for berserker warriors.

1. List the claims that are made about berserkers.
2. Evaluate how useful and reliable you think the evidence is. Give reasons.
3. Assuming the evidence is accurate, what impact would a berserker have on the morale of the enemy?

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Lives of women

The lives of many women were centred around their domestic lives as mothers, carers and overseers of the household. However, women had a degree of economic freedom and could own land and run textile businesses. They could seek divorce from their husbands and retain a degree of autonomy after divorce. Despite this, they were still officially inferior to men and unable to appear in court or hold political power outright.

The modern mental image of a Viking warrior is a masculine one. However, in recent years there has been significant historical debate over the potential existence of female Viking warriors. While there have always been tales, stories and legends in the sagas about powerful female warriors and **Valkyries** who took brave souls to the afterlife (Valhalla), these were dismissed as little more than fantasy. The question remains though: were there female Viking warriors? How can recent archaeological finds challenge the traditional understanding? The following sources provide perspectives on the lives of women as warriors.



SOURCE 4.20 Lagertha, the semi-legendary shield-maiden, in a lithography by Morris Meredith Williams, 1913

Viking sagas contain many examples of shield-maidens such as Brynhildr in the *Volsunga* saga, Hervor in the *Hervarar* saga, the Swedish princess Thornbjorg in the *Hrólfs* saga, and Visna and Veborg in *Gesta Danorum*. However, as previously stated, these sagas were not written until the thirteenth century. While much of the primary evidence comes from the sagas, there are occasionally some more reliable historical sources that mention female warriors. The eleventh-century Greek historian John Skylitzes, in his *A Synopsis of Histories of the Byzantine Empire*, described a Viking siege in Bulgaria in 971 CE, led by the Grand Prince of Kiev, Sviatoslav I. He wrote that many women fought in the battle and later that year, when the Kievan Rus (Vikings) suffered defeat in Dorostolon, the Byzantine victors were shocked to find that many of the defeated soldiers' corpses were female.

Valkyrie a powerful warrior woman who took souls to the afterlife

Dane Danish Vikings

The Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus claimed:

SOURCE 4.21 Saxo Grammaticus, *The Danish History*, Book 5

> **There were once women among the Danes who dressed themselves to look like men, and devoted almost every instant of their lives to the pursuit of war.**

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Further, Saxo claims that shield-maidens fought at the Battle of Brávellir in the year 750 CE:

SOURCE 4.22 Saxo Grammaticus, *The Danish History*, Book 8

> Now out of the town of Sle, under the captains Hetha and Wisna, with Hakon Cut-cheek came Tummi the Sailmaker. On these captains, who had the bodies of women, nature bestowed the souls of men.

However, Professor Judith Jesch, a professor of Viking studies, rejects the notion of female warriors:

SOURCE 4.23 J. Jesch, 'Viking women, warriors, and Valkyries', *The British Museum*, 9 April 2014

> A typical Valkyrie name, like Hild, means 'battle', and many ordinary women in the Viking Age also bore names (like the very common Gunnhild, or 'War-battle') that contained such elements. Yet that did not make them women warriors. Like most periods of human history, the Viking Age was not free from conflict, and war always impacts on all members of a society. It is likely that there were occasions when women had to defend themselves and their families as best they could, with whatever weapons were to hand. But there is absolutely no hard evidence that women trained or served as regular warriors in the Viking Age. Valkyries were an object of the imagination, creatures of fantasy rooted in the experience of male warriors. War was certainly a part of Viking life, but women warriors must be classed as Viking legend.

Britt-Mari Näsström, a professor of Scandinavian religious history, argues in favour of female Viking warriors:

SOURCE 4.24 J. Andersen, 'Shield of Nordic myth', *Motpol*, 2008

> The woman's position was so high that she could choose to carry weapons, and enter into one of the most male spheres that exist; the sphere of war. At the same time, this was not such a society ... where sex roles were suspended in a single androgynous chaos. Instead, this society had clear gender roles, but there was an opportunity for those women who felt very uncomfortable with the classic women's ward to choose something else.

Feminist archaeologist Marianne Moen also argues for the existence of female warriors:

SOURCE 4.25 M. Moen, 'Women in the Viking Age Then and Now', *Dangerous Women Project*, 22 August 2016

> Both written and archaeological sources show women trading, travelling, fighting and taking on leading roles in religious activities. There is even evidence of women as chieftains. This evidence is not hard to find, nor is it scarce. Nevertheless, scholars of the Viking Age, both historians and archaeologists, will often confidently state that women did not lead active public lives and were bound to the homestead, whilst positions of power were nearly invariably held by men. We can still read confident statements to the effect that women were not allowed to carry weapons, or participate at legal gatherings ... Such statements are directly contradicted by substantial amounts of written and archaeological evidence.

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Archaeological remains are highly contested also. There are some female graves that contain weapons, but that does not automatically mean the women buried were warriors. The modern Norwegian anthropologist Terje Birkedal analysed the evidence:

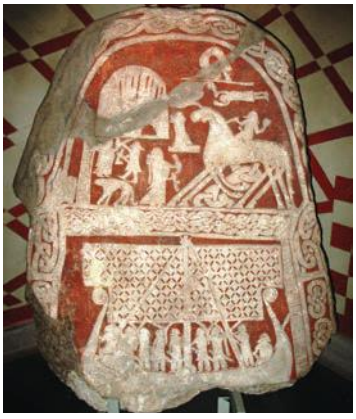
SOURCE 4.26 S. Percy, 'Friday essay: the forgotten female soldiers who fought long ago – and why their stories matter today', *The Conversation*, 30 June 2023

> On the Swedish island of Björkö lie the remains of Birka, a significant Viking trading post ... One particular chamber caught the eye of 19th-century archaeologists, who labelled the grave Bj.581. This grave contained weapons: a sword, an axe, a spear, a battle knife, two shields and 25 arrows, and the remains of two horses.
>
> Clearly, this was the grave of a warrior. No one really looked closely at the skeleton in this grave to confirm it was male but for 100 years, the record held that the warrior in Bj.581 was a man. In the early 1970s, bone analysis suggested the skeleton was female. DNA analysis published in 2018 confirmed the bones were those of a woman, with two X chromosomes. The team conducting the DNA analysis also examined the relationship between the skeleton and the contents of the grave, drawing the same conclusion as all previous investigations: 'the person in Bj.581 was buried in a grave full of functional weapons and war-gear [...] outside the gate of a fortress'. If it looks like a warrior, and is armed like a warrior, it must be a warrior.

The Birka skeleton was DNA-tested by bio-archaeologist Kristina Killgrove, who argued that the deceased was female, a warrior and an officer, pointing out that the grave included some tools used for planning battle tactics.



SOURCE 4.27 The archaeological findings of the Birka Warrior's grave from 1889



SOURCE 4.28 Tjängvide stone, Sweden. A Valkyrie and Odin welcome a warrior into Valhalla.

ACTIVITY **4.2**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. Evaluate Sources 4.20–4.27 and decide if Viking women could be warriors.
2. Create and sustain a response that clearly argues your decision. Refer to at least three of the sources provided.
3. Do a brief online search on this topic. Is your answer corroborated and sustained, or does it need to change or be updated?

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4.4 Technology and engineering

Ships and trade

Ships were the Vikings' most significant technological advantage. The only reason there is a period known as the Viking Age is because their ships allowed them access to the rivers of Europe and the Atlantic Ocean. Viking ships were constructed in a highly sophisticated manner that was copied by others, including one of the Spanish Muslim leaders, who ordered ships to be built in imitation of the Viking ones.

One of the best-preserved Viking warships is the Gokstad ship, a complete ship buried as part of a funeral ritual. During excavations in the 1880s, a human skeleton was discovered lying in a bed placed inside a timber-built burial chamber. The skeleton was that of a powerful man aged in his 40s–50s, around 183 centimetres tall. The grave also contained three small boats, a tent, a sledge and riding equipment. Other grave goods were probably previously plundered, as the excavation found no gold or silver.

The Gokstad ship is 28 metres long and 5 metres wide. From the size, it appears that around 60 sailors lived and worked on board. Ships of this type were made from oak and the timbers intentionally split so that the wood grains on each plank would mesh and provide additional strength. These ships could either be sailed or, if there was not enough wind, rowed by the crew. Most Viking warships were very sturdy and able to handle either open ocean or small rivers. An advantage of the larger ships was the ability to have enough rowers to work in shifts and continue rowing at night.



SOURCE 4.29 Gokstad ship on display at the Viking Ship Museum in Oslo, Norway

Viking ships had a shallow draft, usually around 1 metre, which meant they could land directly on sandy beaches and raid quickly rather than being forced to dock in well-fortified harbours. Their low masts, built for speed when the winds were favourable, could also easily pass under bridges erected in rivers. This design feature allowed the Vikings to pass under the fortified bridges that King Charles the Bald constructed in 864 CE to try to block the Vikings.

The Vikings also had trade ships known as Knörr. These trade ships were usually sailing ships in which the rowing seats were removed to create space to hold trade goods.

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SOURCE 4.30 Gokstad ship on display at the Viking Ship Museum in Oslo, Norway

ACTIVITY **4.3**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

1. Research the Gokstad ship. Below are several questions to get your research started.
   - **a.** Where and when was it discovered?
   - **b.** Why was it completely buried?
   - **c.** How and when was it constructed?
   - **d.** How does it compare to other ship burials such as the Oseberg ship?
   - **e.** How accurate are the 'replica' ships built at places like the Viking Ship Museum at Roskilde, Denmark?
2. What advantages did Viking ships have?
3. What disadvantages did Viking ships have?
4. Explain why Viking skills at shipbuilding and sailing enabled them to be successful raiders.

Sea Stallion from Glendalough is the largest reconstruction of a Viking Age warship. The original ship on which the reconstruction is based was built in Dublin in 1042 CE. It was used as a warship in Irish waters until 1060 CE, when it ended its days as a naval barricade to protect the harbour of Roskilde, Denmark.



SOURCE 4.31 Modern replica of a Viking vessel, *Sea Stallion from Glendalough*

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ACTIVITY **4.4**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

What effect did technology have in the role and success of Viking expansion in the eighth–eleventh centuries?

To answer this question, create three sub-questions to help you frame your investigation and response. The first is provided below. Provide a brief summary to each of the sub-questions you create.

Sub-question 1: How did Vikings navigate?

Vikings had no maps, but used their senses – sight, smell, sounds, such as looking at the position of the sun and the stars, the colour of the sea, the way the waves moved and the way the wind blew. Birds and smell indicated land. Some Vikings may have used an instrument called a sun-shadow or sun-compass to help them navigate, though this is in scholarly dispute.

Viking funerals

A common misconception, capitalised upon by Hollywood and other such mediums for dramatic effect, is that of funerals of Viking leaders. These are often depicted with the body placed in a ship, launched out to sea and set on fire. However, Dr Danica Ramsey-Brimberg wrote in History Extra, the website for the BBC History magazines: 'Outside of Norse mythology and literary texts, such as the Old English epic *Beowulf*, no funerals of real Vikings are known to have been held on the water'. A tenth-century Arab Muslim writer named Ahmad ibn Fadlan was an eyewitness to a Viking funeral of a chieftain who died during a raid into eastern Europe. This account is the only account to depict this kind of funerary activity and is shown in the 1999 movie *The 13th Warrior*. The deceased chieftain, wearing expensive clothing, was loaded onto a boat on land (rather than at sea) with numerous grave goods – such as weapons, food, and animal sacrifices – and a female slave who was killed as a human sacrifice to accompany her master into the afterlife. The whole ship was then set on fire and covered with a mound of earth, and a wooden grave marker was placed on top with the chieftain's name. Outside of much later Viking Icelandic saga stories, the funerary practice of burning ships launched out to sea (even depicted in the *Game of Thrones* series) does not exist. However, Viking burials are numerous and provide a wealth of information, through archaeological excavation, of the life and cultural aspects of the Vikings.



SOURCE 4.32 A re-enactment of a Viking ship burial by cremation

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4.5 Weapons and warfare

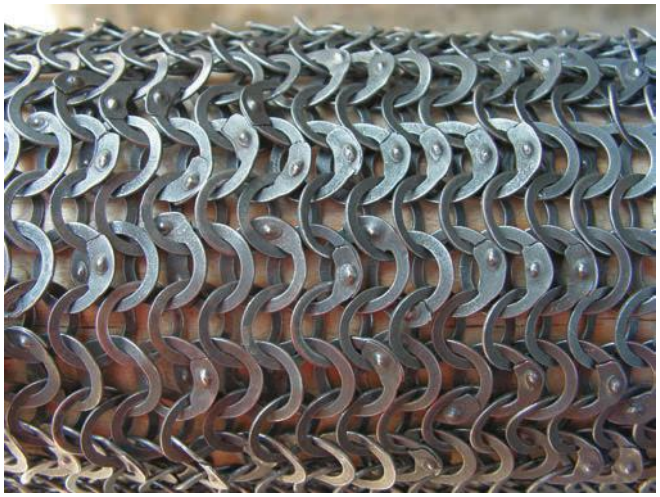
Archaeology has provided modern historians with a fuller picture of Viking weapons than the fragments of medieval literary text. The **chroniclers** of the times were understandably more concerned with the violence of the raids and conquests than in giving future generations a clear image of the weapons used. There are limitations to the archaeological records, mainly because leather and wood perish, and iron was so highly prized that it was likely reused. Beyond this, the Viking's primary source of iron was 'bog iron', harvested only in tiny ingots from swamps.

chronicles annual accounts of significant events



SOURCE 4.33 Modern-day re-enactment of Viking warriors

The image of the Viking warrior depicts a reasonably common set of equipment and weaponry. Most Vikings would have had relatively simple armour constructed from sturdy cloth or leather. Vikings sometimes wore chainmail shirts with thousands of interlocking iron rings, but the expense of iron combined with the need for mobility on raids meant that it was unlikely that these were common. A chainmail shirt could weigh around 12 kilograms and contain 30 000 individual rings of iron.



SOURCE 4.34 Detail of reconstruction of chainmail

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Helmets

Viking helmets are distinct from most others of the same era in that they are typically constructed from multiple pieces of iron riveted together, rather than being a single sheet of iron hammered into shape. There are multiple theories to explain the difference. Most centre on a lack of large enough sheets of iron. Viking helmets were expensive and rare, leading to a lack of archaeological evidence as it seems likely that they would have been handed down from generation to generation.



SOURCE 4.35 Gjermundbu helmet (Norway)

An excellent example of a Viking helmet is the Gjermundbu helmet (Norway) found by accident on a farm in 1943. The Gjermundbu burial chamber contained many grave goods and the most complete Viking helmet ever found. This type of helmet is known as a *spangenhelm*. These helmets must have had some kind of cushioning between the metal and the skull, either a thick felting or a suspended leather liner. However, as these materials rot, no archaeological records remain as to how the helmets were lined.

The stereotypical horned Viking helmet has no credible historical evidence to back it up. Instead, it is a costume designed in 1876 by Carl Emil Doepler for the first Bayreuth Festival production of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. It is possible that horns could have been worn on ceremonial helmets for rituals but they would not have been practical in battle.



SOURCE 4.36 Modern reconstructions of Viking helmets

Weapons

Spears

The most common weapon used in the Viking Age was the spear. This was true of all ancient and medieval armies due to the relatively simple technological threshold and materials required to construct a spear, as well as the low skill level required to wield one. In contrast to a sword, spears could be constructed much more simply, with less metal and with lower quality iron.

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While we tend to picture swords as the primary Viking weapon, it should be noted that the Allfather god Odin used a spear known as Gungnir, and spears had significant cultural value to the Vikings.

Archaeological remains, as well as images from the time, show that spears consisted of metal heads with a blade and a hollow shaft, mounted on wooden shafts between two to three metres in length. Spearheads measured around 40 centimetres with a tendency towards slightly longer and narrower heads in the later Viking Age. Spearheads with winged edges are called *krókspjót* (hooked spear) and could be used to catch the edge of shields and pull enemies off balance. Some spears, known as *höggspjót* (chopping spear), had far larger blades that allowed them to be used for both stabbing and cutting like a sword. Lighter spears with narrower spearheads could be thrown like a javelin.

Axes

The second most common weapon for Vikings was the axe. Like the spear, lower production challenges and reduced metal availability are some of the main reasons for the prevalence of axes. Additionally, axes were a tool for chopping wood and thus had practical uses beyond warfare.

The Vikings developed large axes, often known as Danish axes, which had long shafts and large heads. These axes stood close to two metres tall and were designed for two-handed usage over the top of shielded companions. An example of a Danish axe is clearly found on a segment of the Bayeux Tapestry. These larger axes were also used against cavalry, allowing the wielder to attack the rider. Many Viking axe blades were hooked or bearded to allow the warrior to snag an enemy's weapon or shield.



SOURCE 4.37 Danish axe as depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry, c. 1066 CE

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Small hand axes that could also be thrown were more common than the larger Danish axes. The Mammen Axe, held in the National Museum of Denmark, is a famous example. The complex silver inlaid motifs on the axe can be interpreted as both Christian and pagan. The curators at the National Museum offer the following interpretation:

SOURCE 4.38 Meaning of a Mammen axe motif at the National Museum of Denmark

> **On one side a tree motif can be seen. It may symbolise the Christian Tree of Life or the pagan tree Yggdrasil. On the other side is an animal figure – perhaps the rooster Gullinkambi [Old Norse 'golden comb'] or the phoenix. According to Norse mythology Gullinkambi sits on top of the tree Yggdrasil. Here it wakes the Viking warriors every morning and it will crow at the beginning of Ragnarok [the end of the world]. The phoenix is a Christian mythological animal and a symbol of re-birth.**



SOURCE 4.39 Mammen axe

Swords

Swords were the most significant weapon in the Viking world. They were challenging to forge and required large quantities of high-quality iron. Owning a sword was a mark of distinction for a warrior and they became heirlooms passed down through generations. The Icelandic saga *Fóstbrædra* explains that very few men were armed with swords and, out of more than a hundred weapons found in Viking Age burials in Iceland, only 16 are swords. In the *Laxdæla* saga, the King Hakon gives a sword to the warrior Hoskuldur that is valued at a half mark of gold, approximately equivalent to 16 milk cows – a fortune in that time. The *Laxdæla* saga from Iceland also tells the cautionary tale of Geirmundr who is planning to leave his wife, Thurídr, and their baby daughter. When Thurídr discovers his plot, she steals his sword Fótbítr (Leg Biter) and leaves their daughter behind on Geirmundr's ship. As Thurídr rows away, the baby begins to cry so loudly that Geirmundr wakes up. He tells Thurídr to take her daughter and whatever wealth she wants, but leave his sword; he would give up a great deal of money rather than lose his sword. However, Thurídr takes the sword because Geirmundr has treated her dishonourably.



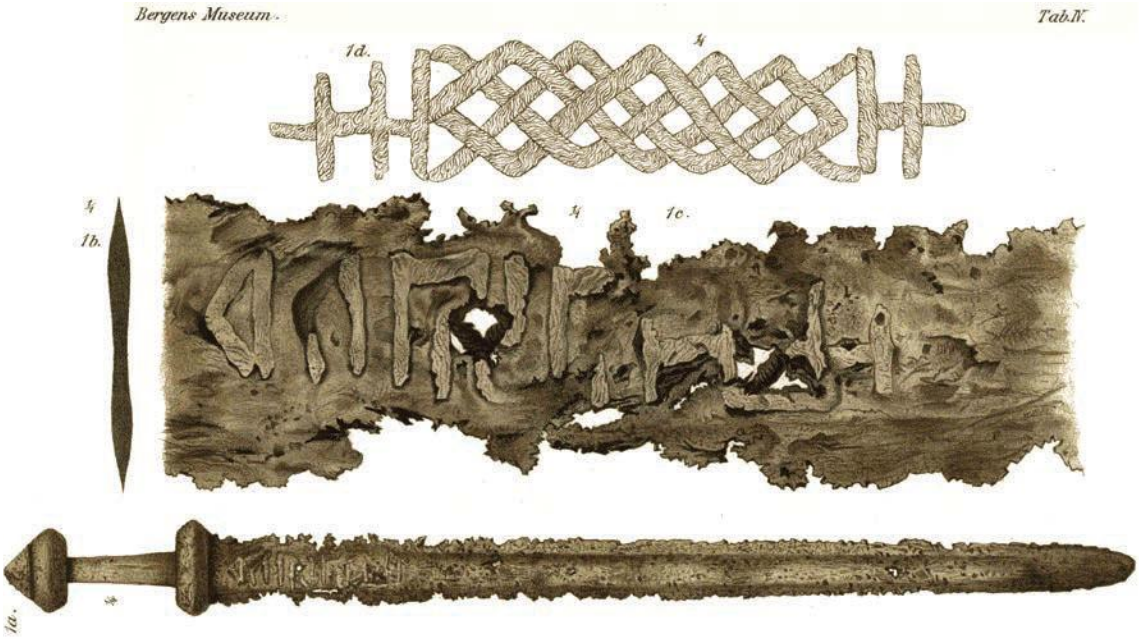
SOURCE 4.40 Viking swords: originals and replicas

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Viking blades were usually wielded with one hand, leaving the other free to hold a shield. Although they vary significantly in size, most blades would have been around 70–80 centimetres long and only became longer much later in the Viking era, when they were up to 100 centimetres.

Blades were typically 4–6 centimetres wide and usually sharp on both sides. Combined with the hilt and pommel (needed for balance) the swords weighed around 1–2 kilograms and balanced closer to the hilt due to the tapering of the blade.



SOURCE 4.41 The runes on this early-ninth-century sword from Sæbø in the west of Norway are shown in this modern sketch.

Shields

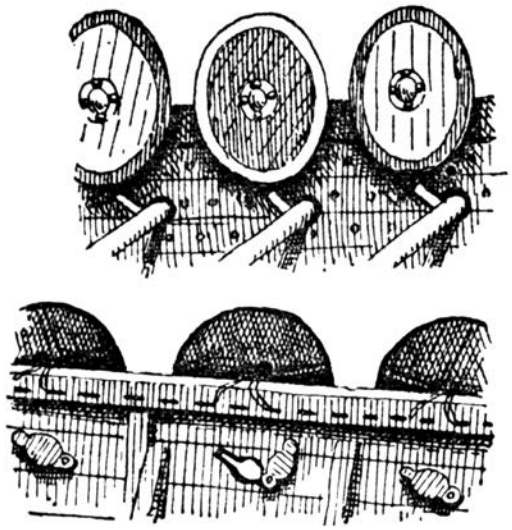
Vikings favoured round shields with a central boss (a round cover for the hand, usually made of metal). Archaeological remains of shields at Gokstad and Trelleborg show that they were constructed of surprisingly thin timbers. This made the shields light and easy to use both offensively and defensively. Vikings reinforced their shield rims with leather and strengthened the facing side of the shield with thick fabric or animal skins. Timbers such as linden, fir, alder, and poplar were used, and experimental archaeology has demonstrated that the fibres of these timbers can trap blades that bite into the shield.



SOURCE 4.42 Replica shield

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SOURCE 4.43 Drawing of shields that fit onto a *drakkar* ship from Nouveau Larousse Ilustré, Larousse XIXs, 1866–1877



SOURCE 4.44 Trellborg shield remnants

While the image of Vikings creating a wall of shields may seem like an accepted technique of Vikings in battle, there are archaeologists who do not believe that Vikings used their shields in this manner.

Rolf Warming, a Danish archaeologist, discusses this in the article below:

SOURCE 4.45 T. Lanesskog, 'Research: Vikings did not hide behind shield walls', *Thornews*, 30 August 2017

> There is a widespread misunderstanding among Viking enthusiasts and us archaeologists that the Vikings have been standing shield by shield forming a close formation in battle.
>
> His [Warming's] research results are supported by archaeological finds, written texts and known Viking fighting techniques that were based on surprise, speed and weapon skills. The Gokstad shields are, like the shield found at Trelleborg, relatively thin, and research has shown that they would easily split when struck with arrows, swords, and axes. This strengthens the theory that they originally were covered with animal skin: The skin shrinks a little when it dries out, something that increases the strength. By using animal skin, it was also possible to use relatively thin pieces of wood and thereby keep the weight as low as possible. However, the shields were not strong enough (or big enough) to withstand multiple hits from swords and axes in a shield wall.

Conversely, there is some evidence of the shields being used like a wall. The eleventh-century Icelandic poet Thjódólfr Arnorsson states in the *Sexstefja* poem that at the Battle of the River Nissa:

SOURCE 4.46 Thjódólfr Arnorsson, *Sexstefia* poem

> the valiant King of Uppland drew his bow all night; the lord caused arrows to shower against the white shields [of Denmark]. The blood-drenched points inflicted wounds up on the mailshirted men, where arrows lodged in shields; the volley of spears from the dragon [longship] increased.

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Occasionally Vikings chose not to carry a shield when they carried a two-handed weapon such as a Danish axe or carried a different weapon in each hand. Gunnar Hámundarson was a tenth-century Icelandic chieftain who carried an axe in one hand and a sword in the other at the battle at Rangá. This was described in chapter 62 of the *Brennu-Njáls* saga, when Gunnar Hámundarson's enemy Thorgeirr urged his brothers Bork and Thorkell to all charge at Gunnar together: 'He has no shield, and we'll have his life in our hands.' The saga says that Gunnar knocked Bork's sword out of his hand with his axe while slicing off Thorkel's head with his sword.

Viking shields could also be used as offensive weapons. In the *Bjarnar* saga *Hítdælakappa*, Björn smashes his shield into his opponent's head to kill him, and in the *Grettis* saga, Grettir kicks Snækollr's own shield into his head so hard that Snækollr's face is torn open, and his jaw falls down to his chest. The saga says: 'when he (Grettir) came alongside of the bearserk's [berserker] horse, he sent up his foot under the tail of the shield so hard, that the shield went up into the mouth of him [Snækollr], and his throat was riven asunder, and his jaws fell down on his breast'.

Finally, consider the following dramatic description of the Battle of Maldon, 991 CE, at which an Anglo-Saxon army failed to repulse a Viking raid. Only 325 lines of the poem survive; both the beginning and the ending are lost. No one knows for sure who wrote the poem. A popular theory is that the author may have been one of the Saxons present at the battle.

SOURCE 4.47 Anglo-Saxon poem, 'The Battle of Maldon'

The slaughter-wolves advanced, minded not the water, a host of Vikings westward over the Pant [a river in Essex, England], over the bright water bore their shields: sailors to land brought shields of linden. Opposite stood Birhtnoth with his warriors, ready for the fierce invaders. He ordered his men to form a war-hedge with their shields and to hold the formation fast against the enemy. Now was combat near, glory in battle. The time had come when doomed men should fall. Shouts were raised; ravens circled, the eagle eager for food. On earth there was uproar. They let the file-hard spears fly from their hands, grim-ground javelins. Bows were busy, shield felt point. Bitter was the battle-rush. On either side warriors fell, young men lay dead.

ACTIVITY **4.5**



Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Explain why Vikings used light wooden shields.
2. Explain how the Vikings used their shields both defensively and offensively.
3. Although the sources disagree, decide whether the Vikings formed shield walls, by considering which sources are the most credible.
4. Consider the role of experimental archaeology in helping understand the ways in which weapons and armour were used. Experimental archaeologists attempt to recreate artefacts using only the technology and materials available to people in the past, and re-enact their use, to test a hypothesis. This can involve drawing inferences from sketches and partial archaeological remains. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this approach?

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From raids to conquest and kingdoms

Raiding

It is important to distinguish between the majority of Norse people, who never left their homelands in Scandinavia, and those who went raiding, the Vikings. British historian Jonathon Clements argues that raiding was essential to the Vikings' sense of community:

SOURCE 4.48 J. Clements, *A Brief History of the Vikings*, Robinson Publishing, 2005, p. 52

> **This was a small community led by a 'king' and his warriors. The war band was an organism that lived to acquire possessions – it would roam in search of a territory of its own. It could be destroyed by a more powerful adversary, or it could seize the territory of another, acquiring land, women and wealth for itself. At that point, it would have fulfilled its basic function, and fizzle out. A war band was not so much a parasite as an outlet for a community's bad seeds. A generation after the original raiders gave up on their raiding life, their many wives and concubines would have raised another horde of hungry mouths. Eventually a new war band would form and go off in search of plunder.**

The sagas also express this concept of raiding and returning home with wealth and honour. The Icelandic epic poem known as *Egil's saga* describes the cycle clearly. The saga was written in around 1220 CE and tells stories about the life of the possibly fictitious war poet Egil and those he interacted with during his life:

SOURCE 4.49 *Egil's saga*, chapter 1, quoted in W. C. Green, 'Egils saga Skallagrímssonar', 1893

> **But when Thorolf was twenty years old, then he made him ready to go a harrying. Kveldulf gave him a longship, and Kari of Berdla's sons, Eyvind and Aulvir, resolved to go on that voyage, taking a large force and another longship; and they roved the seas in the summer, and got them wealth, and had a large booty [treasure] to divide. For several summers they were out roving, but stayed at home in winter with their fathers. Thorolf brought home many costly things, and took them to his father and mother; thus, they were well-to-do both for possessions and honour.**

The Christian priest Dudo in Normandy, France wrote in 1020 CE that the Vikings left home because:

SOURCE 4.50 Christian priest Dudo, 1020 CE

> **these people who insolently abandon themselves to excessive indulgence, live in outrageous union with many women and there in shameless and unlawful intercourse breed innumerable children. Once they have grown up, the young quarrel violently with their fathers, or with each other, about property and riches, and if they increase too greatly in number and cannot acquire sufficient land to farm, a large group is selected by lottery. They are driven away to foreign lands so that they, by fighting, can gain themselves countries.**

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The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* written in England in 793 CE described the arrival of the Viking raiders in apocalyptic overtones:

SOURCE 4.51 *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* on the arrival of the Viking raiders

> **In this year came dreadful forewarnings over the land of Northumbria, terrifying the people most woefully: these were immense sheets of lightning and whirlwinds, and fiery dragons were seen flying through the sky. A great famine soon followed these signs and not long after in the same year, on the sixth day before the ides of January, the harrowing inroads of heathen men destroyed the church of God in Lindisfarne by robbery and slaughter.**

ACTIVITY **4.6**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Consider the nature of the Christian primary sources. What claims do the Christians make about the Vikings, and how are the Vikings depicted?
2. Suggest why these sources were hostile to the Vikings.

Conquest and kingdoms

Lightning-fast raids were the most common way that Vikings attacked for around the first 60 years of the Viking Age. Then, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* states that, in 851 CE, 'the heathen men stayed in Thanet over the winter'. This indicated a very significant shift in mentality by the Vikings and led to the development of conquests and settlements. Some Vikings also became successful at extorting vast payments to not attack.

The first recorded Viking attack on France was in 820 CE. Thirteen Viking ships tried to attack but were defeated by the French navy. They then tried to raid further south at the Seine River but failed again. However, they managed to get some valuable loot in Aquitaine.

Later, a new defense strategy was created: Viking leaders were given land around river mouths in exchange for protecting against other Vikings. This control over rivers also meant control over trade, making these Viking leaders very rich. These river mouths turned into Viking settlements, which were used as bases for further attacks.

By 843 CE, the Annals of St Bertin noted that Vikings were buying houses and settling in. In 845 CE, Viking settlers moved inland and looted Paris on Easter Sunday. King Charles the Bald paid them 2600 kg of silver to stop attacking, marking the first of many such payments. During this time, several Viking armies were active, and in 861 CE, King Charles promised a large sum of money to one Viking army to drive out another.

The British Isles experienced multiple Viking invasions and conquests. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* describes that in 865 CE, the Great Heathen Army composed of thousands of Vikings invaded and wintered in East Anglia. Battles between the English and the Vikings continued until the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Wessex, led by Alfred the Great, defeated the Great Heathen Army in 878 CE. After this a series of treaties and agreements formed a new balance of power in which the Vikings gained control over the north-eastern areas of England, which became known as the **Danelaw**.

Danelaw the area of England ruled by the Danish

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SOURCE 4.52 England under the Danelaw, c. 878 CE

ACTIVITY **4.7**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

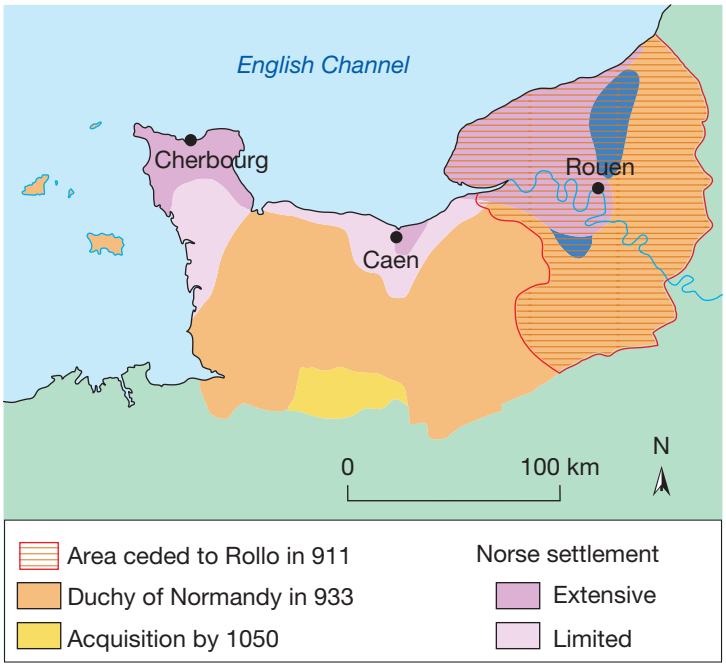
Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Describe the changes to Viking raids over time.
2. Suggest reasons for the Vikings choosing to conquer and settle rather than raid.
3. Conduct research into the Great Heathen Army.
   - **a.** Who led the army and why?
   - **b.** How large was the army?
   - **c.** What major battles did the army win?

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Conversion of the Vikings to Christianity

Something new and different becomes apparent around this time. Viking populations assimilated with the people they had conquered or ruled over. They adopted their languages, writing, customs and religions, such as the Normans in France and the Kievan Rus in Russia, in addition to the Vikings in north-east England, Scotland and Ireland.



SOURCE 4.53 Norse settlement in Normandy

They became Christian, and with the conversion of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden to Christianity in and by the eleventh century. The source material about Vikings changes from one of hostility to one of admiration.

SOURCE 4.54 Caitlin Ellis, 'Vikings didn't just murder monks and pillage monasteries – they helped spread Christianity too', *The Conversation*, 2019

> Vikings are often seen as heathen marauders mercilessly targeting Christian churches and killing defenceless monks. But this is only part of their story. The Vikings played a key role in spreading Christianity, too. Scandinavia converted to Christianity later than many parts of Europe, but this process is still an important part of the Vikings' real story. ... The conversion of Scandinavia was gradual with Christian missionaries preaching intermittently in Scandinavia from the eighth century. ... One of the most significant turning points in the Christianisation of Scandinavia was the conversion of the Danish king Harald Bluetooth in the 960s. ... Norway was converted largely due to two of its kings: Olaf Tryggvason and Olaf Haraldsson. The latter was canonised shortly after his death in battle in 1030AD, becoming Scandinavia's first native saint.

ACTIVITY 4.8

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Create a timeline of the conversion of Viking groups and leaders to Christianity.

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And finally, perhaps the best example of Viking transformation, is the creation of the Varangian Guard – the personal bodyguard of the Christian Byzantine emperors. The Varangian Guard was composed of Norsemen from Scandinavia, Varangians (eastern Vikings) from Russia/Ukraine (Kievan Rus) and, later, Anglo-Saxons from England. The Guard was officially formed under Emperor Basil II in 988 CE following the Christianisation of the Rus by Vladimir I of Kyiv. The eleventh century saw mass recruitment from Scandinavia, following its Christianisation. Harald Hardrada served in the Varangian Guard from 1034 to 1043, after fleeing Norway for Kyiv when his half-brother failed to take the throne. Harald became incredibly rich during his time in the Guard, to the point that he was able to return to Norway and become king. Then, after the Battle of Hastings in 1066, disenfranchised Anglo-Saxon nobles and warriors flocked to Constantinople.



SOURCE 4.55 Varangians – the Kievan Rus

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SOURCE 4.56 Depiction of the Varangian Guard in the eleventh-century chronicle of John Skylitzes

ACTIVITY **4.9**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

The following is a list of Christian Viking heroes, explorers and heathens. Conduct brief research on each group and find a primary source quote / source extract about them. For each group:

1. What patterns and connections can you make between them?
2. What do they have in common?
3. What (if any) differences exist between them?

Christian heroes
- Cnut
- Olaf Tryggvason
- Vladimir the Great
- Harald Bluetooth
- Sven Folkbeard
- Rollo
- Harald Hardrada

Explorers
- Eric the Red
- Leif Erikson
- Naddodd

Heathens
- Eric Bloodaxe
- Ragnar Lothbrok
- Bjorn Ironside
- Ivan the Boneless
- Ubba
- Halfdon Ragnaarsson

1066 and all that – the irony

The final Viking invasion of England came in 1066 when Harald Hardrada of Norway invaded England to claim the throne, following the death of King Edward the Confessor. Harold Godwinson, who had been elected as king by the Anglo-Saxon hierarchy, marched north with his army to Stamford Bridge, where he defeated and killed Hardrada in a long and bloody battle (see Source 4.57). King Harold then learnt that Duke William of Normandy had landed in Kent with his army to also claim the throne of England. Harold marched his army quickly back south for a final battle, which occurred at Hastings on 14 October 1066. King Harald was dead, King Harold was dead, and Duke William the Norman became the new king of England.

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The irony? William was the great-great-great-grandson of Rollo, a Viking, who invaded Normandy in 911 CE, and became a Christian and ruler over this part of northern France. The 'Northmen' became the 'Normans', and the land named after them. Thus, in a bizarre sort of way, the last successful invasion of England was another Viking one!

SOURCE 4.57 Snorri Sturlson, 'Saga of Harald Hardrade', *Heimskringla*

The Saga of Harald Hardrada is an Old Icelandic king's saga focusing on the career of King Haraldr Sigurðarson of Norway (Harald Hardrada). The Saga is attributed to Snorri Sturluson (1178/79–1241), an Icelandic historian, poet, and politician

95. OF THE BEGINNING OF THE BATTLE.

Now the battle began. The Englishmen made a hot assault upon the Northmen, who sustained it bravely. It was no easy matter for the English to ride against the Northmen on account of their spears; therefore they rode in a circle around them. And the fight at first was but loose and light, as long as the Northmen kept their order of battle; for although the English rode hard against the Northmen, they gave way again immediately, as they could do nothing against them. Now when the Northmen thought they perceived that the enemy were making but weak assaults, they set after them, and would drive them into flight; but when they had broken their shield-rampart the Englishmen rode up from all sides, and threw arrows and spears on them. Now when King Harald Sigurdson saw this, he went into the fray where the greatest crash of weapons was, and there was a sharp conflict, in which many people fell on both sides. King Harald then was in a rage, and ran out in front of the array, and hewed down with both hands; so that neither helmet nor armour could withstand him, and all who were nearest gave way before him. It was then very near with the English that they had taken to flight.

96. FALL OF KING HARALD.

King Harald Sigurdson was hit by an arrow in the windpipe, and that was his death-wound. He fell, and all who had advanced with him, except those who retired with the banner. There was afterwards the warmest conflict, and Earl Toste had taken charge of the king's banner. They began on both sides to form their array again, and for a long time there was a pause in fighting. But before the battle began again Harald Godwinson offered his brother, Earl Toste, peace, and also quarter to the Northmen who were still alive; but the Northmen called out, all of them together, that they would rather fall, one across the other, than accept of quarter from the Englishmen. Then each side set up a war-shout, and the battle began again.



ACTIVITY **4.10**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

What does Source 4.57 reveal about the nature of Viking culture and values?

a. Choose five of the most important quotes from the text.
b. Give reasons how and/or why you think they are important.
c. Rank these quotes from most to least in overall importance.

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Archaeology

One measure of Viking settlement is the archaeological remains. The oval brooch, a common item found in Viking settlements, was a popular piece of jewelry in Scandinavia. Its standardised design makes it easily recognisable, aiding archaeologists in identifying Viking activity. These brooches have been discovered in places like Norway, Denmark, Sweden, England, Scotland, Ireland, Iceland, and Russia. Measuring about 10–12 cm in length, they were mass-produced in Scandinavian workshops during the ninth and tenth centuries.



SOURCE 4.58 Viking brooch, c. 900 CE

ACTIVITY **4.11**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. What can archaeology tell modern historians about cultural influences?
2. Other than brooches, what other artefacts might archaeologists uncover that would reveal cultural influence?
3. Linguists also study the effect of invasions on language – research the effect of the Viking invasions on the English language. Create five main points that you believe are most important in the understanding of this section. Rank those points in order of importance. Give reasons for your prioritisation. Discuss with others in your group or class. Do they agree? Why or why not?

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CONCLUDING STUDY

4.6 The legacy of the Vikings

There have been significant re-evaluations, shifting interpretations and ways of thinking about the Vikings in recent years. While the majority of primary sources are hostile to the Vikings, not all are. It may have been easy to dismiss the Vikings purely as evil raiders sent by God to punish the Christians, but there is a lot more to the story.

The Vikings had runes, but little else in the way of written records. That means that most, if not all, of the written primary sources are from the enemies of the Vikings who possessed a written language – that is, the Christianised remnants of the Old Roman Empire – or are from the later Viking Age after most of the Vikings had been Christianised themselves. How might this information affect the historical 'truth' concerning the Vikings, and what role does archaeology have to play in confirming or negating the hostile view of the Vikings?

Modern professor of Scandinavian literature Lars Lonnroth argues that many of the early primary sources have created a highly biased view of the Vikings:

SOURCE 4.59 L. Lonnroth, 'The Vikings in history and legend', in P. Sawyer (ed.), *Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 225

> **The barbaric brutality of the Vikings was simply taken for granted ... particularly in Western Europe. The Arabs also saw the Scandinavians as barbarians, as can be seen from Ibn Fadlan's ... terrifying eyewitness account ... with its graphic descriptions of violence, filth, drunkenness, and offensive sexual behaviour.**

The British historian Peter Sawyer offers a similar argument, largely in agreement with Lars Lonnroth:

SOURCE 4.60 P. Sawyer, *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 250

> **Our knowledge of Viking activity in western Europe largely depends on texts written by churchmen. Archaeological evidence, coins, and place-names provide a great deal of additional information, much of it unobtainable in any other way, but that evidence is all the more instructive when set in the framework provided by the chroniclers, charters, laws and other texts produced in the churches and courts of the Christian west.**

When the Vikings attacked Lindisfarne (Holy Island), the Christian monk Simeon of Durham Priory recorded:

SOURCE 4.61 Simeon of Durham, *History of the Church of Durham*

> **They came ... to the church of Lindisfarne, and laid all waste with dreadful havoc, trod with unhallowed feet the holy places, dug up the altars and carried off all the treasures of the holy church. Some of the brethren they killed; some they carried off in chains; many they cast out, naked and loaded with insults; some they drowned in the sea.**

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Regino, the Christian abbot of Prüm Monastery, wrote in 892 CE:

SOURCE 4.62 Regino's Chronicle, 892 CE

> but when they went into the monastery they destroyed everything, killed some of the monks, slew most of the servants and led the rest away prisoners. When departing they entered the Ardennes, where they attack and without difficulty take a newly built fortress on a prominent mountaintop in which an innumerable amount of people had taken refuge; after having killed them all they return with immense booty to their fleet and sail with heavily laden ships and all their crew to the regions beyond the sea.

The Christian monk and historian Ermentarius of Noirmoutier recorded:

SOURCE 4.63 Ermentarius of Noirmoutier, 860 CE

> The number of ships grows; the endless stream of Vikings never ceases to increase.
>
> Everywhere the Christians are the victims of massacres, burnings, plunderings. The Vikings conquer all in their path and nothing resists them. They seize Bordeaux, Perigeux and Toulouse. Angiers, Tours and Orleans are annihilated and an innumerable fleet sails up the Seine River and the evil grows in the whole region. Rouen is laid waste, plundered and burned: Paris, Beauvais and Meaux taken.

The annals of Xanten, a French monastery, records that in the year 837 CE:

SOURCE 4.64 *Annals of Xanten*, 837 CE

> immense whirlwinds frequently erupted and a comet [Halley's Comet] had been seen with a great train of light in the east, and the pagans laid waste the Walcheren [an island in southern Holland] and abducted many captive women as well as an immense amount of various goods.

Not all primary sources were hostile to the Vikings; later Christian sources, in particular, demonstrated a shift in thinking. The Christian priest Adam of Bremen, writing in the eleventh century, notes:

SOURCE 4.65 Adam of Bremen, eleventh century

> but after the acceptance of Christianity, they have become imbued with better principles and have now learned to love peace and truth and to be content with their poverty; even to distribute what they have stored up and not as aforetime to gather up what was scattered ... of all men they are the most temperate, both in food and in their habits, loving above all things thrift and modesty.

The *Encomium Emmae Reginae* outlines the bravery of the Viking warriors who went with King Cnut to invade England in 1016:

SOURCE 4.66 *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, c. 1041

> None found among there was a slave, none a freed-man, none of low birth, none enfeebled by age, for all were noble, all strong in the power of maturity, all properly trained in any type of warfare, all of such fleetness that they despised the speed of cavalry.

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The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, despite being written by people being invaded by the Vikings, still contains a number of passages that praise the Vikings as heroic and strong warriors. An incident recorded at the Battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066 says:

SOURCE 4.67 *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*

> But there was one of the Norwegians who withstood the English folk so that they could not pass over the bridge and complete their victory. An Englishman aimed at him a javelin but it availed nothing. Then came another under the bridge who pierced him terribly inwards under the coat of mail.

While not condoning the raiding and slavery, the modern historian Winroth argues there was a positive economic impact of the Viking era:

SOURCE 4.68 A. Winroth, *The Age of the Vikings*, Princeton University Press, 2014, p. 126

> Although no exact statistics are available, it seems that Scandinavians and others who exported slaves, fur, and other articles to the Arab Caliphate and Byzantium rectified for some time the lopsided trade balance between Western Europe and the East, stopping or perhaps even reversing the flow of silver and gold that had been leaving the western economy. The influx strengthened the European stock of silver, the coinage, and thus commerce. It was during the Viking Age that the European economy slowly began to grow again, eventually, in the modern era, leading to Europe's economic, political, and cultural hegemony.

The modern historian Gwyn Jones offers a clear warning to historians trying to understand the Vikings and defies a Viking stereotype:

SOURCE 4.69 G. Jones, *A History of the Vikings*, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 348

> The temptation is strong to offer generalisations about the Viking himself, produce a 'typical' figure, and prop him against the museum wall with his catalogue number and descriptive label. It is a temptation to be resisted because of its limiting and misleading consequences. Harald Hardradi, who waged war from Asia Minor to Stamford Bridge for thirty-five years, was a Viking; so was his father Sigurd Sow, who stayed at home and counted haystacks. Hastein, who led the Great Army of the Danes into England in the early 890ss, was a Viking; so too was Ottar, who came peaceably to his lord king Alfred's court with walrus tusks and lessons in northern geography. The men who destroyed churches in England, Ireland, and France were Vikings; so too were the woodcarvers of Osberg and the metalworkers of Mammen. The men who said 'With law shall the land be built up and with lawlessness wasted away' were Vikings; so were the practisers and curtailers of blood-feud, the profitmakers and those who robbed them of profit, the explorers and colonisers, the shapers of verse-forms and makers of legend.

The modern Danish archaeologist Else Roesdahl uses artefacts to tell a very different story about the Vikings that does not fit the typical berserker raider image. She claims that the majority of Viking men had well-groomed hair that was combed regularly. Many wore long moustaches and partial beards (not full around the face), and archaeological remains of nail cleaners, tweezers and washing bowls have been found.

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Traces of wear on skeletal teeth show that toothpicks were commonly used. The Spanish Arab At-Tartushi, who visited Hededy in the tenth century, recorded that both men and women used artificially produced eye makeup (likely mascara). A thirteenth-century English chronicler, John of Wallingford, related that earlier sources explained Viking men's success at seducing English women as due to their bathing, combing their hair and being handsomely dressed:

SOURCE 4.70 *The Chronicle of John of Wallingford*, c. 1225–1250

> The Danes, thanks to their habit of combing their hair every day, of bathing every Saturday, and regularly changing their clothes, were able to undermine the virtues of married women and even seduce the daughters of nobles to be their mistresses. Surviving Viking clothes are often made of very rich fabrics, decorated in jewellery and quite complex in ways that were considered highly attractive. An Englishman Aelfric wrote a *Letter to Brother Edward* which gives the impression that the Vikings were dandies and innovators of fashion. It warns that people should not indulge in the 'Danish fashion of bared necks and blinded eyes' (shaved neck and long fringe covering the eyes).



SOURCE 4.71 Tenth-century Viking comb



SOURCE 4.72 The Jelling beaker, 800–1050 CE

ACTIVITY **4.12**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. Create a table that shows which sources speak positively of the Vikings and which sources do not.
2. Evaluate the sources with a specific focus on their bias, authorship, time and context.
3. Decide how the Vikings should be remembered. Engage in a class discussion in which you justify your decision with evidence.

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- The Viking Age began with raids on England.
- Raiding was a way of life for Viking communities for hundreds of years.
- The sagas are excellent sources but need to be treated with caution.
- Excellent shipbuilding combined with seafaring skills were essential to success in the Viking Age.
- Viking weapons and armour were highly effective.
- Many of the Christian and Muslim primary sources are hostile to the Vikings.
- Berserker warriors, if they existed, were incredibly fierce.
- There is evidence for female Viking warriors; however, there is also scholarly debate about their existence.
- The Viking Age ended in 1066 at the Battle of Hastings.



SOURCE 4.73 A modern interpretation of a Viking ship in rough seas

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
Explain the roles played by different social classes within Viking society.

DEVISE
Devise an overarching inquiry question and three sub-questions for an investigation into the impacts of the Vikings on medieval Europe.

ANALYSE
Consider three primary sources in this chapter written by medieval Christian authors. Determine their perspective on the Vikings and support your response with evidence.

EVALUATE
Evaluate the degree to which the sagas are useful and reliable for understanding Viking history.

SYNTHESISE
To what extent was technology primarily responsible for the Vikings' success in raiding?

COMMUNICATE
Create a response to the argument that the Viking Age was essential for creating trade connections between Europe and the Middle East.

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions
1. Evaluate the effect of the Viking raids on Europe.
2. To what extent are modern views on the Vikings misinformed by Christian sources?
3. Analyse the advantages that Viking weapons and warfare gave Viking invaders.

Investigation tasks
1. Devise a series of questions that will allow you to investigate the relationship between the Vikings and Arabs.
2. Research the Viking settlements in northern America. What were the most significant factors in the Vikings' failure to build permanent settlements there?
3. Compare and contrast the major types of Viking weapons by constructing a list of advantages and disadvantages of the different armour types worn by Vikings.
4. Investigate the connections between the Vikings and Christianity.
   a. A theory exists about Viking expansion and violence, that it was a reaction to the growth of Frankish power and forced conversion of the Saxons by King Charlemagne to Christianity. How valid do you think this theory is?
   b. What role did Christianity play in ending the Viking Age?
5. Many societies have their own history wrapped around oral traditions and stories. Debate the notion that 'oral history, while useful in understanding cultural identity, cannot be considered as reliable historical evidence'.

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Chapter 5

SPARTA (900–371 BCE)

Syllabus reference: Unit 1, Topic 2: Features of ancient societies

ALAN BARRIE WITH
RASHNA TARAPOREWALLA

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What types of sources are important for developing an understanding of the Ancient World?
- What issues of evidence are important to consider when investigating the Ancient World?
- How does archaeological evidence contribute to an understanding of the Ancient World?

(Adapted from Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 5.1 Jean-Jacques-Francois Le Barbier, *A Spartan woman giving a shield to her son*, 1826

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FOCUS: WHAT IS LACONOPHILIA?

The imagination of 'Sparta' in today's world is simply that – imagined! Its popualistic, modern-day representation is far removed from historical accuracy, and has been throughout the twentieth century, as Myke Cole discusses:

SOURCE 5.2 Myke Cole, 'The Sparta fetish is a cultural cancer', *The New Republic*, 1 August 2019

Ancient Sparta's influence is all around us, providing a litany of patron saints for spectacular last stands. There's a word for this mania in Western cultures: laconophilia, taken from **Laconia**, the region the Spartans hailed from. Most of us have never heard of laconophilia, even as we live in a world so dramatically shaped by it, but it has a hand in everything from the French Revolution to the British educational system to the Ivy League to the Israeli Kibbutz movement. There are at least 39 municipalities named after Sparta in America alone [...] How did the Spartans, who ceased to be a real political force more than 2100 years ago, come to hold such a widespread, and increasingly pernicious, influence on contemporary society? ... We are entirely reliant on second- and third-hand accounts of who the Spartans were. The fetishization of the exotic impacts every outsider's perspective, and contemporaneous writers, from Herodotus to Xenophon to Aristotle, all had a breathless, almost fanboyish fascination with Sparta. ... Laconophilia marched on throughout Western arts and letters, and always on the same theme—praising the Spartans' legendary selflessness, restraint, and devotion to duty. ... [The] legendary Jean-Jacques Rousseau, practically drooled over Sparta's myth, praising 'that city as famous for its happy ignorance as for the wisdom of its laws, whose virtues seemed so much greater than those of men that it was a Republic of demi-gods rather than of men.'

... Spartan admiration unmistakably turned malignant in the late-nineteenth century with the advent of scientific racism. ... It is not surprising that Adolf Hitler saw in Sparta 'the first völkisch state' and gushed about the ancient city-state's legendary eugenics: 'The exposure of the sick, weak, deformed children, in short, their destruction, was more decent and in truth a thousand times more human than the wretched insanity of our day which preserves the most pathological subject.' ... [T]he Spartan myth is a powerful catalyst, both for racist vanguards and the political machines that cater to them. Laconophilia alone cannot fully explain the Trumpist vision of a sealed, homogenized, and militarized America, but it explains a lot. Steve Bannon—the alt-right pioneer so instrumental to the rise of Trump as an avatar for nativist hopes—loves classical war literature and is an avid fan of Thucydides's history.

Laconia the territory around Sparta's city centre

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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

This context study will provide you with a general understanding of Spartan history by looking at key issues, sources, and geographical and chronological features.

5.1 When and where did the events of Ancient Sparta take place?

TABLE 5.1 A list of key dates

c. 900 BCE	Sparta is founded
756	*Ephor* list begins
743–724	The First Messenian War
669	Defeat by Argos at the Battle of Hysiae
550	Beginning of the Peloponnesian League
480–479	Spartan involvement in Persian Wars
478	Recall of Pausanias
464	Earthquake and helot revolt
457	The Battle of Tanagra
457–445	War with Athens
431–404	The Peloponnesian War
425	Surrender at Sphacteria
424–422	Brasidas in Thrace
421	Peace of Nicias
413	Occupation of Decelea
412	Sparta defeats Athens
371	Battle of Leuctra

Sparta, a prominent city-state in ancient Greece, (then known as **Lacedaemonia** or Lacedaemon) was located in the region of Laconia on the Eurotas River, which was the source of fresh water. Mountains provided natural defences – to the west was the Taÿgetus range and the Parnon range lay to the east. The Arcadian covered northern routes to the city. In addition, Sparta possessed a natural harbour at Gytheion. Sparta had no walls and no **acropolis**, and the temple of Athena Chalkioikos was the main religious building.

Lacedaemonia the name of the city of Sparta from late antiquity to the nineteenth century

acropolis a Greek city's strong vantage point, citadel

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SOURCE 5.3 Map of southern Peloponessus

5.2 How do we know about Sparta today?

The modern enquirer who seeks to reconstruct any aspect of Spartan society is faced with a formidable challenge. The Spartans were renowned for their reticence and isolationist customs. They disclosed little to foreigners about their customs and practices, and while an oral tradition may have been strong in Sparta, they were reluctant to document their own history and institutions. There is no extant work by a Spartan historian or biographer, and with the exception of some fragmentary verse from the seventh-century poets Alcman and Tyrtaeus and a small epigraphic record, Spartan voices are silent on most issues.

Yet the problem is not one of a lack of sources on Sparta. As the ***polis*** held a fascination for ancient writers and was regarded as unique and exceptional, we possess various accounts of Spartan society written by non-Spartan and non-contemporary authors.

***polis* (pl. *poleis*)** politically independent Greek city-state, which consisted of the city and its defensible acropolis and the surrounding land, usually farming land

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Unfortunately, the interest in Sparta that led to a proliferation of writings about the *polis* also had a distorting effect. Non-Spartan writers were prone to approach the *polis* as a curiosity or else as a social model to be avoided or emulated.

In consequence, the modern enquirer should always draw upon evidence from the sources in a critical way. When attempting to reconstruct life in Ancient Sparta before the Battle of Leuctra, remain aware of the following problems and issues:

- Most information is documented in the ancient sources without chronological references. In some instances, the authors refer to a golden past of Sparta, when society functioned in the way that they describe, and note that Spartans in their own day no longer live up to the ideal of the past. Historians are left pondering whether the version of Sparta they describe ever existed in reality.
- The Spartans were highly xenophobic and practised *xenelasia*, whereby magistrates could expel any person deemed a threat to public order or morals. Foreigners were generally not permitted to live in the environs of Sparta, though some exceptions were made, such as Xenophon. Few non-Spartans would have access to the inner workings of the private lives of the Spartan family.
- Ancient writers tended to comment on the unusual, interesting and sensational aspects of Spartan society. We may rightly suspect that there was much about Spartan life that would have seemed ordinary and 'normal' to any Ancient Greek and which thus was not recorded.
- The Ancient Greeks tended to organise their thoughts into polarised categories such as Greek vs Barbarian and male vs female. In particular, Spartan society was viewed as diametrically opposed to that of Athens, and differences between the two tended to be emphasised and exaggerated. Both were exceptional city-states, and it would be misguided to recognise one as more 'typical' than the other. However, as evidence is most abundant for these two city-states, modern scholars are equally guilty of reinforcing this comparison.
- The main focus of most writers was the impact of an interventionist state upon the functioning of society; on many issues, such as ordinary family life and relationships, nothing was written.
- The types of sources that can be used to reconstruct the family in Athens are not available for Sparta: vase painting, tomb sculpture, epitaphs, laws and courtroom speeches delivered in cases of family disputes, and portrayals of family life in comedy and tragedy.
- Almost no archaeological evidence has been uncovered relating to the private life of Spartans.
- Almost all evidence concerns the upper class, and no information is available relating to families of the ***perioikoi*** or **helots**.

perioikoi 'the dwellers round about'; communities of free people occupying land in Laconia and Messenia granted them by the Spartan state in exchange for military service

helot local inhabitants of Laconia and Messenia, owned by the Spartan state and required to work for its citizens in total subjection; they might on occasion be freed for military service

Many mistaken notions about Sparta and its society have arisen through an uncritical acceptance of the information provided by problematic ancient sources. The case of Sparta highlights that while a principal task of the classical historian is to reconstruct the past, their role equally involves admitting when adequate evidence for plausible reconstruction is lacking, and dispelling myths that can be dangerous in the wrong hands. The past can be, and has been, abused by those with their own agenda.

Greek writers' views of Sparta

Most of our information about the way of life of the Spartans derives from two key authors: the Athenian philosopher and Laconophile Xenophon, and the moralising biographer Plutarch. However, there were other Greek authors who also wrote about Sparta, focusing on a range of different aspects.

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Herodotus mainly refers to Spartan foreign policy and was critical of aspects of its constitution. He wrote in detail on the key battles of the Persian wars that involved Sparta – Thermopylae, Plataea and Mycale. He was writing for an Athenian audience in the latter half of the fifth century when relations with Sparta had deteriorated.

Thucydides's *History of the Peloponnesian War* details the conflict between Athens and Sparta in 433–411 BCE. Main thematic elements are the causes, course and conduct of the war (Athenian perspective), Spartan foreign policy, and Thucydides's admiration for Spartan governance.

Xenophon's *The Hellenica* continues on from where Thucydides finished in 411 BCE, through to the end of the war in 404 BCE. He also writes about the constitution and Spartan society. He is an admirer of the Spartans, and provides details of the Spartan military system, social customs and laws.

Pausanias was basically a travel writer in the second century BCE. His descriptions provide details on Spartan customs and constitutional arrangements. He notes important features of geography and structures.

Aristotle criticises the Spartans. Helots rebel; women have too much influence; the magistrates (***ephors***) are irresponsible; wealth is unequal, and **Spartiates** evade taxes. The Spartans know no other arts than war. They are conservative and lack forward thinking.

Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus* (late first century CE) includes extracts from the now lost works of the Spartan poet Tyrtaeus. He writes about Spartan political and social structures and gives a critical view of Lycurgus's role in them.

ephor one of five officials elected each year; possessed powers – even over the king – and took a leading role in the state's affairs; could not be re-elected

Spartiate full Spartan citizens through birth, successful completion of the agoge and election to a mess

Alcman (seventh century BCE) is one of the few literary sources we have from Sparta. He wrote six books of choral poetry, most of which have not survived but appear in quotations from other ancient authors and on fragmentary papyri discovered in Egypt.

ACTIVITY **5.1**



Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Do some further research to complete the table regarding each author as a source on Sparta.

Author	Date	Key works relating to Sparta	Genre and purpose	Strengths	Limitations
Alcman					
Herodotus					
Xenophon					
Aristotle					
Plutarch					
Pausanius					
Thucydides					

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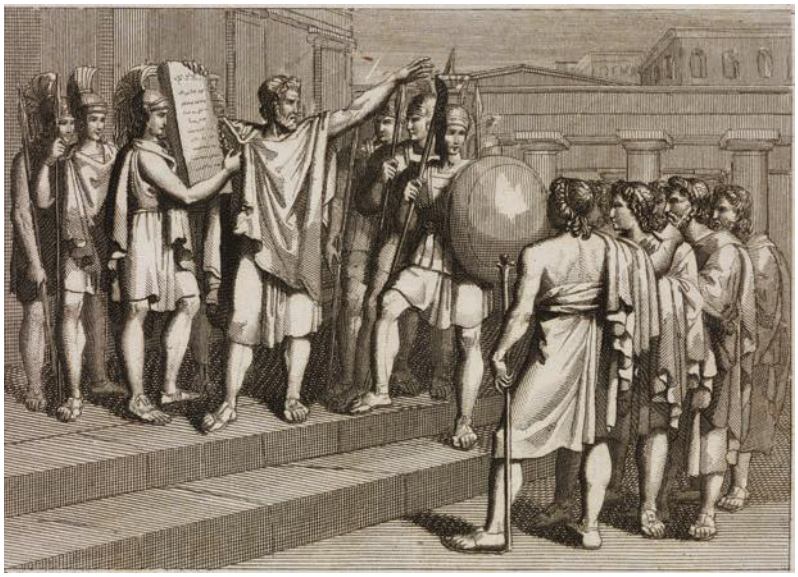
Lycurgus and the Spartan Constitution

A significant problem encountered by social historians of Sparta is that many ancient writers so greatly admired Spartan ideals that what emerges from their writings is a vision of a utopian society that may never have existed, a phenomenon some modern scholars refer to as the 'Spartan mirage'. Fundamental to this utopian vision of Sparta was the figure of Lycurgus. Xenophon's *Constitution of the Spartans* was intended as a pamphlet in praise of Sparta's customs as established by Lycurgus, and can be credited as a significant influence in shaping the Spartan mirage. It should be noted, however, that Xenophon also criticised contemporary Spartans for failing to live up to the Lycurgan ideals.

Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus* also presents Sparta as an exceptionally well-ordered and changeless society, and idealises the Sparta of some 700 years before the time the author was writing. One of Plutarch's central concerns is the loss of virtue, and Sparta served to illustrate this theme.

By the time Herodotus was writing in the fifth century BCE, tradition credited Lycurgus as the architect of the social and political institutions underpinning this system. According to this tradition, Lycurgus received a series of reforms from the Delphic oracle, which he brought to the Spartans as the Great **Rhetra** or law. The variety of historical contexts provided for Lycurgus and his reforms in the ancient sources suggests that he was in fact a mythical figure, and most modern scholars doubt the existence of such a historical individual. It is noteworthy that the seventh-century poet Tyrtaeus refers to the Great Rhetra, but not to Lycurgus. It is nevertheless convenient to speak of the system as 'Lycurgan'.

rhetra oracle or law



SOURCE 5.4 A likely mythical Lycurgus giving his laws to people of Sparta, as engraved by Persichini, c. 1834 CE

Whether or not Lycurgus was an actual person or a retrospective fabrication to give legitimacy to reforms, historians accept that at some point in their history, probably in the late seventh century, the Spartans came to organise their state in such a way as to emphasise the importance and centrality of civic duty and martial prowess.

SOURCE 5.5 Xenophon, *Constitution of the Spartans,* 1.1–4

> I was thinking that Sparta among cities of few citizens proved to be the most powerful and famous, and I wondered in what way this had come about. When, however, I thought about the Spartans' way of life, I no longer wondered. I admired Lycurgus, their lawgiver, whose laws they were fortunate in obeying, and I think him extremely wise. He did not imitate other cities, but thinking the opposite of most, he made his country outstandingly fortunate.

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SOURCE 5.6 Xenophon, *Constitution of the Spartans*, 14

If someone should ask me whether I think that the laws of Lycurgus still remain unchanged at this time, I certainly could not state that with any confidence at all. For I know that at one time the **Lacedaemonians** very much preferred to live together at home rather than be corrupted by flattery as governors of cities. And I know also that at one time they were afraid to acknowledge that they had gold, whereas now they pride themselves on their possessions. Previously there was the banishment of foreigners, and it was forbidden to go abroad and I realise that the purpose of this was so that the citizens would not be filled with laziness through contact with foreigners. Now I know for certain that they aim to never cease ruling as governors of foreign lands.

Lacedaemonian inhabitant of Sparta and surrounding area

SOURCE 5.7 Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 1.1–3

In general nothing can be said about Lycurgus that is not disputed, because there are different accounts of his birth, his death, his travels and what he did in making laws and political arrangements, but there is the least agreement among historians about the time period in which he lived … All the same, even though this is such a confused history, we will try to produce a clear presentation of Lycurgus by following those accounts that offer the fewest contradictions or by following the most distinguished authorities.

ACTIVITY **5.2**



Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Read Source 5.5.
   a. What indications are there in this passage that Xenophon considered the Spartan society established by Lycurgus as a model to be emulated? Select the best evidence from the source to support your answer.
   b. How might this perspective influence the reliability of Xenophon's writings on Spartan society?
2. Read Source 5.6.
   a. Does Xenophon believe that the Spartans of his own time (fourth century BCE) lived up to the ideal set by Lycurgus? Select the best evidence from the source to support your answer.
   b. Why might Xenophon's comments lead scholars to question whether the Spartans ever conformed to the Lycurgan laws?
3. Read Source 5.7.
   a. What problems does Plutarch identify in his *Life of Lycurgus*?
   b. What are the two principles that Plutarch states will guide his selection of material for the *Life of Lycurgus*?
   c. Plutarch paired his *Life of Lycurgus* with Numa Pompilius, one of the early kings of Rome and a great reformer. What might this indicate about the way Plutarch viewed Lycurgus?
   d. If Lycurgus ever existed at all, then Plutarch was writing at least 700 years after his death. What problems might you anticipate in using his *Life of Lycurgus* as evidence for the way of life adopted by the Spartans?
4. Based upon these sources, what considerations must the ancient historian keep in mind when reading about social institutions or practices credited to Lycurgus?

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DEPTH STUDY

5.3 Society and culture

Spartiates *(homoioi)* were the elite group of full citizens, males over 30 years. Citizenship was only achieved after successful completion of education and training in the ***agoge*** and acceptance as a member of a military mess. This warrior class was supported by the state with an allotment of land (***kleros***) and state-owned helots to work it. They were forbidden to participate in farming, trade and industry and lived by a strict code of honour; unacceptable conduct could lead to an individual's *atimia* (loss of honour).

agoge 'a raising/upbringing', Spartan education

kleros (**pl. *kleroi***) an allotment of land

Messenia the fertile territory over the mountains to the west of Sparta

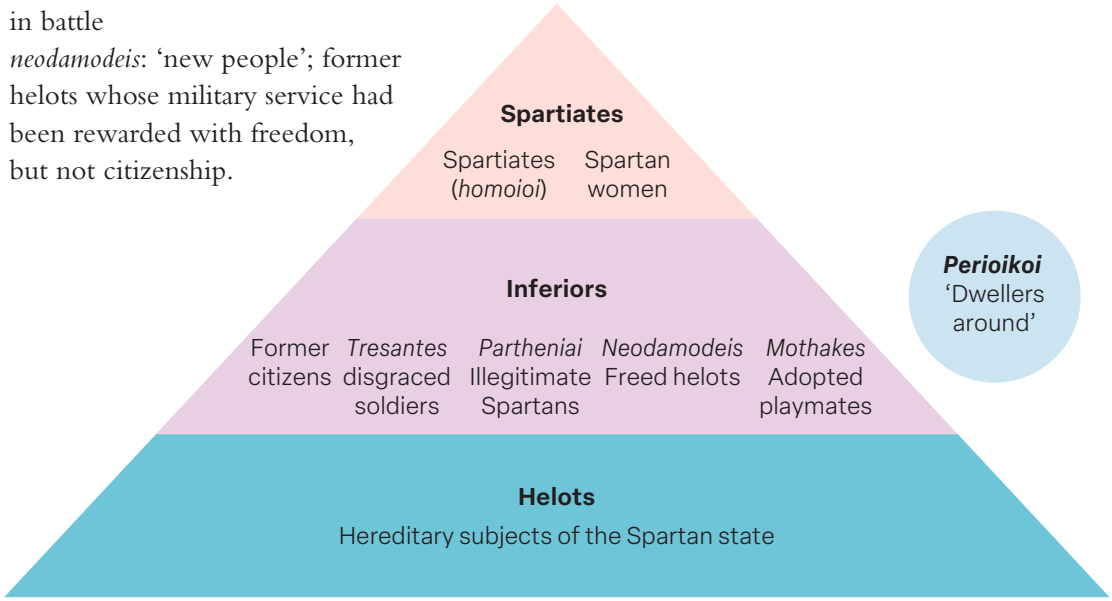
krypteia secret police

Helots were the inhabitants of Laconia and **Messenia**. They were state-slaves, with no political or legal rights, and could not marry or travel without Spartan approval. They lived in constant fear of being beaten or killed by the ***krypteia*** (secret police). Indeed, Sparta was essentially a police state, designed to subdue the helots (perhaps 90 per cent of the populous). Fear of a helot revolt dominated Spartan foreign policy, so they were reluctant to send their army outside of the Peloponnese for a substantial period of time.

Perioikoi were non-helot inhabitants of Laconia, occupying the area surrounding the city of Sparta. Little is written about this group in antiquity. They were autonomous and free, but without full citizen rights in Spartan society, and were obligated to fight within the Spartan army under a Spartan commander. Permitted to handle money and precious metals, they were an essential part of the Spartan economic system as traders, fishermen, sailors, manufacturers and craftsmen. They paid taxes to the Spartan state, and could be convicted by a Spartan magistrate for crimes.

Inferiors were Spartans who were neither *perioikoi* nor helots:

- *mothakes*: playmates of Spartan boys; participated in the *agoge* but did not become citizens
- *partheniai*: perhaps the offspring of illegitimate unions between Spartan women and helots
- *tresantes*: those who had shown cowardice in battle
- *neodamodeis*: 'new people'; former helots whose military service had been rewarded with freedom, but not citizenship.



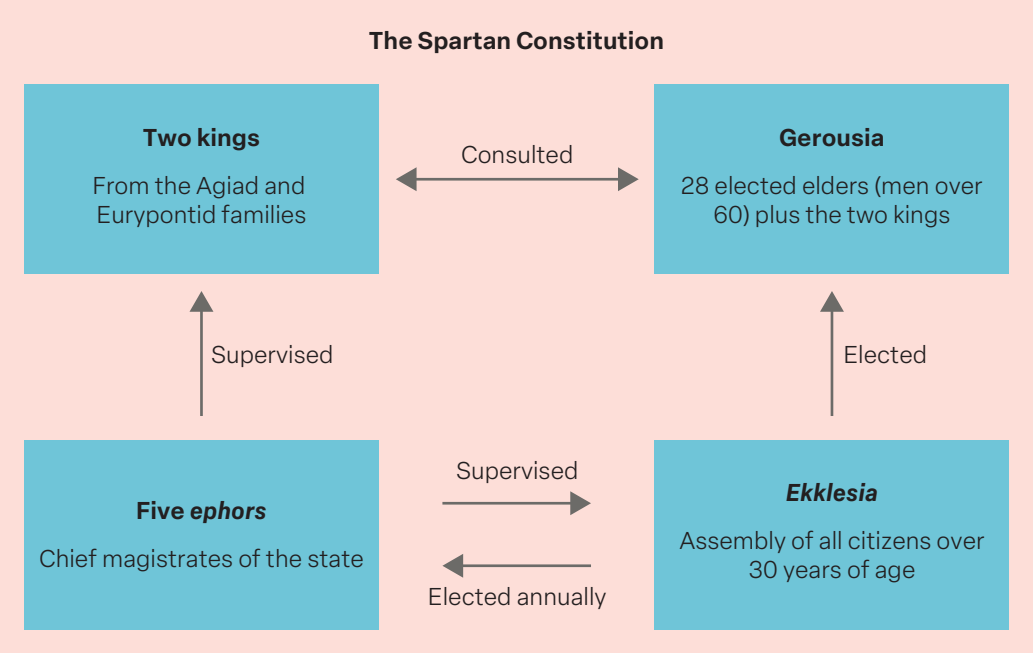
SOURCE 5.8 Spartan society, adapted from P. Bradley, *Ancient Greece: Using Evidence*, 1988, p. 59

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5.4 Spartan politics

According to tradition, the Spartans changed their constitution in the seventh century in accordance with an oracle from the god Apollo at Delphi received by the lawgiver, Lycurgus. They referred to this oracle as the Great Rhetra. Modern scholars doubt the veracity of this tradition and recognise that the Spartan political institutions most likely evolved over time into this 'mixed' constitution, which combined elements of monarchy, oligarchy and democracy.



SOURCE 5.9 The Spartan Constitution, adapted from P. Bradley, *The Ancient World Transformed*, 2014, p. 82

5.5 The Spartan family

Oikos and *polis*

Aristotle observed at the beginning of his work *Politics* (1.1.3-6) that in order to understand the different characteristics of each state, it is essential first to examine the unique features of the smallest unit within a community. It was the ***oikos*** (plural *oikia*), and not the individual, which represented the most fundamental social and economic unit in most Greek *poleis*. Though the standard translation of the term *oikos* is 'family', the Greeks used the word to refer to a composite of the family, the dwelling in which they lived, their land, livestock, property and goods, including slaves. The primary focus of every member of the *oikos* was the social standing, preservation and economic self-sufficiency of the household, and it was the basic social unit of production, consumption and reproduction. A person could not be identified as a citizen within a *polis* unless first accepted as a member of an *oikos*. The household was at the core of a person's identity, existence and concerns.

oikos house, household

Ancient Greek society was monogamous, and the nuclear family at the centre of the *oikos* consisted of a father, mother and their children. Greek society was also patriarchal and patrilineal. The master of the *oikos* and head of the family was the *kyrios*, who was always a male member of the household. Descent was traced through the father. Upon death, a man's property was divided equally among his sons. Daughters received their share of the estate indirectly, as part of a wedding dowry. New brides relocated from their *oikos* of birth to that of their husband, and any children belonged to the husband's *oikos*.

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The Spartan ***oikos***

In presenting their account of Spartan society, writers both ancient and modern suggest that the *polis* intervened in the affairs of the *oikos* to such a degree that the family was largely marginalised. The *oikos* was entirely subsumed by and subject to the interests of the *polis*. Model Spartans gave their loyalty primarily to the State at the expense of the family, and the authority of the *kyrios* was diminished. The traditional *oikos* was replaced by an artificial family at the level of the State, with all citizens as brothers and fathers.

A range of twentieth and twenty-first century historians comment on the Spartan family.

SOURCE 5.10 S. B. Pomeroy, *Families in Classical and Hellenistic Greece: Representations and Realities*, Clarendon Press, 1997, p. 48

> **... there were two versions of the Spartan family, one artificial, the other consisting of people actually related by blood or marriage. At Sparta the public version was shaped by legislation attributed to Lycurgus, a legendary figure who was said to have created the social institutions that are distinctively Spartan ... The Spartan lawgiver emphasized communal responsibilities, and usurped family terminology and imagery with the purpose of strengthening bonds among members of the larger group ... Lycurgus organized the Spartans into one artificial family ... in this pseudo-family, marriage and parenthood existed primarily for the purpose of reproducing healthy warriors for the good of the state.**

SOURCE 5.11 C. B. Patterson, *The Family in Greek History*, Harvard University Press, 1998, p. 74

> **All the traditional responsibilities of the oikos and its members would seem ... to be usurped by the Lycurgan polis as portrayed by Xenophon and elaborated by Plutarch ... Lycurgan Spartan as depicted by Plutarch was undeniably hostile to, and disruptive of, the interests and traditional relationships of the Greek household. This conclusion, however ... [is] heavily dependent upon the mythologizing perspective of historically remote sources, for whom Sparta was more of a cause celebre or a philosophical paradigm than a historical community.**

SOURCE 5.12 P. Oliva, *Sparta and her Social Problems*, Hakkert, 1971, p. 28

> **It is well known that the family was not considered as important in Sparta as in the other Greek states, a fact which is usually explained by the special education given to young people and the military way of life of the Spartan men.**

SOURCE 5.13 A. Powell, *Athens and Sparta: Constructing Greek Political and Social History from 478 BC*, Routledge, 1988, p. 228

> **It seems that model Spartans did not love their families; they loved the State.**

SOURCE 5.14 R. Kulesza, 'The Spartan family', EOS C 2013, fasc. 2, 2013, p. 207

> **According to many scholars in Sparta the family was marginalized ... The evidence does not support these opinions. They originate from the general vision of relationships in (fabulous) Sparta, not from the analysis of source material. In fact family ties played an absolutely vital role in (historical) Sparta ... a 'model Spartan' did not suffer from a conflict of loyalties; he loved the Family as much as the State.**

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ACTIVITY **5.3**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Use Sources 5.10–5.14 to create a historical paragraph of three or four sentences that supports the following statement: 'The State or Sparta was of far more importance that its citizens'. Within these sentences, you must combine quotes from each of the sources.

5.6 The lives of women in Ancient Sparta

Marriage

An *oikos* was created when a man and woman joined together in marriage. According to Plutarch, men who chose to remain bachelors were dishonoured through exclusion from the Gymnopedia, a festival where nude youth paraded before the rest of the community and potential spouses (*Life of Lycurgus*, 15.1).

By Greek standards, Spartan women married relatively late. While in Athens it was common for a 14-year-old girl to marry a 30-year-old man, Spartan women were about 18 when they married, and men were probably at least 20. Both Xenophon and Plutarch emphasised that in Sparta, the primary function of marriage was to produce healthy babies and increase the number of Spartiates.

Spartan marriage customs seemed strange to other Greeks, and for this reason, attracted a good deal of attention. Plutarch describes a practice of 'bride capture' (*harpage*) involving transvestism and a secret marriage. According to Aristotle (*Poltics,* 1270b 1-4), men who produced three or four sons were granted exemptions from military service and taxation by the State.

SOURCE 5.15 Xenophon, *Spartan Constitution*, 1.5-6, 7-10; Pomeroy, 2002, p. 40

[Lycurgus] saw, too, that during the time immediately following marriage, it was usual elsewhere for husbands to have unlimited intercourse with wives. He decreed the opposite of this: for he ruled that the husband should be embarrassed to be seen visiting his wife or leaving her. Thus the desire for intercourse was more fervent in both of them, and if there should be a child, it would be more sturdy than if they were satiated with one another. In addition to this, he took away from men the right to take a wife whenever they wanted to, and ordered that they marry in their prime, believing that this too was conducive to the production of fine children.

SOURCE 5.16 Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 15. 1, 3-7; Pomeroy, 2002, p. 40

[Lycurgus] decreed that those who did not marry would lose a civic right, for they were excluded from the spectacle of the Gymnopaidiai ['Nude Youth'] ... [The Spartans] used to marry by capture, not when the women were small or immature, but when they were in their prime and fully ripe for it. The so-called 'bridesmaid' took the captured girl. She 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, having dined with his mess group, then would slip in, untie 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 with the other young men.

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Women and children

The primary productive role of all Greek women was to produce offspring for the perpetuation of the *oikos*. For Spartan women, living in a militaristic society outnumbered by an oppressed helot population, procreation was a civic obligation. As the future mothers of soldiers, the State prescribed that Spartan girls and women engage in regular exercise outdoors and were well nourished. State intervention in the upbringing of girls was an unusual aspect of Spartan society, and as such was described by both Xenophon and Plutarch.



SOURCE 5.17 Small bronze statue from Prizren or Dodona, 520–500 BCE, British Museum

SOURCE 5.18 Xenophon, *Constitution of the Spartans*, 1.3–8

First, to begin at the beginning, I will take the begetting of children. In other states the girls who are destined to become mothers and are brought up in the approved fashion, live on the very plainest fare, with a most meagre allowance of delicacies. Wine is either witheld altogether, or, if allowed them, is diluted with water. The rest of the Greeks expect their girls to imitate the sedentary life that is typical of handicraftsmen – to keep quiet and do wool-work. How, then, is it to be expected that women so brought up will bear fine children?

According to Plutarch, the State also intervened in decisions regarding whether a newborn son would be accepted within the household, a right elsewhere reserved for a Greek father. There was no latitude for weakness within Spartan society. Male infants would be assessed by the *ephors*, government representatives appointed to determine the child's vitality in terms of his potential as a **hoplite**. Female infants, it appears, were exempt from the process. Those deemed worthy were presented to Artemis, and reared at home by their mothers and nurses for their first six years. Plutarch informs us that Spartan babies continued to be subjected to tests of strength: washed in wine to test whether they were epileptic, denied swaddling clothes and forbidden from being fussy eaters or afraid of the dark.

hoplite heavily armed foot soldier

Infants who did not conform to the Spartan ideal were left to die at the place of rejection known euphemistically as the *Apothetai* (place of deposits) below Mt Tayegtos. It is important to note that infanticide and exposure were not unique to Sparta, and mass deposits of unwanted infants have been uncovered in Athens. However, Martha L. Rose has recently questioned the widely held assumption that all infants born with visible impairments were exposed in the Greco-Roman world. Certainly, in the case of Sparta, no archaeological evidence for the practice has as yet been uncovered. While archaeologists found a large deposit of skeletal remains at Kaiadas, the chasm of Mt Taygetos, they did not find bones of infants or children. Rather, the pit appears to have been used for the disposal of the remains of Spartan traitors, enemies and those convicted of serious crimes.

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SOURCE 5.19 Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 16.1-2

The father of a newborn baby did not have the power to decide whether to rear it, but carried it to a certain place called a meeting-place (*lesche*), where the eldest of his fellow-tribesmen sat. They examined the infant, and if it was sturdy and robust, they told him to rear it, and allocated it one of the 9000 lots of land. But, if it was weak and deformed, they sent it off to the so-called Place of Exposure (Apothetai), a place like a pit by Mount Taygetos, considering it better for both the child itself and the city that what was not properly formed with a view to health and strength right from the very beginning should not live.

Education and child-rearing

According to the image of Sparta presented by Xenophon and Plutarch, in an effort to produce a society of invincible warriors, Lycurgus usurped the role traditionally ascribed to the father in other Greek *poleis*, giving responsibility for the decisions relating to raising children to the State. Education and upbringing were left not to the discretion of the head of the *oikos*, but to the *polis*. The lawgiver was attributed with the creation of a rigorous education system based upon age groups, referred to by the Hellenistic period as the *agoge* ('bringing up' or 'training'). The overall aim was to train boys in courage and endurance and to inculcate obedience and loyalty.

The *agoge,* as described by the ancient authors, replaced familial life with life focused upon the State. At the age of seven, Spartan boys were expected to leave their *oikos* and submit to the authority of a State-appointed official, the *paidonomos* (master of the boys). Aided by a group of assistants armed with whips, the *paidonomos* oversaw the upbringing of boys and enforced regulations through harsh discipline. Other citizens could also intervene when they observed a child misbehaving. Within the *agoge*, boys underwent a strict training program that lasted for the next 13 years. Boys were arranged into units (*agelai*) and progressed through a range of age-defined categories as they transitioned through the various changes from childhood to adolescence to adulthood. As boys grew older, the intensity of their training increased until, at the age of 20 with their education complete, they became men.

Mothers of soldiers

A stereotypical representation of a Spartan mother emerges from the sources in which she plays an instrumental role in moulding her son into an ideal citizen, and enforcing the warrior code in accordance with the values of the polis. Many stories survive that present Spartan women as model mothers, approving the valour and bravery of fighting men or mocking cowards who shirked their duty on the battlefield. At its most extreme form, this involved the mother's enthusiastic acceptance of the death of her son as a necessary sacrifice for the fatherland.

SOURCE 5.20 Plutarch, *Sayings of Spartan Women,* 241b–c 7

One woman sent forth her sons, five in number, to war, and, standing in the outskirts of the city, she awaited anxiously the outcome of the battle. And when someone arrived and, in answer to her inquiry, reported that all her sons had met death, she said, 'I did not inquire about that, you vile varlet, but how fares our country?' And when he declared that it was victorious, 'Then,' she said, 'I accept gladly also the death of my sons.'

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SOURCE 5.21 Plutarch, *Sayings of Spartan Women*, 241.1

Another Spartan woman killed her son, who had deserted his post because he was unworthy of Sparta. She declared: 'He was not my offspring ... for I did not bear one unworthy of Sparta.'

SOURCE 5.22 Plutarch, *Sayings of Spartan Women*, 241.5

A woman, when she saw her son approaching, asked: 'How does our country fare?' And when he said: 'All are dead,' she picked up a tile, threw it at him, and killed him, saying: 'Then did they send you to bring us the bad news?

SOURCE 5.23 Plutarch, *Sayings of Spartan Women*, 241.16

Another woman handed her son his shield and exhorted him: 'Son, either with this or on this.'

ACTIVITY **5.4**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Review the sources presented in this chapter to answer the following questions.

1. To what extent, and how, was the individual marginalised and replaced by the State in Ancient Sparta?
2. How, and why, was Sparta's existence centred around creating a warrior race?
3. For further thought, research and discussion: How might Spartan racial theory be held responsible for its own demise?

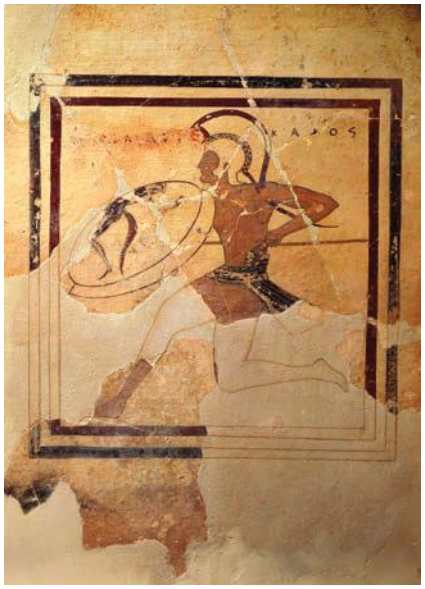
5.7 Weapons and warfare

Dual kingship

Sparta had two hereditary kings from two different royal families. They held office for life (but could be exiled or deposed by the *ephors*); one of the two commanded the army on foreign expeditions (in which the king on campaign had absolute right of deciding life or death in battle) and received part of the overall spoils of war. The *ekklesia* decided which king should lead war expeditions, and two *ephors* accompanied the king on campaign to oversee him. The king had an elite bodyguard of 300 hoplites at his disposal.

Role of the Spartan army

All male Spartiates were educated and trained in the art of war – not only to control the helots and prevent revolts, but also to lead its allies (the Peloponnesian League) and triumph over any rivals.



SOURCE 5.24 Hoplite soldier on votive tablet, c. 520 BCE

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The soldier was trained to fight as part of a **phalanx**, as well as in hand-to-hand combat. Sparta itself was not a walled city – its soldiers were its 'walls'. In war, *perioikoi* and lightly armed helots could supplement the Spartiate forces.

phalanx heavily armed infantry formation where soldiers stand shoulder to shoulder in ranks 16 men deep

Weapons and armour

Spartan hoplite armour and weapons were made by the *perioikoi* because Spartiates were forbidden from any trade or work except war. Consisting of leather, copper, tin and iron, their armour and weaponry consisted of the following:

- *aspida* – a large shield, emblazoned with the Greek letter 'Λ', a lambda for Lacedaemon
- *dory* - a 1.5- to 3-metre thrusting spear with iron tip
- bronze helmet - Corinthian style, decorated with horse hair
- *kopis* – short 60-centimetre bronze or iron slashing sword
- *cuirass* – body armour consisting of leather, linen and metal glued together
- *reaves* – bronze leg protector
- *phoinikis* – red wool cloak.

5.8 Slavery

Helots – the lowest stratum of Spartan society – comprised up to 90 per cent of the population. They had no political rights and were state-owned serfs (rural workers) bound to the land. Those given their freedom (usually for military service) were called *neodamodeis*. The Messenians were made helots when their land was conquered by the Spartans in the eighth century. Helots worked the land, were entitled to a portion of what they produced, and paid a fixed amount of tax to their Spartiate overlord. Helots were sometimes required to fight in foreign wars, but the whole system of governance in Sparta was designed to keep the Helot population controlled and in servitude. They were subject to random killing by the *krypteia* if found roaming at will, could be selected for public beatings as an incentive to other helots to behave, and even had war declared on them each year by newly elected magistrates.

SOURCE 5.25 Spartan neighbours and slaves; T. R. Martin, *An Overview of Classical Greek History from Mycenae to Alexander*

Some of the conquered inhabitants of Laconia, the territory of Sparta, continued to live in self-governing communities. Called 'those who live round about' (perioikoi), these neighbours were required to serve in the Spartan army and pay taxes but lacked citizen rights. Perhaps because they retained their personal freedom and property, however, the perioikoi never rebelled against Spartan control. Far different was the fate of the conquered people who ended up as helots, a word derived from the Greek term for 'capture'. Later ancient commentators described the helots as 'between slave and free' because they were not the personal property of individual Spartans but rather slaves belonging to the whole community, which alone could free them. Helots had a semblance of family life because they were expected to produce children to maintain their population, which was compelled to labour as farmers and household slaves as a way of freeing Spartan citizens from any need to do such work. Spartan men in fact wore their hair very long to show they were 'gentlemen' rather than laborers, for whom long hair was an inconvenience. In their private lives, helots could keep some personal possessions and practice their religion, as could slaves generally in Greece. Publicly, however, helots lived under the threat of officially sanctioned violence.

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Every year the ephors formally declared a state of war to exist between Sparta and the helots, thereby allowing any Spartan to kill a helot without any civil penalty or fear of offending the gods by unsanctioned murder. By beating the helots frequently, forcing them to get drunk in public as an object lesson to young Spartans, marking them out by having them wear dog skin caps, and generally treating them with scorn, the Spartans consistently emphasized the otherness of the helots compared to themselves. In this way, the Spartans erected a moral barrier between themselves and the helots to justify their harsh treatment of fellow Greeks.

Tyrtaeus, writing in Sparta around c. 740–720 BCE, is known for his political and military poetic elegies that exhort Spartans to fight bravely against their enemies (the Messenians).

SOURCE 5.26 Conquest of Messina helots; Tyrtaeus, Poem 5: 'Victory over Messenia', in M. Dillon and L. Garland, *Ancient Greece, Social and Historical Documents from Archaic Times to the Death of Alexander the Great* (3rd edn), Routledge, 2010

To our king, Theopompos, friend of the gods,

Because of whom we took spacious Messene,

Messene good to plough, good to plant;

They fought for it for fully nineteen years

Unceasingly and always stout of heart

The spearmen fathers of our fathers;

And in the twentieth, leaving their rich fields,

The Messenians fled from the great mountains of Ithome

SOURCE 5.27 Secret police, helots; Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus,* in J. P. Adams, *Materials for the Study of Ancient Sparta*

This is as follows: The magistrates (Krypteia) from time to time sent out into the countryside at large the most discreet of the young men, equipped only with daggers and necessary supplies. During the day they scattered into obscure and out of the way places, where they hid themselves and lay quiet. But in the night, they came down to the roads and killed every Helot whom they caught. Often, too, they actually made their way across fields where the Helots were working and killed the sturdiest and best of them. So, too, Thucydides, in his History of the Peloponnesian War (IV.80), states that the Helots who had been judged by the Spartans to be superior in bravery, set wreathes upon their heads in token of their emancipation, and visited the temples of the gods in procession, but in a little while afterwards all disappeared, more than two thousand of them, in such a way that no man was able to say, either then or afterwards, how they came to their deaths.

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ACTIVITY **5.5**

Objective 2: Comprehension of terms, concepts and issues

Cognition: explanation. To explain is to make an idea, concept, situation, relationship or meaning clear by communicating more in-depth information. To explain how to solve a problem might include writing down the steps needed to achieve a result or talking to someone to guide them to a solution. Explanations enable an audience to gain insight into, and make deeper connections with, questions such as who, what, when, where, why and how.

Use Sources 5.25–5.27 to explain why and how the Spartan State was created to subdue its slaves (helots). Give reasons and examples from the sources in your response.

SOURCE 5.28 Helots on military service: Myron of Priene, cited by Athenaeus in *The Deipnosophistae*

And Myron of Priene, in the second book of his Messenian History, says that 'the Spartans often freed their slaves, calling some 'released,' some 'masterless,' some 'curbers,' others again 'master-seamen'; the last they assigned to the sea forces. Others still they called 'newly-enfranchised,' all being different from the helots.

SOURCE 5.29 Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VIII: The dead Thermopylae, 480 BCE, Persian wars. Translated by G. Rawlinson, *The History of Herodotus by Herodotus*

'Comrades, King Xerxes gives permission to all who please, to quit their posts, and see how he fights with the senseless men who think to overthrow his armies.' No sooner had these words been uttered than it became difficult to get a boat, so great was the number of those who desired to see the sight. Such as went crossed the strait, and passing among the heaps of dead, in this way viewed the spectacle. Many helots were included in the slain, but everyone imagined that the bodies were all either Lacedaemonians or Thespians.

SOURCE 5.30 Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book IX: The Greek army assembles at Plataea, 479 BCE, against the Persians. Translated by G. Rawlinson, *The History of Herodotus by Herodotus*

When this matter had been arranged, the Greek army, which was in part composed of those who came at the first, in part of such as had flocked in from day to day, drew up in the following order: Ten thousand Lacedaemonian troops held the right wing, five thousand of whom were Spartans; and these five thousand were attended by a body of thirty-five thousand Helots, who were only lightly armed; seven Helots to each Spartan.

ACTIVITY **5.6**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

To what extent do Sources 5.28–5.30 support or negate the view in Source 5.25–5.27 about how the Spartans treated their helots/slaves?

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SOURCE 5.31 Helots slavery: Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus,* in P. Fitz, 'Arts & ideas, building Athens', *'Lycurgus' from Plutarch (490–429 BCE)*

> And Aristotle, in particular, adds, that the ephori, so soon as they were entered into their office, used to declare war against them (helots), that they might be massacred without a breach of religion. It is confessed, on all hands, that the Spartans dealt with them very hardly; for it was a common thing to force them to drink to excess, and to lead them in that condition into their public halls, that the children might see what a sight a drunken man is; they made them to dance low dances, and sing ridiculous songs, forbidding them expressly to meddle with any of a better kind. And accordingly, when the Thebans made their invasion into Laconia (371 BCE), and took a great number of the Helots, they could by no means persuade them to sing the verses of Terpander, Alcman, or Spendon, 'For,' said they, 'the masters do not like it.' So that it was truly observed by one, that in Sparta he who was free was most so, and he that was a slave there, the greatest slave in the world. For my part, I am of opinion that these outrages and cruelties began to be exercised in Sparta at a later time, especially after the great earthquake (464 BCE) when the Helots made a general insurrection, and joining with the Messenians, laid the country waste, and brought the greatest danger upon the city.

SOURCE 5.32 Myron of Priene (third century BCE), translated by P. Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia, A Regional History 1300 to 362 BC* (2nd edn), Routledge, 2002, p. 305

> They assign to the Helots every shameful task leading to disgrace. For they ordained that each one of them must wear a dog skin 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.

SOURCE 5.33 Tyrtaeus, Poems 6, 7: Messenian Tribute and Servitude, in M. Dillon and L. Garland, *Ancient Greece, Social and Historical Documents from Archaic Times to the Death of Alexander the Great* (3rd edn), Routledge, 2010

> The Messenians themselves were treated by the Spartans in the following way: first they made them take an oath that they would never rebel against them or attempt any form of revolution. Secondly, while the Spartans imposed no fixed tribute on them, they used to bring half of all their agricultural produce to Sparta. It was also laid down that at the funerals of kings and other magistrates both men and women should come from Messenia in black clothes; and a penalty was imposed on transgressors. As to the punishments with which they maltreated the Messenians, this is written in the poems of Tyrtaeus: 'Just like donkeys oppressed great burdens, Bringing to their masters of grievous necessity, Half of all the produce their land bears.'



ACTIVITY **5.7**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Use Sources 5.31–5.33 to evaluate the following viewpoint: Sparta's treatment of its helots is tainted with the fact that most of what we know about the helots comes either from later sources or from Athenian sources – Sparta's traditional enemy!

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SOURCE 5.34 Threat: Plutarch, *Cimon*, 16–17

When Archidamus, the son of Zeuxidamus, was in the fourth year of his reign at Sparta, a greater earthquake than any before reported rent the land of the Lacedaemonians into many chasms, shook Taÿgetus so that sundry peaks were torn away, and demolished the entire city with the exception of five houses. The rest were thrown down by the earthquake. Archidamus at once comprehended from the danger at hand that which was sure to follow, and as he saw the citizens trying to save the choicest valuables out of their houses, ordered the trumpet to give the signal of an enemy's attack, in order that they might flock to him at once under arms. This was all that saved Sparta at that crisis. For the Helots hurriedly gathered from all the country round about with intent to despatch the surviving Spartans. But finding them arrayed in arms, they withdrew to their cities and waged open war, persuading many Perioeci also so to do. The Messenians besides joined in this attack upon the Spartans.

SOURCE 5.35 Helots in military service slavery: Plutarch, *Life of Agesilaus*, 6.1–3: 32.7, translated by B. Perrin, *Plutarch's Lives*, 1917

Agesilaus went before the assembly of the people and agreed to undertake the war if they would grant him thirty Spartans as captains and counsellors, a select corps of two thousand enfranchised Helots, and a force of allies amounting to six thousand. They readily voted everything, owing to the cooperation of Lysander, and sent Agesilaus forth at once with the thirty Spartans. Of these Lysander was first and foremost, not only because of his own reputation and influence, but also because of the friendship of Agesilaus, in whose eyes his procuring him this command was a greater boon than his raising him to the throne.

Later in the campaign many of the provincials and Helots who had been enrolled in the army ran away from the city and joined the enemy, and this caused very deep discouragement. Agesilaus therefore instructed his servants to go every morning before it was light to the barracks and take the arms of the deserters and hide them, that their numbers might not be known.

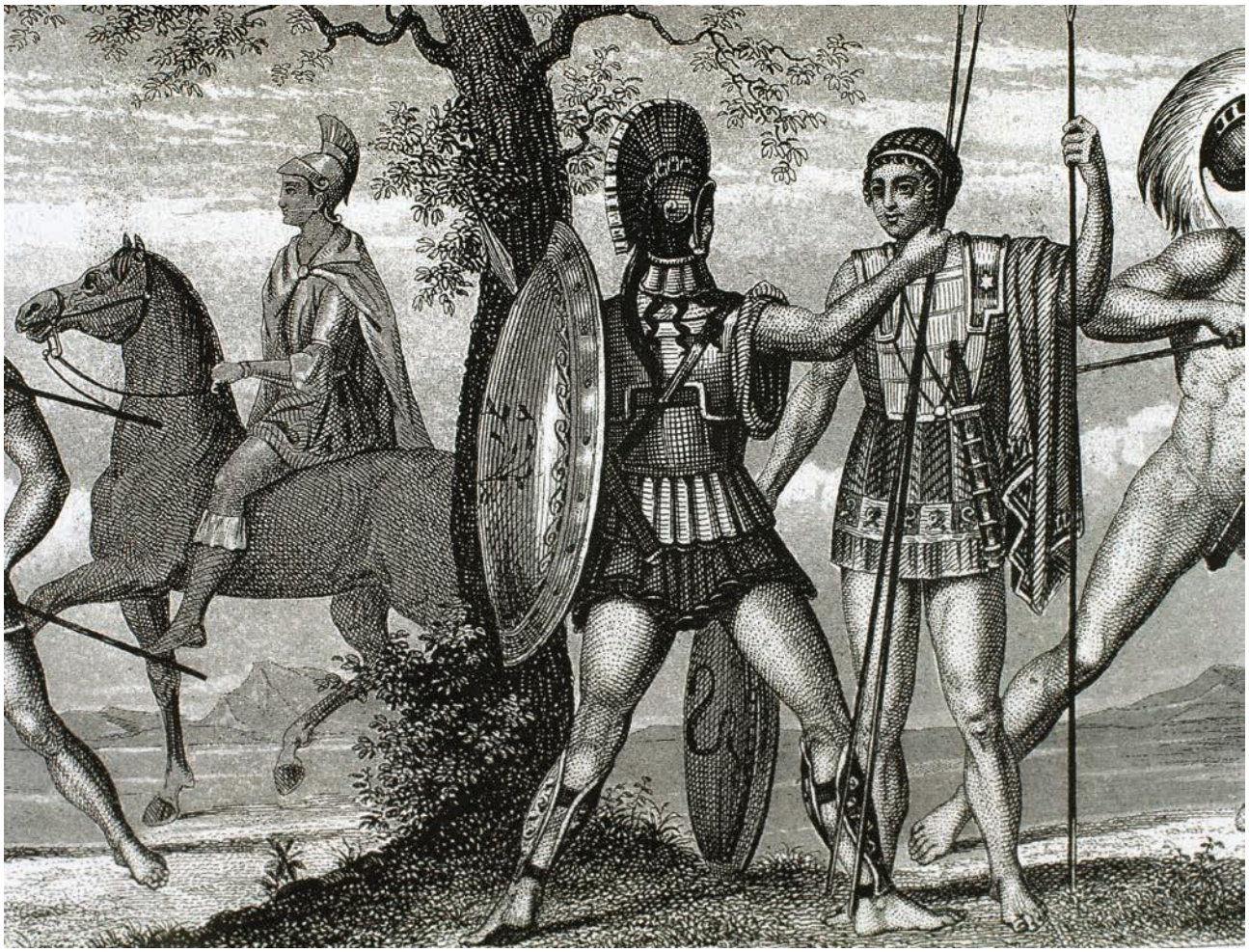
SOURCE 5.36 Helots slavery: Paul Cartledge, *Raising hell? The Helot Mirage: A personal review,* 2001

The Helots, at any rate the Helots of Messenia, were an unfree people, not just a random collection of individually owned slaves. They were moreover an unfree Greek people—and the fact that the very utterance of that phrase in a context of Greek domestic politics, as opposed to one of external imperial domination, sticks in the gullet is a fair index of just how rare (though not unique) this situation was, and how crucial their condition was in preparing them ultimately for freedom, or rather liberation. Even after the liberation of the Messenian Helots [c.370BCE] … Plato could speak of the situation of the remaining, Lakonian Helots as deeply controversial, and his pupil Aristotle, writing up to twenty years later, could liken them to an enemy constantly sitting in wait, as if in ambush, for the disasters of their masters. … The shrinking size of the master class through a process laconically defined by Aristotle as oliganthropia – shortage of military manpower – had become conspicuous at least as early as the first phase of the Peloponnesian War. The disproportion between the number of Helots and the number of adult male Spartan citizens, though never precisely quantifiable, can only have increased from the early fifth- century peak of the latter to the demise of Sparta as a great power a century later.

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Scheidel's composite mean estimate (really a 'guesstimate') of 30,000 able-bodied adult male Helots in the early fifth century suggests that they then outnumbered their Spartiate counterparts by some four to one. To that we should now add the findings, admittedly preliminary and of course provisional and tentative, of the PRAP survey, to the effect that Messenian Helots lived in agglomerated settlements rather than on dispersed farmsteads: 'Community dwelling not only helps to explain pragmatic things (such as how helots could plan rebellion), but provides the day-to-day context for other forms of communication as well … [S]uch dwelling together also affirmed emotional ties of kinship and of common concern which could, potentially, ignite into violent resistance.



SOURCE 5.37 Engraving of a fully armoured hoplite and an unarmoured helot

ACTIVITY **5.8**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Assess the validity of the statement: The Spartans basically ruled over the helots through the deliberate use of fear and terror.

In your response, you can use any of the sources found in this chapter.

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CONCLUDING STUDY

5.9 The legacy of Sparta

It is inevitable that Sparta is often compared to Athens but, given the vast domination of Athens in the overall Greek literary domain, we often (mistakenly) equate Ancient Athens with Ancient Greece. As Lukas Thommen, Professor of History at the University of Zurich says:

SOURCE 5.38 L. Thommen, 'Sparta', *Oxford Bibliographies*, 2020

> Alongside Athens, Sparta is considered as the second mighty polis in the Greek world and has always attracted admiration as well as criticism, so that its image has undergone many transformations. Sparta was time and again represented as the counterpart of Athens and assigned the role of a backward oligarchy and legally, rigidly regulated military state. In Antiquity (cf. Xenophon and Plato) the political stability and military efficiency of Sparta were declared an ideal and traced back to the system of public education (agoge). In the course of the 4th century BCE, Aristotle finally proclaimed Sparta a pattern for a 'mixed constitution,' which contains monarchic as well as aristocratic and democratic elements (kings, gerontes, and ephors, or the leaders of the popular assembly). Following this outline, it later also became a model for the Romans (Polybius, Book 6). On the other hand, the 'equality' of the Spartans, who termed themselves homoioi ('equals'), has always been fascinating. Connected with this equality was the communal life of Spartan men in the form of a permanent military-style camp. The idea of severe regulation of all facets of life and its orientation toward the state resulted in the early 20th century in the denotation of the Spartan community as a 'kosmos,' so that Sparta also became a modern myth. Yet the Spartan 'mirage' has been continuously deconstructed since ... Recently, there has been ongoing debate between researchers who think Sparta was more like other Greek states than sources note, and those who think it was unique.



SOURCE 5.39 Statue of Leonidas on the monument celebrating the Battle of Thermopylae

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Sparta was a city-state located in the Ancient Greek region of Lacedaemonia.
- Lycurgus is credited as the architect of the social and political institutions underpinning the utopian vision of Sparta, but it is unclear whether he was a real person.
- Xenophon and Plutarch wrote extensively about Lycurgus and the systems, customs and laws of Sparta.
- Spartans emphasised the importance and centrality of civic duty and martial prowess.
- The household, rather than the individual, was at the core of a person's identity, existence and concerns.
- All male Spartiates were educated and trained in war.
- Helots, state-owned serfs, comprised up to 90 per cent of the population and lived under the constant threat of state-sanctioned violence and murder.



SOURCE 5.40 The Spartans also had memorials. At Thermopylae, the scene of Leonidas's doomed stand against the Persians (480 BC), the Spartans erected a monument to those that died bearing the statement: 'Ὦ ξεῖν', ἀγγέλλειν Λακεδαιμονίοις ὅτι τῇδε κείμεθα, τοῖς κείνων ῥήμασι πειθόμενοι', which means: 'Stranger, tell Spartans that we lay here, staying faithful to Sparta's laws.'

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CHAPTER REVIEW



SOURCE 5.41 Rider with birds and a winged figure, perhaps Nike (Victory). Lakonian black-figured kylix, c. 550–530 BCE. Located now in the British Museum.

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
What does 'freedom' mean? Explain how the following people might answer:
a. a Spartiate
b. a helot.

DEVISE
What did Sparta exist for? What was its purpose and aims?

ANALYSE
How do Herodotus, Thucydides, Aristotle and Xenophon view Sparta, and who were they writing for?

EVALUATE
Why do Herodotus, Thucydides, Aristotle and Xenophon hold the views that they do, and whose is more valid/truthful?

SYNTHESIS
To what extent is respect for Ancient Spartan society justified?

COMMUNICATE
Write what you consider to be the truth about Sparta in several succinct sentences with correct spelling, punctuation and syntax.

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions
1. 'There was no place for individuality in Ancient Sparta.' Discuss
2. 'Sparta had the best army, but never really had an empire.' Why?
3. How did Sparta and Athens descend from allies to enemies in the fifth century BCE?
4. To what extent is the following statement true? 'One of the greatest ironies is that, in Sparta, women had more freedoms than anywhere else in the Ancient World, and contributed to a system that crushed the freedom of most others.'

Investigation tasks
1. To what extent was the State more important than the concept of 'family' in Ancient Sparta?
2. Explain why and how the Spartan State was created to subdue its slaves (helots).

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Chapter 6

EGYPT DURING THE RAMESSIDE PERIOD (19TH AND 20TH DYNASTIES)

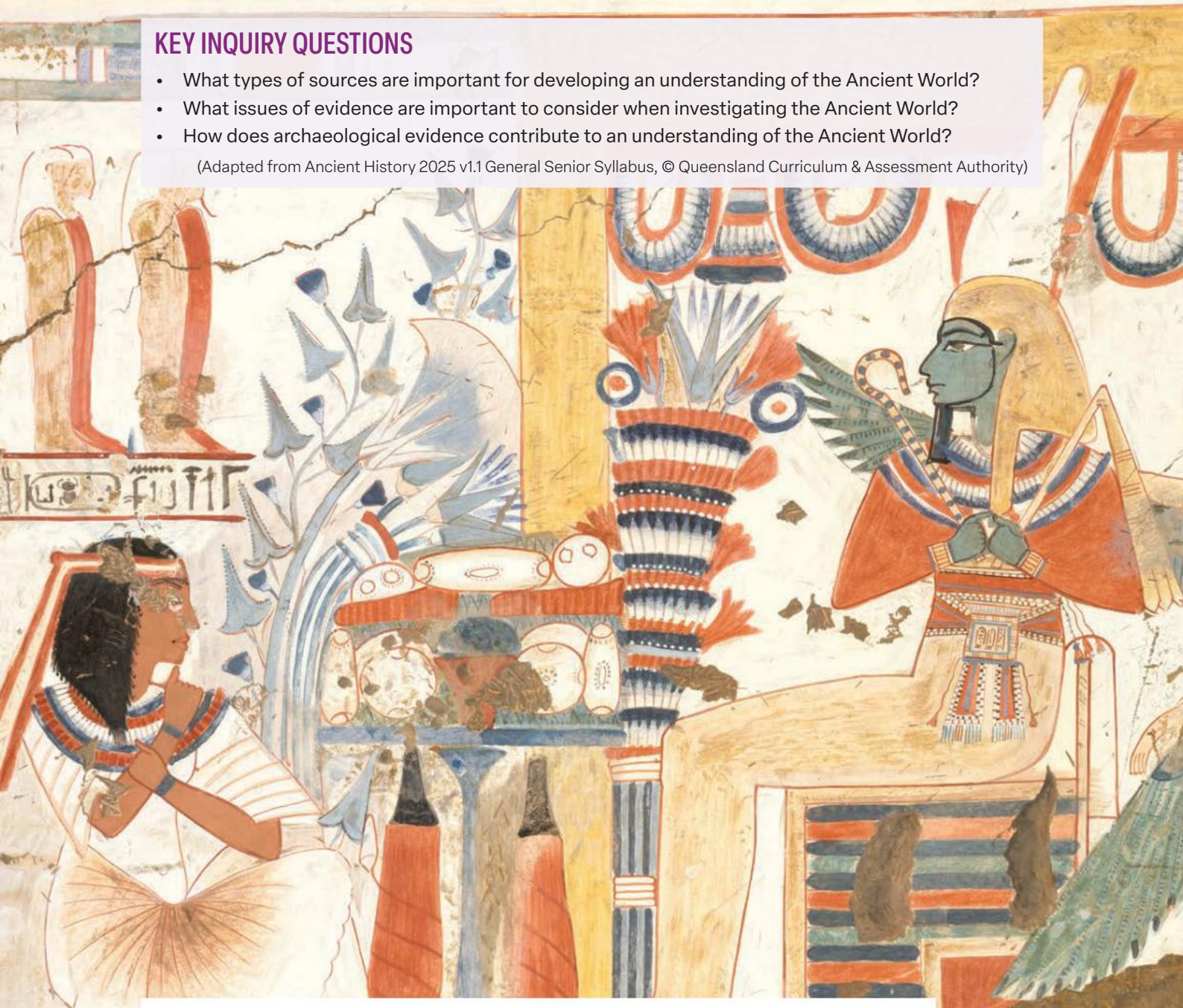
Syllabus reference: Unit 1, Topic 2: Features of ancient societies

JENNA HAYWOOD WITH MICHAEL COCKS

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What types of sources are important for developing an understanding of the Ancient World?
- What issues of evidence are important to consider when investigating the Ancient World?
- How does archaeological evidence contribute to an understanding of the Ancient World?

(Adapted from Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 6.1 Userhat Kneeling Before Osiris and the Goddess of the West, Tomb of Userhat, New Kingdom, Ramesside, Dynasty 19, c. 1294–1279 BCE

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FOCUS: ART INSPIRED BY ANCIENT EGYPT: OZYMANDIAS

The nineteenth-century British poet Percy Bysshe Shelley's most famous poem, 'Ozymandias', was published in 1818 in *The Examiner* under the pen name Glirastes. The poem is centred around a pharaoh's statue found in a desert landscape. Once upon a time the magnificent statue in its full form was a tribute to a great ruler – Pharaoh Rameses II – the 'Great'. Now, with just mere feet and legs remaining, it is a tribute to the futility of human actions.



SOURCE 6.2 Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1792–1822

SOURCE 6.3 Percy Bysshe Shelley, 'Ozymandias'

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: 'Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert ... Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.'

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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

Introduction

Ancient Egypt is a civilisation that has long fascinated modern historians. The discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922 by Howard Carter, paid for by Lord Carnarvon, generated hype about this mysterious and legendary culture that has been sustained until today. Unlike Greece and Rome where there is a plethora of primary literary source material available, much of what historians have come to understand about the Egyptians is derived from archaeology. Most notably, the archaeological study of Egyptian tombs and burials has been the key to our interpretation of Ancient Egypt.

Often the best tool for archaeologists to use in understanding a culture is the culture's treatment of the dead. Death and burial rituals tell us far more about the living than the dead. Understanding the belief systems that dictate and inform rites, rituals and burial practices is a gateway into the lives of the common people. It is a valuable tool because so much of history is recorded by aristocratic males, who were usually the only members of society able to read and write proficiently. Examination of the beliefs, rituals and funerary practices of Egyptians during the Ramesside period sheds light on what appears to be a complex and highly religious society.

Understanding the beliefs the Ancient Egyptians held will enable you to identify how their beliefs informed burial practices, and how their beliefs changed and continued over time. For further information on types of archaeological sources, see Chapter 1.

6.1 When and where did the events of Ancient Egypt take place?

TABLE 6.1 A list of key dates

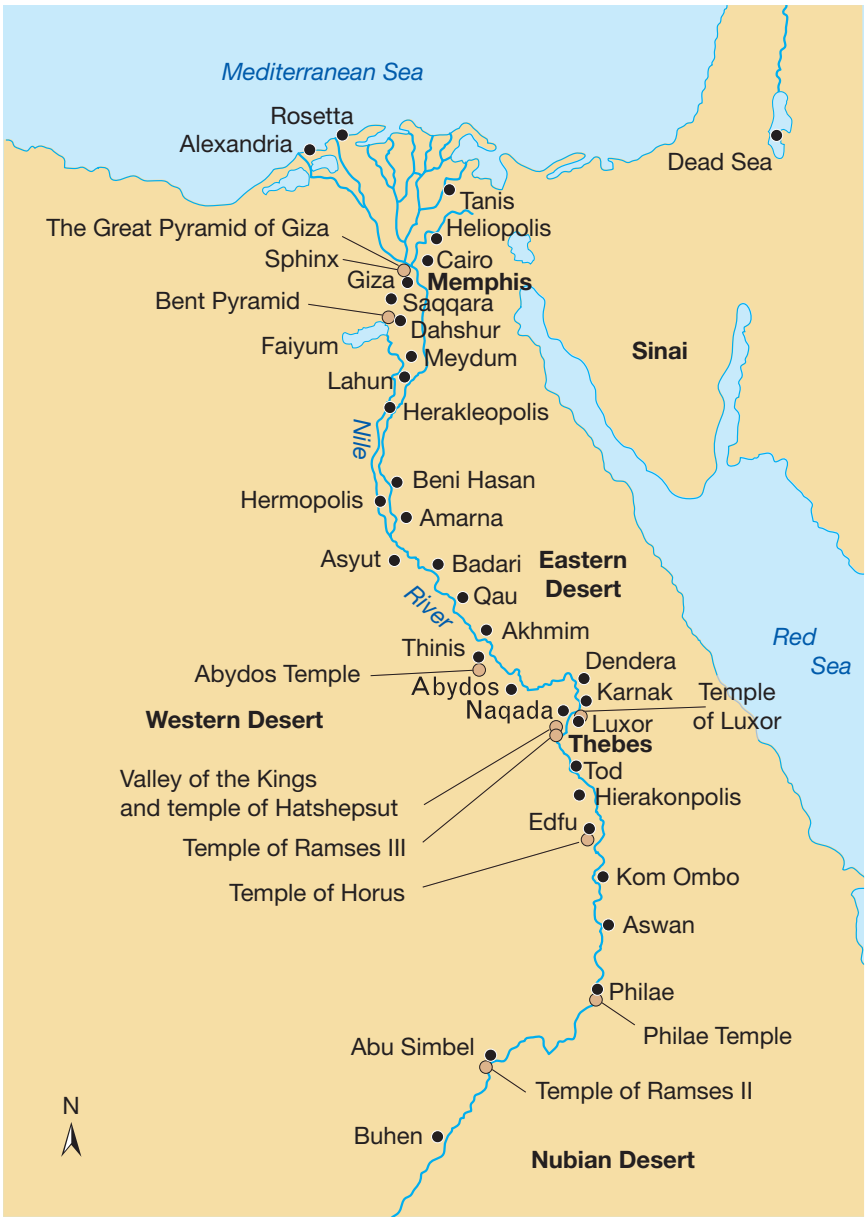
c. 3150–2686 BCE	Early Dynastic Period (1st to 2nd Dynasties)
c. 2686–2181 BCE	Old Kingdom (3rd to 8th Dynasties) • Use of pyramid texts began with the use of pyramids for the burial of pharaohs
c. 2181–2125 BCE	First Intermediate Period (9th and 10th Dynasties)
c. 2125–1650 BCE	Middle Kingdom (11th to 14th Dynasties) • Use of coffin texts begins along with visual representations on tomb walls
1650–1550 BCE	Second Intermediate Period (15th to 17th Dynasties) • Use of the *Book of the Dead* begins
1550–1069 BCE	New Kingdom (18th to 20th Dynasties) • Thebes becomes the capital city • Rameses II led an attack against the Hittites at Kadesh • First invasion by the 'Sea Peoples' in the Nile Delta region • Rameses III repels two Libyan invasions and another by the 'Sea Peoples'
1069–664 BCE	Third Intermediate Period • Characterised by internal conflict, which increased the risk of invasion by foreign kings

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Geographical location

The Ancient Egyptians occupied most of the territory that is included in the modern country of Egypt. At its greatest extent under Thutmose III, the Egyptians controlled an empire that stretched down into modern Sudan, west into the Sahara and north to Israel-Palestine. The Egyptian people predominantly occupied the Nile Valley between the northern delta region and the first cataract (a naturally occurring river-crossing point) at Aswan – a 1200-kilometre stretch of river. Memphis was the capital of Lower Egypt prior to the unification under Pharaoh Narmer. Thebes was the capital of Upper Egypt and became the sole capital city during the New Kingdom.



SOURCE 6.4 Map of Ancient Egypt

The environment

The most prominent geographical feature of Egypt is the Nile River, which originates in the highlands of Ethiopia and makes its way northwards towards the Mediterranean Sea. Along its course, the Egyptians established several crossing points where the Nile was shallow enough to cross by cart. The delta region features areas of marshland and lakes, but was also one of the most productive regions of agriculture.

Each year, dark silt was deposited by the annual inundation or flooding of the river. It was this annual replenishment of the soil that renewed the land's fertility. The size of the inundation was erratic and it was one of the people's greatest concerns. If the floodwaters were too high, they could cause damage to agriculture and infrastructure; too low and they could result in a poor harvest and possible famine. Because the Nile and the inundation were so vital to the Egyptians' existence, they were personified and worshipped as the fertility god Hapi. Canals and irrigation channels were built by the people to direct recordings from the 'nilometres', which were used to predict future flood levels and calculate taxation (larger floods resulted in more produce, which could be taxed more heavily).

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ACTIVITY 6.1

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Look at a satellite picture of the Egyptian region (Google Earth or Google Maps is great for this). What geographical conditions can you identify that would have helped the Egyptian civilisation to rise and flourish?
2. At the same time, how may developments of society have been hampered by the geographical conditions?
3. Based on what you can see in the satellite picture and further research, which natural resources would the Egyptians have had access to? Which would be rare, or only acquired through trade?
4. How did the Nile and Egyptian geography encourage social cooperation between the people and those of neighbouring regions (for example, Nubia and Mesopotamia)?

6.2 How do we know about Ancient Egypt today?

One of the most difficult parts of trying to understand what life was like in the time of Ancient Egypt is that the information that has survived from that era is sometimes fragmented and limited. As a result, modern scholars have to make educated guesses based upon these scant details. Unfortunately, this difficulty affects every aspect of modern understanding of Ancient Egypt. In his *History of Ancient Egypt*, Marc Van de Mieroop writes about the problem with ancient sources:

SOURCE 6.5 M. Van de Mieroop, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, p. 13

> One of the hardest tasks for the scholar of ancient Egypt is to subject the textual record to historical criticism. Often a single source, or a set that presents the same point of view, provides the only information on an event or a practice. It is thus difficult to ascertain whether the outcome of a military campaign was as glorious as the author proclaims or even whether the campaign took place. In other fields of historical research the rule that a single testimony is no testimony is often invoked, but this attitude would leave ancient Egyptian history in tatters, as often we have to rely on one source only. Historians need to use great caution. They cannot just accumulate individual statements about a king's reign and present them as a reconstruction of the period.

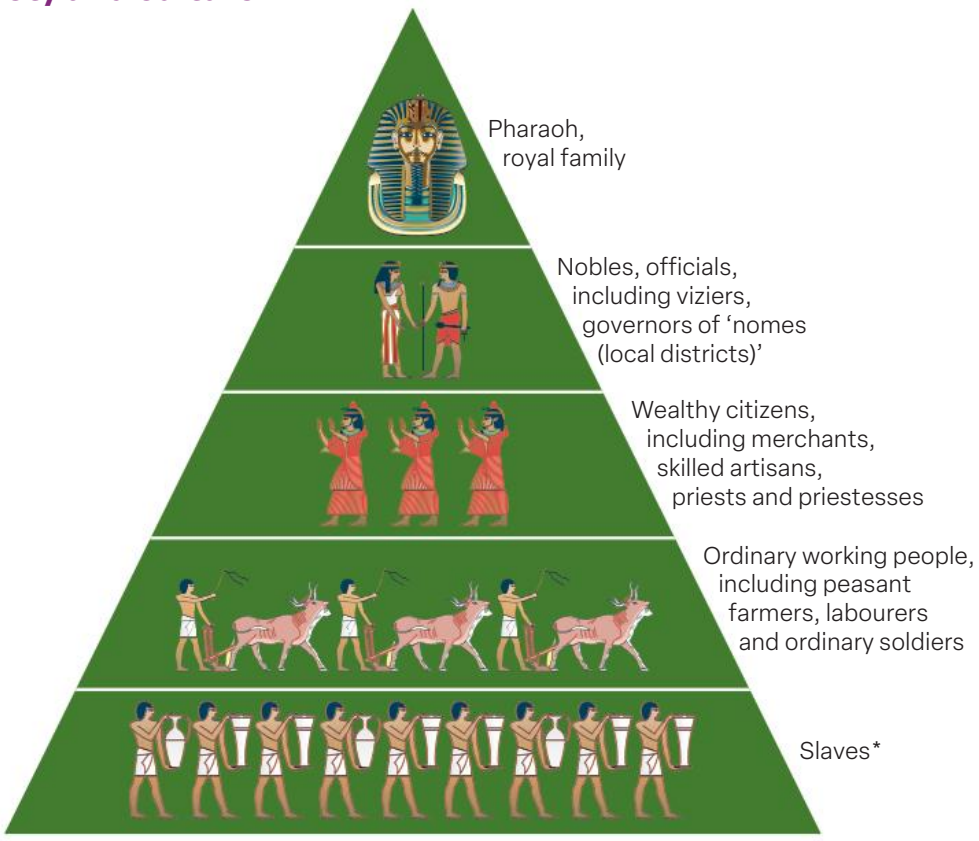
ACTIVITY 6.2

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Based upon what is said in Source 6.5, why is historical criticism difficult for scholars of Ancient Egypt?
2. What is meant by 'a single testimony is no testimony', the rule used in other fields of historical research? Why do you think this rule exists?
3. Why would the application of this rule 'leave ancient Egyptian history in tatters'?

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6.3 Society and culture



*Although at the bottom of the social hierarchy, slaves were not common in Ancient Egypt.

SOURCE 6.6 The social structure of Ancient Egypt. How does Egyptian social structure compare with that of other ancient and modern societies? Why?

The pharaoh

Ma'at the goddess of order, truth and balance; evolved into a concept meaning justice, harmony and balance

The pharaoh held ultimate power in Egyptian society and represented the gods on Earth, (particularly Horus) during their lifetimes. The primary role of the pharaoh was to ensure that ***Ma'at*** (law and order) was maintained. A pharaoh's right to kingship was emphasised through a direct relationship or co-regency with the previous pharaoh. This could be done through a traditional transition of power between a father and son upon the father's death, or, as a pharaoh aged, through the pharaoh's heir assuming more direct control and responsibility during his father's lifetime.

While pharaohs were seen as divine beings when in their official position, it was understood that they were also mortal beings in private life. As the supreme authority in Egypt, the pharaoh led all activities, but in practice they were assisted by thousands of officials. These included civil government leaders, military commanders and high priests of temples. Each of these institutions had its own complex bureaucracy, but all of them were answerable to the pharaoh.

Nobles and wealthy citizens

Second in status only to the pharaoh, nobles were the ones who handled the day-to-day administration of Egypt. Between them, they handled both internal and external, and military and administrative affairs of state. Internally, the viziers (one for Upper Egypt and one for Lower Egypt) and overseers were responsible for the administration of the treasury, taxation, granaries and judiciary.

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nomarch the provincial governor or mayor of a *nome*

Nomarchs handled these on a local level. Chief priests were also considered among the social elite, as the temple property that they administered had a large income from the offerings received at temples.

Merchants, skilled artisans, priests and priestesses were considered among Ramesside Egypt's social elite. Unlike the modern world, the ability to read and write was not a common skill. Consequently, scribes had a very high social status. They were integral to the effective functioning of almost every aspect of economic and political life in Egypt. They recorded the gifts received at temples, kept inventories of weapons and booty, and recorded casualties and prisoners, receipt of taxes, payment of wages, and intake and distribution of grain. Egyptian society was similar to many others in the Ancient World in that male professions tended to be inherited – the skills and accompanying social status was passed from father to son.

Commoners and slaves

Like all other civilisations in the Ancient World, commoners and slaves made up the largest portion of the population. Also, like for other ancient societies, historical sources that represent the thoughts and opinions of the majority are few and far between. Most of the Egyptian population were agricultural workers – an industry that was the lifeblood of the Egyptian economy. Men and women alike worked on the estates of the pharaoh and nobles, farming crops, herding cattle and fishing.

It is clear from historical sources that there were slaves in Ramesside Egypt, but it is difficult to clearly align the practice with modern understandings of slavery. Translations of Egyptian texts suggest that the term 'slave' could refer to labourers, servants or even prisoners of war. During Ramesside Egypt, it became possible for slaves to become private property (in addition to public property) and thus could be bought and sold. Slaves had a small number of legal protections and could own some property.



ACTIVITY 6.3

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Conduct some further research and answer the questions.

1. What symbols were associated with the pharaoh and their power?
2. How do these symbols of power represent the complexities of the pharaoh's role?
3. What duality can be seen between the crook and the flail?

6.4 The lives of women in Ancient Egypt

While men dominated most roles of responsibility in ancient cultures, women also contributed. In fact, Egypt was quite progressive in terms of equal rights between the genders. Within the social hierarchy of Ramesside Egypt, a woman's social status was dependent upon that of her father and, after marriage, her husband. Women were considered equal with men before the law – all were responsible for their own actions and answerable for them. This independence allowed women to own or rent property in their own right and administer it as they saw fit. For some women, it was consequently possible to avoid being economically dependent on their husband. Women and girls could also be recipients of an inheritance. They could not, however, hold public office. While ancient sources give historians a good picture of the lives of Egypt's elite, they say little about those less privileged. For women of all social standing, their primary role was a domestic one.

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ACTIVITY 6.4

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

1. Investigate the roles, rights and responsibilities of Egyptian women (royal and non-royal) and compare them with another ancient civilisation.
2. Why do you think it might be the case that Egyptian society offered such roles, rights and responsibilities to women?

SOURCE 6.7 Relief of Twosret holding two sistra (a type of rattle) at Amada Temple in Nubia. Twosret is thought to be the wife of Seti II and is the last known pharaoh of the 19th Dynasty (having assumed the throne for herself when her stepson died).

This extract discusses the will of an Egyptian woman named Naunakhte:

SOURCE 6.8 G. D. Middleton, *Women in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, Cambridge University Press, 2023

In the third year of pharaoh Ramesses V, c. 1145 BC, an Egyptian woman called Naunakhte, who lived in the worker's village of Deir el-Medina, went to her local court to explain her final will. It was her express wish to disinherit some of her eight surviving children, sons and daughters, because they had failed in their duty to care for her in her old age. In her words:

> I am a free woman of the land of Pharaoh. I raised these eight servants of yours, and I outfitted them with everything that is usual for people of their character. Now look, I have become old, and look, they do not care for me. As for those who put their hands in my hand, to them I will give my property; [but] as for those who gave me nothing, to them I will not give any of my property.

An elderly woman of around eighty years of age, Naunakhte would have given her statement orally in front of a panel of fourteen men, her fellow villagers, and probably her husband and grown up children too, where it was recorded for posterity by two scribes in a text that is now known as P. Ashmolean Museum 1945.97 … Naunakhte's will suggests how complicated things could get with regard to property and inheritance even at the village level, amongst people with far less property than the pharaohs or elites we often implicitly think about when we think of ancient Egypt … Naunakhte was not a queen or a princess … though through her first marriage, her literacy, and relative wealth, she probably had some standing in the village. She lived in Egypt, in the eastern Mediterranean, at a time better known for the collapse of states and for widespread destruction and war, yet her own life in this special community gives us plenty of drama on a much more human scale.

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6.5 Politics

One of the prominent features of political structure in Ancient Egypt, next to the monarchy, was the ***nome***. Each was governed by a *nomarch* who effectively functioned like a local council mayor. Each *nome* was like a miniature version of the larger state – each had its own treasury, judicial courts, land office, canal maintenance office, militia and scribes, who kept records.

nome an administrative district; comes from the Greek *nomos*, meaning 'district'; the borders of *nomes* fluctuated but were generally centred upon a town after which the *nome* was often named



SOURCE 6.9 Administrative centres in Lower Egypt. The borders of *nomes* are indicated by red lines or the tributaries of the Nile through the delta region. Why would the Egyptians have so many administrative centres?

6.6 Economics

Crafts and industry

Craftsmen were well respected in Ancient Egypt and paid appropriately for their skills, thus the profession usually ran down through the generations of a family. Carpenters were responsible for building anything from boats and structural frameworks to highly decorative furniture and coffins. Masons were required to carve large structural pieces of stone, statues and obelisks. They were also responsible for the vast decoration of various tombs and temples, which featured scenes of battles, celebrations and the recording of events through hieroglyphics. Metalworkers made numerous objects such as basic tools, weapons and decorative objects like mirrors. Highly skilled metal workers made the thousands of pieces of gold and precious jewellery that archaeologists have uncovered in various tombs.



SOURCE 6.10 Breastplate of Rameses II (currently in the Louvre). What symbols and features can you identify? Can you recognise any of the materials?

Exchange and taxation

Ancient Egypt did not use a system of currency; instead goods were bought or sold through a bartering or exchange system. Most Ancient Egyptians used their own personal surplus (food, livestock, slaves, land) or skills to exchange for what they required. A standard system of weights made such exchanges easier as there was a consistent way resources were measured.

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While taxation was administered by the pharaoh and viziers, they relied on the diligent record-keeping of the many scribes who lived in Egypt. Scribes recorded numerous agricultural resources – the size of a field, orchard or vineyard before harvest, the number of cattle in a herd or the yield taken by a fisherman. Scribes measured each crop to determine what portion of the produce was due as tax. The degree of taxation was determined by the height of the inundation as it was an indicator of prosperity. Most temples also paid tax, but some were exempt by royal decree (although the exemption could be revoked at any time). The tax was paid to the local *nomarch*, who was responsible for paying local expenses on behalf of the pharaoh.



SOURCE 6.11 Fishing scene, Saqqara (Old Kingdom – 6th Dynasty). What features can you identify in the scene?

ACTIVITY **6.5**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

At any time, the pharaoh could revoke the special exemption to taxation given to a temple. Why might an exemption have been granted? What reasons might have motivated a pharaoh to withdraw the exemption?

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DEPTH STUDY

Introduction

In this next section we will look at key aspects of Ancient Egyptian life, including beliefs, rituals and funerary practices, along with weapons and warfare.

6.7 Beliefs

An Ancient Egyptian's religion focused primarily on the importance of the individual's life. What a person did while they were alive was significant, and every ritual they participated in was aimed at preventing a second death (a failure to reach the afterlife). They believed heaven was in the realms of the sun and was a perfect version of their current life. Texts buried with the dead were to provide guidance for their journey to the afterlife.



SOURCE 6.12 Relief of Osiris, Horus and Isis at the Temple of Hibis, Egypt. How can you tell which figure is which?

The function of Ancient Egyptian religion was to explain the mysteries of life and the cosmos. For the people of Ancient Egypt, Amun-Re was the one god who dictated their lives as he controlled the movement of the sun. Most Ancient Egyptian deities were depicted with a human body, but their head could be either human or animal. Many were worshipped on a national level, while others were predominantly the focus of local settlements.

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Major deities had vast temple complexes dedicated to them and were served by an organised priesthood. Unlike in many modern Western religions, Ancient Egyptian priests were not spiritual mentors for the people, but rather they were responsible for the successful management of the temple complex.

The temple at Karnak

An impressive part of the temple at Karnak is known as the Great Hypostyle Hall. This impressive feat of engineering sits between Pylon II and Pylon III. Two pharaohs, Seti I (ruled c. 1294–1279 BCE) and Rameses II (ruled c. 1279–1213 BCE), were responsible for most of its construction. It is truly monumental in scale, measuring 103 metres long and 52 metres wide. The hall's roof no longer survives, despite being held up by over 130 columns. Both Seti and Rameses decorated the walls of the hall with large inscriptions showing their military victories in Palestine. One of the most famous battles of Rameses II, the Battle of Kadesh, is depicted there. Once completed, the Great Hypostyle Hall created a huge space within the temple, which was used for major religious ceremonies, including the coronation of new pharaohs. Rameses II's inscription describing the completion of the Great Hypostyle Hall begun by Seti I is recorded in the source below.

SOURCE 6.13 Adapted from J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt,* vol. 3, University of Chicago Press, 1907, pp. 217–18

Rameses II mighty king, making monuments in the house of his father, Amun, building his house in eternal work, established forever. See, the Good God inclined his heart to make monuments, sleeping or waking, he did not cease to do excellent things. It was his majesty who gave the regulations, and led the work on his monuments. All his plans come to pass immediately ... the maker of excellent things, made, which his majesty made of excellent and eternal work... He made [it] as his monument for his father, Amun-Re, lord of Thebes, making for him the [temple] ... of fine white sandstone ... surrounded by columns ... its beauty (reaches) to the height of heaven ... Rameses II; he made [it] as his monument for his father, Amun-Re, lord of Thebes ... I have made it for you with a loving heart, as a profitable son does for his father, by enlarging the monuments of him that [fathered] him, and establishing the house of him that caused him to take the whole land. Live the Good God, who makes monuments for his father, Amon-Re.

ACTIVITY 6.6



Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Study Source 6.13 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. According to this inscription, what relationship does Rameses claim to have with the god Amun-Re?
2. How does Rameses make it clear that he was personally responsible for all of the building projects at Karnak?
3. According to the source, what motivated Rameses to build these monuments?
4. Research the different pharaohs who contributed to the building of the hall. What information has been intentionally omitted by Rameses?

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ACTIVITY **6.7**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Complete the table below, featuring the main Ancient Egyptian deities. Note that not every column is relevant to every deity. Some lines have been completed for you. If you are completing this digitally, you may like to add an image of the deity where possible.

Name	Function	Symbol/depiction	Sacred site	Sacred animal or object
Amun-Re	Creator god	Man wearing double *shuti* feathers	Karnak, Thebes	Ram and goose
Mut				
Ptah				
Sekhmet				
Re				
Geb				
Nut				
Osiris	God of the afterlife	A mummified king	Abydos	Crook and flail
Isis				
Horus				
Seth				
Nephthys				
Thoth				
Anubis				

SOURCE 6.14 Modern tourists in the ruins of the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak. How do you think people of the Ancient World would have reacted to the monumental constructions at Karnak like the Great Hypostyle Hall?



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The *ka*, the *ba* and the *akh*

The concepts of *ka*, *ba* and *akh* were central to the beliefs the Ancient Egyptian people held regarding the afterlife.

The ***ka*** was the life force that differentiated the dead from the living, and death only occurred when the *ka* left the body. The Egyptians believed that their physical body required **mummification** to ensure the survival of the *ka* in the afterlife. Food and drink left as offerings at a **mortuary temple** were hoped to sustain the *ka*.

The ***ba*** was what made a person unique and supplied their personal characteristics. Ancient Egyptians believed the *ba* would live on after the physical body had died; it would leave the dead body during the day as a human-headed bird, but would return at night for sustenance. As such, it could move between the worlds of the living and the dead.

The ***akh*** was the completely resurrected form of the deceased person in the afterlife. This re-animation of the deceased occurred when the *ka* and *ba* were reunited in the afterlife. It is similar to the modern concept of ghosts in that the *akh* was believed to have the ability to influence the living (positively or negatively) from the afterlife.

In Source 6.15, the *ba* is represented as a small human-headed bird with upraised arms at the top right. The *ka* is the white-clothed figure at the bottom right.

ka a person's life force; death occurred when the *ka* left the body

mummification process of preserving a human body to ensure it remains as lifelike as possible

mortuary temple a temple constructed during a pharaoh's reign to commemorate their reign, as well to act as a place of worship for the pharaoh following their death where family and others could make offerings for the deceased

ba part of the soul that holds personal characteristics of an individual, represented as a human-headed bird

akh fully resurrected form of the deceased person in the afterlife, similar to the modern concept of ghosts



SOURCE 6.15 *Ka* and *ba* of Tentpessumedju c. 1070–341 BCE. Which deities can you identify in this scene?

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ACTIVITY 6.8

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Faith and religious belief were apparent in almost every aspect of life for the Ancient Egyptian people. Divide into four groups and choose one of the topics listed below. Each group needs to create a research question that leads to an investigation of that topic. Refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 2* for guidelines on how to frame a good research question. Each group conducts research into the topic to answer the research question that you have designed.

a. creation myths
b. the reign of Amun-Re as the creator god
c. Osiris myth
d. symbolism and meaning associated with the movements of the sun

The afterlife

The pharaoh's goal was to join the gods in the afterlife and become one of them. The most common belief regarding his journey was that his passage to rebirth mirrored the sun. During the hours of his journey through the underworld at night (death was symbolised by the setting sun), the pharaoh assisted the *barque* (boat) that carried the sun to navigate the ***Duat***, or underworld. Many dangers could be encountered in the *Duat*, so the pharaoh had the ***Amduat*** to assist him. He had to travel safely through the 12 regions of the underworld (which corresponded to the 12 hours of night) if he was to be reborn with the gods as the sun rose.

Duat realm of the dead in Egyptian mythology

Amduat New Kingdom funerary text, translates to *Book of What is in the Underworld*

maat kheru translates to true of voice, used to denote someone whose soul had been judged to be morally righteous

Field of Reeds Egyptian heavenly paradise that individuals hoped to reach in the afterlife; a mirror image of one's life on Earth

papyrus a plant common to the Nile River Valley that was most notably used to create a writing material, similar to paper

For the common people, the Judgement of the Dead was the challenge to be faced before entry to the afterlife could be granted. This judgement was a series of tests the deceased had to pass in order to be declared ***maat kheru*** and be admitted to the heavenly paradise where Osiris ruled, called the **Field of Reeds**. The judgement began by the deceased declaring that they had not committed any offences during their lifetime. This was known as the Negative Confession. Once the confession had been made, the heart of the deceased was weighed against the feather of Ma'at. As the heart was believed to be the centre of thought and emotion, it was not removed during mummification so it could be used by the deceased in this ritual. If the heart was lighter than Ma'at's feather, the deceased was welcomed by Osiris into the afterlife. If it was filled with wrong and therefore heavier than the feather, it was consumed by the beast Ammut, essentially wiping the deceased from existence. This fate terrified all Ancient Egyptians and it explains why representations of this ritual are depicted so often in tombs – having the ritual shown (either on **papyrus** or on the tomb walls) was believed to guarantee them safe passage.

ACTIVITY 6.9

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Conduct further research about the *Duat*. What dangers could the pharaoh encounter on his journey? How could he overcome them?

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SOURCE 6.16 Weighing the Heart, papyrus from the ***Book of the Dead*** of Ani, Thebes, Egypt, 19th Dynasty, c.1295 BCE, British Museum

Book of the Dead a collection of spells, prayers and hymns that emerged at the start of the New Kingdom

ACTIVITY **6.10**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Using Source 6.16 and your research, complete the questions below.

1. Identify the following in Source 6.16: Ani (the deceased), Anubis, Osiris, Thoth, Horus, Isis, Nepthys, Ammut, Ma'at and the heart of the deceased.
2. What role did the following play in the Weighing of the Heart?
   - **a.** Hall of Two Truths
   - **b.** the heart of the deceased
   - **c.** Horus
   - **d.** 42 assessors
   - **e.** Ammut the Devourer
   - **f.** Anubis
   - **g.** the Negative Confession
   - **h.** Thoth
   - **i.** Osiris
   - **j.** the Sons of Horus
   - **k.** Isis, Nepthys, Selket, Neith
3. What was the purpose of producing the *Book of the Dead*?

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ACTIVITY **6.11**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

The Negative Confession is addressed to the gods of the 42 *nomes* of Egypt, who act as judges. Find a copy of 'The 42 Laws of Maat: The Moral Principles of the Ancient Egyptians' online. Read it and answer the questions.

1. What is the context for its production?
2. What view does it present about an individual's daily life and actions?
3. What themes do you notice among the confessions? What headings could you group them under?
4. What conclusions can you reach about the values and priorities present in Ancient Egyptian society and culture? (You can use your answers from questions 1 to 3.)
5. Are there any confessions that are surprising to you? Which ones? Why?
6. Do you think it likely that an Ancient Egyptian would be able to keep all of these promises during their lifetime? Why or why not?
7. Are there any confessions that stand out as having a valid and reasonable excuse why they would not have been followed?

6.8 Rituals

By the New Kingdom, methods and techniques of mummification had progressed and been essentially perfected. These advances demonstrate how much the Ancient Egyptians had progressed from their earliest form of burial in the desert, where the natural heat of the desert acted as a very effective method of preservation. By the Middle Kingdom, mummification in some form was available to all people. What degree of preservation was achieved depended upon how much the relatives of the deceased could afford to spend on the procedure. This variation in mummification available, based on financial standing, indicates how access to the afterlife had been democratised and was now available to all people. For the Ancient Egyptians, mummification was essential in guaranteeing a resting place for their spirit and a focus for their mortuary cult to be maintained by relatives after their death.



SOURCE 6.17 Anubis warming the heart of the deceased, from the tomb of Sennedjem at Deir el-Medina, c. 19th Dynasty. What role did Anubis have in preparing the dead for burial and the afterlife?



SOURCE 6.18 Gebelein Man, c. 3400 BCE, EA 32751 British Museum. The body of this man was so well preserved by the desert heat that hair can still clearly be seen on his skull.

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Pre-Dynastic and Old Kingdom burials made good use of the desert environment; the heat and dry sand acted as natural preservatives. Individuals in these early burials were commonly found lying in the foetal position. During the Old Kingdom, a more uniform and intentional method of preservation began; there was the removal of organs and the use of **natron**. The most notable change that had occurred by the New Kingdom was the additional removal of the brain.

natron a naturally occurring mineral that is often found in saline lake beds, used by the Egyptians to remove moisture from bodies during mummification



SOURCE 6.19 Mummy of Rameses II, c. 1279–1213 BCE. This mummy and the Gebelein Man differ significantly in date, yet what do you notice about the level of preservation?

ACTIVITY 6.12

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Using information in this chapter and other resources, answer the questions below.

1. What is the significance of intentionally burying individuals in the foetal position?
2. How can modern historians deduce that the preservation of the body was paramount?
3. What assumptions could we make about the Ancient Egyptians' attitude towards cremation?
4. What roles did the following deities play in mummification?
   - **a.** Anubis
   - **b.** Hapi
   - **c.** Nepthys
   - **d.** Duamutef
   - **e.** Imseti
   - **f.** Selket (Serket)
   - **g.** Qebesenuef
   - **h.** Isis
   - **i.** Neith

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Step 1: The body is taken to the ibu tent (place of purification) where embalmers wash it with scented palm wine. It is then rinsed with water from the Nile.



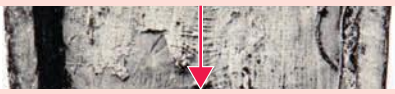
Step 2: Most of the internal organs are removed from a cut on the left side of the body. The heart is not removed. The brain is broken down and pulled out through the nose with a long hook.



Step 3: Four of the major organs – the liver, lungs, stomach and intestines – are packed in natron to dry them, before being placed in canopic jars. In later methods they would be returned to the body.



Step 4: The body itself is stuffed with natron and covered.



Step 5: Forty days later the body is again washed with Nile water and then oils are applied to the skin to help it stay elastic.



Step 6: The remaining organs are then returned to the body and the cavities are stuffed with leaves, linen and sawdust to give a lifelike appearance. Scented oils are applied again.



Step 7: The body is then wrapped in layers of linen, beginning with the head and neck, with amulets placed between the layers to protect the body during the deceased's travels through the underworld.



Step 8: During the wrapping process a priest reads out prayers to ward off evil spirits and a papyrus scroll from the the *Book of the Dead* is placed in the hands of the body. The layers of wrapping are painted with resin to bind them together.



Step 9: Finally, the whole body is wrapped in cloth and placed in a coffin.

SOURCE 6.20 Mummification process

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Diodorus Siculus, a Greek historian, writing around the first century BCE describes his understanding of the mummification process:

SOURCE 6.21 Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, Book 1.91, c. 36–30 BCE

When a person amongst them dies, all his relatives and friends, putting mud upon their heads, go about the town lamenting, until the time of burying the body. In the meantime, they abstain from bathing and from wine and all kinds of delicacies, neither do they wear fine apparel. They have three manners of burial: one very costly, one medium and one modest. Upon the first a talent of silver is spent, upon the second twenty minae, but in the third there is very little cost. Those who attend to the bodies have learned their art from their forefathers. These, carrying to the household of the deceased illustrations of the costs of burial of each kind, ask them in which manner they desire the body to be treated. When all is agreed upon, and the corpse is handed over, they (that is, the relatives) deliver the body to those who are appointed to deal with it in the accustomed manner.

First, he who is called the scribe, laying the body down, marks on the left flank where it is to be cut. Then he who is called the cutter takes an Ethiopian stone, and cuts the flesh as the law prescribes, and forthwith escapes running, those who are present pursuing and throwing stones and cursing, as though turning the defilement [of his act] on to his head. For whosoever inflicts violence upon, or wounds, or in any way injures a body of his own kind, they hold worthy of hatred. The embalmers, on the other hand, they esteem worthy of every honour and respect, associating with the priests and being admitted to the temples without hindrance as holy men. When they have assembled for the treatment of the body which has been cut, one of them inserts his hand through the wound in the corpse into the breast and takes out everything excepting the kidneys and the heart. Another man cleanses each of the entrails, sweetening them with palm-wine and with incense. Finally, having washed the whole body, they first diligently treat it with cedar oil and other things for over thirty days, and then with myrrh and cinnamon and [spices], which not only have the power to preserve it for a long time, but also impart a fragrant smell. Having treated it, they restore it to the relatives with every member of the body preserved so perfectly that even the eyelashes and eyebrows remain, the whole appearance of the body being unchangeable, and the cast of the features recognisable. Therefore, many of the Egyptians, keeping the bodies of their ancestors in fine chambers, can behold at a glance those who died before they themselves were born.

Herodotus, a Greek historian born in modern-day Turkey who wrote during the fifth century BCE, outlines how bodies are embalmed:

SOURCE 6.22 Herodotus, *Histories*, Book 2.86–8, c. 440 BCE

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

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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 spicery except frankincense, and sew up the opening. Then the body is placed in [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.

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 [natron] 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 [natron] 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 clyster, and let the body lie in [natron] the seventy days, after which it is at once given to those who come to fetch it away.

ACTIVITY **6.13**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Refer to Sources 6.21 and 6.22 from Diodorus Siculus and Herodotus.

1. On which points do Herodotus and Diodorus agree regarding the forms of mummification used by the Egyptians?
2. On which points do they differ?
3. What evidence is there in the accounts that a person's wealth and status influenced the quality of mummification available to them?
4. Conduct some brief research on the background of Diodorus and Herodotus regarding the following points:
   a. Where and when were they born?
   b. What was their social status in the community they spent most of their time living in?
   c. How have historians described their writing style?
   d. What topics did they write about?
5. What difficulties may Diodorus and Herodotus have encountered when researching for their writing?
6. From what perspective do they write?
7. Having considered your responses for the previous three questions, do you consider Diodorus and Herodotus reliable and useful sources for modern historians to use when researching mummification? Why or why not?

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6.9 Funerary practices

Funerals

Funerals for the deceased began after the mummification process was completed (usually 40–70 days). A procession usually accompanied the mummy across the Nile. How elaborate the procession was depended upon the social status and wealth of the deceased.



SOURCE 6.23 Outer coffin of Sennedjem with lid on a wooden sledge. Sennedjem was an artist who was active during the reigns of Seti I and Rameses II. Why would craftsmen put such effort into coffins and sarcophagi?

Before the procession began, the mummy had to be placed inside its coffin. The materials used to make the coffins varied upon the status of the deceased. Timber was the most basic element, and where there were multiple coffins (nesting coffins), the innermost one was the most decorated. The decoration could be more elaborate paintwork, or costly and embellished materials, such as in the case of Tutankhamun and his 110-kilogram coffin of pure gold. A burial mask was sometimes placed directly over the mummification wrappings. These masks were meant to replicate the face of the deceased.



SOURCE 6.24 Funeral procession fresco from the Tomb of Ramose, vizier under Amenhotep III and Akhenaten (18th Dynasty). What elements of the funeral procession are recognisable? How do they compare to practices in other cultures?

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A priest organised the procession and could also call on professional mourners if the status of the deceased dictated it. The priest led the procession, sprinkling milk and incense as he walked. Following him came a group of women who represented the presence of Isis and Nephthys. These women were often hired as professional mourners and were required to wail aloud and beat their chests. Next came the mummy of the deceased on a bier dragged by oxen or carried aloft by a group of men. Immediately after the mummy would be the canopic chest, containing the four **canopic jars** and their associated organs. Lastly, mourners including family and friends followed the formal procession, bringing the possessions the deceased needed in the afterlife, along with food and drink to go in the tomb. When the procession arrived at the tomb, the mummy was placed in the chamber, along with their various possessions and grave goods. The priest then performed the **Opening of the Mouth** ceremony so that the deceased could begin their journey through the afterlife.

canopic jar jars used to store mummified lungs, stomach, liver and intestines of the deceased

Opening of the Mouth ceremony performed on the mummy immediately before burial by a priest to allow the deceased to eat and drink in the afterlife

Weighing of the Heart a judgement test that the deceased faced before they were granted a place in the afterlife; the heart (symbolic of their Earthly life) was weighed against the feather of Ma'at

Pyramid texts

Pyramid texts were a collection of utterances recited by a priest at the burial. The texts themselves were also recorded on the interior walls of tombs, statues and stelae in mortuary chapels. The main purpose of the texts was to offer guidance to the deceased in navigating their passage into the afterlife. Originally they were exclusively used by kings, but as mummification and, consequently access to the afterlife itself, became more democratised, these texts were more commonly used. The only restriction on their use in the New Kingdom was financial – you could have as many of these texts represented in your tomb as you could afford. The *Book of the Dead* is perhaps the most famous of these texts. Spell 125, which recorded the **Weighing of the Heart** ceremony, was commonly used in burial due to its importance in imparting guidance for the deceased through this crucial test.



SOURCE 6.25 Limestone *shabti* figures and painted wooden box, 19th Dynasty the Louvre, Paris. Why build a little case for the *shabti* figures?

Grave goods

The goods placed in the grave of the deceased were chosen specifically to ensure their needs in the afterlife would be met. The objects reflected the status of the deceased and would allow them to continue their daily activities and routines.

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The most common of these included ***shabti*** figures – small models of people who were believed to come alive in the afterlife to provide the deceased with labour. As with all grave goods, the number and quality of production of *shabti* figures indicated the wealth of the person who resided in the tomb.

shabti a small figurine (wooden, stone or faience) placed in the tomb to complete any work the deceased person may be called upon to do in the afterlife

Tombs and cemeteries

For Ancient Egyptians, the placement of their tombs and cemeteries was determined by the sun. The east was associated with life and the west with death, due to the symbolic nature of sunrise and sunset. Consequently, all burial places were on the western bank of the Nile River.

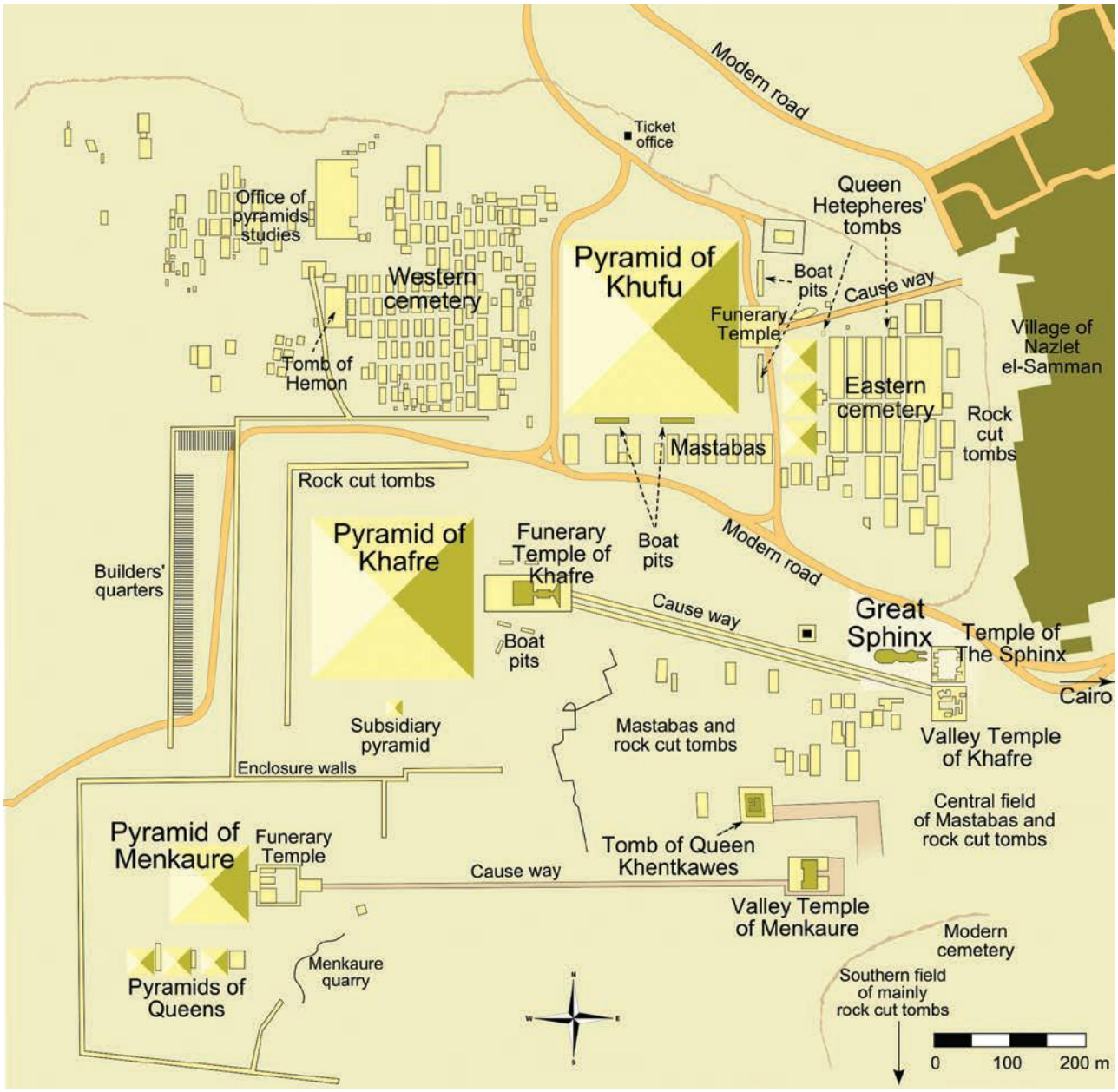
Tombs consisted of two elements: the tomb itself and the funerary or mortuary chapel. This chapel was where regular offerings for the deceased would be made after the tomb was closed. The Ancient Egyptians believed that tombs needed to be carefully prepared because they were the locations for the extension of life and thus essential for maintaining the individual in the afterlife. They were also considered the point of transition from one world to another; consequently, they needed to provide all possible material support. By the 19th Dynasty, funerary chapels were usually located separately from the tomb itself to detract from possible tomb robberies. As seen in the modern diagram of the Giza pyramid complex in Source 6.27, the temples associated with the pyramids were physically connected to the pyramid complexes by a causeway (the temples themselves would have originally sat very close to the Nile shoreline).

SOURCE 6.26 Records of royal tomb robberies. J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt,* vol. 4, University of Illinois Press, 2001

[The Papyrus Amehurst] ... is part of the court record of the prosecution of tomb-robbers ... It contains the remarkable confession of the eight men who robbed the tomb of Sebekemsaf and his queen Nubkhas, and the record of their identification of the tomb, on being conducted to it, in the presence of the vizier ... In [Column 2] the common confession of all is in progress, having begun in the lost upper portion. It is as follows:

'King's-Wife, Nubkhas, L.P.H., his royal wife in the place of his ..., it being protected ... its ... with mortar, covered with blocks. We penetrated them all, we found her resting likewise. We opened their coffins and their coverings in which they were. We found this august mummy of this king ... There was a numerous list of amulets and ornaments of gold at its throat; its head had a mask of gold upon it; the august mummy of this king was overlaid with gold throughout. Its coverings were wrought with gold and silver, within and without; inlaid with every splendid costly stone. We stripped off the gold, which we found on the august mummy of this god, and its amulets and ornaments which were at its throat, and the coverings wherein it rested. [We] found the King's-Wife likewise; we stripped off all that we found on her likewise. We set fire to their coverings. We stole their furniture, which we found with them, being vases of gold, silver, bronze. We divided, and made the gold which we found on these two gods, on their mummies, and the amulets, ornaments and coverings, into eight parts.'

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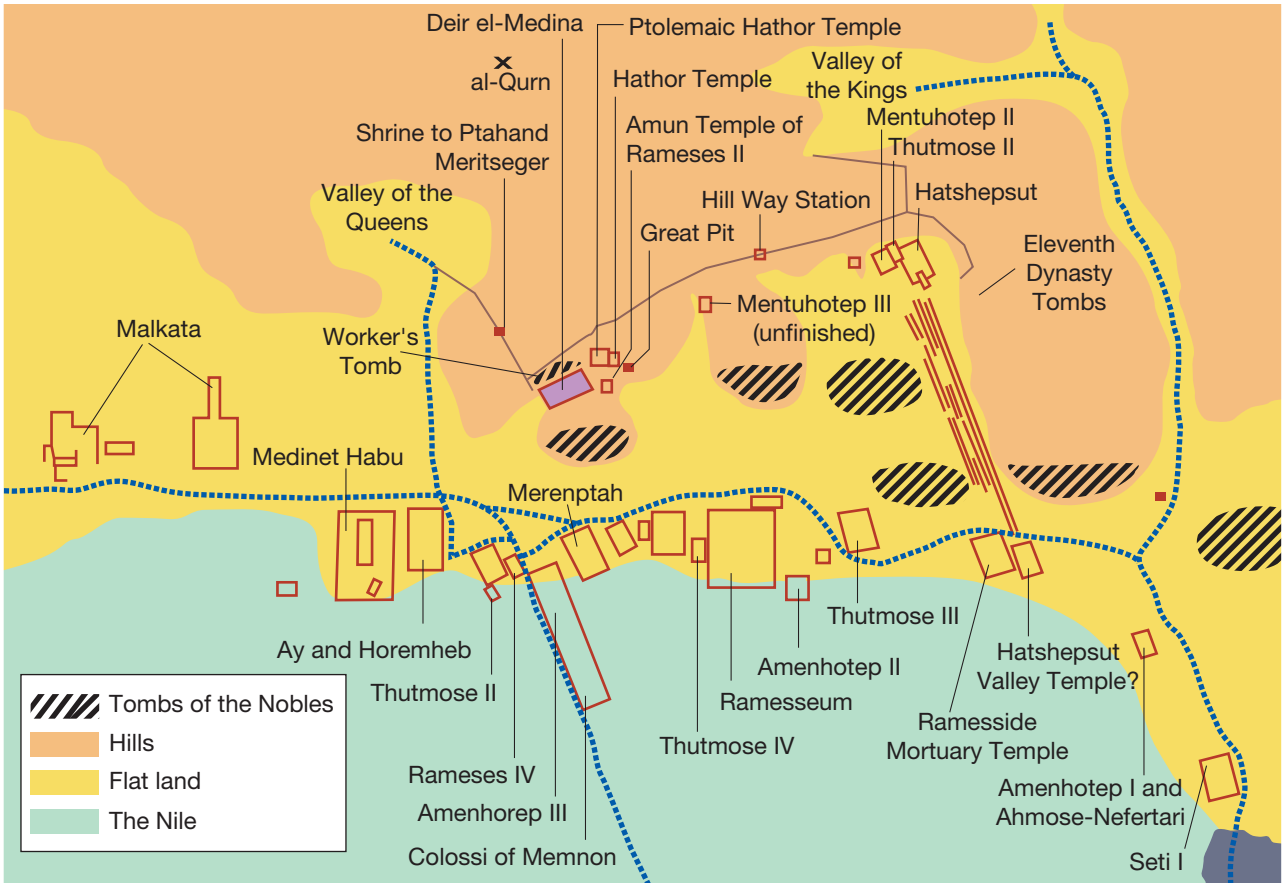


SOURCE 6.27 Pyramid complex at Giza. Have a look at modern satellite images – what features in this map can you see in the modern landscape?

Building of *mastabas* and pyramids in the Old and Middle Kingdoms ensured that the Ancient Egyptians were well versed in the engineering required to cut tombs directly into cliffs and bedrock. Tombs built for nobles were quite simple in their layout – a T-shape was most common. Many were incomplete by the time they were required for use due to the financial investment and time required for construction. Scenes painted on tomb walls often depicted the daily life of the deceased, particularly showing them undertaking normal duties required of their occupation.

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SOURCE 6.28 Thebes, West Bank. Have a look at modern satellite images – what features in this map can you see in the modern landscape?



SOURCE 6.29 Ma'at; Rameses I before Ptah; djed pillar (19th Dynasty). How does this scene compare to other tomb scenes in quality and subject?

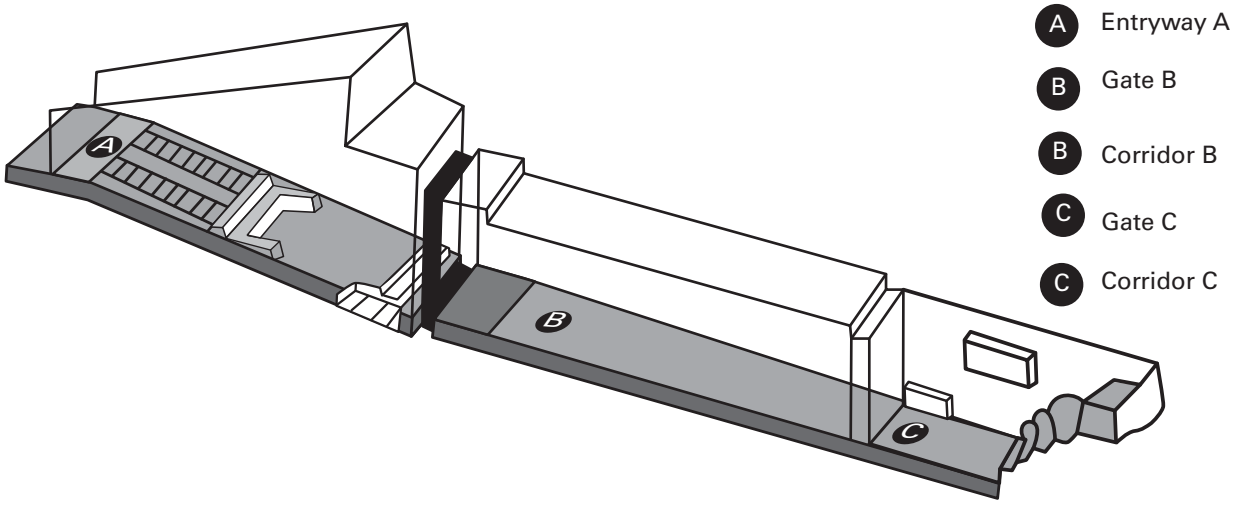
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Tombs of pharaohs and queens from the New Kingdom were built in the **Valley of the Kings** and Valley of the Queens respectively. So far, 63 tombs have been uncovered in the Valley of the Kings. Despite the Egyptians' best intentions to hide the tombs, most were still found and robbed in antiquity. Tombs in the valley vary greatly in their scale and design. They twist and turn, weaving in between each other, and some descend as deep as 200 metres. The straightforward and architectural simplicity of Rameses X's tomb is in stark contrast to the pillared maze of that of Rameses II and his sons.

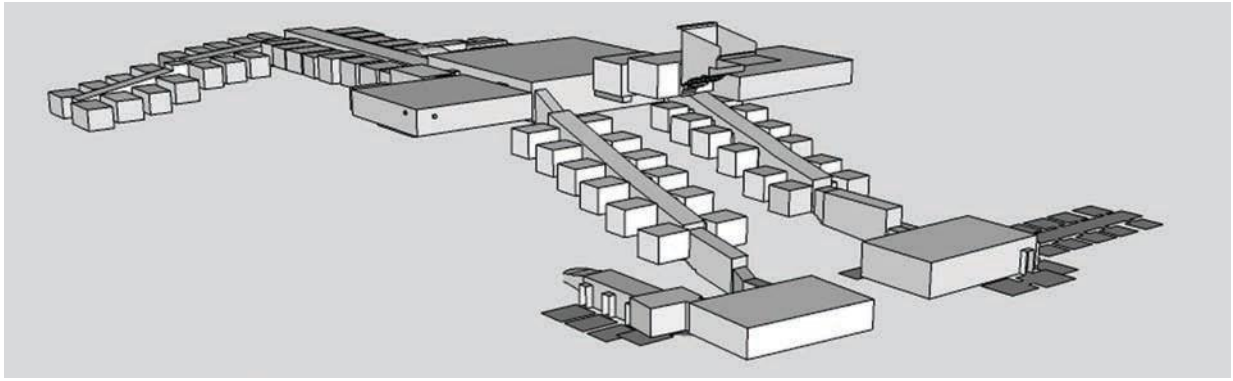
Valley of the Kings main location for pharaonic burials during the New Kingdom; it is on the western bank of the Nile, opposite Thebes



SOURCE 6.30 Panorama of the Valley of the Kings, looking northwards. How would this desert landscape impact the Egyptians' ability to build tombs here?



SOURCE 6.31 Diagram of Rameses X's tomb, KV18



SOURCE 6.32 Tomb of Rameses II. How does this tomb and that of Rameses X compare in their layout?

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ACTIVITY **6.14**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Choose four to six sources from Sources 6.23–6.32. For each source, respond to the question: What can we learn from the source about the funerary goods, graves, funerals or tombs of Egyptians during the 19th Dynasty?
2. What are the main conclusions you can reach after examining the sources? You should be able to support each point using multiple sources.
3. Turn your main points into a cohesive paragraph, using correct referencing techniques.

ACTIVITY **6.15**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Compare the tombs of royalty and non-royalty by investigating the architectural and decorative features of at least one royal and one non-royal tomb (suggestions below) from the 19th or 20th Dynasties. Create a table to structure the recording of your findings.
   Non-royal tombs: Ameneminet, Amenemope, Djehuty (usurped by Djehutyemheb), Kyky (Samut), Nakhtamon, Neferrenpet (Kenro), Nefersekhem, Shuroy
2. List the main similarities and differences you have identified between the two types of tombs.

6.10 Weapons and warfare

Case study: The Battle of Kadesh

Unpacking the events of Rameses II's campaign against the Hittites in the fifth year of his reign (1274 BCE) provides historians with a challenge in determining a point of truth in the historical record. The Hittites and Egyptians had been in conflict for control over land that is now modern Syria. This territory was particularly important for the control of trade routes out of the east, and Kadesh was strategically significant for this reason. While both Rameses II and Muwatalli II claimed victory in the aftermath, the peace treaty that was signed in the years following (the first recorded one of its kind anywhere in the world) is arguably an achievement for both leaders.

Before considering the events of the battle in detail, it is worth pausing to consider the truthfulness of historical sources that record military victories. Such sources are created with a specific agenda – to glorify the leader who emerged victorious. Consequently, it's worth considering what practical involvement pharaohs had with their military achievements. In battle scenes on temple and tomb walls, all arrows come from the bow of the pharaoh and he is often the only one depicted charging against the enemy. Written and visual sources reinforce each other by putting emphasis on the king's supreme ability as a warrior. While textual sources may use the daily records created by scribes to note dates and troop movements, any action by the pharaoh is adjusted to fit the idealised image he wanted to curate. Consequently, written sources cannot be used alone to determine whether the pharaoh fought as described or not – they are simply too idealised at the key moments of battle.

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SOURCE 6.33 Hittite (yellow) and Egyptian (purple) territories in 1279 BCE

To address this idealisation, it is possible to examine other types of evidence in order to make a judgement based on probability. For instance, a pharaoh like Rameses II who fought glorious campaigns would surely have some cuts or broken bones – something to indicate a life spent fighting his enemies. Perhaps unsurprisingly, none of the royal mummies show any sign of battle wounds. If they were present at the battle itself (or even the campaigns they claimed to win), it is more than likely that they were far from the action.

The 'Poem of Pentaour', written or dictated by Rameses II, is inscribed in most of the temples and monuments built in that period.

SOURCE 6.34 Extract from the 'Poem of Pentaour' in C. F. Horne, *The Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East; with an Historical Survey and Descriptions,* vol. 2, Parke, 1917

The King (Ramesses II) had armed his people and his chariots. He arrived as far as Kadesh. And when the King approached the city, the miserable King of the hostile Hittites had arrived. He had assembled with him all the peoples. Their number was endless; nothing like it had ever been before. They (Hittites) stood in ambush northwest of the town of Kadesh. Then they went out from Kadesh, on the side of the south, and threw themselves into the midst of the legion of Ra [Note 1], which gave way, and was not prepared for the fight. Their King's warriors and chariots gave way before them. The King had placed himself to the north of the town of Kadesh, on the west side of the river Arunatha. Then they came to tell the King the attack of the Hittites.

Then the King (Ramesses II) arose like his father Monthu. He seized his weapons and put on his armor. The King had quickened his course; he rushed into the middle of the hostile hosts of Hatti. All alone, no other was with him. When Pharaoh had done this, he looked behind him. He was surrounded by two thousand five hundred pairs of horses. His retreat was beset by the bravest heroes of the miserable King of the people of Hatti.

(The King says): 'Not one of my princes, not one of my captains of the chariot, not one of my chief men, not one of my knights was there. My warriors and my chariots had abandoned me. Not one of them was there to take part in the battle. I had met two thousand five hundred pairs of horses. I was in the midst of the charioteers, but they were dashed in pieces before my horses. Not one of them raised his hand to fight. Their courage was sunken in their breasts, their limbs gave way, they could not hurl the dart,

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nor had they the courage to thrust with the spear. I made them fall into the waters just as the crocodiles fall in. They tumbled down on their faces one after another. I killed them at my pleasure, so that not one looked back behind him, nor did another turn around. I killed them; no one escaped me.'

When the earth was again light in the morning [on the second day of the war], the King arranged the hosts of his warriors for the fight. He stood there prepared for the battle, like a bull which has whetted his horns. The King had power over the enemies and slew them without their being able to escape. As bodies tumbled before his horses, so they lay there stretched out altogether in their blood.

Then the King of the hostile people of Hatti sent a messenger to pray piteously to the great name of the King (Ramesses II), speaking thus: 'Better is peace than war. Give us freedom.'

The King assembled all the leaders of the army and they were permitted to hear the contents of the message which the King of Hatti had sent to him. When they had heard these words, they answered to the King: 'Excellent, excellent is that!'

Then the King went in peace to the land of Egypt with his princes, with his army, and his charioteers, in serene humour, in the sight of his people. All countries feared the power of the King, as of the lord of both the worlds.

Note 1: The Egyptian army consisted of four large troops: the army of Ra, the army of Amun, the army of Set and the army of Ptah. When the Hittite attack started, these four armies were situated far from each other.



SOURCE 6.35 Depiction of Rameses II slaying one enemy while trampling another; from a rock-cut relief at Abu Simbel

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SOURCE 6.36 Rameses and chariot at the Battle of Kadesh; relief from inside the temple at Abu Simbel

Unlike the Ancient Egyptian sources, there is only a small description of the Battle of Kadesh in the extant Hittite sources.

SOURCE 6.37 Hittite accounts of Kadesh. T. Bryce, *The Kingdom of the Hittites*, Oxford Academic Books, 2005

When Muwattalli ... became king, the people of Amurru [name of the region, in this historical period, including city of Kadesh] broke faith with him, and had this to say to him: 'From free individuals we have become vassals. But now we are your vassals no longer!' And they entered into the following of the king of Egypt. Thereupon Muwattalli ... and the King of Egypt did battle with each other over the people of Amurru. Muwattalli defeated the king of Egypt and destroyed the Land of Amurru with his weapons and subjugated it

...

Muwattalli campaigned against the king of Egypt and the king of Amurru, when he defeated the kings of Egypt and Amurru, he went back to Aba. When Muwattalli, my brother defeated Aba, he ... went back to Hatti ...

SOURCE 6.38 Who won according to a historian? T. Bryce, *The Kingdom of the Hittites*, Oxford Academic Books, 2005

Both sides claimed victory. The Egyptian records clearly depict the battle as an overwhelming triumph for the pharaoh. On the other hand our Hittite records, while they contain no surviving account of the battle itself, represent the outcome as a victory for Muwattalli. The likelihood is that after a desperate rally from Rameses and the forces immediately at his disposal, the Egyptian army was saved at the eleventh hour from a devastating defeat, and the battle itself ended in a stalemate; both sides sustained heavy losses and neither emerged as the decisive victor.

In the longer term, however, Muwattalli was the ultimate victor. After fending off the Hittite's onslaught, Ramesses promptly withdrew his forces far to the south. Not only had he failed to regain for Egypt Hittite subject territories north to Kadesh, but his retreating forces were pursued by Muwattalli into Egyptian-held territory, as far south as the Land of Aba (region of Damascus) ... For Muwattalli, the most important sequel to the battle of Kadesh was his recapture of the kingdom of Amurru. Control of this kingdom was of critical importance to the security of Hittite rule in Syria.

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The pharaohs of the 19th Dynasty were conscious that the Egyptian empire had declined as a result of Akhenaten's preoccupation with religious reforms. After a draw at the Battle of Kadesh, both Rameses II and the Hittite king accepted a treaty of alliance and peace – the first international treaty in existence. It is worth nothing that each of the rival kings (Rameses II and Hattusili III – successor of Muwattalli) both sought to save face by claiming they accepted the appeal of the other for peace. What follows are extracts from the blunter Egyptian version (a Hittite version also exists).

SOURCE 6.39 Peace Treaty of Kadesh, 1269 BCE. N. M. Bailkey and R. Lim, *Readings in Ancient History: Thought and Experience from Gilgamesh to St Augustine*, Wadsworth, 2012

Copy of the tablet of silver which the great chief Hatti, Hattusilis, caused to be brought to Pharaoh by the hand of his messenger Tartesub and his messenger Ramose, in order to beg peace from the Majesty of Usi-ma-Re-setpen-Re, son of Re, Ramesse-mi-Amun [Rameses II], bull of rulers, who makes his boundary where he will in every land ...

Peace and Brotherhood

Behold, Hattusilis, the great chief of Hatti, has made himself in a treaty with [Rameses], the great ruler of Egypt, beginning with this day, to cause to be made good peace and good brotherhood between us forever; and he is in brotherhood with me and at peace with me, and I am in brotherhood with him and at peace with him forever.

And since Muwattallis, the great chief of Hatti, my brother, hastened after his fate, and Hattusilis took his seat as great chief of Hatti on the throne of his father; behold I have become with Ramesse-mi-Amun, the great ruler of Egypt, we being together in our peace and our brotherhood; and it is better than the peace and brotherhood of formerly, which was in the land.

Behold, I, being the great chief of Hatti, am with Ramesse-mi-Amun, the great ruler of Egypt, in good peace and brotherhood.

And the children of the children of the great chief of Hatti shall be in brotherhood and at peace with the children of the children of Ramesse-mi-Amun, the great ruler of Egypt; they being in our policy of brotherhood and our policy of peace.

And the land of Egypt with the land Hatti shall be at peace and in brotherhood like us forever; and hostilities shall not be made between them forever.

Mutual Nonaggression

And the great chief of Hatti shall not trespass into the land of Egypt forever to take aught from it; and [Rameses], the great ruler of Egypt, shall not trespass into the land of Hatti to take aught from it forever ...

Mutual Defense

And if another enemy come to the lands of [Rameses], the great ruler of Egypt, and he send to the great chief of Hatti saying, 'Come with me against him'; the great chief of Hatti shall come to him, the great chief of Hatti shall slay his enemy.

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But if it be not the desire of the great chief of Hatti to come, he shall send his troops and his chariotry and shall slay his enemy.

Or if Ramesse-mi-Amun, the great ruler of Egypt, become incensed against servants of his, and they do another offence against him, and he go to slay his enemy; the great chief of Hatti shall act with him to destroy everyone against whom they shall be incensed ...

Extradition of Fugitives

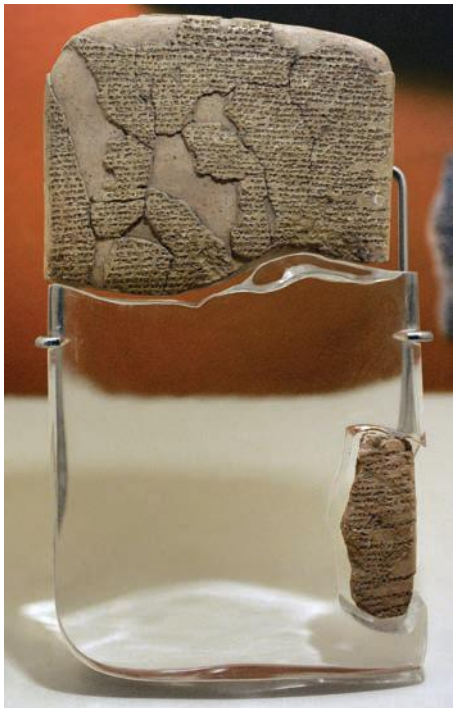
If any great man flee from the land of Egypt and he come to the lands of the great chief of Hatti; or a town or a district ..., belonging to the lands of Ramesse-mi-Amun, the great ruler of Egypt, and they come to the great chief of Hatti: the great chief of Hatti shall not receive them. The great chief of Hatti shall cause them to be brought to [Rameses], the great ruler of Egypt, their lord, on account of it.

Or if one [common] man or two men who are unknown flee ... and they come to the land of Hatti, they shall be brought to Ramesse-mi-Amun, the great ruler of Egypt ...

Divine Witnesses

As for these words of the treaty made by the great chief of Hatti with Ramesse-mi-Amun, the great ruler of Egypt, in writing upon this tablet of silver; as for these words, a thousand gods, male gods and female gods of those of the land of Hatti, together with a thousands gods, male gods and female gods of those of the land of Egypt—they are with me as witnesses hearing these words ...

As to these words which are upon this tablet of silver of the land of Hatti and of the land of Egypt, as to him who shall not keep them, a thousand gods of the land of Hatti and a thousand gods of the land of Egypt shall destroy his house, his land and his servants. But he who shall keep these words which are on this tablet of silver, be they Hatti, or be they Egyptians, and who do not neglect them, a thousand gods of the land of Hatti and a thousand gods of the land of Egypt will cause him to be healthy and to live, together with his houses and his land and his servants.



SOURCE 6.40 Fragments of the Treaty of Kadesh

ACTIVITY 6.16

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Use Sources 6.33–6.40 to develop an argument for who you believe 'won' the battle.

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CONCLUDING STUDY

6.11 The legacy of Ancient Egypt

Ancient Egypt will always remain a topic of fascination for modern historians and the general public alike. In a similar vein to the Ancient Eastern cultures like the Assyrians and Babylonians, Ancient Egyptian culture is far removed and almost unrecognisable to us. As Ancient Greece and Rome are considered the foundations of Western society and culture, there are numerous elements of them that are recognisable to people today. It wasn't really until wealthy Europeans began touring Egypt in the eighteenth century that it slowly returned to public attention. When news of the incredible remains of temples and tombs was published throughout Europe in the nineteenth century, enthusiasm for all things Egyptian began to rise. Artists began to sell drawings and paintings of the ruins. The publicity attracted amateur archaeologists to the area.

Sadly, the early archaeologists were not trained in how to correctly care for the fragile artefacts that had been preserved in the Egyptian climate for thousands of years. Many of the amateur archaeologists carelessly damaged many items, paintings, inscriptions and buildings in their desire to find treasures to take back to Europe.

One of these early amateur archaeologists was an Italian called Giovanni Battista Belzoni. He spent significant time in the area around Thebes and uncovered many famous sites. He is most famous for uncovering the tomb of Pharaoh Seti I in the Valley of the Kings, but his archaeological technique destroyed as many artefacts as it saved. Here, Belzoni describes exploring the Theban tombs in 1817:

SOURCE 6.41 G. Belzoni, *Narrative of the Operations and Recent Discoveries in Egypt and Nubia,* John Murray, 1820, pp. 156–8

> Of some of these tombs many persons could not withstand the suffocating air, which often causes fainting. A vast quantity of dust rises, so fine that it enters into the throat and nostrils, and chokes the nose and mouth to such a degree, that it requires great power of lungs to resist it and the strong effluvia of the mummies … After the exertion of entering into such a place, through a passage of fifty, a hundred, three hundred, or perhaps six hundred yards, nearly overcome, I sought a resting-place, found one, and contrived to sit; but when my weight bore on the body of an Egyptian, it crushed it like a band-box. I naturally had recourse to my hands to sustain my weight, but they found no better support; so that I sunk altogether among the broken mummies, with a crash of bones, rags, and wooden cases, which raised such a dust as kept me motionless for a quarter of an hour, waiting till it subsided again. I could not remove from the place, however, without increasing it, and every step I took I crushed a mummy in some part or other. Once I was conducted from such a place to another resembling it, through a passage of about twenty feet in length, and no wider than that a body could be forced through. It was choked with mummies, and I could not pass without putting my face in contact with that of some decayed Egyptian; but as the passage inclined downwards, my own weight helped me on: however, I could not avoid being covered with bones, legs, arms, and heads rolling from above. Thus I proceeded from one cave to another, all full of mummies piled up in various ways, some standing, some lying, and some on their heads. The purpose of my researches was to rob the Egyptians of their papyri; of which I found a few hidden in their breasts, under their arms, in the space above the knees, or on the legs, and covered by the numerous folds of cloth, that envelop the mummy.

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ACTIVITY **6.17**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Read Source 6.41 and answer the questions.

1. What did Belzoni admit to destroying while he was exploring the tombs at Thebes?
2. What techniques did he use?
3. What did Belzoni say his real purpose was while he was exploring?
4. Do some research on Belzoni. What training did he receive in order to be an archaeologist?
5. Should Belzoni be remembered as a pioneering archaeologist or a reckless and incompetent explorer who destroyed ancient artefacts in his quests?

While the development of modern satellite technology has enabled scholars to explore more of the landscape, like other ancient archaeological sites, Egypt's pyramids and tombs are not immune to the pressures of modern life.

ACTIVITY **6.18**

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Look online for articles about funerary practices in other ancient societies.
With further reading, what evidence can you find that Ancient Egyptian culture influenced other ancient civilisations?



SOURCE 6.42 J. A. Kruseman, *Portrait of Giovanni Belzoni*, 1824. Belzoni is depicted here, dressed in obviously 'foreign' clothing. Why would he have wanted himself shown in this way?

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SOURCE 6.43 Archaeologist Howard Carter opening the sarcophagus of Tutankhamun. How significant is Howard Carter's discovery to Egyptology?



SOURCE 6.44 Satellite imagery taken in 2019 shows the pyramids at Giza increasingly surrounded by new developments. How has the growing urbanisation in Cairo impacted the site? What preservation challenges do archaeologists currently face?

ACTIVITY **6.19**

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. What problems are currently being faced by the Egyptian people in regard to preserving their history? Conduct online research and answer this question. You could use one or more of the following news stories as a starting point:
   - U.S. helps Egypt preserve antiquities: https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/10727
   - Egyptian Museum: Cairo's looted treasure: https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/10729
   - Egypt turns to technology in effort to protect ancient treasures from looters: https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/10730
   - Egypt welcomes back tourists after seven years of political instability despite security concerns: https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/10731
2. Conduct research on this investigation question: What other ancient sites are at risk because of social, political, religious or economic reasons? Write an extended response to the key question and focus on one ancient site. Ensure your response makes use of correct language and referencing conventions.
3. What similarities are shared by your site and Egyptian ones?

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- The Ancient Egyptians had a vast pantheon that they believed in.
- The Ancient Egyptians believed that they could continue to exist in the afterlife, so their bodies and other possessions needed to be preserved.
- The mummification methods used by the Ancient Egyptians made use of natural resources, and differences in the process were influenced by the socio-economic status of the deceased.
- It was the responsibility of the family to ensure the deceased was suitably prepared for the afterlife.
- The deceased would be held to account for their actions during their life – Ancient Egyptians were expected to live a life that upheld *Ma'at*.
- The Ancient Egyptians had a variety of texts that they reproduced inside tombs that would guide and direct the deceased as they journeyed to the afterlife.
- The Battle of Kadesh in 1274 BCE is an excellent example of the challenge historians face in determining a point of truth in the historical record. Despite both Rameses II and the Hittite king Muwatalli II claiming victory, a peace treaty was later signed (the first recorded one of its kind).
- While Egyptian records show Rameses II defeating the Hittites almost single-handedly, it is likely that he was far from the action. Presenting the pharaoh as a strong and powerful figure added to their divine status.



SOURCE 6.45 Tourists outside the Karnak Temple in Luxor

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND

1. Create a revision game that tests your knowledge of the key terms, concepts and issues.
2. In small groups, find out what the roles, rights and responsibilities were of the other members of Ancient Egyptian society (viziers, priests, women, slaves, merchants, scribes, craftsmen and so on).

DEVISE

Select a pharaoh from the 19th Dynasty to be the subject of this inquiry question: What conclusions can be made about the pharaoh's personal life, achievements and legacy based on evidence in their tomb? Generate sub-questions as necessary, and ensure your research includes primary and secondary sources.

ANALYSE

Pharaohs also used their tombs as a record of their achievements. Select one pharaoh from the Ramesside period and analyse the visual and literary texts on the walls of their tomb. What achievements and/or accomplishments was the pharaoh the most proud of?

EVALUATE

1. Using a primary and secondary source gathered in the 'Devise' question, evaluate the sources' usefulness and reliability.
2. Identify the author's or creator's perspective in the sources and explain how that influenced the work they produced.

SYNTHESISE

Form a judgement using the evidence gathered in the previous question. What does the scale and decoration of the tomb suggest about how the pharaoh was perceived by their subjects? Be sure to incorporate historical evidence that is corroborated, reliable and represents different perspectives.

COMMUNICATE

Using the research conducted for the 'Devise' question, present your findings to the class in a format of your choice (visual, oral or written).

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response question

Examine the validity of one of these statements:

1. Funerary practices and rituals were an integral part of the Ancient Egyptians' beliefs about the afterlife.
2. Archaeological records of death and burial are the most valuable source of information historians have for the lives of everyday people.

Investigation tasks

1. Choose an artefact that relates to the death and burial practices of one ancient society. Investigate what historians can learn about that society through the artefact.
2. Select an aspect of death and burial practices (e.g. use of cremation or inhumation). Investigate how that aspect moved between and/or carried across different ancient cultures.

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Unit 2

PERSONALITIES IN THEIR TIMES

UNIT DESCRIPTION

In Unit 2, students investigate key personalities of the Ancient World in the context of their times. Students examine the social, political and economic institutions in which the personality is positioned and focus on an analysis and evaluation of the differing ways in which they have been interpreted and represented from ancient to modern times. Students consider the attributes that characterise a significant ancient personality and the driving forces behind such individuals.

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UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. Devise historical questions and conduct research about personalities from the Ancient World.
2. Comprehend terms, concepts and issues about personalities in the Ancient World.
3. Analyse evidence from historical sources about personalities from the Ancient World.
4. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of evidence from historical sources about personalities in the Ancient World.
5. Synthesise evidence from historical sources to develop historical arguments and decisions about personalities in the Ancient World.
6. Create responses that communicate to suit purpose about personalities in the Ancient World.

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Temple of Hatshepsut

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KEY CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- context, reliability and usefulness of sources
- perspectives and representation
- evidence
- continuity and change
- cause and effect
- significance
- empathy
- contestability.

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KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How can we determine the motivations, attributes and achievements of significant ancient personalities?
- How have ancient personalities been represented throughout time and why do these representations change?

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CHAPTERS IN THIS UNIT

Chapter 7	Hatshepsut
Chapter 8	Agrippina the Younger
Chapter 9	Akhenaten
Chapter 10	Perikles
Chapter 11	Boudica

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Topics 1 and 2
PERSONALITIES IN THEIR TIMES

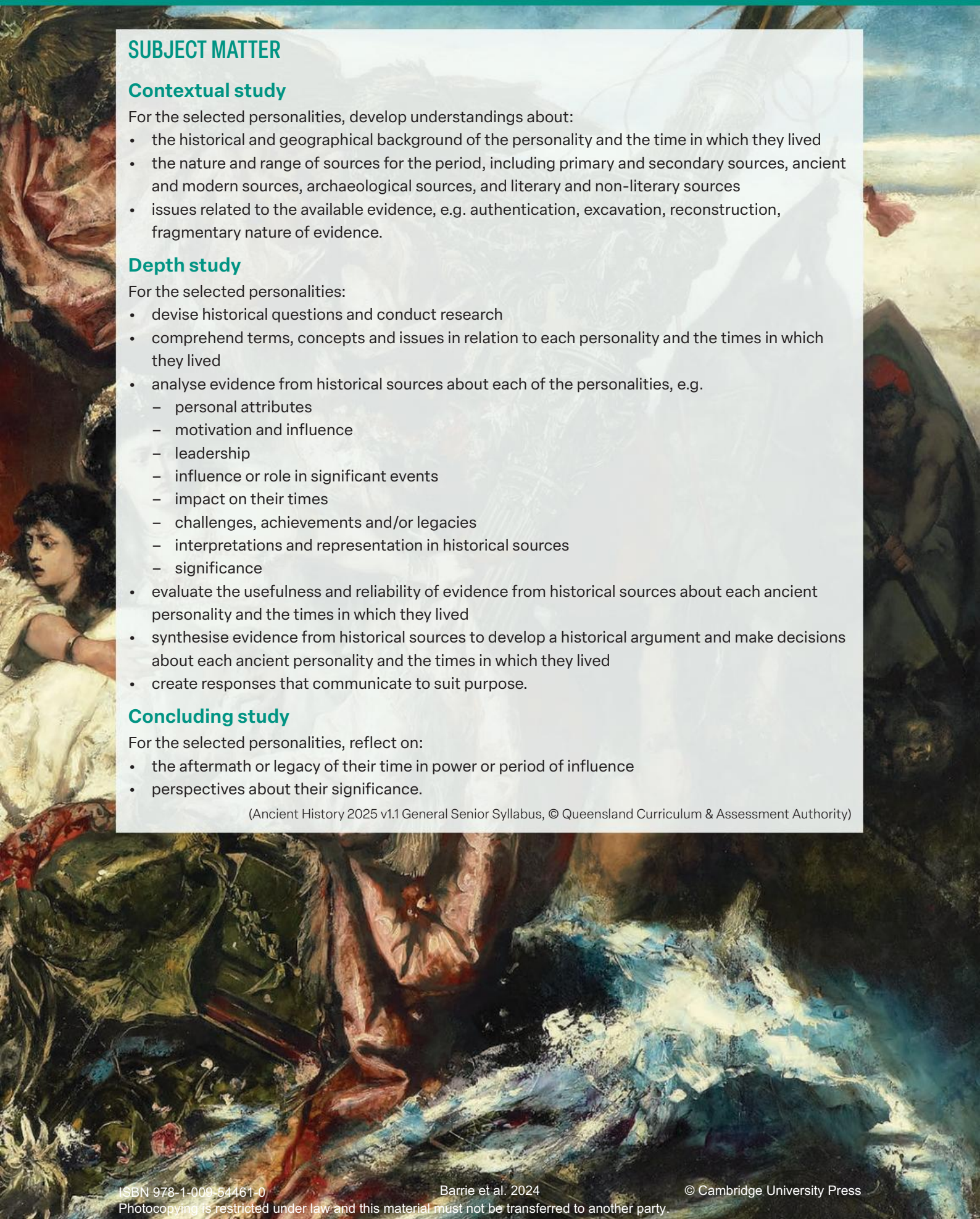
TOPIC DESCRIPTION

Two topics are studied in this unit. For each topic, schools select one personality from the Ancient World, provided there is sufficient evidence available for a depth study.



Gustav Wertheimer, *The shipwreck of Agrippina*, 1874

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SUBJECT MATTER

Contextual study

For the selected personalities, develop understandings about:

- the historical and geographical background of the personality and the time in which they lived
- the nature and range of sources for the period, including primary and secondary sources, ancient and modern sources, archaeological sources, and literary and non-literary sources
- issues related to the available evidence, e.g. authentication, excavation, reconstruction, fragmentary nature of evidence.

Depth study

For the selected personalities:

- devise historical questions and conduct research
- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to each personality and the times in which they lived
- analyse evidence from historical sources about each of the personalities, e.g.
  - personal attributes
  - motivation and influence
  - leadership
  - influence or role in significant events
  - impact on their times
  - challenges, achievements and/or legacies
  - interpretations and representation in historical sources
  - significance
- evaluate the usefulness and reliability of evidence from historical sources about each ancient personality and the times in which they lived
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to develop a historical argument and make decisions about each ancient personality and the times in which they lived
- create responses that communicate to suit purpose.

Concluding study

For the selected personalities, reflect on:

- the aftermath or legacy of their time in power or period of influence
- perspectives about their significance.

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Chapter 7

HATSHEPSUT

Syllabus reference: Unit 2, Topics 1 and 2: Personalities in their times

SIMON CORVAN

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How can we determine the motivations, attributes and achievements of significant ancient personalities?
- How have ancient personalities been represented throughout time and why do these representations change?

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SOURCE 7.1 Statue of Hatshepsut, found in her tomb at Deir el-Bahri

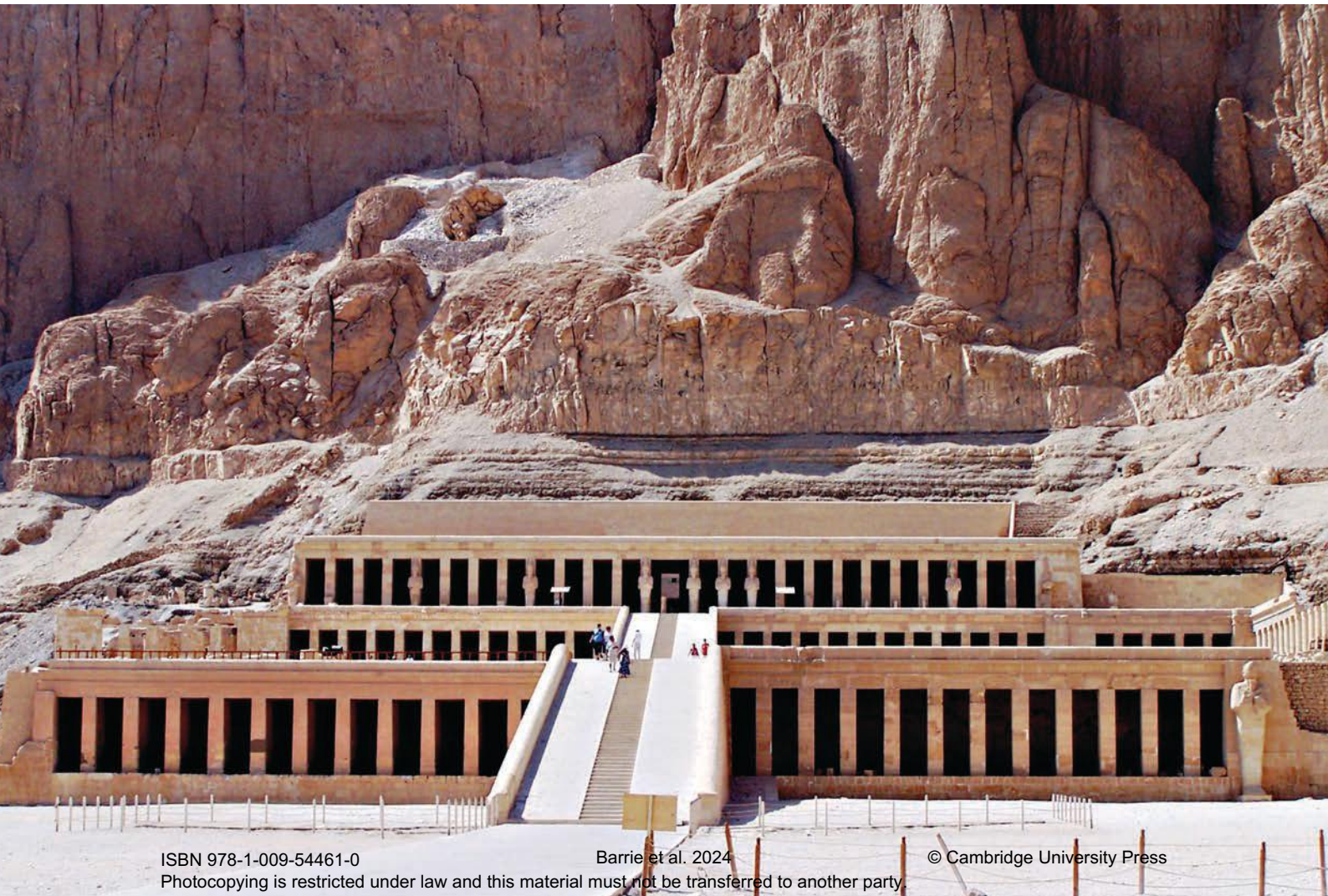
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FOCUS: THE MODERN DESECRATION OF STATUES

Why destroy statues of leaders? In recent years people have torn down statues of now controversial figures. In the United States of America many statues of slave owners and Confederate generals such as Robert E. Lee have been torn down or defaced. Across nations that were invaded and colonised by European powers, statues of the explorer Christopher Columbus have been smashed. In Australia, statues of Captain James Cook have been defaced and covered in red paint on Australia Day. When the USSR fell at the end of the Cold War, there was a huge wave of destruction of statues of political leaders such as Stalin. There is something powerful about smashing the past and erasing a person from public spaces.

In 1927 the Metropolitan Museum of Art's archaeological team in Egypt, led by Herbert Winlock, were working on uncovering a massive temple complex at Deir el-Bahri, across the Nile from Thebes and Karnak. The team was shocked to discover that someone had engaged in a malicious attack that seemed clearly and deliberately designed to erase a pharaoh from history. Winlock noted that there were many smashed statues of a pharaoh – pieces 'from the size of a fingertip to others weighing a ton or more'. The Pharaoh Hatshepsut, who was nearly lost to history, had been put through 'almost every conceivable indignity', he wrote, as someone had expressed 'their spite on the [pharaoh's] brilliantly chiseled, smiling features'. There is no doubt that the Ancient Egyptians worshipped their leaders like gods, and the desecration seemed to be very specifically targeted rather than the collateral damage of war.

SOURCE 7.2 Mortuary temple of Hatshepsut



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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

pharaoh the ruler of Ancient Egypt

18th Dynasty the 18th Dynasty of Egypt is classified as the first dynasty of the Ancient Egyptian New Kingdom period

New Kingdom one of three main periods of Egyptian history, which began roughly in 1550 BCE and lasted until 1069 BCE

dynasty a sequence of rulers from the same family

Introduction

Hatshepsut was the fifth **pharaoh** of the **18th Dynasty** of the **New Kingdom** era. This **dynasty**, a family line of pharaohs, had reclaimed control of Egypt from the foreign invaders, the Hyksos. The act of reconquering Egypt began the period known as the New Kingdom era, a period in which Egypt became its most militarily powerful.

7.1 When and where did Hatshepsut live?

It is notoriously difficult to pinpoint precise dates for Egyptian chronology; however, a commonly agreed approach is that Hatshepsut was born in 1507 BCE and died in 1458 BCE.

TABLE 7.1 A list of key dates

1507 BCE	Hatshepsut is born, the only child of Pharaoh Thutmose I and his primary wife Ahmose; if she had been male, she would have inherited the throne.
1495 BCE	Hatshepsut marries her half-brother Thutmose II and becomes Queen of Egypt.
1479 BCE	Thutmose III is crowned pharaoh; Hatshepsut is appointed regent as Thutmose III is only two years old.
c. 1477 BCE	Hatshepsut is crowned pharaoh sometime during her second and seventh year as regent. After this she is considered a co-regent and shares the rule with Thutmose III.
1472 BCE	Hatshepsut sends an expedition to Punt, considered extraordinary as no Egyptians had been there in five hundred years.
1466 BCE	Hatshepsut sends an expedition to the turquoise mines in the Sinai region where Egyptians had not been in over one hundred years.
1463 BCE	Hatshepsut celebrates her Heb-Sed (renewal ceremony) and orders the erection of two obelisks coated in electrum (to shine like the sun) at Karnak. Work begins on the Red Chapel, a sacred building to Amun-Re.
1458 BCE	Hatshepsut dies, possibly from bone cancer.

During the reign of her husband, Thutmose II, Hatshepsut performed the traditional duties of the great royal wife. British Egyptologist Joyce Tyldesley has argued that before becoming a powerful pharaoh, Hatshepsut lived a pretty ordinary life. She was first a queen consort and then a queen regent. She was a typical wife and mother, showing respect to her husband and stepson, and loving her young daughter. She followed the traditional roles expected of royal women at that time.

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A brief history of pharaohs and what they meant to the Ancient Egyptians is described in the extract below by modern historian Joshua J. Mark.

SOURCE 7.3 J. J. Mark, 'Pharaoh', *World History Encyclopedia* (www.worldhistory.org), 2 September 2009

The Pharaoh in ancient Egypt was the political and religious leader of the people and held the titles Lord of the Two Lands and High Priest of Every Temple. The word pharaoh is the Greek form of the Egyptian *pero* or *per-a-a*, which was the designation for the royal residence and means Great House. The name of the residence became associated with the ruler and, in time, was used exclusively for the leader of the people. The early monarchs of Egypt were not known as pharaohs but as kings. ... In c. 3000 BCE the 1st Dynasty appeared in Egypt with the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt by the king Menes (now believed to be Narmer). Menes/Narmer is depicted on inscriptions wearing the two crowns of Egypt, signifying unification, and his reign was thought to be in accordance with the will of the gods; but the office of the king itself was not associated with the divine until later. During the 2nd Dynasty of Egypt [c. 2890–2686 BCE] King Raneb (also known as Nebra) linked his name with the divine and his reign with the will of the gods. Following Raneb, the rulers of the later dynasties were equated with the gods, and with the duties and obligations due those gods. As supreme ruler of the people, the pharaoh was considered a god on Earth, the intermediary between the gods and the people, and when he died, he was thought to become Osiris, the god of the dead. As such, in his role of High Priest of Every Temple, it was the pharaoh's duty to build great temples and monuments celebrating his own achievements and paying homage to the gods of the land.

The role of the pharaoh, specifically in terms of laws and defence is further outlined by Joshua J. Mark:

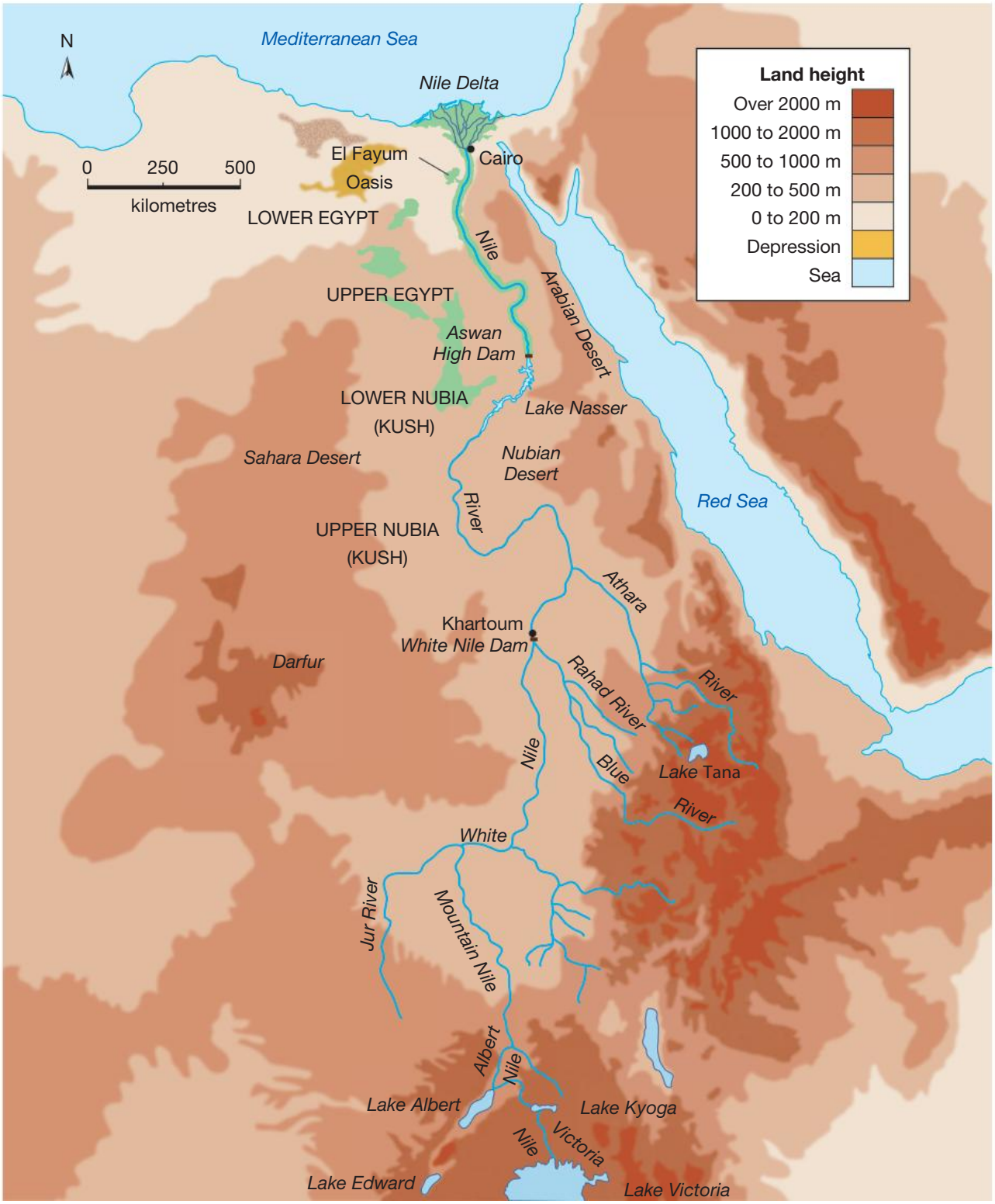
SOURCE 7.4 J. J. Mark, 'Pharaoh', *World History Encyclopedia* (www.worldhistory.org), 2 September 2009

As Lord of the Two Lands the pharaoh made the laws, owned all the land in Egypt, collected taxes, and made war or defended the country against aggression. ... The chief responsibility of the pharaoh was to maintain ***Ma'at***, universal harmony, in the country. The goddess Ma'at (pronounced *may-et* or *my-eht*) was thought to work her will through the pharaoh but it was up to the individual ruler to interpret the goddess's will correctly and to then act on it. Accordingly, warfare was an essential aspect of the rule of pharaoh, especially when it was seen as necessary for the restoration of balance and harmony in the land (as the *Poem of Pentaur*, written by the scribes of Rameses II the Great, on his valor at the Battle of Kadesh attests). The pharaoh had a sacred duty to defend the borders of the land, but also to attack neighboring countries for natural resources if it was thought that this was in the interest of harmony.

Ma'at the goddess of order, truth and balance; evolved into a concept meaning justice, harmony and balance

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SOURCE 7.5 Map of Ancient Egypt

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It is important to recognise that Ancient Egyptian history extends over thousands of years and many different families or rulers (known as dynasties). Joshua J. Mark's work gives a brief overview of some of the most significant times and people.

SOURCE 7.6 J. J. Mark, 'Pharaoh', *World History Encyclopedia* (www.worldhistory.org), 2 September 2009

By the 3rd Dynasty King Djoser commanded enough wealth, prestige and resources to have the Step Pyramid built as his eternal home. Designed by the vizier Imhotep, the Step Pyramid was the tallest structure of its day and a very popular tourist attraction then as it is today. The pyramid was designed primarily as Djoser's final resting place but the splendor of the surrounding complex and great height of the pyramid were intended to honor not only Djoser but Egypt itself, and the prosperity of the land under his reign. Other 3rd Dynasty kings such as Sekhemkhet and Khaba built pyramids following Imhotep's design (the Buried Pyramid and the Layer Pyramid), and created a type of monument which would become synonymous with Egypt, even though the pyramid structure was used by many other cultures (notably the Maya, who had no contact at all with ancient Egypt). Old Kingdom monarchs [c. 2686–2160 BCE] then followed suit culminating in the Great Pyramid at Giza, immortalising Khufu, and making manifest the power and divine rule of the pharaoh in Egypt.

With the collapse of the Middle Kingdom in [1650] BCE, Egypt came to be ruled by the mysterious Semitic people known as the Hyksos. The Hyksos, however, emulated all the trappings of the Egyptian pharaohs and kept the customs alive until their kingdom was overthrown by the royal line of the Egyptian 17th Dynasty [New Kingdom], which then gave rise to some of the most famous of the [later] pharaohs such as Rameses the Great and Amenhotep III. Although pharaohs were predominantly male, Queen Hatshepsut of the 18th Dynasty (also known as [Maatkare]) ruled successfully for over twenty years and, during her reign, Egypt prospered. Hatshepsut was responsible for more public works projects than any pharaoh save Rameses II, and her rule is marked by peace and affluence throughout the land. When Tuthmosis III came to power after her, he had her image removed from all her temples and monuments in an effort, it is speculated, to restore order to the land in that a woman should never have held the title of the pharaoh, and he feared her example might inspire other women to 'forget their place' in the sacred order and aspire to power the gods had reserved for males.

ACTIVITY **7.1**



Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Read Sources 7.3, 7.4 and 7.6. In general, what were the main duties and responsibilities of the pharaoh?
2. Research the reign of Thutmose I, who was considered a 'model' of typical pharaonic rule. Use the following four areas as a guide to make notes on him as a:
   - **a.** warrior
   - **b.** builder
   - **c.** administrator
   - **d.** religious leader.
3. As extension work, research the reign of Hatshepsut and compare her reign to the model of typical pharaonic rule provided by Thutmose I. Use the same four areas as a guide for comparison.

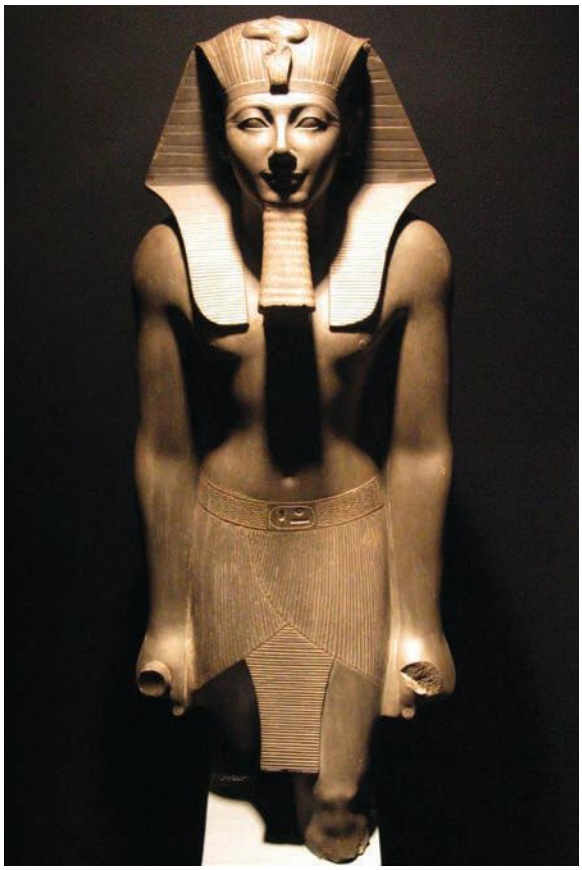
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7.2 How did Hatshepsut rise to power?

When Hatshepsut's husband Thutmose II passed away, his son, by a concubine named Isis, was crowned as Thutmose III. However, Thutmose III was approximately two years old at the time, which meant he needed someone to help him rule Egypt until he was old enough to do so on his own. It was relatively common for a **regent** to be appointed to manage the country for a period of time. Hatshepsut became regent for the young king, managing the affairs of Egypt for him until he was old enough to rule alone.

While there are many issues to consider in relation to Hatshepsut, the most significant issue is her rise to power and position as regent for the infant Thutmose III. The legitimacy of Hatshepsut's claims to power, as well as the timing and validity of her accession as pharaoh, has long been subject for debate. It remains the most controversial issue of her reign for modern scholars.



SOURCE 7.7 Statue of Thutmose III

While the Ancient Egyptians preferred male rulers, women were not blocked from positions of power. The title of **God's Wife** was common during the 18th Dynasty and conferred power upon the royal female who held it. Hatshepsut held the title of God's Wife during her marriage to Thutmose II and passed this title on to her daughter Neferure. This acceptance of female rulers was especially true in challenging times when necessity overcame tradition. In the earliest dynasties, there were several female rulers who were outright pharaohs rather than regents, although archaeological evidence for this is scant. Khentkawes I of the 4th Dynasty and Nitocris of the 6th Dynasty were both likely to have ruled outright as pharaohs. During the last part of the 12th Dynasty, Amenemhat IV died, likely without heirs, and his daughter Sobeknefru ruled as king in such a manner that she was applauded as a national heroine. In the New Kingdom era, there is also evidence of queens rising to significant prominence. Queen Tetisheri was greatly honoured, and obviously loved by her grandson King Ahmose, while Queen Ahhotep, Tetisheri's daughter and likely the wife of King Seqenenre Tao II and mother of King Ahmose, almost certainly played an important advisory role in the political and economic issues. Queen Ahhotep was also possibly regent to her son, and Ahmose's Karnak **stele** suggests that during the regency she may have quelled a rebellion in Upper Egypt:

regent a temporary ruler who acts as a caretaker when the pharaoh is too young to rule

God's Wife a powerful royal title

stele an upright stone slab or column typically bearing a commemorative inscription or relief design, often serving as a gravestone

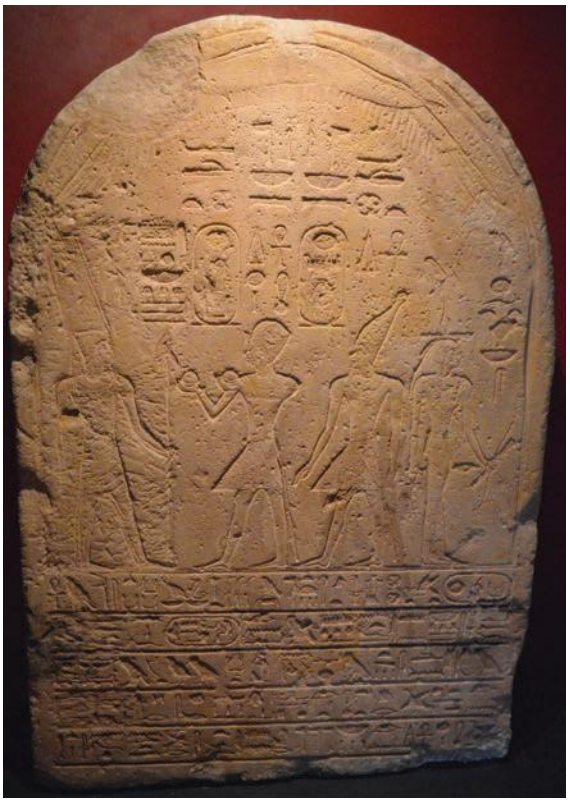
SOURCE 7.8 I. Edwards, C. Gadd, N. Hammond and E. Sollberger (eds), *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume II, Part 1, Cambridge University Press, 1973, p. 306

> **One who cares for Egypt. She has looked after her soldiers; she has guarded her; she has brought back her fugitives and collected together her deserters; she has pacified Upper Egypt and expelled her rebels.**

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The language of Ahmose's Karnak stele strongly suggests that Queen Ahhotep led soldiers and successfully dealt with military threats to her son's rule. Egypt clearly accepted mothers who defended their children and queens who carried on ruling in their deceased husband's name. Hatshepsut's regency therefore should not be considered particularly unusual. However, at some point early in her regency (possibly as early as year two) she was crowned pharaoh and became a co-regent with Thutmose III. This dual rulership lasted until Hatshepsut's death 20 years later and well beyond the point at which Thutmose was old enough to assume outright control of Egypt.



SOURCE 7.9 Dual stele of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III

ACTIVITY 7.2

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Consider Source 7.9.

1. Suggest why Hatshepsut and Thutmose III are depicted at a similar size, and why each is wearing one of the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt.
2. Suggest initial reasons for Hatshepsut not taking sole control over Egypt.

Although the length of Hatshepsut's regency and rule was highly unusual, an inscription in the tomb of a noble, Ineni, who was overseer of the granaries of **Amun-Re**, shows that Hatshepsut's rule was accepted because it ensured stability. When describing Hatshepsut's co-regency, Ineni uses imagery of Egypt in terms of being a boat (bow ropes and mooring stakes) and of Hatshepsut as being able to manage the boat skilfully. To modern audiences this is perhaps an odd image, but to the Nile-worshipping Ancient Egyptians this would have been clear and reassuring.

Amun-Re one of the most worshipped gods of the New Kingdom era; composite of two gods, Amun and Re

An element of this desire for stability is in the throne name that she took, Maatkare, which links her name to Ma'at (the goddess of order):

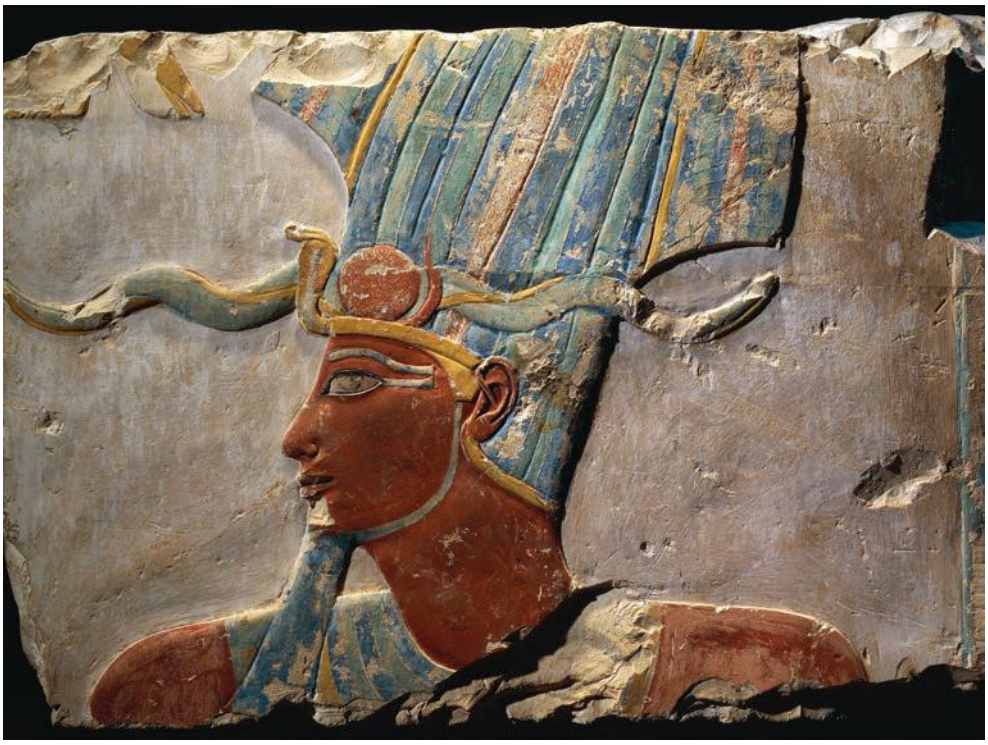
SOURCE 7.10 Ineni describes the king of two lands

> **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 labour 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.**

Most scholars agree that Hatshepsut did not attempt to usurp Thutmose III's throne and install herself as sole ruler. There is significant evidence from the co-regency that shows both as pharaohs. However, Hatshepsut was always depicted as the dominant partner with only a single exception on the stele of Nakht from Sinai, dated year 20, where both appear on an equal footing making offerings to local gods.

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Occasionally on stelae beyond Egypt, in Nubia and Sinai, Thutmose III is represented alone, which is likely due to his role in the military conquests of those regions. Private monuments often include both Hatshepsut and Thutmose III in inscriptions.



SOURCE 7.11 Thutmose III wearing the Atef Crown (King of the Underworld)

cartouche an oval or oblong enclosing a group of Egyptian hieroglyphs, typically representing the name and title of a monarch

The shrines at Gebel Silsilah belonging to nobles Minnakhte and Ahmose show both pharaoh's **cartouches** above the entrances. A statue of Ineni records that it was:

SOURCE 7.12 Inscription from a statue of Ineni

made by the favour of the Good Goddess, mistress of the Two Lands [Ma'atkare/Hatshepsut], may she live and endure forever like Re! and of her brother, the Good God, master of the ritual Menkheperre [Thutmose III], given life like Re forever.

ACTIVITY 7.3

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

1. Conduct initial research into the New Kingdom of Egypt and make a list of four to seven of its key characteristics.
2. Develop a timeline that includes the dynasties of the New Kingdom of Egypt.
3. Conduct research into Hatshepsut's family tree and comment on why and how her family and marriage connections strengthened her claim to power.
4. Make a list of the circumstances in which female rulership was acceptable to the Ancient Egyptians.
5. Suggest reasons why it was not acceptable for Hatshepsut to take sole control over Ancient Egypt.

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DEPTH STUDY

Introduction

Once Hatshepsut became regent and then co-regent, she needed to ensure these moves were perceived as valid and legitimate. The key questions that drive this aspect of the investigation forward:

- How did Hatshepsut legitimise her rule?
- Many images of Hatshepsut are masculine. Why did she portray herself in this way?
- What role did the priests of Amun-Re play in securing Hatshepsut's power?

7.3 Legitimising Hatshepsut's rule

A key element of Hatshepsut's method of legitimising her rule was to claim to be the daughter of the god Amun-Re as well as the named heir to her father Thutmose I. Being the child of a god was a common claim for male pharaohs who usually linked themselves to the sun god, Re. When Hatshepsut assumed the throne of the Two Lands, it was clear that New Kingdom pharaohs were supposed to act in accordance with the worship of Amun-Re. The support of the state cult of Amun-Re was essential to stability, and the continued program of building works in honour of the god was an important element of each pharaoh's reign. The priests of Amun-Re played a dominant role in both the religious and bureaucratic elements of Hatshepsut's reign.

Evidence for Hatshepsut's claims to divine birth are found at the Deir el-Bahri temple complex, but only in a fragmentary manner due to the later destruction of her works. Throughout the reliefs she is shown as a young man and described in both male and female language. Although some historians claimed that Hatshepsut attempted to hide her femininity, this seems unlikely due to the female representations of her at Deir el-Bahri. It is more likely that she was drawing on the highly traditional elements of pharaonic rule, which were strongly masculine, to help promote her right to rule.

The divine birth

The following two descriptions of the divine birth are from archaeologist James Breasted's 1902 translation of written records of Egypt.

SOURCE 7.13 J. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, vol. 2, Russell & Russell, 1962, pp. 80–1

In the first scene the god Amun, in the shape of her husband Thutmose I, sits opposite Queen Ahmose and gives her the *ankh* (the symbol of eternal life).

He (Amun) made his appearance like the majesty of her husband, the king Okheper-kere (Thutmose I). He found her as she slept in the beauty of her palace. She waked at the fragrance of the god, which she smelled in the presence of his majesty. He went to her immediately … he imposed his desire upon her, he caused that she should see him in his form of a god. When he came before her, she rejoiced at the sight of his beauty, his love passed into her limbs, which the fragrance of the god flooded; all his odours were from Punt. Queen Ahmose replies: '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.

Amun: 'Khnemet-Amun-Hatshepsut shall be the name of this, my daughter, whom I have placed in your body … she shall exercise the excellent kingship in this whole land. My soul is hers, my bounty is hers, my crown is hers, that she may rule the Two Lands.'

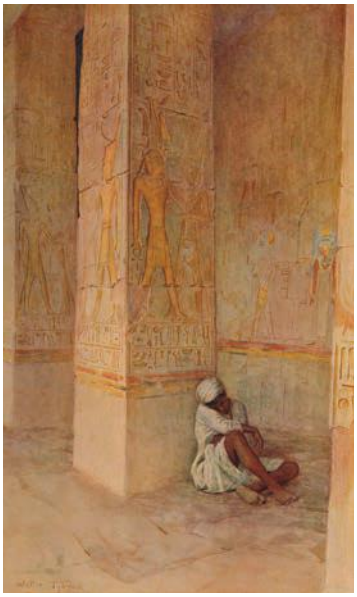
Punt a semi-mythical land that is likely to be present-day Ethiopia

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SOURCE 7.14 J. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, vol. 2, Russell & Russell, 1962, pp. 81–2

The next scene shows Amun calling on Khnum, the ram-headed creator god, after leaving the queen. Khnum will shape the child and her *ka*. Khnum tells Amun: I will shape for you your daughter (Hatshepsut) ... Her form shall be more exalted than the gods, in her great dignity of King of Upper and Lower Egypt.

Queen Ahmose is seated on the throne, holding the child in her arms. Nurses and midwives are in front of her. Behind are goddesses offering the signs of life. The gods present all utter the conventional promises of long life and a long reign. Hatshepsut and her *ka* are later presented to the gods. They are held by Amun and Thoth. Later Anubis promises the queen 'all lands, all countries, all inhabitants of Egypt, all strangers, all future and all past generations.'



SOURCE 7.15 The birth colonnade at the Temple of Hatshepsut

The coronation scenes

While the divine birth scenes are quite typical for demonstrating connections to the gods, Hatshepsut's coronation scenes in the middle colonnade of Deir el-Bahri are controversial. She presents a version of history in which her father, Thutmose I, selected her as the official heir and made her king. This story completely erases her half-brother and husband Thutmose II's rule as pharaoh. The Canadian historian Donald Redford argues it is possible that Hatshepsut was presented to the nobility as a potential successor by her father, Thutmose I. The coronation scene portrays Hatshepsut as male, yet the language used is both masculine and feminine. After purification, Hatshepsut (masculine) is displayed to the gods of the south and the north. Amun-Re is shown seated with Hatshepsut standing on his knees. The text states:

SOURCE 7.16 Inscription at the coronation scene, Temple of Deir el Bahar

As this your daughter Hatshepsut is living, we give her life and peace, for she is your daughter of your form, the perfect one whom you have begotten ... When she was still in the womb of her mother, all lands and countries were in her possession, all that is covered by the sky and surrounded by the sea. You have granted her the possession of all this.



ACTIVITY **7.4**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Read Sources 7.13, 7.14 and 7.16, and answer the questions.

1. Suggest reasons for Hatshepsut claiming to be the child of Amun-Re rather than of Thutmose I.
2. In the coronation scene, Hatshepsut erased her husband Thutmose II from history. Suggest reasons for this.
3. What evidence can you find in relation to Hatshepsut and gender representation?

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SOURCE 7.17 Two representations of Hatshepsut as the male god Osiris



SOURCE 7.18 Hatshepsut depicted as a powerful sphinx wearing the royal beard

ACTIVITY **7.5**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

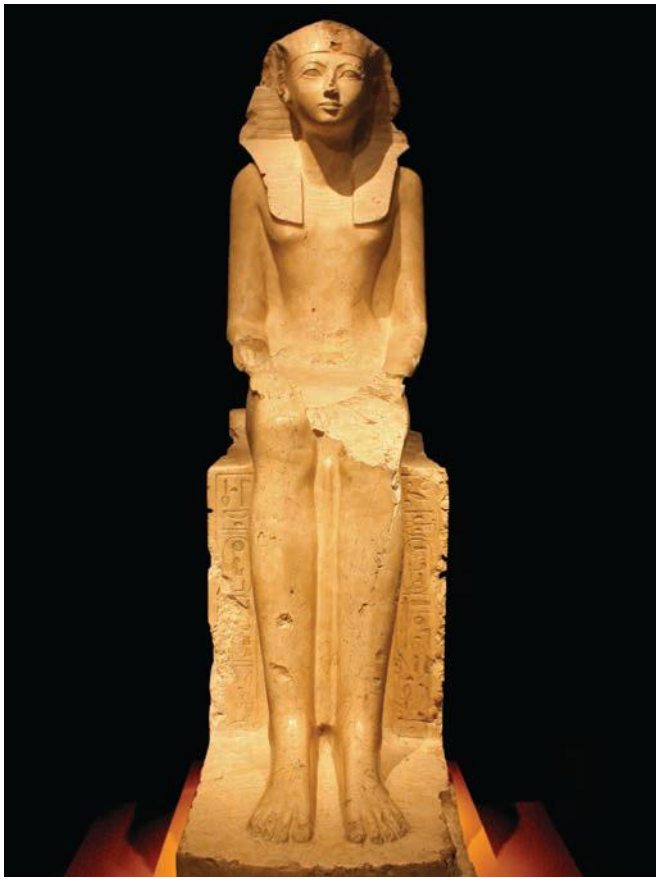
1. Consider the images of Hatshepsut as Osiris (Source 7.17). Why would Hatshepsut be depicted as this god?
2. Consider the statue of Hatshepsut as a sphinx (Source 7.18). What are the political and religious messages associated with this representation?

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7.4 Representation as male

Once Hatshepsut took the throne, she was depicted as Pharaoh in full typical clothing and crowns. Several of the typical masculine pharaonic titles were feminised and Hatshepsut was referred to as 'the King herself'. In Source 7.19, Hatshepsut is shown wearing the ceremonial clothes (*nemes* headcloth and the *shendyt* kilt) of the Egyptian pharaoh, traditionally a masculine role. However, the statue is distinctly feminine in appearance, which is at odds with many surviving representations of Hatshepsut. Where Thutmose III is seen, he was usually shown as smaller, behind her or completing a less significant task.



SOURCE 7.19 Hatshepsut with feminised kingly titles, 'the Perfect Goddess, Lady of the Two Lands' and 'Bodily Daughter of Re'

In the activity box below, read the discussion between Aude Semat, a curator at the Department of Egyptian Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Mona Eltahawy, a feminist author and founder and editor-in-chief of the feminist newsletter *Feminist Giant*.

DOC

ACTIVITY 7.6

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Refer to the following link to help you answer the question below:
https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/10792.

Consider the analysis of the statue of Hatshepsut. In what ways did Hatshepsut conform/reject traditional representation as pharaoh?

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Historian Marc Van de Mieroop argues a different perspective on the situation:

SOURCE 7.20 M. Van de Mieroop, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, p. 172

> **Whereas she had been represented as a woman in earlier statues and relief sculptures, after her coronation as king she appeared with male dress and gradually became represented with male physique. Her breasts did not show, and she stood in a traditional man's posture rather than a woman's. Some reliefs were even re-carved to adjust her representation to appear more like a man.**

ACTIVITY **7.7**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Analyse the perspectives provided by Aude Semat and Mona Eltahawy on Hatshepsut in Activity 7.6.
2. Find additional images and statues of Hatshepsut online. Arrange them chronologically and analyse the ways in which representation of Hatshepsut changed over time.

7.5 Relationship with the priesthood of Amun-Re

There is an argument that Hatshepsut worked closely with the priests of Amun-Re in a symbiotic relationship in which both benefited. Hatshepsut's unusual length of co-regency was supported and normalised by the priests of Amun-Re. In the Punt reliefs in the Deir el-Bahari temple, there is an inscription in the Temple of Karnak where Hatshepsut attributes her empire to Amun-Re:

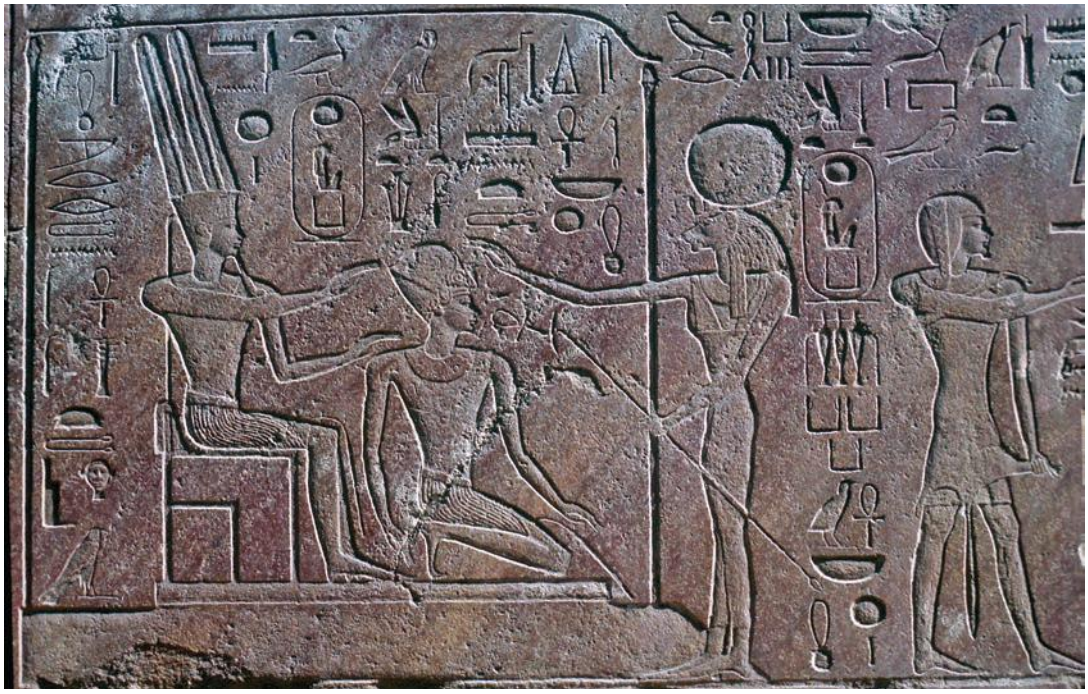
SOURCE 7.21 Inscription in the Temple of Karnak

> **Amun, lord of Thebes; he caused that I should reign over the Black and the Red Land … I have no enemy in any land, all countries are my subjects, he has made my boundary to the extremities of heaven, the circuit of the sun has laboured for me.**

Hatshepsut further stated that Amun-Re commanded that the great journey to Punt be made and that her major building projects be initiated. Hatshepsut dedicated the produce of Punt to Amun-Re and ensured that great wealth flowed into the god's temple at Karnak.

In exchange, the priests of Amun-Re were lifted above all other priesthoods, gaining considerable power both in a religious sense and also in civil administration. The leading priest, Hapuseneb, was given the titles of Overseer of Prophets of Upper and Lower Egypt, Overseer of Temples, Overseer of Every Office of the Estate of Amun and Great Chief in Upper Egypt. Thus, Hapuseneb became the most powerful religious figure (after the pharaoh), and he held greater prestige and power than any other priest, and all other religious orders, in Egypt.

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SOURCE 7.22 Queen Hatshepsut receiving blessings from the gods Amun-Re and Sekhmet, Temple of Amun, Karnak, Egypt



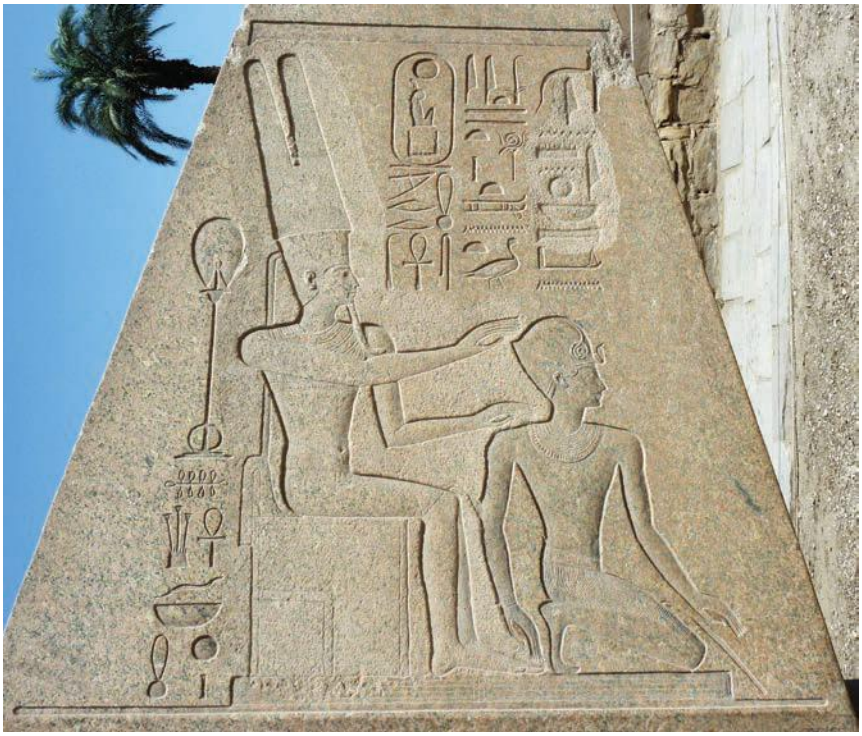
SOURCE 7.23 One of Hatshepsut's **obelisks** at Karnak showing her receiving Amun-Re's blessing

obelisk a tapering stone pillar, typically having a square or rectangular cross-section, set up as a monument or landmark

Hatshepsut was not the first New Kingdom ruler to leverage the priesthood of Amun-Re. Queen Ahmose-Nefertiri, wife of King Ahmose who founded the 18th Dynasty, used the title God's Wife of Amun. This title must have held significance because Hatshepsut used it during her regency and then passed the title to her daughter Neferure. Scenes from the Red Chapel at Karnak show that the role of God's Wife of Amun was significant; the woman who held it played an important part in temple rituals. Interestingly, Thutmose III continued to have strong connections with the priests of Amun-Re when he laid claim to the throne by stating that he had been 'chosen by the god Amun'.

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SOURCE 7.24 Obelisk scene – the god Amun-Re crowning Hatshepsut

ACTIVITY **7.8**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Read the information on Hatshepsut's relationship to the priesthood of Amun-Re and respond to the following questions.

1. Why was Amun-Re such a significant god during the New Kingdom?
2. Explain the relationship between Hatshepsut and the priests of Amun-Re. Who benefited and why?
3. How did Hatshepsut demonstrate her connection to Amun-Re to the people of Egypt?
4. Consider the obelisks showing Amun-Re blessing and crowning Hatshepsut.
   a. What is the power relationship between Hatshepsut and Amun-Re?
   b. The obelisk is a solar symbol, so what messages was Hatshepsut sending the people of Egypt?

7.6 Administration of Egypt and building projects

Hatshepsut ruled over Egypt successfully for many years, engaging in many building projects. Perhaps the most famous event during her rule was the trade expedition to Punt, which she had immortalised in inscriptions. While Thutmose III's military campaigns are considered some of the most significant of the Ancient World, there are many sources that suggest that Hatshepsut was active militarily also.

Hatshepsut engaged in substantial building projects across Egypt. The building projects served multiple purposes: they employed a huge number of people, the temples demonstrated piety to the gods, and they promoted her name and image. That Hatshepsut's empire was able to sustain such a significant series of projects suggests that Egypt must have been both wealthy and stable during her rule.

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On Hatshepsut's building projects, Egyptologist Ian Shaw writes:

SOURCE 7.25 I. Shaw, *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 229

As ruler, Hatshepsut inaugurated building projects that far out-stripped those of her predecessors. The list of sites touched by Thutmose I and II was expanded in Upper Egypt to include places that the Ahmosid rulers had favoured: Kom Ombo, Nekhen (Hierakonopolis), and Elkab in particular, but also Armant and Elephantine ... However, no site received more attention from Hatshepsut than Thebes. The temple of Karnak grew once more under her supervision with the construction work being directed by a number of officials ... With the country evidently at peace during most of the twenty years of her reign, Hatshepsut was able to exploit the wealth of Egypt's natural resources, as well as those of Nubia. Gold flowed in from the eastern deserts and the south: the precious stone quarries were in operation, Bebel el-Silsila began to be worked in earnest for sandstone, cedar was imported from the Levant, and ebony came from Africa (by way of Punt, perhaps). In the inscriptions of the queen and her officials, the monuments and the materials used to make them were specifically detailed at some length. Clearly Hatshepsut was pleased with the amount and variety of luxury goods that she could acquire and donate in Amun's honour; so much so that she had a scene carved at Deir el-Bahri to show the quantity of exotic goods brought from Punt.

7.7 Economy and trade achievements

Some evidence of Hatshepsut's rule has survived in Hatshepsut's temple at Speos Artemidos. Much of the inscription was damaged and we are left with only fragmented remains:

SOURCE 7.26 Inscription at Speos Artemidos

I [Hatshepsut] am ... whom [Amun-Re] predestined when he founded the lands ... the Black Land and the Red Land being subject to the dread for me, and my might causing the foreign countries to bow down, for the *uraeus* [serpent] that is upon my brow tranquillises for me all lands. Roshawet and Iuu [foreign lands] have not remained hidden from my august person and Pwenent overflows for me on the fields, its trees bearing fresh myrrh. The roads that were blocked on both sides are [now] trodden. My army, which was unequipped, has become possessed of riches since I arose as king. The temple of the Lady of Cusae, which was fallen into dissolution, the earth had swallowed up its noble sanctuary, and children danced upon its roof. The titulary serpent goddess a frighted not, and men of low station accounted ... as crookedness [?], its appointed festivals not being celebrated. I hallowed it, built anew, and I sculpted her sacred image of gold to protect her city in a bark of land-procession. Pakhet [a lion-goddess of the region] the great, who roams the valleys in the midst of the East ... there being no libationer who came [?] to pour water [?] – I made her temple worthy [?].

Listen, all you nobles, and common folk as many as you be, I have done these things by the device of my heart. I never slumbered as one forgetful, but have made strong what was decayed. I have raised up what was dismembered, [even] from the first time when the Asiatics were in Avaris of the North Land, [with] roving hordes in the midst of them overthrowing what had been made; they ruled with [Amun-Re], and he acted not by divine command [?] down to my august self, I being firm established on the thrones of [Amun-Re]. I was foretold for a [future] period of years as a born conqueror. [And now] I am come as

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the sole one of Horus darting fire against my enemies. I have banished the abomination of the gods, and the earth has removed their foot-[prints]. Such has been the guiding rule of the father of [my fathers] who came at his [appointed] times, even [Amun-Re]; and there shall never be the destruction of what Amun has commanded. My command stands firm like the mountains and the sun's disk shines and spreads rays over the titulary of my august person, and my falcon rises high above the kingly banner into all eternity.

As well as emphasising that she was developing Egypt internally, Hatshepsut took great pride in the trading expedition she sent to Punt. She obviously regarded it as one of her major accomplishments, carved as it was on the middle colonnade walls at Deir el-Bahari, opposite the scenes of the divine birth. This expedition probably opened up trade between Egypt and inner Africa. Contact was made for trade purposes, not for conquest. It is not known precisely where Punt was located, but it was somewhere on the coast of Africa close to the Red Sea, perhaps present-day Somali.



SOURCE 7.27 Workers returning with trees from the expedition to Punt

In the late nineteenth century, the Swiss Egyptologist Edouard Naville published a six-volume analysis of the inscriptions that Hatshepsut had carved to honour the expedition to Punt. Below is his analysis of those inscriptions; however, you will need to be mindful that much of the inscription was damaged.

SOURCE 7.28 E. Naville, *The Temple at Deir el Bahari*, vol. 3, Egypt Exploration Society, 1898, pp. 5, 15–18

Unloading the ships

In the next panel, five Egyptian ships arrive in Punt. The first two have already moored. Bags and large jars are being unloaded from the first ship.

... the landing happily in the land of Punt by the soldiers of the king, according to the prescription of the lord of the gods, Amun, lord of the thrones of the two lands in order to bring the precious products of the whole land.

Loading the ships

The upper register, damaged, shows Puntites and Egyptians carrying incense trees in pots towards the ships to be later planted in the garden of [Amun]. One inscription says that thirty-one trees were taken to Thebes.

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The loading of the cargo-boats with great quantities of products of the land of Punt, with all the good woods of the Divine Land, heaps of gum of anti (incense), and trees of green anti, with ebony, with pure ivory, with green (pure) gold of the land of Amu, with cinnamon wood, khesit wood, with balsam, resin, antimony, with cynocephali (baboons), monkeys, greyhounds, with skins of panthers of the south, with inhabitants of the country and their children. Never were brought such things to any king, since the world was.

The Egyptian ships leave Punt

The navigation, the arrival in peace, the landing at Thebes with joy by the soldiers of the king; with them are the chief of this land, they bring such things as never were brought to any king, in products of the land of Punt, through the great power of this venerable god [Amun-Re], the lord of the thrones of the two lands.

Arrival at Thebes

The ships land at Thebes in the presence of the queen. A long line of people march towards her. Puntites carry ebony and drive cattle. Egyptians carry the frankincense trees. Other goods include amphoras, baskets and a baboon. [Bowing] down before (Hatshepsut) by the chiefs of Punt ... the Anti of Nubia of Khenthennofer, all lands ... stooping, bringing their goods in the place where is her Majesty ... roads which never had been trodden by others ... as was ordered by her father, who put all lands under her feet living eternally.

Dedication to [Amun]

Hatshepsut dedicates the best produce of Punt to [Amun]. She stands, wearing the Osirian *atef* crown, and holding the insignia of royal power (the figure has been badly damaged). Behind her stands her *ka* [soul].

Frankincense trees were planted in the garden of [Amun] and these are shown, grown large enough for cattle to graze beneath them. Other goods shown beneath the branches of the trees include ivory and tortoise-shell.

Measuring the produce from Punt

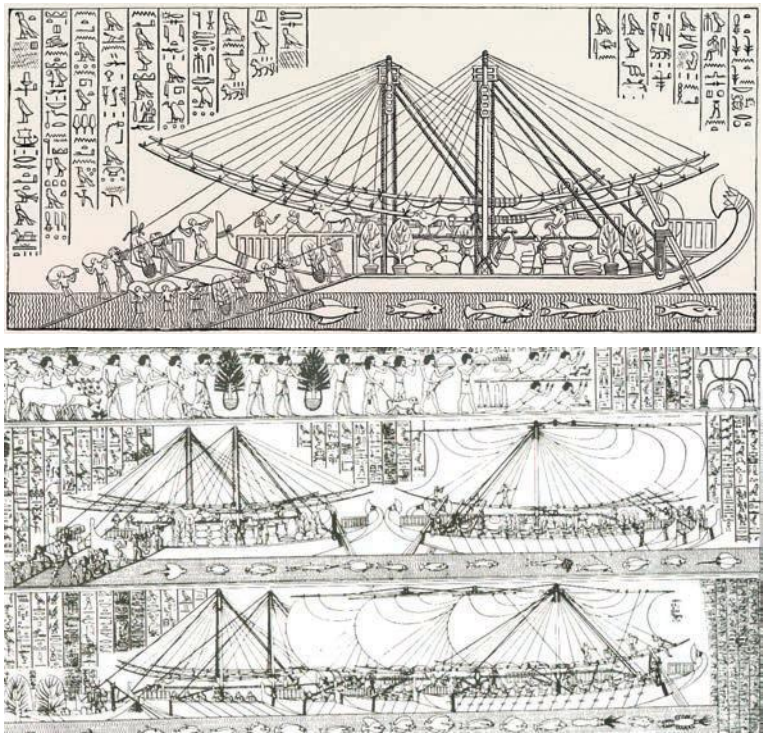
The frankincense 'anti' was measured and gathered in heaps. Near the four workers shown above is the figure of the god Thoth, recording the quantity of the goods. These are heaps of green (fresh) anti, in great number; the measuring of green anti in great quantity to [Amun], the lord of the thrones of the two lands, from the marvels of the Land of Punt, and to good things of the Divine Land ... trees of green anti thirty-one, brought among the marvels of Punt to the Majesty of this god, [Amun- Re], the lord of the throne of the two lands; never was such things seen since the world was.

Thutmose III offers incense to the boat of [Amun]. [Amun] speaks to Hatshepsut:

She [Hatshepsut] has no enemies among the Southerners, and no opponents among the Northerners ... they come to her with a heart full of fear; their chiefs are bowing down, their presents are on their backs, they carry to her their children ... I will give thee Punt, the whole of it, as far as the Divine Lands. The Divine Land had never been explored; the harbours of incense had never been seen by the men of Egypt.

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SOURCE 7.29 Inscriptions of Egyptian shipping

ACTIVITY **7.9**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Analyse Sources 7.27–7.29, associated with Hatshepsut's expedition to Punt.

1. Why did Hatshepsut send an expedition to Punt?
2. What kinds of goods did the expedition acquire there?
3. Which groups and organisations benefited most from the expedition?
4. In what ways did Hatshepsut benefit from the expedition?

7.8 Warfare under Hatshepsut's rule

Although there is only scattered evidence for Hatshepsut's role as a leader of Egypt's armies, fragmentary evidence points to several military campaigns led by her. The historian Redford argued that that there could have been several military campaigns waged during Hatshepsut and Thutmose Ill's reign that we lack direct evidence for. Some of the details of these campaigns can be pieced together.

- a campaign against Nubia led Hatshepsut, probably early in her reign, to quell the rebellion that almost inevitably followed the coronation of a new pharaoh
- small-scale wars in Syria, perhaps led by one of her generals
- the re-capture of Gaza by Thutmose III – within a few months of Hatshepsut's death, Thutmose III led the army on a campaign into Syria. From inscriptions at the time it is clear that Thutmose III must have captured Gaza previously when both he and Hatshepsut were ruling
- a campaign in Nubia led by Thutmose III shortly before Hatshepsut's death.

This inscription on a relief of Hatshepsut and Tetun at Deir el-Bahari describes an attack against peoples of Upper Egypt in which Hatshepsut defeated the enemies:

SOURCE 7.30 Inscription on relief of Hatshepsut and Tetun

> As was done by her victorious father, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Okheperkere [Thutmose I], who seized all lands had begun [?] an uproar, those who are in ... a slaughter was made among them, the number [of dead] being unknown; their hands were cut off ... she overthrew ... the gods ... 'she has destroyed the southern lands' ... 'all lands are beneath her feet'.

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On the mortuary statue of the noble Enebni, there is a brief mention of two campaigns undertaken by Thutmose III during the time Hatshepsut was also pharaoh:

SOURCE 7.31 Inscription on the mortuary statue of Enebni

> **The follower of his lord on his journeys in the south country and the north country, the King's son, chief of the archers, master of the royal weapons, Enebni.**

Elsewhere on this statue, Thutmose III is referred to as 'her brother'.

Hatshepsut had a temple built at Sehel and in that temple there is a tiny inscription by a noble named Ty. In this inscription, Ty claims to be 'the hereditary prince and governor, treasurer of the king of Lower Egypt, the sole friend, chief treasurer, the one concerned with the booty Ty' and says:

SOURCE 7.32 Inscription at Sehel

> **I followed the good god, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Ma-ka-re [Hatshepsut], given life. I saw him overthrowing the [Nubian] nomads, 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.**

A stele by the nobleman Djehuty at Dra' Abu el-Naga says that he saw the queen on the battlefield collecting booty (valuables):

SOURCE 7.33 Inscription on the stele by the nobleman Djehuty at Dra abu el-Naga

> **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.**

Pakhet was a lioness-headed goddess of warfare. In one of the temples constructed during Hatshepsut's reign, Pakhet gives a speech in which she describes Hatshepsut in a very traditional warlike manner:

SOURCE 7.34 Speech of Pakhet

> **O my beloved daughter, Mistress of the Two Lands, Mistress of the Ritual, Makere [Hatshepsut]. I give you all strength, all might, all lands and every hill country crushed beneath your sandals like Re.**

This inscription, observing Hatshepsut's governmental and military excellence, is from two broken limestone blocks at Karnak, which had been reused in the third pylon:

SOURCE 7.35 Broken blocks at Karnak

> **[Hatshepsut] who makes excellent laws and divine plans, who comes forth from the god, who commands what happens ... [the Asiatic] being in fear and the land of Nubia in submission.**

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In this coronation text is a prophecy supposedly made when Hatshepsut was a child:

SOURCE 7.36 The coronation text at Deir el-Bahari

> You strike with your sword, you smite with your mace the Nubians, you cut the heads off their soldiers, you take hold of the chiefs of the Retenu through your blows instead of your father; your tributes are men by millions, prisoners of your sword.

This text at Deir el-Bahari underscores Hatshepsut as protector of Egypt against any foreign rebels:

SOURCE 7.37 Punt relief at Deir el Bahari

> She has no enemies among the Southerners and no opponents among the Northerners ... They come to with a heart full of fear... bowing down; their presents are their backs; they carry to her the children.

Nineteenth-century archaeologist Naville wrote during his excavation of Deir el-Bahari:

SOURCE 7.38 Naville, *The Temple at Deir el Bahari*, vol. 3, Egypt Exploration Society, 1898, pp. 15–18

> The fragments of inscriptions found in the course of the excavations at Deir el-Bahari show that during Hatshepsut's reign wars were waged against the Ethiopians, and probably also against the Asiatics. Among these wars that which the queen considered the most glorious, and which she desired to be recorded on the walls of the temple erected as a memorial of her high deeds, was the campaign against the nations of the Upper Nile.



SOURCE 7.39 Egyptian soldiers on the expedition to the land of Punt

ACTIVITY 7.10

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Make a list of the places against which Hatshepsut claims to have engaged in war.
2. How successful was Hatshepsut as a military leader?
3. What role did Hatshepsut play in these battles?
4. What role did Thutmose III play in these battles?
5. Suggest reasons why Hatshepsut allowed Thutmose III to lead an army.
6. Many early historians ignored the evidence for Hatshepsut's military command. Consider why this might be.

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CONCLUDING STUDY

Introduction

After Hatshepsut's death someone decided to remove much of the evidence of her life. Many of the temples and inscriptions were painstakingly chiselled out and her cartouche chipped away. However, the situation is complex because it appears that the destruction of her name did not begin until perhaps 20 years after her death. If Thutmose III was responsible, this raises the issue of why he waited so long to have his revenge. Moreover, the issue is complicated because not all of her imagery was destroyed. Why destroy some but not all?

The long-held belief of historians is that Thutmose III deliberately attempted to erase Hatshepsut from memory to create an unbroken chain of pharaohs from Thutmose I to Thutmose II to Thutmose III. Early Egyptologists were very quick to assume this was an act of revenge. More modern analysis has instead focused on the timing and the nature of the destruction. Historians have radically changed the narrative of Hatshepsut's life over the years since the uncovering of the relics at Deir el-Bahri. The longstanding version treated her life in highly dramatised language of vaulting ambition and brutal revenge, in which Hatshepsut was cast in the role of the wicked stepmother who stole the throne from the rightful heir, Thutmose III. British archaeologist Joyce Tyldesley's modern analysis of the Hatshepsut debate centres on how much of the story has been shaped by gender.

In her 1996 book *Hatshepsut: The Female Pharoah*, Tyldesley argues that i Hatshepsut had been born a man, her long rule would likely be remembered for its achievements. However, because she was a woman, most references to her reign focus on her gender, personal relationships, and power struggles instead of her accomplishments.

Elizabeth B. Wilson, discussing historiographical issues, argued that the common understanding of Hatshepsut as an aggressive usurping harridan was shaped by pre-feminist historians in the early part of the twentieth century. Wilson suggested that one possible motivation for these early male historians was an almost fearful reaction to a woman breaking gender roles, which resulted in putting her in her rightful historical place as subordinate. Interestingly, Wilson also ascribes early historians with the desire to tell larger-than-life narratives, recreating historical events like a Hollywood movie that, while fun, are hardly accurate.

The majority of the surviving images come from Hatshepsut's monuments, notably the Red Chapel and her mortuary temple at Djeser-Djeseru. The inscriptions and images are told from her perspective in which she is the central figure. However, even in these locations, she has included Thutmose III in powerful roles that show him as a ruler, a military leader and one who is deeply connected to the gods. The modern arguments frequently find fault with the notion that Hatshepsut was a usurper because she would not have included Thutmose III in the most important monuments of her life if she truly were trying to take his place.

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7.9 Perspectives on the significance of Hatshepsut

Present-day historian Peter Dorman argues:

SOURCE 7.40 P. F. Dorman, 'The early reign of Thutmose III: An unorthodox mantle of coregency', in Eric H. Cline and David O'Connor (eds), *Thutmose III: A New Biography*, University of Michigan Press, 2006

> I think that people recognise now, because it happened so late in Thutmose III's reign, that it wasn't personal animosity ... For some reason, Thutmose III must have decided it was necessary to essentially rewrite the official record of Hatshepsut's kingship ... best erased to prevent the possibility of another powerful female ever inserting herself into the long line of Egyptian male kings ... Noteworthy also is that although Tuthmosis [Thutmose] III was responsible for this far-reaching program of alteration, it is only rarely that his own name is carved over Hatshepsut's. Rather in nearly every instance, he inserted the name of his father Tuthmosis II or grandfather Tuthmosis I ... the timing and short duration of the attack on Hatshepsut's image and name suggest that it was driven by concerns related to royal succession and ceased once Amenhotep II was securely enthroned.

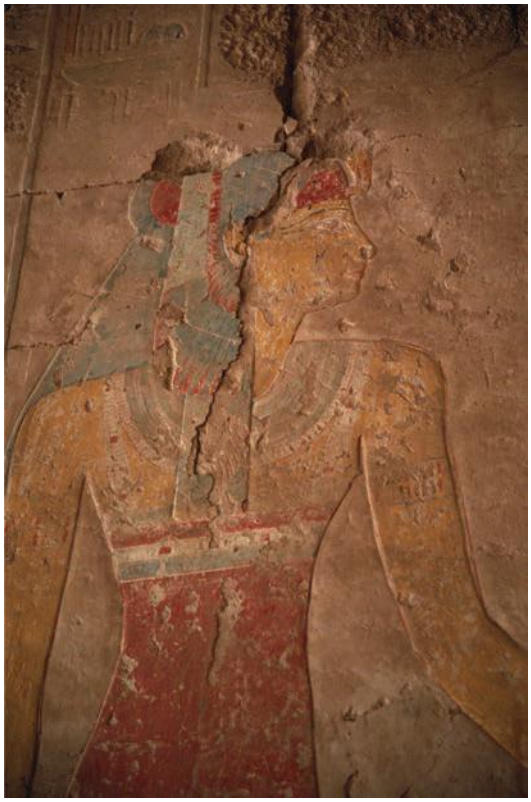


SOURCE 7.41 Hatshepsut and Thutmose III as co-rulers at the Red Chapel

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SOURCE 7.42 Chiselled out image of Hatshepsut as pharaoh between the gods Horus and Thoth



SOURCE 7.43 A bas-relief of Hatshepsut as God's Wife in her mortuary temple, untouched

According to Egyptologist and archaeologist Donald Redford:

SOURCE 7.44 D. B. Redford, *History and Chronology of the 18th Dynasty of Egypt*, University of Toronto Press, 1967, p. 65

> Here and there, in the dark recesses of a shrine or tomb where no plebeian eye could see, the queen's cartouche and figure were left intact ... which never vulgar eye would again behold, still conveyed for the king the warmth and awe of a divine presence ... This matriarchal streak is one of the most striking features of the early 18th Dynasty. The stubbornness and driving ambition of the queens could not help but precipitate a conflict with the males of the family, at least if the women persisted in grasping after what logically must have been their ultimate aspiration, vis-a-vis the crown.

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The art historian Gae Robins has suggested:

SOURCE 7.45 G. Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, Harvard University Press, 1993, p. 52

> as time went by, political expediency might have won over sentiment, and he [Thutmose III] might finally have agreed that all traces of the unnatural female king should be erased, since they did not conform to *ma'at*, the natural order of the world. It may be significant that the name and figure of Hatshepsut as queen were not attacked.

The historians George Steindorff and Keith Seele assumed that Hatshepsut's rise would have deeply frustrated and angered Thutmose III. They quite passionately argue that Thutmose III:

SOURCE 7.46 G. Steindorff and K. Seele, *When Egypt Ruled the East*, University of Chicago Press, 1942, p. 46

> wreaked with full fury his vengeance on the departed ones who in life had thwarted his ambitions ... resolved that their memory should perish from the Earth ... replaced by those of Thutmose I, II and III ... It must have been much against his will that the energetic young Thutmose III watched from the sidelines the high-handed rule of the 'pharaoh' Hatshepsut and the chancellorship of the upstart Senenmut ... Thus about 1482 BC, she came to what we may well believe was an unnatural end.

Egyptologist and mystery author Barbara Mertz believed that:

SOURCE 7.47 B. Mertz, *Temples, Tombs and Hieroglyphs*, William Morrow Paperbacks, 2007, pp. 166–7

> The land of Egypt trembled under the fury of [Thutmose's] wrath and the mute evidences of it still speak from the walls and from the tombs. His wholesale destruction of anything Hatshepsut had ever touched ... We are not satisfied with a tame and bloodless ending for the haughty spirit of Hatshepsut. I am personally, if illogically, convinced that Thutmose did away with Hatshepsut. It is highly probable that he did away with her mummy; no trace of it has ever been found ... Surely a collision was inevitable between the maturing strength and resentment of the young king and the waning powers of the queen.

Egyptologist Nicole B. Hansen suggests political expediency as the cause of the destruction:

SOURCE 7.48 N. B. Hansen, '10 Surprising Facts about Egyptian Pharaoh Thutmose III', *TheCollector.com*, 17 June 2020

> Thutmose III had people take a chisel to her name on many of their joint monuments. For a long time, Egyptologists thought this indicated he resented her joint rule. But this destruction took place 25 years after her death. Now, we think that it was intended to smooth the way for his joint reign with his son, Amenhotep II.

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ACTIVITY **7.11**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

There are many competing theories as to the nature of the destruction of Hatshepsut's images.

1. Consider Sources 7.40–7.48 and complete additional research to create a table that outlines these controversies. (Note: Tables are a great way to synthesise information about historical complexities and controversies.)
2. Which of the arguments in your table do you think is most likely to be correct? Why?
3. Use your table and refer to all the sources to help you structure a 400-word response to the following question: Why was there an attempt to erase the memory of Hatshepsut from history?

7.10 The legacy of Hatshepsut

Perhaps the most significant issue for contemporary historians studying Hatshepsut is the ways in which she is represented. Most historians focus on two key aspects of her rule: the legitimacy of her position and her gender. Early Egyptologists were usually quick to cast Hatshepsut as a wicked stepmother who stole the throne from the rightful ruler. However, over time, these interpretations have come under intense scrutiny as more evidence seems to suggest that, although Hatshepsut was certainly ambitious, she was also an intelligent ruler who shared power.

Some of the usual stereotypes include:

- an evil stepmother usurping the throne
- an overly power-hungry woman
- a loyal and dutiful daughter
- a wise and considerate ruler
- a visionary who possibly saw her own daughter as an option for succession.

Your task is to examine the following sources on Hatshepsut and reach your own conclusions about this ancient personality.

Modern British Egyptologist Dr Tyldesley has provided a frame for considering representation and the changing perspectives by arguing that, usually, Egyptologists are very careful and serious, but when it comes to Hatshepsut, they often let their personal feelings influence their stories about her. They tend to interpret her actions based on the common beliefs of their time.

Alan Gardiner, a leading Egyptologist of the mid-twentieth century, wrote:

SOURCE 7.49 A. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, 1961, pp. 183–4

Twice before in Egypt's earlier history a queen had usurped the kingship, but it was wholly a new departure for a female to pose and dress as a man … [Hatshepsut] is depicted in masculine guise and taking precedence over [Thutmose] III, himself shown as a king, but only as a co-regent … she flaunts a full titulary … It is not to be imagined, however, that even a woman of the most virile character could have attained such a pinnacle of power without masculine support … The reign of [Hatshepsut] had been barren of any military enterprise except an unimportant raid into Nubia … It was not long before Thutmose III began to expunge her name where ever it was found.

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Peter Dorman, an Egyptologist particularly known for his work on the reign of Hatshepsut, pondered her motives.

SOURCE 7.50 P. F. Dorman, 'Hatshepsut: Wicked stepmother or Joan of Arc?', *The Oriental Institute News and Notes*, Winter 2001, p. 168

> 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.

Nicholas Grimal, Professor of Egyptology at the Sorbonne, also built a case against Hatshepsut.

SOURCE 7.51 N. Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell, 1992, pp. 207–13

> Hatshepsut failed to produce a male heir ... In the second or third year of her regency, Hatshepsut abandoned the pretext and had herself crowned as king ... Officially Thutmose III was no longer her co-regent. In order to justify this usurpation, she effectively ignored Thutmose II by inventing a co-regency with her father, Thutmose I. She incorporated this fabrication into a group of texts and representations ... It seems that during her lifetime she faced less opposition than might have been expected, considering the fury with which her stepson later set out to erase her memory after her death. During her reign she relied upon a certain number of prominent figures of whom the foremost was a man called Senenmut ... Even in Senenmut's time there was spiteful gossip suggesting that he owed his good fortune to intimate relations with the queen ... Senenmut was a ubiquitous figure throughout the first three-quarters of Hatshepsut's reign, but he subsequently fell into disgrace for reasons that are not precisely known. It is thought that after the death of Neferure ... he may have embarked on an alliance with Thutmose III which led Hatshepsut to discard him ... This expedition [Punt], recounted in great detail on the walls of Hatshepsut's mortuary temple, represented the high point of a foreign policy that was limited to the exploitation of the Wadi Maghara mines in Sinai and the despatch of one military expedition into Nubia. When Thutmose III finally regained the throne in about 1458 BC he still had thirty-three years of rule ahead of him, in which he was to carry out a political programme that established Egypt as the undisputed master of Asia Minor and Nubia. During the reign of Hatshepsut, the only military actions were to consolidate the achievements of Tuthmosis I.

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Egyptologist and archaeologist Donald Redford on Hatshepsut's 20-year reign:

SOURCE 7.52 D. B. Redford, *History and Chronology of the 18th Dynasty of Egypt*, University of Toronto Press, 1967, p. 59

> **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 ... Thutmose had no reason to hasten her death ... was motivated not so much by genuine hatred as by political necessity.**



SOURCE 7.53 Hatshepsut with the god Hathor. Hatshepsut is partially chiselled out while Hathor remains untouched



SOURCE 7.54 Senenmut, Hatshepsut's adviser, with Neferure, Hatshepsut's daughter

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ACTIVITY 7.12



Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Use Sources 7.49–7.54 to complete the following table, showing perspectives of the type of ruler Hatshepsut was.

Source	Perspective	Key quotes/ evidence/features	Comments
7.49			
7.50			
7.51			
7.52			
7.53			
7.54			

2. Which sources support each perspective? (List and link them.)
3. Complete additional research on each source's author (excluding the images). How might this information be helpful when evaluating which perspective may be the most historically accurate?

Concluding study: Summary

Hatshepsut was a remarkable woman who ruled Ancient Egypt as a pharaoh. Had she been born a male, the throne would have been hers without question. However, her path to rule was contentious due to the initial regency period over Thutmose III and later dual pharaonic status. In asserting her authority, she adopted the only titles and symbols available to her, those of a male king. Yet she retained her femininity in some titles and some statues. This apparent contradiction continues to pose challenges to historians interpreting her reign.

Overall, Hatshepsut was a successful and peaceful leader, who expanded trade, built temples and monuments, and promoted art and culture. She was especially famous for her expedition to the land of Punt, a mysterious region that was a source of exotic goods such as incense, ebony, gold, ivory and animals. Hatshepsut also commissioned an extensive building program that included the construction of her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri, near the Valley of the Kings. The temple was decorated with scenes of her life and achievements, as well as statues of herself and the gods.

After her death, someone tried to erase her memory by destroying or defacing her images and inscriptions. However, some of her monuments survived and were rediscovered by modern archaeologists. Historians are still piecing together the elements of Hatshepsut's life from such fragmentary evidence.

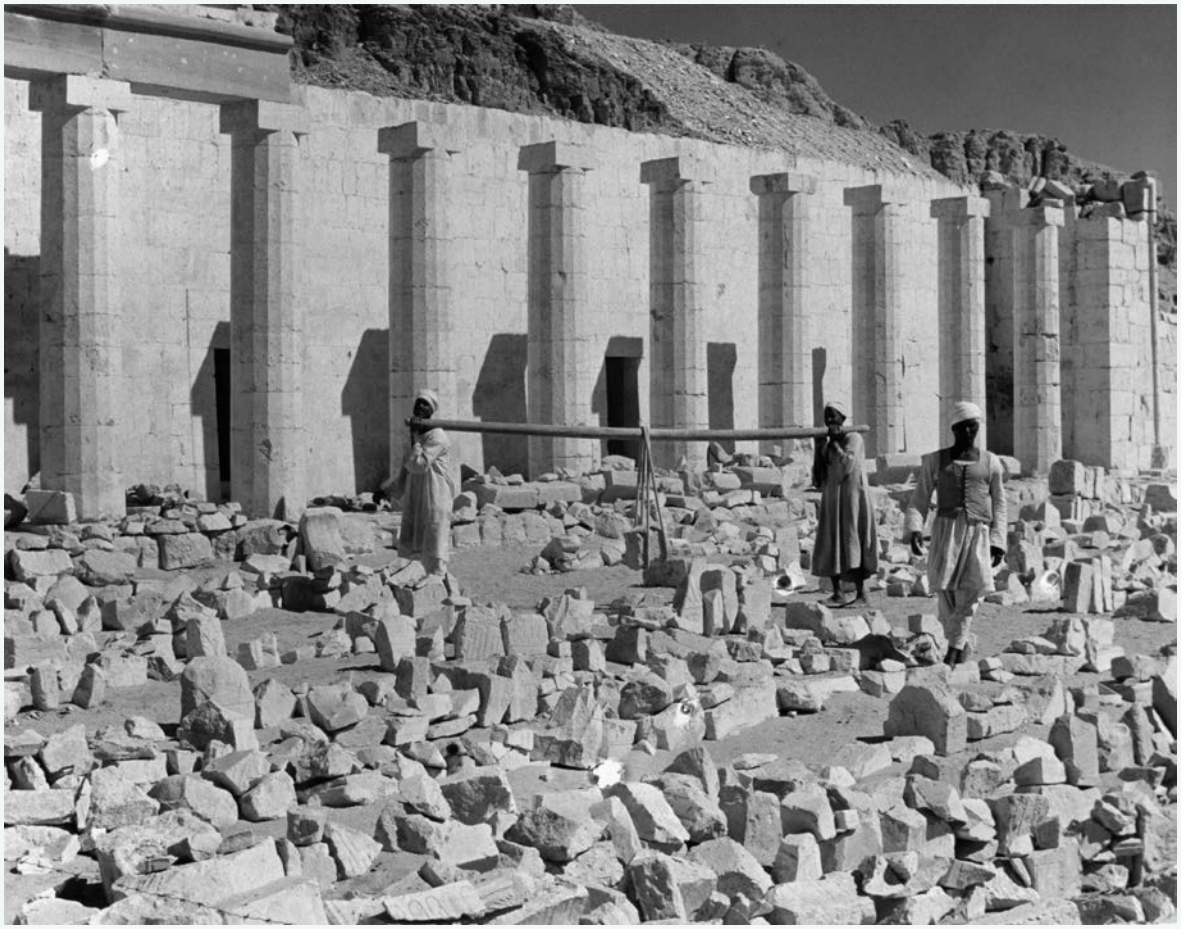
Hatshepsut is now recognised as one of the most influential and remarkable women in history, who challenged the gender norms of her time and left a lasting legacy in Ancient Egypt.

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Hatshepsut took control of Egypt as regent for the child Thutmose III. This was only supposed to last until Thutmose III came of age.
- Hatshepsut changed her regency to co-regency in which she shared power with Thutmose III for the rest of her life.
- To legitimise her rule, Hatshepsut used stories of a divine birth in which Amun-Re was her father rather than Thutmose I.
- Masculine and feminine images and titles are used for Hatshepsut. Scholars remain divided on the purpose of this.
- The expedition to Punt must have been incredibly important to Hatshepsut because it was so strongly commemorated.
- Thutmose III was treated well by Hatshepsut, given rulership opportunities, pictured alongside her with the gods and placed in charge of the military.
- After she died someone destroyed many of her images, but it is not clear:
  - who destroyed these
  - why they destroyed them
  - why the destruction was incomplete.
- The way Hatshepsut should be remembered has been contested by historians.



SOURCE 7.55 Workers at the Mortuary Temple of Hatshepsut

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
Explain why the Punt expedition was significant to Hatshepsut's rule.

DEVISE
Devise a series of research questions that focus on the role played by building programs in Hatshepsut's reign.

ANALYSE
Analyse the role that historians have played in changing the way Hatshepsut is remembered.

EVALUATE
Evaluate the legitimacy of Hatshepsut's claim to the throne.

SYNTHESISE
There are many different views on the destruction of Hatshepsut's images. Create a chart that outlines the major arguments and the support for them.

COMMUNICATE
Create a response to the argument that analysis of Hatshepsut's rule should only focus on how effective she was as a ruler.

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions
1. What were the religious and political purposes of Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri?
2. Analyse the relationship between Hatshepsut and Thutmose III.
3. Evaluate the modern and ancient interpretations of Hatshepsut.

Investigation tasks
1. Analyse Hatshepsut's rise to power.
2. Assess the images of Hatshepsut and their purpose.
3. Explain the purpose and extent of Hatshepsut's building program.

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Chapter 8

AGRIPPINA THE YOUNGER

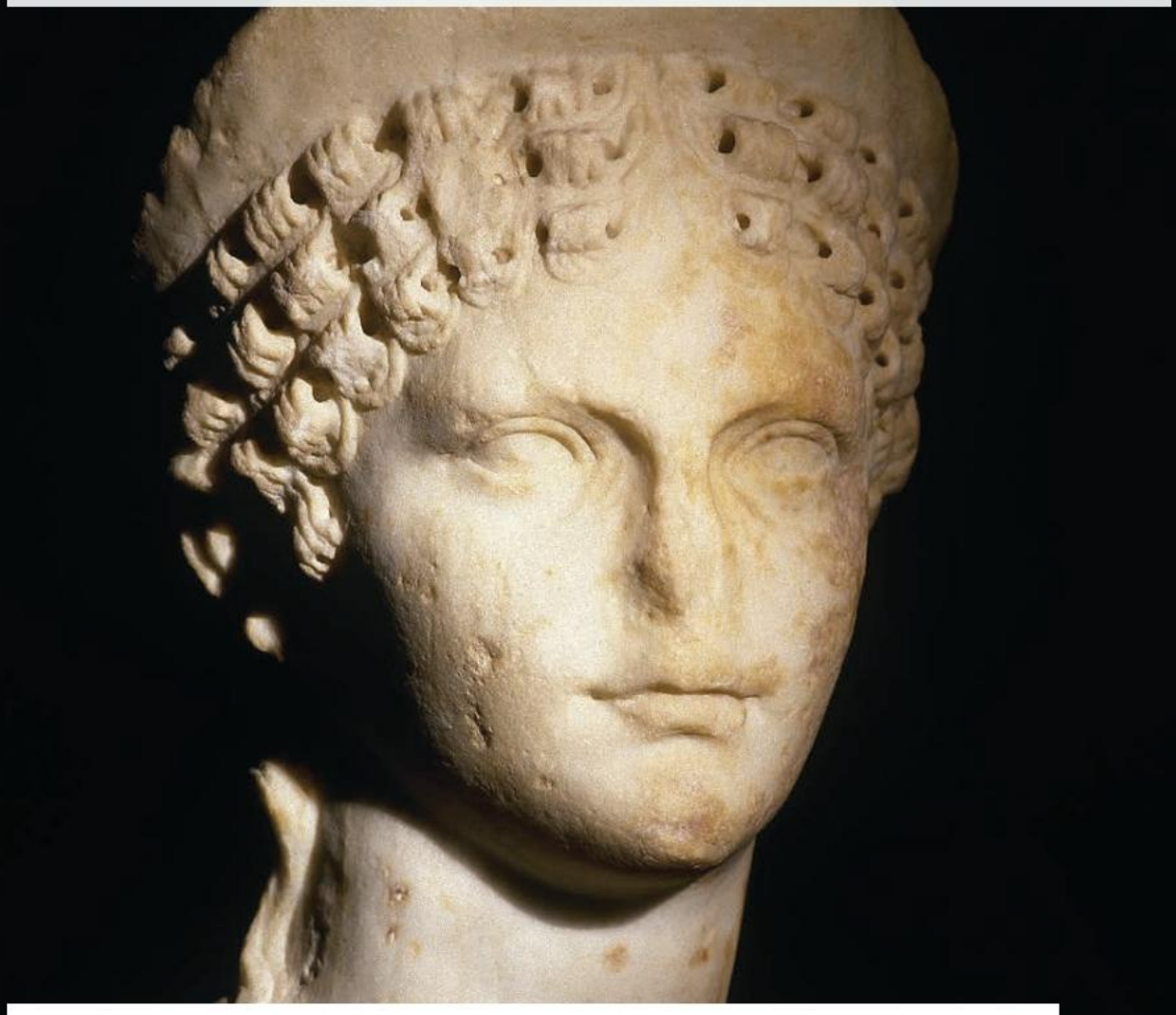
Syllabus reference: Unit 2, Topics 1 and 2: Personalities in their times

GLENN DAVIES

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How can we determine the motivations, attributes and achievements of significant ancient personalities?
- How have ancient personalities been represented throughout time and why do these representations change?

(Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 8.1 Bust of Agrippina the Younger, Barcelona City History Museum, Catalonia, Spain

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FOCUS: WHY STUDY AGRIPPINA THE YOUNGER?

Agrippina the Younger was a powerful, ambitious and intelligent member of the **Julio-Claudian Roman imperial family** during the first century CE. She has been charged by later Roman writers, including Tacitus and Suetonius, with crimes such as conspiracy, **incest** and poisoning. Could she really be as bad as she was portrayed by the ancient literary tradition and by historians for the next 2000 years?

Agrippina the Younger was born in 15 CE at Oppidum Ubiorum on the Rhine, now modern Cologne, Germany. She was the daughter of the great Roman general Germanicus Caesar (the grandson of Livia), and Agrippina the Elder (the granddaughter of Augustus). Agrippina the Younger was born into the Julian family, one of the 'first families' of Rome, and attained a level of power in Rome in the first century CE that was unique for a woman. In time she earned the renowned title of **Augusta** and became the most powerful and influential of the Julio-Claudian women, although, as a woman, she could not become emperor. Her achievements within Rome relied entirely on the utilisation of her strong family connections and relationships with the males in her life, in particular her uncle, the Emperor Claudius, and her son, the future emperor Nero. The ancient writers record that Agrippina the Younger achieved her success by plotting against her brother, the Emperor Caligula; murdering her husband, the Emperor Claudius; and controlling her son, the Emperor Nero, through sexual activity with him. This is a view that was largely accepted until the late twentieth century. However, more recent historians suggest Agrippina the Younger may have been misjudged. Certainly, she was ambitious, but a closer look at the ancient non-literary sources shows that it was her ability and determination that were responsible for her achieving positions of political influence, rather than relying on her sexuality.

Julio-Claudian Roman imperial family the first five Roman emperors and their families, descendants of the Emperor Augustus (the Julian branch) and his wife Livia's children (the Claudian branch)

incest sexual activity between family members or close relatives

Augusta empress of Rome

Agrippina the Younger was the last of the really great Julio-Claudian matrons and deserves admiration for her tenacity towards the only two things she believed in: her son's claim to be emperor and her claim to a share in his power. She was able to directly influence the governing of the Roman Empire through the men in her life but, ultimately, was overwhelmed by the weight of her competitive family. In the end, Agrippina the Younger did not change the attitudes of her contemporaries and was the last woman to play a dominant role in Roman political life for a century and a half.



SOURCE 8.2 Gustav Wertheimer, *The shipwreck of Agrippina*, 1874

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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

Introduction

principate rule of a *princeps*, name given to the early Roman Empire period

From the first century CE of the early ***principate*** to the present, Agrippina the Younger's forceful personality and extensive influence within the Julio-Claudian imperial family has captured the imagination of historians.

The Ancient Roman sources of Tacitus, Cassius Dio and Suetonius, though, were universally critical of Agrippina the Younger. They regarded independent and individual actions by women as unfeminine, morally suspect, and stepping outside the conservative Roman ideals regarding their traditional roles. A common accusation against noble Roman women with political influence was that of adultery or incest. Suetonius wrote in his *Life of Nero*, 'Some say that he did, in fact, commit incest with Agrippina every time they rode in the same litter', and Cassius Dio acknowledged, 'Everything that could conceivably happen was noticed as having actually taken place'.



SOURCE 8.3 Statue of Agrippina the Younger, Archaeological Museum of Olympia, Greece

Tacitus's treatment of Agrippina the Younger is withering, as in the *Annals* where he portrays her as filled with ambitious purpose. This hostile tradition of the ancient literary sources has continued to leave its mark on even the most respected modern scholars. An example is the modern historian H. H. Scullard, who agrees with the ancient writers that Agrippina the Younger was ambitious, unscrupulous and a sexual psychopath.

In contrast, the modern historian Anthony Barrett suggests that it may be time for a more balanced assessment of Agrippina the Younger. He argues that the study of women of the Ancient World, especially those who held power, is inherently fraught with the opinions and influence of men. In particular, it is the ancient written sources that tended to vilify powerful women. In support of Barrett's revisionist argument is the existence of the more flattering ancient primary material record of Agrippina the Younger found in contemporary coins, sculptures and cameos. These contemporary material record sources conflict with the accepted hostile tradition of the ancient secondary literary sources, and present her in a favourable light.

The conspicuous difference of the material record of Agrippina the Younger to those in the hostile ancient literary sources shows that she was not necessarily stepping outside the conservative Roman ideals regarding the roles of women.

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8.1 When and where did Agrippina the Younger live?

TABLE 8.1 A list of key dates

15 CE	Agrippina is born in Germany.
19 CE	Her father Germanicus dies at Antioch.
28 CE	Marries Domitius Ahenobarbus at 13 years old.
29 CE	Both her mother and eldest brother, Nero, are arrested by Sejanus and banished.
30 CE	Agrippina's brother Drusus is arrested.
31 CE	Her brother Nero dies in prison.
32 CE	Agrippina's husband, Ahenobarbus, becomes consul.
33 CE	Her mother, Agrippina the Elder, and brother, Drusus, die in prison.
37 CE	• Tiberius dies. • Her brother Gaius Caligula becomes emperor. • She gives birth to her only child, Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus, later known as Nero.
38 CE	Her sister Drusilla dies.
39 CE	Caligula accuses Agrippina and her sister Livilla of adultery and treason, both are exiled.
40 CE	Ahenobarbus dies.
41 CE	• Caligula is assassinated. • Agrippina's uncle Claudius becomes emperor.
42 CE	Agrippina marries Gaius Sallustius Crispus Passienus.
46 CE	Husband dies, leaving inheritance to Agrippina and Nero.
48 CE	Claudius's wife Messalina is executed.
49 CE	• Agrippina marries Claudius. • Nero becomes engaged to Claudius's daughter Octavia.
50 CE	• Nero is formally adopted by Claudius. • Title Augusta is conferred on Agrippina.
54 CE	• Claudius dies; Nero becomes emperor.
55 CE	Britannicus, son of Claudius, is poisoned.
56–59 CE	• Period of declining influence of Agrippina. • Nero removes titles and guards.
59 CE	Agrippina is murdered on the orders of her son, Nero.

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8.2 How do we know about Agrippina the Younger and her achievements?

Assessing the historical personality of Agrippina the Younger is difficult because we have a limited selection of sources to refer to and they are hostile to her. Ancient Roman written sources, representing exclusively male perspectives, present Agrippina the Younger as:

- a wicked, scheming mother prepared to go to any lengths for her son
- a seductress using her feminine wiles to have her way
- a violent and intimidating woman who eliminated anyone who got in her way.

Agrippina the Younger constantly challenged the traditional role of the Roman woman and tried to broaden the influence of the imperial women; the male authors of contemporaneous sources appear to have hated her for it. The most critical view of Agrippina the Younger was held by Tacitus, who considered her to be vicious. He had a strong disposition against her because she was female and influential in politics. Tacitus's views were supported by Suetonius and Cassius Dio, although to a lesser extent.

The writers of the ancient sources use Nero's submission to the Roman Senate justifying his actions in murdering his mother as their evidence for Agrippina the Younger's misdeeds. This submission is obviously a highly biased document but does represent a uniformly hostile view of Agrippina the Younger. Interestingly, Tacitus, Suetonius and Cassius Dio all reference a text called *The Memoirs of Agrippina the Younger*. Unfortunately, no copy of this document has survived to modern times. It would be fascinating to read a source written by Agrippina the Younger that documents her views on the power struggle within the imperial Roman household.

The study of women of the Ancient World, especially those who held power, is inherently fraught with the opinions and influence of men. It is the ancient sources in particular that tend to vilify powerful women. From the period of the early Roman Empire to the present, Agrippina the Younger's forceful personality and extensive influence have captured the imagination of historians. However, the main Ancient Roman sources of Tacitus's *The Annals*, Cassius Dio's *The Roman Histories* and Suetonius's *The Twelve Caesars* were universally critical of Agrippina the Younger because of the way in which she had achieved her goals through the manipulation of Claudius and Nero. These Ancient Roman writers saw the elevation of women like Agrippina the Younger as an inversion of the natural order, and their preoccupation with the evils of female ambition all but blinded them to any admirable qualities these women might have possessed.

These ancient male writers were often highly critical of the Julio-Claudian women, including:

- Livia, the wife of Augustus
- Julia, the daughter of Augustus
- Agrippina the Elder, the granddaughter of Augustus
- Agrippina the Younger, the great-granddaughter of Augustus
- Octavia, the sister of Augustus.

Tacitus, Cassius Dio and Suetonius dwelt on the qualities expected of a respectable Roman woman, and regarded independent and individual actions by women as unfeminine and morally questionable. They argued that their acquisition of influence and power must have been a result of schemes, conspiracy, underhanded machinations, sexual charm and seduction, or even murder. Indeed, a common accusation against noble Roman women with political influence was that of adultery or incest. Both ancient and modern historians attribute, in varying degrees, all these deeds to Agrippina, as her actions.

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The hostile tradition of the literary sources continues to be reflected in many of the secondary modern sources. However, more recently, representations have altered from the negative portrayal of ancient sources to a re-evaluation of modern sources, which reveal a politically astute woman who undoubtedly used her considerable political talents to fulfil her ambitions, and in so doing, contributed to the strength and stability of Rome.

The visual representations of Agrippina's image include coins, sculptures and cameos (small relief carvings), and are products of the Roman imperial dynasty itself, its supporters, or those wishing to obtain its favour. Interestingly Agrippina, along with her two sisters, became one of the first living women to be represented by image and name on coins of the Roman mint.

Today, it is only by looking more closely at the material sources from the time and questioning the differences in perspective from the ancient literary sources that a more accurate view of Agrippina the Younger can be achieved.



SOURCE 8.4 The sisters of Caligula: Agrippina the Younger, Drusilla and Livilla



SOURCE 8.5 A first-century cameo of Agrippina the Younger

ACTIVITY **8.1**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Who were the main ancient writers who referred to Agrippina the Younger?
2. Which primary and secondary sources might be most valuable for this topic?
3. What types of sources might exist that help us to investigate the lives of Roman women? Do you think more archaeological or more written sources created by or for Roman women have survived?
4. Most written sources were created by Roman men. How might this impact the way that Roman women were described?

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DEPTH STUDY

8.3 The personal attributes of Agrippina the Younger

Ancient Roman women had set roles they were expected to play within society: mother, daughter and wife. They were considered citizens, but were not permitted to vote or participate in government or political activity. Any attempt to contribute in this way was frowned upon.

The respected life of the Roman ***matrona*** (a freeborn, legally married woman) was devoted to housekeeping, childbearing, chastity, submissiveness, and the ideal of being all her life ***univira*** (married only once). Wives were expected to be dignified and good mothers. Although they could own property or businesses, inherit and dispose of wealth, and obtain a divorce, these privileges were not open to all women, and in most cases, Roman women remained under the guardianship of the senior male of the family. Moreover, women had no direct voice or influence. Of course, this did not hold for the women within the imperial household; they were influential in succession struggles and so were able to directly affect the governing of the Roman Empire. Agrippina the Younger belonged to this ruling family.

The imperial family

During the first century CE, one of the main problems for the Julio-Claudian imperial family was the issue of the succession – that is, who would become the next Roman emperor. The first Roman emperor, Augustus, dominated Roman politics until his death in 14 CE. He was the first of the Roman emperors, or ***princeps***, and established the ruling family of the Julio-Claudians. Augustus was followed by Tiberius, who was succeeded by Caligula in 37 CE, followed by Claudius and then Nero.

matrona Roman mother
univira a woman married only once; the ideal Roman *matrona*
princeps 'first man among equals'; the Roman emperor

Agrippina the Younger was descended from the Julian family as well as the Claudian family (through her great-grandmother Livia). Her extraordinary family connections were unmatched by any female in Roman history. Agrippina was:

- great-granddaughter of Emperor Augustus
- granddaughter by adoption of Emperor Tiberius
- sister of Emperor Caligula
- wife and niece of Emperor Claudius
- mother of Emperor Nero.

Agrippina's impressive family lineage meant she was one of a family of very strong and interesting women. In general, the Julio-Claudian women were talented, highly individual, well educated, confident and attractive.

Livia, the wife of the Emperor Augustus, ruled alongside him for over 50 years, from 38 BCE until his death in 14 CE. In this time Livia saw unprecedented social and moral change, and in many ways facilitated the establishment of an imperial image that would last for centuries. Motherhood was considered an esteemed occupation for Roman women. However, there had been a decline in birth rates among the upper classes. This so concerned Augustus that he introduced laws to encourage larger families.

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Livia's most prominent role within the imperial household was to be the figurehead for Augustus's restoration of the State and reshaping of the morals of society. Livia presented herself as the model wife of Augustus by restricting ostentatious luxury within their home and supposedly spinning the *princeps* clothes herself; she set the standard for matronly morality and modesty within Roman society.

Significant individuals

The most significant family in the Roman Empire in the first century CE was the Julio-Claudian family. It was also the most dangerous place to be. (See Source 8.6 the Julio-Claudian family tree for more information). Key members of the family:

- Augustus: first Roman emperor, creator of the Julio-Claudian dynasty
- Livia: Augustus's wife, mother of Tiberius, grandmother of Germanicus and Claudius
- Emperor Tiberius: Augustus's stepson and successor
- Agrippina the Elder: granddaughter of Augustus, wife of Germanicus, mother of Agrippina the Younger and Gaius Caligula
- Germanicus: grandson of Livia, husband of Agrippina the Elder, brother of Claudius, nephew of Tiberius, father of Agrippina the Younger and Gaius Caligula
- Emperor Gaius Caligula: great-grandson of Augustus (Julian line) and Livia (Claudian line), son of Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder, brother of Agrippina the Younger
- Emperor Claudius: grandson of Livia, husband and uncle of Agrippina the Younger, brother of Germanicus, nephew of Tiberius, uncle of Gaius Caligula
- Britannicus: son of Claudius, great-grandson of Livia
- Emperor Nero: great-great-grandson of Augustus (Julian line) and Livia (Claudian line), son of Agrippina the Younger, nephew of Gaius Caligula, great-nephew and adopted son of Claudius, husband of Octavia
- Julia Livilla (also known as Livilla) and Julia Drusilla (also known as Drusilla), the sisters of Agrippina the Younger and Gaius Caligula.

Agrippina the Elder

Agrippina the Younger's mother, Agrippina the Elder, had Julian blood in her veins. This meant that they had 'divine' blood, unlike most others at the centre of Roman life. Agrippina the Elder was a biological descendant of the already semi-divine Augustus and the divine Julius Caesar; Augustus and Julius Caesar claimed descent from Aeneas, the hero of Virgil's *The Aeneid*, who fled from the burning Troy, journeyed to Italy and settled in the area of Rome. Aeneas was believed to be descended from the goddess Venus, which is why the Julians claimed to have divine blood.

Agrippina the Elder was the granddaughter of the Emperor Augustus. At about the age of 15, she was married to her step–second cousin, Germanicus, the grandson of the Empress Livia. After Tiberius had been marked as Augustus's heir, Germanicus was marked as Tiberius's heir. Germanicus's marriage to Agrippina the Elder, alongside his adoption by his uncle Tiberius, was a clear public sign that Germanicus would be the next Roman emperor, and that Agrippina the Elder would be the next empress. The marriage represented a joining of the Julian and Claudian families and a resolution to the constant succession question.

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The young couple was loved by the people of Rome. Germanicus went on to have an impressive military career on the German frontier. Agrippina the Elder always remained at his side wherever he was sent to lead the Roman legions. They were to have nine children and were seen as the golden couple of Rome. However, it all began to unravel when Tiberius sent Germanicus to the province of Syria. While Germanicus was in Syria, the governor of the province, Piso, began interfering with Germanicus's affairs. A quarrel began, which ended only when Germanicus fell seriously ill. Both Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder believed that he had been poisoned and that Tiberius was to blame. When Germanicus's cremated remains were returned to Rome, the people of Rome lined the streets loudly displaying their grief. The public's enthusiasm for Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder annoyed Tiberius and he banished her to an island, where she eventually starved to death.

Agrippina the Younger's continuation of the Julian family

Agrippina the Younger was four years old when her father Germanicus died at the age of 34 in 19 CE. The death of Germanicus shook the very foundations of the Roman state. His death also fractured his young family.

As a small child, Agrippina the Younger had enjoyed the love and respect given to her family by the people of Rome, although these affections were subverted later when her relatives and friends were persecuted. Tiberius organised her marriage at the age of 13 to Domitius Ahenobarbus, a 30-year-old great-nephew of Augustus. Ahenobarbus was a violent and cruel man, who was once accused of deliberately driving his carriage over a child playing with a doll on a village road. Nine years later, Agrippina the Younger gave birth to her only child, Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus, later known as Nero.

Agrippina the Younger saw the continuation of her divine Julian family as her sacred duty. All of Rome acknowledged she was a descendant of the goddess Venus. She made her life's purpose the rescue and rebuilding of the succession that had been stolen from her family by the murder of her father, Germanicus. She saw her son, Nero, as the answer in this mission; Agrippina viewed Nero as the perfect composition of the descent of all the ***dignitas*** of the past 100 years and more, because in him flowed all that was strong and honourable about Rome and the Julian family. He was the:

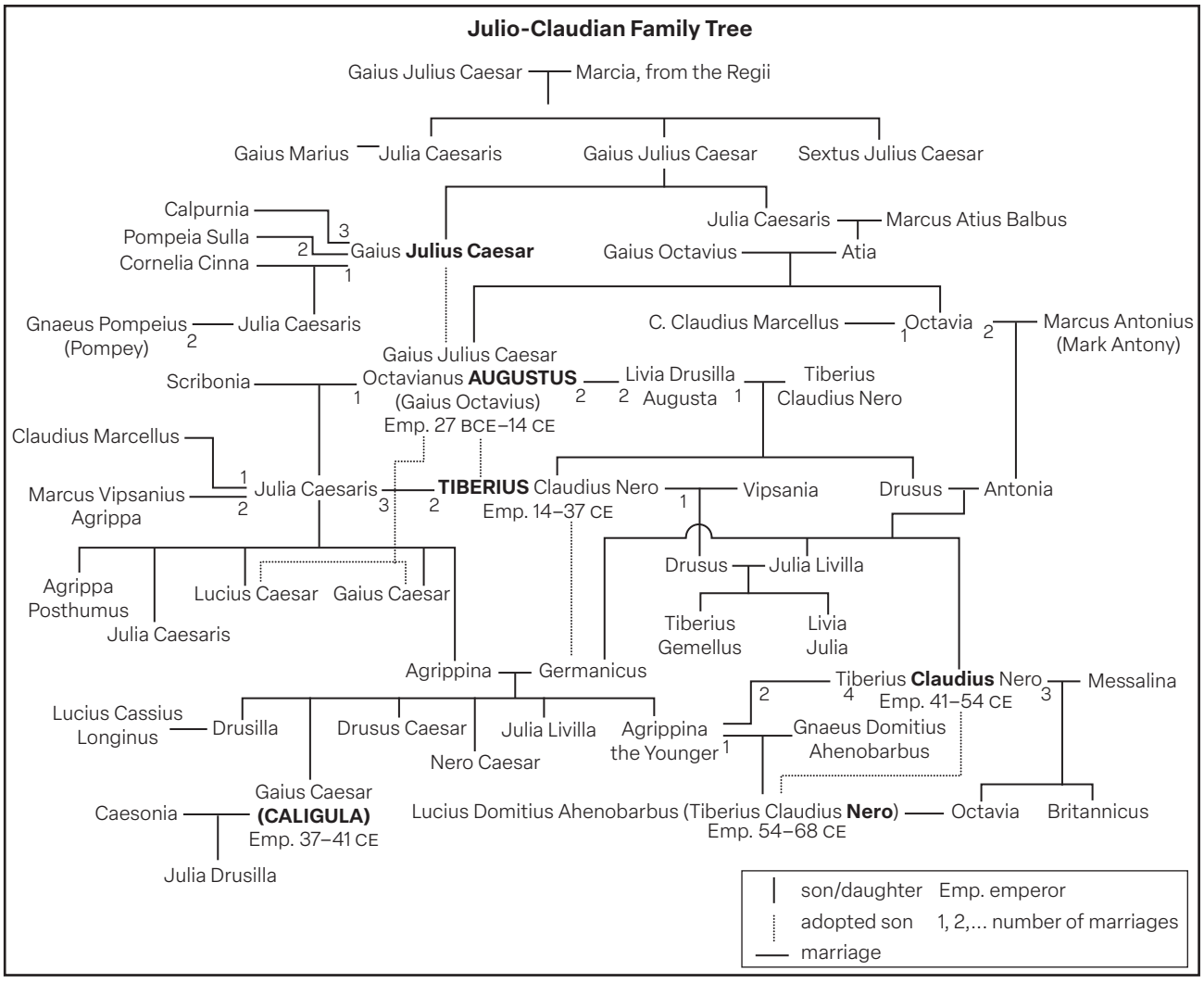
dignitas Roman sense of honour

- great-great-grandson of the divine Augustus, Emperor and Triumvir
- great-great-grandson of the Triumvir, Mark Antony
- great-great-grandson of the Triumvir, Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, through his granddaughter Aemillia Lepida
- great-grandson of the great admiral Agrippa
- great-great-grandson of Octavia, older sister of Augustus.

On the Claudian side, Nero's great-great-grandmother was Livia, wife of Augustus. Nero was a true Julio-Claudian, descended on both sides from Augustus and Livia, and doubly from Augustus through his own father.

Along with Livia (the wife of Augustus, the first Roman emperor), Agrippina the Younger managed to gain power and influence in a society that did not allow women to hold political roles. With no possibility of ruling as emperor, exerting influence as an empress makes her accomplishments interesting and noteworthy.

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SOURCE 8.6 The Julio-Claudian family tree

ACTIVITY **8.2**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Study Source 8.6. Explain how Agrippina the Younger was related to both Augustus and Livia.
2. Using Source 8.6, locate all the emperors to whom Agrippina the Younger was related. Trace their relationship to her.
3. Draw a timeline to cover the events from 13 CE to 37 CE. Mark on it the major events in Agrippina the Younger's life, and her age at the time of each event.
4. Write a character summary of Germanicus.

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8.4 The motivations and influences of Agrippina the Younger



SOURCE 8.7 Modern cast of a bust of Octavia held in Ara Pacis Museum, Rome

The women of the imperial household were expected to maintain the standard of familial stability set by Livia to encourage a sense of calm across the Roman Empire. The Roman woman who duly excluded herself from involvement in political matters became hallowed in tradition. The main Ancient Roman sources of Tacitus, Cassius Dio and Suetonius were universally critical of Agrippina the Younger, particularly of the way in which she achieved her goals through the apparent manipulation of Claudius and Nero. A case study of this vilification of Agrippina the Younger is evident at the time of Nero's ascension to the *princeps*.

Octavia was the sister of the Emperor Augustus and one of the most prominent women in Rome in the early part of the first century CE. She was respected and admired by contemporaries for maintaining traditional Roman feminine virtues.

Suetonius describes the way he believed Agrippina the Younger achieved success, by using her feminine wiles:

SOURCE 8.8 Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, 'Claudius'

but it was Agrippina ... who ensnared him.

A common accusation against noble Roman women with political influence was that of adultery or incest, with such accusations being fuelled by unproven gossip.

SOURCE 8.9 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 61.8.5

Everything that they said to each other, or that the imperial pair did each day, was reported outside the palace, yet it did not all reach the public and hence conjectures were made to supply missing details and different versions arose. What was conceivable as happening, in view of the baseness and lewdness of the pair, was noised abroad as having already taken place, and reports possessing some credibility were believed as true.

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Suetonius was renowned as a writer who relied on gossip and innuendo rather than facts.

SOURCE 8.10 Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, 'Nero'

> **The lecherous passion he felt for his mother, Agrippina, was notorious; but her enemies would not let him consummate it, fearing that if she did, she would become even more powerful and ruthless than hitherto. So he found a new mistress who was said to be her spitting image; some say that he did, in fact, commit incest with Agrippina every time they rode in the same litter – the stains on his clothes when he emerged proved it.**

Tacitus's treatment of Agrippina portrays her as filled with ambitious purpose, austere and arrogant.

SOURCE 8.11 Tacitus, *Annals*, Book XII.7

> **Then came a revolution in the State, and everything was under the control of a woman, who did not insult … Rome by loose manners … there was sternness and generally arrogance in public, no sort of immodesty at home, unless it conduced to power.**

Dr Caillan Davenport and Dr Sushma Malik from the University of Queensland are Ancient Rome mythbusters. They have investigated the references from the ancient writers describing the Emperor Nero committing incest with his mother, Agrippina the Younger.



SOURCE 8.12 Bust of Agrippina the Younger, held in Stuttgart

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SOURCE 8.13 C. Davenport and S. Malik, 'Mythbusting Ancient Rome – the Emperor Nero', *The Conversation*, 28 September 2016

Did Nero commit incest with his mother?

The Roman people loved to speculate about the emperors and their sex lives. One story involves Nero and his mother being carried through Rome in a litter (a portable couch concealed by curtains), only for the emperor to emerge with suspicious stains on his clothes. People started to whisper that the pair had been doing more than reviewing imperial legislation behind the curtains. Even more scandalous was the fact that the emperor took a mistress who turned out to be the spitting image of his mother – a situation which got tongues wagging throughout Rome. These rumours can be explained as responses to an unusual political situation. Nero was only 16 when he was acclaimed emperor, and his mother Agrippina asserted herself as the emperor's guardian by appointing men loyal to her in key positions. Her extraordinary influence is demonstrated by contemporary coins with busts of both the emperor and his mother on the 'heads' side. This coin made Agrippina look like she was Nero's equal. Agrippina's unprecedented position was the subject of continual speculation throughout the city of Rome, according to Cassius Dio, because the people could not obtain accurate information about affairs inside the palace. Without reliable information, rumours spread based on cultural preconceptions: in the Roman world, it was believed that a woman could not exert political power unless it was gained by underhanded or immoral means.

One particularly pervasive rumour developed after Agrippina began to lose influence over Nero, as he began to pay more attention to his comely courtier Poppaea Sabina. Agrippina allegedly dressed herself up to the nines and propositioned her son as he lay in a drunken stupor after a long liquid lunch. Cassius Dio remarked: 'Whether this actually occurred, now, or whether it was invented to fit their character, I am not sure.' The fact that our ancient historians do not believe such tales should give us pause.

The purpose of rumour

Sociological studies of rumours have shown that they develop in situations when people do not have good information to explain current events ... The stories about the sexual relationship developed as a way of explaining both Agrippina's extraordinary power and prominence as well as her fall from favour. Our ancient sources are clear about the fact that they are reporting rumours and innuendo. Suetonius, the biographer of Nero, reports that the emperor was merely *thought* to have desired his mother, but was persuaded not to act on his feelings. Similarly, Tacitus reveals that, while some *believed* in the *rumour* that Nero started the fire, there were also those who did not. If our ancient authors knew these stories were just rumours, why did they record them? There are various reasons for this. There was certainly a tradition in ancient historiography of reporting different versions of events and allowing the reader to make up their own minds. The stories are also very entertaining: we should never forget that these histories and biographies were designed to bring pleasure to their readers. Finally, the salacious rumours served a political purpose. An emperor's sex life was not simply juicy gossip for the masses: his private peccadilloes were believed to reflect the character of his government. Rumours, even if ultimately untrue, helped to define the expectations of a good emperor in the minds of the readers. Slightly different motivations underlie the circulation of these rumours about Nero as facts in the modern world. They are enjoyable and entertaining to read, appealing to our cultural preconceptions of ancient Rome and its emperors as corrupt and morally bankrupt. But perhaps most significantly, they enable us to impose a moral distance between ourselves and our ancient forebears. Making the past seem strange and unfamiliar helps to forget that the same problems still exist in the present.

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ACTIVITY **8.3**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Compare Sources 8.8 and 8.10. Explain why Suetonius would have written critically about Agrippina the Younger and not Octavia.
2. When Nero became emperor he was only 17 and initially had a great deal of assistance from his mother, Agrippina the Younger, to run the Roman Empire. Sources 8.9 to 8.11 are critical of his mother's motivations. Identify in these sources Cassius Dio's, Suetonius's and Tacitus's words that indicate what they write may not be completely accurate.
3. Look at Sources 8.4, 8.7 and 8.12. Describe how these non-literary primary sources conflict with the literary primary sources of Cassius Dio, Suetonius, and Tacitus.
4. What do the Ancient Rome mythbusters in Source 8.13 argue is the purpose of rumours?
5. Would you agree or disagree that there is value in imposing a moral distance between ourselves and our ancient forebears? Defend your position.

8.5 Social position and status

Agrippina the Younger grew up at the absolute centre of power, wealth and privilege in the Roman Empire; her large family promised continuity for the imperial house but, as fate would show, all the surviving members would be involved in the struggles around succession in the first century CE.

Germanicus was compared in death to Alexander the Great.

SOURCE 8.14 Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, 'Gaius', 3

> Germanicus is everywhere described as having been of outstanding physical and moral excellence. He was handsome, courageous, a past-master of Greek and Latin oratory and letters, conspicuously kind-hearted and gifted with the powerful desire and capacity for winning respect and inspiring affection.

Tacitus describes Agrippina the Elder's deep grief, and how the Roman people showed their love for Germanicus, after his death.

SOURCE 8.15 Tacitus, *Annals*, 3.1

> [Agrippina] was wild with grief and knew not how to endure. Meanwhile, on hearing of her arrival, all her intimate friends and several officers, every one indeed who had served under Germanicus, many strangers too from the neighbouring towns, some thinking it respectful to the emperor, and still more following their example, thronged eagerly to Brundisium, the nearest and safest landing-place for a voyager.
>
> As soon as the fleet was seen on the horizon, not only the harbour and the adjacent shores, but the city walls too and the roofs, and every place which commanded the most distant prospect were filled with crowds of mourners.

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SOURCE 8.16 Nicholaus Poussin, *The death of Germanicus*, 1627, Minneapolis Institute of Arts



SOURCE 8.17 Benjamin West, *Agrippina landing at Brundisium with the ashes of Germanicus*, c. 1768, Yale University Art Gallery

ACTIVITY **8.4**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. How did the Romans react to Germanicus's death according to Source 8.15?
2. Using Source 8.16 and Source 8.17, what conclusion can you reach about the position Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder held from the point of view of the Roman people?
3. Evaluate the reliability of Sources 8.16 and 8.17.
4. Can you suggest any other female in Ancient Rome who could have claimed as important a position as Agrippina the Younger? Explain your answer.

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8.6 Challenges and achievements of Agrippina the Younger

The struggle for supremacy within the Julian and Claudian imperial households

Agrippina the Younger's family background formed a crucial basis for her power and influence; she observed important lessons of wielding power and was provided with a platform to build patron–client relationships. Her father, Germanicus, was a significant connection for Agrippina the Younger as he was intensely popular with the Roman people and the army. As a direct descendant of Augustus, Agrippina the Younger was acutely aware of her lineage. Her family background inspired the goals that would continue to mark her life: gaining imperial prestige and elevating her son to *princeps*.



SOURCE 8.18 Bust of Domitius Ahenobarbus, Vatican Museum. Domitius was a close relative of the five Roman Emperors of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

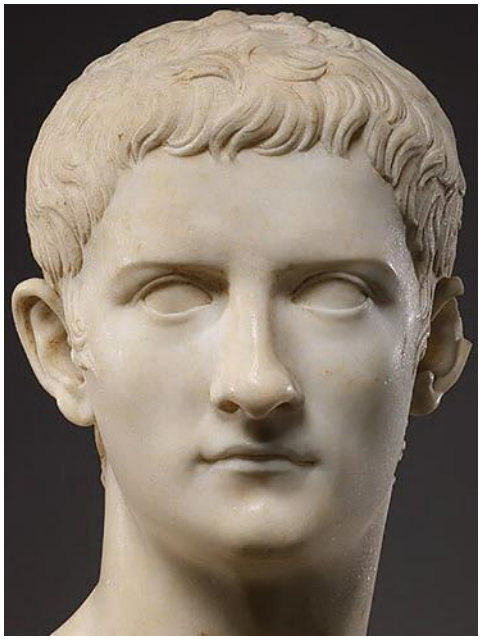
The turmoil during the reign of Gaius Caligula

On 16 March 37 CE, Tiberius died and Agrippina the Younger's brother Gaius Caligula became emperor. His accession was welcomed across Rome initially as a reprieve from Tiberius and also as a recognition of his status as son of Germanicus.

Suetonius describes how Caligula was welcomed by the people of Rome as their new emperor.

SOURCE 8.19 Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, 'Gaius', 13

> **Gaius's accession seemed to the Roman people – one might almost say, to the whole world – like a dream come true. The memory of Germanicus and compassion for a family that had been practically wiped out by successive murders made most provincials and soldiers, many of whom had known him as a child, and the entire population of Rome as well, show extravagant joy that he was now Emperor. When he escorted Tiberius's corpse from Misenum to Rome he was, of course, dressed in mourning but a dense crowd greeted him uproariously with altars, sacrifices, torches, and such endearments as 'star', 'chicken', 'baby', 'pet'.**



SOURCE 8.20 Emperor Gaius Caligula. Describe the state of mind of Caligula you think this bust is portraying.

During the reign of her brother, Agrippina enjoyed some influence initially. One of the first acts of Caligula was to give his three sisters, Agrippina, Livilla and Drusilla, the status of honorary **Vestal Virgins**, the highest public position women could obtain, as they were given seats in the imperial enclosure at games and included in the annual vows of allegiance to the emperor. He also elevated the women of the imperial house to show they shared in the majesty of the *principate* by commemorating his sisters on a coin with him.

Vestal Virgins priestesses of Vesta, goddess of the hearth; they cultivated the sacred fire and took a vow of chastity and their wellbeing was regarded as fundamental to the continuance and security of Rome

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The birth of Agrippina the Younger's son, Nero, gave her a new status as a mother. The birth took place nine months after the death of Tiberius, which is unlikely to have been a coincidence; Agrippina would have been well aware that any son of hers, with his Julian blood and direct link to Augustus, would have been a victim of the imperial power plays that marked Tiberius's reign. The birth of her son increased her prestige but it also marked the birth of an ambition that would come to dominate the rest of her life – the elevation of her son to *princeps*. As descendant of Augustus, daughter of Germanicus, mother to the only direct male descendant of her illustrious Julian family, Agrippina the Younger would have felt entitled to her share of power in the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

In late 37 CE, Caligula suffered a major illness. Afterwards he was never the same, and his reign from then on has become associated with megalomania, tyranny and paranoia.

Suetonius documents the levels of deceit Caligula would go to after Drusilla, his favourite sister, died in 38 CE.

SOURCE 8.21 Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, 'Caligula', 24

Caligula showed no such extreme love or respect for the two surviving sisters, and often, indeed, let his favourites sleep with them; and at Aemilius Lepidus's trial, felt no compunction about denouncing them as adulteresses who were party to plot against him – openly producing letters in their handwriting (acquired by trickery and seduction) and dedicating to Mars the Avenger the three swords with which the accompanying placard alleged, they had meant to kill him.

It was generally agreed by the ancient writers that, while Agrippina the Younger was still married to her first husband, she and her sisters had ongoing sexual relationships with their brother, Caligula. However, incest was an often-used criminal charge against the aristocracy, because it was impossible to defend successfully. In the following source, Cassius Dio accuses Caligula and his sisters of incest.



SOURCE 8.22 Roman coinage showing Gaius Caligula and his three sisters: Agrippina, Drusilla and Livilla

SOURCE 8.23 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Book 59, 22.6

Another of Caligula's victims was Lepidus, that lover and favourite of his, the husband of Drusilla, the man who had together with Gaius maintained improper relations with the emperor's other sisters, Agrippina and Julia [Livilla], the man whom he had allowed to stand for office five years earlier than was permitted by law and whom he kept declaring he would leave as his successor to the throne. To celebrate this man's death, he gave the soldiers money, as though he had defeated some enemies, and sent three daggers to Mars Ultor in Rome. He deported his sisters to the Pontian Islands because of their relations with Lepidus, having first accused them in a communication to the Senate of many impious and immoral actions ... He sent a report about these matters to the senate at the time, just as if he had escaped some great plot; he was always pretending to be in danger.

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In 39 CE, Agrippina the Younger was alleged to have been involved in a conspiracy against Caligula. She and her sister Livilla were exiled to the modern-day island of Ventotene, one of the Pontine Islands in the Tyrrhenian Sea. It is said she was forced to dive for sponges on the island to make a living. Agrippina's husband Ahenobarbus died in 40 CE.

cornucopia a horn that was a symbol of fortune and plenty

ACTIVITY **8.5**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. What memory, identified by Suetonius in Source 8.19, assisted the people of Rome to accept Caligula as their new emperor?
2. No Roman coin before Caligula had ever depicted sisters of an emperor. What do you think the placement of these women on the coin in Source 8.22 tells us about their position and status?
3. In Source 8.22, Agrippina the Younger holds a **cornucopia**, which is the symbol of prosperity, health and fertility. Why do you think Agrippina would be shown with this on the coin?
4. Sources 8.21 and 8.23 are written by the ancient writers Suetonius and Cassius Dio. Identify a possible reason for the conflict between these sources and Source 8.19.
5. Identify why, from the beginning of the reign of Caligula, Agrippina the Younger had a vested political interest in the Julio-Claudian dynasty beyond her own survival and personal advancement.



SOURCE 8.24 The modern-day island of Ventotene, the location of Agrippina's exile

Marriage to Emperor Claudius

In 41 CE, Gaius Caligula was assassinated and Agrippina the Younger was returned to Rome under the reign of the new *princeps*, her uncle Claudius. She then married Gaius Sallustius Passienus Crispus, whom she later allegedly killed for his money. With the death of Caligula, she was in a much stronger position to be the only Julian mother of a future Julio-Claudian emperor.

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Agrippina the Younger married her uncle, the Emperor Claudius, in 49 CE after they were successful in obtaining a waiver from the Senate to marry. Her marriage to Claudius unified the two branches of the Julio-Claudian family as follows:

- Agrippina the Younger had true Julian blood with a direct link to Augustus, and was daughter of the beloved Germanicus; her son, Nero, was the only living male descendant of Germanicus and Augustus.
- Claudius was the most senior living member of the Claudian family, the brother of Germanicus, and grandson of Livia, the wife of Augustus.

Agrippina and Claudius shared a belief that the union of the two families would provide Rome with strength and stability.

Suetonius accuses Agrippina the Younger of actively encouraging the marriage to her uncle, the Emperor Claudius.

SOURCE 8.25 Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, 'Claudius', 26

But it was Agrippina, daughter of his brother Germanicus, who hooked him. She has a niece's privilege of kissing and caressing Claudius, and exercised it with a noticeable effect on passions ... the wedding took place without delay.

Cassius Dio suggests Claudius was swept away by Agrippina the Younger, even though he had known her since she was a child.

SOURCE 8.26 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Book 61, 31.5–6

After a little he 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 toward him than became a niece.

Suetonius discusses the efforts undertaken by Pallas, a freedman who was a trusted adviser of Claudius, to help change the law to allow uncles to marry nieces.

SOURCE 8.27 Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, 'Claudius', 26

When the house next met, he persuaded a group of senators to propose that a union between [Claudius] and [Agrippina] should be compulsorily arranged, in the public interest; and that other uncles should likewise be free to marry their nieces, though this had hitherto counted as incest.

Tacitus points out that a change of law to allow uncles and nieces to marry was not being actively requested by Romans.

SOURCE 8.28 Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 12.7

There were some who rushed out of the Senate, passionately protesting that if the emperor hesitated, they would use violence. A promiscuous throng assembled, and kept exclaiming that the same too was the prayer of the Roman people. Claudius without further delay presented himself in the forum to their congratulations; then entering the Senate, he asked for them to decree which should decide that for the future marriages between uncles and brother's daughters should be legal. There was, however, found only one person who desired such a marriage, Alledius Severus, a Roman knight, who, as many said, was swayed by the influence of Agrippina.

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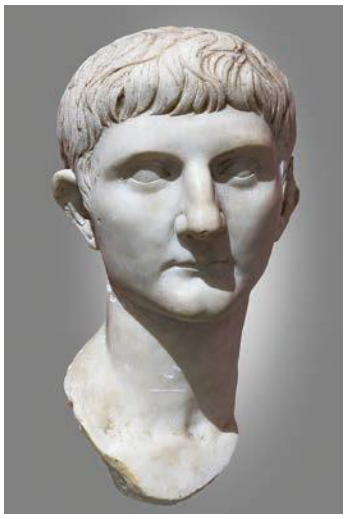
Tacitus stated that Claudius's secretary, Pallas, saw the benefit in the marriage to ensure Agrippina the Younger did not have children to anyone else and thus the family tree would be united.

SOURCE 8.29 Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 10.2

> **Pallas again selected Agrippina for special commendation because she would bring with her Germanicus's grandson, who was thoroughly worthy of imperial rank, the scion of a noble house and a link to unite the descendants of the Claudian family. He hoped that a woman who was the mother of many children and still in the freshness of youth, would not carry off the grandeur of the Caesars to some other house.**



SOURCE 8.30 Bust of Agrippina the Younger



SOURCE 8.31 Bust of Germanicus

The physical features in the Agrippina the Younger bust are very similar to the older bust of her father, Germanicus Caesar.

On the left side of the Gemma Claudia brooch in Source 8.33 is the Emperor Claudius and his wife Agrippina the Younger. On the right side is Claudius's brother Germanicus and his wife Agrippina the Elder.

Cassius Dio claims Agrippina the Younger dominated Claudius from the beginning of their marriage.

SOURCE 8.32 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Book 8.61

> **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 toward him.**



SOURCE 8.33 Balancing of Julian and Claudian couples, Gemma Claudia brooch, Museum of Art History, Vienna

Agrippina the Younger's powers and influence grew steadily from the time of her marriage to Claudius in 49 CE. This can be seen when in 50 CE she received the title of Augusta, the first wife of a living Roman emperor to be given this title.



SOURCE 8.34 A coin from 41–54 CE showing Claudius on the left and Agrippina the Younger on the right

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Tacitus states Agrippina the Younger's power and influence were now given recognition outside Rome when a colony of veterans was founded at her birthplace, Ara Ubiorum (Cologne), and called Colonia Claudia Ara Augusta Agrippinensium.

SOURCE 8.35 Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 7.26

> **Agrippina, to show her power even to the allied nations, procured the despatch of a colony of veterans to the chief town of the Ubii, where she was born. The place was named after her. Agrippa, her grandfather, had, as it happened, received this tribe, when they crossed the Rhine, under our protection.**

Modern historian Anthony Barrett states that Agrippina saw herself as an equal to Claudius due to her imperial lineage.

SOURCE 8.36 A. Barret, *Agrippina: Sex, Power, and Politics in the Early Empire*, Yale University Press, 1998, p. 124

> **It was unlikely that she intended any such arrogation of authority by her virtually equal status to Claudius in this particular ceremony as it would have seemed completely fitting to her as daughter of Germanicus and granddaughter of Drusus, both commendable vanquishers in the north-west.**

The relief in Source 8.37 shows Agrippina the Younger holding the hand of Claudius in the centre, indicating perhaps the theme of concord in the imperial houses, as well as an elevated representation of domestic harmony between the emperor and his wife. The toga-clad figure on the right represents the Senate and people of Rome crowning Claudius.



SOURCE 8.37 Statue of Claudius and Agrippina at Aphrodisias, Turkey



SOURCE 8.38 Bust of Claudius at the Naples National Archaeological Museum

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ACTIVITY **8.6**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Use Sources 8.25 to 8.29 to write a paragraph on the justification for the marriage of Claudius and Agrippina the Younger. Make sure you use quotes to support your view.
2. Look closely at Sources 8.30 and 8.31. What do you think would be the political advantage in a Roman audience seeing the physical similarity between Germanicus and his daughter, Agrippina the Younger?
3. The Gemma Claudia brooch in Source 8.33 was a private piece of jewellery made of five layered onyx in a gold setting that was designed with the busts of both imperial couples emerging from cornucopias, a symbol of prosperity.
   a. Describe what you see in the Gemma Claudia brooch.
   b. What do you think the inclusion of Agrippina the Younger's parents in the Gemma Claudia brooch indicates about the basis of her power and influence?
4. Look at the coin in Source 8.34. What can you infer about the relationship between the Emperor Claudius and Agrippina Augusta from the portraits on the coin?
5. Source 8.36 is corroborated by statue in Source 8.37 that shows Agrippina the Younger in a stance of *concordia* with Claudius. Identify the phrase in Source 8.36 where the corroboration is demonstrated.
6. Review all the sources and list the various honours Agrippina the Younger received during her marriage to Claudius.
7. Agrippina the Younger's marriage to Claudius provided her with access to power. Identify the evidence from the sources that support the view that Claudius was controlled by his wife.

The reign of Nero

Agrippina the Younger was one of the few remaining descendants of Augustus, and her son Nero was one of the last males of the imperial family. As a woman, she could not become emperor herself, so access to the position was through the men in her life. Her two alternatives were to marry the emperor or to help her son, Nero, to become *princeps*. After achieving the first, she then achieved the second.

Agrippina the Younger persuaded Claudius to adopt her son, Nero, as his heir at the age of 13, even though Claudius already had a son, Britannicus, from his previous marriage to Messalina. The Roman Senate approved the adoption on 25 February 50 CE. After her marriage to Claudius and then Nero's adoption, Agrippina was no doubt one of the most powerful women in the Roman Empire. She dominated Claudius and controlled central positions, such as the Praetorian prefect. In 51 CE, Nero reached official manhood and assumed the *toga virilise*, and became *princeps iuventutis*, leader of youth.

Agrippina the Younger's ambitions were designed not only to gain herself power and influence, but also to allow for her son, Nero, to succeed Claudius as *princeps,* which would in turn give her more power than ever. In 53 CE, Agrippina the Younger achieved what her mother had grieved for after the death of her husband, Germanicus – another perfect Julio-Claudian marriage match. She convinced Claudius to approve Nero marrying his daughter, Claudia Octavia. Nero was 16, they were first cousins, and representatives of each of their families.

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The Julian and Claudian lines were now entwined and the families were secure. Here were the new Agrippina the Elder (Claudia Octavia) and Germanicus (Nero), but this time the Julian divinity was within the blood of the husband.

Everything was aligned for Nero's succession when Agrippina allegedly had Claudius murdered with poisonous mushrooms in October 54 CE.

Suetonius names the possible culprits of Claudius's poisoning.

SOURCE 8.39 Suetonius, *Life of Claudius*, xliii–xliv

Most people think that Claudius was poisoned; but when, and by whom, is disputed. Some say that the eunuch Halotus, his official taster, administered the drug while he was dining with the priests in the Citadel; others, that Agrippina did so herself at a family banquet, poisoning a dish of mushrooms, his favourite food.

Cassius Dio suggests that Claudius was about to remove Agrippina the Younger from her position of power and influence as empress and reinstate his son Britannicus as his heir rather than Nero.

SOURCE 8.40 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 61.34 1–2

Claudius, who displayed his affection whenever he met [his son] Britannicus, was not disposed to endure her behaviour and made preparations to put an end to her power, to register his son among the iuvenes, and appoint him as heir to the empire. This news alarmed Agrippina, who decided to anticipate the emperor's project by poisoning him … she sent for a drug-woman named Lucusta …



SOURCE 8.41 Nero and Agrippina, as depicted on the Sebasteion Relief, Archaeological Museum Aphrodisias, Turkey

In the relief in Source 8.41, Agrippina the Younger crowns her young son Nero as Roman emperor in 54 CE with a laurel wreath. She carries a cornucopia and he wears the armour and cloak of a Roman commander, with a helmet on the ground at his feet.

Agrippina had realised her ambition of participating in the family dynasty through involvement in Claudius's administration as 'Julia Augusta' and ensuring her son Nero's accession. Everything now rested on Nero's shoulders. He was the last thread left of all of the Julian lineage who had come before him. And at 17 years old, he would need guidance to rule over the huge empire he had inherited.

Early years of Nero's rule

The first five years of Nero's *principate* was a period of good government, where Agrippina the Younger guided Nero, with the help of the philosopher Seneca, and the Praetorian prefect Burrus. The latter two were allies in their education of the emperor. At first Agrippina the Younger managed all imperial business for Nero, negotiating with embassies, and corresponding with communities, foreign magistrates and kings. Nero allowed her full authority in all business, public as well as private. It was during this time that she and Nero became very close.

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Tacitus argued that from the moment of Nero's succession the Roman Empire was transformed. Complete obedience was now given to a woman.

SOURCE 8.42 Tacitus, *Annals*, 13.2

> Still every honour was openly heaped on Agrippina, and to a tribune who according to military custom asked the watchword, Nero gave 'the best of mothers'. The Senate also decreed her two lictors, with the office of priestess to Claudius ...

Suetonius wrote that Agrippina now managed the Roman empire.

SOURCE 8.43 Suetonius, *Nero*, 9

> Nero started off with a parade of filial dutifulness: giving Claudius a lavish funeral, at which he delivered the oration in person, and finally deifying him. He also exalted the memory of his father Domitius, and turned over all his public and private affairs to Agrippina's management. On the day of his accession the password he gave to the colonel on duty was 'the best of mothers'; and she and he often rode out together through the streets in her litter.

ACTIVITY 8.7

Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. **a.** Who were the possible murderers of Emperor Claudius identified in Sources 8.39 and 8.40?
   b. Which of these sources acknowledges that there is doubt that Agrippina murdered Claudius?
   c. Which states confidently that Agrippina had him murdered?
2. What might Agrippina the Younger have hoped to achieve by the death of Claudius?
3. What do you think Source 8.41 demonstrates about Agrippina's influence at the beginning of Nero's *principate*? In your response consider the quote from Source 8.43 that on the day of his succession, the password Nero gave to the colonel on duty was 'the best of mothers'.

8.7 Impact on the times and Agrippina the Younger's loss of influence

While Agrippina the Younger guided Nero for the first few years of his *principate*, the important role she played in the early years of his rule soon evaporated.

Agrippina the Younger's power and authority were represented on gold and silver coins, as she was shown face-to-face and in equal size to Nero on the obverse of coins. She was the first woman during her lifetime to share with the *princeps* the face of a coin minted in Rome. Sources 8.44 and 8.45 show coins from 54 CE and 55 CE of Nero and his mother.



SOURCE 8.44 Roman coin from 54 CE



SOURCE 8.45 Roman coin from 55 CE

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Cassius Dio explains how Nero's advisers began to prevent Agrippina the Younger's involvement in the management of the Roman Empire, resulting in her loss of influence.

SOURCE 8.46 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 61.3.2

At first Agrippina managed all affairs pertaining to the empire, and she and her son went about together, often reclining in the same litter ... It was she who transacted business with embassies and sent letters to peoples and governors and kings.

When this had gone on for a considerable time, it aroused the displeasure of Seneca and Burrus, who were both the most sensible and the most influential of the advisers of Nero. The one was his teacher and the other was prefect of the Pretorians. They took the following occasion to stop this method of procedure. An embassy of Armenians had arrived and Agrippina wished to ascend the platform from which Nero was talking with them. The two men, seeing her approach, persuaded the young man to go down before she could reach there and meet his mother, pretending some form of greeting. After that was done they did not return again, making some excuse to prevent the foreigners from seeing the flaw in the empire. Subsequently they labored to keep any public business from being again committed to her hands.

Agrippina the Younger's influence over Nero also began to wane. She was furious when he fell in love with a freedwoman, an ex-slave called Acte, and he openly disobeyed her and asked Seneca for help.

SOURCE 8.47 Tacitus, *Annals*, 13.11

[Agrippina's] influence was gradually weakened, as Nero fell in love with a freedwoman, Acte by name, and took into his confidence Otho and Claudius Senecio, two young men of fashion, the first who was descended from a family of consular rank, while Senecio's father was one of the emperor's freedmen ... Without [Agrippina's] knowledge, then in spite of her opposition, they had crept into [Nero's] favour by debaucheries and equivocal secrets ... for here was a girl who without harm to anyone gratified his desires ...



SOURCE 8.48 Nero appears on later coins alone

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Agrippina changed her tactics and offered her own bedroom for his frolics. However, she became increasingly isolated, for Nero avoided private meetings with her and many of her former friends deserted her. As time went on, Nero increasingly resented his mother's constant monitoring and criticism of everything he did and said. Nero tried to make her unpopular by pretending he would leave Rome and live on Rhodes. He then took away her security protection of Roman and German soldiers. Nero even banned her from living with him in the palace. After this, Nero realised there were no boundaries to how much he could harass and punish his mother, and that no one would stop him. The next step was organising lawsuits to be placed against her while she stayed in the city of Rome. When Agrippina finally moved to live outside Rome, Nero employed people to constantly abuse her and shout insults.

Hostilities between mother and son escalated. Suetonius's description of Nero's treatment of his mother would today be called bullying and harassment.



SOURCE 8.49 Bust of Nero

SOURCE 8.50 Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, 'Nero', 34

The over-watchful, over-critical eye that Agrippina kept on whatever Nero said or did proved more than he could stand. He first tried to embarrass her by frequent threats to abdicate and go into retirement in Rhodes. Then, having deprived her of all honours and power, and even of her Roman and German bodyguard, he refused to have her living with him and expelled her from the palace; after which he did everything possible to annoy her, sending people to pester her with lawsuits 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.

The death of Agrippina the Younger

Nero accused Agrippina the Younger of plotting a conspiracy against him. She defended herself eloquently to him and gained a pardon. Nero made four attempts to have his mother killed. This included having a boat designed and built that would collapse while she was sailing it, which happened on the Bay of Naples. However, she managed to swim to shore and was rescued. In 59 CE, Nero sent his soldiers to kill her. She is said to have told them to stab her in her abdomen, where she had conceived and carried Nero. So perished 'the best of mothers'. Nero was afraid of how the public would react to her death. He sent reports to Rome from his estate at Baiae that she had tried to kill him and had then committed suicide. Interestingly, in the list of her many 'crimes' that Nero submitted to the Roman Senate to justify her murder, he included that, as a woman, she should not have desired power and involvement in imperial rule.

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Agrippina the Younger was murdered outside Rome, cremated and buried in an unmarked grave with no ceremony. From then on, Nero did his best to pretend his mother had never existed. However, for almost 10 years, Agrippina the Younger had unofficially ruled the Roman Empire as partner to her husband and son.

Cassius Dio appears to make the argument that Agrippina being murdered by her son was a richly deserved misfortune.

SOURCE 8.51 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 8.62

> **Thus was Agrippina, daughter of Germanicus, grand-daughter of Agrippa and descendant of Augustus, slain by the very son to whom she had given the sovereignty, and for whose sake she had killed her uncle and others.**

Tacitus appears to support the argument that the charges Nero made against his mother (that she wanted to be a co-ruler) to the Roman senate justified her murder.

SOURCE 8.52 Tacitus, *Annals*, 14.11

> **[Nero] even revived the charges of a period long past, how [Agrippina] had aimed at a share of empire, and at inducing the praetorian cohorts to swear obedience to a woman, to the disgrace of the Senate and people; how, when she was disappointed, in her fury with the soldiers, the Senate, and the populace ... she organised prosecutions against distinguished citizens.**

Perhaps, after all, Agrippina had her revenge as Suetonius describes the ghost of Agrippina the Younger haunting her son.

SOURCE 8.53 Suetonius, *Nero*, 34

> **he [Nero] was never either then or thereafter able to free his conscience from the guilt of the crime. He often admitted that the Furies were pursuing him with whips and burning torches, and set Persian [magicians] at work to conjure up the ghost and make her stop haunting him.**



ACTIVITY **8.8**

Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Look at the coins in Sources 8.44 and 8.45.
   a. What do you think the coin from 54 CE suggests about the power relationship at that time between Nero and his mother?
   b. Describe how the power relationship has changed in the coin in 55 CE.
2. Use Sources 8.46 to 8.49 to identify the evidence that Agrippina the Younger's influence over Nero was declining.
3. Study Sources 8.50 to 8.53 and answer the questions.
   a. What were some of the reasons for Nero's growing belief that he must kill his mother?
   b. What were some of the methods Nero used while attempting to murder his mother?
   c. How did Nero justify his murderous actions to the Roman Senate?

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CONCLUDING STUDY

8.8 Modern perceptions of Agrippina's achievements

Most modern scholars writing about Agrippina the Younger, at least up to the late twentieth century, have continued to follow the negative literary tradition of Tacitus and produced a portrait little different from the ancient tradition. Up to this time, the writing of ancient history was mostly the reserve of middle-aged men who did not question the male-dominated and patriarchal nature of their own times. However, twentieth-century scholars, such as H. H. Scullard, have also had a critical view of Agrippina the Younger and appear to be disinclined to question patriarchal perspectives from early imperial Rome.

SOURCE 8.54 H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome from 133 BC to AD 68*, Methuen & Co., 1976, p. 314

> **Ambitious and unscrupulous, Agrippina struck down a series of victims; no man or woman was safe if she suspected rivalry or desired their wealth.**

Scullard was writing in the 1960s, before any major challenge to these patriarchal norms began to be reflected in historiography. Since the 1970s, the writing of history, both modern and ancient, has come under the influence of a wide range of historiographical trends, including feminist history and gender studies. This has led to historians approaching a figure like Agrippina the Younger with a willingness to read her as an intelligent, determined woman, who should be admired for achieving as much as she did in a world dominated by men.

However, even before the 1960s and 1970s – at the start of the twentieth century – Italian historian Guglielmo Ferrero suggests that Agrippina the Younger had been judged harshly by history.

SOURCE 8.55 G. Ferrero, *The Women of the Caesars*, The Century Co., 1911, pp. 215–16

> **The unforeseen death of Claudius suddenly cut short the work which Agrippina had well under way. Claudius was sixty-four years old, and one night in the month of October of the year 54 he succumbed to some mysterious malady after a supper of which, as usual, he had partaken inordinately. Tacitus pretends to know that Agrippina had secretly administered poison … this version is so strange and improbable that Tacitus himself does not dare affirm it, but says, many believe that it was in this manner that he met his death … Claudius, who was 64, in all probability died a sudden but natural death.**

Richard Bauman states that modern historians are split regarding Agrippina's guilt over her husband's death:

SOURCE 8.56 R. A. Bauman, *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome*, Routledge, 1994, p. 187

> **The way was now clear for Agrippina to eliminate Claudius, and the sources almost unanimously agree that this is what she did. But though they agree that poison was administered and Agrippina was responsible, they differ on detail … Modern investigators divide equally into believers and unbelievers. There is little point in attempting to arbitrate.**

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ACTIVITY **8.9**

Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Which of the three main ancient writers do you think Scullard reflects the most closely in Source 8.54?
2. Identify the quote in Source 8.55 where Ferrero criticises Tacitus. What is the damning phrase he uses to dismiss the authenticity of Tacitus?
3. Read Source 8.56. Explain in your own words Bauman's hypothesis on the murder of Claudius.
4. Select which historian you think is the most accurate. Defend your answer.

8.9 The differences between ancient literary and visual representations of Agrippina the Younger

Another new approach to studying Agrippina the Younger has emerged through analysing the representations of Agrippina, and other Julio-Claudian women, in coins, busts, statues, reliefs and cameos. The representations of Agrippina the Younger in the visual sources are conspicuously different from those in the literary tradition. The literary constructs of the ruthless power seeker, the seducer-turned-poisoner of husbands, and the mother who commits incest with her son, are replaced in the material record by much more flattering constructs.

A synopsis of the modern historian Anthony Barrett's view states that Agrippina the Younger was misjudged:

SOURCE 8.57 Publisher's synopsis of Anthony Barrett's, *Agrippina: Sex, Power, and Politics in the Early Empire,* Routledge, 1996

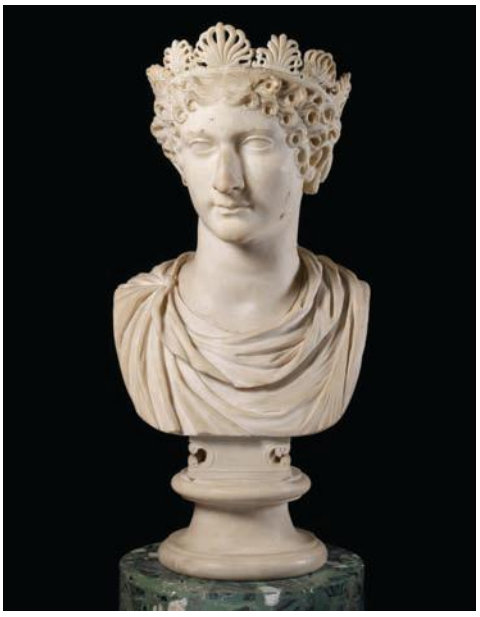
Agrippina the Younger attained a level of power in first-century Rome unprecedented for a woman. According to ancient sources, she achieved her success by plotting against her brother, the emperor Caligula, murdering her husband, the emperor Claudius, and controlling her son, the emperor Nero, by sleeping with him. Modern scholars tend to accept this verdict. But ... Anthony Barrett paints a startling new picture of this influential woman ... Drawing on the latest archaeological, numismatic, and historical evidence, Barrett argues that Agrippina has been misjudged. Although she was ambitious, says Barrett, she made her way through ability and determination rather than by sexual allure, and her political contributions to her time seem to have been positive. After Agrippina's marriage to Claudius there was a marked decline in the number of judicial executions and there was close cooperation between the Senate and the emperor; the settlement of Cologne, founded under her *aegis*, was a model of social harmony; and the first five years of Nero's reign, while she was still alive, were the most enlightened of his rule. According to Barrett, Agrippina's one real failing was her relationship with her son, the monster of her own making who had her murdered in horrific and violent circumstances. Agrippina's impact was so lasting, however, that for some 150 years after her death no woman in the imperial family dared assume an assertive political role.

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The following images of Agrippina the Younger show the variety of ways she was represented by contemporary artisans.



SOURCE 8.58 Statue representing Agrippina the Younger



SOURCE 8.59 Bust of Agrippina the Younger



SOURCE 8.60 Statue of Agrippina the Younger in a reclining pose



SOURCE 8.61 Plaster cast of a statue of Agrippina the Younger found in the surroundings of Rome

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The Great Cameo of France in Source 8.62 is a layered Roman cameo made c. 50–54 CE. The upper level shows deceased family members, including close relatives of Tiberius.

The middle level shows Emperor Tiberius and his mother Livia; standing in front of them are Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder; behind them are the future emperor Nero and the figure of Providentia (Foresight); behind Livia and Tiberius are Claudius and Agrippina the Younger.

In the bottom level are defeated and captured barbarians.



SOURCE 8.62 *The Great Cameo of France*, depicting a Julio-Claudian family reunion, Cabinet des Medailles, Paris

ACTIVITY **8.10**

Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. In Source 8.57, Anthony Barrett argues that Agrippina the Younger has been misjudged for nearly 2000 years.
   - **a.** According to the review of his book, what does Barratt identify as the almost universally accepted view of Agrippina the Younger by the ancient sources?
   - **b.** What type of evidence has Barrett used for his reinterpretation of Agrippina the Younger?
   - **c.** Identify what Barrett thinks was Agrippina the Younger's one real failing.

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2. Look at Sources 8.58 to 8.61. Consider how these visual representations of Agrippina the Younger depict a positively demure, matronly and pious woman. These statuary sources are in contrast to the immoral, vicious woman portrayed by Tacitus, Suetonius and Cassius Dio. Develop a hypothesis to address the conflict between the ancient literary sources and the ancient material record sources.
3. Source 8.62 is an image of *The Great Cameo of France*. Refer to the image and the text, explaining the figures in it to answer the questions below.
   a. What do you think was the purpose behind this cameo?
   b. Identify the location in the cameo of Agrippina the Younger and Claudius. Would you say the imagery supports the position of the ancient writers or of modern historians such as Anthony Barrett? Elaborate on your answer.

ACTIVITY **8.11**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Key inquiry question

To what extent were the (overwhelmingly critical) ancient sources on the women of the imperial family – who were influential in the struggles over the succession and directly influenced the governing of the Roman Empire – based only on literary sources and not on the contemporary material sources?

Sub-questions

Sub-questions are developed to help respond to a key inquiry question. It's important to ensure the sub-questions are focused on the key inquiry question. The use of colours in each sub-question demonstrates how they link to the key inquiry question. The specific use of words as a link helps to keep the development of the historical responses discerning and to the point.

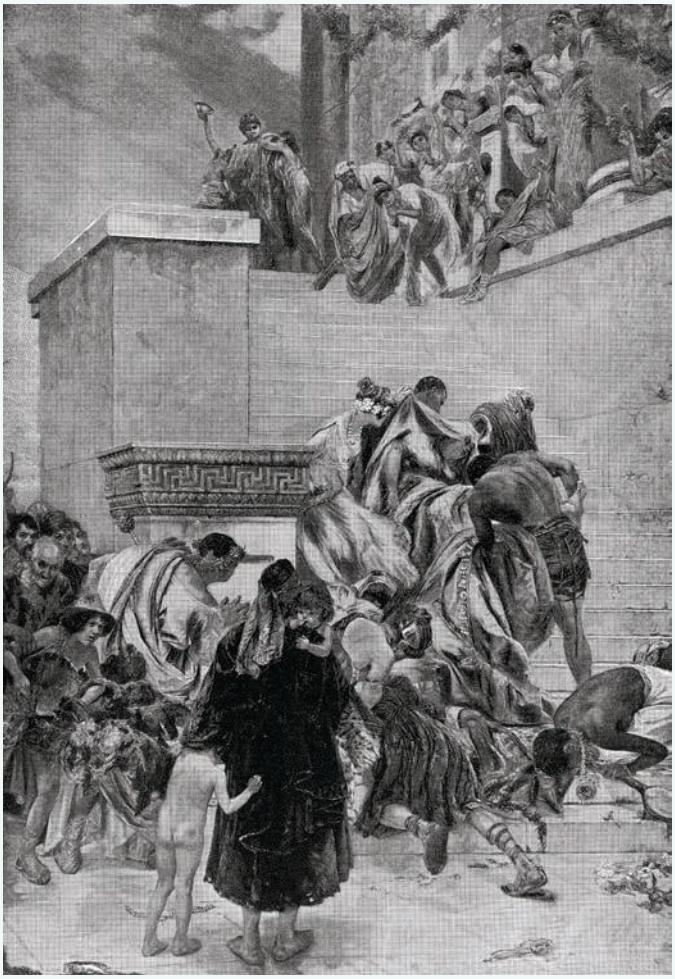
1. How did the succession issue affect Agrippina the Younger? (Give background context to who was the Roman Imperial family in the first century CE.)
2. What alternative pathways were open to a woman of the imperial Roman family to gain influence and power? (Discuss the role of women in Ancient Rome.)
3. How did Agrippina the Younger have so much power and influence considering Roman women had no direct involvement in politics? (She was the sister of Emperor Caligula, wife of Emperor Claudius, and mother of Emperor Nero.)
4. Why are the Ancient Roman sources overwhelmingly critical of Agrippina the Younger? (Discuss the attitudes of ancient male writers Tacitius, Suetonius and Cassius Dio.)
5. How are the representations of Agrippina the Younger in the ancient material sources of the Julio-Claudian period conspicuously different from those in the literary tradition? (Look at recent historical revision work.)

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Julia Agrippina, known as Agrippina the Younger, was a key figure of the Julio-Claudian Roman imperial family.
- The social position and status of Agrippina the Younger fluctuated with the struggle between the two great Roman families: Julian and Claudian.
- Agrippina the Younger was successful in navigating the turmoil during the reign of her brother, Gaius Caligula.
- When Agrippina the Younger was named Augusta and Empress of Rome during her marriage to the emperor (her uncle Claudius), she had reached the height of political influence and power.
- During the reign of Agrippina the Younger's son, Nero, she effectively co-ruled for about five years.
- After Emperor Nero was able to banish Agrippina the Younger from the Imperial Court and the city of Rome, her influence on Roman politics declined and with her murder there was an effort to have her name forgotten.
- Ancient Roman sources vilify Agrippina the Younger as ambitious, unscrupulous and seductive.
- A comparison of the hostile ancient literary sources with modern literary interpretations and evidence available in the material sources shows a different personality of Agrippina the Younger compared to the one that has been accepted by historians for the past 2000 years.



SOURCE 8.63 This engraving depicts the body of Agrippina the Younger being brought before her son, Emperor Nero.

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
Briefly describe Agrippina the Younger's early life and rise to prominence.

DEVISE
Devise a series of research questions on each of the ancient writers Suetonius, Cassius Dio and Tacitus that focuses on their view of the actions of Agrippina the Younger.

ANALYSE
Identify the basis of Agrippina's power and influence by exploring features of evidence in the sources in this chapter before Agrippina the Younger's marriage to Claudius.

EVALUATE
Make a decision about the influence of Agrippina the Younger during her lifetime using the sources in this chapter.

SYNTHESISE
Draw a conclusion about the representations of Agrippina the Younger in the Ancient sources.

COMMUNICATE
Explain the expected role of a woman in Ancient Roman society.

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions
1. How have interpretations of Agrippina the Younger changed over time?
2. How did Agrippina the Younger's background prepare her for her prominent role?
3. Evaluate the significance of Agrippina's marriages in her rise to prominence.

Investigation tasks
1. To what extent was Agrippina the Younger an influential political figure?
2. Evaluate Agrippina's relationship with Nero.
3. Modern historian Judith Ginsburg has stated that 'Tacitus's Agrippina is largely a literary construct that serves the larger ends of the narrative of the *principates* of Claudius and Nero'. Respond to this quote with reference to the physical artefacts of the Julio-Claudians.

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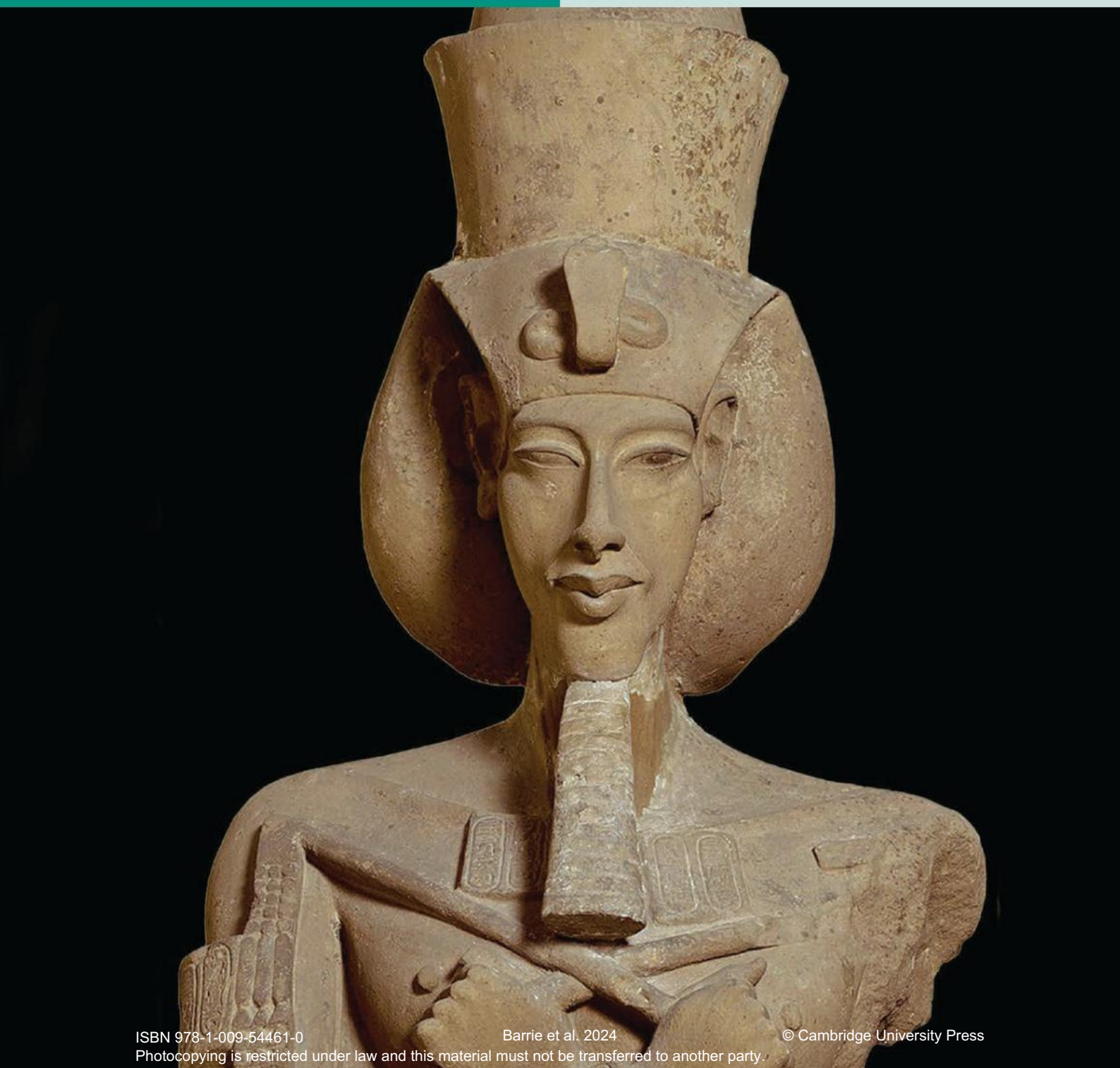
Chapter 9

AKHENATEN (DIGITAL)

Syllabus reference: Unit 2, Topics 1 and 2: Personalities in their times

GLENN DAVIES WITH MICHAEL COCKS

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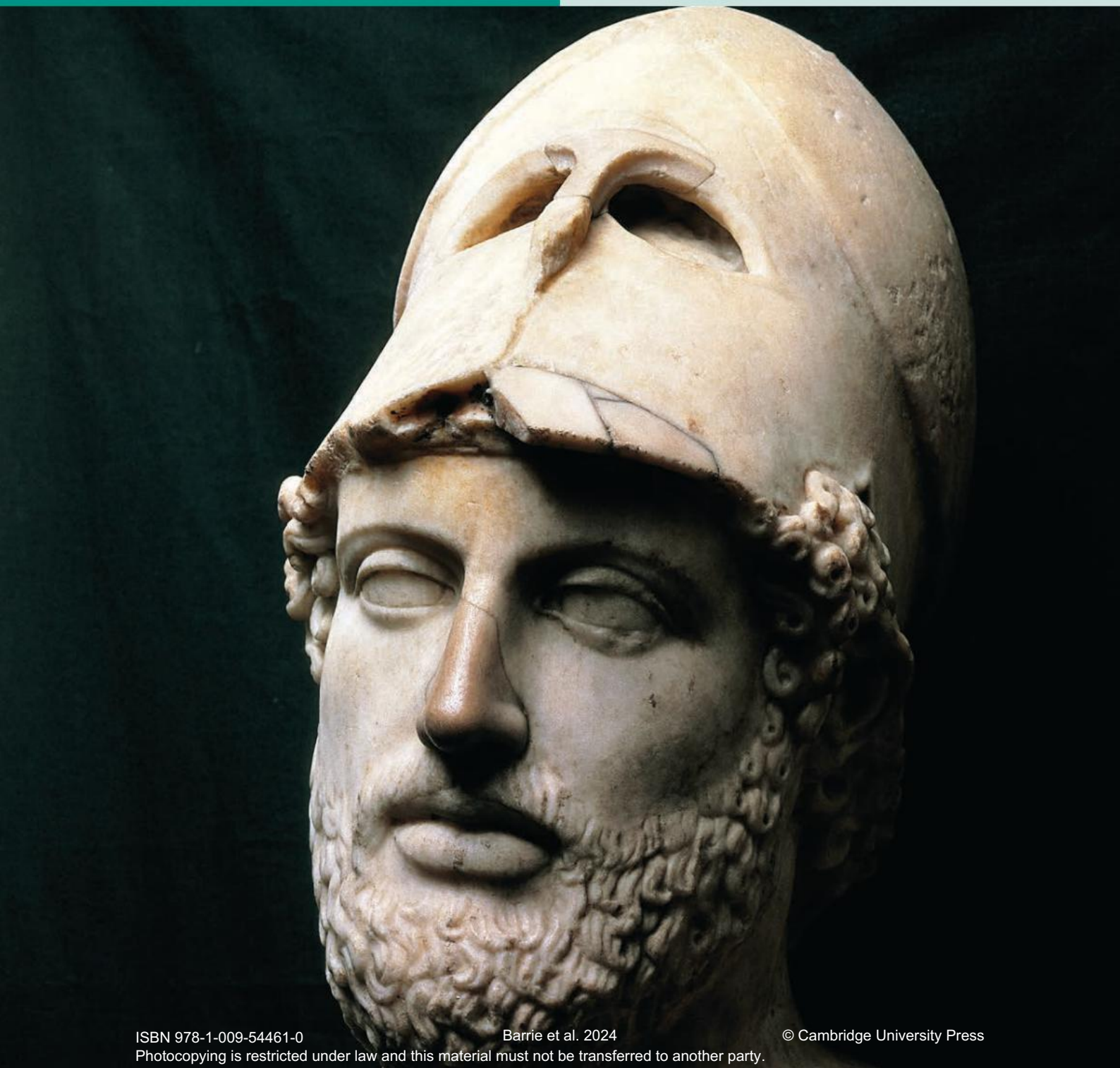
Chapter 10

PERIKLES (DIGITAL)

Syllabus reference:
Unit 2, Topics 1 and 2:
Personalities in their times

ALAN BARRIE

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Chapter 11

BOUDICA

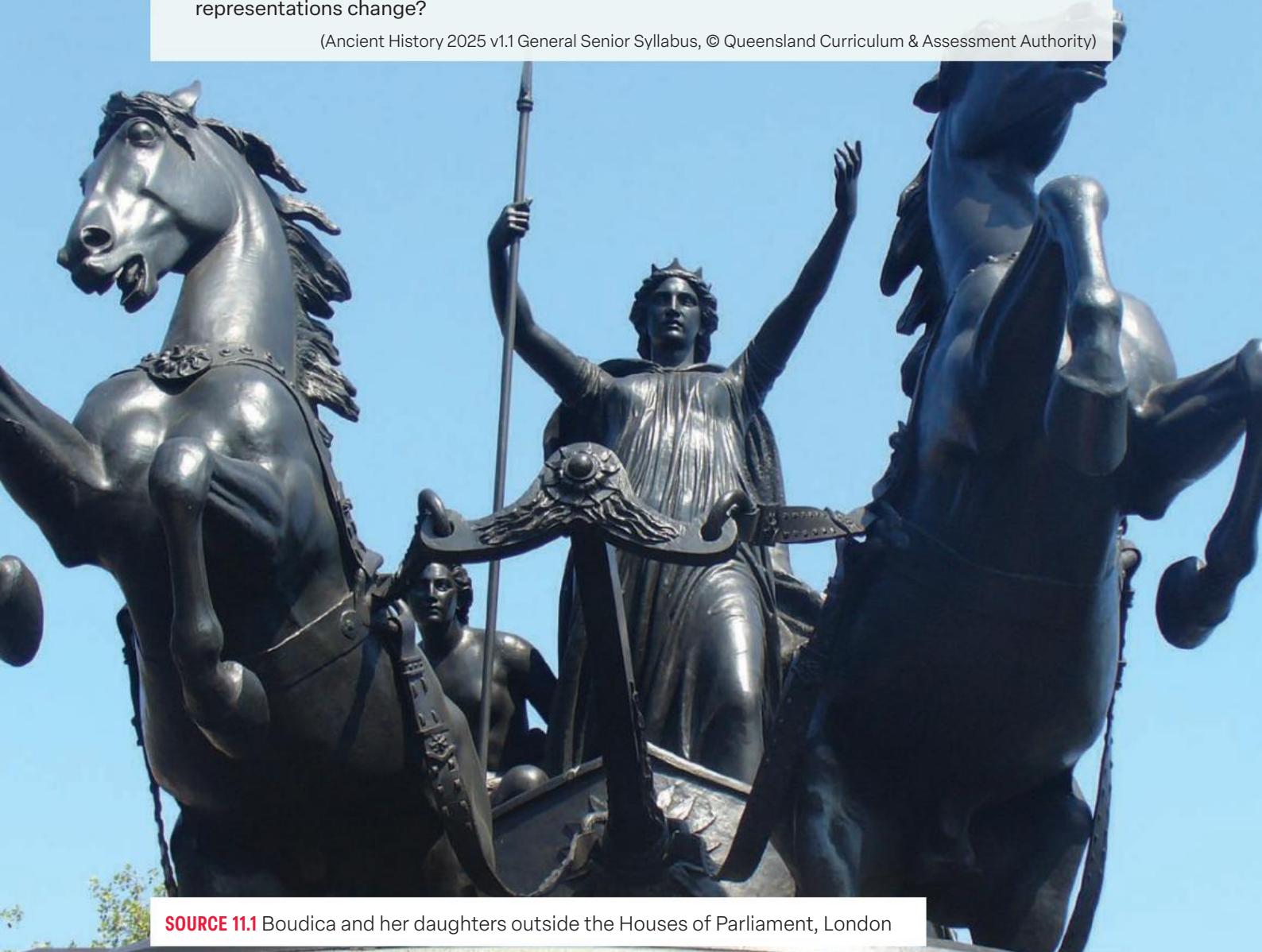
Syllabus reference: Unit 2, Topics 1 and 2: Personalities in their times

SARAH COLEMAN

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How can we determine the motivations, attributes and achievements of significant ancient personalities?
- How have ancient personalities been represented throughout time and why do these representations change?

(Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 11.1 Boudica and her daughters outside the Houses of Parliament, London

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FOCUS: A STATUE OF AN ANCIENT TERRORIST IN THE HEART OF LONDON

If, as a tourist in London, you head to Westminster and the Houses of Parliament, you will find on the north side of the western end of Westminster Bridge, surrounded by hawkers selling 'I ❤ LONDON' merchandise, a striking bronze statue. Erected in 1902 in honour of the late Queen Victoria, it depicts a strong woman, sheltering two young girls atop a chariot led by horses: arms outstretched, hair flowing, face stern. The woman is Boudica, Queen of the **Iceni**, famed for leading a destructive rebellion against the Roman army in the province of Britannia in 64 CE, and a potent symbol of female power, anti-imperialism and British resistance.

Iceni an Iron Age tribe in modern-day Kent, one of the first tribes to capitulate to Rome, despite rejection of Roman friendship following the expeditions of Caesar in 54 BCE

But why, almost 2000 years after this woman scourged unleashed hell on the Roman occupiers of the fledgling British colony, was a statue commissioned of her, a rebel against empire, a terrorist even, established in the heart of the civilisation that evolved in the wake of four centuries of Roman imperial domination, and came to be the imperial leviathan of the modern era? And why place the might and fury of Boudica in such proximity to the very seat of power in the British Empire: The English Houses of Parliament? Perhaps because she is a reminder of the power of those who refuse to be silenced.

The outpost of Britannia posed one of the most significant challenges to the Roman military machine, and continued to be a problematic province until the empire finally withdrew its legions in the fifth century CE. Landfall was first achieved by Gaius Julius Caesar in 54 BCE as an extension of his provincial duties in Gaul. Though the territory was technically outside his legal sphere of influence, Caesar justified his actions, claiming he needed to confront those who were aiding the Gauls in their resistance to Rome. Caesar's ventures, though militarily unsuccessful, introduced Britain to the Roman psyche. In 43 CE, the new emperor, Claudius, took arms against the Britons, seeking to cement his military status as emperor. Though Claudius himself did little, his armies introduced the indigenous Britons to the empire that would shape their identity over the coming centuries, forging a narrative that has encouraged people to challenge those who subjugate and suppress others, while asking questions about the impact of colonialism and empire, the justice of war and political terrorism.

ACTIVITY 11.1

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. In small groups, create a mind map documenting the reasons why people rebel against authority. Include any examples you can think of in your study of history to date, or your general knowledge of current affairs.
2. Create a word wall as a class, which includes images and examples of the following terms:
   - imperialism
   - colonialism
   - rebellion
   - liberation.
3. Suggest why an understanding of these terms might help with your understanding of Boudica as a historical figure.
4. Consider the following expressions:
   - *Jus ad bellum* – a just war: all wars can be justified
   - One person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter.

   To what extent do you agree with these statements? Document your responses as a class either in a digital forum or visibly in your class. You will reflect on these later in the unit.

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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

Introduction

Boudica was Queen of the Iceni – a British tribe from the area that is now East Anglia in England – during the middle of the first century CE. By this time, Britain had officially been the Roman province of Britannia since 44 CE following the Claudian invasion of 43 CE, and subsequent surrender (or subjugation, depending on the narrative) of tribes in the south, especially around the Thames Valley. Boudica is famed for a revolt she led against the Romans in the province of Britannia, which we now refer to as the Boudican Revolt, or Boudican Rebellion.

11.1 When and where did Boudica live and die?

Very little is known of Boudica prior to her involvement in the Boudican Revolt. Her age, birth, even the specifics of her death are unknown. The ancient sources who document the rebellion place the death of Prasutagus in 60 CE, during the reign of Nero. Prasutagus was the king of the Iceni tribe and the husband of Boudica. In his will, Prasutagus left half his territories to his daughters and the other half to Rome. This enraged the Romans, who scourged Boudica and violated her daughters. Following the actions of the Romans against Boudica and her daughters, the Iceni Queen was able to unite tribes and lead an onslaught against three Roman settlements, which suggests significant power and influence. This, coupled with the fact that she had teenage daughters, would place her potentially as young as 30 years of age at the time of the rebellion, though this is conjecture.

The time and circumstances of Boudica's death are unknown. Tacitus declares that she 'ended her days by poison', drawing on the notion of the noble savage, who would commit suicide rather than face capture; Cassius Dio claims sickness, while modern historians believe that it is more likely that she died in battle. Further to this, the location of her burial is likewise unknown. Following the discovery of an elephant and spear during the construction of King's Cross Station in London in 1850, there was some conjecture that this was the place of Boudica's final moments, but it is more likely that it was further north, following the Battle of Watling Street in 61 CE.

The Iceni tribe inhabited the lands in what is modern-day East Anglia, occupying areas of Norfolk, north-east Cambridgeshire, and the northern parts of Suffolk. Tacitus refers to them as 'a powerful tribe, which war had not weakened, as they had voluntarily joined our alliance', and the archaeological and numismatic records attest to their wealth and interest in metalware and horses. The archaeological record provides evidence of the metallurgical skill of the Iceni, as is evidenced by significant collections held in the British Museum. One such example is a large metal neck ring, called a torc, found in Snettisham on the Norfolk coast (part of what would have been Iceni territory). Discovered in 1950 as part of a larger hoard of **Iron Age** jewellery, the torc weighs over one kilogram, and is made from an alloy of gold and silver. The detail of the torc reflects the detailed skill of Icenian metalworkers: comprising 64 individual threads of metal, each 1.9 millimetres wide, twisted together in groups of eight to form eight separate metal 'ropes' which were then twisted together to make the final torc. In addition to the detailed ornamental metalwork is Icenian coinage, which commonly depicts horses.

Iron Age period following the Stone and Bronze Ages, and immediately preceding Roman occupation; refers to the use of iron implements, and in developmental terms is the most advanced age prior to classical civilisation

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SOURCE 11.2 The Snettisham Torc, discovered in 1950 as part of an Iron Age hoard, dating to the first century BCE, British Museum



SOURCE 11.3 First-century-BCE Iceni coin. This type has been attributed to Queen Boudica by R. D. van Arsdell, Museums Victoria

While the tribe of the Iceni was an ally of Rome following the Claudian Invasion, the sources do not name a specific settlement, and therefore it is likely that the Iceni continued to live in Iron Age conditions – hill forts and natural defences. An example of such a hill fort that continues to be visible today is Maiden Castle in modern-day Dorset. Maiden Castle is a significant archaeological site of Iron Age Britain. It is the largest Iron Age hill fort in Britain, encompassing an area the size of 50 football fields, surrounded by a network of complex ramparts. Revelations about its history emerged from excavations carried out in the 1930s and 1980s. The hilltop has experienced a long and complex history of human inhabitation, development and modification, beginning with its origins in the Neolithic period more than 6000 years ago. In the Iron Age (800 BCE – 43 CE), it was inhabited by several hundred people. It later featured a Romano-British temple. Excavations suggest that round houses were organised in rows, and traffic-specific streets existed. Animals were enclosed in pens, there were drainage gullies, and evidence suggests that textile and metalworking industries were present at the site. This is perhaps similar to how the Iceni were living at the time of the rebellion, only 17 years after the invasion of Claudius, and declaration of Roman victory.



SOURCE 11.4 Peoples of southern Britain according to Ptolemy's map

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11.2 How do we know today about Boudica and her achievements?

The only detailed written evidence of Boudica is found in the accounts of Ancient Roman historians Tacitus and Cassius Dio, writing in the second and third centuries respectively, while the events of her rebellion are largely supported by the archaeological record. Evidence from the Roman occupation of Britain is variable and, in many cases, problematic. Britain was very much the outpost of the empire and was as remote in distance as it was in significance to the residents of the Mediterranean. It was a place where careers were forged, where men made their mark and climbed the ladder of offices among the barbarian horde. This is the perspective that is widely reflected in the ancient literary record and consequently forms a fragmented history of Roman occupation on the island. In many cases, the tantalising snippets that remain reflect the pre-eminence of Roman civilisation with Britain simply forming the backdrop for more illustrious deeds, usually of high-ranking Roman officials. Consequently, substantial gaps in our knowledge of the 500 years when Britain was a Roman province must be heavily substantiated by other evidence to ensure the most accurate and balanced picture of Britain under Roman occupation. In addition to this, attempts at locating evidence to support the sporadic British references in the Roman literary record have altered the archaeological landscape, resulting in an inherently Roman bias, silencing the native.



SOURCE 11.5 Maiden Castle, Dorset

Due to the glaring absences in the literary record, the archaeological record has proved significant in completing the picture of Britain under Roman occupation. The archaeological evidence, as with any other source, requires rigorous assessment. Until relatively recently, excavations in Britain have reflected the scholarship of the time, emphasising military, urban and upper-class rural settlements. The interest in the identities and development under Roman occupation has altered the way that the evidence is excavated and interpreted.

The examination of archaeological evidence allows for the consideration of changing social structures as a result of Roman occupation. The spread and diversity of Roman-style goods, housing, roads and temples reflects changing ideologies and social patterns. This, however, is problematic, in that the emphasis on the changing nature of life in Britain tends to marginalise the components of British life that remained the same.

Inscriptions erected by the natives of the Roman province of Britain form an invaluable source of information in the examination of life on the island. An advantage of epigraphy is that it is not tarnished by the inherent bias of the classical author; they tend to be short, personal reflections of the day-to-day dealings of people on the island. The main disadvantage is the fragmentary nature of the inscriptions, many having been affected by vandalism and weathering.

Stamps of manufactured goods often denote the artisan and place of production, which can be particularly valuable in determining the geographical spread of material culture. Epigraphic evidence provides depth to the story of the province, and when used in conjunction with other primary sources, can help create a clearer, more balanced picture of life in the province.

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ACTIVITY **11.2**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Identify the problems faced by historians in 'finding' the historical Boudica and her part in the revolt against Rome in 60–61 CE.
2. Using online databases, read the Roman accounts of Britain listed below and complete the table.
   - **a.** Strabo, a Greek geographer from the turn of the millennium: Strabo, *Geography*, 2:5
   - **b.** Julius Caesar's *Commentarii de Bello Gallico*, a record of his undertakings and victories (written in the third person), and a vital source in understanding the history of Roman dealings with Britain: Julius Caesar, *Commentarii de Bello Gallico*, 4.21–5.14
   - **c.** Cicero, a politician, orator and statesman of the first century BCE, mentioned Britain in a letter to his friend Atticus: Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Letters to Atticus*, 4.16.7
   - **d.** Roman historian Suetonius, writing in the second century CE, discusses Julius Caesar's invasion of Britain: Suetonius, *Divus Iulius*

	Geography	Ethnography	Trade and commerce	Warfare	Roman contact
Strabo					
Caesar					
Cicero					
Suetonius					

3. Based on the evidence you have collected in the previous question, create a mind map that highlights the features of Iron Age Britain.
4. Having examined the evidence, identify any contradictions in the text. How would you account for this?
5. According to the evidence, what was the extent of British–Roman contact prior to 43 CE? Suggest the benefits this would have had for each side. What was the value in invading?
6. Although it is a very small reference, the letter from Cicero is very important. Evaluate the usefulness of this as a source of evidence.
7. The sources spend a lot of time discussing the barbaric features of the Britons.
   - **a.** On what basis are the Britons deemed uncivilised by the evidence?
   - **b.** What do we need to know about Roman attitudes towards civilisation to make judgements about this?
   - **c.** How might one go about dispelling the Roman view that the Britons were uncivilised?
   - **d.** Identify one method that could be used to disprove this view.
8. What were the aims and objectives of Caesar's invasion in 54 BCE? What was its significance?
9. Is there any evidence that suggests ties with Rome existed prior to Caesar's crossing in 54 bce? How might we account for this?
10. What effect does Caesar's account being written in the third person have? What do you think his purpose was here?
11. Suetonius's account is very brief. How would you account for this?
12. How has the genre of each source influenced the way it was written? What ramifications does this have for students of ancient history?
13. The Roman historian and the Roman audience: To what extent might Roman writers over-dramatise their histories for the sake of their audience?

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DEPTH STUDY

Introduction

The Boudican Rebellion or Revolt refers to a large-scale act of resistance on the part of the native Britons against the rapacious Roman army in 60–61 CE. Britain had officially been the Roman province of Britannia since 44 CE following the Claudian Invasion. Prior to 44 CE, Britain had contact with the continent, most notably through Caesar's failed expedition 90 years prior, which established contacts who would continue to ask Rome for aid, as did 'a certain Berikos' (a British king) upon whom the need for invasion is justified. Under the leadership of Aulus Plautius, four legions and approximately 20 000 auxiliaries landed at Richborough in Kent. Despite facing a large army led by the Catuvellaunian kings Caratacus and Togodumnus, the Romans were victorious after only two days of battle. When Claudius arrived with his elephants following the victory, Camuloludnum (Colchester) was established as the provincial capital and **client kingdoms** were established. After his brief stay of 16 days, Claudius instructed Plautius to 'conquer the rest'.

Following Claudius's success, many tribal chiefs followed the suit of the likes of Jugurtha of Numidia and Nicomedes of Bithynia, and in allying themselves and their people with the Roman State, became what we refer to as 'client kings'. A client kingdom refers to the practice of establishing a native ruler loyal to Rome. These territories formed buffer zones at the edges of the empire, and in many cases were ultimately absorbed by the empire. By the time of Boudica, these arrangements were a tried and tested method of introducing Roman mores and stabilising tenacious regions. They were used as a deliberate measure to avoid excessive bloodshed and economic drain of the imperial purse, and allowed for the achievement of short-term goals, predominantly rapid conquest and the ability to pressure neighbouring tribes. It was, for Rome, a systematic means of quickly securing a basis for provincial expansion and secure occupation. This process was, by nature, heavily politicised and predetermined.

client kingdoms a kingdom with a native ruler loyal to Rome, these territories formed buffer zones at the edges of the empire, and in many cases were ultimately absorbed by the empire

Roman Britain period during which Britannia was a province of the Roman Empire; commenced with the Claudian invasion of 43/44 CE and concluded with the removal of Roman garrisons in 476 CE

According to David Mattingly (2007), whose text is crucial for any study of **Roman Britain**, client rulers were liable to be manipulated in a number of ways, including the contentious area of succession. Rome was obviously advantaged if the replacement of any client king was one of those from the pool of educated hostages in Rome, who were then able to perpetuate the ideologies of the empire in the provinces.

Tacitus observes that Prasutagus was 'famed for his long prosperity', which suggests that he had ruled for an extensive period of time. In addition, he is not mentioned as one of the 11 kings who submitted to Claudius in 43 CE and perhaps already had a longstanding relationship with Rome or had approached Claudius upon his arrival.

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Tacitus claims that Prasutagus was 'under the impression that this token of submission would put his kingdom and house out of the reach of wrong'. The opposite, however, was the result. Suetonius Paulinus, the fifth governor of Britain, had decided that resolute action needed to be taken against the **druids** in Anglesey, and thus the XIV and XX legions left the heavily militarised south-east and headed west, into unguarded Wales to remove the druid threat. It was in this absence that the Iceni rebelled.

11.3 The personal attributes of Boudica

It can be very challenging to find the 'real Boudica' within the Roman rhetoric of Tacitus and Cassius Dio. Remember, theirs are our only ancient accounts of Boudica's existence and both were writing sometime after the events being described.

druid Celtic priest and scholar often associated with British resistance to Roman rule

romanisation a term that suggests the adoption of Roman customs in place of traditional ones; has evolved, as evidence emerges that suggests fusion, and a heterogeneous Romano-British culture, rather than a purely homogeneous Roman one

Tacitus

Publius Cornelius Tacitus is one of the most prolific writers on the Roman Empire. A man of senatorial rank, Tacitus compiled his works in the late first century. The key theme in the writing of Tacitus is the ability of power to corrupt; the early emperors are widely depicted as cruel, despotic and manipulative. This belief in corruption and excess pervades all aspects of the empire. The *Annals* and the *Histories* are littered with scandal, government corruption and the imperial lust for power.

The works of Tacitus have left an indelible mark for students of Roman Britain. While Tacitus makes mention of Britain in the *Histories* and *Annals* – notably the revolt of the Iceni – it is the *Agricola* (published in 98 CE) that tends to be the main Tacitean text on which Roman-Britain historians focus, and without it, much of what is known about the Roman occupation of Britain would not exist. Tacitus is explicit about the character and purpose of the *Agricola,* to honour his father-in-law; however, the place that Britain holds within these works is contentious. Throughout his works, Tacitus highlights the degenerate and corrupt Romans of the time by presenting a view of Britain as a geographical entity and subjugated nation. Tacitus seeks to expose the evils of Roman occupation – a result of a Rome that was increasingly plagued by corrupt men. Tacitus was writing at a time when Rome had direct engagement with Britain for some 150 years. Further, he was writing for a public who knew little about Britain and cared even less, and thus sought to highlight the material prosperity and outward **romanisation** of the island. He frequently uses speeches to convey his ideas, usually making various 'barbarian leaders' such as Boudica the mouthpiece of these ideas. In the portrayal of the Battle of Mons Grapius (in modern Scotland), Tacitus uses the Scottish tribal leader Galgacus as the mouthpiece for his rhetorical speeches. Galgacus berates his Roman conquerors, describing 'the terrible Romans from whose oppression escape is vainly sought by obedience and submission', who were the 'robbers of the world' creating 'devastation and calling it peace'. Tacitus highlights the inherent difficulties faced in the conquest of remote and untouched nations, particularly their 'superiority of force'. Tacitus's writings arguably placed Britain on the mental map of the Roman world, and recognised that no matter how great the conqueror, the subjugation of a 'barbarian' nation and the forced servitude that ensued was fraught with difficulties.

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Cassius Dio

Cassius Dio was a native of Bythnia, and a prominent politician in the early third century CE. His *History of Rome* comprised 80 books covering the city's history up until the time of Cassius Dio's second consulship (229 CE). With the exception of his own period, Cassius Dio was heavily reliant on literary sources. There are echoes of Livy throughout, but in the main his sources are unknown. As is expected, Cassius Dio refers to Britain in snippets. Books 60 and 62 provide the most extensive detail, the former relating the invasion of 43 CE and the latter discussing Boudica. His narrative forms the basis for many contemporary historical studies of Roman conquest. Cassius Dio provides significant detail regarding the premise for the invasion, attributing it to Berikos, a British king who had fled an uprising. Cassius Dio provides a detailed account of the initial battles against the Britons, highlighting the activities of the commander Aulus Plautius and the Emperor Claudius. Cassius Dio was a staunch monarchist; consequently he sought to validate the role of the emperor. He is careful to record the emperor's entry to Britain as an active ruler, upholding the Roman military, and extending Roman domination.

Cassius Dio is also highly significant in assessing the Boudican Revolt of 69 CE. In the main, Cassius Dio's version of the revolt comprises speeches, both Roman and British. Speech was a common technique used by classical historians; however, they tend to echo the ideals and values of the author, rather than the supposed speaker. This is certainly the case with Cassius Dio, as his speeches are littered with graphic description and clear Roman ideologies. This does not by any means discount him as a source; he does, however, need to be treated with caution.

The Roman historian Suetonius writes this about Britain under Nero:

SOURCE 11.6 Suetonius, *The Lives of the Caesars*

18 1 So far from being actuated by any wish or hope of increasing or extending the empire, he even thought of withdrawing the army from Britain and changed his purpose only because he was ashamed to seem to belittle the glory of his father.

Why does he not even mention Boudica and the revolt? Suetonius had access to the imperial archives. Would the absence of any mention of Boudica and the revolt by Suetonius reflect how unimportant it was considered in Rome? Tacitus takes an interest because his father-in-law, Agricola, was Governor of Britain, and the revolt appears in Cassius Dio because he used Tacitus to help write his own history.

The portrayal of Boudica

The focus in both Cassius Dio and Tacitus is the reasons for and the course of the rebellion. It is only in this context that we garner any knowledge about Boudica as a person. It is thus challenging to make any accurate judgement about her personality, and we are instead left to read between the lines: to focus on the implications of the evidence.

Both writers identify Boudica as the leader of the rebellion; however, there are no earlier attestations. Both were writing after Nero had dissolved into what they believed to be narcissistic indulgence, and they depicted Boudica with the attributes that Nero lacked. Their comparison was made even more disparaging because she was a woman.

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Cassius Dio gives us the most specific detail, in terms of Boudica the person:

SOURCE 11.7 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 62:2.

> ... the person who was thought worthy to be their leader and who directed the conduct of the entire war, was Boudica, a Briton woman of the royal family and possessed of greater intelligence than often belongs to women ... In stature she was very tall, in appearance most terrifying, in the glance of her eye most fierce, and her voice was harsh; a great mass of the tawniest hair fell to her hips; around her neck was a large golden necklace; and she wore a tunic of diverse colours over which a thick mantle was fastened with a brooch. This was her invariable attire. She now grasped a spear to aid her in terrifying all beholders.

Tacitus, however, only tells us that she was a 'queen of glorious ancestry' (*Annals*, 35). It is also from Tacitus that we get the image of Boudica atop a chariot, flanked by her daughters, which was no doubt the inspiration for the statue outside the Houses of Parliament. He does not identify her as the leader until the final stand, rather noting at the beginning of the rebellion that 'they [the Iceni] flew to arms, and incited to rebellion the **Trinobantes** and others, who, not yet broken by servitude, had entered into a secret and treasonable compact to resume their independence' (*Annals*, 31), while Cassius Dio notes, 'This woman assembled her army, to the number of some 120 000' (*Roman History*, 62:2).

Trinobantes also called the Trinovantes, the tribe immediately to the south of the Iceni, who were among the first to join the revolt

ACTIVITY 11.3

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Using the evidence of Boudica's characteristics provided by Cassius Dio and Tacitus, identify the explicit information in the sources.
2. What is implied about Boudica by the sources? What can we infer about her character and leadership based on the evidence provided?

11.4 The motivations and influences of Boudica

Accounts of the cause of the rebellion differ, rendering a straightforward narrative impossible. Ostensibly, the revolt was a response to Roman violence against the Iceni, specifically Boudica and her daughters. This is described in detail by Tacitus:

SOURCE 11.8 Tacitus, *Annals*, 31

> The Icenian king Prasutagus, celebrated for his long prosperity, had named the emperor his heir, together with his two daughters; an act of deference which he thought would place his kingdom and household beyond the risk of injury. The result was contrary – so much so that his kingdom was pillaged by centurions, his household by slaves; as though they had been prizes of war. As a beginning, his wife Boudica was subjected to the lash and his daughters violated: all the chief men of the Icenians were stripped of their family estates, and the relatives of the king were treated as slaves.

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While this may have been the immediate cause, Cassius Dio provides additional information, suggesting a financial reason:

SOURCE 11.9 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 62:2

> An excuse for the war was found in the confiscation of the sums of money that Claudius had given to the foremost Britons; for these sums, as Decianus Catus, the procurator of the island, maintained, were to be paid back. This was one reason for the uprising; another was found in the fact that Seneca, in the hope of receiving a good rate of interest, had lent to the islanders 40,000,000 sesterces that they did not want, and had afterwards called in this loan all at once and had resorted to severe measures in exacting it.

Beyond the ancient sources, there are other theories as to the cause of the rebellion; however, the leadership of Boudica surely was directly connected to the treatment of her and her daughters by the Romans. While Cassius Dio adopts the Tacitean line of slavery, the treatment of the conquered by the imperial army is no doubt a significant source of discontent. The treatment of Boudica and her daughters may have been the proverbial 'straw that broke the camel's back', provided a shared experience of injustice, and a shared purpose in rebellion.

SOURCE 11.10 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 62:3

> You have learned by actual experience how different freedom is from slavery. Hence, although some among you may previously, through ignorance of which was better, have been deceived by the alluring promises of the Romans, yet now that you have tried both, you have learned how great a mistake you made in preferring an imported despotism to your ancestral mode of life, and you have come to realise how much better is poverty with no master than wealth with slavery. For what treatment is there of the most shameful or grievous sort that we have not suffered ever since these men made their appearance in Britain? Have we not been robbed entirely of most of our possessions, and those the greatest, while for those that remain we pay taxes? Besides pasturing and tilling for them all our other possessions, do we not pay a yearly tribute for our very bodies? How much better it would be to have been sold to masters once for all than, possessing empty titles of freedom, to have to ransom ourselves every year! How much better to have been slain and to have perished than to go about with a tax on our heads! Yet why do I mention death? For even dying is not free of cost with them; nay, you know what fees we deposit even for our dead. Among the rest of mankind death frees even those who are in slavery to others; only in the case of the Romans do the very dead remain alive for their profit. Why is it that, though none of us has any money (how, indeed, could we, or where would we get it?), we are stripped and despoiled like a murderer's victims? And why should the Romans be expected to display moderation as time goes on, when they have behaved toward us in this fashion at the very outset, when all men show consideration even for the beasts they have newly captured?

Cassius Dio sought to depict a mighty foe in intelligence, oratory and appearance as a means to make the Roman victory all the more glorious. It is interesting to consider the possibility that Boudica may have only been a minor player, whose role was exaggerated for literary and moral effect.

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11.5 The leadership style of Boudica

coloniae as colony; in the case of Rome, these were settlements of retired Roman soldiers

There are a number of reasons that have been suggested for the Boudican Revolt, and ultimately the leadership and actions of Boudica in response to those of Rome. These are summarised below:

- **Long-term discontent with the Roman presence in Britain:** As a tribal entity in the south-east, the Iceni were under no illusions about the precariousness of their position. The Trinovantes to the south had lost their tribal capital, Camulodunum, which was now a ***coloniae***, or colony for Roman veterans. Taxation, oppression and growing numbers of Roman informers all added to the discontent among the British tribes.
- **The foolishness of Prasutagus (husband of Boudica):** There are many historians who put the actions of Prasutagus down to naivety, if not outright stupidity. He seems to have genuinely believed that his inheritance could be divided between his family and the Roman State. Instead all his possessions, which under Roman law included his wife and children, became property of the emperor.
- **The treatment of Boudica, despite the fact that her husband had been a citizen of Rome:** Whether a revolt of some sort had been on the cards or not prior to the flogging of Boudica and the rape of her daughters is unclear, but this was certainly the event that lit the fire of revolution among not only members of the Iceni, but also the neighbouring tribes. There are some historians who challenge the traditional view that Prasutagus was merely a client and suggest he held citizenship status, which would make the crimes committed against his wife and children more brazen.
- **Resentment over the weapons ban following the capture of Caratacus in 51 CE under the governorship of Ostorius Scapula:** Following uprisings at the beginning of his tenure, Scapula responded in kind, attacking continually and not allowing any time for the resistance to regroup. He was responsible for issuing a disarmament ban south and east of the rivers Trent and Severn, which had already caused the Iceni to revolt.

What do the sources say?

Below is a range of both secondary and primary sources that comment on the reasons for the revolt.

Miranda Aldhouse-Green is a British archaeologist and academic, and is highly regarded for her research into understanding the Celts. Here she comments on the relationship between Prasutagus and the emperor.

SOURCE 11.11 M. Aldhouse-Green, *BBC History Podcast*

> The client kingship; the treaty that existed between Prasutagus and the Emperor was a personal one. So, at Prasutagus's death, Rome was technically within its rights to reassess the situation and have the option of turning the Icenian territory into part of the Province ... If we read between the lines, Prasutagus was almost certainly a Roman citizen, and if he was a Roman citizen chances are that Boudica was one as well. That is something that you just don't do to Roman citizens.

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Tacitus sketches the events that followed Prasutagus's death and the treatment of his family and followers at the hands of the Romans.

SOURCE 11.12 Tacitus, *Annals*, XIV:31

Prasutagus, the late king of the Icenians, in the course of a long reign had amassed considerable wealth. By his will he left the whole to his two daughters and the emperor in equal shares, conceiving, by that stroke of policy, that he should provide at once for the tranquillity of his kingdom and his family.

The event was otherwise. His dominions were ravaged by the centurions; the slaves pillaged his house, and his effects were seized as lawful plunder. His wife, Boudica, was disgraced with cruel stripes; her daughters were ravished, and the most illustrious of the Icenians were, by force, deprived of the positions which had been transmitted to them by their ancestors. The whole country was considered as a legacy bequeathed to the plunderers. The relations of the deceased king were reduced to slavery. Exasperated by their acts of violence, and dreading worse calamities, the Icenians had recourse to arms. The Trinovantians joined in the revolt. The neighbouring states, not as yet taught to crouch in bondage, pledged themselves, in secret councils, to stand forth in the cause of liberty. What chiefly fired their indignation was the conduct of the veterans, lately planted as a colony at Camulodunum. These men treated the Britons with cruelty and oppression; they drove the natives from their habitations, and calling them by the [shameful] names of slaves and captives, added insult to their tyranny. In these acts of oppression, the veterans were supported by the common soldiers; a set of men, by their habits of life, trained to licentiousness, and, in their turn, expecting to reap the same advantages. The temple built in honour of Claudius was another cause of discontent. In the eye of the Britons it seemed the citadel of eternal slavery. The priests, appointed to officiate at the altars, with a pretended zeal for religion, devoured the whole substance of the country. To over-run a colony, which lay quite naked and exposed, without a single fortification to defend it, did not appear to the incensed and angry Britons an enterprise that threatened either danger or difficulty. The fact was, the Roman generals attended to improvements to taste and elegance, but neglected the useful. They embellished the province, and took no care to defend it.

In this extract, Cassius Dio relates the reasons for the revolt.

SOURCE 11.13 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 62:1

The casus belli lay in the confiscation of the money which Claudius had given to the foremost Britons, Decianus Catus, governor of the island, announcing that this must now be sent back. This was one reason and another was that Seneca had lent them on excellent terms as regards interest a thousand myriads that they did not want, and had afterward called in this loan all at once and levied on them for it with severity.

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Graham Alexander Webster was a twentieth-century archaeologist and one of the pre-eminent figures of Roman-British archaeology. He sketches the opposing expectations and treatment of Boudica and her family, and the rulers of the day.

SOURCE 11.14 G. Webster, *Boudica: The British Revolt Against Rome AD 60*, Routledge, 1993, p. 88

Bravery was there in plenty and, for many the basic concept that they were fighting for their freedom against foreign domination ... The natives beyond the frontier must have been envied for their freedom to continue the struggle against the new conquerors and to live their lives in the traditional way, however humbly or lowly ... the possibility of release from the new tyranny must have stirred many a heart. [Additionally] the very thought of a great temple, not merely to an alien cult, but to the very man who had enslaved Britain, was enough, but worse, the Britons were forced to pay for it. Augustus took the view that the personal fortune and estates of a client King became Imperial property on his death ... therefore the Procurator of Britain ... operated entirely with Imperial approval, if not direct instruction ... Boudica naturally assumed that her status and regal bearing would have overawed the Roman officials, but they were merely annoyed at their actions being questioned ... Resistance was treated as an act of rebellion and the infuriated Queen suffered the indignity of being stripped and lashed like a common criminal, and her daughters, as spoils of war, were raped by all and sundry. Property and possessions of all the chief tribal families were seized ...

ACTIVITY **11.4**



Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Having examined the evidence, complete the following.

1. Identify the short- and long-term causes of the revolt by creating a list of dot points.
2. Complete the table below by identifying which view/s the source subscribes to, and provide evidence to support your position.

Source	Analysis	View	Evidence/ quotation	Significance on a 5-point scale

3. Create a well-structured historical paragraph that examines what you deem to be the most significant factors in the outbreak of the revolt. Prioritise these factors in terms of importance, citing clear reasons for your decisions.
4. Investigate the role of the British chieftain Caratacus in the context of British resistance.
5. Compare the Boudican revolt to another anti-Roman uprising, such as the Spartacan revolt. What are the similarities?
6. Examine another incident of Roman reprisal or submission (Gaul, Corinth, Carthage) and consider whether the actions of the Roman State could be considered terrorist in nature.

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Barbarians, terrorists and freedom fighters

Boudica and her followers are not the only Britons to be considered barbaric, nor is theirs the only battle where the Roman historians have used their words as the canvas on which to comment on Roman **imperialism**. Caratacus was one of the early resisters of Roman occupation, and after a long stint of hiding in the Welsh mountains he was turned over to the Romans by Cartamandua, Queen of the Brigantes. When Caratacus was brought to Rome in chains, he is alleged to have said, 'Why, when you have all this, do you covet our little tents?' (Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 176:22). It is possible that if the Romans had been less cruel, the Boudica Revolt might not have occurred. Archaeologist Miranda Aldhouse-Green considers Boudica's role as a **freedom fighter**, and asks, 'Was Boudica simply a fanatical terrorist, or was she the world's first suicide bomber?'.

imperialism refers to a deliberate government policy that seeks military expansion through the establishment of colonies

freedom fighter someone perceived to have justly resisted oppressive rule; in ancient contexts, this usually involved armed and violent resistance

11.6 Challenges and achievements for Boudica

What then are the characteristics of the revolt that allow us to make these connections to modern-day terrorism? This first requires us to define our topic: terrorism. Generally speaking, terrorism refers to the use, or continued threat, of violence to force people to conform or adhere to a set of rules, or to make political, religious or ethical statements.

Let us then consider the actions taken by both the Romans and the British, as recounted by Cassius Dio and Tacitus. These accounts are extensive, and provide us with detailed information and some epic speechifying for analysis. Much of the work of Cassius Dio suffers from a lack of source criticism, but this is not the case with Tacitus. If it were not for the works of Tacitus – especially *Agricola*, the biography of his father-in-law – we would not have as much knowledge about Roman Britain. While Tacitus was writing some 50 years after the events in question, Agricola in all likelihood did experience them. Agricola was one of a very small group of men who worked his way up the military ranks in a single province, Britannia, which means his understandings and insights were long-term, rather than of a moment in time. According to Tacitus, Agricola 'served his military apprenticeship in Britain to the satisfaction of Suetonius Paulinus, a painstaking and judicious officer, who, to test his merits, selected him to share his tent' (*Agricola,* 5). Such intimacy makes it possible, if not likely, that the young tribune bore witness to Paulinus's speech to his troops prior to engaging with the British army, which would suggest that Tacitus's account is relatively accurate. The purpose of the biography was quite different from that of the *Annals* (part of Tacitus's history of the Roman Empire). As a result of trying not to mix family glory with history, much of what Tacitus may have known from conversations with Agricola is omitted, which means his account of the revolt is somewhat manufactured.

The Romans

When we examine these accounts in their entirety, it seems that the behaviour of the Roman army, such as burning villages and laying waste to crops, was meant to intimidate people, to 'persuade' them that resistance was pointless.

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Tacitus comments:

SOURCE 11.15 Tacitus, *Annals*, 14:31

...[the] dominions [of Prasutagus] were ravaged by the centurions; the slaves pillaged his house, and his effects were seized as lawful plunder. His wife, Boudica, was disgraced with cruel stripes; her daughters were ravished, and the most illustrious of the Icenians were, by force, deprived of the positions, which had been transmitted to them by their ancestors. The whole country was considered as a legacy bequeathed to the plunderers. The relations of the deceased king were reduced to slavery.

The Britons

The historical record, both ancient and modern, supports the portrayal of Boudica and her army as freedom fighters: the idea that the Britons were defending what was rightfully theirs. Boudica rallied an army comprised not only of her own people, but also the neighbouring tribes, and proceeded to deliver florid exaltations as recorded by Cassius Dio and Tacitus, before rampaging through the British countryside, destroying Roman property. The speeches ascribed to Boudica by the ancient historians are obviously compromised by the fact that they were not witness to these speeches. In addition, their existence contradicts everything we know about Celtic warfare, which would have been less rhetoric, more music, war cries and the like. Furthermore, using rhetoric to create an articulate, intelligent and impassioned leader, a female leader nonetheless, has a dual effect: to heighten the might of the defeated foe, and account for the seriousness of the damage she, a woman, was able to inflict on the might of Rome.

While Tacitus and Cassius Dio (who is heavily reliant on and tends to reflect the former) portray Boudica as a freedom fighter rejecting the 'benefits of empire' in standard Tacitean form, the descriptions of their tactics (Cassius Dio says they severed the breasts of noblewomen and sewed the cleaved flesh to their mouths) seem more in line with a reactionary act of terror. The nuances of language used, such as 'atrocities', give negative connotations to these actions, while the idea of a freedom fighter tends to be more positive. The Tacitean model is less ornate in its description, yet supports Cassius Dio's approach, evident in the declaration 'to make prisoners … was not in the idea of a people, who despised all the laws of war. The … slaughter and defoliation, fire and sword, were the marks of savage valour' (*Annals*, 33).

It is also worth considering who the rebels were targeting. Much like modern-day terror, whether it is the plane-flying, gun-toting or machete-wielding variety, we can see the notion of a soft target. Suetonius and the army were in Anglesey on the west coast, dealing with the druids, when the rebellion occurred, and thus the targets were Roman civilians, who, while symbolic of British oppression, were largely innocent, weak and unguarded. As the Britons continued to burn and defile towns, such as Londinium and Verulamium, which had been abandoned to them, it looked less and less like traditional warfare, and more like terrorism. Graham Webster, one of the pioneering historians of the Boudican Revolt, notes that 'toleration had little chance against certain kinds of religious/political fanaticism, especially when small determined groups [were] working towards precise but narrow objectives … When toleration in the community degenerates to apathy, there is fertile ground for these small bodies of extremists to plant and nurture their seeds of disruption'. This notion of Boudica and her army as extremists falls in line with the terrorist argument, and yet interestingly, it is a terrorist who has become the poster girl for British independence, and the less appealing of her traits whitewashed, in favour of the more palatable.

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ACTIVITY **11.5**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Read the 2006 online article 'Terrorism in the Ancient Roman World' by Gregory G. Bolich, published in *MHQ: The Quarterly Journal of Military History*. You may also wish to refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit: Objective 2* section on 'How to read a large document'. After you have read the article, answer the following questions.

1. How is terrorism defined?
2. What is meant by the phrase 'terrorism begets terrorism'? Give both an ancient and a modern example in your answer.
3. What is meant by the following terms: state-sponsored terrorism, rebel, freedom fighter? How might these terms be applied to the study of Boudica?
4. What were the three ways a conquered populace could respond to such supreme power? Give an example of each as highlighted in the text.
5. What were the types of resistance that dominated the Roman world?
6. What is meant by the phrase 'cloaked in the guise of state authority'? How might we be able to apply this concept to our study of Boudica?
7. Would you define the act of Mithridates as state-sponsored terrorism or rebellion? Justify your response.
8. Who is the terrorist here: the state, or Boudica? Justify your answer.
9. Bolich refers to Britain's 'circle of terror'. Why is understanding what came before and after Boudica important in making judgements about her actions?

11.7 Impact on their times, and interpretations and representations of Boudica

One of the key areas of interest in understanding Boudica, her leadership and legacy, is the attention she is given by the classical historians Cassius Dio and Tacitus. The fact that the province suffered so much damage at the hands of a woman would no doubt have been a knock to Roman pride, an event that needed elevation in order to make the subsequent Roman victory all the more glorious.

Tacitus reported a speech made by Paulinus before the battle:

SOURCE 11.16 Tacitus, *Annals,* XIV:36

> Even Suetonius, in this critical moment, broke silence. In spite of his reliance on the courage of the men, he still blended exhortations and entreaty: 'They must treat with contempt the noise and empty menaces of the barbarians: in the ranks opposite, more women than soldiers meet the eye. Unwarlike and unarmed, they would break immediately, when, taught by so many defeats, they recognised once more the steel and the valour of their conquerors. Even in a number of legions, it was but a few men who decided the fate of battles; and it would be an additional glory that they, a handful of troops, were gathering the laurels of an entire army. Only, keeping their order close, and, when their javelins were discharged, employing shield-boss and sword, let them steadily pile up the dead and forget the thought of plunder: once the victory was gained, all would be their own'. Such was the ardour following the general's words – with such alacrity had his veteran troops, with the long experience of battle, prepared themselves in a moment to hurl the pilum* – that Suetonius, without a doubt of the issue, gave the signal to engage.

**a javelin used by the Roman army*

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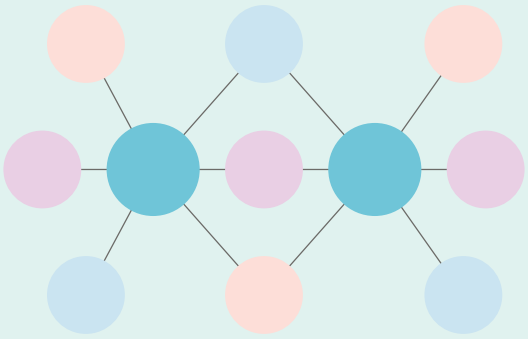
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ACTIVITY **11.6**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Read the accounts of Tacitus (*Annals*, 29–39) and Cassius Dio (*Roman History*, 62.1–12) online. Then create a double bubble diagram to compare the accounts of the two historians. In the centre circle, write 'Tacitus and Cassius Dio'. Label the centre right circle 'Differences' and the centre left circle 'Similarities'.



1. Evaluate the reliability and usefulness of speeches in ancient texts as historical evidence.
2. Explain the purpose of including speeches in literary works.
3. Consider the context of the historians. Explain the significance of their own time, and the views of Rome in the mid-first century in shaping their writing.
4. Refer back to your work on terrorism and imperialism.
   a. What evidence is there of acts of terror that are:
      i. state-sponsored
      ii. the work of an individual?
   b. What evidence is there to suggest an imperial policy?
5. Having analysed and evaluated the evidence, where do you feel the sympathies of the authors lie? Justify your response using evidence.
6. Review Source 11.16 and further speeches reported by Cassius Dio, in *Roman History* 62:9–12, which you can find online. Does reading these speeches change your view regarding authorial sympathies?
7. Boudica was, first and foremost, a political leader. Make a list of the qualities of her leadership.
8. Draw together your knowledge and the accounts of Cassius Dio and Tacitus (i.e. synthesise) and respond to the following questions.
   a. To what extent are the actions of Boudica simply a response to the state-sponsored terrorism suffered at the hands of the Romans?
   b. To what extent can the speeches attributed to Boudica be considered valuable historical evidence?
   c. Examine the significance of Boudica's leadership in the revolt. Was her leadership essential or was rebellion inevitable?
   d. The expression *jus ad bellum* means a 'just war'. To what extent can the actions of Boudica and her army be justified?
9. Graham Webster suggests that 'the Britons were in a state of wild disorder which their leaders must have found impossible to control. They were a large unruly mob in a state of high exultation, confident of a great victory which would free them from the abominable yoke of oppression and exploitation'. To what extent does this statement challenge the significance of Boudica as a leader? Create a historical argument as your response.

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The following sources look at whether archaeology aligns with the written records.

SOURCE 11.17 J. Burke, 'Dig uncovers Boudica's brutal streak', *The Guardian*, 4 December 2000

In the history books, she is a flame-haired paragon of wronged womanhood, a first-century feminist leading a horde of righteous Britons against their nasty Mediterranean overlords. But new archaeological evidence shows Boudica, the warrior queen who led the Britons in revolt against the Romans, in a very different light: as a calculating, vengeful and brutal military leader, who methodically razed cities.

A dig in Colchester has revealed that, when Boudica's troops seized the city in the first year of their two-year revolt that began in AD60, they went to enormous lengths to destroy anything touched by the Romans. Many of the houses in the city – effectively the capital of Roman Britain since the invasion of AD43 – were built of hardened clay and timber. According to archaeologists, they would have been very difficult to burn. 'These were not flammable buildings,' said Philip Crummy, who directed the dig. 'But they were levelled. It was a murderous, determined, intensive and deliberate attack.'

The dig found that every house had been carefully levelled, one by one, by the Iceni tribesmen. The new evidence is to be revealed on the digital channel BBC Knowledge later this month. Crummy compared the attack to 'ethnic cleansing' in the Balkans. 'The civilian population was wiped out. There were no prisoners. Men, women and children were all killed,' he said.

No remains of any casualties have been found. Experts believe the Romans took their dead home and that many others were buried in mass graves. Estimates of the number of Romans and 'collaborators' killed by Boudica and her followers vary, although Roman historians claimed that up to 70,000 people died.

The new evidence of Boudica's brutality will dismay many. For 150 years the woman who led the Iceni tribe from its base in Norfolk against the Roman invaders has been viewed as an icon of national resistance. She was a favourite subject for Victorian painters and sculptors. A statue of her still remains close to the Houses of Parliament on Westminster Bridge in London, ideally placed to give heart to passing Euro-sceptic MPs. The *Sun* recently described Boudica as 'inspiring' and a reason 'to be proud to be British'. She was also a heroine for early feminists, regularly featuring in suffragette literature.

Boudica led her revolt after her husband, the king of the Iceni, died, allowing the invaders to annex his lands and plunder the chief tribesmen. After being flogged and seeing her two young daughters raped, she launched the most serious uprising faced by the Romans during their occupation of Britain.

The rebels targeted and razed Colchester, then called Camulodunum, first. It was the most important site in Britain for the Romans at the time. St Albans (Verulamium) and London were next but, after inflicting serious casualties on the Roman army in a series of skirmishes, the Iceni were finally defeated in a hard and bloody battle. Boudica is thought to have poisoned herself rather than be taken prisoner. Her body is said to lie under Platform 9 of London's King's Cross station.

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SOURCE 11.18 'Boudica sacks London (Londinium)', *Roman Britain*

As at Colchester the destruction and slaughter were universal: the same Boudican destruction horizon found there is repeated at London. Excavations have revealed a layer of bright red burnt daub, typically 30-60 centimetres deep. Sometimes the burnt debris had accumulated in open pits to make it (exceptionally) as much as 1.5 metres deep. The depth of the horizon at Colchester, London and Verulamium suggests that most of the buildings destroyed were only single-storeyed. The distribution of sites with this burnt debris is important evidence for the extent of the town in the early Roman period.

Destruction extended south of the river to include the suburb at Southwark. Structures evened in the destruction horizon allow the architectural history of first London to be reconstructed in some detail. Although London had been thoroughly looted by its attackers among the portable wealth overlooked by them was a cache of four sealstones concealed in a pot at Eastcheap, presumably from a jewellery workshop to judge by their similarity of style. At Lloyds Bank on King William Street a hoard of seventeen fire-blackened bronze coins of Claudius were found.

An important find at 160-2 Fenchurch Street sheds some light on the background to the revolt. There a large mass of cereal burnt in AD was discovered which included einkorn. Britain lies north of those parts of Europe where einkorn was cultivated and this shows that at least some of the grain from Fenchurch Street had been imported from overseas. This was confirmed by the presence of bitter vetch and lentils (as weeds), indicating a source in the Mediterranean world. Clearly one or more poor harvests in southern Britain had caused a shortage of grain on the eve of the Boudican revolt. As the native population had to pay some of their taxes in grain, crop failure and hunger must have contributed to the tensions that erupted so violently in AD 60.

More than one hundred human skulls, have been found in the bed of the Walbrook stream. It has been suggested that they represent the decapitation of Londoners in AD 60, but an examination of the surviving skulls reached the conclusion that they were not from the revolt. None bear any signs of the sort of injuries that one might have expected of victims of Boudica. Moreover most of the skulls came from young to middle-aged adults. Tacitus says that women and the elderly were especially reluctant to flee the city in the face of Boudica, yet these are the very groups that are under-represented in the surviving skulls. The lack of jaw bones shows the skulls had been deposited in the river without flesh on them and as we know the Boudican hordes did not spend long in London it is probable that they were cast in the river after the revolt, as part of ritual practices unconnected with Boudica; the decisive evidence takes the form of detached skulls found elsewhere in London until at least the mid second century AD.

ACTIVITY 11.7



Objective 3: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. How, and to what extent, is the level of destruction in the Boudica Revolt (as written in Roman accounts) confirmed by archaeology?
2. What can be known through archaeology? What isn't known yet (i.e. the site of her burial, the site of the Battle of Watling Street and so on)?

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CONCLUDING STUDY

11.8 The legacy of Boudica



SOURCE 11.19 John Opie, *Boadicea haranguing the Britons*. To what extent does this portrayal of Boudica reflect the accounts of the ancient authors?

mythologisation process by which a historical figure takes on mythical proportions, often to such an extent that the realities of the historical figure are lost

The long-term significance of Boudica and what she stood for is hard to ignore. While the bestial details of the attack on Camulodunum that Cassius Dio delighted in recounting have been whitewashed, the image of the proud Briton queen has been etched into the British national psyche. Both Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria styled themselves in the manner of the Iceni warrior, and perhaps the likes of Matilda, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and the female royals of the Middle Ages that Shakespeare termed 'she-wolves' would have had greater ammunition had the works of Tacitus been rediscovered earlier.

The mythologisation of Boudica

Boudica has been heavily **mythologised** and become a symbol for female leaders many times in the centuries since her death.

Queen Elizabeth I

The famous Tilbury speech that Queen Elizabeth I delivered to her troops prior to facing the Spanish Armada is allegedly modelled on Boudica's speech to her troops, which was conveyed by Tacitus and Cassius Dio.

Consider the account of the famed Tilbury speech (Source 11.20). There are multiple versions, but this one is believed to be authentic. It was found in a letter from Leonel Sharp to the Duke of Buckingham, sometime after 1624.

SOURCE 11.20 The speech to the troops at Tilbury was delivered in August 1588 by Queen Elizabeth I

My loving people

We have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear. I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good-will of my subjects; and therefore I am come amongst you, as you see, at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust.

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I know I have the body of a weak, feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm; to which rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field.

I know already, for your forwardness you have deserved rewards and crowns; and We do assure you on a word of a prince, they shall be duly paid. In the meantime, my lieutenant general shall be in my stead, that whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject; not doubting but by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and your valour in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory over these enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my people.



SOURCE 11.21 *Elizabeth addressing the troops at Tilbury*, engraving, c. 1754

ACTIVITY **11.8**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Having read the speech, answer the following:

1. Create a mind map to identify the similarities between the speech in Source 11.20 and the speeches attributed to Boudica in sources by Cassius Dio and Tacitus.
2. Explain Elizabeth's motive in this speech.
3. Explain how Elizabeth uses her gender for her own purpose here.
4. Consider the image presented in Source 11.21. How does this align with the iconography associated with Boudica?
5. To what extent can this speech by Elizabeth I be deemed useful in assessing the legacy of Boudica?
6. Conduct some research into the circumstances surrounding the Armada and the Tilbury speech and identify what other correlations can be made between Elizabeth and Boudica's leadership in these two battles.

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SOURCE 11.22 H. C. Selous, *Boudica haranguing the Britons*, early 1840s

Queen Victoria

In Celtic, the word for victory is *bouda* and the Iceni queen's name, Boudica, literally translates as 'Victoria', so it is unsurprising that the nineteenth-century queen chose to style herself after the Celtic queen. Because of this, the Victorians felt a special affinity with the Iron Age ruler. After Victoria became Queen of England in 1837, the artist Selous painted a portrait of a bare-breasted Boudica in full battle armour, addressing her forces before battle.

Not only that, but poets and other artists published works drawing connections between their monarch and the warrior queen. Insomuch as she was a symbol for the greater schemes of both Tacitus and Cassius Dio, Boudica has been interpreted in different ways to suit the various beliefs and biases of her admirers; ultimately, the historical figure of Boudica has been moulded at will to align with a range of contemporary outlooks.

Read the poem *Boädicéa* by Alfred Lord Tennyson, written in 1859, but not published until 1864. You will be able to find it online.

Similar to Selous's painting is the great bronze statue of *Boadicea and Her Daughters* by Thomas Thornycroft. It currently sits on the Thames Embankment, outside Westminster station.



SOURCE 11.23 Thomas Thornycroft, *Boadicea and her daughters*, 1885. The statue was commissioned in the 1850s and completed by 1885, although it was not cast in bronze and installed until 1902.

ACTIVITY **11.9**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Use a Venn diagram or similar to identify the similarities and differences between the historical narrative and the poem of Tennyson.
2. Describe the image of Boudica presented by Tennyson.
3. Conduct some research into Tennyson. How does his genre, purpose and context influence his work?
4. Evaluate the usefulness of the poem as a source for the historical event of the Boudican revolt. Explain your response.
5. Evaluate the usefulness of this poem in studying the 'mythologisation' of Boudica. Explain your response.
6. Account for any differences in your responses and suggest reasons for this.

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ACTIVITY 11.10

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Compare the image of Boudica that is referenced in each of the sources in this section so far, then copy and complete the following table:

Source	Characteristics of Boudica presented
11.20	
11.21	
11.22	
11.23	
11.24	

2. To what extent is the image of Boudica that was conveyed in the Victorian era testament to the place she has earned in the British identity?
3. Is there some irony in the glorification of a freedom-fighting terrorist challenging the yoke of imperialism by the only empire to surpass the might of Rome? Explain your response.
4. An alternative view of the British mythologisation of Boudica is provided by British historian David Mattingly, who states that 'in our national mythology, the Roman period is presented as one of development and opportunity, far more than one of defeat, subjugation and exploitation … Despite a brief flirtation with the legend of Boudica … Victorian and Edwardian Britain sided pretty much wholeheartedly with the Roman invaders of Britain rather than with the subjugated natives … Britain's modern imperial role made most scholars sympathetic to the perspective and problems of the Roman state in its governance of empire and its civilising mission into the frontier lands'. To what extent does the evidence provided in this chapter support this statement?
5. To what extent is Victoria's appropriation of Boudica's legend an extension of that undertaken by Elizabeth I in the sixteenth century?

11.9 Perspectives on the significance of Boudica

Read the following assessments of the significance of Boudica.

Professor of Archaeology Richard Hingley's research focus is on transforming knowledge of the Roman past. Here he explains the symbolic significance of Boudica.

SOURCE 11.24 R. Hingley, 'Boudica', *BBC Radio*, 2010

> [Boudica] is actually … dislocated from that idea of resistance and warfare and built into the idea that the British have inherited their imperial mantle from the Romans. Ironically, she becomes a symbol of British imperialism, when her major act was to fight against a world empire.

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Stephanie Lawson, Professor of Politics and International Law at Macquarie University, presents a different view of Boudica.

SOURCE 11.25 S. Lawson, 'Nationalism and biographical transformation: The case of Boudica', *Humanities Research*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2013, 101–20

A suitably stylised iconography – most famously represented by Boudica's statue at Westminster – is accompanied by a popular biographical representation casting her in the role of leader of her 'nation' against the alien occupier and subjugator. That she ultimately failed matters little. Indeed, to have met death in the course of struggle only enhances the individual's stature. The nationalist romanticisation of Boudica, however, has not gone unchallenged. Alternative interpretations of her biography depict a violent, vengeful figure who cared as little for most of her fellow Britons as for the occupying Romans. An equally negative version figured prominently in representations of Boudica in early modern England. These, however, seem to demonstrate more of a discomfort with the challenge to gender roles presented by a female warrior leader in the nation's past than a concern for the way in which she prosecuted her cause.

ACTIVITY **11.11**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Having examined these assessments, and with reference to all the sources used in this chapter, answer the following:

1. To what extent were the actions of Boudica and the revolt that followed a direct consequence of Roman imperialism?
2. 'The significance of Boudica is not in the narrative trope of the barbaric queen, but in the mythological status she took on in the second half of last millennium.' Assess the validity of this statement.
3. Assess the extent to which it can be argued that the military, not only in Britain, but in the Roman cultural psyche more broadly, is responsible for allowing a figure such as Boudica to take control.
4. 'Boudica had no real leadership other than the ability to give a good speech. Her armies were ill-prepared, and in the heat of battle, she was unable to control them.' Assess the validity of this statement.

Consider the following sources:

SOURCE 11.26 M. Aldhouse-Green, *BBC History Podcast*

Had not the Romans behaved with crass cruelty and insensitivity, would the Boudican Rebellion ever had happened? Was Boudica simply a fanatical terrorist, or was she the world's first suicide bomber? These are legitimate questions for students of Boudica's extraordinary career as a freedom fighter to ponder.

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SOURCE 11.27 G. Webster, *Boudica: The British Revolt Against Rome AD 60*, Routledge, 1993

> Toleration had little chance against certain kinds of religious/political fanaticism, especially when small, determined groups are working towards precise but narrow objectives ... When toleration in the community degenerates to apathy, there is fertile ground for these small bodies of extremists to plant and nurture their seeds of disruption.

ACTIVITY **11.12**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. Throughout this chapter, you have examined the military context of Roman imperial rule that was the breeding ground of discontent, as well as the question of terrorism and the legacy of Boudica. With this in mind, you are to respond to Source 11.26 or 11.27 (or both) by using it as the basis for an inquiry question, which will then allow for a historical investigation. Use the following steps:
   - **a.** Create an inquiry question that allows you sufficient scope to examine an aspect of Boudica and her historical significance.
   - **b.** Establish three historical focus questions and appropriate sub-questions.
   - **c.** Conduct research from a balance of ancient and modern historians of the period.
   - **d.** Organise your findings in an appropriate manner (table, chart, infographic, video).
2. Practise writing research questions for investigation.
   Example investigation research question: To what extent does the revolt led by Boudica disprove Suetonius's remarks that Britain was easily conquered?
   Write your own research question (try creating three).



SOURCE 11.28 A nineteenth-century engraving depicting Queen Boudica of the Iceni exhorting the Britons to defend their country against the Romans, c. 60 CE

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Boudica was an Iron Age queen who led a revolt against the Romans in Britain.
- The military arm of the Roman Empire was long, and the archaeology of Britain suggests its significance, as well as testifying to the difficulties the Romans faced in this province.
- It is difficult to ascertain whether a direct imperial policy existed in the province; however, the persistence on the part of Britain over 400 years suggests that bringing 'civilisation' to the world was important.
- The evidence for Roman Britain is problematic, as the literary evidence is Romano-centric, and archaeology has been tainted by particular historical schools of thought over the years.
- Iron Age archaeology challenges the Roman belief that the Britons were 'uncivilised'.
- The story of Boudica has grown to mythological proportions, and has been appropriated by key female figures in history, such as Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth I.
- Modern concepts of terrorism are increasingly applied to Rome, and Boudica's response is deemed by some as the actions of a freedom fighter.



SOURCE 11.29 A vintage illustration featuring Boudica leading her troops against the Romans in Britain

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
Summarise what Tacitus and Cassius Dio think of Boudica.

DEVISE
What are the problems faced by historians in 'finding' the historical Boudica and her part in the revolt against Rome in 60–61 CE?

ANALYSE
Assess the role of speeches in our understanding of Boudica.

EVALUATE
To what extent did the Roman annexation affect Ancient Britons in the first century CE?

SYNTHESISE
Explain the significance of the defeat of Boudica and her rebel force by the Romans.

COMMUNICATE
Did Boudica initiate a rebellion against the Romans for personal vengeance, or was it religiously motivated?

ASSESSMENT
Extended-response question
To what extent is it true to say that there is nothing that can be said about Boudica with certainty other than she was an Iceni queen who lived in the mid-first century CE?

Investigation tasks
1. Investigate the role of the British chieftain Caratacus in the context of British resistance.
2. Compare the Boudican revolt to another anti-Roman uprising, such as the Spartacan revolt.
3. Examine another incident of Roman reprisal or submission (Gaul, Corinth, Carthage) and consider whether the actions of the Roman State could be considered terrorist in nature.

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Unit 3

RECONSTRUCTING THE ANCIENT WORLD

UNIT DESCRIPTION

In Unit 3, students investigate significant historical periods through an analysis of relevant archaeological and written sources. Students examine how these sources have been used to construct an understanding of relevant social, political, religious and economic institutions and practices, key events and individuals of a historical period. This unit allows students to focus on historiography and challenges associated with an interrogation of evidence. Students analyse the usefulness of a wide range of sources and the contribution of research and scholarship to the reconstruction of a historical period. Students develop their understanding of changing interpretations over time and appreciate the contestable nature of history and the value of the ancient past.

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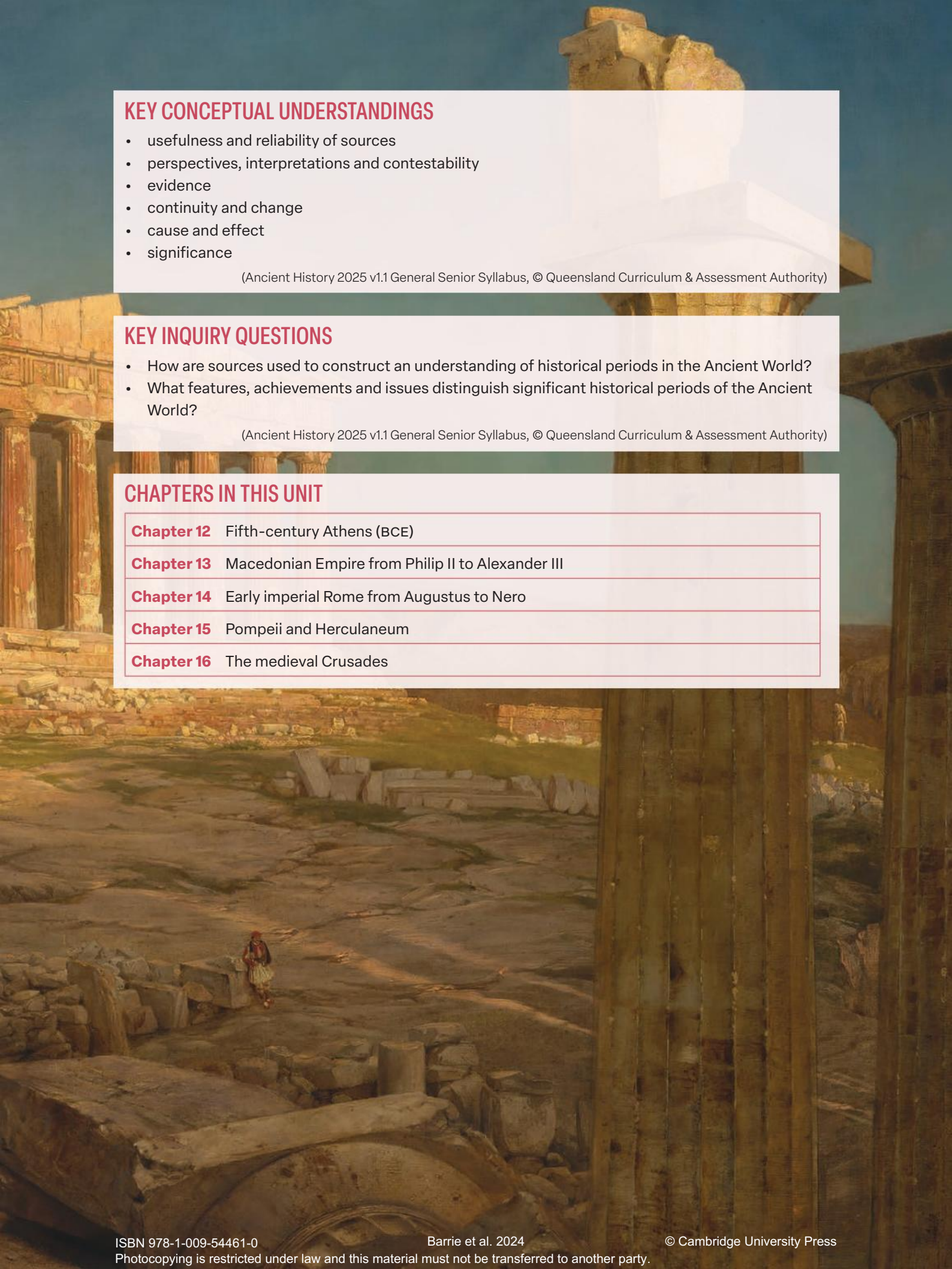
UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. Devise historical questions and conduct research about historical periods in the Ancient World.
2. Comprehend terms, concepts and issues about the reconstruction of historical periods in the Ancient World.
3. Analyse evidence from historical sources about historical periods in the Ancient World.
4. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of evidence from historical sources about a historical period in the Ancient World.
5. Synthesise evidence from historical sources to develop historical arguments and decisions about historical periods in the Ancient World.
6. Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose about historical periods in relation to the Ancient World.

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Frederic Edwin Church, *The Parthenon*, 1871

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KEY CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- usefulness and reliability of sources
- perspectives, interpretations and contestability
- evidence
- continuity and change
- cause and effect
- significance

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KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How are sources used to construct an understanding of historical periods in the Ancient World?
- What features, achievements and issues distinguish significant historical periods of the Ancient World?

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CHAPTERS IN THIS UNIT

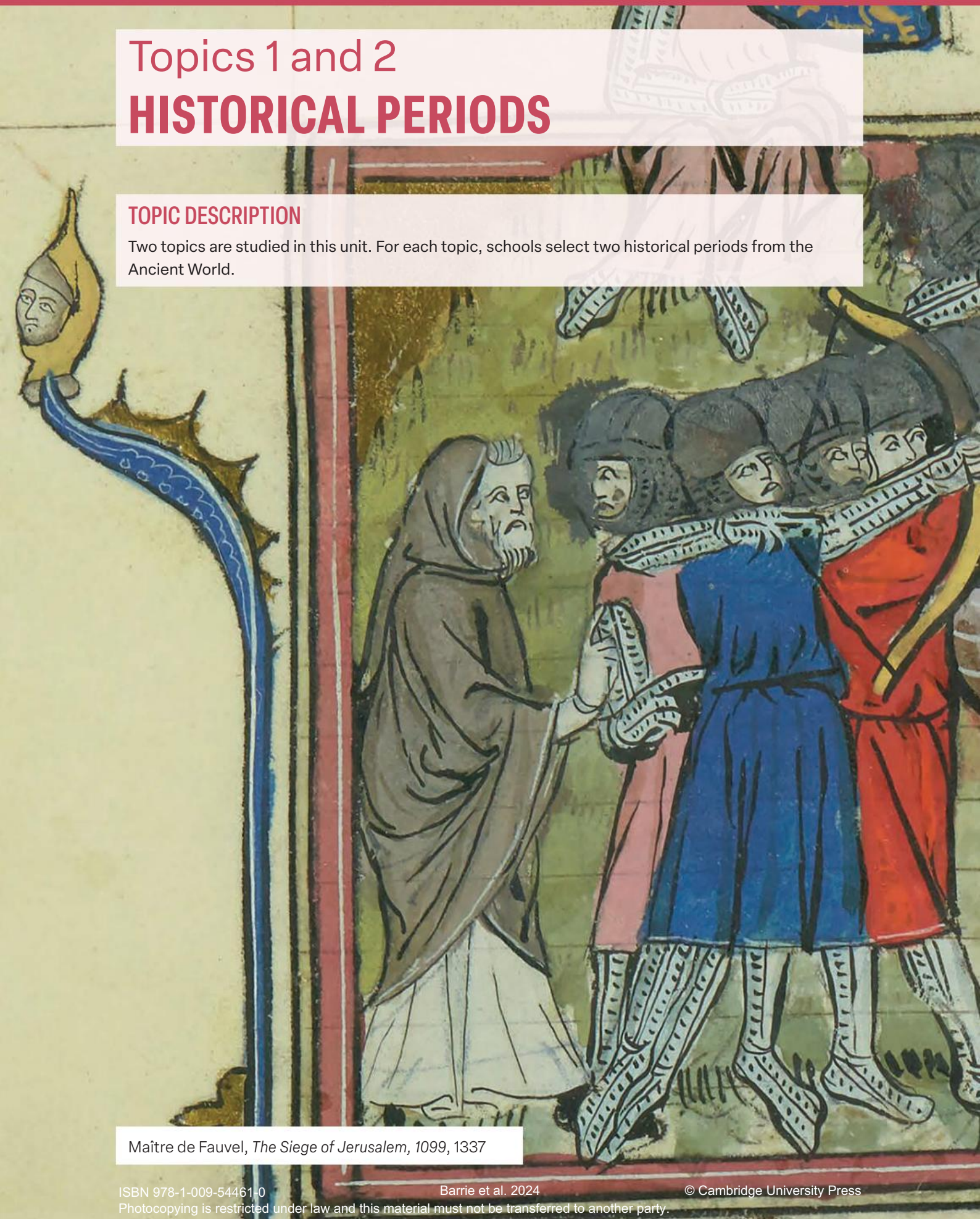
Chapter 12	Fifth-century Athens (BCE)
Chapter 13	Macedonian Empire from Philip II to Alexander III
Chapter 14	Early imperial Rome from Augustus to Nero
Chapter 15	Pompeii and Herculaneum
Chapter 16	The medieval Crusades

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Topics 1 and 2
HISTORICAL PERIODS

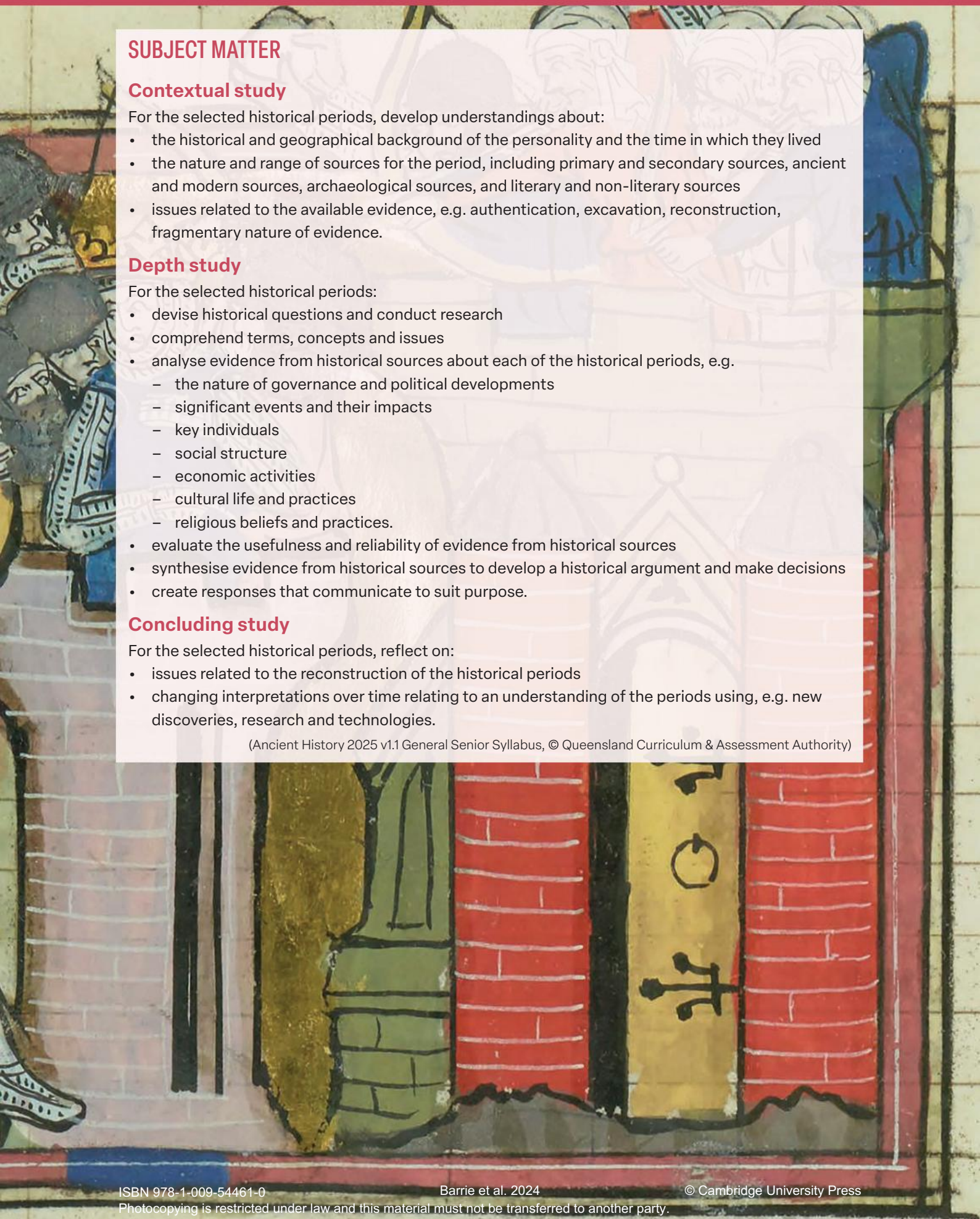
TOPIC DESCRIPTION

Two topics are studied in this unit. For each topic, schools select two historical periods from the Ancient World.



Maître de Fauvel, *The Siege of Jerusalem, 1099*, 1337

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SUBJECT MATTER

Contextual study

For the selected historical periods, develop understandings about:

- the historical and geographical background of the personality and the time in which they lived
- the nature and range of sources for the period, including primary and secondary sources, ancient and modern sources, archaeological sources, and literary and non-literary sources
- issues related to the available evidence, e.g. authentication, excavation, reconstruction, fragmentary nature of evidence.

Depth study

For the selected historical periods:

- devise historical questions and conduct research
- comprehend terms, concepts and issues
- analyse evidence from historical sources about each of the historical periods, e.g.
  - the nature of governance and political developments
  - significant events and their impacts
  - key individuals
  - social structure
  - economic activities
  - cultural life and practices
  - religious beliefs and practices.
- evaluate the usefulness and reliability of evidence from historical sources
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to develop a historical argument and make decisions
- create responses that communicate to suit purpose.

Concluding study

For the selected historical periods, reflect on:

- issues related to the reconstruction of the historical periods
- changing interpretations over time relating to an understanding of the periods using, e.g. new discoveries, research and technologies.

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Chapter 12

FIFTH-CENTURY ATHENS (BCE)

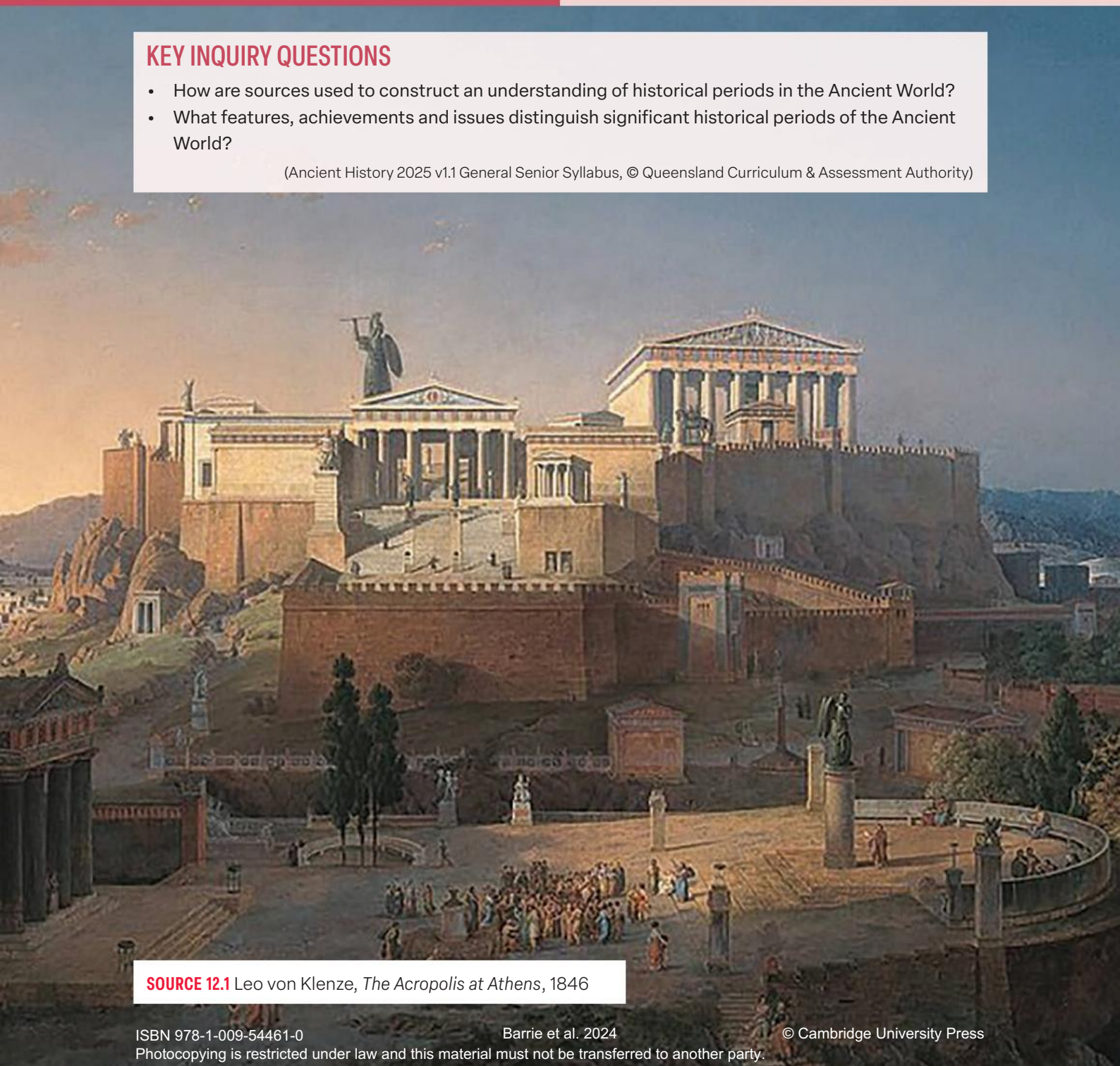
Syllabus reference: Unit 3, Topics 1 and 2: Historical periods

JENNA HAYWOOD

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How are sources used to construct an understanding of historical periods in the Ancient World?
- What features, achievements and issues distinguish significant historical periods of the Ancient World?

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SOURCE 12.1 Leo von Klenze, *The Acropolis at Athens*, 1846

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FOCUS: SAVING DEMOCRACY – THE BATTLE OF MARATHON

Tales of the exploits of famous Athenians and Persians at the Battle of Marathon have remained popular long after 490 BCE. While these stories have served to inspire others in the centuries since, the significance of the battle for Athenians themselves is too easily underestimated. Greek journalist Philip Chrysopoulos elaborates on this below.

SOURCE 12.2 P. Chrysopoulos, 'The Battle of Marathon saved Western civilization 2,500 years ago', *Greek Reporter,* 4 September 2023

It was in September of the year 490 BC when, just 42 kilometers (26 miles) outside of Athens, a vastly-outnumbered army of brave soldiers saved their city from the invading Persian army in the Battle of Marathon. But as the course of history shows, in the Battle of Marathon they saved more than just their own city: they saved Athenian democracy itself, and consequently, protected the course of western civilization. According to historian Richard Billows ... the Athenian army under General Miltiades changed the course of civilization. It is very unlikely that world civilization would be the same today if the Persians had defeated the Athenians at Marathon. The mighty army of Darius I would have conquered Athens and established Persian rule there, putting an end to the newborn Athenian democracy of Pericles. In effect, this would certainly have destroyed the idea of democracy as it had developed in Athens at the time. ... Billows calls the Battle of Marathon a 'miraculous victory' for the Greeks. The victory was not as easy as it is often portrayed by many historians. After all, the Persian army had never before been defeated. ... The British historian argues that the empowering sense of democracy that the Athenians enjoyed could explain the great victory they claimed at Marathon. As opposed to the Persians, Athenians actually saw themselves as participating members of their society, and the army was egalitarian. Each soldier was fighting to protect his home, his community, and what he viewed as his own state, so he fought at his own expense, paying for his armour, weapons, and upkeep.

SOURCE 12.3 Georges Rochegrosse, *The Heroes of Marathon*, 1859



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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

12.1 When and where did the events of fifth-century-BCE Athens take place?

Historical context

At the start of the fifth century BCE, mainland Greece was home to warring *poleis* who were always trying to best each other. However, the looming threat from Persia forced them to put aside their differences and fight together for their homeland.

TABLE 12.1 A list of key dates

1200 BCE	Dorian invasions affect the rest of Greece.
1100 BCE	Refugees from Dorian invasions settle in Attica and further abroad.
1000 BCE	• Termed the 'Dark Ages' • Geometric and protogeometric pottery styles are common. Athenian pottery is the most abundant and artistic.
800 BCE	• Athens' power in Greece declines. • Power of the king declines. Two magistrates (the ***archon*** and the **polemarch**) are elected and assume some of the king's authority.
700 BCE	• Kingship is no longer hereditary. • Rule devolves to aristocrats through the Aeropagus – only they can be elected to office because political privilege is based on birth and land ownership. • Law is administered arbitrarily and justice is inequitable.
600 BCE	• Deep and widespread distress due to debt among lower classes. Those who failed to pay can be enslaved. • Gap between rich and poor expands and Athens is in a poor economic state.
621 BCE	• Laws are codified by Draco and punishments are harsh (the term 'draconian' derives from this). • Written laws do not end the widespread discontent and conditions continues to deteriorate.
594–593 BCE	Solon is appointed *archon* and institutes reforms.
536–527 BCE	Pisistratus rules with tyranny.
508 BCE	Reforms of Cleisthenes mean that all citizens (regardless of wealth or birth) have equal political rights.

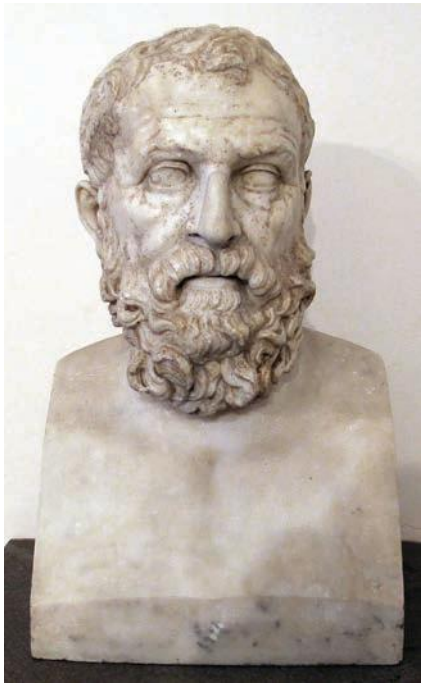
archon chief magistrate in a *polis*
polemarch chief military commander

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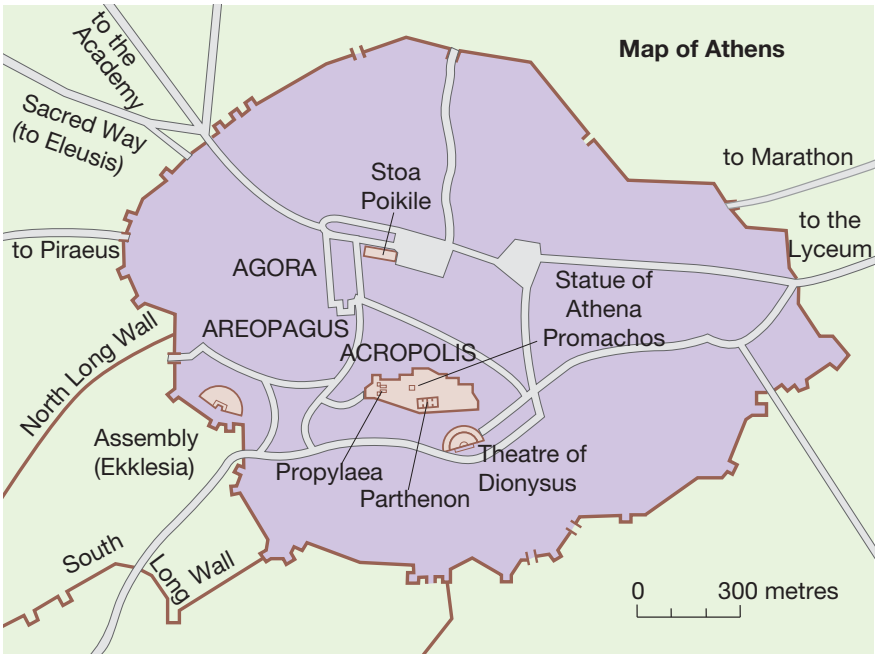
The reforms of Solon

In the sixth century BCE, an Athenian statesman called Solon attempted to institute a series of constitutional, economic and moral reforms.

- *seisachtheia* ('shaking off of burdens'): outstanding debts where personal freedom was used as security were all cancelled. The practice was forbidden in the future.
- freeing Athenian slaves (though not non-Athenian slaves)
- limiting the amount of land that could be owned by one person
- temporarily banning exports (which had led to price rises and famine) except olive oil because it was in surplus
- encouraging landless peasants to learn a craft and giving **citizenship** to foreign craftsmen who settled permanently in Attica, which improved the pottery industry
- reforming coinage
- further developing mines at Larium, thereby producing more income
- devising a code of law
- instituting early stages of what would become a democracy, giving more power to the people and breaking the monopoly of the nobles.



SOURCE 12.4 Bust of Solon (copy of Greek original), c. 110 BCE





SOURCE 12.5 Map of Athens in the fifth century BCE

citizenship free men over the age of 18, born within a legitimate marriage between a citizen and the daughter of a citizen

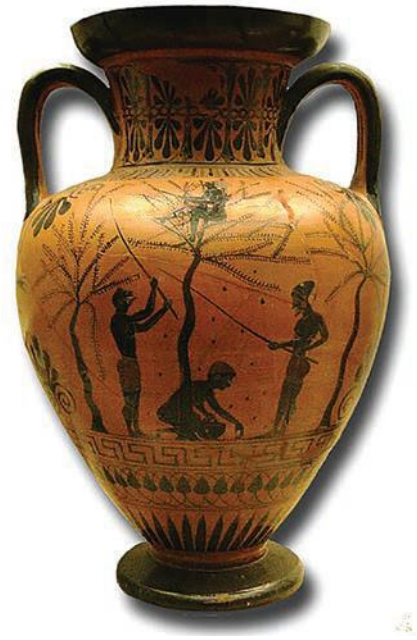
Located within the Mediterranean like its neighbour Italy, Greece was in a good position geographically to influence other civilisations, but also to come into contact with new ideas through trade and language. Geography played an important role in determining many features of Greek culture as it grew and developed before the fifth century BCE. It particularly influenced the development of the *poleis*.

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SOURCE 12.6 Vikos Gorge, in the Pindus Mountains of northern Greece. How does the geography of Greece vary around the country?

***polis* (pl. *poleis*)** politically independent Greek city-state, which consisted of the city and its defensible acropolis and the surrounding land, usually farming land



SOURCE 12.7 Olive gathering, attributed to the Antimenes Painter, c. 520 BCE, Attic amphora, British Museum. What other agricultural themes can be found on pottery?

The *poleis*

The Greek ***polis*** translates to 'city-state'. Originally, the term meant 'citadel' (a fortress surrounded by farming land). Over time, it came to mean more than a place defined by a boundary. It implied that a group of people in a general locality were united by feelings of kinship, worship of a deity and a common language. They operated as an individual political entity and sponsored local artistic and intellectual achievement. One such achievement for Athens was the development of democracy.

The Ancient Greeks did not consider themselves as 'Greeks': they were Athenian, Spartan or Corinthian. Their identity was tied to that of the city they were associated with. Citizenship of a *polis* belonged to men who were born there (some *poleis* based citizenship also on land ownership). The individualistic nature of the *poleis* was only enhanced by the landscape – much of Greece is mountainous and so the *poleis* were content to keep to themselves, often out of necessity.

The climate around mainland Greece was warm and dry, thus well suited to the cultivation of olives and grapes. This enabled the Greeks to trade excess produce for uncommon metals and grains. Many regions in Greece had excellent natural clay that was used in the manufacture of pottery for local use and export. As transporting goods through mountainous regions was difficult and Greece has many natural harbours, trade was most commonly conducted via water. The poet Hesiod, in *Works and Days,* gives advice about which agricultural activities should be undertaken at particular times of the year. The text offers a valuable insight into the life of everyday people.

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ACTIVITY **12.1**



Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Using Google Earth or an atlas, answer the following questions.

1. What geographical features would have made it difficult for *poleis* to associate with one another regularly? Consider bodies of water as well as topography.
2. Conduct research to establish which *poleis* would have been able to communicate regularly with ease. Why?

12.2 How do we know today about fifth-century-BCE Athens?

Modern historians have the advantage of a wealth of literary and archaeological material available from Athens during the fifth century BCE. However, the historical context of the time must be remembered. Athens emerged victorious from the Persian Wars, brimming with confidence and with a new taste for power. By the end of the century, the city-state's boasting and arrogance had been silenced by surrender to its old enemy, Sparta. When using primary sources, be aware of what was happening at the time so you can peel away the layers of bias and clouded motives.

Literary sources

Modern historians are fortunate to have numerous literary sources for the fifth century BCE. Listed below are some of the most notable and their works.

- Poets:
  - Homer wrote *The Illiad* and *The Odyssey*.
  - Hesiod wrote *Works and Days*.
- Historians:
  - Herodotus wrote *The Histories*.
  - Polybius wrote *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*.
  - Arrian wrote *History of Alexander*.
  - Thucydides wrote *The Peloponnesian War*.
  - Diodorus wrote *History of the World*.
  - Xenophon wrote *The Constitution of the Lacedaemonians Hellenica Anabasis*.
  - Plutarch wrote *The Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans*.
- Playwrights:
  - Aristophanes wrote *Lysistrata*, *The Wasps*, *The Knights*.
  - Aeschylus wrote *The Persians*.
- Orators:
  - Demosthenes wrote *Philippic 1 & 2*.
  - Isocrates wrote *Philippus*.
- Philosophers:
  - Aristotle wrote *The Politics, The Athenian Constitution*

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Herodotus: A contemporary source

Herodotus (484–425 BCE) was born in Halicarnassus, a port city on the south-eastern coast of modern Türkiye. He travelled widely but predominantly lived in Athens. While he was not an Athenian citizen (due to the laws enacted by Perikles), he held a pro-Athenian attitude and was an admirer of Perikles. This bias was acknowledged by him in his writing. Unsurprisingly, he was hostile in his writing towards Peloponnesians.

While Herodotus used primary sources that were available to him and interviewed people to inform his writing, inaccuracies are still present. While he sometimes lacked a deep understanding of the causes of events, he made an attempt to understand. He had no military knowledge and so numbers in military matters are generally exaggerated.

Aristotle: An ancient source

Aristotle (384–322 BCE) was a prominent Greek philosopher. He was highly respected in his own time, so much so that Philip II sought him out to tutor his son, Alexander the Great. Aristotle wrote a commentary in 330 BCE on Athenian politics called *Athenian Constitution*. It was preserved on **papyrus** and is useful for modern historians in understanding Athenian politics.

While not a contemporary historical source, Aristotle is reliable as he would have written with a good firsthand knowledge of the political system. In addition, he would have had access to contemporary sources that modern historians no longer have. Lastly, it should be noted that Aristotle wrote from the perspective of a fourth-century-BCE philosopher. It is important to consider how he interpreted the Athenian instructions of earlier periods through the lens of his fourth-century-BCE philosophical beliefs.

papyrus a plant common to the Nile River Valley that was most notably used to create a writing material, similar to paper



SOURCE 12.8 Detail from a red-figure kylix (drinking cup) showing a cobbler at work making shoes, 480–470 BCE

Plutarch: A later ancient source

Plutarch (46 – c. 120 CE) was a Greek scholar and biographer with Roman citizenship. He wrote a series called *Parallel Lives* – a series of biographies where he paired Greek and Roman leaders and compared their attributes and achievements. Of note to this topic are his biographies of Solon and Perikles. Both would have been based on a wide range of sources available to Plutarch at the time (including the complete poems of Solon).

Archaeological sources

Pottery was used for transporting olive oil, grain and wine. It was also used as household utensils, roofing tiles, water pipes, oil lamps and standards for weights and measures. Scenes painted on pottery illustrated aspects of mythology and showed ordinary people at work and play. They are useful to us for dating purposes.

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Epigraphic sources

Epigraphy is the study and interpretation of ancient inscriptions. In the case of Athens in the fifth century BCE, you will most likely encounter the two source types below:

- *ostraka*: broken fragments of pottery used as writing material (particularly for voting). **Ostracism** was when a citizen was temporarily banished from the *polis* following a popular vote. Citizens recorded their votes on an *ostrakon*.
- oracles: statements given by a priest or priestess at a shrine in response to a query to a god for prophetic advice. Often inscribed or recorded.

ostracism exclusion from a society or group; in ancient Athens, ostracism was the result of a public vote and the individual was banished for 10 years

Numismatic sources

Athens had access to a rich silver mine at Laurion, which they used to mint their coins. Coinage was initially used to pay the salaries of officials. Bronze coinage was later introduced for day-to-day trading and living. Some *poleis* chose a symbol or 'city badge' of sorts to brand their coins (Athens used the olive branch and owl, both symbolic of Athena). Other *poleis* advertised their exports (e.g. tuna, grapes) while others made connection to local legends (e.g. Pegasus of Corinth).



SOURCE 12.9 Athenian silver coin (*tetradrachm*), dating from the second half of the fifth century BCE

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DEPTH STUDY

12.3 Social structure of fifth-century-BCE Athens

The distinction between social classes in Athens was quite simple. Those with the most privilege and opportunity were the ones who held citizenship, and those with the least were slaves. Some of the benefits of citizenship were:

- they were the only ones permitted to own land
- they had political rights and the protection of the law
- they were free from direct taxation.

Citizens in Ancient Athens belonged to four distinct classes:

TABLE 12.2 Social hierarchy of men in ancient Athens

Greek name	Qualification	Rights
Pentacosiomedimni (men of 500 bushels)	Land owned produced 500 measures of produce	Eligible for archonship and every institution
Hippeis (horsemen)	Land owned produced 300 measures of produce (enough to provide for a horse)	Eligible for lower magistracies, the Council of 500 and Assembly
Zeugitae (yoked men)	Land owned produced 200 measures of produce (enough for a yoke of oxen to plough their field)	
Thetes (labourers)	Land owned produced less than 200 measures of produce	Eligible for Assembly only, but able to sit on popular court of appeal, the *Heliaia*

Women

Like most ancient societies, in Ancient Athens women had restricted freedom, and lacked social and legal equality with men. Within Athens, the degree of freedom a woman had was dependent on her social standing. Women who served as priestesses held the greatest social respect. Women were not permitted to participate in politics, sports or military service; instead, they were responsible for the efficient running of the home and raising children.

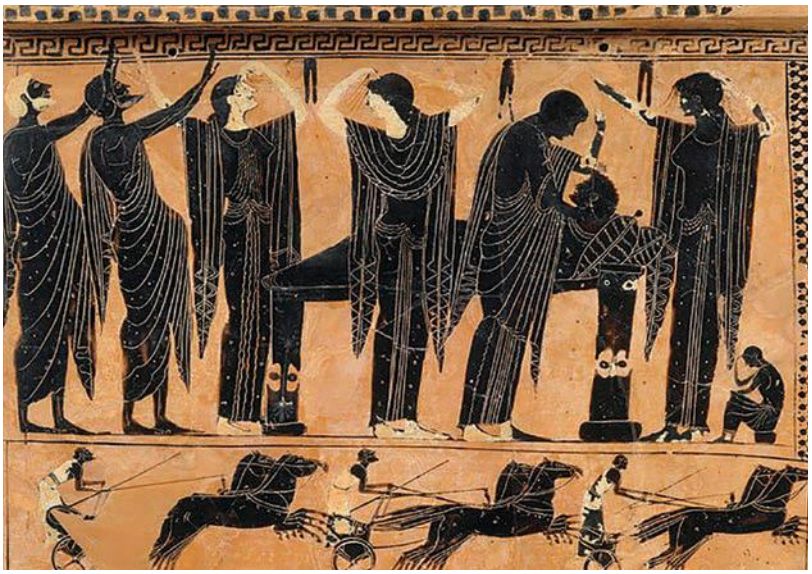
In Athens, marriage served two purposes: the production of legitimate children and the protection of property. It was common for girls to be promised in marriage to a man when they were very young. A dowry (family property, gifts or money) was given to her, and she was usually married in her early teenage years to a man about 30 years of age, or older. The dowry was controlled by her husband during their marriage. As a result of this age difference, it was common for women to be widowed in their twenties. Dissolution of the marriage or divorce was possible, if there were no male children. Infertility could be grounds for divorce. In these cases, the dowry would be returned to the woman's family.

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Women were considered the property of men, so men had a responsibility to protect them. For example, the men's rooms in the home were between the door and the women's quarters. Movements of women outside the home were restricted (the exceptions being funerals, religious festivals and childbirth). This restriction also made it difficult for women to commit adultery – the practice of male inheritance meant that the paternity of children had to be undoubted. Women could make small purchases (household goods, food and so on) and wherever possible had slaves to complete other household tasks for them. This confinement and restriction of women was to the point where pale complexions were considered a status symbol and sign of wealth (the woman was privileged enough to have others do work outside the house in the sun for her). All of a woman's education occurred at home and covered what was necessary for her to manage a household and various crafts such as weaving. One group of women who were not restricted in these ways were *hetairai* or courtesans – they were well educated and had the greatest degree of social freedom.



SOURCE 12.10 Epinetron, National Archaeological Museum of Athens. An epinetron was worn by women over the thigh during the preparation of wool for weaving. What other domestic scenes featuring women can be found in sources?



SOURCE 12.11 Terracotta funerary plaque, showing women participating in a funeral, Metropolitan Museum of Art. What roles did women have in funerals?

SOURCE 12.12 Euripides, *Medea*, lines 230–250, 431 BCE. In this tragic play, Medea is lamenting her lot as a wife because her husband wishes to get rid of her to marry a Corinthian princess and gain the throne.

> **Of all creatures that have breath and sensation, we women are the most unfortunate. First at an exorbitant price we must buy a husband and master of our bodies. (This misfortune is more painful than misfortune.) And the outcome of our life's striving hangs on this, whether we take a bad or a good husband. For divorce is discreditable for women and it is not possible to refuse wedlock. And when a woman comes into the new customs and practices of her husband's house, she must somehow divine, since she has not learned it at home, how she shall best deal with her husband. If after we have spent great efforts on these tasks our husbands live with us without resenting the marriage-yoke, our life is enviable.**

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Otherwise, death is preferable. A man, whenever he is annoyed with the company of those in the house, goes elsewhere and thus rids his soul of its boredom (turning to some male friend or age-mate). But we must fix our gaze on one person only. Men say that we live a life free from danger at home while they fight with the spear. How wrong they are! I would rather stand three times with a shield in battle than give birth once.

ACTIVITY **12.2**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Analyse one of Sources 12.10–12.12 by completing the following questions.

1. What is the origin of the source (author, date, context for production and so on)?
2. Is there a particular purpose of the author in writing the text?
3. In the case of texts that feature a character, what is the motive of the character in speaking?
4. What point of views are represented in the source? Consider the author's point of view and those of the characters and figures featured.
5. Considering all of the sources, what conclusions can be made about the following?
   a. the place of women within the home
   b. the qualities and attributes women were expected to have
   c. the rights and freedoms of women
   d. the nature of marriage
   e. the differing opinions of men and women on these issues.

metic foreigners who lived permanently in Athens, and had some rights but not political ones

Metics and slaves

Metics were foreigners who lived permanently in Athens. They could own property but had no political rights. They were still required to pay taxes and perform military service when needed. Notable metics include Aristotle, Aspasia and Diogenes of Sinope. Slaves could be owned by private citizens or the state.

Athenian citizenship

Athenian citizenship was considered a privilege and a reward. The advantages included (for men) the freedom to participate in politics and juries, to influence decisions that directly affected their lives, to have equal protection under the law, and to own land and houses in Athenian territory.

In Athenian law, a citizen was a man born from a citizen father and a mother who was a daughter of a citizen. Until the mid-fifth century BCE, one parent of citizen birth, usually the father, sufficed for citizen status, but since Perikles's Citizenship Law of 451 BCE, only those born from the legitimate marriage between a citizen and the daughter of a citizen could participate in the Athenian *polis* (although sometimes citizenship was granted for particular services to the State). Citizens participated in religious rites, political office, and administration of the *polis*.

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As a result of Perikles's reforms, the number of citizens fell from 60 000 in the fifth century BCE to 30 000 in the fourth century BCE. At 18 years of age, men who met these criteria could register in one of the ***demes***.

deme a small division or area of the Attica region surrounding Athens that was used for voting and civil purposes in Athenian democracy based on the reforms of Cleisthenes

TABLE 12.3 The population of Athens in the late fifth to fourth centuries BCE

Citizens	35000 to 45000 Athenian males over 18 years of age whose mother and father were of Athenian citizen birth and who had accomplished their military service
Non-citizens	110000 to 150000 Women and children of Athenians
Non-citizens	25000 to 40000 Foreigners (including women and children): strangers living in Athens but excluded from political life
Non-citizens	80000 to 110000 Slaves (including women and children) who were not free and possessed nothing

Rights and responsibilities

The ***Ekklesia*** or people's assembly, which sat for 200 days each year, discussed and voted for propositions prepared by the ***Boule*** or city council, and the ***Heliaia*** or people's Tribunal judged criminal affairs. There were also a variety of different magistrates, such as the 10 *archons* who were responsible for religious and judicial affairs. Many magistrates were chosen by lot to avoid corruption, except for the 10 ***strategoi*** (or generals) who commanded the fleet. They were elected and could be re-elected. This is how Perikles came to dominate Athenian life for so many years (refer to Chapter 10 in Unit 2 for more information on Perikles). Between the ages of 18 and 20, future citizens had to undertake military service on the borders of **Attica**. However, Athens' principal military power came from the fleet, and the all-important rowers were recruited from the poorest citizens. The richest citizens had to each finance the equipping of a warship or a theatrical work for one year. This voluntary public duty was known as the **liturgy**.

Ekklesia the main body and public Assembly of Athens; all male citizens over the age of 18 could attend; they would debate and vote on motions prepared by the *Boule*, make decisions on war, peace and alliances, and elect officials such as *archontes*

Boule a council of 500 members

Heliaia the supreme court of ancient Athens

strategos (pl. strategoi) an elected role, these 10 generals were elected for one-year terms but could hold the office repeatedly; in addition, during each *prytany* (10 administrative months) the Assembly voted on whether an individual *strategos* should retain the office

Attica an ancient district of Greece that encompassed Athens

liturgy a public duty performed voluntarily by rich Athenians

Women were not considered to be citizens although they were free. They were not allowed to possess land or receive an inheritance or file a claim for a legal action. The role of a woman in Athens was defined by their domestic tasks, such as looking after children, serving their husband, making clothes and managing the slaves. They were also responsible for a number of religious functions organised by the city each year in dedication to the goddess Athena.

Aristotle (384–322 BCE), a philosopher, wrote in *Politics* (c. 350 BCE), 'The temperance of a man and of a woman, or the courage and justice of a man and of a woman, are not … the same; the courage of a man is shown in commanding, of a woman in obeying … silence is a woman's glory'.

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SOURCE 12.13 In this source, the woman is shown serving the men. Seated in the centre is a mature man. Standing to the right is an *ephebe*, a man aged 18–19 years old who was undertaking his two years of state-sponsored military service, the *ephebeia*, c. 430 BCE.

All foreigners living in Athens had to register as a metic. They had an inferior status within the city-state to Athenians but could file a legal claim provided they were represented by a citizen. They had no political rights and only limited civil rights. They could not own property and could not marry the daughter of a citizen. They also had to pay a special tax, the *metoikion*. However, they had certain civic duties. These included being part of the infantry, if the army was mobilised, acting as rowers in the ships of the fleet, and the richest could finance liturgies of a non-military nature such as sponsorship of a theatre.

Athenian slaves

Slaves had no rights or liberties and were, as Aristotle said, 'animal instruments'. They were bought and sold as merchandise and depended entirely on their masters. Most slaves did domestic work, especially the female slaves. Slaves who had skills in high demand had a measure of autonomy and could buy their freedom. Others, such as those working in the Laurion silver mines, lived in appalling conditions. The city-state also had its own slave workforce for looking after the roads, for example.

Most Athenians had at least one slave since this enabled the citizens to take the time to participate in the Assembly or the Tribunal. In this way, Athenian democracy functioned thanks to the work of slaves and women.

ACTIVITY **12.3**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Having read about Athenian society, answer the question: To what extent were non-citizens valuable to Athenian society?

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12.4 Governance and politics in fifth-century-BCE Athens

Colonisation and tyranny

Up until the fifth century BCE, Greece had been a melting pot of different forms of government. Throughout their history, at one time or another, *poleis* had used **monarchy**, **thalassocracy**, **aristocracy**, **anarchy**, **tyranny**, **oligarchy** and **timocracy**. The most notable among these, in the case of Athens prior to the fifth century BCE, is tyranny. As expansion into the surrounding region of Attica brought more wealth and resources into the city, tyranny emerged as a form of government in response to the economic and social changes of the time. In Athens, powerful individuals emerged to govern the *polis* – individuals who were not from the traditional aristocratic classes. Our modern understanding of the word 'tyrant' will usually generate images of strong, forceful leaders who use their gift in persuasive public speech to seize control (Adolf Hitler is often used as an example of a tyrant). Like modern tyrants, the tyrants of Athens used fear and force to gain and keep control. However, while 'tyranny' has negative connotations, Ancient Athens still achieved growth and development. In fact, many positive changes occurred under the leadership of tyrants.

monarchy a form of government where power and authority is held by a monarch; the position of monarch is usually inherited

thalassocracy a state whose power comes from its naval or commercial supremacy on the seas

aristocracy power is held by the aristocrats or nobles (a small, privileged ruling class)

anarchy a society in which there is no government, order or control

tyranny a form of government where all power is held by a single ruler who is cruel and oppressive; there is no control over or limits on the authority or use of power by the tyrant

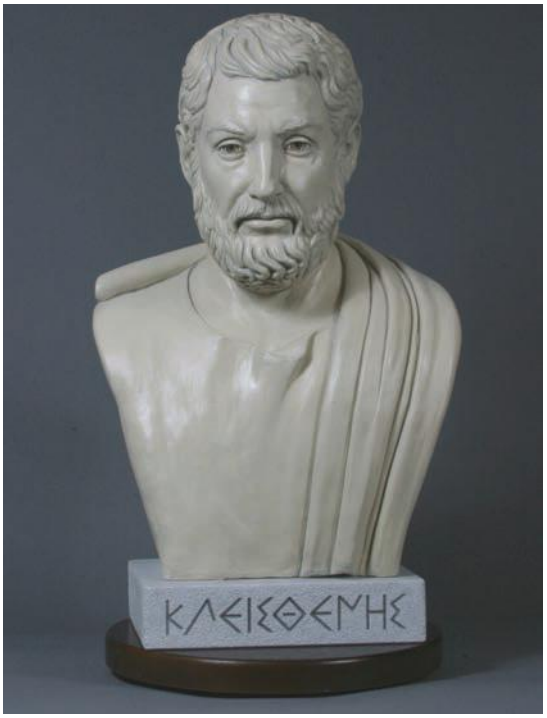
oligarchy a form of government where power rests with a small number of people; in Ancient Greece, oligarchies were made up of wealthy and influential citizens

timocracy possession of property is required to hold office and participate in government

The emergence of democracy

Before examining the features of Athenian democracy, it is crucial to put aside any assumption that it should be expected to resemble modern democracy. Democracy today in Australia, and around the world, responds to our modern needs and situation. The case is the same for Athens – its democratic institutions and practices suited its society and people. The decades after the Persian Wars, particularly, saw the rising influence of the lower classes. The men from the *thetes* class were the rowers in the Athenian navy – the same men who manned the fleet against the Persians at Salamis and helped build the empire in later years. Because of their crucial role, they demanded more say in decision-making processes. It was not until the late fifth century BCE that the word *demokratia*, meaning 'sovereign power of the people', was used to describe democracy.

During the seventh and sixth centuries BCE, Solon and Cleisthenes were the leading reformers who helped direct the Athenian political system towards democracy. The re-organisation of 139 *demes* into 10 tribes by Cleisthenes was particularly significant as it represented the gradual transfer of political power from the aristocrats to the greater population. Subsequent reforms truly made Athens a democracy. The following diagram charts the steps that led to democracy becoming the accepted system of government in Ancient Greece.



SOURCE 12.14 Modern bust of Cleisthenes, c. 2004 CE

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487 BCE: *Archons* are chosen by lot rather than voting and the first victim of ostracism is expelled from Athens. During the Persian Wars, the *strategos* begin to take over some of the archon's functions.

↓

The office of *strategos* becomes the most important military and political position as the general gains command of military and naval forces.

↓

Decreasing importance of the archons begins to devalue the role of the Areopagus (a council of ex-*archons*).

462 BCE: Ephialtes deprives the Areopagus of most of its functions and makes them answerable to the Council of 500.

↓

The traditional aristocratic membership of the Areopagus is in conflict with the democratic ideal of participation by everyone.

↓

Ephialtes prosecutes members of the Areopagus for using powers unlawfully (such as *dokimasia*, *eisangelia* and *euthynai*). The use of these powers meant the Areopagus could overrule the *Ekklesia* and actions of the magistrates.

↓

The powers are transferred to the *Boule, Ekklesia* and the courts.

↓

The Areopagus do not submit passively to the loss of their powers; Ephialtes himself is murdered not long after the changes.

458 BCE: The archonship is made available to the third property class, the *zeugitae*. This means half of the male citizens in Athens can hold the highest office.

↓

The *thetes* become eligible not long after.

451 BCE: Perikles introduces payment for service as a juror. The courts can sit for as long as 200 days.

↓

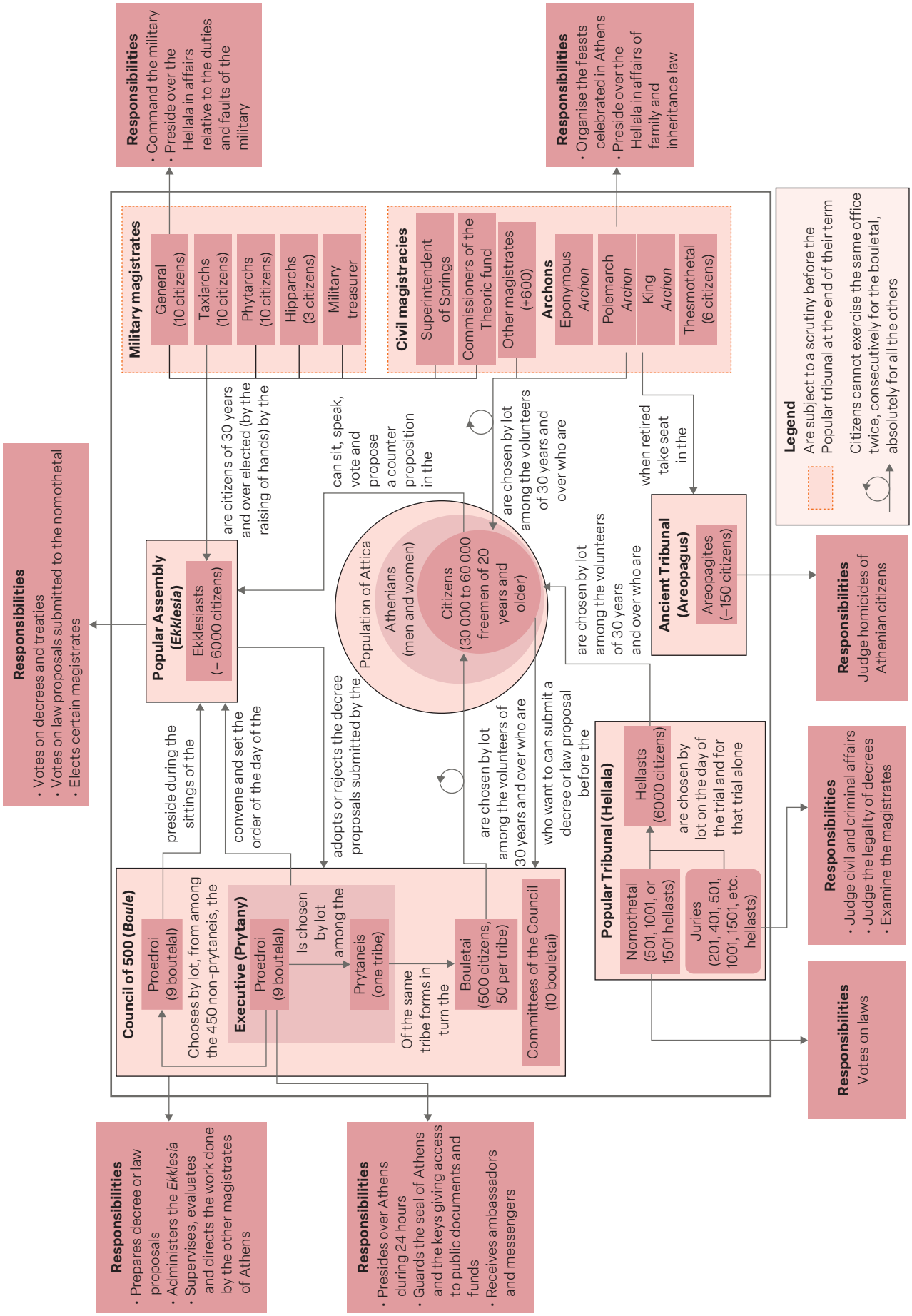
Jurors initially paid 2 *obols* per day, enabling many working-class Athenians to participate as otherwise they could not afford the loss of income.

SOURCE 12.15 How Ancient Greece became a democracy

During the fifth century BCE, there were four main political institutions in Athens:

1. the Popular Assembly (*Ekklesia*)
2. the Council of 500 (*Boule*)
3. the Magistracy
4. the *Heliaia* and *dikasteria* (other law courts).

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SOURCE 12.16 Athenian political institutions in the fifth century BCE

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Radical democracy

By the middle of the fifth century BCE, Athens had become a radical democracy in which sovereignty, or the ultimate control of state affairs, rested with the masses. Through various reforms by Cleisthenes, Ephialtes and Perikles, most of the political decision-making power had been transferred to institutions made up of ordinary citizens.

The radical features included:

- selection by lot: for every magistrate except the *strategos*
- collegiality: all magistrates were members of boards or groups (no one served alone)
- direct participation: everyone was expected to attend and serve
- payment for service: first for jurors, then later magistrates
- rotation of offices: no magistrate could serve in an office more than once (except members of the *Boule* and the *strategia*).



ACTIVITY **12.4**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Compare Athenian democracy with modern Australian democracy by completing the table below.

	Athenian democracy	Australian democracy
Who gets to be a citizen?		
How are citizens given political office?		
Who creates the agenda for what comes up for debate and voting?		
How are votes taken?		

Praise of democracy

The following sources, praising democracy, are from different works by philosopher Aristotle, writing in the fourth century BCE.

SOURCE 12.17 Aristotle, *Politics*, 1317a40–1317b4, c. 335–323 BCE

A democratic *polis* presupposes liberty, and it is generally said that only in this type of state can liberty be enjoyed: people say that this is the aim of every democracy. One principle of liberty is that everyone is governed and governs in turn. This is because democratic justice means equality by numbers and not by merit, and this being so the majority must be the sovereign power, and whatever the majority decides must be the final decision and be just. Every one of the citizens, it is said, must be equal. In consequence, in democracies the poor have more power than the wealthy, as there are more of them and the decision of the majority is supreme. So this is one of the marks of liberty, which all democrats see as the distinguishing mark of their constitution: another is that everyone should live as he chooses. This, they affirm, is liberty in practice, since not living in accordance with your wishes constitutes the life of a slave. This is the second distinguishing mark of democracy, and in consequence of this there has evolved the desire not to be governed, by anyone if possible, and if not for government to be taken in turns, thus contributing to the concept of liberty founded on equality.

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SOURCE 12.18 Aristotle, *The Athenian Constitution*, Chapter 2, c. 330 BCE

Not only was the constitution at this time oligarchical in every respect, but the poorer classes – men, women, and children – were in absolute slavery to the rich. They were known as *pelatai* and also as *hectemori*, because they cultivated the lands of the rich for a sixth part of the produce. The whole country was in the hands of a few persons, and if the tenants failed to pay their rent, they were liable to be hauled into debt-slavery and their children with them. Their persons were mortgaged to their creditors, a custom which prevailed until the time of Solon, who was the first to appear as a leader of the people. But the hardest and bitterest part of the condition of the masses was the fact that they had no share in the offices then existing under the constitution. At the same time they were discontented with every other feature of their lot; for, to speak generally, they had no part nor share in anything.

The following speech was delivered by Perikles in around 431 BCE after the first Athenians fell in the Peloponnesian War. Perikles stresses the ideals of democracy and praises the Athenian way of life in what has become known as the Funeral Oration. He makes it clear that the heart of Athenian democracy is the equal involvement of citizens: the majority of the citizens run the state, all are equal before the law and any citizen can stand for political office. Perikles makes a deliberate, implicit comparison with Sparta when he claims the Athenians 'love wisdom without cowardice'. The extract ends with a comment on the essential participatory nature of the democracy in the reference to the 'totally useless' citizen. Citizens should 'love' their city.

SOURCE 12.19 Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book 2.37–2.43, 431 BCE

We possess a constitution which does not imitate the laws of our neighbours: in fact we are an example to others rather than imitating anyone else. And the constitution's name is democracy, because the majority manage its affairs, not just a few; as regards the laws, everybody is equal when private disputes are being settled, and, as regards the criteria used to pick out anyone for office, what counts is not his belonging to a particular class, but his personal merit, while as regards poverty, as long as he can do something of value for the city, no one is prevented by obscurity from taking part in public life. We conduct our political life with freedom, especially freedom from suspicion in respect of each other in our daily business, not being angry with our neighbour if he does as he pleases, and not even giving him the sort of looks which, although they do no harm, still hurt people's feelings. But while we avoid giving offence in private life, in our public life it is primarily fear which prevents us from committing unlawful acts and makes us obey the magistrates and the laws, and in particular those laws made to protect those who are being unjustly treated and those which, though unwritten, bring acknowledged disgrace on people who break them. We love good things without extravagance and we love wisdom without cowardice; we use wealth as an opportunity for action rather than as something to boast about, and there is nothing disgraceful for anyone in admitting poverty – what is disgraceful is not taking steps to escape it. In the same people there is a concern at the same time for their own affairs and for those of the city, and even those primarily concerned with their own business are not deficient in their knowledge of the city's affairs; indeed, we are unique in considering the man who takes no part in the affairs of the city not as one who minds his own business, but as one who is totally useless.

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Modern historians Nels M. Bailkey and Richard Lim provide an analysis of the funeral oration.

SOURCE 12.20 N. M. Bailkey and R. Lim, *Readings in Ancient History,* 6th edn, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2002, p. 167

No finer expression of the ideals of democracy exists than the famous funeral oration delivered by Perikles in honour of the Athenians who fell fighting Sparta during the first year (431 BCE) of the Peloponnesian War (Selection 25). Like Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, with which it is frequently compared, it is considered one of the greatest speeches in literature. (Unlike Perikles, however, Lincoln does not say that death in battle is the best end a man can come to. Nor would he have taken for granted, as Perikles does at the end of his oration, the inferior nature of women and their seclusion.) Perikles appeals to the patriotism of his listeners, confronted by the crisis of a great war, by describing the superior qualities and advantages of their democracy as a heritage won for them by their ancestors and worthy of any sacrifice to preserve. He emphasises as the outstanding feature of their democracy – and, we can add, of any democracy – the harmonious blending of opposite tendencies in politics, economics, and culture that it contains. This is perhaps the finest expression of the Greek ideal of a mean between extremes. All this is described in sharp contrast to the rigid totalitarianism of Sparta, which regulated every detail of its citizens' existence. An outstanding example of this happy blending of control and freedom in all phases of life was the Athenian acceptance of the leadership of Perikles as the recognised superior individual voted into power by the people to 'lead them,' as Thucydides noted, 'instead of being led by them'.

Perikles extends the same argument, that order and liberty are compatible, to justify the existence of the Athenian Empire, which had emerged after the Persian Wars to fill the vacuum left by the failure of Spartan leadership in Greek affairs. Before a peace treaty with Persia was signed in 448 BCE Athens and its allies had countered Persian expansionism by aiding anti-Persian uprisings in Cyprus and Egypt. Like the Americans in Vietnam, the Athenian-led Greeks failed in their mission. Bogged down in the Nile Delta after eight years of fighting and the loss of some two hundred ships and many men, Perikles had to withdraw the Greek forces. But he went on to complete the formation of the Athenian Empire, which unified and brought peace and prosperity to half of the Greek world. It was at present under attack by Sparta and its allies as the 'tyrant city' that had extinguished the liberties of many Greek states and was now threatening the remainder. Perikles's reply to this charge is an idealised rationalisation of the need to replace the anarchy of narrow city-state 'nationalism' with an 'international' organisation of Greek states under Athenian leadership. The goal was peace and prosperity – or what can be called freedom from fear and want, two of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's stirring 'Four Freedoms', the idealistic goals for which World War II was fought. Such also is the meaning of Perikles's inspired conception of Athenian imperialism: 'We secure our friends not by accepting favours but by doing them ... We are alone among mankind in doing men benefits, not on calculations of self-interest, but in the fearless confidence of [bringing] freedom. In a word I claim that our city as a whole is an education to Greece ...'

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Criticisms of democracy

During the latter half of the fifth century BCE, Athens' growing sense of self-importance brought it into conflict with its old enemy, Sparta. It was clear to *poleis* around the Aegean that, in the absence of a Persian threat, Athens had grown increasingly authoritarian in its control of the Delian League; even going so far as to impose its democratic institutions on other members and using military force to keep control. Athens and Sparta, and their respective allies, fought two wars between 431 and 404 BCE. In 429 BCE, Perikles (the leader who had shepherded the cultural achievements in the middle of the fifth century BCE) died during a plague that swept through the city. The involvement of Persia on Sparta's side during the later years and the lack of stable leadership in Athens forced their eventual surrender. Athens lost its empire, most of its fleet and its political autonomy (Athens was controlled by a committee of Spartans known as the Thirty Tyrants).

ACTIVITY **12.5**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Evaluate the following points and determine whether you consider them to be advantages or disadvantages.
   - **a.** Individual *poleis* lost autonomy to Athens.
   - **b.** The empire brought peace and security as states were spared involvement in serious conflicts, e.g. Persian control was removed from Ionia and piracy was ended, making shipping safe.
   - **c.** Subject states were exploited as they paid tribute.
   - **d.** Athens meddled in members' internal affairs by encouraging democracy.
   - **e.** Subject states enjoyed commercial preference within the empire and member states enjoyed unprecedented prosperity from enhanced trade.
   - **f.** Democracy brought a freer social environment, which helped produce great thinkers, artists and craftsmen all over the empire.
   - **g.** Athens imposed harsh decrees.
   - **h.** Athens did not offer Athenian citizenship to its subjects. (In fairness it must be pointed out that Athenian citizenship would not have been coveted by everyone as most subjects would have considered their own *polis* more important.)
2. What tentative conclusions can be drawn about the nature of the benefits and the disadvantages brought to members of the Athenian Empire after it first evolved from the Delian League? Consider what commonalities they have and so on.
3. Do you think overall, the Athenian Empire was beneficial to the Greek world at the time? Why?

SOURCE 12.21 Professor Simon Goldhill, 'Athens: The truth about democracy', 2010

> Far from being a symbol of pure white Hellenism, it [democracy] is a symbol of how Athens asserted power over a lot of rather smaller states in order to glorify itself.

SOURCE 12.22 Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens XXIV*

> Having taken this advice and won the empire, they treated the allies too masterfully, except Chios, Lesbos and Samos, which they kept as outposts of empire, and allowed to have their own governments and to rule the subjects that they had at the time.

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Perikles's speech to the *demos* encouraging them to continue the war (after the plague had decimated the city and they were thinking of suing for peace terms with Sparta), 430 BCE:

SOURCE 12.23 Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, Book 2, 63.2–3

> For already your government is in the nature of a tyranny, which is both unjust for you to take up and unsafe to lay down. And such men as these, if they could persuade others to it or lived in a free city by themselves, would quickly overthrow it. For the quiet life can never be preserved if it be not ranged with the active life, nor is it a life conducible to a city that reigneth but to a subject city that it may safely serve.

Perikles's speech to the people at the start of the Peloponnesian War:

SOURCE 12.24 Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, Book 2, 13.2–5

> He also gave the citizens some advice on their present affairs in the same strain as before. They were to prepare for the war, and to carry in their property from the country. They were not to go out to battle, but to come into the city and guard it, and get ready their fleet, in which their real strength lay. They were also to keep a tight rein on their allies—the strength of Athens being derived from the money brought in by their payments, and success in war depending principally upon conduct and capital. Here they had no reason to despond. Apart from other sources of income, an average revenue of six hundred talents of silver was drawn from the tribute of the allies; and there were still six thousand talents of coined silver in the Acropolis, out of nine thousand seven hundred that had once been there, from which the money had been taken for the porch of the Acropolis, the other public buildings, and for Potidaea.



ACTIVITY **12.6**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Read Sources 12.21–12.24 and answer the questions below. In your response, form a thesis and then support your thesis with evidence from the sources.

1. How do the sources reveal the importance of allied revenue to Athens at the start of the Peloponnesian war?
2. What do the sources reveal about the nature of allied contributions? (i.e. willingness/voluntary vs force and fear).

What becomes apparent as you examine the cultural and political achievements of Athens during the fifth century BCE is that its most significant success and growth occurred during times of peace. While authors still wrote plays and philosophers still questioned the mysteries of the universe during times of conflict, Athens did not have the financial resources or luxury of time to invest in fostering their development while at war. Consequently, the effect of these conflicts on Athenian society cannot be underestimated.

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12.5 Economics in fifth-century-BCE Athens

The reforms of Solon in the sixth century BCE meant that mortgaging people as security for a debt (debt slavery) was now forbidden. Prior to these reforms, many of the poor had to sell their land to repay mortgages. However, Solon did not redistribute land as they expected.

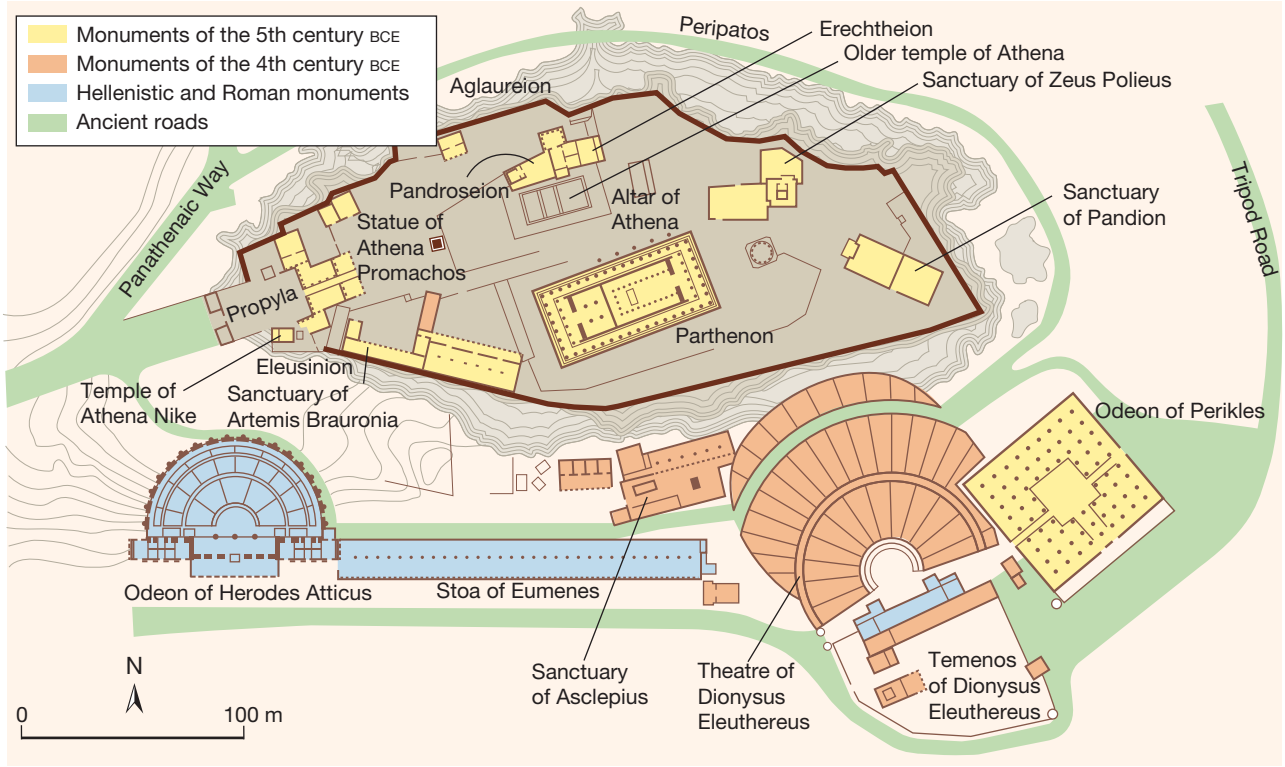
In regard to trade and industry, the export of wheat from Athens was forbidden but exporting of olive oil and wine was encouraged. Skilled workers were recruited from other cities to further develop the pottery industry.

As Athens controlled the treasury of the Delian League, Perikles took the opportunity to move it from Delos to Athens in 454 BCE, claiming that he did so to protect it from Persia. He then began using the Delian League's resources, including its navy and taxes, for Athens. It was this money that funded the rebuilding of Athens.

12.6 Cultural life and practices in fifth-century-BCE Athens

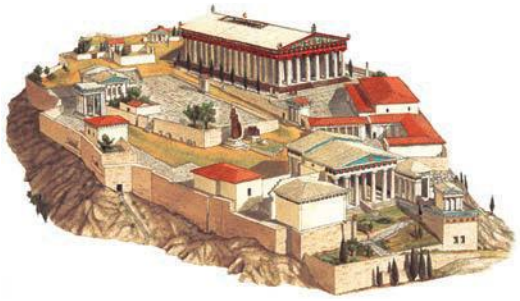
Architecture

Many of the iconic buildings that are associated with Ancient Greece and Athens were built during the fifth century BCE. The buildings in Athens particularly owe thanks to the *strategos* Perikles, who championed public pride in the city. Perikles's pretext for such a large-scale building and reconstruction program was the restoration of temples and other buildings destroyed by the Persians. However, their grandeur was unprecedented and brought Athens prestige and the admiration of other *poleis*. Fortunately, the economic success of the Delian League and the influx of metics to the city made it possible to complete projects of such scale. The rebuilding undertaken on the Acropolis and the construction of the Parthenon were projects that Perikles personally started. This rocky fortress, rising 120 metres above the city, would become Athens' crowning glory.



SOURCE 12.25 Periods of major construction of the Acropolis. How has the use of the Acropolis changed over time?

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SOURCE 12.26 Artistic depiction of the Acropolis. How does this illustration compare with the current archaeological site? Can you recognise any features in satellite imagery?

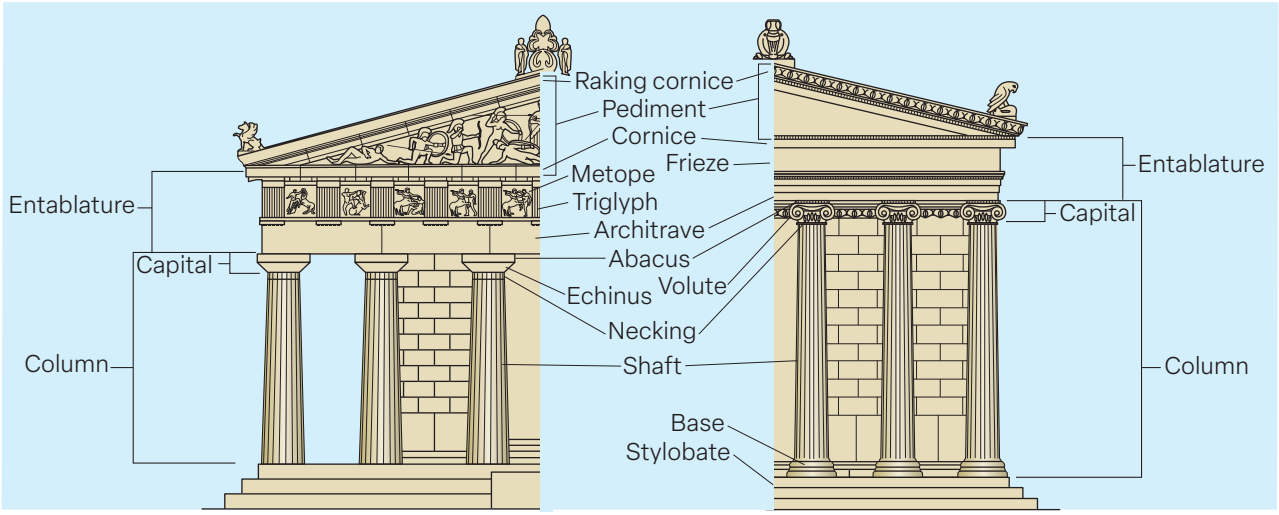


SOURCE 12.27 The Parthenon as it stands on the Acropolis today.

No building better symbolises the success of Athens in the fifth century BCE than the Parthenon. This great temple to Athena, started in 447 BCE and designed by Callicrates, was the pride of the city. In Greece, temples had a twofold purpose: as a place for religious worship, but also as a celebration of civic power, pride and success. The earliest temples in Greece had a long central chamber, with a single row of columns to support the roof. By the middle of the sixth century BCE, the chamber was placed on a platform, which allowed for a more impressive façade. As shown in Source 12.26, the Parthenon, built in the fifth century BCE, has a second, inner row of columns on the narrower east and west sides. Continuing this focus on architectural aesthetics and the achievement of ***arête***, the Greeks used the **golden ratio** to ensure their buildings were well proportioned and balanced.

Basic temple design in Ancient Athens included:

- a stepped platform (**stylobate**)
- columns with fluted shafts
- a capital on top of a column
- **entablature** at roof level consisting of an architrave, **frieze** and cornice
- **pediment** above the entablature.



SOURCE 12.28 Elements of Greek temple design. The example on the left has Doric columns from the Archaic period; the one on the right is the later Ionic style. Compare this to the photograph of the Parthenon in Source 12.27, and see what features you can identify. Are the Parthenon's columns in the Doric or the Ionic style?

arête meaning 'excellence of any kind'
golden ratio a special rule of proportion occurring in nature that was discovered by the Ancient Greeks (1 : 1.618)
stylobate a continuous base supporting a row of columns; acts as the foundation for a building
entablature the upper part of a classical building supported by columns, comprising the architrave, frieze and cornice
frieze a horizontal band of sculpted or painted decoration
pediment triangular upper part of the front of a classical building, often filled with sculptures

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The earliest temples were constructed from wood; it was in the sixth century BCE that stone began to be used. During the fifth century BCE, temples and other important buildings were constructed from limestone or marble, with a timber roof structure and terracotta or marble tiles. Stones were cut with protrusions, enabling them to be carried or lifted. Most blocks were roughly cut before being delivered to the building site on wagons, and the finished carving was done by master masons on-site. Tall columns were made in cylindrical sections, also called drums, and lifted into place, then held together with pegs. The fluting was done after the drums were erected and the column complete.

Architectural orders

The architectural style of a Greek building was determined by the style of columns used. As the Athenian understanding of design grew, so too did their technological ability to innovate, driven by their quest for elegance and clarity. Columns became slimmer and finer, and there was a greater distance between them.

TABLE 12.4 Description of the Greek columns

Doric	Ionic	Corinthian
• Simplest, most widespread • Used from 600 BCE • Height between five and six times its diameter • No base • Undecorated capital	• Style came from Asia Minor and developed around the same time as the Doric order • Slimmer than Doric • Height eight or nine times its diameter • Shafts were deeply fluted • Capital had volutes (spiral scroll) facing in and out	• Came into use after the other two orders (predominantly on Roman and late-Hellenistic buildings) • Height similar to Ionic • Main feature was the capital • Capital was ornate with volutes at the corner and acanthus leaves

Analysing architectural sources

The Parthenon is one of the most recognisable symbols of Ancient Greek culture. For the Athenians in the fifth century BCE, the Parthenon and the Acropolis were their crowning achievements in architecture and design. The sculpture that adorned the building was particularly used as a message for visitors about Athens' superiority. Various scenes repeated the symbolic struggle of civilisation and order against chaos and lawlessness (much like the Athenians in their recent victory over the Persians).

What remains on the site in Athens are the structural bones of the building – most of the decoration has been removed for preservation over the centuries. Fortunately, thanks to modern technology, the archaeological remains are easily accessible from all over the world. Many of the surviving sculptures are on display in the British Museum. In the next activity, you will look at three of these.

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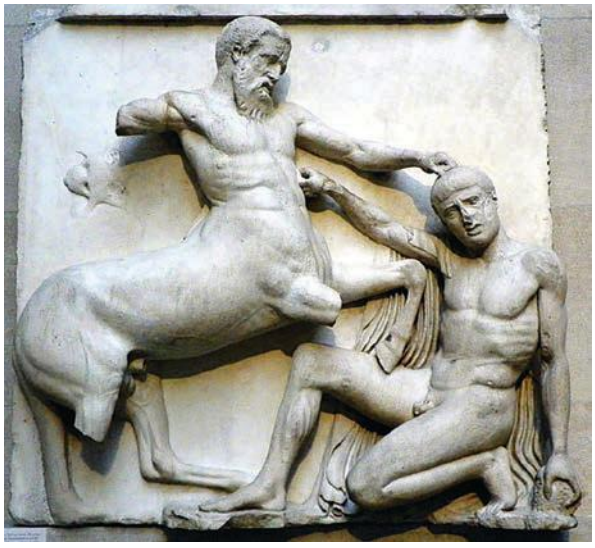
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ACTIVITY **12.7**

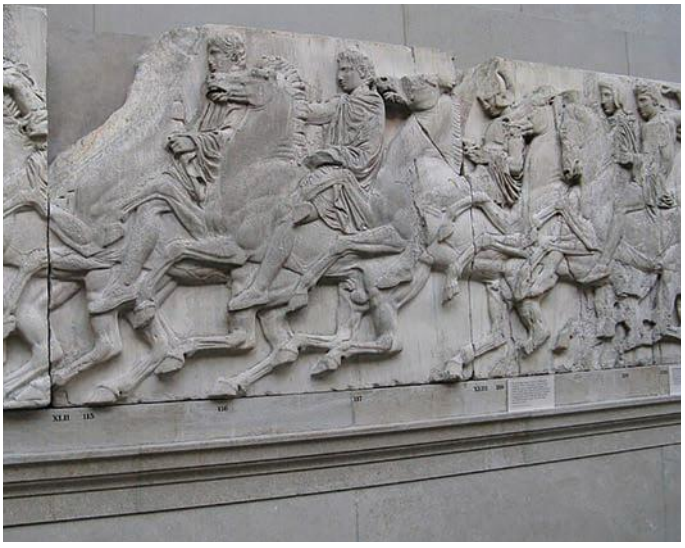
Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Conduct your own research to find out the focus and theme of the **metopes** and friezes, recording your findings in the table below. Then, consider what the purpose of the artist may have been in choosing that subject to decorate the Parthenon, and what perspective their work presents to viewers (for example, who is represented positively?).

	What is represented? (focus and theme)	Purpose of artist	Perspective
North frieze			
East frieze			
South frieze			
West frieze			
North metope			
East metope			
South metope			
West metope			



SOURCE 12.29 A centaur tramples a crouching Lapith (south metope 30)



SOURCE 12.30 A section of frieze showing the Panathenaic procession

The Athenians also drove trends in pottery and decoration. From the seventh century BCE, black-figure decoration on pottery items was common. However, it began to be used less from the fifth century BCE onwards as red-figure pottery became more popular. This also represented a development in technique and the skill of the artists – they now had to paint the background to the figures, not just the figures themselves. Sadly, archaeological evidence of the Greeks painting on other surfaces (such as frescoes in homes) is very limited.

metope a rectangular, decorated element that fills the space between two triglyphs in a Doric frieze

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Visual art

Artists, like the sculptor Phidias, were responsible for the decorations and the important outward appearance of buildings. Sculptures formed the link between the physical appearance and the sacred character of buildings. Stone, marble or bronze sculpture was used for decorative work, and subjects varied from daily life to myths and legends. Many stone decorations would have originally been painted, the Parthenon's included.

Phidias's most famous commission was the ivory and gold statue of Athena inside the main chamber of the Parthenon. *Athena Parthenos* was over 11 metres high and made from ivory and sheets of gold. The ancient geographer Pausanias, writing in the second century CE, gave a description of this statue:

SOURCE 12.31 Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, Book 1.24.5, c. second century CE

> **The statue is created with ivory and gold. On the middle of her helmet is likeness of the Sphinx ... and on either side of the helmet are griffins in relief ... The statue of Athena is upright, with a tunic reaching to the feet, and on her breast the head of Medusa is worked in ivory. She holds a statue of Victory that is approx. four cubits high, and in the other hand a spear; at her feet lies a shield and near the spear is a serpent. This serpent would be Erichthonius. On the pedestal is the birth of Pandora in relief.**

Phidias was also responsible for work on the Acropolis itself – he acted as superintendent, appointed by Perikles.



SOURCE 12.32 *Athena Parthenos*. What would it be like walking into the Parthenon and seeing this statue?



SOURCE 12.33 Decorative work on the exterior of the Parthenon. Why were these subjects chosen to be featured as decorative works?

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SOURCE 12.34 Heracles subduing the Cretan Bull, c. 500–480 BCE, British Museum



SOURCE 12.35 Oedipus and the Sphinx, c. 440–430 BCE, Staatliche Antikensammlungen, Munich. What other subjects are featured on black- and red-figure pottery?

ACTIVITY **12.8**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Choose one of the sculptures listed and complete the table using your own research. Once you have finished, synthesise your evidence to respond to the following question: How does the work fulfil the Greek concept of *arête*?

- *Artemision Bronze*
- Statue of Zeus at Olympia
- Parthenon *Metopes*
- *Athena Parthenos*
- *Hermes and the Infant Dionysus*
- *Discobolus*
- *Charioteer of Delphi*
- The Parthenon pediments

Artist and date	
Physical description (materials, size, elements missing and so on)	
Subject (including any relevant historical background of the subject)	
Significance of the work at the time of production	
Interpretations made about purpose of the work	
Influences on future art	

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Theatre

Theatre is a significant cultural legacy left by the fifth-century-BCE Athenians. It is through the work of the playwrights of this era that modern historians have an insight into everyday life, and opinions about political and social changes of that time. The earliest form of drama was religious rituals that involved a **chorus** (group of singers) dancing and singing in honour of Dionysus. These rituals involved requests to the gods for help, such as the granting of a good harvest or plentiful rain. In the sixth century BCE, the poet Thespis added an actor to speak and interact with the chorus – this actor became known as the **protagonist**. It was this change that signified the move from ritual to drama.

chorus in Greek theatre, a group of actors who describe and comment upon the main action of the play through song, dance and chanting; they act as a social barometer for the audience, telling them how they should react to the events of the play

protagonist the leading character in a play

didactic intended to teach; moral instruction is the motive of the text

satyr in mythology a man with horse-like ears and tail; companions of Dionysus

Playwrights and their works

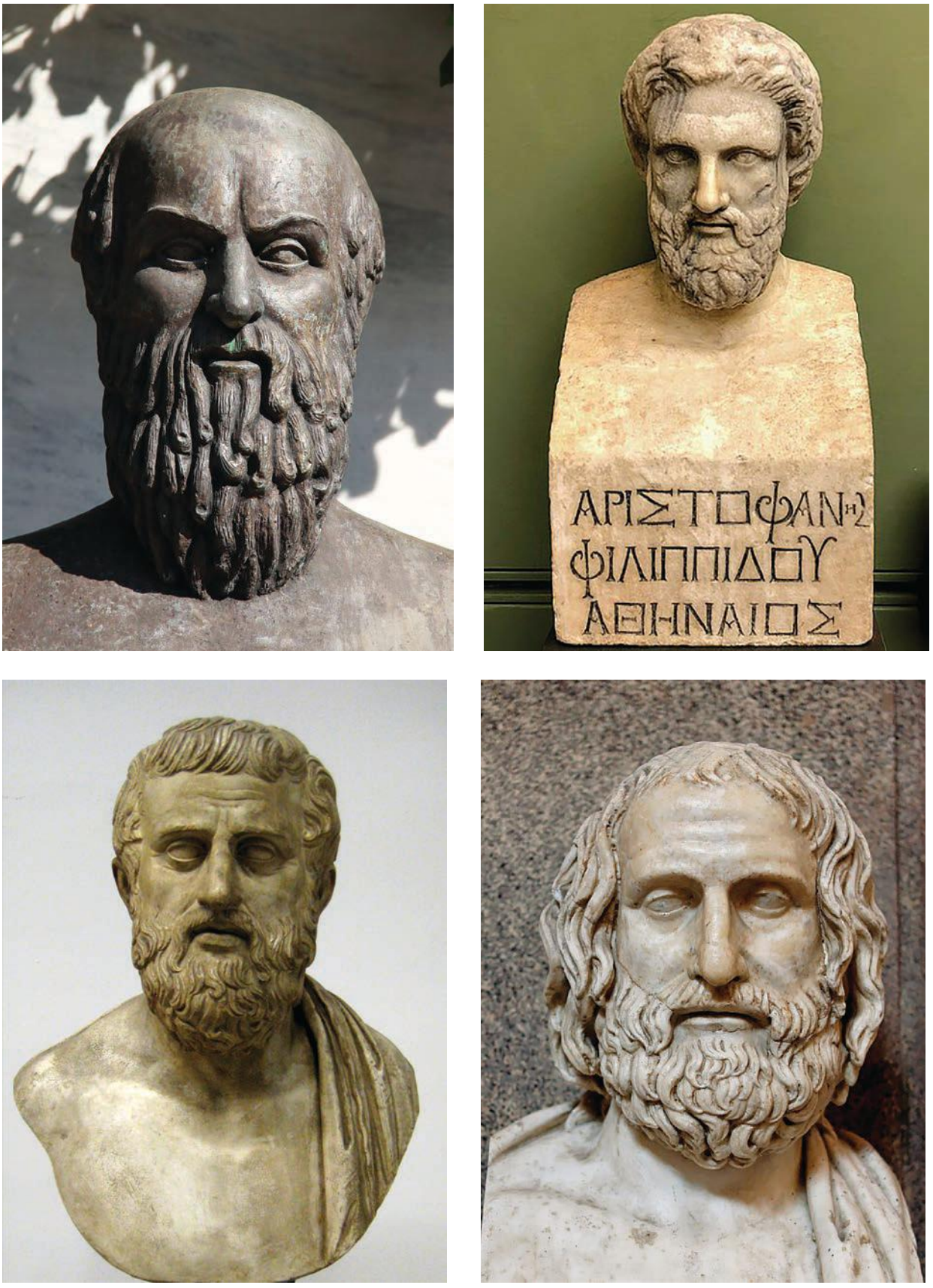
Some of the most prolific playwrights from the fifth century BCE include Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Euripides and Sophocles. These playwrights responded to the increasingly complex Athenian society by including social and political issues in their work. A common theme was also the glory and prominence of Athens in comparison to the rest of Greece.

Greek plays generally fit into four genres, outlined in Table 12.5

TABLE 12.5 The four genres of Greek plays

Comedies	Tragedies
• Eighteen still exist • Comes from Greek *komos* (revel) • Began around 486 BCE (comedy performed in Athens during the fifth century BCE was categorised as 'old comedy') • Subject matter included contemporary issues (individuals, politicians, tragedians, philosophers and the gods were subject to parody) • A forum where social norms could be turned upside down • Plot structure was episodic • Used a large number of characters and large chorus (24 members) • Costume design added to the humour	• Thirty-three still exist • Comes from Greek *tragos* (goat) and *oide* (song) as they were originally performed during ritualistic goat sacrifices • Their purpose was **didactic**, to teach the audience • All-male cast (3 leads and a chorus of 15) • Formal narrative structure that usually had mythological subject matter and followed the 'tragic cycle' • Most prestigious of the genres
Dithyrambs	**Satyr plays**
• None survive in full • Little is known about them • Used as a 'show opener' for festivals • Large-scale choral performances of song and dance in honour of Dionysus	• Euripides's *Cyclops* and parts of Sophocles's *Trackers* • Farce or comedy in which the main character was half-human and half-animal • Grotesque in tone but light-hearted • Chorus dressed as **satyrs** • Sometimes performed after tragedies so they could pick up on similar themes • Took the heroic world of tragedy and subverted it through parody

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SOURCE 12.36 Clockwise: Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Euripides, Sophocles. Why are men usually depicted in a similar way throughout Greek sources?

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British classicist Oliver Taplin writes about Greek tragedy.

SOURCE 12.37 O. Taplin, *Greek Fire*, Atheneum Books, 1990, pp. 36–9

Our world is full of things that do not bear thinking about. If someone we love, or even someone we know, is killed in a car crash or contracts leukaemia, we find this hard enough to face. Life seems so unreasonable, chaotic, so unfair. Why him? Why me? If we were to try to feel fully, we would be reduced to blind comprehension, or go mad. While television brings the disasters and atrocities into everyone's home, the only possible way to live through them is to turn one's heart to stone. Television news is Medusa, the Gorgon's head. Confronted with reality we turn our faces away, we are lost for words ... Through facing up to older, closer, primal terrors, tragedy shows us how terrors can be confronted and perhaps survived, even those of the late 20th century. In the theatre we not only stare without averting our eyes and listen without blocking our ears, we actually want the sufferers to go on expressing their terrible experiences and we want to feel their agonising emotions with them. And at the end of the play, we discover that we have not been turned to stone. We get up, leave, and return to life, whether in the fifth century BCE, or the 20th century AD. We return with the experience as part of ourselves ...

Tragedy enables us to live through the unbearable. Greek tragedies, at least all the great ones, are concerned with large, distressing issues, with disruption, conflict, things going very wrong, turning dark. They incarnate the worst horrors, particularly within the family, such as betrayal, incest, murder – killing of mother by son, children by father, husband by wife, every unthinkable combination. Tragedy not only acts out these deep terrors, it makes the audience confront them. As we, the audience, sit in our seats, faces towards the play, voluntarily trapped and helpless, we are forced to live vicariously through the terrible story played out before us.

The didactic nature of Greek theatre

Greek theatre, tragedies in particular, were didactic in nature – they were written with the purpose of teaching their audience. Those lessons often had their roots in social and political issues of concern to Athenians at the time.



SOURCE 12.38 A krater, or two-handed type of vessel found in Ancient Greece, depicting a scene from an Aristophanes comedy play from the fifth century BCE

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ACTIVITY **12.9**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Choose one of the plays listed below and either read the play in its entirety (some are not long) or a detailed synopsis. Then, answer the questions that follow.

- Aeschylus, *The Persians*
- Sophocles, *Antigone*
- Euripides, *Medea*
- Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*
- Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*
- Aristophanes, *The Frogs*

1. What are the key themes and issues explored in the play's subject matter?
2. What do you believe is the lesson or advice the playwright was trying to leave his audience?
3. Why would this be relevant to Athenian people during the fifth century BCE?
4. How reliable is your chosen play as a record of true events and daily life at the time?
5. When compared to historical works (such as those by Herodotus or Thucydides) and archaeological remains, what unique advantages do plays have?
6. What are the disadvantages or limitations of plays as historical sources?

Philosophy

Philosophy developed from the curiosity the Ancient Greeks had about the world around them, and their unwavering desire to find the truths and principles underlying all knowledge. They sought to understand the world through universal explanations that covered all phenomena. This was because they lived in an uncertain world and one they had little control over or understanding of. The philosophical ideas they developed emerged from a mixture of mythology, mysticism and mathematics. Philosophers began to inquire into the nature of the physical world rather than relying on traditional myths. The changing nature of society, such as the increase in number of metics living in Athens and the emergence of democracy, encouraged their speculations.

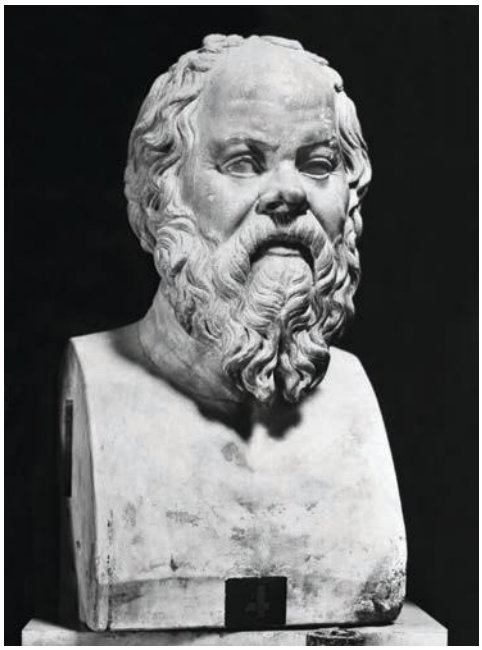


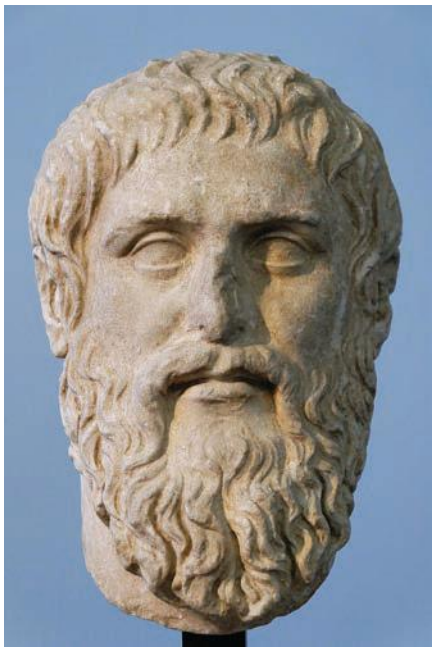
SOURCE 12.39 Raphael, *School of Athens*, fresco in the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican. Which famous figures can you identify in this painting?

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Socrates and Plato were two of the most influential and respected philosophers to emerge from this period.





SOURCE 12.40 The two most significant philosophers to live and practise in Athens during the fifth century BCE were Socrates (left) and Plato (right). Are these depictions of Socrates and Plato consistent with others?

TABLE 12.6 The lives of Socrates and Plato

Socrates	Plato
• He was born 470 BCE, Athens. • He is considered one of the founding fathers of philosophy and very influential on Western thought. • Had a simple childhood; initially trained as a stonemason and sculptor. • He served during the Peloponnesian War. • He is known for posing challenging questions – this became known as the Socratic method. • In asking questions, he aimed to bring out the confusions and absurdities of others' points of view. • Rather than teaching others the truth, he aimed to help people discover it for themselves as a result of his questions. • He left no written work – his work was recorded by Plato and Xenophon. • In 399 BCE, he was charged with corrupting the youth of Athens and neglecting the gods. • He was sentenced to death by drinking hemlock.	• He was born 428 BCE, Athens. • He came from an aristocratic family. • He was a student of Socrates until his death (Plato was around 30 years old when his mentor died). • He left Athens, after Socrates's death, in disgust and travelled around the Mediterranean. • In c. 387 BCE he returned to Athens and founded a school called the Academia (it became known as the Academy). • The subjects taught were diverse, arguably one could call it the first European university. • His main work is *The Dialogues*. • He was the central character in his own works – initially he focused on recording the views of Socrates; later, it is likely Socrates is used as a mouthpiece for Plato's own views. • He developed the concept of virtue ethics – what is moral is determined by an individual person, not a set of rules. • He died 348 BCE, Athens.

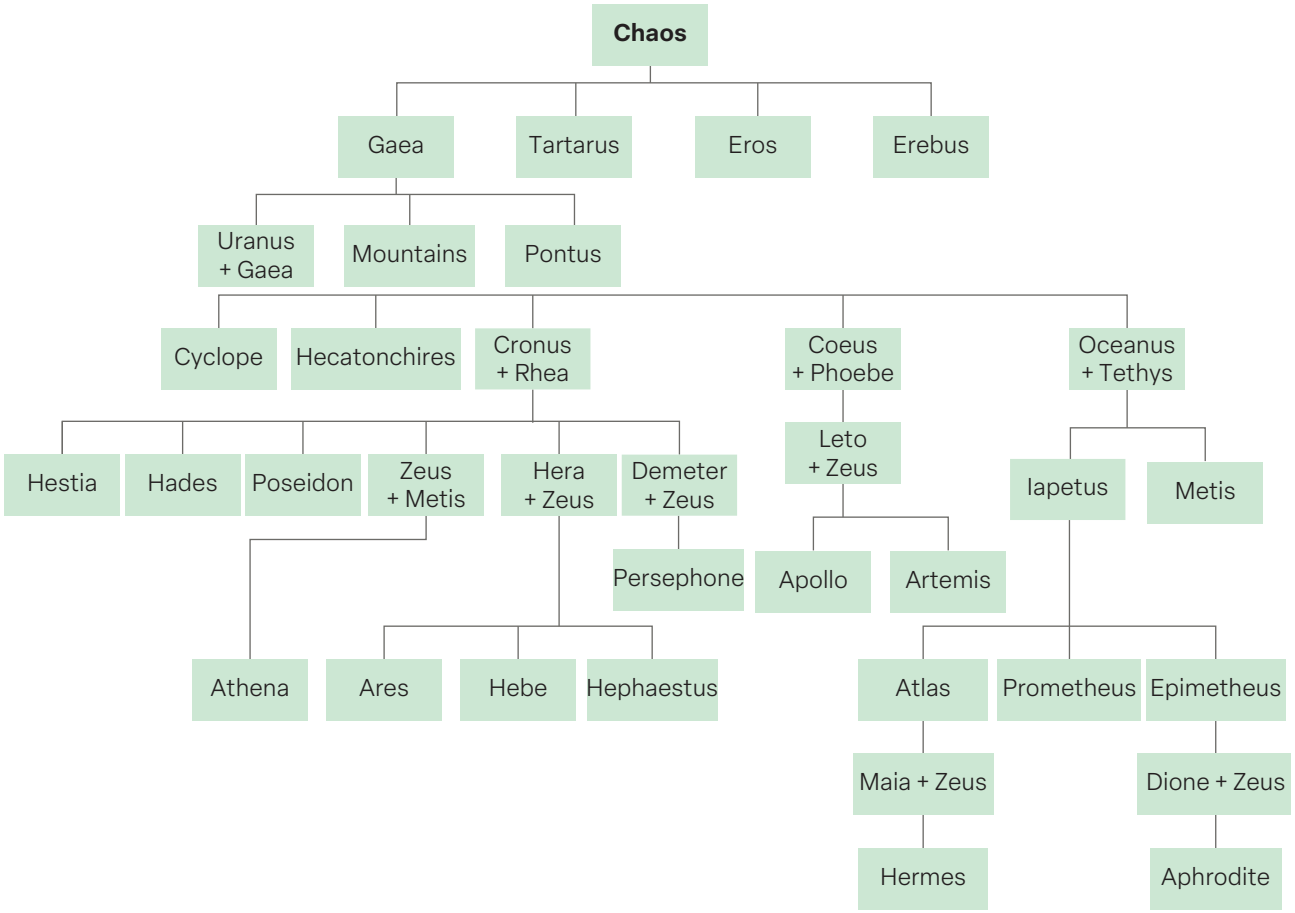
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12.7 Religious beliefs and practices in fifth-century-BCE Athens

Like the Ancient Egyptians and most other ancient civilisations, the Greeks were **polytheistic** in their beliefs. Each Greek god was believed to have control or influence over a particular aspect of life or a particular concept. The Greeks believed their gods were humanistic; that is, they were human in their physical appearance, emotions, personality, desires and so on, except for their immortality. Consequently, the Ancient Greeks had no concept of a devil (as in Christianity) as all gods were capable of good and evil. The gods also featured heavily in myths and legends. A family tree of the major deities is shown below.

polytheistic the belief in multiple deities simultaneously



SOURCE 12.41 The main Greek gods

Abstract concepts

Since many gods personified abstract moral concepts, such as victory or vengeance, they were the source of spiritual morality for the Greek people. One common concept that the Greeks interacted with regularly was fate. Fate was personified in the Moirai – the sisters Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos making wool. Clotho pulled the wool around the spindle, thus giving life. Lachesis spun and measured the wool, thus measuring the length of one's life. Atropos cut the thread, thus choosing the time and manner of one's death. Another popular conceptual group were the Muses (the personification of knowledge and the arts such as literature, dance and music). Prayers to the Muses would be made in the hope of inspiring people to do their best.

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SOURCE 12.42 *Winged Victory of Samothrace* (representing the Greek goddess of victory – Nike), c. 190 BCE, the Louvre. What restoration has recently been conducted by the Louvre on this statue?



SOURCE 12.43 Giorgio Ghisi, *The Three Fates – Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos*, sixteenth century, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Italy. How have the Three Fates been represented across different periods of history?

Myths and legends

The Greeks used myths and legends to try to explain natural phenomena (particularly origins or creation), cultural variations, traditional enmities and friendships, and the daily lives of various gods. These stories were usually spread through an **oral tradition**. Some of the more popular tales featured famous heroes who were part-human and part-divine (Zeus fathered many heroes), like Hercules, Jason and Theseus.

oral tradition a form of communication where knowledge, art and ideas are passed down through the generations by word of mouth

Religious practices

The gods were the powers that determined a person's lot in life; they could be bargained with. However, the gods did not expect good behaviour from their followers. For the Ancient Greeks, their faith was not expressed through ethical and moral behaviour; rather, it was through activities such as rituals, offerings or sacrifices and prayers that they earned the favour of the gods. While Ancient Greeks could worship all gods, individual *poleis* usually developed a focused practice on one patron deity, thus becoming a centre for pilgrimage of that deity. For example, Athens was the centre for worship of Athena, the city's patron goddess.

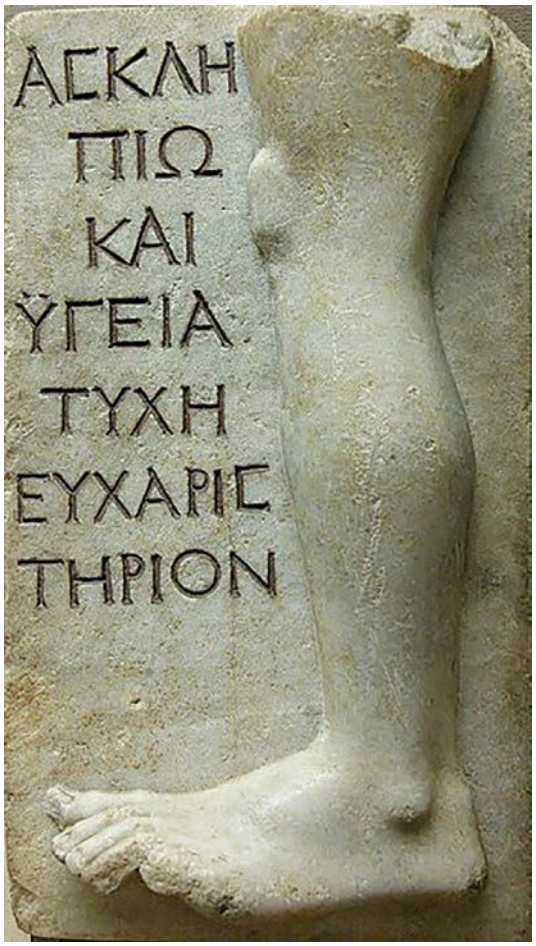


SOURCE 12.44 Attic votive relief depicting a man accompanied by his sons making an offering of a bull to a god, c. fifth century BCE, Museo Archeologico Nazionale Venice. What might the man and his sons be asking of the god?

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Rituals permeated almost every part of Ancient Greek life, both public and private. In the home, rituals and ceremonies were held for births, deaths and marriages. In public life, religion was the focus of festivals, of oaths taken in court and it even influenced medical diagnoses. These rituals would usually also involve prayers and offerings or sacrifices. Animal sacrifices were very common; the type of animal was determined by the type and scale of the request. Offerings of objects could also be made – vases, jewellery, metalwork, statues or whole buildings. Archaeologists have found numerous objects whose inscriptions detail the reason for dedication, giving us a valuable connection to the ordinary people of the fifth century BCE.

Modern historians are fortunate that there are numerous religious archaeological sites available that can help construct a picture of religious life in Ancient Greece.



SOURCE 12.45 Votive offering in the form of a marble relief; translation: 'Tyche [dedicated this] to Asklepios and Hygieia as a thanks offering', second century CE, British Museum. What do you suppose Tyche was thankful for?

votive offering an object that is displayed or deposited in a sacred place without the intention of recovery to gain favour with the gods

ACTIVITY 12.10

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Choose one of the archaeological sites listed below and answer the questions that follow:

- The Acropolis, Athens
- Sanctuary of Athena and Poseidon, Sounion
- Temple of Apollo, Delphi
- The Agora, Athens
- The Temples of Zeus and Hera, Olympia

1. What facilities were available for worshippers at the site?
2. What archaeological evidence has been uncovered of their activities?
3. How useful is the evidence available in constructing a picture of religious practice?
4. What limitations are present in the archaeological site? Is it difficult to interpret? Why or why not?

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CONCLUDING STUDY

12.8 Changing interpretations on fifth-century-BCE Athens

Athens: Was it good or bad?

James Kierstead, Senior Lecturer in Classics, Victoria University of Wellington, writes:

SOURCE 12.46 J. Kierstead, 'Is democracy Western? The case of Sortition', *Medium*, 25 April 2021

> **The debate about Western Civilization continues to rage, with several different points of contention. Is the idea of a distinctive Western tradition even coherent? If so, which cultures should we include in it? Can it be seen as having roots in the ancient cultures of Greece and Rome, or is this simply a later construct? What social and cultural practices can really be said to have been distinctively Western? Among the more hotly-debated questions is whether democracy has Western roots. Traditional narratives see modern liberal democracy as a continuation, or at least a revival, of Greco-Roman political ideas; the word *dēmokratia*, the power of the people, is, after all, a Greek coinage. Revisionist scholars, by contrast, emphasize the discontinuities between ancient Greek and modern democracies, and draw attention to evidence for democratic ideas and structures in non-Western contexts — contexts which they think haven't been given the scholarly attention they deserve.**

In praise of Athens

Athens was the foundation of Western civilisation, characterised by rationality, scientific and philosophic thinking, progressive thinking, technological exploits, liberal arts and entertainment (plays, poetry, literature, history) and rights (individuals and societies). And, of course, representative democracy.

Athens condemned

Ancient Athens exudes the characteristics of base and crass egotism, bigoted supremacist thinking, which set the justification for nineteenth- and twentieth-century Western global imperialism, domination, supremacism, and even genocide.

Spencer McDaniel from Brandeis University writes:

SOURCE 12.47 S. McDaniel, 'Athenian democracy wasn't really that great', *Tales of Times Forgotten*

> **... ancient Athens was not the first democracy. Furthermore, Athenian democracy was deeply flawed in ways that are, unfortunately, often overlooked. Notably, the vast majority of the Athenian population was excluded from participating in the democracy. Athens was also aggressively imperialistic and routinely sought to dominate and oppress other Greek poleis (i.e., city-states) and, on several occasions, democratic Athens even committed outright genocide.**

For the debate between 'Western' and 'Eastern' traditions, and their effect on the modern world, visit the discussion at the opening of Chapter 18 on the Persian Wars.

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- During the fifth century BCE, Athens reached the height of political power and cultural achievements.
- The era saw the distribution of political rights to all male citizens and the removal of power from old aristocratic institutions.
- Clear property qualifications for office were established.
- Greek democracy has received both praise and criticism from ancient and modern sources.
- Women lacked social and legal equality with men. Their primary responsibilities were for the home and family.
- Despite having to fulfil civic duties, metics had few rights.
- Athens used the economic resources of the Delian League to fund the rebuilding and beautification of the city after the Persian Wars.
- The Parthenon was built on the Acropolis and is considered the best example of classical architecture.
- Visual art is a rich source of historic evidence for the daily lives of Greeks in the fifth century BCE.
- Famous writers of tragedy and comedy used their works to explore social issues.
- Socrates and Plato began teaching and established their schools, making Athens the centre of philosophical learning for Greece.
- The Greeks were polytheistic, and religious practices and rituals were integral to both public and private life.



SOURCE 12.48 Tourists in front of the Parthenon at the Acropolis archaeological site in Athens

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
Create a mind map that shows the main achievements of Athens in architecture, theatre, philosophy, democracy and political rights during the fifth century BCE.

DEVISE
Devise a series of focus questions exploring women's contribution to Athens' success during the fifth century BCE.

ANALYSE
Analyse the sources in this chapter to justify the claim that 'the cultural achievements of fifth-century-BCE Athens reflected a vibrant community, confident in its democracy and sense of civic duty, but with it came also an arrogance that would ultimately lead to its fall'.

SYNTHESISE
How and why did Athens turn its allies from a 'league' of unity into virtual slaves of its 'empire'?

EVALUATE
Who are credible primary sources for this time period? Why?

COMMUNICATE
How would Western civilisation be different today without the Athenians' achievements of the fifth century BCE?

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions
1. To what extent can it be argued that the Classical Age of Athens could also be called the Age of Perikles?
2. How was theatre used by Ancient Greek playwrights as a form of social commentary?
3. To what extent can it be argued that while Athenian society was democratic, democratic rights were not distributed equally?

Investigation tasks
1. How did themes and plots of Greek plays reinforce cultural and social norms of gender in the fifth century BCE?
2. Given the cultural achievements of Athens in sculpture, philosophy, architecture and theatre during the fifth century BCE, which of these has been the most significant in shaping modern Western culture?
3. How did the religious and mythological beliefs of the Ancient Athenians guide their everyday lives?

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Chapter 13

MACEDONIAN EMPIRE FROM PHILIP II TO ALEXANDER III

Syllabus reference: Unit 3, Topics 1 and 2: Historical periods

DIANA PLATT

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How are sources used to construct an understanding of the Macedonian Empire from Philip II to Alexander III?
- What features, achievements and issues distinguish the Macedonian Empire from Philip II to Alexander III?

(Adapted from Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 13.1 Portrait heads of Philip II (left) and Alexander III (right)

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FOCUS: WHY STUDY THE MACEDONIAN EMPIRE?

The study of the Macedonian Empire, especially under the reign of Philip II and Alexander III, may be of interest for several reasons.

1. Military tactics, strategy and history: Understanding military innovations, such as the **phalanx**, is crucial for military historians and strategists.
2. Expansion of the **Hellenistic World** and its impact on Western civilisation: Alexander's conquests spread **Hellenistic** culture, which had a significant influence on society, governance, economics, culture and religion. The blending of Greek, Persian, Egyptian and other cultures created a unique fusion that still impacts the world today. Studying this period helps us understand the roots of many aspects of Western culture.
3. Diplomacy, governance and leadership: Philip II's and Alexander the Great's lives provide valuable insights into leadership, governance and political organisation. The study of their diplomatic efforts illuminates the challenges of managing a vast and diverse empire.

phalanx heavily armed infantry formation where soldiers stand shoulder to shoulder in ranks 16 men deep

Hellenistic World after the conquests of Alexander the Great, the lands that fell into the Macedonian Empire were referred to as the Hellenistic World; it roughly corresponds with the Hellenistic period of Ancient Greece

Hellenistic a period relating to Greek history, language and culture starting from the death of Alexander the Great through to the defeat of Cleopatra and Mark Antony by Octavian in 30 BCE

SOURCE 13.2 Jan Brueghel the Elder, *The Battle of Issus*, 1602



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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

Introduction

While little may be known about Macedon, Philip II and Alexander the Great (III) turned it into an empire. To reconstruct this period, it is important to understand when the empire existed, where it was located and key issues related to the investigation of sources, including the nature and range of sources. It is also important to note that the terms 'Macedon' and 'Macedonia' can be used interchangeably when talking about the country, which can be seen in various sources about the Macedonian Empire.

13.1 When and where did the events of the Macedonian Empire take place?

The Macedonian Empire is generally believed to have reached the height of its powers from 359 BCE, with the beginning of Philip II's reign, until 323 BCE, with the death of Alexander.

TABLE 13.1 A list of key dates

359 BCE	• Philip II of Macedon comes to power after the death of his father King Amyntas III. • Philip's brothers were Alexander II and Perdiccas III.
357 BCE	• Philip II marries Olympias of Epirus (Alexander III's mother).
356 BCE	• Alexander III is born July 20. • Pydna and Potidae are captured by Philip II.
340 BCE	• Philip II invades Thrace. • Alexander III left as regent of Macedon at age 16. • Alexander III defeats Maedians and settles Alexandropolis.
338 BCE	Battle of Chaeronea; Alexander III has a commanding post.
338/337 BCE	League of Corinth is developed.
336 BCE	Philip II is assassinated by Pausanius.
334 BCE	Alexander III begins his Asiatic campaign.
333 BCE	Battle of Issus
332/331 BCE	• Alexander III captures Darius III's (Persian king) family. • Alexander III enters Egypt.
331 BCE	• Battle of Gaugamela • The surrender of Babylon, Susa and the capture of the Persian Gates, Persepolis • Alexandria is founded in Egypt.
327 BCE	Alexander III reaches India.
323 BCE	Alexander III dies.

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Where was the Macedonian Empire?

Macedonia was a small kingdom to the north of Greece. It consisted of two parts: Lower Macedonia and Upper Macedonia.

Lower Macedonia was characterised by a fertile alluvial plain, thanks to the rivers Haliacmon and the Axius. This plain produced cereals, which were exported, as well as livestock such as cattle and sheep. The region also produced strong horses and is characterised by a flat coast with few natural harbours.

Upper Macedonia, however, comprised mountains with certain areas that are suitable for farming, mainly used for grazing livestock. This region was known for its timber, iron and gold mining, and furs.

Today, Lower Macedonia is completely within the borders of modern Greece while the northern part of Upper Macedon lies in North Macedonia (officially the Republic of North Macedonia). This has caused (and continues to cause) much debate, with not only scholars, but politicians and patriots from Greece and North Macedonia. The key arguments raised are that 'the ancient Macedonians spoke a Slavic language' and 'Macedonia has been Greek for at least 3000 years'.



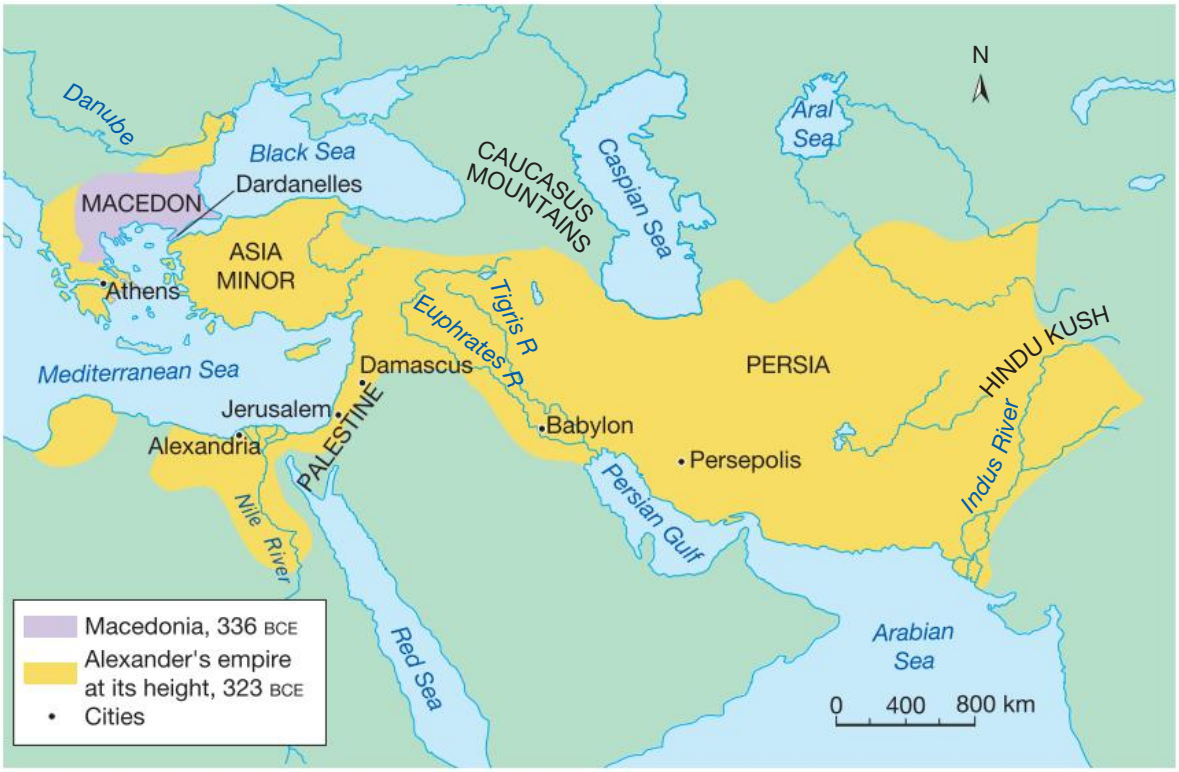
SOURCE 13.3 Map showing the regions of Upper and Lower Macedonia under Philip II



SOURCE 13.4 Approximate location of the Ancient Macedonian kingdom alongside modern political borders

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SOURCE 13.5 Expansion of Macedon under Alexander III

ACTIVITY 13.1

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Describe the Macedonian Empire under Philip II (Source 13.3).
2. Describe the Macedonian Empire under Alexander III (Source 13.5).
3. Comparing the maps, explain the geographical changes of the Macedonian Empire.

13.2 How do we know today about the Macedonian Empire?

The reconstruction of the Macedonian Empire during the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III (359–323 BCE) is challenging due to issues with the sources.

Ancient sources

There are limited primary sources that exist for this period, other than archaeological evidence and the works of Demosthenes. While there were literary records from the time, these are now lost and only exist as extracts or served as the foundation for the work of the following later ancient historian.

- Aristobulus of Cassandreia (375–301 BCE)
- Ptolemy (367–283 BCE)
- Nearchus of Crete (360–300 BCE)
- Callistenes of Olynthus (360–328 BCE)
- Onesicritus of Astypalaea (360–290 BCE)
- Cleitarchus of Alexandria (c. last quarter fourth century BCE)
- Chares of Mytilene (c. last quarter fourth century BCE)
- Athenaeus (c. late second century/early third century CE)

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Archaeological evidence

There are many coins, artefacts and archaeological sites that continue to exist, albeit in various stages of preservation.

larnax a chest usually of terracotta, often ornamented and used in Ancient Greece as a vessel for remains

TABLE 13.2 How sources were used and what they can tell us

Source	Uses at the time	Limitations
Coins	• Governance and politics • Religious beliefs and practices • Cultural life and practices • Significant events and people	• Commissioned by those in power • They control representation • Depictions may not be a 'true' or factual representation
• Artefacts • Jewellery • Pottery • Statues • **Larnax** (chest) • Armour, weapons • Household goods	• Governance and politics • Religious beliefs and practices • Cultural life and practices • Significant events • Society	• Damage • Incomplete or partial • Authentication • Conservation • Inconsistencies in recording and conservation due to funding and/or available technology
• Artwork • Frescoes • Paintings • Mosaics • Reliefs	• Religious beliefs and practices • Cultural life and practices • Significant events and people • Society	• Damage • Incomplete or partial • Authentication • Conservation • Ethics surrounding ownership – political issues • Prejudices of the archaeological team involved in excavation • Inconsistencies in recording and conservation due to funding and/or available technology
• Archaeological sites: – Tombs at Vergina – Dion • Pella • Philippi • Heraclea Lyncestis, Bitola • Ancient Theatre, Ohrid	• Governance and politics • Religious beliefs and practices • Cultural life and practices • Significant people • Society	• Damage over time • Ability to be fully excavated and recorded accurately • Incomplete or partial • Ethics surrounding ownership – political issues • Prejudices of the archaeological team involved in excavation • Inconsistencies in recording and conservation due to funding and/or available technology

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Ancient historians and writers

Although not primary sources, the following ancient writers had access to the lost primary accounts, and drew on them for their own writing.

- Lucius Flavius Arrianus (Arrian) c. 90–160 CE
- Diodorus Siculus or Diodorus of Sicily (Diodorus) 80–c. 20 BCE
- Lucius Mestrius Plutarchus (Plutarch) c. 45–120 CE
- Quintus Curtius Rufus (Curtius) d. 53 CE
- Marcus Junianus Justinus (Justin) c. second century CE
- Theopompus c. 378–320 BCE

Modern historians

While the list below is not exhaustive, it is a snapshot of some of the modern historians who have made this period their life's work.

- A. B. Bosworth
- Eugene N. Borza
- Thomas R. Martin
- Ian Worthington

ACTIVITY **13.2**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Choose one of the authors and investigate the following:

- origin (when and where they were creating their work)
- context (their background, credentials, positions and so on; what was happening at the time they were creating their work; other sources used)
- motive and audience (who their work was created for and why)
- perspective (how they view this period).

1. Record your findings on a collaborative PowerPoint.
2. Make judgements about how useful and reliable their work would be for this period.
3. Share your findings with the rest of the class.

Contextual study: Summing up

Despite the challenges posed by not only the nature and extent of sources but also the understanding of Macedon itself, reconstructing some understanding of the Macedonian Empire under Philip II and Alexander III is achievable.

ACTIVITY **13.3**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Create a mind map outlining the ancient and modern sources for this period.

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DEPTH STUDY

Introduction

Philip II (382–336 BCE) ruled the ancient kingdom of Macedonia from 359 BCE. He was very successful on the battlefield, with conquests including Athens and Thebes. He established the **League of Corinth**, an offensive and defensive alliance of the Greek states (except for Sparta). When Philip was assassinated, he was succeeded by his 20-year-old son Alexander III (356–323 BCE). Alexander continued his father's military tradition; he campaigned through Asia and north-east Africa and achieved one of the largest empires of the Ancient World. He is often referred to as 'Alexander the Great', and many people consider him to have been one of the most successful military commanders in history. However, reconstructing the period of history during the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III poses challenges.

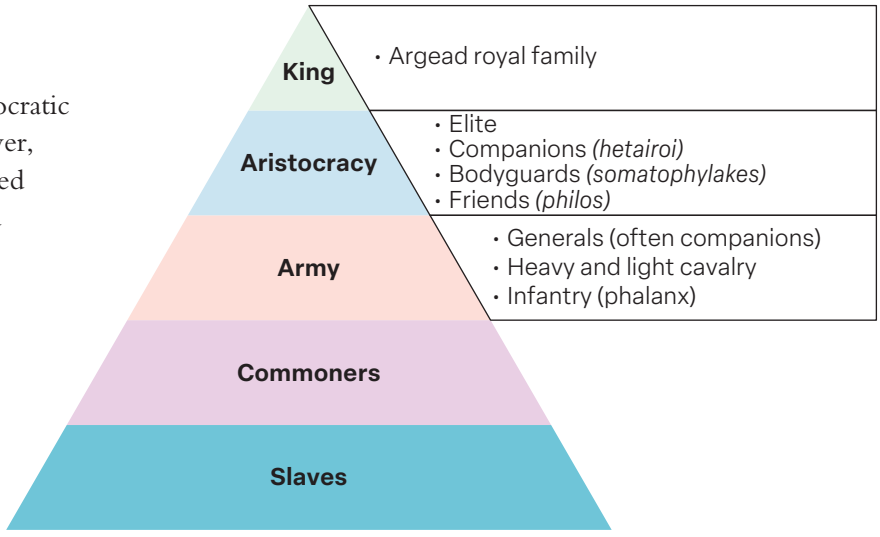
League of Corinth also referred to as the Hellenic League, it was the federation of Ancient Greek states, except Sparta, after the battle of Chaeronea; an offensive and defensive alliance under the leadership of Philip II

First, there is an issue surrounding the origin and ethnicity of the Macedonians. While some sources and historians have grouped the Macedonians as Greek, they were not Greek. Instead, they were a distinct group that shared some similarities with the Greeks, such as religion. The Greek influence increased during the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III, which may have contributed to the confusion. The debate over the ethnicity of Philip II and Alexander III continues to influence the national identity of Macedonians and Greeks today.

Second, there is an issue concerning evidence. The primary sources, such as writing by Demosthenes, contain heavy bias or no longer exist. Furthermore, many of the ancient sources for this period were written more than 300 years after the death of Alexander, although the writers may have had access to primary sources that have not survived. In addition to these issues of reliability, the sources have limitations. The sources remain quiet on certain aspects of this period, which contributes to the challenges of reconstructing the past. Much like a puzzle that is missing a few pieces and has distorted edges, one can try to put the pieces together and make out what the image is supposed to be. This is the challenge of reconstructing the past of Philip II and Alexander III.

13.3 Social structure of the Macedonian Empire

Macedonia had a hierarchical aristocratic society with disproportions in power, privilege and wealth. The poor lived disposable lives without effect, and most of the information on this period is centred on the royalty and the aristocracy.



SOURCE 13.6 Macedonian social hierarchy. What does this structure suggest about Macedonian society?

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Royal family

The royalty of Macedonia were of the **Argead Dynasty** whose kings took many wives for political reasons, although this was not a practice within the aristocracy. Furthermore, the kings arranged marriages for their daughters to establish or confirm political alliances, which established a network of ***philia***. Royal fathers and brothers were ***kurioi*** (guardians) for royal women and the role of Argead women became more public following the reign of Philip II. Education of the royal family was individualised to honour the family and background of the mother. Additionally, the king was the head of the army and the state, and was chief priest of the kingdom.

Aristocracy

The aristocracy were significant landowners and dominated the cavalry and officer corps in the army. The monarchy would give gifts and land grants for the support of prominent families. The adolescent sons of leading Macedonians were conscripted into service as ***basilikoi paides***.



SOURCE 13.7 Gold Medallion of Philip II of Macedon, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris



SOURCE 13.8 Gold Medallion of Olympias, Walters Art Museum, Baltimore. What do these medallions suggest about the importance of the royal family?

Argead Dynasty Ancient Macedonian royal house whose origins trace back to Argos in the Peloponnese, 700–310 BCE

philoi roughly translates to 'friend', and was a relationship based on reciprocity; members of the 'friends' class were called *philia*

kurioi guardians of women

basilikoi paides royal pages

hypaspists stood between the phalanx and cavalry in battle formation

somatophylakes the king's bodyguard; a select group of seven

hetairoi companion of the king or elite cavalry

The king's bodyguards came from the nobility in society and service was seen as a prestigious honour. There were two categories of bodyguards: the elite ***hypaspists*** and a smaller group of ***somatophylakes*** that formed the king's inner circle. At the time of Alexander III, this small group numbered eight. The king paid respect to the noble birth of Macedonians by choosing them as bodyguards. It was at the king's discretion to appoint, remove or replace the bodyguards. This was considered more a role of honour rather than an effective unit for protecting the king's life. As such, the king was still vulnerable, as seen by Philip II's assassination by Pausanius, one of his bodyguards.

Companions (***hetairoi***) were the primary associates and servants of the king. They enjoyed power at the court and had grown up with the king through the institution of *basilikoi paides*. They often accompanied the king in hunting, fighting and feasting. Companions or friends (*philos*) would attend to the king in large numbers both at home or on campaign by invitation only. They may give the king advice, hear his speeches and consult on matters of state. They were free to speak, although there is no indication that the king was bound to heed their advice or that a formal vote took place. Additionally, within the *hetairoi,* there were marriage alliances that built kin networks.

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Thomas R. Martin is an American historian specialising in the Greco-Roman world.

SOURCE 13.9 T. R. Martin, *Ancient Greece: From Prehistoric to Hellenistic Times,* Yale University Press, 2013, p. 239

Unlike the city-states of Greece, Macedonia was ruled by a monarchy. The power of the king of the Macedonian state was constrained by the tradition that he was supposed to listen to his people, who were accustomed to addressing their monarch with considerable freedom of speech. Above all, the king could govern effectively only as long as he maintained the support of the most powerful aristocrats, who counted as the king's social equals and controlled large bands of followers. Fighting, hunting, and heavy drinking were the favorite pastimes of these men. The king was expected to demonstrate his prowess in these activities to show he was a Macedonian man's man capable of heading the state. Macedonian queens and royal mothers received respect in this male-dominated society because they came from powerful families in the Macedonian nobility or the ruling houses of lands bordering Macedonia and bore their husbands the heirs that they needed to carry on their royal dynasties. In the king's absence these royal women could vie with the king's designated representative for power at court.

ACTIVITY 13.4



Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Consider Source 13.9. Describe the relationship between the aristocracy and the monarchy.
2. Describe the role of royal women.
3. Explain the importance of 'companions' to the power of the monarchy.

Women

The family and the home were the centre of women's lives in Macedonia, so aristocratic women often did not go out in public or, if they did, wore veils of varying coverage. Rural and lower-class women had to leave their homes to work.

Aristocratic women often held priesthoods and participated in public rituals. Women's religious experience centred on female deities and cults of children, protection in childbirth, fertility and healing. Many of the women-centred cult sanctuaries were placed outside the city walls. Women companions were highly educated in art, culture and matters of the state.

Royal women had no title; they had their personal name and ancestry only. There was no institutionalised chief wife of the king; however, the mother of the heir received greater dominance and status, although factors such as ethnicity and family background could affect women's places at court. Furthermore, mothers were succession advocates for their sons (or grandsons) as seen in Olympias's alleged order of the execution of Eurydice and her child in order to secure her own son's (Alexander III) succession.

By the fourth century BCE, royal women became domestic supervisors due to the increased numbers of slaves and the size and luxury of the palaces.

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SOURCE 13.10 The Philippeion, a circular memorial of Philip to commemorate his victory at the Battle of Chaeronea, 338 BCE. It once housed ivory and gold statues of Philip and his family, including Alexander III, Olympias and Eurydice. What challenges does this pose to reconstructing the past?

Army

Philip II reorganised the army, increasing the size and introducing corps engineers. Under Philip II, the army became a professional occupation that paid well enough for active service year-round, and allowed for cohesion and unity. Additionally, the army had uniforms and an oath, which demonstrated loyalty to the king rather than to hometowns. Philip II restructured the phalanx by giving each unit its own commander. He developed the Macedonian phalanx, known for its use of ***sarissa***, ***xiphos*** and redesigned shield, and he developed the ***hipparchies*** and *hypaspists*.

Furthermore, he made the military a way of life for Macedonian men. Initially, Alexander III continued this structure, but later he added Asiatic techniques, such as archers on horseback, which was an adaptation from his campaigns in **Sogdiana** and **Bactria**.

sarissa long spear or pike (5–6 metres) introduced by Philip II in Macedonian phalanxes

xiphos a one-handed, double-edged straight sword

hipparchies cavalry unit (approximately 1000) with the intention to flank

Sogdiana a region in ancient Central Asia between the Oxus and Jaxartes rivers located in territories of modern-day Tajikistan and Uzbekistan

Bactria region of ancient Central Asia north of the Hindu Kush and south of the Amu Darya river; modern-day Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan



SOURCE 13.11 Relief depicting Macedonian phalanx, Thessaloniki

13.4 Significant events of the Macedonian Empire

Battle of Chaeronea, 338 BCE

Philip II's victory at Chaeronea (Boeotia) in 338 BCE saw the destruction of the old Greek city-states' liberty. This battle signalled the end of the city-states system and the rise of large military monarchies. However, was conflict avoidable? Who was to blame?

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SOURCE 13.12 Diodorus Siculus, *The Battle of Chaeronea*, k. XVI, chapter 14

Philip, King of Macedon, being already in alliance with many of the Greeks, made it his chief business to subdue the Athenians, and thereby with more ease control all Hellas. To this end he presently seized Elateia [a Phocian town commanding the mountain passes southward], in order to fall on the Athenians, imagining to overcome them with ease; since he conceived they were not at all ready for war, having so lately made peace with him. Upon the taking of Elateia, messengers hastened by night to Athens, informing the Athenians that the place was taken, and Philip was leading on his men in full force to invade Attica. The Athenian magistrates in alarm had the trumpeters sound their warning all night, and the rumour spread with terrifying effect all through the city. At daybreak the people without waiting the usual call of the magistrate rushed to the assembly place. Thither came the officials with the messenger; and when they had announced their business, fear and silence filled the place, and none of the customary speakers had heart to say a word. Although the herald called on everybody 'to declare their minds' as to what was to be done, yet none appeared; the people, therefore, in great terror cast their eyes on Demosthenes, who now arose, and bade them to be courageous, and forthwith to send envoys to Thebes to treat with the Boeotians to join in the defence of the common liberty; for there was no time (he said) to send an embassy for aid elsewhere, since Philip would probably invade Attica within two days, and seeing he must march through Boeotia, the only aid was to be looked for there. The people approved of his advice, and a decree was voted that such an embassy should be sent. As the most eloquent man for the task, Demosthenes was pitched upon, and forthwith he hastened away [to Thebes. Despite past hostilities between Athens and Thebes, and the counter-arguments of Philip's envoys, Demosthenes persuaded Thebes and her Boeotian cities that their liberty as well as that of Athens was really at stake, and to join arms with the Athenians.] ... When Philip could not prevail on the Boeotians to join him, he resolved to fight them both. To this end, after waiting for reinforcements, he invaded Boeotia with about thirty thousand foot and two thousand horse.

ACTIVITY **13.5**



Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

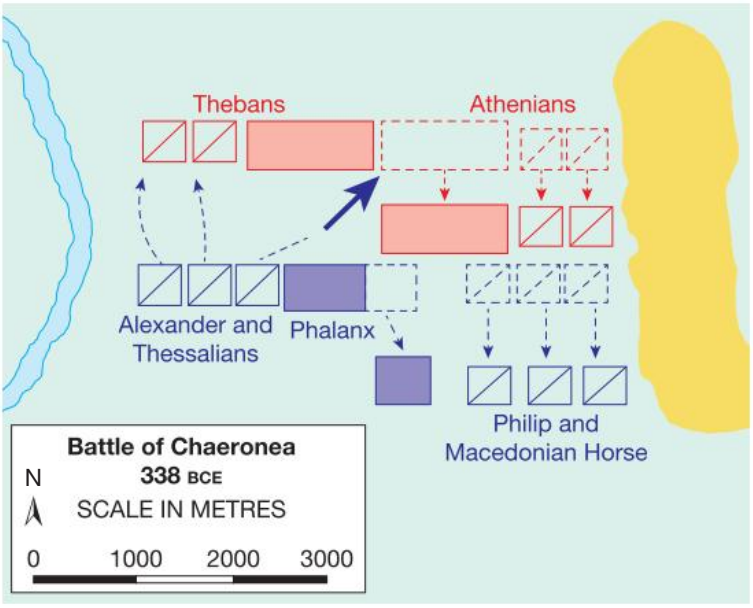
Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Read Source 13.12 and respond to the following:

1. Identify why Demosthenes went to Thebes.
2. Identify how Philip treated Thebes and Boeotia.
3. Assess whether it was Demosthenes (Greece) or Philip (Macedon) who was more to blame for the fate of Thebes and Boeotia.
4. Write your answer in a paragraph. In your response, consider the actions of both individuals, and give clear reasons why one is more to blame than the other.
   a. Provide a clear topic sentence that directly answers the question, incorporating key words from the question.
   b. The body of your responses should contain at least two direct quotes from the source.
   c. Be careful about your selections and elaborate on the significance of your choices (quote and comment).
   d. Consider combining quotations to strengthen your response (one example does not prove a point).
   e. Finish with a 'clincher' that summarises the key aspect or aspects of your response.

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SOURCE 13.13 Diagram depicting battle formations of the Battle of Chaeronea, 338 BCE

Polyaenus was a Macedonian author (second century CE) of a collection of stratagems, which he dedicated to the Roman emperors Lucius Verus and Marcus Aurelius.

SOURCE 13.14 Attalus Polyaenus, *Stratagems, Book 4,* chapters 1–3. Translated by R. Shepherd, 1793.

Engaging the Athenians at Chaeroneia, Philippus made a sham retreat: and Stratocles, the Athenian general, ordered his men to push forwards, crying out, 'We will pursue them to the heart of Macedonia.' Philippus observed, 'The Athenians know not how to conquer:' and ordered his phalanx to keep close and firm, and to retreat slowly, covering themselves with their shields from the attacks of the enemy. As soon as he had by the manoeuvre drawn them from their advantageous ground, and gained an eminence, he halted; and encouraging his troops to a vigorous assault, he attacked the Athenians and won a brilliant victory.

SOURCE 13.15 Diodorus Siculus, *The Battle of Chaeronea*, k. XVI, chapter 86

The armies deployed at dawn, and the king stationed his son Alexander, young in age but noted for his valour and swiftness of action, on one wing, placing beside him his most seasoned generals, while he himself at the head of picked men exercised the command over the other; individual units were stationed where the occasion required. On the other side, dividing the line according to nationality, the Athenians assigned one wing to the Boeotians and kept command of the other themselves. Once joined, the battle was hotly contested for a long time and many fell on both sides, so that for a while the struggle permitted hopes of victory to both.

Then Alexander, his heart set on showing his father his prowess and yielding to none in will to win, ably seconded by his men, first succeeded in rupturing the solid front of the enemy line and striking down many he bore heavily on the troops opposite him. As the same success was won by his companions, gaps in the front were constantly opened. Corpses piled up, until finally Alexander forced his way through the line and put his opponents to flight. Then the king also in person advanced, well in front and not conceding credit for the victory even to Alexander; he first forced back the troops stationed before him and then by compelling them to flee became the man responsible for the victory. More than a thousand Athenians fell in the battle and no less than two thousand were captured. Likewise, many of the Boeotians were killed and not a few taken prisoners. After the battle Philip raised a trophy of victory, yielded the dead for burial, gave sacrifices to the gods for victory, and rewarded according to their deserts those of his men who had distinguished themselves.

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ACTIVITY **13.6**

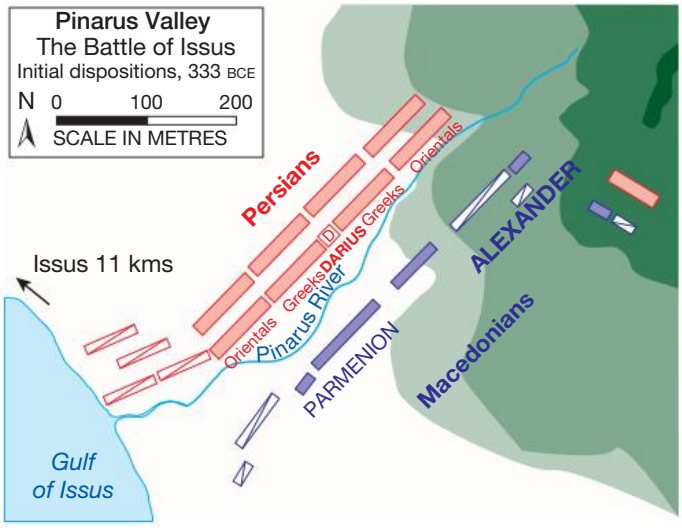
Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Consider Sources 13.14 and 13.15 and compare the accounts of Polyaenus and Diodorus.

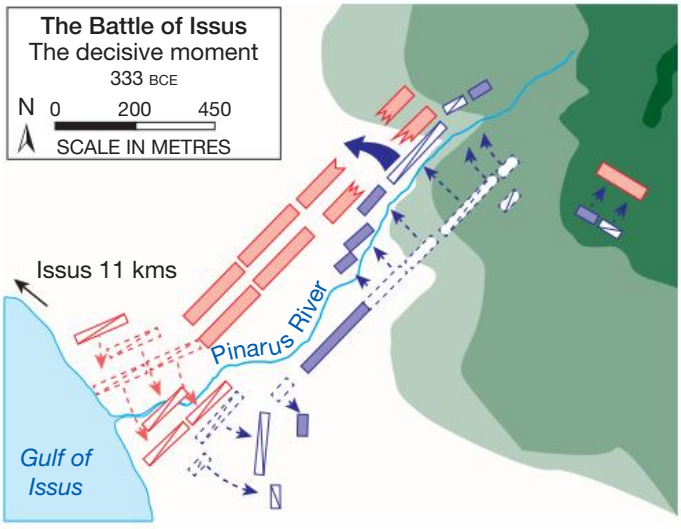
Battle of Issus, 333 BCE

This famous battle between the Macedonian Empire and the **Achaemenid Empire** resulted in the embarrassing defeat of Darius III. Was it truly a clash of empires? The battle was pivotal for Alexander III's power as he gained the territories of Egypt and Phoenicia while destroying the Persian army.

Achaemenid Empire ruled by the Persian dynasty of kings from Cyrus the Great to Darius III (550–331 BCE)



SOURCE 13.16 Diagram depicting initial battle formations of the Battle of Issues, 333 BCE



SOURCE 13.17 Diagram depicting the decisive moment of the battle

SOURCE 13.18 T. R. Martin, *Ancient Greece: From Prehistoric to Hellenistic Times,* Yale University Press, 2013, p. 246

In 333 BCE the Persian king Darius finally faced Alexander in battle at Issus, near the southeastern corner of Anatolia. Alexander defeated his more-numerous opponents with a characteristically bold strike of cavalry through the left side of the Persian lines, followed by a flanking maneuver against the king's position in the center. Darius had to flee from the field to avoid capture, leaving behind his wives and daughters, who had accompanied his campaign in keeping with royal Persian tradition. Alexander's scrupulously chivalrous treatment of the Persian royal women after their capture at Issus reportedly boosted his reputation among the peoples of the king's empire.

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SOURCE 13.19 Arrian, *The Anabasis of Alexander*, 2.10.5-7. Translated by E. J. Chinnock, 1884.

Darius' Greek mercenaries attacked precisely at the point in the line where the gap was widest. There was a violent struggle. Darius' Greeks fought to thrust the Macedonians back into the water … while the Macedonians, in their turn … were determined not to forfeit the proud title of invincible, hitherto universally bestowed upon them. The fight was further embittered by the old racial rivalry of Greek and Macedonian. It was in this phase of the battle that Ptolemy, son of Seleucus, and about 121 Macedonians of distinction met a soldier's death.



SOURCE 13.20 Mosaic from the Pompeiian House of the Faun (120–110 BCE) depicting the battle of Alexander the Great against Darius (III) the Great, possibly at Battle of Issus or Battle of Gaugamela

SOURCE 13.21 Diodorus Siculus, *World History*, 17.34.6. Translated by C. Bradford Welles, 1963.

The horses which were harnessed to the yoke of Darius's chariot were covered with wounds and terrified by the piles of dead about them. They refused to answer to their bridles, and came close to carrying off Darius into the midst of the enemy, but the king himself, in extreme peril, caught up the reins, being forced to throw away the dignity of his position and to violate the ancient custom of the Persian kings.

SOURCE 13.22 Arrian, *The Anabasis of Alexander*, 2.11.1. Translated by E. J. Chinnock, 1884.

Alexander, at the head of his own troops on the right wing, rode at a gallop into the stream. Rapidity was now all in all: a swift attack would shake the enemy, and the sooner they came to grips the less damage would be done by the Persian archers. Alexander's judgment was not at fault: the Persian left collapsed the very moment he was on them.

Alexander's victorious right wing now swung left towards the center, hard pressed as it was by Darius' Greeks; they forced them back from the river and then, outflanking the broken enemy left, delivered a flank attack on the mercenaries and were soon cutting them to pieces.

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ACTIVITY **13.7**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Read the extracts in Sources 13.18, 13.19, 13.21 and 13.22, and identify the perspectives presented.
2. Explain why the battle was represented in this way.
3. Explain how the mosaic (Source 13.20) represents the Battle of Issus.

13.5 Key individuals in the Macedonian Empire

Below is a list of significant individuals during this period:

- **Olympias (375–316 BCE):** Princess of Epirus, daughter of King Neoptolemus I, fourth wife of Philip II, mother of Alexander III
- **Aristotle (384–322 BCE):** Greek philosopher and tutor to Alexander III
- **Darius III (381–330 BCE):** Persian king
- **Parmenion (400–330 BCE):** General under Philip II; when his son Philotas was convicted of treason, Parmenion was assassinated; a member of the aristocracy, possibly *hetairoi*
- **Philotas:** Son of Parmenion, who rose to command of companion cavalry; accused of conspiring against Alexander, executed
- **Oxyartes:** Sogdian nobleman of Bactria; father of Roxana
- **Roxana:** Sogdian wife of Alexander III
- **Demosthenes (384–322 BCE):** Athenian orator of speeches against Philip II
- **Theopompus (378–320 BCE):** Greek historian and rhetorician
- **Callisthenes (360–328 BCE):** Greek historian, accompanied Alexander on Asiatic campaigns; Aristotle was his great uncle
- **Hephaestion (356–324 BCE):** Macedonian nobleman and a general in Alexander's army; friend of Alexander who was brought up with him
- **Perdiccas (365–321 BCE):** General in Alexander's army and supreme commander of the imperial army after Alexander's death; regent for Philip Arrideaus (Philip III)
- **Pausanius of Orestis:** Bodyguard turned assassin of Philip II
- **Alexander the Lyncestian:** Contemporary of Philip II, who was suspected of being involved in Philip's assassination along with his two brothers (Heromenes and Arrhabaeus); conspired against Alexander and was executed.

ACTIVITY **13.8**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

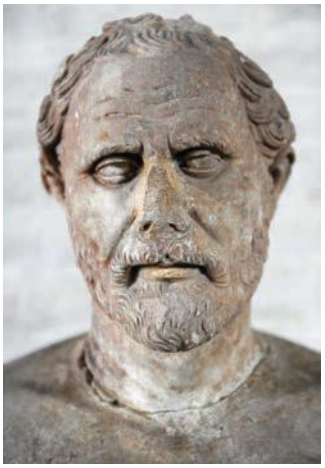
Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. Choose a significant individual from the list.
2. Investigate your chosen individual:
   a. Who were they?
   b. What role did they have in the Macedonian Empire?
   c. What did they do?
   d. Why are they a significant individual from this period?
3. Discuss the relationships that exist between these key individuals.
4. Create a family tree for the Argead Dynasty.

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Demosthenes

Demosthenes (not to be confused with the later Athenian general of the same name) was an Athenian statesman and contemporary of Philip II, whose works are among the few remaining primary sources for this period. Demosthenes's 61 speeches have survived, along with the rhetorical openings (*prooimia*) for approximately 50 speeches and six letters. Of these surviving speeches, four were specifically targeted against Philip II and are known as the *Philippics* (351, 344 and 341 BCE). There are other speeches that discuss both Philip II and Alexander III. While his speeches may contain useful evidence to assist in recreating the period, one must consider the heavy bias contained in them.



SOURCE 13.23 Demosthenes bust, a Roman copy of an original from 280 BCE

So why did Demosthenes dislike Philip II? There are several contributing factors to Demosthenes's opinion:

- Demosthenes held a common Greek attitude towards Macedonians.
- Philip II was considered a threat to Athenian democracy.
- Philip II continued to conquer Greek city-states and unified the city-states (except for Sparta) under his rule (**hegemony**).

hegemony the leadership and dominance by one state or social group over another

Peter Green, a British scholar noted for works on the Greco-Persian Wars and Alexander the Great, examines the Greeks' general feelings towards Macedonians, and the culture Demosthenes was raised in.

SOURCE 13.24 P. Green, *Alexander of Macedon: 356-323* BC, University of California Press, 2013, p. 6

> **The attitude of the city-state Greeks to this sub-Homeric enclave was one of genial and sophisticated contempt. They regarded Macedonians in general as semi-savages, uncouth of speech and dialect, retrograde [backward] in their political institutions, negligible as fighters, and habitual oath-breakers, who dressed in bear pelts and were much given to deep and swinish potations [drinking of alcohol], tempered with bouts of assassination and incest.**

ACTIVITY 13.9

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Identify the Greeks' opinion of the Macedonians (a general statement).
2. Identify what the Greeks thought of the Macedonians (multiple examples).

The following sources are all from speeches by Demosthenes discussing Philip.

SOURCE 13.25 Demosthenes, *Philippic 1*, 4:4

> **But if anyone here, Athenians, is inclined to think Philip too formidable, having regard to the extent of his existing resources and to our loss of all our strongholds, he is indeed right, yet he must reflect that we too, men of Athens, once held Pydna, Potidaea, and Methone and had in our own hands all the surrounding territory, and that many of the native tribes now in his service were then free and independent and were indeed more inclined to side with us than with Philip.**

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SOURCE 13.26 Demosthenes, *Olynthiac 2*, 2:18

If there is anyone among them who can be described as experienced in war and battle, I was told that Philip from jealousy keeps all such in the background, because he wants to have the credit himself of every action, among his many faults being an insatiable ambition. Any fairly decent or honest man, who cannot stomach the licentiousness of his daily life, the drunkenness and the lewd dancing, is pushed aside as of no account.

SOURCE 13.27 Demosthenes, *Philippic 3*, 9:31

But if some slave or superstitious bastard had wasted and squandered what he had no right to, heavens! How much more monstrous and exasperating all would have called it! Yet they have no such qualms about Philip and his present conduct, though he is not only no Greek, nor related to the Greeks, but not even a barbarian from any place that can be named with honor, but a pestilent knave from Macedonia, whence it was never yet possible to buy a decent slave.

ACTIVITY **13.10**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. For each of Sources 13.25–13.27, identify Demosthenes's opinion of Philip II.
2. Appraise the limitations that exist with the evidence provided by Demosthenes's speeches above.
3. Judge the usefulness and reliability of Demosthenes's speeches to determine Philip's governance.
4. Explain how the perspectives of Demosthenes affect the interpretation of the past.

13.6 Governance and politics of the Macedonian Empire

The nature of governance in Macedonia evolved during the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III. However, there is difficulty in attesting to the overall structure of government due to a lack of evidence and perspectives, and the non-contemporary nature of sources. Despite this, it is known that Macedonia's political structure was a **kingship**, although there are two major schools of thought regarding the type of kingship: **constitutionalist** and **monarchic autocracy**.

Kingship in Macedonia was hereditary and, as the king offered daily sacrifices and presided over religious festivals, the role was considered a priesthood. Under Philip II, diplomatic alliances were strengthened through marriage, as seen by the seven wives of Philip II. Furthermore, under the reign of Philip II, not only was Macedonia restored, but also its lands extended to include Paeonia, Thrace and the Greek city-states (except Sparta), which had been unified by Philip II, with the establishment of the Hellenic League (also known as League of Corinth; 338/337 BCE). However, Alexander III was considered increasingly an **autocratic** king.

kingship the state or position of being a king

constitutionalist a government according to a constitution

monarchic autocracy a state or nation in which the supreme power is held by a monarch who has unlimited authority over others

autocrat a ruler who has absolute power

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SOURCE 13.28 Illustration after Persian manuscript of a battle between Alexander and Darius

Initially, Alexander III emulated the kingship style of his father, although after the defeat of Darius III (331–330 BCE) he adopted aspects of Persian kingship, whereby the king was considered lord and master. Under the reign of Alexander III, Macedonia's lands were further extended from the Nile River to the Indus River. Despite the expanse of the Macedonian kingdom, without an heir, the kingship disintegrated into provincial rule by Alexander's generals and companions upon his death (323 BCE).

Roman historian Curtius from around the first century CE wrote:

SOURCE 13.29 Curtius, *The History of Alexander*, 6.8.25

> In capital cases, it was a long-established Macedonian practice for the king to conduct the trial while the army (or the commons in peace-time) acted as jury, and the position of the king counted for nothing unless his influence had been substantial prior to the trial.

SOURCE 13.30 Diodorus Siculus, *Library*, 16.2.4

> For after the death of Amyntas, Alexander, the eldest of the sons of Amyntas, succeeded to the throne. But Ptolemy of Alorus assassinated him and succeeded to the throne and then in similar fashion Perdiccas disposed of him and ruled as king. But when he was defeated in a great battle by the Illyrians and fell in the action, Philip his brother, who had escaped from his detention as a hostage, succeeded to the kingdom, now in a bad way.

SOURCE 13.31 Diodorus Siculus, *Library*, 16.89.1

> When Phrynichus was archon at Athens, the Romans installed as consuls Titus Manlius Torquatus and Publius Decius. In this year King Philip, proudly conscious of his victory at Chaeronea and seeing that he had dashed the confidence of the leading Greek cities, conceived of the ambition to become the leader of all Greece.

ACTIVITY **13.11**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Define the Macedonian concept of 'kingship'.
2. Compare the ways that Curtius and Diodorus describe Macedonian kings.

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After his victory at the Battle of Chaeronea in 338 BCE, Philip set up the League of Corinth, which was a collection of Greek states under his leadership. This fragment of carved writing, found on the Acropolis, is from the Athenian copy of the treaty that established the League. It consists of oaths to be sworn by ambassadors from each state.

SOURCE 13.32 Treaty with Philip II, IG II3 1 318, 338–337 BCE

Oath: I swear by Zeus, Earth, Sun, Poseidon, Athena, Ares, all the gods and goddesses. I shall abide [by the Peace?] and I shall not break the treaty which ... [with Philip?], nor shall I bear weapons with hostile intent against any of those who abide by the oaths, whether by land or sea; and I shall not capture either city or fort or harbour, with intent to war, of any of those who share in the Peace, neither by trick nor strategem; and I shall not overthrow the kingdom of Philip and his descendants, or the constitutions existing in each place when they swore the oaths about the Peace; and I myself will do nothing contrary to this [treaty], nor shall I empower anyone else; ... in breach of the treaty, ... I shall help in whatever way ... requires; and I shall make war against anyone who contravenes ... in whatever way ... and the leader requires; and I shall not abandon the ...

ACTIVITY **13.12**



Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Determine the impact of this treaty (Source 13.32) on:

a. the Greek city-states

b. the Macedonian Empire.

There are various historic opinions of Philip II's governance. The following are just a few extracts.

Justin, a Roman historian from around the second century CE, wrote about the Lacedaemonian response to Philip's peace terms.

SOURCE 13.33 Justin, *Epitome*, 9.5

War being at an end in Greece, Philippus directed deputies from all the states to be summoned to Corinth, to settle the condition of affairs. Here he fixed terms of peace for the whole of Greece, according to the merits of each city; and chose from them all a council, to form a senate as it were for the country. But the Lacedaemonians, standing alone, showed contempt alike for the terms and the king; regarding the state of things, which had not been agreed upon by the cities themselves, but forced upon them by a conqueror, as a state, not of peace, but of slavery. The number of troops to be furnished by each state was then determined, whether the king, in case of being attacked, was to be supported by their united force, or whether war was to be made on any other power under him as their general. In all these preparations for war it was not to be doubted that the kingdom of Persia was the object in view. The sum of the force was two hundred thousand infantry and fifteen thousand cavalry. Exclusive of this number there was also the army of Macedonia, and the adjacent barbarians of the conquered nations.

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Diodorus considers Philip's wealth and how he used it.

SOURCE 13.34 Diodorus Siculus, *Library*, 16.8.

After this he went to the city of Crenides, and having increased its size with a large number of inhabitants, changed its name to Philippi, giving it his own name, and then, turning to the gold mines in its territory, which were very scanty and insignificant, he increased their output so much by his improvements that they could bring him a revenue of more than a thousand talents. And because from these mines he had soon amassed a fortune, with the abundance of money he raised the Macedonian kingdom higher and higher to a greatly superior position, for with the gold coins which he struck, which came to be known from his name as Philippeioi, he organised a large force of mercenaries, and by using these coins for bribes induced many Greeks to become betrayers of their native lands.

SOURCE 13.35 Demosthenes, *On the Crown*, 18: 235

Such were the means of the city: and I defy anyone to name anything else. Now consider those of our antagonist Philip. In the first place, he was the despotic commander of his adherents: and in war that is the most important of all advantages. Secondly, they had their weapons constantly in their hands. Then he was well provided with money: he did whatever he chose, without giving notice by publishing decrees, or deliberating in public, without fear of prosecution by informers or indictment for illegal measures. He was responsible to nobody: he was the absolute autocrat, commander, and master of everybody and everything.

A. B. Bosworth, Professor of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Western Australia, outlines governance under Alexander III.

SOURCE 13.36 A. B. Bosworth, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 7

Philip reigned as an autocrat. The political institutions of Macedon were informal and rudimentary, and there were few practical constraints on a strong king. Like his son, Philip presumably consulted an inner council of intimates on major issues of state, but nothing suggests that the council was anything other than advisory.



ACTIVITY 13.13

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Analyse Sources 13.33–13.36, using the features of evidence.
2. Identify the issues that arise with these sources.
3. Examine the limitations that exist with the sources.
4. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of the sources in response to the statement: Philip's governance of Greece was autocratic.
5. Use the sources to create a historical argument in response to the question: To what extent did Philip II exploit the Greek city-states?

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These historic extracts discuss the governance of Alexander III.

SOURCE 13.37 Justin, *Epitome*, 11.1

To all these apprehensions the succession of Alexander was a relief, who, in a public assembly, so effectually soothed and encouraged the people, as to remove all uneasiness from those that were afraid, and to fill every one with favourable expectations. He was now twenty years old; at which age he gave great promise of what he would be, but with such modesty, that it was evident he reserved the further proofs of his ability for the time of action. He granted the Macedonians relief from all burdens, except that of service in war; by which conduct he gained such popularity with his subjects, that they said they had changed only the person, not the virtues, of their king.

SOURCE 13.38 Diodorus Siculus, *Library*, 17.2. 1-2

In this year Alexander, succeeding to the throne, first inflicted due punishment on his father's murderers, and then devoted himself to the funeral of his father. He established his authority far more firmly than any did in fact suppose possible, for he was quite young and for this reason not uniformly respected, but first he promptly won over the Macedonians to his support by tactful statements. He declared that the king was changed only in name and that the state would be run on principles no less effective than those of his father's administration. Then he addressed himself to the embassies which were present and in affable fashion bade the Greeks maintain towards him the loyalty which they had shown to his father.

SOURCE 13.39 A. B. Bosworth, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 7

Alexander came to the throne immediately after the death of his father, but the details of his investiture are a mystery. It is totally unknown what acts and ceremonies conferred legitimacy upon a Macedonian king. Acclamation was certainly important. In the immediate aftermath of Philip's death he was proclaimed by members of the nobility in the palace, and there is every reason to think that he was also acknowledged by the commons in an assembly at Aegae. Whether or not such a meeting had constitutional significance, it was advisable to have public endorsement of his regime. A formal assembly is attested some days later, in which Alexander addressed the people as King, promising to continue his father's policies.

SOURCE 13.40 T. R. Martin, *Ancient Greece: From Prehistoric to Hellenistic Times,* Yale University Press, 2013

Alexander (356–323 BCE), promptly liquidated potential rivals for the throne and won recognition as king. In several lightning-fast campaigns, he subdued Macedonia's traditional enemies to the west and north. Next he compelled the southern Greeks, who had rebelled from the League of Corinth at the news of Philip's death, to rejoin the alliance. To demonstrate the price of disloyalty, Alexander destroyed Thebes in 335 BCE as punishment for its rebellion from the League.

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SOURCE 13.41 Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander*, 4.11.5, speech by Callisthenes

> To take the lead in the way you did was a disgraceful thing: you ought to have remembered that you are not the attendant and advisor of Cambyses or Xerxes, but of Philip's son, a man with the blood of Heracles and Aecus (father of Achilles) in his veins, a man whose forefathers came from Argos to Macedonia, where they long ruled not by force, but by law.

Plutarch was a first-century-CE Greek biographer and essayist who wrote about the life of Alexander.

SOURCE 13.42 Plutarch, *Alexander*, 11.1

> Thus it was that at the age of twenty years Alexander received the kingdom, which was exposed to great jealousies, dire hatreds, and dangers on every hand. For the neighbouring tribes of Barbarians would not tolerate their servitude, and longed for their hereditary kingdoms; and as for Greece, although Philip had conquered her in the field, he had not had time enough to make her tame under his yoke, but had merely disturbed and changed the condition of affairs there, and then left them in a great surge and commotion, owing to the strangeness of the situation.

ACTIVITY **13.14**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Identify how each of the authors in Sources 13.37–13.42 viewed Alexander's reign.
2. Determine the extent to which the historiography of these sources impact their representation of Alexander's rule.
3. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of these sources to determine the governance of Alexander III.
4. Compare the governance of Philip II and Alexander III.



SOURCE 13.43 Alexander routs Persians on one of the long sides of the Alexander Sarcophagus. What does this suggest about how Alexander III ruled?

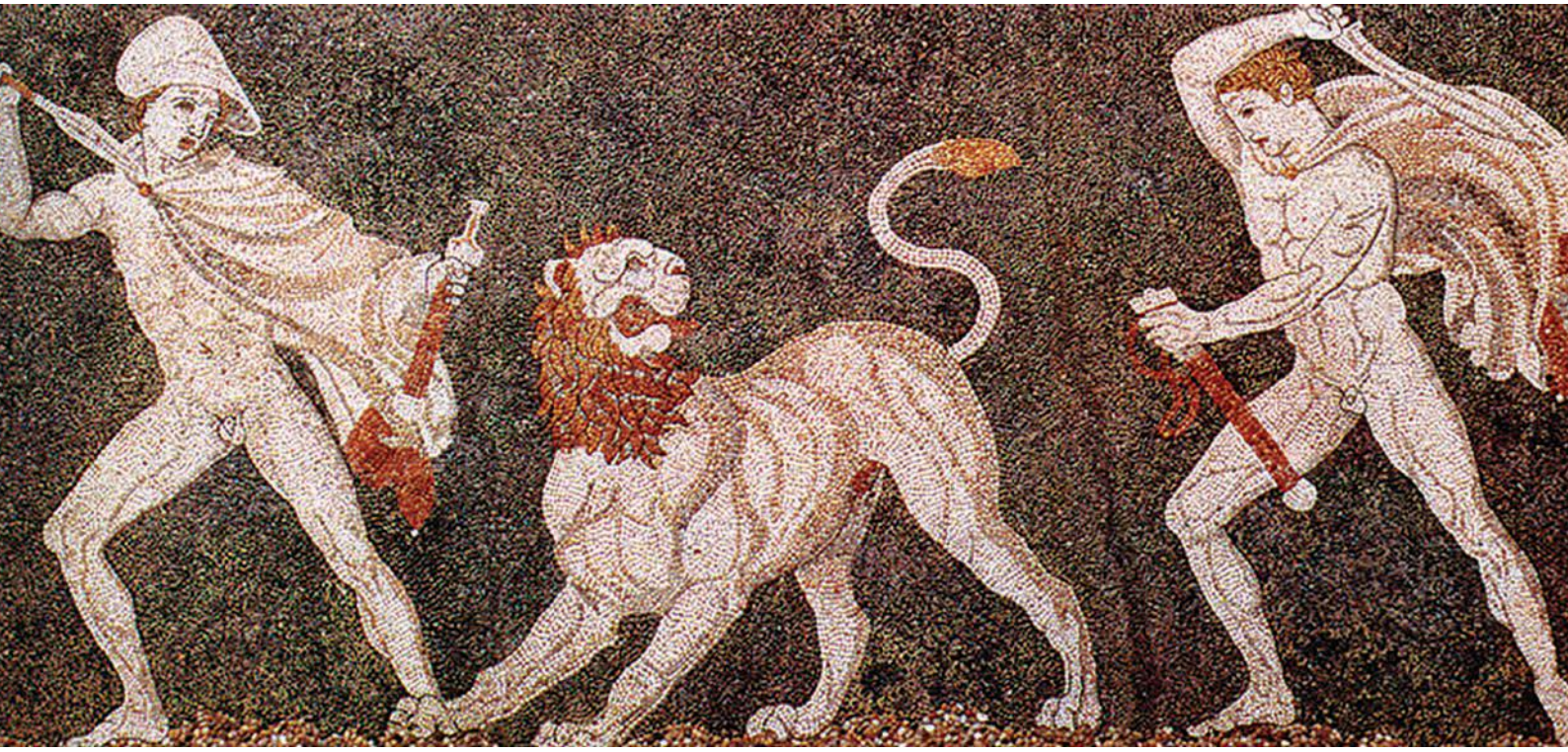
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13.7 Cultural life and practices in the Macedonian Empire

The Macedonian court adapted many aspects of the cultural life of Greece, increasingly so with the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III. The Argead kings brought Greek intellectuals to court; in fact, Philip II brought Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, to be Alexander's tutor (343 BCE).

The Macedonian ***symposia*** was central to aristocratic society and culture, although investigations into Macedonian *symposia* are difficult due to the limitations of relevant sources and the prejudices that are present within existing sources (for example, court histories by authors such as Callisthenes). Court *symposia* had an intellectual tone in that it was often an occasion of sophisticated debate. These gatherings had many functions such as relief, entertainment, and a platform to display power or to discuss strategy and international diplomacy. They were an opportunity for the companions and the king to interact; it was also an opportunity for the court to gain the king's attention and favour, and to maintain or improve their position. *Symposia* and hunting were major activities of the royalty and aristocracy.

symposia drinking practices that included intellectual debates, entertainment and discussion of strategy



SOURCE 13.44 Lion hunt, mosaic from Pella (Ancient Macedon)

ACTIVITY 13.15

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Devise questions that investigate the cultural practices of the Macedonian Empire.
2. Using your questions, investigate the cultural practices of the Macedonian Empire.
3. Discuss your findings with a partner.

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13.8 Religious beliefs and practices in the Macedonian Empire

Religious beliefs and practices of the Ancient Macedonians are complicated due to ethnic diversity, the extent of the Macedonian kingdom, the Macedonian openness to foreign influence, polytheism and the changes in beliefs over time.

Worship of gods such as Zeus, Dionysus and Isis were important in Macedonia. Additionally, there were cults worshipping Aphrodite, Cybele and **nymphs**. Zeus was the most important deity and was considered the father of Macedonia. He was a mythical individual whom all Macedonians are thought to be descended from. Furthermore, the Macedonian kings traced their lineage to Heracles.



SOURCE 13.45 Heracles fighting the Nemean Lion, lithograph, published 1897



SOURCE 13.46 Marble statue of Zeus in the Archaeological Museum of Olympia, Greece

Zeus Hypsistos Highest Zeus	**Zeus Agoraios** Zeus of the Marketplace	**Zeus Hyperairetes** Zeus on High
Zeus Eleutherios Zeus the Deliverer	**Zeus Hetaireios** Zeus of the Companions	**Zeus Cronides** Zeus son of Cronos
Zeus Ctesios Zeus Protector of House and Property	**Zeus Olympios** Zeus from Olympus	

SOURCE 13.47 The many names of Zeus. Adapted from J. Roisman and I. Worthington, *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, p. 430.

Both Artemis and Heracles-Cynagidas (Heracles the Hunter) were **tutelary** deities for the coming of age of girls (beginning) and boys (end) respectively (however, Dionysus was considered the tutelary deity for the beginning of boys' coming of age). Additionally, there were links between the cult of Dionysus and a belief in the afterlife. This is further seen in the special reverence shown to Persephone. It was this ingrained belief in the afterlife that sets the Macedonians apart from the Greeks. Furthermore, magic was practised among everyday Macedonians.

nymph Greek mythology, minor nature deity of land forms or locations

tutelary guardian or protector



SOURCE 13.48 Statue of Artemis from the sanctuary of Artemis in the Parian Delion, c. 360 BCE

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SOURCE 13.49 Statue of goddess Cybele, c. second to first century BCE, found in Marvinci, Valandovo, Macedon

Zeus-Amun Egyptian god Amun (god of sun and air and king of the gods) associated with the Greek counterpart, Zeus

deification the action of making someone or something into a god

The Macedonians were open to foreign influence in religion as seen in their worship of Isis, Sarapis and later **Zeus-Amun** under Alexander III. The worship of Isis evolved quickly over time – initially, Isis was identified with Demeter and Artemis. In addition, the cult of Sarapis was gradually subsumed into the worship of Isis. The worship of Amun by Alexander III is mentioned by many sources such as Diodorus and Justin.

Due to the domination of Macedonian society by the aristocracy who were concerned with desire, freedom and wealth, the remaining monuments are familial rather than civic. There are scant monumental temples as religious expressions of the Macedonians; instead, there are a considerable number of elaborate tombs with expensive grave goods. This further demonstrates the strong belief in the afterlife. Burials of men of the Argead period contain weapons and armour as grave goods, which supported the warrior nature of the society. Furthermore, burials of male aristocracy contained items of athletic activity or drinking vessels. The burials of women contained jewellery and terracotta figurines relating to various cults. Although women and men were buried facing in different directions, both included vessels used in the funerary ritual, as well as gilded or gold wreaths and mouth coverings.

Both Philip II and Alexander III encouraged others to assign them god-like status and worship them (living) as gods, although Alexander is thought to be the prime mover in royal **deification**.

ACTIVITY **13.16**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Devise questions to investigate the religious beliefs and practices of the Macedonian Empire.
2. Describe the religious beliefs and practices of the Macedonian Empire under Philip II.
3. Describe the religious beliefs and practices of the Macedonian Empire under Alexander III.
4. Compare the practices and beliefs of the Macedonian Empire under Philip II and Alexander III.

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13.9 Tomb II at Vergina

The archaeological site of Aigai (the modern city of Vergina) is a UNESCO World Heritage site in northern Greece and was the ancient capital of the Macedonian Empire. The remains at this site include a palace, decorated with painted **stuccoes** and mosaics, and a burial ground containing more than 300 **tumuli**. Tomb II, a royal tomb, is widely regarded as that of Philip II. The following sources show the tomb and its findings in greater detail.

stucco crushed or burned lime or gypsum mixed with sand and water to make a plaster; it was easily moulded into relief decoration and could also be painted and can last a long time

tumuli a mound of earth and stones over a grave



SOURCE 13.50 Entrance to the tomb of Tomb II, Aigai, Vergina



SOURCE 13.51 Aerial of the palace, Aigai, Vergina



SOURCE 13.52 Queen Medea's gold wreath, 336 BCE, from the antechamber Tomb II



SOURCE 13.53 Silver oinochoe (wine jug) with Silenus relief, 350–336 BCE, from Tomb II



SOURCE 13.54 Philip II's larnax

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SOURCE 13.55 Eugene N. Borza, 'Material Culture in the Age of Philip and Alexander,' *In the Shadow of Olympus: The Emergence of Macedon*, Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 257–8

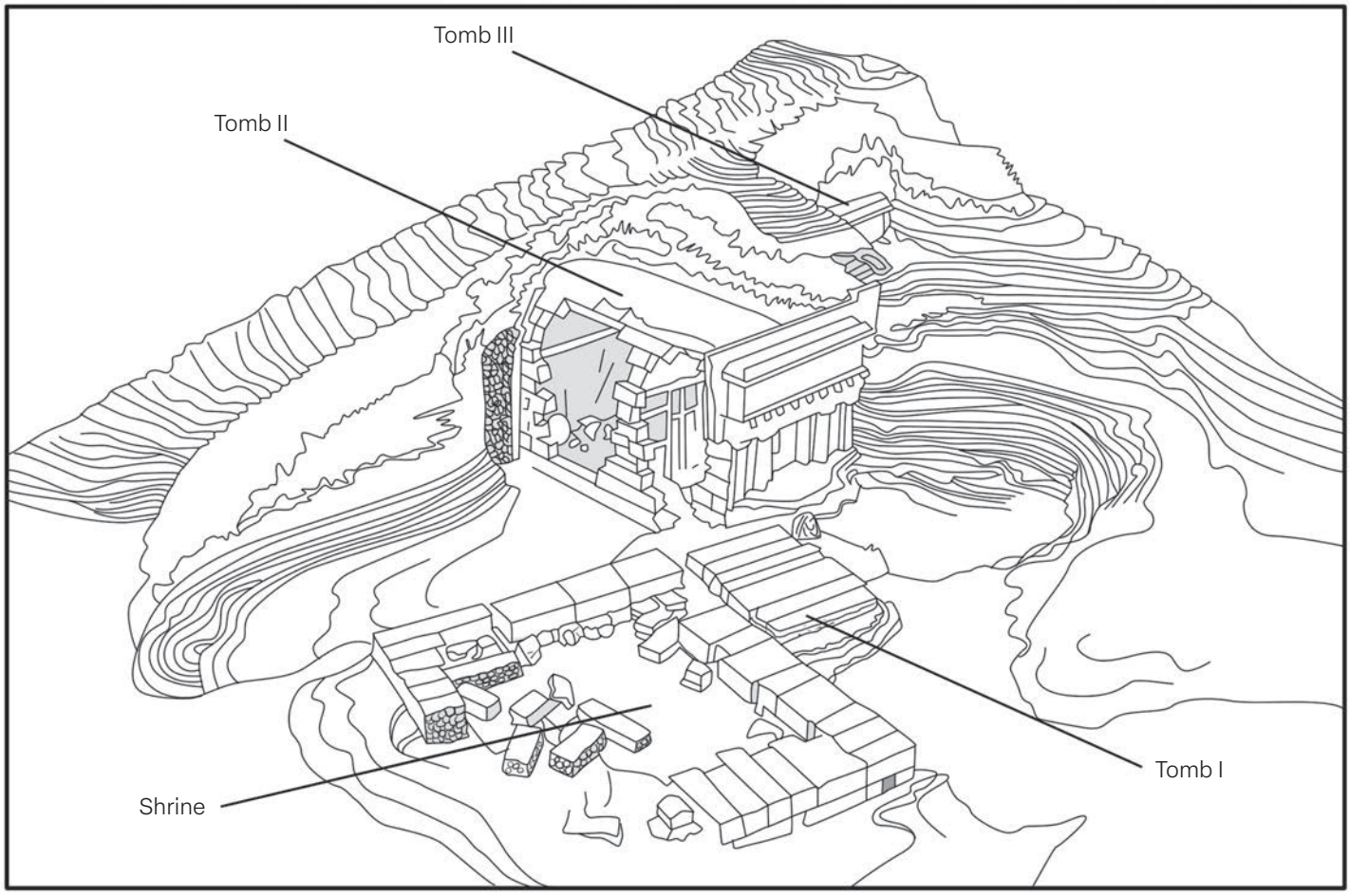
Tomb 2 is quite different. It is a chamber tomb – a rectangular structure roofed with a barrel vault, divided into an antechamber and a somewhat larger main chamber, and decorated with a facade designed to give the impression of a small Doric building – what has come to be known as a 'Macedonian-style' tomb. A doorway led through the facade into the antechamber, and doors connected the two interior rooms. Both sets of doors were sealed before the tomb was buried within its tumulus … Tomb 2 at Vergina is unique among tombs discovered thus far in that interments were made in both chambers, a situation that leads to some interesting historical speculation, as we shall see. The roughly finished main chamber held an elaborate gold casket containing the burned bones of the deceased (a middle-aged male). Nearby was a rich assortment of grave goods, including a panoply and numerous silver and bronze vessels. Richly decorated furniture and a number of what appear to be personal possessions make up the remainder of the items placed in the main chamber. Most of the burial goods are to be associated with a Macedonian warrior: weapons, armor, and wine-drinking vessels. The diverse and rich jumble of objects that were presumably the personal property of the deceased is more reminiscent of Egyptian or Etruscan burials than of anything known from the Greek world.



SOURCE 13.56 Back of facade and exterior of barrel vault of Tomb II

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SOURCE 13.57 A model of the shrine and tombs under the Great Tumulus at Vergina

ACTIVITY **13.17**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. Using Sources 13.50–13.57, create a concept map for the findings of Tomb II.
2. On your mind map, make connections between the evidence listed by drawing lines between evidence and annotating.
3. Complete a 'I used to think … now I think …' activity.
4. Write a paragraph in response to the question: How might Tomb II at Vergina be significant for understanding Philip II's reign of the Macedonian Empire? Ensure you use evidence from the sources and references, as well as any further research you have done.

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13.10 Coinage and oracles



SOURCE 13.58 Obverse: Head of Heracles wearing lion-skin headdress. Reverse: the word 'FILIPPO', trident head, lion's head, 359–336 BCE.



SOURCE 13.59 Obverse: Laureate head of Zeus facing right. Reverse: the word 'FILIP-POU', youth on horseback facing right, crowning horse with palm 'AP' shown under horse, c. 323–315 BCE.



SOURCE 13.60 Early Philip II stater. Obverse: god Apollo. Reverse: a charioteer, with Philip's name appearing in the reverse.



SOURCE 13.61 Obverse: typical depiction of Zeus. Reverse: the king on horseback, with the bow symbol in front of the horse's forelegs, 355–348 BCE.



SOURCE 13.62 Tetradrachm of Alexander III. Obverse: Alexander wearing a lion scalp (guise of Heracles). Reverse: the seated figure of Zeus.



SOURCE 13.63 Obverse: Head of Athena facing right, wearing a crested Corinthian helmet ornamented with a coiled serpent. Reverse: word for Alexander, Nike standing facing left, holding a wreath and a stylus, a trident-head on left, 336–323 BCE.

ACTIVITY **13.18**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Identify the deities of significance to Philip II.
2. Explain why these deities were depicted on coins for Philip II.
3. Identify the deities of significance to Alexander III.
4. Explain why these deities were depicted on coins for Alexander III.
5. Synthesise evidence from Sources 13.58–13.63 to create a historical argument to the question: To what extent were coins used as propaganda by both Philip II and Alexander III?

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In classical times, many people consulted oracles – people who could provide counsel or prophecy through divine inspiration. Among the most famous was the Pythia or Oracle of Delphi, who were the priestesses at the Temple of Apollo in Delphi. Diodorus records that at the start of his campaign in Asia, Philip asked the Oracle of Delphi whether he would be successful. Alexander also took counsel from the oracles.

SOURCE 13.64 Diodorus Siculus, *Library*, 16.91.4

In any event, he thought that the gods supported him and was very happy to think that Asia would be made captive under the hands of the Macedonians.

Straightaway he set in motion plans for gorgeous sacrifices to the gods joined with the wedding of his daughter Cleopatra [Eurydice], whose mother was Olympias; he had given her in marriage to Alexander king of Epirus, Olympias's own brother.

SOURCE 13.65 T. R. Martin, *Ancient Greece: From Prehistoric to Hellenistic Times,* Yale University Press, 2013, p. 247

During his time in Egypt, Alexander also paid a mysterious visit to the oracle of the god Ammon, whom the Greeks regarded as identical to Zeus, at the oasis of Siwah far out in the western Egyptian desert. Alexander told no one the details of his consultation of the oracle, but the news got out that he had been informed he was the son of the god and that he joyfully accepted the designation as true.

SOURCE 13.66 Diodorus Siculus, *Library*, 17.51.1

When Alexander was conducted by the priests into the temple and had regarded the god for a while, the one who held the position of prophet, an elderly man, came to him and said, 'Rejoice, son take this form of address as from the god also.'

SOURCE 13.67 Justin, *Epitome*, 11.11

He then went to the temple of Jupiter Ammon, to consult the oracle about the event of his future proceedings, and his own parentage. For his mother Olympias had confessed to her husband Philip, that 'she had conceived Alexander, not by him, but by a serpent of extraordinary size'. Philip, too, towards the end of his life, had publicly declared that 'Alexander was not his son'; and he accordingly divorced Olympias, as having been guilty of adultery. Alexander, therefore, anxious to obtain the honour of divine paternity, and to clear his mother from infamy, instructed the priests, by messengers whom he sent before him, what answers he wished to receive. The priests, as soon as he entered the temple, saluted him as the son of Ammon. Alexander, pleased with the god's adoption of him, directed that he should be regarded as his son. He then inquired 'whether he had taken vengeance on all that had been concerned in the assassination of his father'. He was answered that 'his father could neither be assassinated, nor could die; but that vengeance for Philip's death had been fully exacted'. On putting a third question, he was told that 'success in all his wars, and dominion over the world, was granted him'. A response was also given by the oracle to his attendants, that 'they should reverence Alexander as a god, and not as a king'.

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SOURCE 13.68 Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander*, 4.11.6

> Again, not even Heracles was accorded divine honours by the Greeks while he was alive – nor when he was dead either, until the command to do so was given by an oracle of Apollo at Delphi ... do you really propose to force the Greeks, who love their liberty more than anyone else in the world, to prostrate themselves before you? Or will you let the Greeks off and impose this shameful duty only on the Macedonians?

ACTIVITY **13.19**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Study Sources 13.64–13.68 and use them to respond to the questions below.

1. Identify the role of the oracle in each source.
2. Explain how the perspectives presented in these sources affect the interpretation of the past.
3. Explain how religion evolved from the reign of Philip II to Alexander III.
4. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of these sources to determine the importance of the oracles during the period from Philip II to Alexander III.
5. Hypothesise the extent religion affected the reigns of Philip II or Alexander III.
6. Justify the extent to which religion was central to Macedonian society, culture and politics.

13.11 Sacred temples at Dion

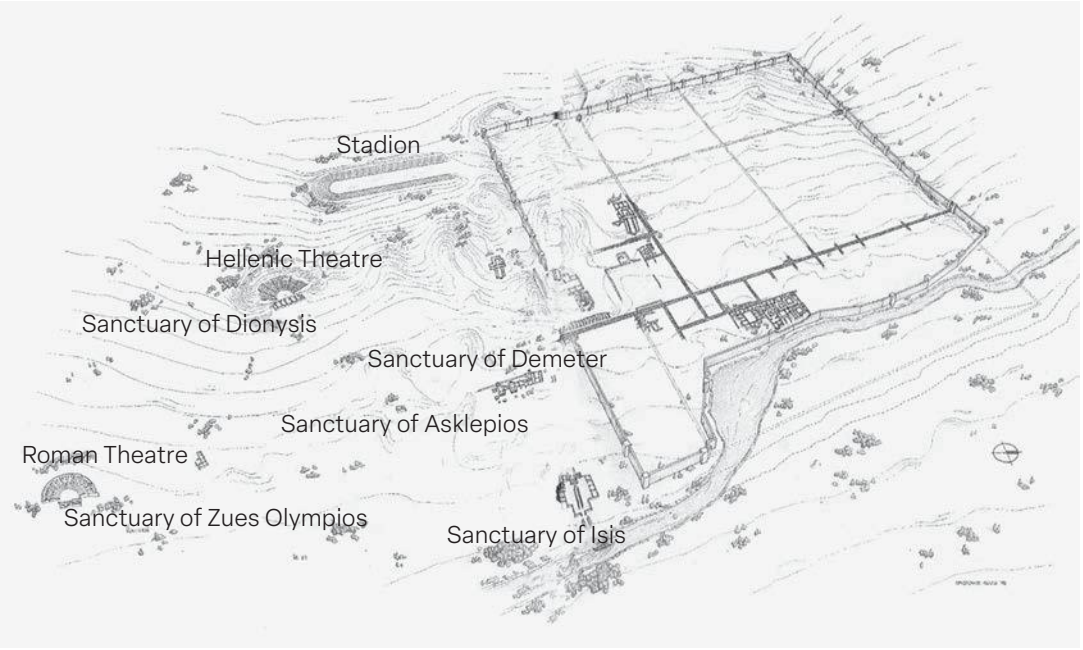
The archaeological site at Dion is located at the foot of Mount Olympus, north of Greece. It contains a city centre including public buildings, sanctuaries and a necropolis. In 1983, the museum opened to protect and preserve the artefacts from the elements. Hence, replica statues replace the originals in the sanctuaries. Dion was a significant site under Philip II and Alexander III, who both visited to celebrate victories. Alexander III regularly visited the site to make sacrifices.



SOURCE 13.69 Original statues in the Archaeological Museum of Dion (Source: Carole Raddato, May 23, 2021)

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SOURCE 13.70 Plan of the sanctuaries and the city of Dion

ACTIVITY 13.20

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Go to the Mapcarta website for the Archaeological Park of Dion, and click on the 'Photo Map' icon. Explore the Archaeological Park of Dion and complete a 'See, Think, Wonder' exercise.

The Sanctuary of Zeus Olympios contained an altar with three rows of 11 stone bases in front of it. Each base had a bronze ring attached to secure the sacrificial animal. Inside the sanctuary, at one time, stood the statues of the Macedonian kings and probably the Sculptures of Lysipos (group of bronze horsemen), a dedication by Alexander III. The sanctuary was burned down by the Aetolian army (219 BCE), leaving minimal remains.



SOURCE 13.71 Remains of the Sanctuary of Zeus Olympios, c. fourth century BCE, Dion

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SOURCE 13.72 Remains of the Sanctuary of Zeus Olympios, c. fourth century BCE, Dion

The ancient inhabitants of Dion built a sanctuary devoted to Aphrodite (goddess of the foothills of Olympus) and Artemis (goddess of childbirth) on top of sacred springs. Although the buildings of the sanctuary date back to the second century CE, ruins of older structures were discovered underneath. By the second century BCE, Isis succeeded Artemis, whom Alexander held in high esteem.



SOURCE 13.73 Remains of the sanctuary of Isis

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SOURCE 13.74 The Sanctuary of Demeter, Dion



SOURCE 13.75 Finds from the Sanctuary of Demeter, Archaeological Museum, Dion

ACTIVITY **13.21**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Identify the challenges the Dion site poses for reconstructing an understanding of the period between Philip II and Alexander III.
2. Investigate the importance of this site for Philip II OR Alexander III OR the ancient Macedonians.
3. Using the sources and your investigation, complete a 'Claim, Support, Question' exercise about the importance of the Dion site at this period.

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CONCLUDING STUDY

Introduction

While there may not have been many recent developments that contribute to the understanding of this period beyond continued excavations at sites such as Aigai, the Macedonian Empire from Philip II to Alexander III is still a fascinating period. This fascination has been fuelled by the legend of Alexander the Great and his empire, the nationalistic claims to Philip II and Alexander III by Macedonians (North Macedonia) and Greeks, and the challenges to fully understanding this period.

13.12 Reconstruction and changing interpretations of the Macedonian Empire

Eugene N. Borza was an American history professor whose expertise was Greek and Macedonian history and archaeology.

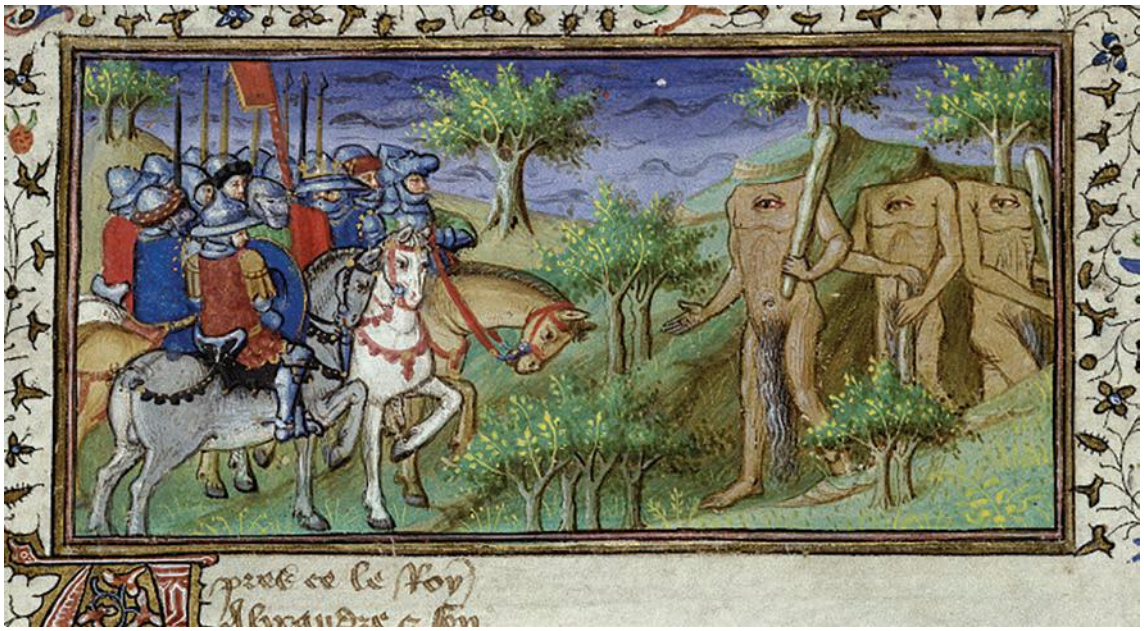
SOURCE 13.76 E. N. Borza, 'Toward a history of Macedonia', *In the Shadow of Olympus: The Emergence of Macedon*, Princeton University Press, 1990, p. 5

> **Whatever one thinks of Macedon's conquest of Greece, Demosthenes has had his revenge, as the Demosthenic view of the Macedonians has affected our understanding of fourth-century Greek politics. That view produced a drama in which the 'civilized' cities of Greece, led by Demosthenes and the Athenians struggled against domination by the northern 'barbarians,' Philip and his Macedonian warriors.**

Over time there have been various interpretations and representations of Alexander the Great: the drunkard, the barbarian, the conqueror, the general, to name a few. Despite the myriad 'Alexanders', there are some general historiographic schools of thought:

- The Medieval tradition: Alexander romance literature depicting him as an ideal knight and saviour
- The Renaissance tradition: Seen as beautiful, but also possibly a tyrant. An Alexander, possibly Alexander III, is mentioned in Dante's *Inferno* among the souls tortured in the Seventh Circle of Hell for being tyrants
- Nineteenth century: Alexander the Nationalist, as depicted by the historian Constantine Paparrigopoulos
- The Heroists: Alexander popularised as a 'great man of history' in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. The idea that Alexander shaped the world by his strength was put forward by writers such as Thomas Carlyle, Johann Gustav Bernhard Droysen, N. G. L. Hammond, Letitia Elizabeth Landon, Mary Renault and William Tarn
- The Killerists: Alexander was often depicted as an egotistical butcher in the latter half of the twentieth century. This was argued by historians Ernst Badian, Peter Green, Paul Doherty, Ian Worthington, John Maxwell O'Brien and, Brian Bosworth
- The Revisionsists: A more favourable appraisal came about in the 2000s, which saw Alexander as incredibly important for the influence of Greek culture on the Ancient World. This is argued by writers such as Pierre Briant, Philip Freeman and Anthony Everit
- The Problemists: Alexander as an enigma, as argued by historian Paul Cartledge.

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SOURCE 13.77 Alexander depicted in a Middle Ages romance, presenting him as the embodiment of knightly chivalry

Paul Cartledge is a British ancient historian, and was the A. G. Leventis Professor of Greek Culture at the University of Cambridge from 2008 to 2014.

SOURCE 13.78 P. Cartledge, *Alexander the Great*, Overlook Press, 2004, p. 268

It has been well said that the search for the historical Alexander is something like the search for the historical Jesus. Many contemporaries had an interest in preserving a version of what he said and did, but none of the subject's actual words have been certainly preserved verbatim; and those writers whose words have survived all had an interest in recording, or creating, a particular image of their hero – or villain – for the edification of their contemporaries or posterity ...

In other words, although the surviving evidence is quite ample in quantity, it is poor in quality, being contradictory, tendentious and mainly non-contemporary.

ACTIVITY **13.22**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Identify the issues to reconstructing an understanding of the Macedonian Empire from Philip II to Alexander III.
2. Read the article 'The king and the conqueror' on the *Smithsonian Magazine* website.
3. Outline the discoveries made at the ancient site of Aigai.
4. Explain how archaeology at Aigai contributes to reconstructing the period.
5. Research online how technology has been used to recreate the faces of Philip II and Alexander III. Use this to explain how technology has contributed to reconstructing an understanding of the period.
6. Investigate the different historiographical interpretations of Alexander to determine what the view was and why they viewed Alexander that way.

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- There is a distinction between Ancient Macedonian and Ancient Greek society and culture.
- There is limited access to evidence that demonstrates the Macedonian perspective.
- The sources are quiet on certain aspects of history at this time.
- Macedon was ruled by a monarchy, although debates arise regarding the type of kingship.
- Macedon evolved from Philip II's reign to Alexander III's reign due to an expanding empire and foreign influences.
- Society was hierarchical and aristocratic.
- Greece increasingly influenced culture and religion in Macedon from Philip II's reign to Alexander III's reign.
- Religion was constantly evolving due to the empire's expansion, foreign influences and the nature of polytheism.
- There are still many challenges posed to reconstructing the period, e.g. 'Greekness' of Philip II and Alexander III and limited sources from a Macedonian perspective.
- Continued excavations and introduction of technology continue to contribute pieces of the Macedonian Empire puzzle.



SOURCE 13.79 Detail from the painting titled *The Family of Darius before Alexander* by Paolo Veronese (1528–1588), an Italian Renaissance painter, dated from the sixteenth century

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
Identify the issues that exist in reconstructing the past during the period of Philip II and Alexander III.

DEVISE
Using the sample investigation tasks below, devise three to five sub-questions for each. Categorise evidence into sub-questions.

ANALYSE
1. Identify the motivations of writers such as Demosthenes, Arrian and Curtius.
2. Explain the representation of the Macedonian Empire by authors such as:
   - **a.** Demosthenes
   - **b.** Arrian
   - **c.** Curtius
   - **d.** Ian Worthington
   - **e.** Eugene Borza
   - **f.** A. B. Bosworth
   - **g.** Thomas R. Martin
   - **h.** Elizabeth Carney.

EVALUATE
For the evidence used, outline the limitations, usefulness, reliability and contestability.

SYNTHESISE
Using the evidence, formulate a hypothesis concerning the questions posed in the sample investigation tasks below.

COMMUNICATE
Explain how governance of the Macedonian Empire changed from Philip II to Alexander III.

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions
1. How might Alexander III be considered a great leader of an empire?
2. To what extent was Alexander III's success reliant upon the success of Philip II?
3. To what extent is Dion a true representation of Macedonian culture and religion under Alexander III?

Investigation tasks
1. Explain the extent to which religion developed from the reign of Philip II to the reign of Alexander III.
2. What was the role of women in the Macedonian Empire?
3. In what ways did Alexander III enhance Philip II's empire?

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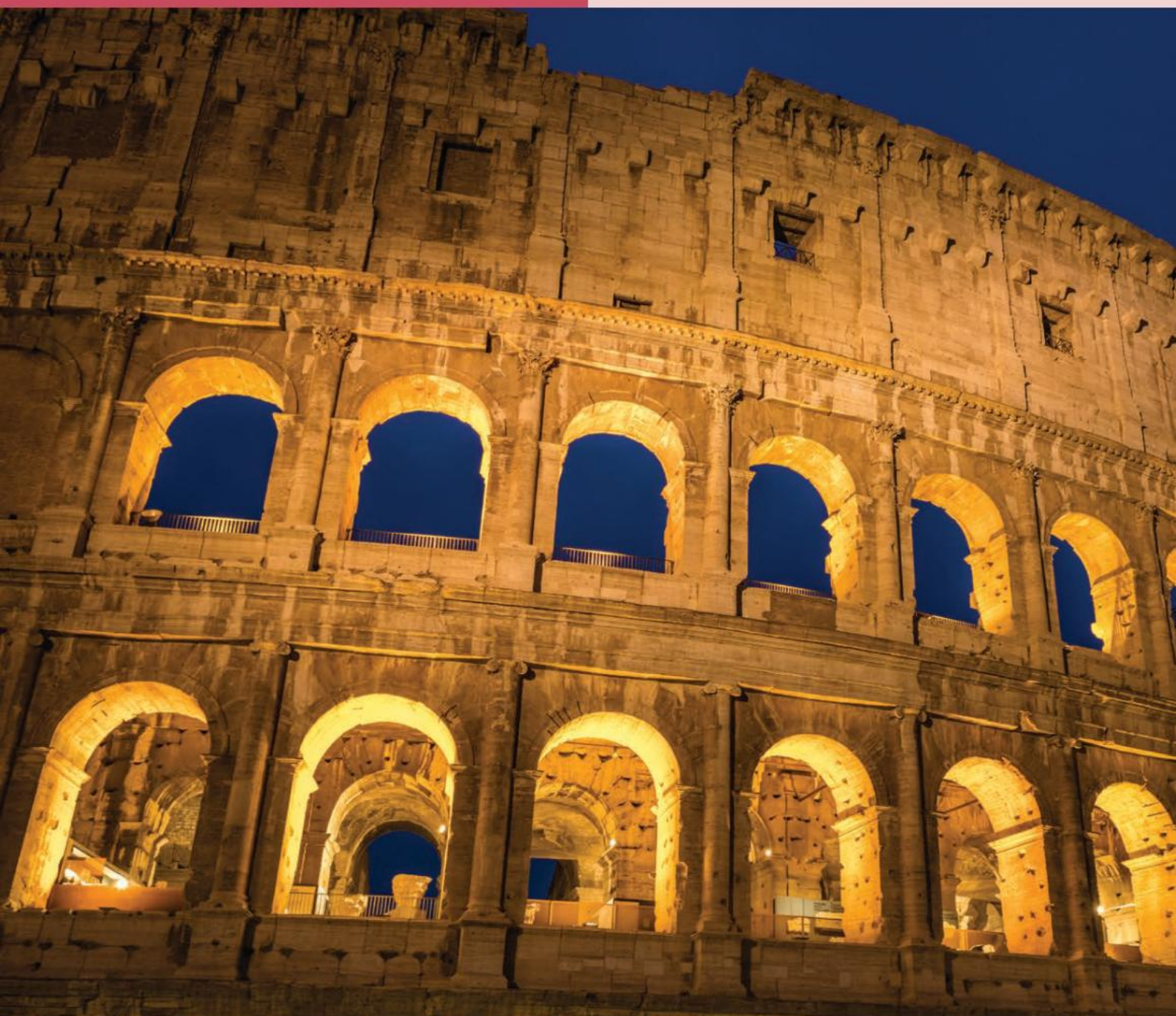
Chapter 14

EARLY IMPERIAL ROME FROM AUGUSTUS TO NERO (DIGITAL)

Syllabus reference:
Unit 3, Topics 1 and 2:
Historical periods

GLENN DAVIES

This chapter is available in the digital version of this resource.



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Chapter 15

POMPEII AND HERCULANEUM

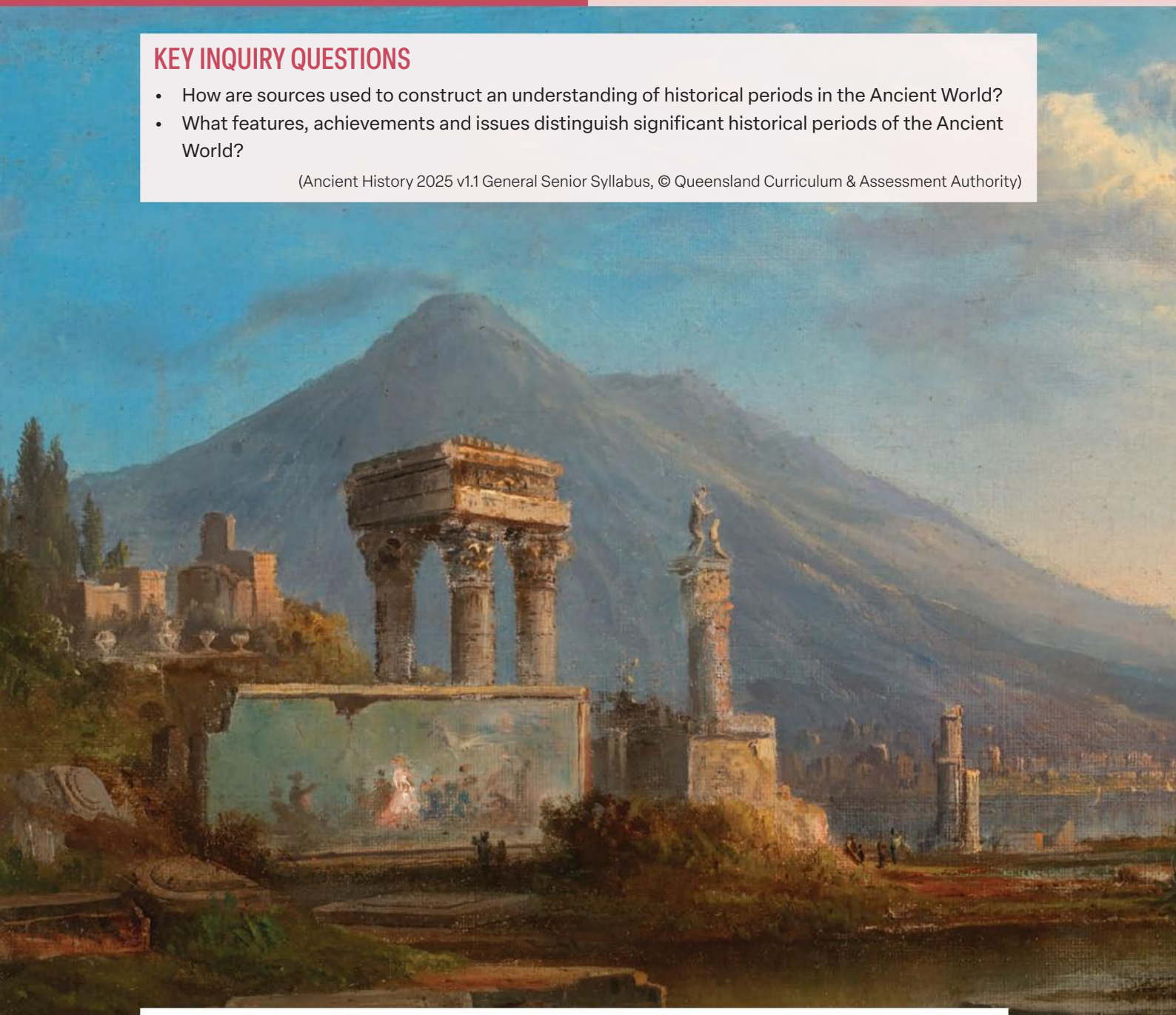
Syllabus Reference: Unit 3, Topics 1 and 2: Historical periods

SARAH COLEMAN

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How are sources used to construct an understanding of historical periods in the Ancient World?
- What features, achievements and issues distinguish significant historical periods of the Ancient World?

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SOURCE 15.1 R. S. Duncanson, *Vesuvius and Pompeii*, 1870, oil on canvas, Smithsonian American Art Museum

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FOCUS: PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY ON POMPEII

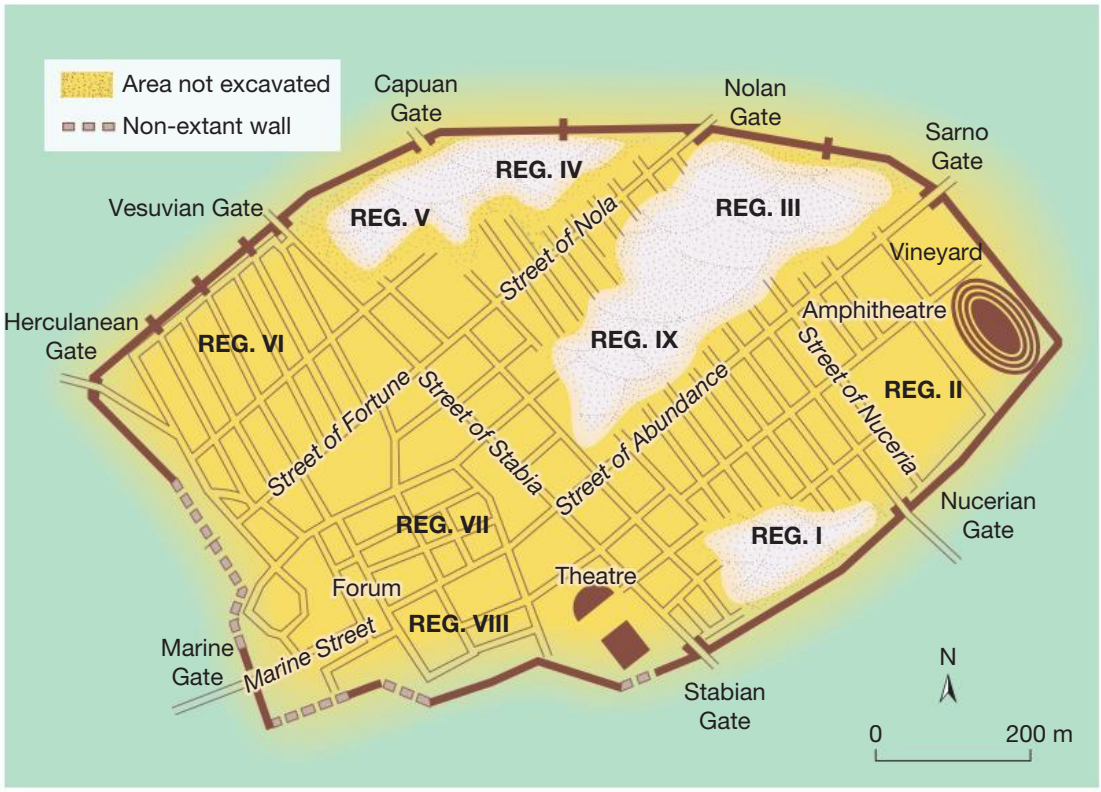
Percy Bysshe Shelley, one of Britain's most gifted poets, wrote of the awe and splendour of a town he had visited, frozen in time: Pompeii.

SOURCE 15.2 P. B. Shelly, 'Ode to Naples', *The Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley,* Edward Moxon, 1847, pp. 274–6

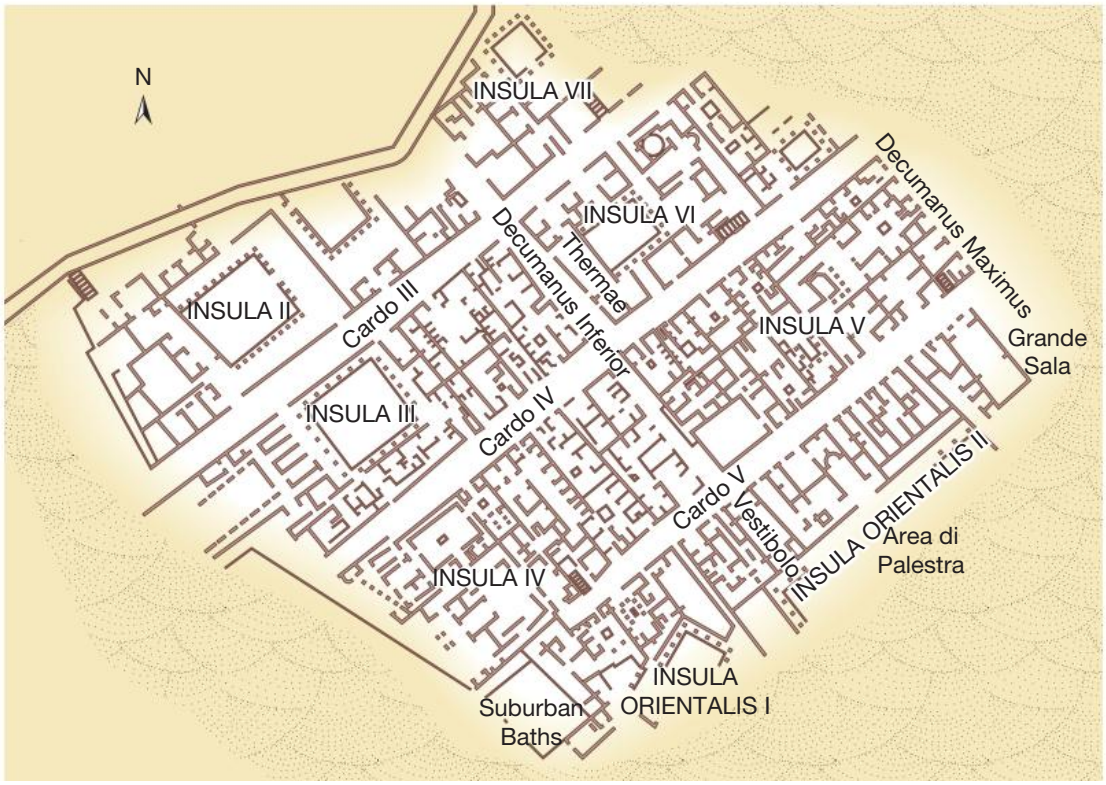
I stood within the City disinterred;
And heard the autumnal leaves like light footfalls
Of spirits passing through the streets; and heard
The Mountain's slumberous voice at intervals
Thrill through those roofless halls;
The oracular thunder penetrating shook
The listening soul in my suspended blood;
I felt that Earth out of her deep heart spoke –
I felt, but heard not: through white columns glowed
The isle-sustaining ocean-flood,
A plane of light between two heavens of azure!
Around me gleamed many a bright sepulchre
Of whose pure beauty, Time, as if his pleasure
Were to spare Death, had never made erasure;
But every living lineament was clear
As in the sculptor's thought; and there
The wreaths of stony myrtle, ivy, and pine,
Like winter leaves o'ergrown by moulded snow,
Seemed only to move and grow
Because the crystal silence of the air
Weighed on their life; even as the Power divine
Which then lulled all things, brooded upon mine.

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SOURCE 15.3 The streets of Pompeii. Pompeii is divided into eight *regio* – regions – which are numbered. These are then divided into *insulae* – smaller divisions – which help us pinpoint the locations of particular buildings, or to document the original location of artefacts.



SOURCE 15.4 Herculaneum map. Compare and contrast the layout of Herculaneum with that of Pompeii. Describe the similarities and differences.

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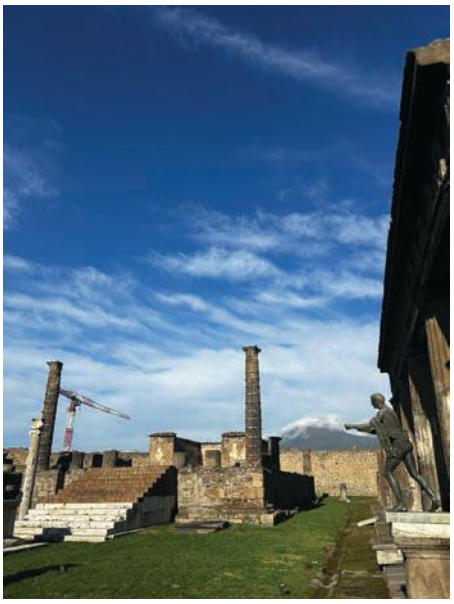
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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

Introduction

In 79 CE Mount Vesuvius, a large conical volcano on the Campanian plain near modern-day Naples, erupted. It spewed tonnes of ash into the air and buried the towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum under surges of **pyroclastic flow** of up to 20 metres deep, either suffocating the terrified inhabitants, or killing them almost instantly from thermal shock. For over a millennia, the towns remained buried and forgotten until their rediscovery in the eighteenth century. Since this time, they have become the archetypes of provincial towns in the early Roman Empire: snapshots of a people frozen in time. These cities of Vesuvius have captured the public imagination, and have become a feature of music, art and literature ever since. A 'must do' on the itinerary of many a tourist, the towns continue to intrigue historians and everyday people in equal measure. The sobering tale of history, filled with the tales of those who did not know when it was time to leave, is played out in these towns, from the casts of the terrified Pompeiians, crouched in fear, to the bones that litter the boat sheds, now kilometres away from the sea, remains of people trying desperately to flee the fury of mother nature. Recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the town of Pompeii alone receives over 2.5 million visitors annually, and the tourist dollar has driven decisions related to the excavation and preservation of the towns.

Read this text by Strabo (64 BCE – c. 24 CE) describing Mount Vesuvius, and compare it with the photo in Source 15.5.



SOURCE 15.5 The Temple of Apollo in the Pompeiian forum, with Mount Vesuvius looming in the background. The **forum** and associated buildings, such as this one, are some of the main areas visited by tourists every year, with some 2.5 million visitors to the site annually.

pyroclastic flow volcanic debris and gas flowing at a fast pace, similar to a snow avalanche

forum a public Roman space with buildings used for town gathering, official religion and trade

SOURCE 15.6 Strabo, *Geography*, V, 4

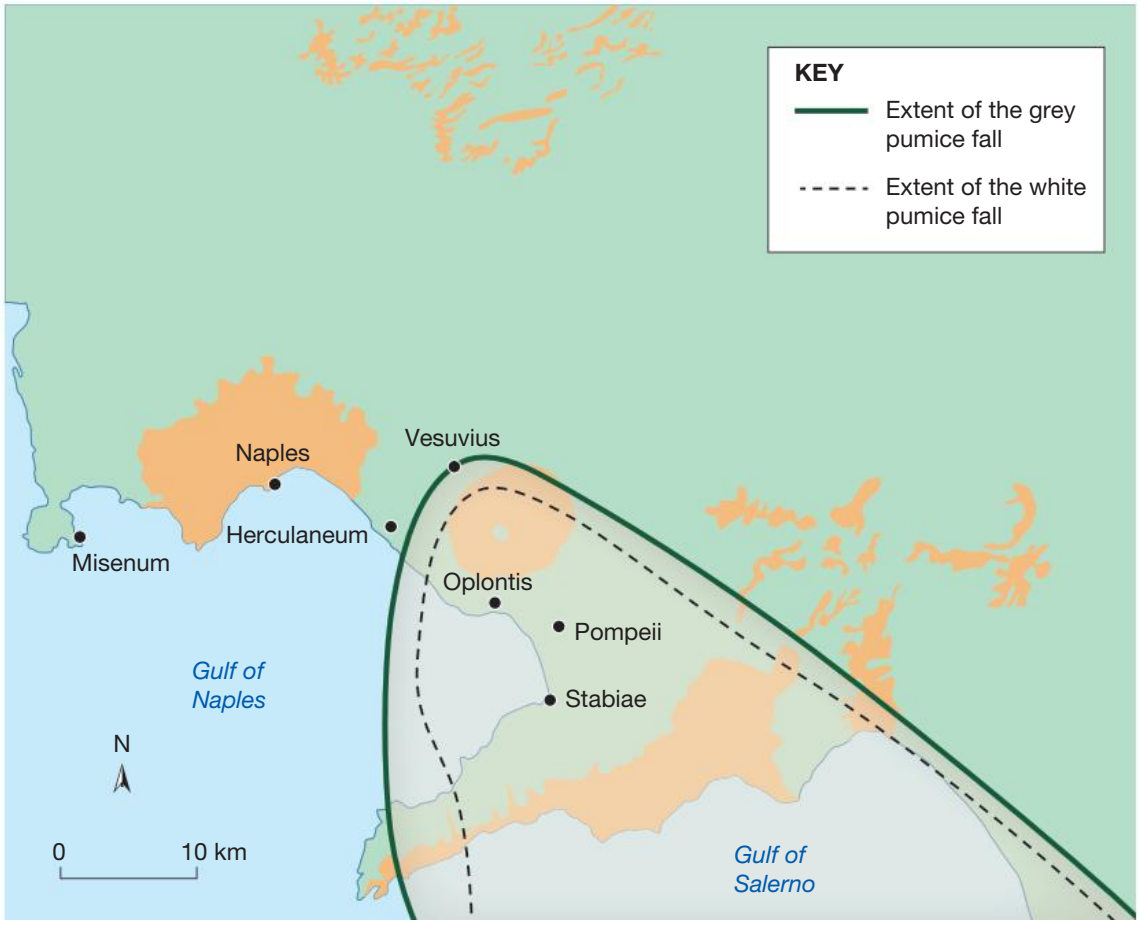
Next after Neapolis comes the Heracleian Fortress, with a promontory which runs out into the sea and so admirably catches the breezes of the southwest wind that it makes the settlement a healthful place to live in ... Pompaia, on the River Sarnus – a river which both takes the cargoes inland and sends them out to sea – is the port-town of Nola, Nuceria, and Acherrae ... Above these places lies Mount Vesuvius, which, save for its summit, has dwellings all round, on farmlands that are absolutely beautiful. As for the summit, a considerable part of it is flat, but all of it is unfruitful, and looks ash-coloured, and it shows pore-like cavities in masses of rock that are soot-coloured on the surface, these masses of rock looking as though they had been eaten out by fire; and hence one might infer that in earlier times this district was on fire and had craters of fire, and then, because the fuel gave out, was quenched. Perhaps, too, this is the cause of the fruitfulness of the country all round the mountain; just as at Catana, it is said, that part of the country which had been covered with ash-dust from the hot ashes carried up into the air by the fire of Aetna made the land suited to the vine; for it contains the substance that fattens both the soil which is burnt out and that which produces the fruits; so then, when it acquired plenty of fat, it was suited to burning out, as is the case with all sulphur-like substances, and then when it had been evaporated and quenched and reduced to ash-dust, it passed into a state of fruitfulness.

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15.1 When and where did the events of Pompeii and Herculaneum take place?

The towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum are located on the Campanian plain, south-east of modern-day Naples. Despite a tale told by Dionysus of Halicarnassus that Herculaneum was founded by the Greek god Hercules in the thirteenth century BCE, evidence suggests that they both began as Oscan settlements, before being absorbed into the Greek colony of Greca Magna, and then subsequently occupied by the Etruscans. In 474 BCE, the Etruscans were defeated by the Greek city of Cumae. Only 50 years later, the Samnites entered the picture, and defeated Greek Cumae. The fourth century witnessed the Samnite Wars, which saw Rome enter the Campanian plain for the first time, though it is not until its defeat during the Social War of the first century under Lucius Cornelius Sulla, that the towns officially became part of the Roman world.

Following the new status of the area as Roman, Pompeii and Herculaneum became key towns (among many others) in the area. The soil was rich in volcanic ash, which made it perfect for agriculture, as it still is today. The port of Misenum, which was home to the Roman navy and the grain boats docking from Egypt, made the towns of Campania important links in the chain of supply to Rome, along the Via Appia.



SOURCE 15.7 The areas affected by the Mount Vesuvius eruption in 79 CE. What areas, other than Pompeii and Herculaneum, were affected by the volcanic eruption?

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The eruption of Mount Vesuvius

While the Vesuvian region was used to tectonic movement, and had experienced a major earthquake in 62 CE, volcanic eruptions were not known in living memory. In fact, the last identified eruption of the mountain dates to approximately 217 BCE. The eruption in 79 CE was characterised by a large column of ash and pumice, hot gas and pyroclastic surges, known today as a Plinian or Vesuvian explosion. Pliny describes the initial eruption as a 'cloud could best be described as more like an umbrella pine than any other tree, because it rose high up in a kind of trunk and then divided into branches' (Pliny VI: 16).



SOURCE 15.8 Vesuvius viewed from the Antica Spiaggia – the ancient beach - at Herculaneum

The two settlements were affected in different ways due to their geographical locations, proximity to the volcano, and the influence of prevailing winds; the best indicator for this is that Herculaneum was buried under 20 metres of volcanic matter, whereas Pompeii was under only four. Our understanding of the initial explosion is a consequence of a letter from Pliny the Younger, to his friend and historian Tacitus. There are many considerations that need to be taken into account when reading Pliny's letters, namely the fact that although he was an eyewitness to the explosion (the 17-year-old Pliny was staying at Misenum at the time of the eruption), he documented his account 25 years later. Time colours the accounts, even of those who bore witness to the events in consideration. It is because of Pliny that we have an approximate date of 24 August 79 CE. This date comes from a medieval transcription of Pliny's letters. In 1797, however, Carlo Maria Rosini, a Roman Catholic priest, philologist, and member of the Royal Herculaneum Academy, argued that the traces of fruits harvested in autumn (such as pomegranates, chestnuts, dry figs, raisin grapes, pine cones and dates) found at both Herculaneum and Pompeii meant that the eruption could not have happened in late August (*Dissertatio isagogica ad Herculanensium Voluminum explanationem*, 1797). This is supported by later excavations, including at the Villa of Oplontis, which unearthed a large sum of carbonised pomegranates, which are not harvested until September.

15.2 How do we know today about Pompeii and Herculaneum?

In undertaking an effective study of Pompeii and Herculaneum, it is vital to have a good grasp of the historiographical limitations of the sites, of which there are many. Due to the nature of the excavations in the eighteenth century and early part of the nineteenth century, evidence is damaged, missing and without context, since the focus in those times was to remove items of value for the benefit of wealthy benefactors. One only needs to consider the treatment of the piles of disarticulated bones found at various locations at both sites to see this. The archaeological and epigraphic records dominate the evidence available for the study of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and these provide important information about trade, commerce, gender, entertainment and leisure, architecture, and the general features of life in the towns. The literary records, with the exception of the letters of Pliny the Younger, are often very distanced, cursory or fragmentary, and thus their applicability is questionable.

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Ancient writers

TABLE 15.1 A list of ancient writers

Writer	Date	Context	Content
Pliny the Younger	61–113 CE	• He is the main source on the eruption in 79 CE. • In about 112 CE, Pliny the Younger wrote a letter to the historian Tacitus describing the eruption and recounting his uncle's rescue attempt. • Although he glorifies his uncle's role in the rescue, the facts he presents are supported by archaeological evidence.	• His uncle (Pliny the Elder) was a naval commander based at Misenum, across the bay from Herculaneum. • He and his uncle both witnessed the eruption.
Pliny the Elder	23–79 CE	• He was a prefect in the Roman navy, and a noted naturalist.	• He wrote about the geography and economy of Campania. • He set out by boat to rescue his friend Pomponianus who was trapped in Herculaneum. • He reached the city but died, apparently from asphyxiation (he was asthmatic).
Strabo	64/63 BCE – c. 24 CE	• He was a Greek geographer whose work is largely based on his own travels.	• He wrote about Campania.
Cassius Dio	155–235 CE	• He was a Roman politician who wrote an 80-volume history of Rome. • The volumes covering the period between 63 BCE and 54 CE are almost complete; however the other volumes exist only in fragments.	• In one of the volumes, he mentions the destruction of Pompeii, but his account is not entirely credible.
Seneca the Younger	c. 4 BCE–65 CE	• He was a Roman philosopher and naturalist.	• He wrote about the earthquake that damaged Pompeii and Herculaneum in 62 CE.
Tacitus	c. 56 – after 117 CE	• He was a Roman senator who wrote two histories of the Roman Empire, covering the period 14–69 CE, but not all of his works survive.	• He mentions a fight between rival spectators at the gladiatorial games in Pompeii in 59 CE, which caused Emperor Nero to ban all such games in the city for 10 years.
Vitruvius	c. 80–70 BCE, died after c. 15 BCE	• He was an architect and engineer, and wrote *De Architectura*, a manual on architecture and building methods.	• For a time, he was the authority on Pompeiian building usage, but this does not always correspond with the archaeology.

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Epigraphy

Epigraphy refers to written public and private inscriptions. Generally they are a part of the archaeological record, but oftentimes they suffer the fate of being fragmentary, out of context or illegible. For our study of Pompeii and Herculaneum, epigraphs comprise a large percentage of the workable evidence.

The limitations, reliability and contestability of the evidence

Due to the nature of the sites, and particularly their early excavation, there are significant issues around the reliability of the evidence. This is for a number of reasons.

- Much of the evidence at Pompeii and Herculaneum has been stolen, lost or destroyed.
- Early excavations used little to no methodology and the excavators were interested only in treasure, which meant valuable historical evidence was cast aside or thrown out. Reporting was inconsistent, and some buildings did not even get an excavation report, while other reports were unpublished.
- Digging destroyed some structures, others collapsed due to negligence, and skeletal remains were lost or destroyed – all before the finds were properly documented.
- Tourists have also caused considerable damage.
- Exposure to the elements has meant oxidisation and thus deterioration. Pompeii in particular has been affected by heavy rain and flooding. The sun fades the exposed frescoes, and in recent years, UV-resistant Perspex has been installed to protect them.
- Protection and preservation, especially from the elements, on the scale that is required is almost financially prohibitive, and for this reason over a third of Pompeii remains untouched. Archaeologists are waiting until better technology is available, which will allow them to excavate while causing only minimal damage.
- There is also too little written evidence to back up the archaeological evidence, as Pompeii and Herculaneum were simply small towns, albeit with a great summer trade from tourists heading down from Rome to escape the summer heat (a bit like Noosa, Airlie Beach or Port Douglas).
- Much evidence has disappeared forever and continues to disappear through the deterioration of the sites.
- The context of many artefacts has been lost because they were looted or put in museums without recording the locations of where they were found. This has made it difficult to ascertain ownership, functions of rooms, standards of living and the status of people.
- Literary evidence is unavailable or disagrees with the architecture (for example, Vitruvius's accounts versus the archaeology). The names of rooms as used by Pompeiians is not known, and are based on the terminology in Vitruvius's *De Architectura* (On Architecture); basic Pompeiian house structure, however, dates to the Samnite period and thus predates the Roman period of the cities, which causes issues in the study of the urban landscape.
- Much work has been done recently on the human remains of Pompeii, especially by Australian archaeologist Estelle Lazer. Originally these remains were not considered important for study, and were discarded or unceremoniously dumped in storage; this was not only a poor way to treat human vestiges, but it also removed bodies from their original contexts.
- The main commercial, religious and political centre of Herculaneum, focused on the forum, has not been recovered.

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Contextual study: Summing up

The studies of the cities of Vesuvius are complex, and require the understanding of key factors in the initial devastation of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and the rediscovery (or second death as it is referred to by some historians) that commenced in the eighteenth century. The manner of their destruction, by Vesuvius in 79 CE, and by the treasure hunters and looters of the eighteenth century particularly, is instrumental in our understanding of the evidence for Pompeii, its limitations and subsequent re-examination.



SOURCE 15.9 A marine-themed mosaic decorating the floor of the women's apodyterium (changing room) in the Central Baths Herculaneum, c. first century CE.

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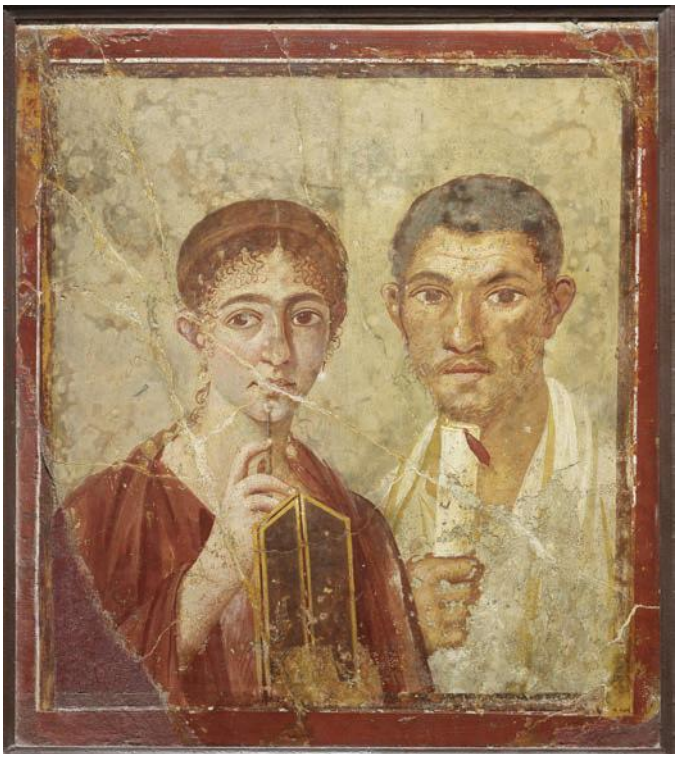
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DEPTH STUDY

Introduction

In the three centuries since its initial rediscovery, Pompeii and the nearby town of Herculaneum have been subject to various excavation, documentation and preservation methods. In the early years after Pompeii's rediscovery, the area was nothing more than a site for looting: artefacts were stolen, sites damaged and context lost. As a consequence of early methods and later misconceptions, a particular version of Pompeii and Herculaneum emerged. This series of misconceptions, because of new information and technology, is being revised; understandings once deemed to be orthodox have been challenged and replaced by new understandings of the towns, the people who lived there and their place in the greatest empire of the Ancient World.

This chapter forms the basis for a depth study of Pompeii and Herculaneum through the evidence, written and archaeological, which allows for a detailed historiographical analysis of the sources. How the interpretations of sources contribute to our collective understanding of these sites and, in turn, help us to make decisions around ethical questions of conservation and preservation, can be applied not only to the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum, but also to other sites around the world. We will examine how these sources have been used to construct an understanding of relevant social, political, religious and economic institutions and practices in Pompeii and Herculaneum. The issues associated with using these sources to make valid judgements about life in these towns will also be explored.



SOURCE 15.10 Portrait of baker Terentius Neo and his wife, c. 50 CE, Pompeii

15.3 Social structure of Pompeii and Herculaneum

Social structure in the towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum is difficult to definitively identify, and various interpretations are largely shaped by the degree to which the towns were defined as 'Roman' by 79 CE. Having only formally become Roman towns in the first century BCE, the origins of the inhabitants included Greek, Samnite and Oscan influences (some graffiti suggests Oscan was still spoken at the time of the eruption), and a large number of inhabitants were descendants of slaves. There are key superficial identifiers of the 'Roman-ness' of the towns, such as temples, bath houses and **amphitheatres**, but the subtleties of the multicultural nature of the town, and the influence this had on social structure, are more difficult to define. Despite this, there are a range of key social structures that are reflected in the evidence, including the socially mobile nature of the populace, freedmen and freedwomen, slaves, patron–client relationships and the role of women.

amphitheatre an oval-shaped building providing seating; entertainment venue

These source extracts are from modern Pompeiian scholars. Read them carefully, identifying any key concepts, themes, issues and ideas, before completing the activity.

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Men and women

In a 2003 book written to accompany a BBC TV dramatisation of the destruction of Pompeii, titled *Pompeii: The Last Day*, historian Paul Wilkinson discusses the role of women. He argues that in Roman households, a woman held the role of domina, or mistress. The domina oversaw the operations of the domus – house – whilst servants and slaves carried out her orders. Throughout the Roman world, women typically married in their teens, between 13 and 17, and until the late republican era, most marriages were of the *manus* (meaning hand) category. This mean that a woman would leave her family's legal authority (*patria potestas*) and transfer it to her husband, along with all her property. This arrangement had significant drawbacks: she lost access to her wealth, and if she died, her family would be barred from inheriting anything. In contrast, the more common marriage in Pompeii and Herculaneum was a contractual agreement made in the presence of witnesses, which allowed women to keep their property and, importantly, to initiate divorce through a declaration of will. This is reflected in the lives of Eumachia and Julia Felix, who both owned and disposed of property.

Epigraphy is the study of inscriptions. The following six inscriptions were all found in Pompeii.

SOURCE 15.11 The dedication of the Temple of the Lares by the priestess Mamia

Mamia, daughter of Publius, a public priestess [built this] to the genius [of the colony and Augustus] on her own land at [her own] expense.

SOURCE 15.12 Election graffiti by women

1) I beg you to make Pupius duumvir. Appuleia with her neighbour Mustius (asks), and Narcissus asks you.

aediles magistrates responsible for maintaining public buildings and spaces

2) [written on bakery (?) wall]. We beg you to make M. Casellius and L. Albucius ***aediles***. Statia and Petronia ask. Such citizens (would be?) in the city forever.

3) I ask you to make A. Vettius Firmus *aedile*. He is worthy. Caprasia asks with Nymphius, together with the neighbours. (We) ask you to vote for him.

4) I beg you to elect Cn. Helvius Sabinus *aedile*, worthy of public office. Aegle asks for this.

5) I beg you to elect Cn. Helvius Sabinus *aedile*, worthy of public office. Maria asks for this.

SOURCE 15.13 Women in the family, funeral inscriptions

Quintus Cornelius Diphilus, freedman of Quintus and Publius, Cornelia Heraes, freedwoman of Quintus lie here and this place is given to my freedmen and freedwomen and all of mine.

Mamia, daughter of Publius, public priestess. The place of burial was given by decree of the *decuriones*.

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SOURCE 15.14 Inscriptions pertaining to freedmen and freedwomen

Inscribed marble plaque: 'Baths of Marcus Crassus Frugi with seawater and baths with fresh water. Ianuarius, freedman.'

Marble plaque in the centre of the tomb's facade, Nucerian Gate necropolis: 'To Gaius Veranius Rufus, Son of Quintus, duumvir; Veraina Clara, freedwoman of Quintus, to her excellent patron, for herself and her household.'

Inscribed marble slab: 'Publius Ancarsulenus Philadelphus, freedman of Publius, President of Mercury, Ancarsulena Eleutheris, freedwoman of Publius, freedwoman.'

SOURCE 15.15 Inscription on the tomb of a freedwoman outside the Herculaneum Gate

Naevoleia Tyche, freedwoman of Lucius, for herself and for Gaius Munatius Fustus, Augustalis and Country District Dweller, to whom the town councillors with the consent of the people, decreed an honorific chair for his merits. Naevolia Tyche had this monument made in her lifetime for her own freedmen and freedwomen and those of Gaius Munatius Faustus.

SOURCE 15.16 Receipt for rental payment from Pompeii

In the duumvirate of Lucius Albucius Iustus and Lucius Veranius Hypsaeus, I, Privatus, slave of the colony, have written that I have received from Lucius Caecilius Iucundus 1652 sesterces, from the outstanding amount for the fullery before this day, 14 July.

Transacted at Pompeii, 14 August, in the consulship of A. Paconius Sabinus and A. Petronius.

Slaves

Slaves are common in ancient societies, especially in Rome. We are generally exposed to slavery in the form of gladiators and slave revolts, or prisoners of war. The reality is that Rome and its empire were built on the backs of slaves, and towns like Pompeii and Herculaneum were no different.

Historians Alex Butterworth and Ray Laurence talk about Roman slaves being given their freedom.

SOURCE 15.17 A. Butterworth and R. Laurence, *Pompeii: The Living City*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2005, pp. 20–1, 65–6

The Roman Empire is alone among all the slave societies that have existed, in that significant numbers of those it imported in chains would eventually earn their freedom and become citizens. Although slaves were denied all rights, including over their own bodies, they could nevertheless aspire ultimately to be freed and to establish a family. They might, in due course, take pride in their own lineage in just the same way as their masters had.

On being freed, a slave took the first two parts of his master's three names as his own. We know, for example, of a Decimus Lucretius Stephanicus, who had almost certainly been a slave of Decimus Lucretius Valens known merely as Stephanicus before being freed. It was the freed slave's continued identification with their master and his family, along with the opportunity both to borrow funds and share in a network of contacts, which provided them with the platform to become such a formidable force within the economy.

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However, a family would have freed only their most dutiful, loyal and reliable slaves. It would have been inconceivable to let men and women who bore the precious family name loose in the world unless there was considerable confidence that they would not bring it into disrepute. The names of successful families were the Roman equivalent of commercial 'brands' and were guarded as jealously as the image rights of contemporary celebrities.

In 2023, archaeologists working in the Regio IX uncovered a bakery where it is believed that enslaved people were imprisoned and exploited to produce bread. A detailed analysis of the site describes the slavery in the bakery:

SOURCE 15.18 Zuchtriegel et al., 'The discipline of the hateful shack: Rustio Vero's house with bakery in Pompeii (IX 10,1)', *Journal of the Pompeii Excavations*, 2023, pp. 10–11

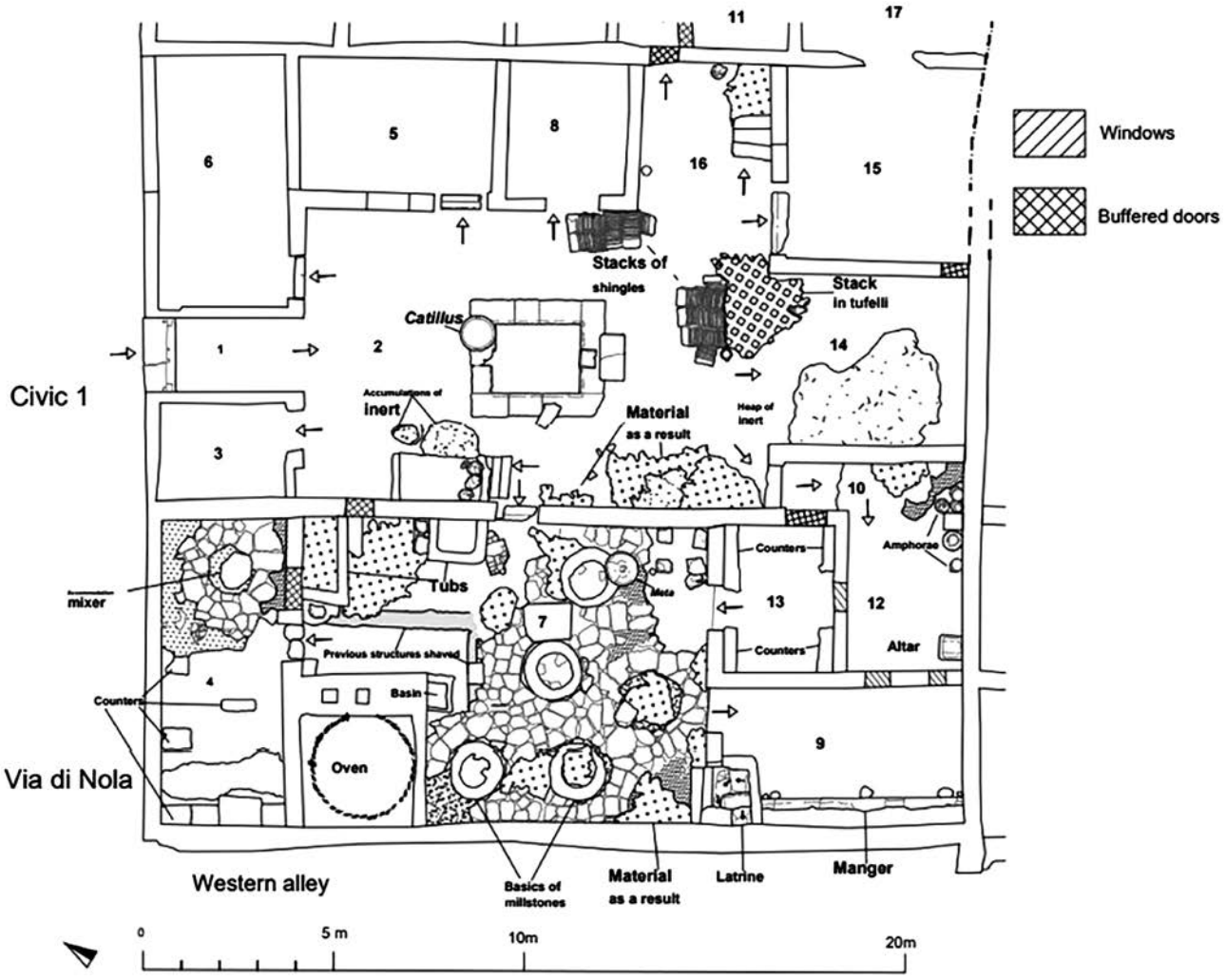
The bakery in House IX 10.1 ... [housed] people of servile status whose freedom of movement the owner felt the need to limit. It is the most shocking side of ancient slavery ... devoid of relationships ... where we were reduced to brute violence. [This] is ... confirmed by the closure of the few windows with iron grates ... between room 13 and room 12 ... [As it is] an internal window between two rooms of the same house ...[it] must have had the sole purpose of preventing the slaves ... from escaping the rooms assigned to them.



SOURCE 15.19 The site seen from above (Source: Pompeii Archaeological Park)

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SOURCE 15.20 Map of the House of Rustio Vero in Pompeii (Source: Pompeii Archaeological Park)

Dr Sarah Bisel was a physical anthropologist whose analysis of the physical and chemical features of ancient skeletons provided greater insight into the nutrition and health of the populations. She wrote a report on the body of a 14-year-old girl found at Herculaneum:

SOURCE 15.21 S. C. Bisel and J. F. Bisel, 'Health and nutrition at Herculaneum: An examination of human skeletal remains', in W. F. Jashemski and F. G. Meyer (eds), *The Natural History of Pompeii*, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 46

> I suspect she was a slave. There are scars on the upper shafts of her humeri where the pectorials major joins the bone. That means she used those bones for heavier work than she should have. Grooves on her teeth indicate inadequate nutrition, when she was about 11 months old, and she suffered from either sickness or starvation even to the point of death.

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The work of British archaeologist Andrew Wallace Hadrill, which involved the removal of 770 bags of human waste from a sewer underneath Herculaneum, revealed detailed information about Roman diets. The bio-archaeological preservation highlighted that there was little difference in nutritional quality between rich and poor, even the slave populations.

SOURCE 15.22 L. Edwards, 'Ancient sewer excavation sheds light on the Roman diet', *PhysOrg.com*, 2011

The estimated 150 inhabitants of the block belonged to the lower and middle-classes, but analyzing their compacted waste has shown their diet was much more varied than scientists had previously thought. Their diet was essentially a typical Mediterranean diet that included plenty of fish and vegetables, eggs, olives, walnuts, spiky sea urchins and figs. They used the olive pips for fuel.

The deposits tell archaeologists a great deal about what ordinary people ate 2,000 years ago. Until now much more was known about what rich people ate, and there was little information on the diet of people in lower and middle classes.

These discoveries provide more evidence on the daily life of Pompeii's enslaved people, often forgotten about by historical sources, but who made up most of the population and whose hard labour propped up the city's economy as well as the culture and fabric of Roman civilisation.

Patrons and clients

Brian Brennan and Estelle Lazer discuss how elite members of society offered patronage to certain poorer citizens:

SOURCE 15.23 B. Brennan and E. Lazer, 'Pompeii and Herculaneum: Interpreting the evidence', *Ancient History Seminars*, 2004

Political life at Pompeii and Herculaneum was dominated by the patronage of poorer citizens and of particular social and business groups by members of a powerful, wealthy and influential elite. In a way similar to Rome itself, where the great senatorial families had an impressive tradition of office-holding and public service, powerful local Pompeians offered both protection and assistance to individuals. They assisted those who sought advancement in political office or desired to make connections and alliances that would help them in business or in social life. In return, the patrons expected support in elections and public recognition of their exalted status. The patron, patronus, could expect support from his clients, clients. Every patronus sought to outdo his rivals in the size and extent of his supporters, clientela. The number of clients who came to your house in the morning, or who accompanied you to the forum, or who cheered you in the theatre, indicated your importance. Patronage might also be extended to separate groups within the community or to the whole populace, whose support was won by offering benefits, beneficia. Benefits could include the provision of food, gladiatorial entertainments, public works or projects such as theatres, temples or public baths.

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Freedmen and freedwomen

Historians Alison E. Cooley and M. G. L. Cooley outline the position of freedmen and freedwomen in society.

SOURCE 15.24 A. E. Cooley and M. G. L. Cooley, *Pompeii and Herculaneum: A Sourcebook*, Routledge, 2013, pp. 146–7

> Freedmen and freedwomen ... became increasingly prominent from the Augustan period onwards ... After their release, ex-slaves became clients of their patron and retained close connections with their original household. They might still live in the same house, and might be buried in the household's tomb at their death. Some freedmen and freedwomen promoted their patron's commercial interests. Some of their epitaphs provide intriguing glimpses of the success with which they and their families were integrated into Roman citizen society after their manumission. Freedmen were excluded from reaching the ranks of the governing class, but could achieve positions of importance and act as benefactors of the community at a lower level, in certain religious cults and as Augustales.

ACTIVITY **15.1**



Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Having read the evidence about class structure in Pompeii and Herculaneum, respond to the following questions.

1. Create a diagram to demonstrate the characteristics of the classes and the relationships between them in Pompeii and Herculaneum.
2. Describe the social structure in Pompeii. Remember, when we describe, we are looking at patterns, processes, features and characteristics.
3. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of the archaeological record in helping us understand the lives of different groups of people in society.
4. Explain how developments in archaeology, and specifically the role of scientific analysis, help us understand the lives of those from the past.
5. Copy and complete the table below to identify key ideas, concepts and information about the Ancient Roman class system, and what we learn from the evidence.

Social element	Information/Evidence	Comment
Upwardly mobile		
Men and women		
Slaves		
Patrons and clients		
Freedmen and freedwomen		

6. Synthesise the evidence to compose a historical argument to assess the significance of the archaeological record in building our understanding of the social structures evident in Pompeii and Herculaneum.

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15.4 Key individuals in Pompeii and Herculaneum

Eumachia

Eumachia was a priestess and businesswoman in Pompeii. Her father was a ceramics magnate, with amphorae and other ceramics stamped with his name found across the Mediterranean. The largest building in the forum is attributed to Eumachia, based on an inscription and a statue.



SOURCE 15.25 Statue of the priestess Eumachia from the Pompeiian forum

SOURCE 15.26 Dedicatory inscription on the woolstore from Eumachia, CIL X 810

Eumachia L.f. *sacerdos publica*, in her own name and that of M. Numistrius Fronto her son, built with her own money the portico, corridor and colonnade, and dedicated them to Concordia Augusta (and?) Pietas.

SOURCE 15.27 Archaeological Park of Pompeii

This building, the most impressive on the eastern side of the Forum, was built by Eumachia, priestess of Venus belonging to a very rich family from Pompeii, to worship the emperor. The statues of the richest and most important people in Pompeii were exhibited below the portico in front of the entrance and two elogia of Romulus and Aeneas, that is two inscriptions with the list of good deeds performed by them, were placed at the sides of the large entrance, below the niches that can still be seen today. The rich marble frame of the entrance with scrolls of acanthus filled with animals was found in the Forum and was mistakenly relocated here when it actually belonged to the adjacent Temple of Genius Augusti.

The interior consisted of a portico with three wings. In the short eastern side there are three exedras; the central one is larger and contained a statue of Concordia Augusta, now at the National Archaeological Museum of Naples. There was a covered corridor behind this portico, also with three wings, at the centre of which there was the statue of Eumachia, the copy of which is now on display as the original is at the National Archaeological Museum of Naples.

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Julia Felix

Julia Felix was a prominent businesswoman in Pompeii, with a large estate or *praeda*, the Via dell'Abbondanza, in close proximity to the amphitheatre. It is likely she appealed to a range of residents, and the size of her estate suggests wealth and prestige. Outside the *praeda* was a sign advertising rental vacancies of both a private and commercial nature for a five-year lease, including shops, taverns, apartments and even a private bath suite!



SOURCE 15.28 Still life with eggs and game from the House of Julia Felix

SOURCE 15.29 Rental advertisement from the House of Julia Felix

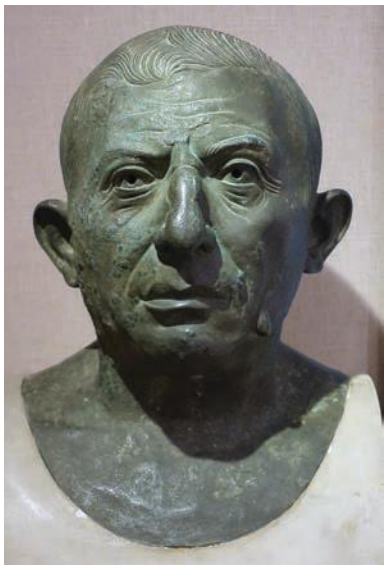
> **To let, for the term of five years, from the thirteenth day of next August to the thirteenth day of the sixth August thereafter, the Venus bath, fitted up for the best people, shops, rooms over shops, and second-story apartments in the property owned by Julia Felix, daughter of Spurius.**



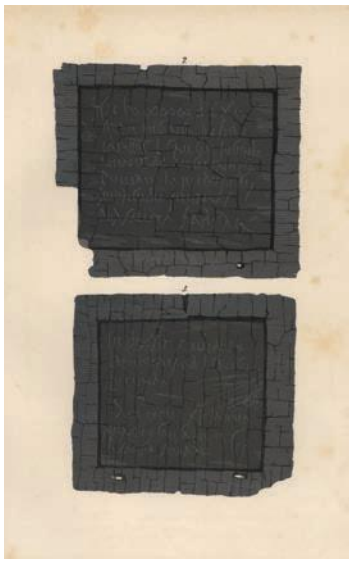
SOURCE 15.30 Fresco from the House of Julia Felix, depicting scenes from Pompeii's forum market

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Lucius Caecilius Iucundus



SOURCE 15.31 A bust from Pompeii thought to be of the banker Lucius Caecilius Iucundus, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples



SOURCE 15.32 Carbonised wood backing showing the inscription from a wax tablet in the House of Iucundus

In excavations in Pompeii in 1875, archaeologists were working on a house, in which was found a large chest. In the chest they discovered the remains of 153 wax tablets, documenting the business transactions of Lucius Caecilius Iucundus, a notable Pompeiian banker who was active during the reign of Nero.

Dating back to 15 CE, the transactions unearthed offer glimpses into ancient commerce. While the wax seals perished in the fiery grip of Vesuvius, traces of inscriptions endured, etched onto wooden backboards. Among the findings, 16 tablets detail contractual agreements between Iucundus and the city of Pompeii, while the remaining 137 document auctions where he facilitated transactions between buyers and sellers – a pivotal role akin to that of a Roman banker. Seventeen tablets chronicle loans extended by Iucundus to auction buyers, providing short-term financial relief spanning 100 days. Evidently, Iucundus excelled in his endeavours, with all but three receipts indicating transactions exceeding 1000 sestertii.

Below are some examples of the receipts, as detailed by August Mau:

SOURCE 15.33 A. Mau, *Pompeii: Its Life and Art*, translated by F. W. Kelsey, MacMillan, 1902

1.

Umbricia Ianuaria declared that she had received from L. Caecilius Iucundus 11,039 sesterces, which sum came into the hands of L. Caecilius Iucundus by agreement as the proceeds of an auction sale for Umbricia Ianuaria, the commission due him having been deducted.

Done at Pompeii on the twelfth day of December, in the consulship of Lucius Duvius and Publius Clodius.

2.

On June 18, in the duumvirate of L. Varanius Hypsaeus and L. Albucius Justus, I, Privatus, slave of the colony of Pompeii, declared in writing that I received from L. Caecilius Jucundus 1675 sesterces, and previous to this day, on June 6, I received 1000 sesterces, as rent for public pasture.

Seal of Quintus Appuleius Severus, Marcus Lucretius Lerus, Tiberius Julius Abascantius, M. Julius Crescens, M. Terentius Primus, M. Epidius Hymenaeus, Q. Granius Lesbus, Titus Vesonius Le...., D. Volcius Thallus.

3.

On December 12, in the consulship of Lucius Duvius Avitus and Publius Clodius Thrasea, I Decimus Volcius Thallus, having examined the tablets put under seal, at the request of Umbricia Januaria declared in writing that she had received from L. Caelius Jucundus 11, 039 sesterces as the proceeds of an auction sale after deducting his commission. Done at Pompeii Mau. 1902: 499 – 504)

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15.5 Governance and politics in Pompeii and Herculaneum

When Pompeii became a Roman colony in 80 BCE, it adopted and followed the laws of governance: the *Lex Iulia Municipalis*. This law regulated municipalities, including how they were governed.

Executive	**2 x *duumviri*** • Co-mayors • Served for one year • In charge of justice • Organised census every five years • Revised the list of the *ordo decuriones* (councillors) • Made decisions on public buildings, roads and so on • Collected fines	**2 x *aediles*** • Served for one year • Took care of streets, public buildings, temples, markets • Maintained public order (for example, organised the registration of prostitutes) • Assisted by one scribe, four public slaves, a town-crier, a flute-player and a haruspex
Council	• Made up of 80 to 100 *decuriones* (leaders of the community) • Honourable, freeborn citizens of considerable wealth and over the age of 25 • Other citizens who could be appointed by the *duumviri* • Settled community debts from their private funds • Every decision was written in the archives; important ones inscribed in bronze • Dealt with matters of city finance, religious authority and other public business • Privileges: – Right to wear purple-edged toga – Had reserved seats at public performances – Allowed to display traditional symbols of power (fasces) • Membership for life • Actors and innkeepers excluded from membership	
People's Assembly	• Assembly of all eligible male citizens over the age of 25 • Lower classes admitted • Voted on proposals by the council • Elected the *duumviri* and *aediles* each spring	

The epigraphic record gives us the most vivid picture of Pompeiian politics, especially in the form of electoral graffiti.

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SOURCE 15.34 Buildings on the Via dell'Abbondanza with remains of electoral graffiti

There are over 2000 documented translations of electoral graffiti. Some examples of this graffiti:

I ask you to elect Gnaeus Helvius Sabinus and Marcus Samellius Modestus *aediles*, men worth of public office.

All the fruit-sellers with Helvius Vestalis call for Marcus Holconius Priscus as duumvir for lawsuits.

I ask that you elect Lucius Popidius Ampliatus and Lucius Vedius Nummianus *aediles*.

I beg you to elect Marcus Epidius Sabinus senior magistrate with judicial power, a most worthy young man. The venerable council is electing him. Good fortune to Clemens, venerable judge.

All the worshippers of Isis call for Cn. Helvius Sabinus as *aedile*.

For the health, return, and victory of Gaius Julius Phillipus, here, to his *lares*, Publius Cornelius Felix and Vitalis Cuspius make an offering.

All the deadbeats and Macerius ask for Vatia as *aedile*.

Epidius with his household want and support Cn. Helvius Sabinus as *aedile*.

ACTIVITY **15.2**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Explain the significance of epigraphy in helping us understand the political landscape of Pompeii.
2. Evaluate the evidence to assess the usefulness and reliability of graffiti in understanding ancient political processes.
3. Analyse the evidence to identify the types of people creating the graffiti. Explain how this helps us understand the ways in which people were able to engage in the political system, even if they couldn't vote.
4. To what extent is there a relationship between commerce, entertainment, religion and politics evident in the sources?

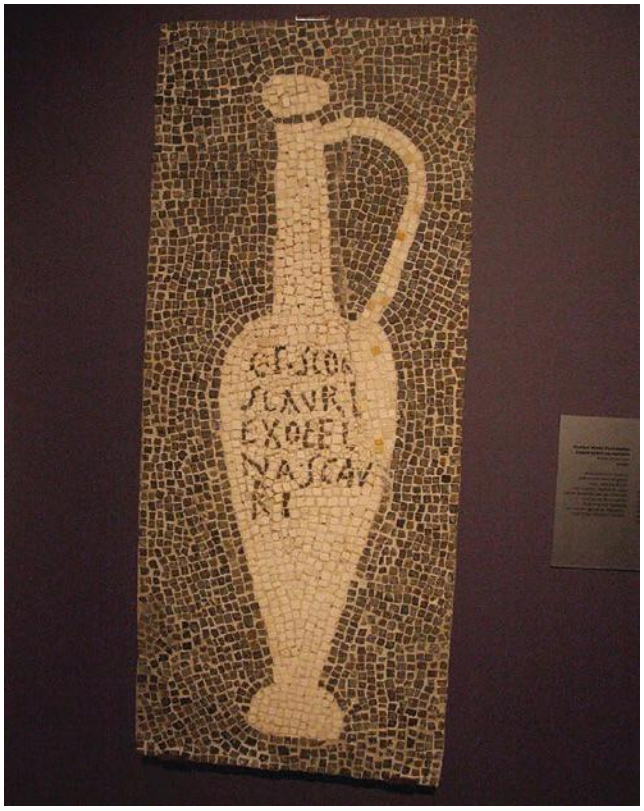
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15.6 Economics in Pompeii and Herculaneum

In the Ancient World, local economies were very closely connected to local geography and trade routes. The fertile soils of the Vesuvian plains and the coastal climate supported livestock, and the growth of grapes and olives; access to the ports facilitated trade. Unlike Herculaneum, where the evidence suggests a quieter resort-style town, Pompeii appears to have been a thriving commercial centre, with more than 600 privately owned shops, bars, inns and workshops. The blurring of public and private has caused some misinterpretation over time, but the work of archaeologists, especially Andrew Wallace-Hadrill whose focus is housing and building structures in Pompeii, has seen the reinterpretation of the nature of public and private, domestic and commercial, in Pompeii. Wallace-Hadrill has suggested that only one brothel can be confirmed, whereas earlier estimates had this number much higher. This is not to suggest, however, that prostitution did not take place elsewhere, but that there is only one definitive purpose-built brothel. The epigraphic record especially attests to the variety of guilds and retailers, and signs outside buildings attest not only to their purpose, but their owner.



SOURCE 15.35 Mosaic of aquatic life from the House of the Faun in Pompeii



SOURCE 15.37 A mosaic floor in the home of a man named Aulus Umbricius Scaurus depicts jars of *garum* ready for sale. Scaurus owned a store that sold *garum*.

Commercial activities in Pompeii

The following sources illustrate different commercial activities in Pompeii and Herculaneum: the sale of ***garum***, the clothing industry, baking and shopfronts.

SOURCE 15.36 Inscriptions on *garum* jars

Finest fish sauce by Umbricius Abascantus

Scaurus's finest mackerel sauce

Best finest mackerel sauce from the workshop of Aulus Umbricius Abascantus

Scaurus's finest mackerel sauce from Scaurus's workshop,

Best fish purée of Aulus Umbricius Scaurus

garum fish sauce

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An important role in the Roman clothing industry was played by the fullers. The websites of the Parco Archeologico di Pompei and AD 79 Destruction and Rediscovery explain this trade.

SOURCE 15.38 Fullery of Stephanus, Parco Archeologico di Pompei

One important trade in Pompei was that of the fullones, or fullers: 13 laboratories processed raw wool, 7 handled spinning and weaving, 9 dyeing, and 18 washing. A typical example is the '***Fullonica*** of Stephanus's (mentioned in a campaign message on the façade: was he the owner or manager?), formed by re-modeling an existing house and using the ground floor for work activities, the upper floor as a dwelling and for drying the cloth. At the back of the building is a series of tubs used for washing: the fullones trampled the cloth in a mixture of water and soda (soap was unknown at the time) or urine, both degreasing substances due to their high ammonia content.

fullonica cleaning and production of cloth for clothing and laundry

SOURCE 15.39 P. Clements and M. Clements, 'Fullonica of Stephanus', *AD 79 Destruction and Rediscovery*

The Fullonica of Stephanus, or Fullonica Stephani, lies on the south side of the Via dell'Abbondanza. The property, which was excavated in 1912, is the only laundry in Pompeii that had not simply been adapted from an existing building, but was a full restructuring of a patrician house, rationally laid out to best fulfil its new function. The name of the probable owner, a man named Stephanus, was deduced from election propaganda painted near the entrance which also inform us that women as well as men worked therein.

This extract from the AD 79 Destruction and Rediscovery website describes a bakery in Pompeii.

SOURCE 15.40 P. Clements and M. Clements, 'Pistrinum', *AD 79 Destruction and Rediscovery*

The Pistrinum, or bakery, occupies a central location on the east side of Cardo V [Herculaneum]. Inside the bakery, the whole cycle of bread-making from milling the grain to baking the bread, which came in a variety of forms, was carried out.



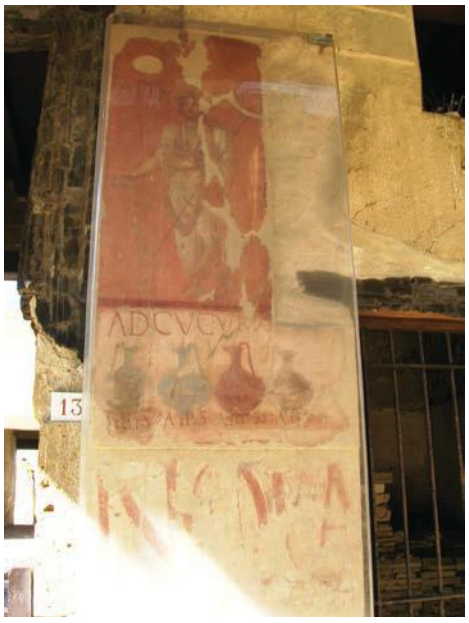
SOURCE 15.41 Pistrinium millstones used for flour in Herculaneum



SOURCE 15.42 Fresco from the *tablinum* at VII.iii.30 at Pompeii depicting what was initially believed to be the sale of bread, but revisionist historians now believe to be a politician giving out bread

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SOURCE 15.43 Bottega of Cucumas, Herculaneum. According to Maiuri, 'Next door there was the little shop of a seller and bronzesmith who also sold jugs for oil workers: but this time the Bourbon cavamonti had cleaned up the shop so well that, without a beautiful sign painted on the outside with the representation of the vases and the Genius protector of the company, we would not have understood what goods it was about.' A. Maiuri, *Chronicles of the excavations of Herculaneum, 1927–1961,* 2008, p. 120.



SOURCE 15.44 Pliny the Elder on Pompeiian wine, *Natural History*, XIV 70

> It has been observed that Pompeiian wines are rather dangerous as they may cause a headache which lasts till noon on the following day.

SOURCE 15.45 Graffiti from the tavern of Valeria Hedone

> Hedone says 'You can drink here for one as, if you give two, you will drink better; if you give four, you will drink Falernian.'

Thermopolium

A **thermopolium** was the equivalent of fast-food outlet, or a café. Hot and cold food was sold from what was usually an L-shaped masonry counter containing terracotta vessels. There are over 160 of these uncovered throughout Pompeii, although this number is problematic, given the patchy understanding of property use in some areas, especially when located adjacent to a ***caupona***, which was the more formal tavern setting, with seating and the like.

thermopolium a shop that produces and serves hot food and drinks

caupona a bar, tavern or inn

The website AD 79 Destruction and Rediscovery has the following description of a thermopolium:

SOURCE 15.46 P. Clements and M. Clements, 'Thermopolium of Vetutius Placidus (Reg I, Ins 8, 8-9)', *AD 79 Destruction and Rediscovery*

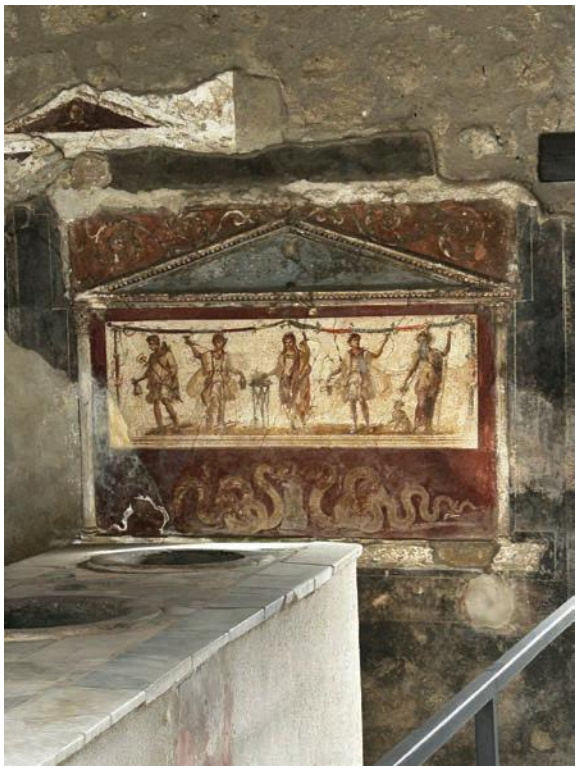
> The thermopolium and house of Vetutius Placidus are closely linked. The bar area, which served both food and drink, opens directly onto the south side of the Via dell'Abbondanza. The marble counter has jars inset into the worktop which were used to hold food ... A stove, positioned on the counter facing the eastern wall, was intended for heating food.



SOURCE 15.47 Thermopolium in Herculaneum

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SOURCE 15.48 Thermopolium of Vetutius Placidus with counter in the foreground and fresco of the *lares* (household gods) in the background

ACTIVITY **15.3**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Having examined the sources, and in combination with your existing knowledge, answer the following questions.

1. Categorise the primary industries in Pompeii and Herculaneum to complete the following table. The first one has been done for you:

Trade, industry or occupation	Historical terms	Description	Evidence
Bakeries	Pristrinum/ae	• Bread was a basic staple food of Romans. • Baking ovens only rarely found in houses. Almost all people went to a bakery for their bread. • Bakers were highly respected and could become wealthy.	 • Bakery of Modestus had three small mills for grinding flour and one large baking oven.

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Trade, industry or occupation	Historical terms	Description	Evidence
		• Bread was made on bakery premises and sold either on premises or from stalls. • Millstones and grain storage have been found in bakeries. • Donkeys turned the millstones. • There's evidence of slavery.	• 81 carbonised loaves of bread were found in the Bakery of Modestus. • To date, 33 bakeries have been found in Pompeii. • Two donkey skeletons were found still harnessed to mills in Herculaneum. • A seal in a baker's shop in a Herculaneum shop reads 'Sextus Patulcus felix', possibly the baker himself. • 25 different baking pans of various sizes were found in this shop – he specialised in cakes.
Garum			
Shopfronts and food sales			
Wine			
Clothing and cloth production			

2. To what extent are the industries a reflection of the geographical context of Pompeii and Herculaneum?
3. Evaluate the usefulness of these sources in contributing to the knowledge and understanding of the primary industries of the Vesuvian region of Campania. Answer using specific examples.
4. Evaluate the significance of physical evidence in contributing to our understanding of the economies of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

15.7 Cultural life and practices in Pompeii and Herculaneum

Leisure and entertainment in Pompeii, as in many Roman towns, is based around the amphitheatre, the smaller odeon and the gladiatorial barracks, and written accounts from the likes of Tacitus support the strength of the *spectaculares* in Pompeii. Inscriptions that detail those responsible for games, as well as of the gladiators and their physical excellence, gives gripping insight into the pastimes of the Ancient Roman town. The bath houses are also a testament to traditional Roman activities, and the thriving trade of bars and inns around these areas suggests that they were very well patronised.

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Gladiators and games

Roger Dunkle describes the basis for gladiatorial games.

SOURCE 15.49 R. Dunkle, *Gladiators: Violence and Spectacle in Ancient Rome*, Routledge, 2008, p. 19

> As a warrior society in origin, Romans were fascinated with martial virtue and the high-risk game of life and death that was war and gladiatorial combat. Wistrand has pointed out that gladiatorial combat demonstrated the most fundamental of all Roman values, *virtus*, a word whose basic meaning is manhood, which came to mean courage in war … The gladiator [w]as an archetypal symbol of Roman culture, whose code in extreme situations was either to kill when necessary, or to accept death when inevitable.

The following is a piece of graffiti from a Pompeii wall:

SOURCE 15.50 Graffiti: games under the aedileship of Suettius Certus

> The gladiatorial troupe of Aulus Suettius Certus will fight at Pompeii on the 31 May. There will be a hunt and awnings. Good fortune to all Neronian games.

Seneca was a stoic philosopher, and the Emperor Nero's tutor and adviser. The following is a description of gladiatorial combat (not necessarily in Pompeii) in a letter to Lucilius.

SOURCE 15.51 Seneca, *Epistles*

> I turned in to the games one mid-day hoping for a little wit and humour there. I was bitterly disappointed. It was really mere butchery. The morning's show was merciful compared to it. Then men were thrown to lions and to bears: but at midday to the audience. There was no escape for them. The slayer was kept fighting until he could be slain. 'Kill him! flog him! burn him alive' was the cry: 'Why is he such a coward? Why won't he rush on the steel? Why does he fall so meekly? Why won't he die willingly?' Unhappy that I am, how have I deserved that I must look on such a scene as this? Do not, my Lucilius, attend by the multitude, or, if you show disgust, be hated by them. So stay away.



SOURCE 15.52 The Neronian – graffiti from a tomb in the Pompeiian necropolis outside the Nucerian gate. The translation reads: 'Games at Nola of Marcus Cominius Heres over 4 days. "The Chief", Neronian, fought 13, 10 victories, victor. Hilarus, Neronian, fought 14, 12 victories, victor. Creunus, fought 7, 5 victories, reprieved.'

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This inscription (now lost) appeared on the family tomb of the Clodii, commemorating the career of Aulus Clodius Flaccus. It places emphasis on the games that he gave at the festival in honour of Apollo each time he held the duumvirate (the equivalent of a town councillor).

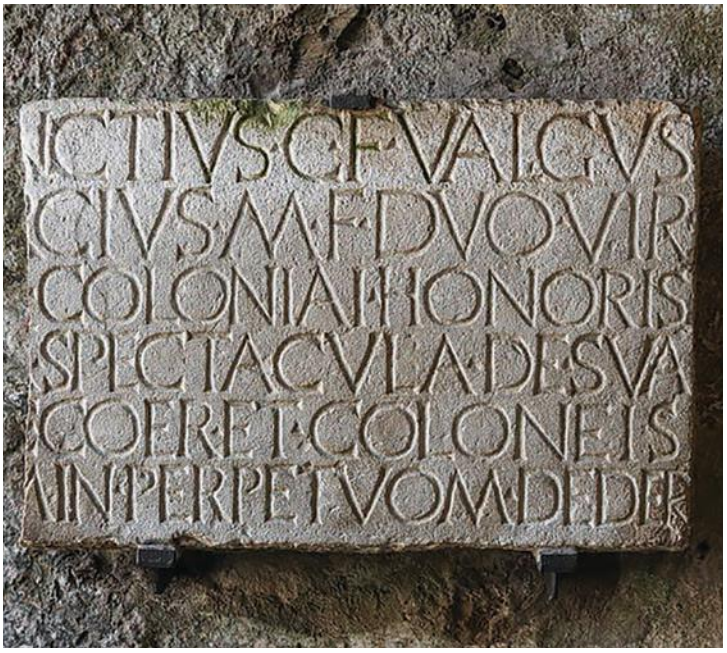
SOURCE 15.53 Games of Aulus Flaccus, funerary inscription, CIL X 1074d

> **Aulus Clodius Flaccus, son of Aulus, of the Menenian voting tribe, duumvir with judicial power three times, quinquennial, military tribune by popular demand. In his first duumvirate, at the games of Apollo in the Forum, [he presented] a procession, bulls, bull-fighters, and their fleet-footed helpers, 3 pairs of stage-fighters, boxers fighting in bands, and Greek-style pugilists; also [he presented] games with every musical entertainment, pantomime, and Pylades; and he gave 10 000 sesterces to the public coffers. In return for his second duumvirate, which was also his quinquennial 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 5 pairs of gladiators, and with his colleague [he presented] 35 pairs of gladiators and a hunt with bulls, bull-fighters, boars, bear and the other hunt-variations. In his third duumvirate [he presented] with his colleague games by a foremost troupe, with extra musical entertainment.**

The inscription in Source 15.53 is found near the southern entrance to the arena. It states that Quinctius Valgus and Marcus Porcius, who were duumvirs or magistrates of Pompeii, had erected the amphitheatre at their own expense. These two men also commissioned the odeon, or small theatre.



SOURCE 15.54 Cockfight mosaic from the Casa del Fauno



SOURCE 15.55 Dedicatory inscription from the Pompeiian amphitheatre

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Cicero was a politician, orator and statesman of the first century BCE. He was conservative in his political views, and was very concerned about the image one conveyed through one's actions.

SOURCE 15.56 Gladiatorial combat for political favour, Marcus Tullius Cicero

> And yet I realise that in our country, even in the good old times, it had become a settled custom to expect magnificent entertainments from the very best men in their year of aedileship. So both Publius Crassus, who was not merely surnamed 'The Rich' but was rich in fact, gave splendid games in his aedileship; and a little later Lucius Crassus (with Quintus Mucius, the most unpretentious man in the world, as his colleague) gave most magnificent entertainments in his aedileship. Then came Gaius Claudius, the son of Appius, and, after him, many others – the Luculli, Hortensius, and Silanus. Publius Lentulus, however, in the year of my consulship, eclipsed all that had gone before him, and Scaurus emulated him. And my friend Pompey's exhibitions in his second consulship were the most magnificent of all. And so you see what I think about all this sort of thing. Still we should avoid any suspicion of penuriousness. Mamercus was a very wealthy man, and his refusal of the aedileship was the cause of his defeat for the consulship. If, therefore, such entertainment is demanded by the people, men of right judgement must at least consent to furnish it, even if they do not like the idea. But in so doing they should keep within their means, as I myself did. They should likewise afford such entertainment, if gifts of money to the people are to be the means of securing on some occasion some more important or more useful object.



SOURCE 15.57 Remains of a Roman theatre in Pompeii overlooking Mount Vesuvius



SOURCE 15.58 Gladiator parade helmet made of bronze from Pompeii, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples

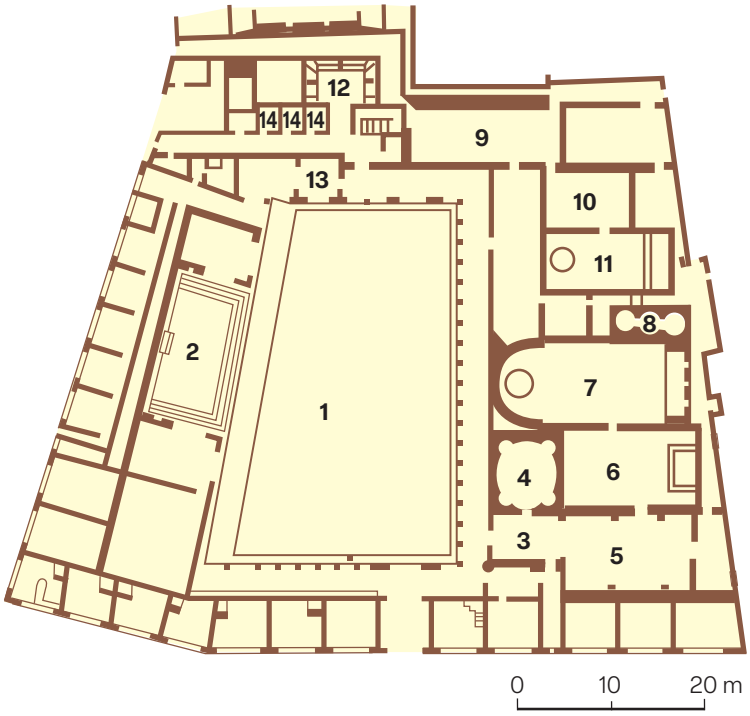
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Bath houses

Seneca describes activities at the baths.

SOURCE 15.59 Seneca, *Epistles*

Beshrew me if I think anything more requisite than silence for a man who secludes himself in order to study! Imagine what a variety of noises reverberates about my ears! I have lodgings right over a bathing establishment. So picture to yourself the assortment of sounds, which are strong enough to make me hate my very powers of hearing! When your strenuous gentleman, for example, is exercising himself by flourishing leaden weights; when he is working hard, or else pretends to be working hard, I can hear him grunt; and whenever he releases his imprisoned breath, I can hear him panting in wheezy and high-pitched tones. Or perhaps I notice some lazy fellow, content with a cheap rub-down, and hear the crack of the pummeling hand on his shoulder, varying in sound according as the hand is laid on flat or hollow. Then, perhaps, a professional a comes along, shouting out the score; that is the finishing touch. Add to this the arresting of an occasional roysterer or pickpocket, the racket of the man who always likes to hear his own voice in the bathroom,b or the enthusiast who plunges into the swimming-tank with unconscionable noise and splashing. Besides all those whose voices, if nothing else, are good, imagine the hair-plucker with his penetrating, shrill voice,—for purposes of advertisement, – continually giving it vent and never holding his tongue except when he is plucking the armpits and making his victim yell instead. Then the cake-seller with his varied cries, the sausageman, the confectioner, and all the vendors of food hawking their wares, each with his own distinctive intonation.



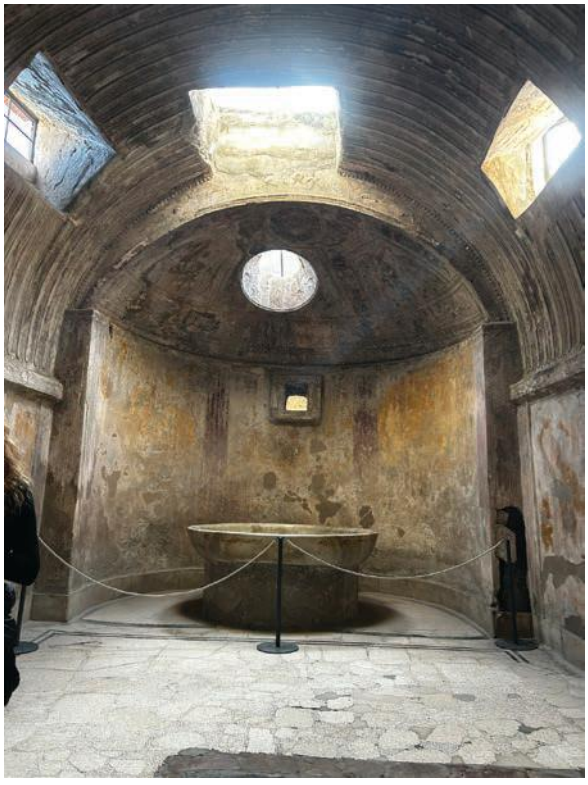
Plan of the Stabian Baths
1. Palaestra
2. Swimming pool (*natatio*)
3. Entrance hall
4. Cold bath (*frigidarium; formerly a hot sweating room, laconicum*)
5. Undressing room (*apodyterium*)
6. Warm room (*tepidarium*)
7. Hot room (*caldarium*)
8. Furnaces
9. Women's *apodyterium*
10. Women's *tepidarium*
11. Women's *caldarium*
12. Latrine
13. Bath supervisor's office
14. Individual 'hip bath' cubicles

SOURCE 15.60 Plan of the Stabian Baths

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SOURCE 15.61 The apodyterium at the Stabian baths



SOURCE 15.62 Caldarium of the forum baths, Pompeii



SOURCE 15.63 Apodyterium (change room) complete with storage shelving in the women's baths in Herculaneum

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ACTIVITY **15.4**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Having examined the sources, and in combination with your existing historical knowledge, answer the following questions.

1. Describe the leisure and entertainment of the citizens of Pompeii and Herculaneum as reflected in the evidence.
2. To what extent is the leisure and entertainment presented in the evidence a reflection of the broader Roman context of Pompeii and Herculaneum?
3. Examine the sources that focus on gladiatorial combat.
   a. Explain what can be inferred about the popular view of gladiatorial games in the evidence.
   b. Analyse Seneca's tone in Source 15.51. What does this suggest about his perspective of the people who attend the games?
4. Assess the extent to which the evidence suggests a connection between entertainment and politics. Explain your response using examples.
5. Describe the features of bath houses and the activities that could be undertaken in them.
6. Identify the different types of evidence that contribute to our knowledge about leisure and entertainment in Pompeii and Herculaneum.
7. Identify which source you find the most interesting in building your understanding of life in Pompeii and Herculaneum? Explain your answer.

15.8 Religious beliefs and practices in Pompeii and Herculaneum

The Ancient World was largely a polytheistic society, as was the case for Roman Pompeii and Herculaneum. With remnants of their Oscan, Greek and Samnite past, as well as other oriental influences, the religious life of the cities of Vesuvius was diverse and rich.

The sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum are littered with temples, both public and private. Some recognise the state gods, including cults to Augustus, and temples for deities such as Jupiter and Apollo, and others are private temples to the household gods, the *lares*. Also evident are foreign cults, such as the Temple to Isis in Pompeii. Separate from worship is the prevalence of artwork throughout the towns, based on the stories of the various deities and cults.

The following sources reflect the religious life and beliefs of the Campanian towns.



SOURCE 15.64 A large continuous fresco that covers three walls in the Villa of the Mysteries, one of the best preserved ancient paintings. It depicts a mysterious rite that is reserved for the devotees of the cult of Dionysus. Dionysus appears on the central wall with his wife, Ariadne.

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SOURCE 15.65 Remains of a small **lararium** in the house of Marcus Lucretius on the Via Stabia in Pompeii. The *lares* were the household gods, and small niches like these, which would have been shrines, are evident in properties in both Pompeii and Herculaneum.

lararium private shrine of household gods



SOURCE 15.68 Temple of the Egyptian goddess Isis, Pompeii



SOURCE 15.66 Fresco from the House of Venus in the Shell, portraying two cherubs accompanying Venus, protectress of Pompeii



SOURCE 15.67 The hall housed the College of Augustales, a civic order of freedmen charged with the organisation of the imperial cult.



SOURCE 15.69 A dedicatory inscription on the north wall of the College of the Augustales, noting that its construction was sponsored in the latter part of the reign of Augustus by two brothers, Aulus Lucius Proculus and Aulus Lucius Iulianus, who offered a banquet for the *decuriones* and the Augustales on the day of its consecration.

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SOURCE 15.70 Mosaic inside the House of Neptune in Herculaneum, depicting Neptune and Amphitrite

ACTIVITY **15.5**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Explain the significance of archaeology in helping us understand the religious beliefs of the inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
2. Evaluate the evidence to assess the usefulness and reliability of artwork in understanding ancient religious beliefs.
3. Analyse the evidence and categorise the types of religious worship in Pompeii and Herculaneum, using both the evidence provided and your own research to complete the following table.

Type of worship	Historical terms	Description	Evidence
Official state religions			
Cults			
Foreign deities			
Private worship			

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CONCLUDING STUDY

15.9 Changing interpretations on Pompeii and Herculaneum

The interpretations of Pompeii and Herculaneum and their inhabitants have changed over time, especially as new technologies have become available. Due to the sheer scope of these developments and the subsequent effects, this chapter is not able to detail the nuances of these changing interpretations, but you can undertake independent research.

ACTIVITY **15.6**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Select one of the following projects and archaeologists that aim to fill the gaps left by inadequate documentation in the early excavation stage through archival research, analysis of the existing remains and excavation below the 79 CE level. The extent of deterioration of the remains can also be studied.

For each of the following projects consider these questions:

1. Who is running the project (person or organisation)?
2. Where is the project?
3. What is the purpose of the project?
4. What has the project achieved?
5. What other information is useful (for example, when the project began, duration of the project and funding for the project)?

The projects:

- The Houses in Pompeii Project
- The Insula of Menander Project
- The Pompeiian Forum Project
- Anglo-American project at Pompeii
- The British School at Rome's Pompeii Project
- Pompeii Archaeological Research Project: Porta Stabia
- Via dell'Abbondanza Project
- The Swedish Pompeii Project
- The Villa of Oplontis Project
- Philodemus Project
- Herculaneum Conservation Project
- School of Pompeii
- The Great Pompeii Project.

Also examine the work of some individual archaeologists:

- Guiseppe Fiorelli
- Vittorio Spinazzola
- Amadeo Maiuri
- Wilhelmina Jashemski
- Andrew Wallace-Hadrill
- Sarah Bisel
- Estelle Lazer
- Jaye McKenzie-Clark
- Penelope Allison.

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ACTIVITY **15.7**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Having conducted some primary reading and selected a key project and archaeologist, devise and respond to a question to create your own historical investigation.

1. Create an inquiry question that allows you sufficient scope to examine an aspect of the interpretation of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
2. Establish three historical questions and appropriate sub-questions.
3. Conduct research from a balance of ancient and modern historians.
4. Organise your findings in an appropriate manner (table, chart, infographic or video).

Based on the research you conducted in Activity 15.6, complete the following activity.

ACTIVITY **15.8**

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, a British archaeologist, argued that Pompeii 'is at once the most studied and the least understood of sites. Universally familiar, its excavation and scholarship prove a nightmare of omissions and disasters. Each generation discovers with horror the extent to which information has been ignored, neglected, destroyed and left unpublished'. Craft a well-written historical essay, article or multimodal presentation that addresses the following question: To what extent have the projects and archaeologists post-1960 fundamentally altered modern interpretations and improved our understanding of life in Ancient Pompeii and Herculaneum? (You could use the above quote as a starting point.) Refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 6* for the process you need to follow in order to create your response.



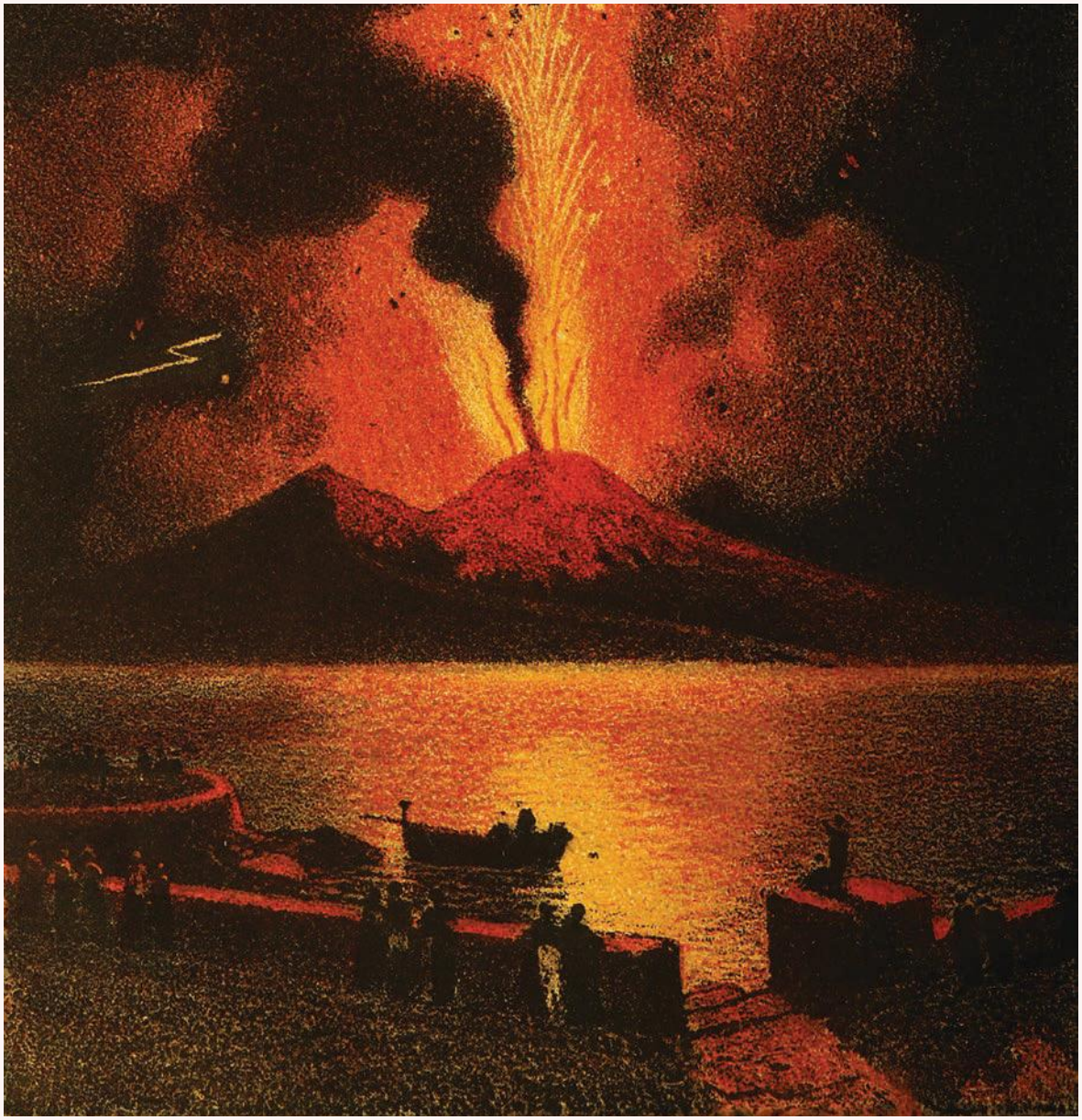
SOURCE 15.71 Villa of Poppea, one of the sites of the Villa of Oplontis project

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- The locations of Pompeii and Herculaneum were heavily influenced by the geography of the region, especially the fertile plains and proximity to the sea.
- Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 CE, burying both Pompeii and Herculaneum.
- Excavation commenced in the 1700s, and up until the later part of the nineteenth century was poorly done, amounting to not much more than treasure hunting.
- Pompeii and Herculaneum are recognised as problematic sites as a result – there is much source deterioration, and many uncontextualised and missing artefacts.
- The sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum still provide important information that is always being extended upon and reinterpreted, especially through the likes of Estelle Lazer, Sarah Bisel and Andrew Wallace-Hadrill.
- Vital information is provided from these sites about religious practices, entertainment and leisure, occupation and trade, social structure, and so on in a provincial Roman town.



SOURCE 15.72 An 1866 illustration of the eruption of Vesuvius

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
With reference to the information and ideas presented in this chapter, and your own knowledge, explain how new research and technologies since the 1980s have changed earlier interpretations of human remains from Pompeii and Herculaneum.

DEVISE
To assess the evidence, make a list of questions you should ask when examining a source.

ANALYSE
Compare the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum. What are their similarities and differences?

EVALUATE
Given the degradation and poor archaeological practices that dominated the site for so long, to what extent does Pompeii continue to be a valuable source?

SYNTHESISE
What do sources reveal about the nature of local political life in Pompeii and Herculaneum?

COMMUNICATE
Read the source below and answer the question.

SOURCE 15.73 M. Beard, 'Pompeii's not-so-ancient Roman remains', *BBC News Magazine*, 2013

> Ghoulish as they are, for most of us (me included), these bodies are always one of the highlights of any display of the discoveries from Pompeii (and a group of them will be starring in an upcoming exhibition at the British Museum). ... The truth is, though, that they are not actually bodies at all. They are the product of a clever bit of archaeological ingenuity, going back to the 1860s.

To what extent do the plaster casts of deceased Pompeiian residents represent a master stroke of archaeological ingenuity?

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ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions

1. Evaluate the limitations of the evidence with reference to the role of women in Pompeii and Herculaneum.
2. Discuss the significance of religion for the people of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
3. Compare the destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum with Thera. What are the similarities and differences?
4. What does the evidence reveal about political life in a Roman provincial town?
5. To what extent is the statement that 'commercial life in Pompeii was inactive' accurate?
6. To what extent does the evidence reflect the religious ideals of everyday Pompeiians?
7. Evaluate the following statement: Leisure and entertainment in Pompeii reflected the Roman Empire in the first century CE.

Investigation tasks

1. Assess the work of Estelle Lazer in contributing to our knowledge of the physicality of the inhabitants of Pompeii.
2. Investigate the representation of wealthy elite in the towns.
3. How do the inhabitants of Pompeii compare with those from Herculaneum?



SOURCE 15.74 A view of the skeletons of the fugitive victims of the eruption of Vesuvius at Herculaneum, open to the public for the first time in 2024

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Chapter 16

THE MEDIEVAL CRUSADES (DIGITAL)

Syllabus reference:
Unit 3, Topics 1 and 2:
Historical periods

ALAN BARRIE

This chapter is available in the digital version of this resource.



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Unit 4

PEOPLE, POWER AND AUTHORITY

UNIT DESCRIPTION

In Unit 4, students investigate an important historical period, with a particular emphasis on the nature and exercise of power and authority. Students also study an ancient personality who had a significant impact on the Ancient World. Students develop an understanding of the importance of human agency, as demonstrated by the possible motivations and actions of ancient personalities. This unit requires a greater focus on a range of written source material and an evaluation of the significance of the selected ancient personality. It examines the key phases by which power and authority are challenged by conflict – causation, course, and consequences – and, through these, the important concepts of historical continuity and change.

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UNIT OBJECTIVES

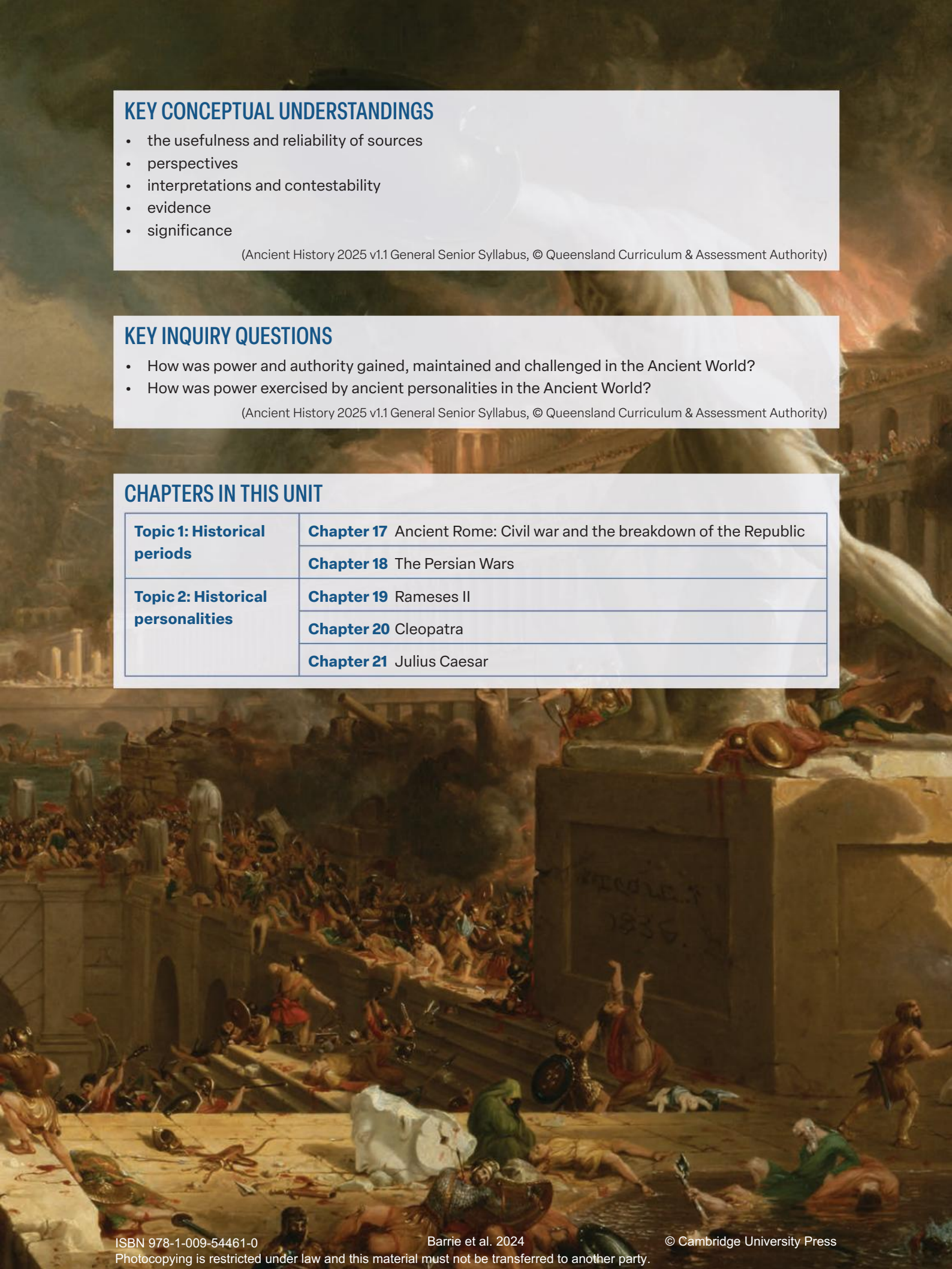
1. Devise historical questions and conduct research about people, power and authority in a particular period in the Ancient World.
2. Comprehend terms, concepts and issues about people, power and authority in the Ancient World.
3. Analyse evidence from historical sources about people, power and authority in the Ancient World.
4. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of evidence from historical sources about people, power and authority in the Ancient World.
5. Synthesise evidence from historical sources to develop historical arguments and decisions about people, power and authority in the Ancient World.
6. Create responses that communicate to suit purpose about people, power and authority in the Ancient World.

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Thomas Cole, *The Course of Empire: Destruction*, 1836

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KEY CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- the usefulness and reliability of sources
- perspectives
- interpretations and contestability
- evidence
- significance

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KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How was power and authority gained, maintained and challenged in the Ancient World?
- How was power exercised by ancient personalities in the Ancient World?

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CHAPTERS IN THIS UNIT

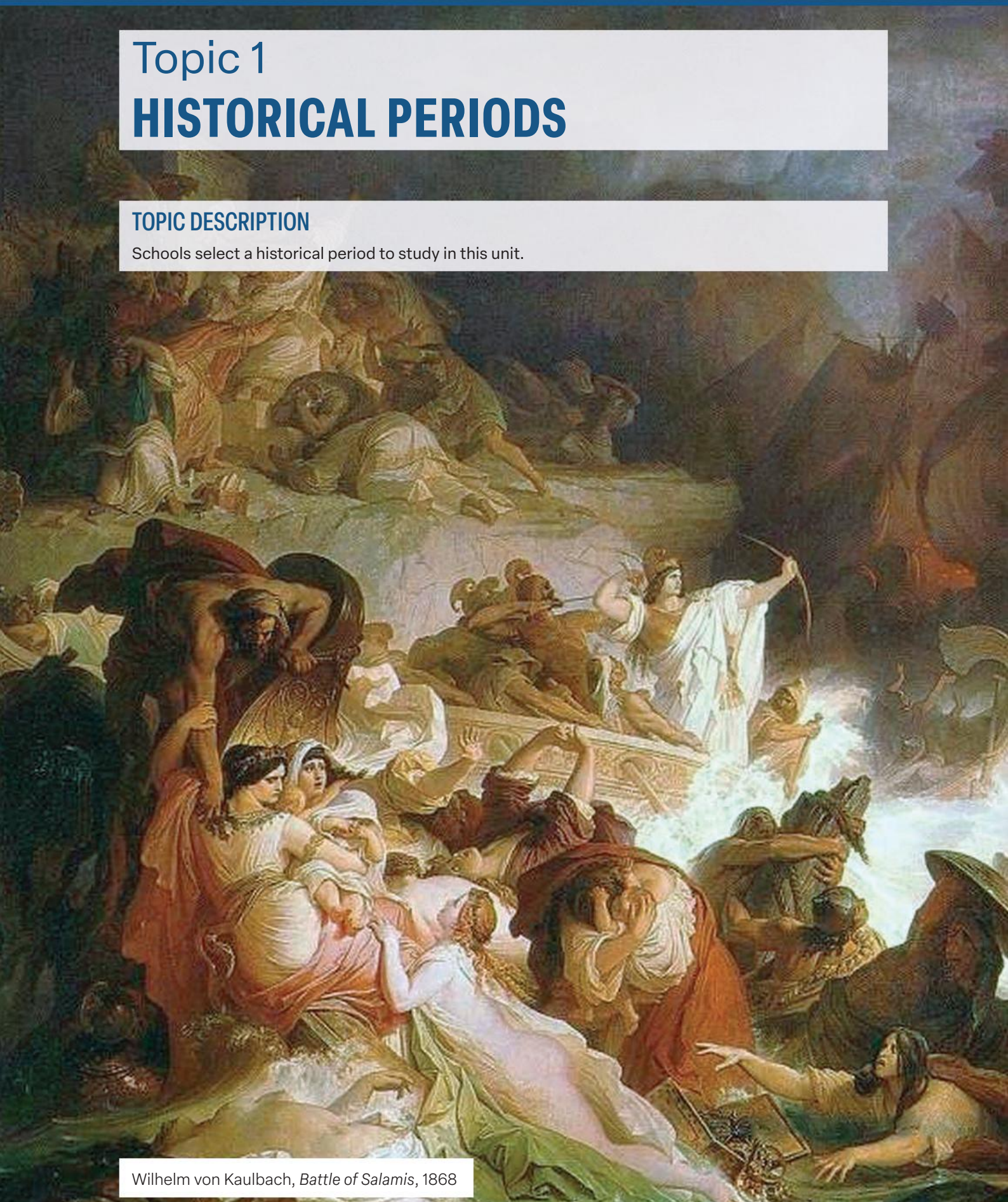
Topic 1: Historical periods	**Chapter 17** Ancient Rome: Civil war and the breakdown of the Republic
	Chapter 18 The Persian Wars
Topic 2: Historical personalities	**Chapter 19** Rameses II
	Chapter 20 Cleopatra
	Chapter 21 Julius Caesar

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Topic 1
HISTORICAL PERIODS

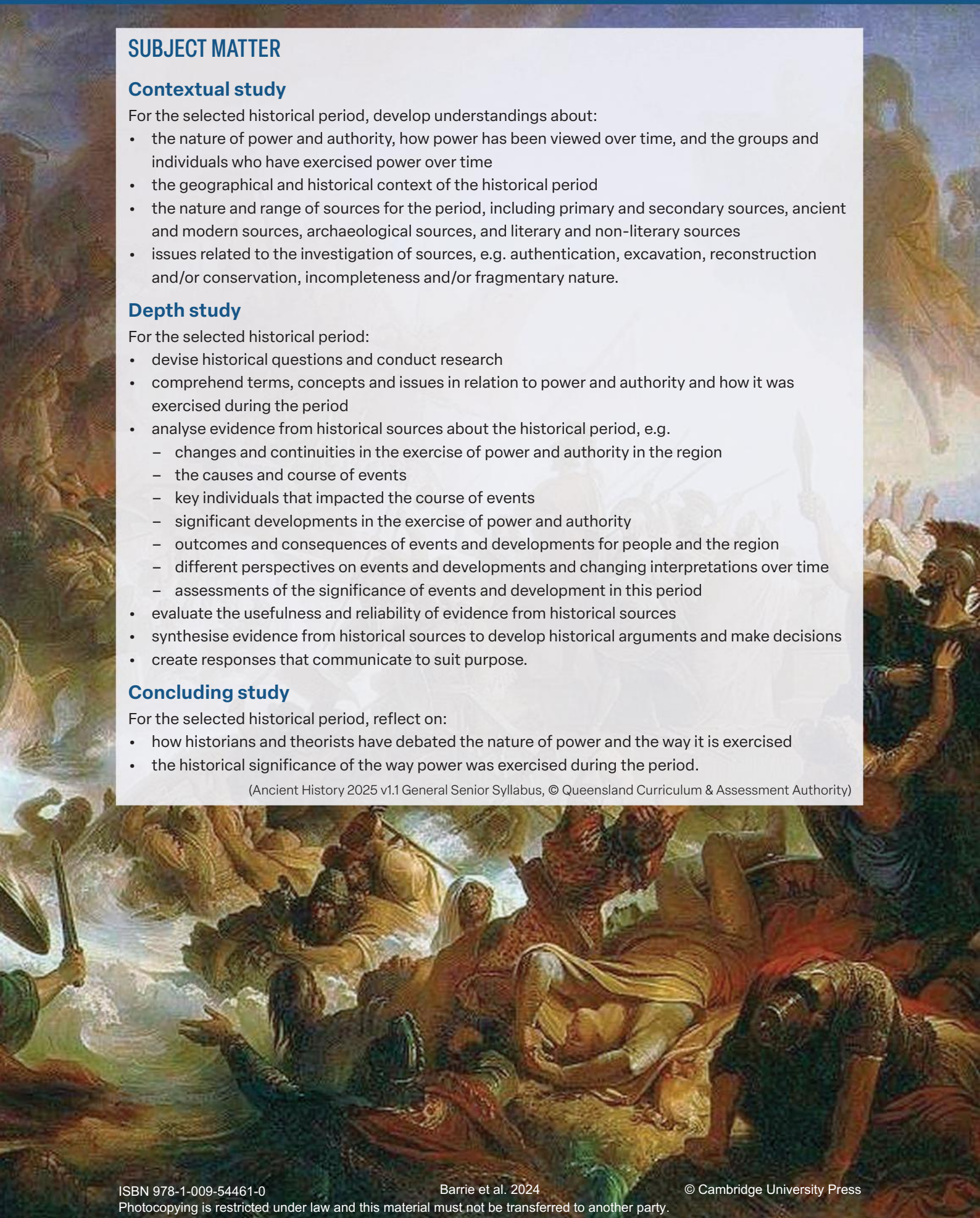
TOPIC DESCRIPTION

Schools select a historical period to study in this unit.



Wilhelm von Kaulbach, *Battle of Salamis*, 1868

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SUBJECT MATTER

Contextual study

For the selected historical period, develop understandings about:

- the nature of power and authority, how power has been viewed over time, and the groups and individuals who have exercised power over time
- the geographical and historical context of the historical period
- the nature and range of sources for the period, including primary and secondary sources, ancient and modern sources, archaeological sources, and literary and non-literary sources
- issues related to the investigation of sources, e.g. authentication, excavation, reconstruction and/or conservation, incompleteness and/or fragmentary nature.

Depth study

For the selected historical period:

- devise historical questions and conduct research
- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to power and authority and how it was exercised during the period
- analyse evidence from historical sources about the historical period, e.g.
  - changes and continuities in the exercise of power and authority in the region
  - the causes and course of events
  - key individuals that impacted the course of events
  - significant developments in the exercise of power and authority
  - outcomes and consequences of events and developments for people and the region
  - different perspectives on events and developments and changing interpretations over time
  - assessments of the significance of events and development in this period
- evaluate the usefulness and reliability of evidence from historical sources
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to develop historical arguments and make decisions
- create responses that communicate to suit purpose.

Concluding study

For the selected historical period, reflect on:

- how historians and theorists have debated the nature of power and the way it is exercised
- the historical significance of the way power was exercised during the period.

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Chapter 17

ANCIENT ROME: CIVIL WAR AND THE BREAKDOWN OF THE REPUBLIC

Syllabus reference: Unit 4, Topic 1: Historical periods

JENNA HAYWOOD AND ALAN BARRIE

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How was power and authority gained, maintained and challenged in the Ancient World?
- How was power exercised by ancient personalities in the Ancient World?

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SOURCE 17.1 The Temple of Saturn in the Roman Forum

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FOCUS: WHAT WAS THE 'FALL' OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC?

To what extent can it be said that the Roman Republic – its values, its identity, its institutions – was already finished, even before the rise of Julius Caesar and Octavian/Augustus?

SOURCE 17.2 A. Kariyawasam (ed.), 'A fallen empire: Lessons from Rome for the modern citizen', *CAINZ Digest*, 11 August 2022

When one hears of Ancient Rome, one might picture an almost fantastical world, with toga-clad senators, legionaries in glistening armour, and crowds roaring for blood in the gladiatorial arena. As culturally and historically distant as it may seem, Rome has had a profound impact on many aspects of western civilisation. In addition to the countless influences on politics, law and other segments of government, Roman symbolism is still displayed in the 'fascia' (axe with a bundle of rods as a symbol of civic authority) seen in the US House of Representatives today. With issues like economic inequality, multiculturalism, tax reform and authoritarianism dominating the cultural zeitgeist, we may share more similarities with the Ancient Romans than many today might think. In the words of Winston Churchill, 'those that fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it', so on that note, this article will explore the lessons a modern citizen can learn from the rise and fall of Rome and what they mean for our future. ...

Looking again to the US, [data published by] Pew Research shows [that] partisanship is on the rise in US politics with Americans increasingly divided among party lines, leading to echo chambers of opinion. More food for thought, when the Roman Republic was at its breaking point, the top 1% controlled 16% of the wealth, the same number in the US as of 2021 was 33%. Australia isn't safe from this plight either, with a Credit Suisse report dated 2018 reporting that the top 1% controlled 23% of the wealth. The Roman Republic lasted decades before it imploded and eventually resolved these issues. The question lawmakers must answer if they leave wealth inequality unaddressed is, is it simply a matter of time?

The implosion of the Roman Republic serves as a reminder of the repercussions of letting wealth inequality run wild. Rising inequality inextricably led to rising social tensions and class warfare, leading to political extremism on levels we are starting to see today. The almost cyclical nature of history is simultaneously fascinating and horrifying and it begs the question, are we simply doomed to repeat these mistakes as our predecessors did millennia ago? The answer is that we do not have to. While this Post-War period of relative peace and immense technological progress may feel like an eternity, it is simply a blip in the grand scheme of time. Perhaps it is worth learning from the many mistakes of a civilisation that lived on for over a millennium and adopting the policies that helped overcome them.

To understand the Fall of the Roman Republic, one has to ask: what actually 'fell'? Is it just the Republican system of government, replaced by the more authoritarian regimes under the Roman emperors/Roman Empire? If that's the case, why then are both 'The Republic' and the Roman **Senate** ('conscript fathers') referred to as continuing systems of government in Rome during the reign of Theodoric the Ostrogoth in the sixth century CE? Or is 'fall' relative to changes in values, virtues and identity – what does it actually mean to be a citizen of, and in, the Roman Republic?

Senate oldest and most powerful assembly in the Republic, had the legislative power to make laws but its membership was dominated by the patricians

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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

17.1 The nature of power and authority in Ancient Rome: The Roman Republic identity (509–202 BCE)

Geographical context

The central geographic location of Rome within Italy and the wider Mediterranean played a large part in its rise to dominance. At its height, the Roman Empire included land that, today, encompasses more than 25 countries.



SOURCE 17.3 A map of Italy showing location of Rome and features listed in Activity 17.1

SOURCE 17.4 Cicero, *De re publica*, Book 2, 54 BCE

> How, then, could Romulus have acted with a wisdom more divine, both availing himself of all the advantages of the sea and avoiding its disadvantages, than by placing his city on the bank of a never-failing river whose broad stream flows with unvarying current into the sea? Such a river enables the city to use both the sea for importing what it lacks and for exporting what it produces ... and by means of it likewise the city can ... obtain from the land, carried on its waters, whatever is the most essential for its life and civilisation. Consequently, it seems to me that Romulus must have had a divine intimation that the city would one day be the seat and hearth-stone of a mighty empire ...

ACTIVITY 17.1

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

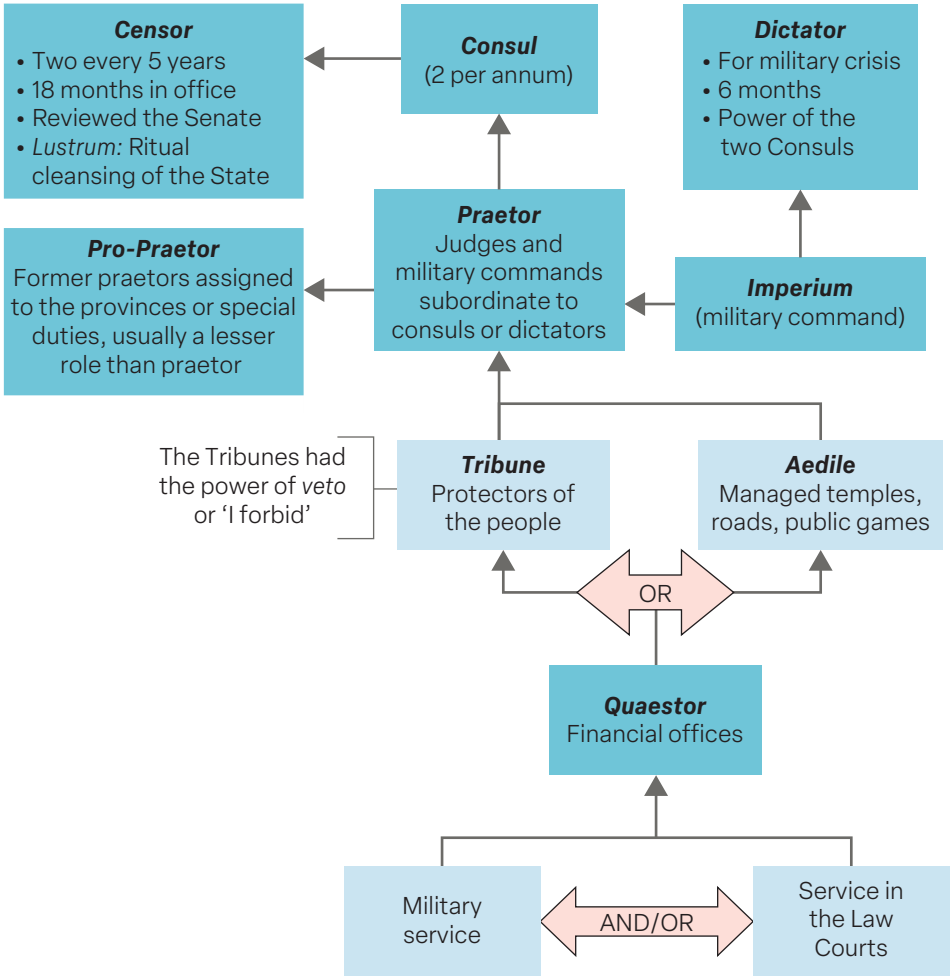
1. Using a copy of Source 17.3, mark the locations of the following:
   - **a.** rivers – Po, Arno, Tiber
   - **b.** seas – Adriatic, Tyrrhenian, Ionian
   - **c.** plains – Etruria, Latium, Campania
   - **d.** mountain ranges – Alps, Apennine
   - **e.** islands – Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica
   - **f.** cities – Rome.
2. Where do you think most of the settlement in Italy occurred? Why? (Consider the position of rivers, plains, mountain ranges and so on.)
3. In which direction do you think it would have been most natural for the Romans to expand?
4. In Source 17.4, why does Cicero believe Romulus made the right choice in placing Rome where he did?
5. How far do Cicero's comments appear to agree with the geographical features indicated on the map?

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Political structures in the Republic

When the last King of Rome was expelled in 509 BCE, a constitution was written that aimed to represent the unified and independent mindset of the new Republic. The constitution retained some old institutions and created new ones so that the Republic would fulfil the driving concept of ***Senatus Populusque Romanus* (SPQR)** – 'The Senate and People of Rome'. The people would work with the Senate through various elected **magistracies** and **assemblies** to collectively govern Rome. Power would be vested in the hands of many, not few or one. Romans feared the threat presented by overwhelming power vested in one person, or a 'king'.

The magistracies



SOURCE 17.5 The ladder of honours *(cursus honorum)* with arrows showing pathways for progress through the ranks. Darker blue panels indicate the office holders (both current and former) are members of the Senate. See Table 17.1 for more information on the magistracies.

Various magistracies (or political positions) were responsible for ensuring the effective day-to-day running of the Republic. The ***cursus honorum*** provided the structural framework for these positions. All positions were re-elected annually with the exception of censor (18 months) and **dictator** (position only created and filled in times of crisis for a maximum of six months). Minimum ages and levels of prior military or legal experience were also set to ensure that those holding such positions had the capability to do what the job required.

***Senatus Populusque Romanus* (SPQR)** 'The Senate and People of Rome'; used in reference to the government of the people

magistracy any of a number of elected (therefore political) executive positions of the Roman Republic, ranked according to the cursus honorum

assemblies various groups that held voting authority in the Republic; membership of assemblies varied; the Senate was the only one with authority to make laws

cursus honorum the ladder of offices that an aspiring politician was expected to climb, which had age limits and set periods between the holding of consecutive offices by one person

dictator position in the *cursus honorum* held in times of political emergency by decree of the Senate

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consul most powerful position of the *cursus honorum*

patrician wealthy social class; small group of privileged elite that came from old aristocratic families

plebeian the lower social class; the majority of Rome's population

curule an ornate stool or chair, usually folding, to be taken to meetings, for magistrates to sit on as a symbol of their status and imperium; also used as a metaphor for high status

TABLE 17.1 The Roman magistrates: Number, functions and relative importance

	Consuls	Praetors	Quaestors	Censors	Dictator	Aediles	Tribunes
Number and subsequent changes	2	1 → 2 → 6 → 8 → 16	2 → 4 → 8 → 20 → 40	2	1	4	Originally 2 – later 10 by c. 450 BCE
Functions and importance	**Consuls** replaced the king in 509 BCE. Chief officials. Commanded army, summoned the Senate, conducted elections.	366 BCE – created by **patricians** to offset opening of consulship to Plebeians. Judicial officials and military commanders. City praetor was the supreme civil judge, usually went on to govern a province.	One of the earliest officials – probably dated back to kings, helped the consuls. Financial officials. Managed taxes, treasury, army pay and all monetary matters.	Created 443 BCE to cope with increasing business of magistrates. Reviewers of the senate membership. In charge of census and public morals, managed more important public works. Could dismiss magistrates and senators on moral grounds.	First dictator supposedly in 501 BCE. Emergency appointment only mainly in times of military crisis, occasionally in times of political crisis, so usually and experienced general. Had complete power while in office.	**Plebeian** aediles created in 494 BCE created after the First Secession of the Plebeians, in response to their grievances. Two **Curule** aediles (higher status) were created in 367 BCE, open to plebeians and patricians. Local government officials. Regulation of markets, care of streets and buildings, police duties, organisation of games and festivals. Curule aediles took over more prestigious roles.	Created 494 BCE after the First Secession of the Plebeians. People's officials. Defended the interests of the plebeians and could veto legislation detrimental to them.
Membership of Senate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

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ACTIVITY **17.2**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Using the information in Source 17.5 and Table 17.1, complete the following questions.

1. Are these statements true or false?
   - **a.** The consuls had supreme command in war.
   - **b.** A dictator was specifically chosen to handle an emergency and held power for only six months, after which he was expected to retire to private life again.
   - **c.** *Aediles* could only enforce the authority of their position of office and had no *imperium*.
   - **d.** Quaestors were no more powerful than praetors.
2. Why do you think the number of praetors and quaestors increased but the other magistracies remained constant?
3. Decide which magistrate would have dealt with the following situations:
   - **a.** collecting taxes from a new province
   - **b.** keeping a register of contracts
   - **c.** paying the soldiers and generals in the army
   - **d.** allocating work gangs to fix holes in the road
   - **e.** accepting a promotion to govern a new province
   - **f.** selecting participants for the gladiatorial games
   - **g.** registering the birth of a new baby
   - **h.** appealing against a proposal not in the best interest of the people
   - **i.** judging civil disputes between citizens
   - **j.** leading the army in times of military crisis
   - **k.** implementing senatorial decisions
   - **l.** expelling a senator for lax morality
   - **m.** nominating an older person for a position as Senator
   - **n.** classifying people in order to determine political rights and military duties.

A key concept in Roman leadership and governance was **imperium**, the authority given to military commanders and the highest magistrates to command the military and to govern and maintain order and justice. Imperium was granted with appointment to a magistracy, or by decree of the Senate or the passing of special laws, such as in the case of provincial governors. Military commanders could stand for elected office and so become members of the Senate, for instance as quaestors, praetors and consuls. In a few rare cases, military commanders were made members of the Senate without being elected as a magistrate. Dictators were, with only a few exceptions, current or former military commanders, and current or former members of the Senate.

Imperium The authority granted to military commanders to lead troops in war, and granted to magistrates to administer justice and enforce the law

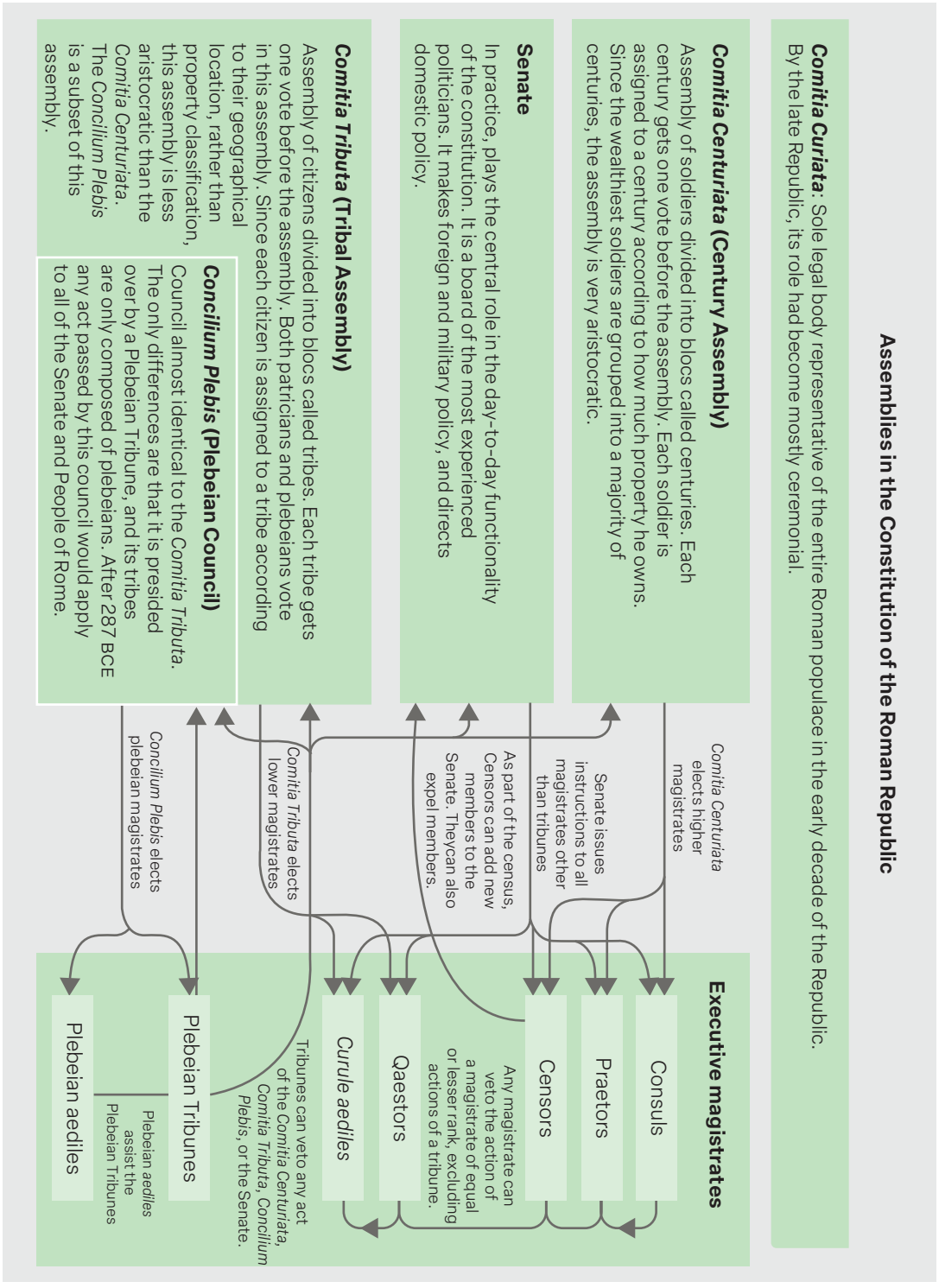
Additional prestige was also informally conferred on the holder's family – descendants of consuls were called *nobiles*. The elevation in social status of an entire family assisted in the development of a social elite. Voters often preferred *nobiles* because of the respect and prestige conferred on the family. It meant that elections were more about an individual's family connections, rather than the individual themselves. Thus, the creation of a public image through carefully orchestrated friendships and marriages became key to political success. The expectation of success was so high that should a son fail to achieve similar levels of prestige as his ancestors, it would be akin to bringing shame upon the family. This disparity between families, and eventually between social classes, was part of the complex catalyst for the collapse of the Republic.

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The assemblies

Four main assemblies were part of the Republic's political system. As every male citizen was eligible to vote on legislation and the election of magistrates, the assemblies met only to vote – not to discuss or initiate action. Legislation was initiated by an individual magistrate, developed in the Senate, and then taken to the respective assembly for voting. No amendments were permissible – the task of the assembly was to simply vote 'yes' or 'no'. For further details on the individual assemblies and how they interacted with the various magistracies, see Source 17.6.

SOURCE 17.6 Assemblies in the Constitution of the Roman Republic



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The Senate

Before the expulsion of the last king of Rome, the Senate was a body comprised of local clan leaders who advised the monarch. They were an advisory body only. All legislative and judicial powers rested entirely with the king. Once the Republic was established, the Senate considered itself the guardian of the new constitution. It grew in prestige during the Second Punic War (218–207 BCE) thanks to its authority to grant military commands. When commanders were successful, it reflected positively on the Senate. The truth of the Senate's power lay in the ancestral custom of ***mos maiorum***. This unwritten code of values, whereby supreme authority lies in the hands of the elders, informally gave the Senate the ability to make decisions without the formal legal 'authority' to do so. As the Republic grew, the appointment of individuals to the Senate began to follow less stringent guidelines.

mos maiorum 'ancestral custom'; Roman traditions that informed social behaviour and etiquette, separate from the law

SOURCE 17.7 Polybius *Histories*, 6.13

The Senate has first of all the control of the treasury, and regulates the receipts and disbursements alike. For the Quaestors cannot issue any public money for the various departments of the state without a decree of the Senate, except for the service of the Consuls. The Senate controls also what is by far the largest and most important expenditure, that, namely, which is made by the censors every offering for the repair or construction of public buildings; this money cannot be obtained by the censors except by the grant of the Senate. Similarly all crimes committed in Italy requiring a public investigation, such as treason, conspiracy, poisoning, or willful murder, are in the hands of the Senate … Or again, outside Italy, if it is necessary to send an embassy to reconcile warring communities, or to remind them of their duty, or sometimes to impose requisitions upon them, or to receive their submission, or finally to proclaim war against them – this too is the business of the Senate. In like manner the reception to be given to foreign ambassadors in Rome, and the answers to be returned to them, are decided by the Senate. With such business the people have nothing to do.

ACTIVITY **17.3**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Using Sources 17.6 and 17.7, consider the following questions and respond in 100–200 words each. Make sure you use language from the question to formulate your hypothesis/argument.

1. Can it be argued that the Senate wielded authority as much as power? Justify your answer.
2. Why do you think magistrates and other men were wary of antagonising the Senate for many years?
3. The word 'senate' comes from the Latin *senex* meaning 'old man'. Why do you think it was given this name? What English words derive from *senex*?

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Inherent problems

In theory, the system of assemblies established in the Republic was equitable. As Rome expanded its influence, a variety of inherent problems emerged:

- To vote, an individual had to be physically present. The expanding Republic often drew people away on campaign or business – if they could not attend, their vote was not counted.
- Senators and patricians often used their influence to sway the voting, essentially monopolising political decisions.
- Senators controlled what legislation came before the assemblies. In that sense, the Republic was arguably more oligarchic (where power is in the hands of a small group) than truly democratic.

17.2 When and where did the events of Ancient Rome take place?

Myths

The foundation of Rome is steeped in legend – something the Roman people were quite proud of. The most common story centres on the Trojan hero Aeneas. The Greek victory at Troy sent the Trojan people wandering, and some of them, including Aeneas, settled in the area of Lavinium. The story of Aeneas' arrival in Italy is recorded in Livy's poem *The Aeneid*. These people came to be known as the 'Latins'. Later, two descendants of Aeneas, the baby princes Romulus and Remus, were spared a death sentence ordered by King Amulius and set adrift on the River Tiber. The river god ensured they were carried safely downstream where they were discovered and cared for by a female wolf. This part of the story is immortalised in the iconic Capitoline Wolf sculpture. Eventually, a local shepherd discovered Romulus and Remus and raised them like they were his own sons. When they had grown, the two set out to found their own city, but argued over the location. Romulus wanted to build their city on the Palatine Hill, but Remus preferred the Aventine Hill. After much argument, Romulus eventually killed Remus. The date of Remus's death marks the foundation of Rome – recorded by Livy as 21 April 753 BCE.



SOURCE 17.8 The Capitoline Wolf (Lupa Capitolina): the wolf statue dates from the eleventh and twelfth centuries CE and is cast in bronze. The twins were a fifteenth-century addition. Why would the twins have been added in the fifteenth century?

Archaeological evidence suggests that around the eighth century BCE, a series of small villages were scattered over the seven hills of modern Rome. These villages grew into distinct communities, which came into contact with travelling Greeks and the Etruscan people to the north. By the end of the seventh century BCE, a marketplace (the forum) was added after part of the marshy site was drained.

SOURCE 17.9 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, Book 1, 72.182–3, 7 BCE

Aeneas, coming from the land of the Molossians, founded Rome with Odysseus.

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SOURCE 17.10 Livy, *History of Rome*, Book 1, 6.3–4, 27 BCE

> Romulus and Remus ... were suddenly seized by an urge to found a new settlement on the spot where they had been left to drown as infants and had been subsequently brought up. There was, in point of fact, already an excess of population at Alba ... For this purpose Romulus took the Palatine Hill ...

ACTIVITY **17.4**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Why might the Romans be happy to accept these myths about the foundation of their city?
2. Can you see any parallels between the legend of Romulus and Remus, and any other stories you know?

ACTIVITY **17.5**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

The Romans adapted many features from the Etruscans, such as gladiatorial funerary games and many features or art, architecture and fashion. Roman identity was also created by rejecting many Etruscan values, like luxury, the higher status of women, and kingship as a political system.

1. Research and further create a list of things that the Romans borrowed from the Etruscans.
2. Research and further create another list of things that the Romans rejected about the Etruscans in order to build their own contrasting identity.



SOURCE 17.11 Jacques-Louis David, *The oath of the Horatii*, 1784–85

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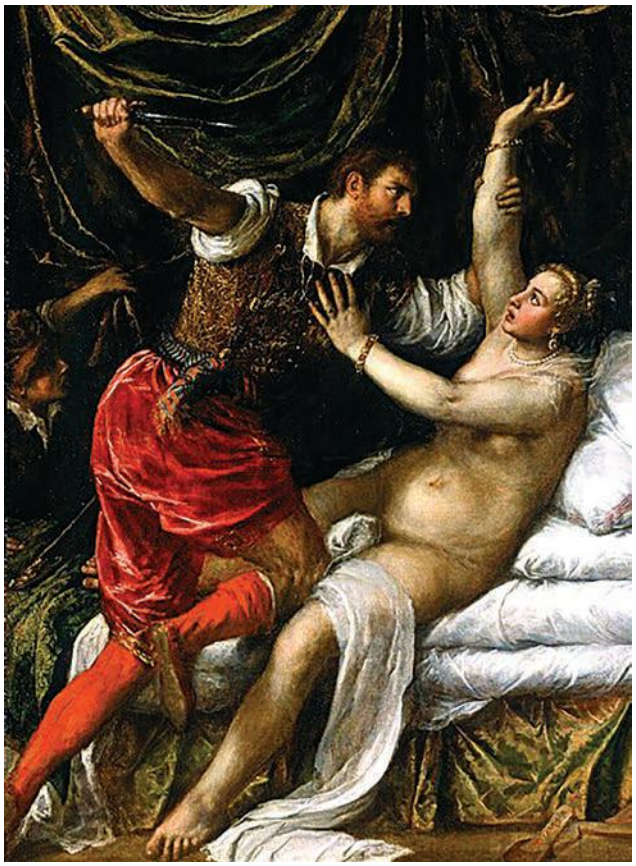


SOURCE 17.12 Charles Le Brun, *Horatius Cocles defending the bridge*, c. 1642–43



SOURCE 17.13 Sebastiano Ricci, *Rape of the Sabine women*, 1702–03

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SOURCE 17.14 Titian, *Tarquinius and Lucretia*, c. 1571

ACTIVITY **17.6**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Find and read online other famous foundational stories about the Roman Republic.

- the Sabine Women
- the Battle of the Champions (Horatii)
- Horatio at the Bridge (Horatius Cocles)
- the rape of Lucretia (Tarquin, Brutus, Lucretia: contrast between Etruscans and Romans).

1. What similarities are there between them?
2. What are the values in each of the stories that relate to Roman identity? (Consider divine protection, teamwork, actions for the glory of Rome and not individual glory.)

Key issues, themes and terms

In the decline of the Roman Republic, it is important to distinguish between power and authority. German sociologist Max Weber defined power as *the ability to exercise one's will over others*, and authority as *power that is accepted by others who agree to follow it*. Put simply, authority is the power that the law gives a person, while power comes from strength of personality. Think about the following questions and keep them in mind as you work through this chapter.

1. How would you explain the difference between power and authority?
2. Can you identify any personalities in history who you believe had both power and authority?
3. Was the combination of both essential to their success? Why or why not?
4. Can you identify any personalities in history who had only power OR authority?
5. How did the lack of one impact their leadership/position?

As you explore the complex reasons behind the collapse of the Republic, you will see that investing power or authority in the hands of individuals, rather than keeping the balance between all elements of the system, had serious repercussions. Unfortunately, the people of the Republic did not realise this lesson soon enough and were stuck with a mess of their own making. The powerful individuals in this chapter all had some combination of authority and power.

- What is power?
- What is authority?
- How did one achieve power and authority in Republican Rome?
- How was power and authority abused by key individuals?

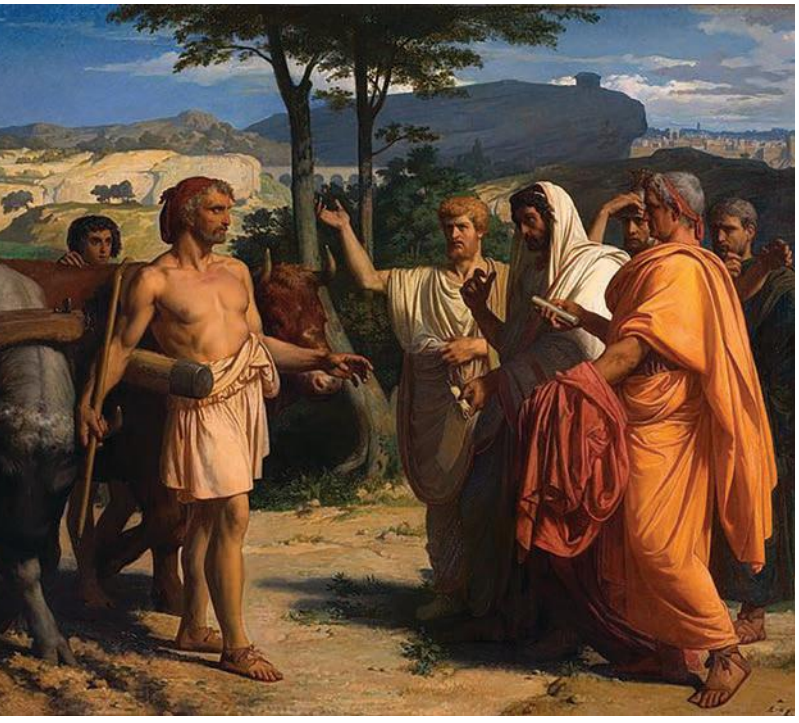
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Values

The key characteristics of Roman identity

Romans took great pride in their identity and so did many others in the Ancient World. They championed numerous values and characteristics:

- *auctoritas:* prestige, moral authority, the type of authority associated with the Roman Senate. Not to be confused with *potestas* or *imperium* (power), which were held by the magistrates or the people
- *comitas:* friendliness
- *constantia:* perseverance, stamina, endurance
- *clementia:* mildness and gentleness
- *dignitas:* dignity, self-worth, personal standing
- *disciplina:* discipline, hard-work
- *firmitas:* tenacity, strength of mind, to stick to one's purpose (firmness)
- *frugalitas:* frugality; simplicity of style, which contrasts to riches and decadence
- *gravitas:* gravity, seriousness, earnestness
- *honestas:* respectability through honesty
- *humanitas:* the appreciation of learning, and being cultured
- *industria:* industry; hard work
- *pietas:* dutifulness; a respect for the natural order socially, politically, and religiously; associated with *mos maiorum*
- *prudentia:* prudence, foresight, wisdom
- *salubritas:* wholesomeness, cleanliness
- *severitas:* responding to the seriousness and gravity of a situation
- *veritas:* truthfulness, honest conduct
- *virtus:* manliness, valour, personal excellence and courage.



SOURCE 17.15 Alexandre Cabanel, *Cincinnatus receiving the Ambassadors of Rome*, 1843

A truly 'Roman' hero: Cincinnatus

The Aequi were an Italic tribe who lived in the Apennine Mountains to the east of Rome. They had been raiding Rome for some years when eventually, in 458 BCE, they managed to attack and surround a Roman army. As the army's situation become dire during the siege, the Senate appointed Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus as dictator for six months. While it's only a minor incident in early Roman history, the story of Cincinnatus became a 'trend-setter', a 'true myth', a model and hero of 'middle class' values that created, enlarged and supported the Roman State.

Having won, Cincinnatus resigned from the position of dictator after just 16 days and went back to his farm. Examples like his, described in Source 17.16, pushed Romans to great extremes to make great sacrifices in order to live up to the idea of a 'true Roman'.

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SOURCE 17.16 Livy, *The Histories*, Book 3.26–27

For those who are disdainful of all human values except riches and who think that high position and excellence are impossible without great wealth, it is worthwhile to listen to the following story. The one hope of the people and the empire of Rome, Lucius Quinctius, cultivated a farm of four acres on the other side of the Tiber. It was directly across from the spot where the dockyard now is situated and to this day is called the Quinctian meadows. There he was found by the deputation from the senate, either bent over his spade as he dug a ditch or ploughing – at any rate, as historians agree, occupied with the work of his farm.

After greetings had been exchanged, they expressed the wish that 'It might turn out well for both him and his country ...' and requested that he put on his toga and hear the mandate of the senate. Crying out in surprise, 'Is everything all right?' He called to his wife to bring his toga from the cottage and hurry! There, after wiping off the dust and sweat, he put it on and came forward to the deputation, who hailed him dictator and summoned him into the city. When they had explained the army's alarming situation he crossed over the Tiber in a boat provided by the state. On the other side he was greeted by his three sons, who had come out to meet him, followed by other friends and relatives, and by most of the senators. Accompanied by this gathering he was conducted to his house by the lictors. A great crowd of plebeians also collected, not at all overjoyed to see Cincinnatus' selection; they considered the office too powerful and the man himself even more relentless and uncompromising. For that night no precautions were taken, aside from posting a watch in the city.

The next morning Cincinnatus arose and went into the Forum before daybreak, where he named Lucius Tarquitius as master of horse. This man was a patrician by birth, although he had been forced by poverty to serve in the infantry, and was considered the finest soldier in Rome. Accompanied by Tarquitius, the dictator went into the assembly of the people, where he proclaimed a suspension of all civic affairs, ordered shops to be closed throughout the city, and forbade the transaction of all private business. He then issued an order that everyone of military age should report in arms at the Campus Martius before sunset, carrying rations for five days and twelve stakes for palisades. Those too old for military duty he ordered to prepare rations for their neighbours serving in the army while these were preparing their arms and looking for stakes.

Immediately the young men ran to collect stakes, taking the first they came to, with no one stopping them, since everyone was eager to carry out the orders of the dictator. At the appointed time the line was drawn up in an order adapted for battle as well as marching, in the event that the occasion should arise; the dictator led the infantry in person, with Tarquitius at the head of the cavalry. Cincinnatus surprised the enemy at night and the Aequi soon were reduced from besiegers into besieged. Beset by a double attack, the Aequi abandoned their assistance for supplication, begging first the commander of one army, then the other, not to make their victory a slaughter. The consul ordered them to go to the dictator. Cincinnatus, wishing to humiliate them in defeat, angrily ordered that their general Gracchus Cloelius and their other officers be brought to him in chains, and the town of Corbio be evacuated. He did not want the blood of the Aequi, he said; they could go if they would confess that they were conquered and pass under the yoke. A yoke was made of three spears and under it were marched the Aequi.

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ACTIVITY **17.7**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Develop your own definition for each of the following terms:
   - **a.** plebeians
   - **b.** patricians
   - **c.** the Senate
   - **d.** *auctoritas*
   - **e.** *imperium*
   - **f.** *mos maiorum*
   - **g.** *potestas*
   - **h.** *cursus honorum*
   - **i.** magistracies
   - **j.** the assemblies.
2. How are each of the terms seen in the story of Cinncinatus?

17.3 Sources for Ancient Rome

Lost works (or surviving in fragments)

While modern texts make ready use of contemporary and ancient sources, it is important to note that these writers would have used material from several lost texts (most of which are entirely lost; some of which survive only in fragments in the works of others that have survived). Some of these lost works are as follows:

- *The Annals of the Pontifex Maximus*, or the *Annales Maximi*, were religious documents, names of consuls, deaths of priests, and various disasters throughout history. The *Tabulae Albatae* included information on the origin of the Republic.
- The annalistic tradition (year-by-year accounts of the history of a city; usually from the founding of the city up until the time that they were living in) includes works by:
  - Gnaeus Gellius (c. 140 BCE)
  - Lucius Calpurnius Piso Frugi (c. 133 BCE)
  - Publius Mucius Scaevola's (c. 133 BCE) history from the foundation of the city in 80 books
  - Sempronius Asellio (c. 100 BCE)
  - Quintus Claudius Quadrigarius (first century BCE).
- Historiography (writing history 'from the founding of the city') was established by Quintus Fabius Picto who wrote in Greek. Many others were inspired by the new literary form, including Lucius Cincius Alimentus, Gaius Acilius, Aulus Postumius Albinus, and Cato the Elder.
- Cato the Elder, the first historian to write in Latin, wrote the *Origines* to teach Romans what it means to be Roman. The *Origines* emphasised religious elements through Roman history, and the Roman superiority to the Greeks, because of the growing influence of Greek ideas and culture in Rome (see Depth Study).
- The monographic tradition means writing a detailed study of single theme or issue (which could include the lives of individuals).
  - Gaius Gracchus wrote a biography of his brother, Tiberius Gracchus, as did Gaius Fannius (however, it showed him in a negative light).
  - Gaius Licinius Macer wrote an anti-Sullan biography, while Valerius Antias was pro-Sulla in his work.

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It is important for modern readers to note that Ancient Roman historians wrote realistic and practical histories in order to benefit future statesmen. Their approach tended to discuss historical events with special reference to causes, conditions and results. In Roman historiography, the facts and an impression of what the facts mean are presented by the author. Interpretation is always a part of historiography; Romans never made any pretence about this. Awareness of conflict between the facts and the interpretation of those facts indicates a good historian. Both Polybius (who wrote in Greek) and Tacitus used this approach. Polybius's histories have an aristocratic ethos and reveal his opinions on honour, wealth and war. Tacitus's writings have both literary merit and interpretations of facts and events. He was not purely objective; rather, his judgements served a moral function.

Surviving works

Noted below are some of the historians mentioned in this chapter whose works survive in full.

Polybius (c. 208–116 BCE) was a prominent Greek, and was one of the 1000 Achaean nobles who were transported to Rome as hostages in 167 BCE. He remained there for 17 years, was patronised by Lucius Aemilius Paullus Macedonicus, (conquering general of the Third Macedonian War) and was tutor to his sons, Fabius and Scipio Aemilianus (who had been adopted by the eldest son of Scipio Africanus). Thus, we see in his history a very pro-Scipio sentiment. Freed in 150 BCE, he nonetheless went on campaign with Scipio Aemilianus to Africa, and was present at the Sack of Carthage in 146 BCE, which he later described. He returned to Greece and continued to write his histories.

Sallust (86 – c. 35 BCE), born a plebeian, was expelled from the senate in 50 BCE on moral grounds (corruption in governing the province of Africa), but quickly revived his career by attaching himself to Julius Caesar. A ***populares***, he wrote about the Catilinarian Conspiracy in 66–63 BCE, and the war with Jugurtha which took place from 111–105 BCE. He used the Jugurthine War as a backdrop for his examination of the development of party struggles in Rome in the first century BCE.

populares politicians who believed in the rights of the populace, or who used popular support to gain political power

Livy (59 BCE – 17 CE) was a Roman historian best known for his work *Ab Urbe Condita*, a monumental history of Ancient Rome, written in Latin between 27 and 9 BCE, which covers the period from the legends concerning the arrival of Aeneas and the refugees from the fall of Troy, the city's founding in 753 BCE, the expulsion of the kings in 509 BCE, and down to Livy's own time, during the reign of the emperor Augustus – his patron and sponsor. His history attributes success to morality, and failure with its moral decay.

Diodorus Siculus was a Greek historian of the first century BCE. He wrote the *Bibliotheca*: 40 books that were intended to be a universal history from mythological times to the first century BCE, which relied heavily on written accounts for information, most of which are now lost.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus was a Greek historian living in Rome who wrote a history of Rome from its mythical beginnings until the First Punic War, consisting of 20 books.

Appian (c. 95–165 CE) wrote his *History* in Greek, about half of which survives, which covers the Civil Wars of the late Republic (in his Books XIII to XVII). Appian addresses the period roughly from 133 to 35 BCE, which covers from the reforms of Tiberius Gracchus to the death of Sextus Pompey.

Cassius Dio (c. 165–235 CE), of Greek origin, became a Roman Senator, and wrote a Roman history of some 80 books, but the only surviving portion of the Roman history is the part from 69 BCE to 46 CE.

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DEPTH STUDY

Introduction: Processes of change

The Struggle of the Orders

The growing domination of the patricians over political affairs caused resentment and tension between the patricians and plebeians. The patricians had economic and social control over society and as the plebeians had virtually no rights, their economic situation was steadily becoming more desperate. From about 500 BCE, the plebeians began to challenge patrician control and aimed to reduce the widening gulf between the privileged few and the majority. This series of conflicts has been termed the **Struggle of the Orders**.

Struggle of the Orders series of conflicts between plebeians and patricians from about 500 BCE to the early third century BCE due to increasing social, economic and political disparity between the classes

Without access to legal and political processes, the plebeians had little chance of improving their economic, social or religious status. During Rome's wars of expansion, the plebeians were the ones away from home on unpaid military service. They often returned home after years abroad to discover their lands and homes in ruin. The main grievances of the plebeians are outlined in Table 17.2.

TABLE 17.2 Main grievances of the plebeians

Injustice	Description
Political	• Patricians monopolised government. • Only political role for plebeians was to vote in *Comitia Centuriata*.
Social	• No plebeian could marry a patrician, perpetuating social divisions. • Even if financially prosperous, plebeians were regarded as inferior. • Patricians wore distinguishing clothes.
Economic	• Many plebeians were poor and ran risk of being enslaved for debt. • Plebeians were excluded from sharing in public land.
Religious	• Plebeians were excluded from (politically important) priestly offices.
Legal	• Laws were unwritten (until about 450 BCE) and subject to the whim of patricians, with no right of appeal.

These grievances led to the First Secession of the Plebeians in 494 BCE (shown in Source 17.65) when as a protest the plebeians left the city (seceded) and climbed the Sacred Mount, refusing to return until the grievances were addressed. So dependent were the patricians on the labour, military service, and goods provided by the plebeians that they agreed to the creation of the Plebeian Tribunes and Aediles.

One of the plebeians' next moves was to establish their own assembly, the *Concilium Plebis*. The assembly was only officially recognised in 471 BCE, due to the sheer weight of public support for it. Decrees passed by the *Concilium Plebis* were initially only binding on its members, but this changed in 287 BCE when a law called the Lex Hortensia came into force making laws passed by the Concilium Plebis binding on all Roman citizens. Patricians were excluded from participation in the plebeian assembly, and it had the right to veto any legislation.

The next task the plebeians tackled was the codification (writing down) of laws. Until the mid-fifth century BCE, laws were not written down or published for the information of all people. Magistrates could make any decisions they liked, and plebeians did not have the knowledge or evidence to argue their case.

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The first codification of Roman laws became known as the Twelve Tables. They were displayed publicly in the forum for all people to read and theoretically remained the basic law of Rome for 1000 years. In reality, many laws were forgotten and ignored.

Gradually, access to public office was granted to the plebeians, and laws about intermarriage between plebeians and patricians were changed. The execution of insolvent debtors was also outlawed. Wealthy plebeians benefited the most from these changes. Many accrued more wealth than patricians thanks to their business acumen as merchants. These plebeians were eligible for recruitment into the cavalry. Consequently, their involvement in the cavalry saw the emergence of a new middle class in Rome – the ***equite***.

equite a 'middle class' that grew during the second and third centuries BCE, as provision was made for plebeians who could afford to equip their own horse to enlist in the cavalry; they became wealthy from business and their status was just below that of senators

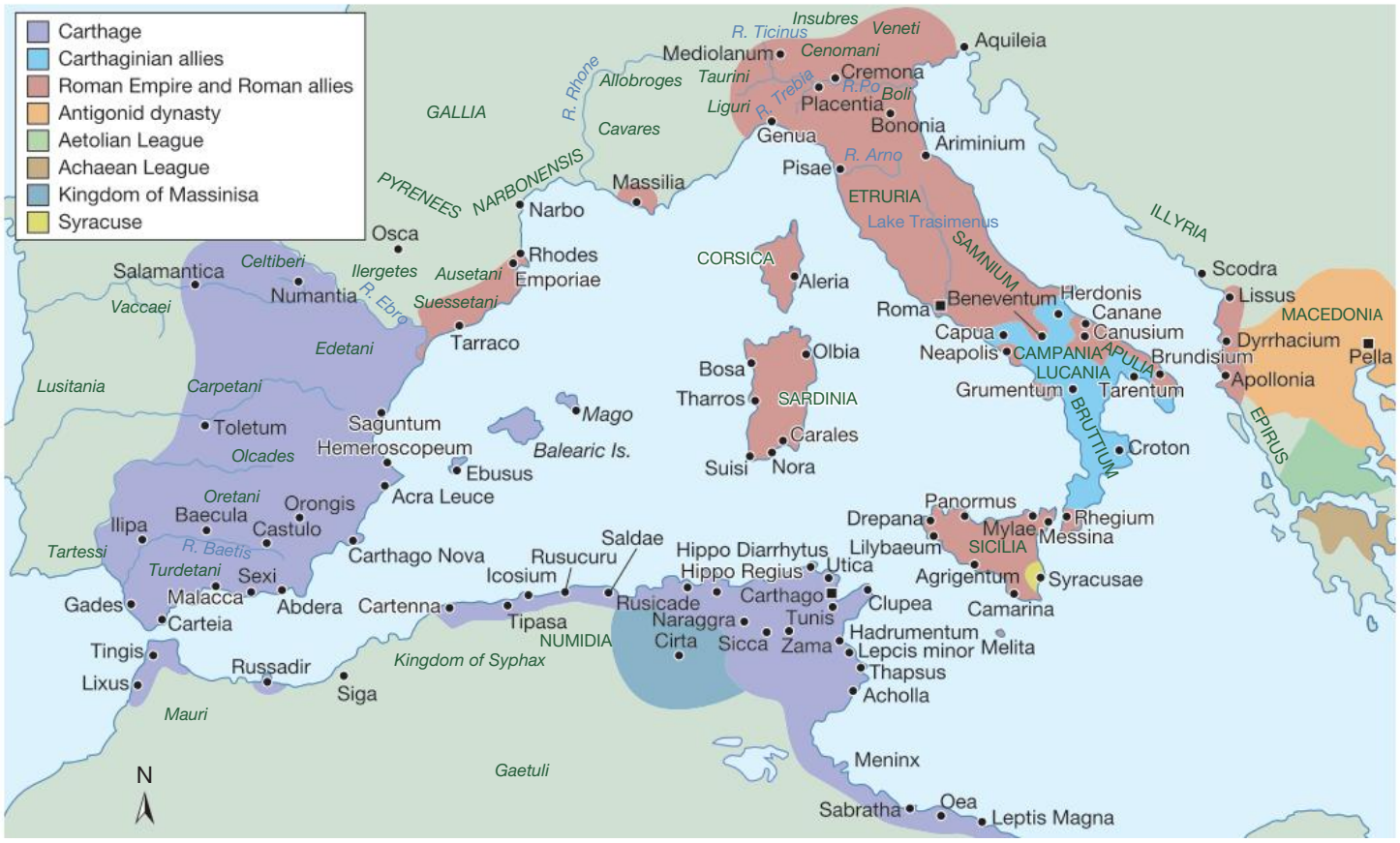
The Struggle of the Orders did not eliminate the plebeians' main grievance, though: the privileged position of the patricians. Patricians retained control over most government institutions, and land ownership continued to be key for political power and office. The wars of expansion made the rich wealthier as they gained control of more land, and the poor were left out.

ACTIVITY **17.8**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

In your own words, summarise and explain how the Roman Republic was designed to prevent tyranny.



SOURCE 17.17 A map of the territories involved in the Second Punic War, 218–201 BCE

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17.4 Key personalities in Ancient Rome

Scipio Africanus: A new type of Roman politician?

Scipio Africanus (236–183 BCE) was a Roman general famous for his victory over the Carthaginian leader Hannibal, ending the Second Punic War. He was given the name 'Africanus' in recognition of his victory at the Battle of Zama in 202 BCE.



SOURCE 17.18 Bust of Scipio Africanus (previously thought to be Sulla)

SOURCE 17.19 N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard (eds), *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 962

An outstanding man of action, Scipio may nevertheless on occasion have felt himself to have been divinely inspired and the favourite of Jupiter Capitolinus. This aspect of his character gave rise to the 'Scipionic legend', born during his lifetime but later elaborated (e.g. by parallels with Alexander the Great). Profoundly convinced of his own powers, Scipio personified a new era in which Greek ideas swept over Roman life. By his tactical reforms and strategic ideals he forged a new weapon with which he asserted Rome's supremacy in Spain, Africa, and the Hellenistic East, championing Rome's imperial and protectorate mission in the world. He turned a city-militia into a semi-professional army, which for ten years he commanded at the People's wish; his victory at Zama gave him the most powerful position yet held by a Roman general. But the time had not yet come when the individual challenged the power of the Senate. Scipio offered no threat to the nobility except through the normal channels of political life in which he showed no particular ability. Factional jealousies, the size of his *clientela*, and reaction against his generous foreign policy and his enthusiasm for Greek culture created *invidia* and led to his downfall amid personal and political rivalries, but he had demonstrated that Rome's destiny was to be a Mediterranean, not merely an Italian, power.

SOURCE 17.20 S. Prince, *The Presentation of Scipio Africanus: Hellenization and Roman Elite Display in the 3rd and 2nd Centuries BC,* Bachelor of Arts (Hons I), University of Queensland, 2021, p. 146

Scipio played a critical but under-recognised role in the cultural exchange between Rome and the Mediterranean as both a product of, and a vessel for, the process of 'Hellenization'. ... by the late 3rd Century many individuals had begun to explore Hellenistic techniques of self-promotion. ... In each stage of his career, Scipio presented himself using Hellenistic techniques and ideals where appropriate and advantageous, and his audiences interacted with and further developed his image through honorific practice. Scipio's interaction with Hellenistic culture in his personal life and political image greatly contributed to his public appeal ... in such a way that it was palatable to his audiences and profitable for himself. The standards set by his eye-catching appearance, relationship with the gods, his triumph, and heroic identity, formed models for elite competition within the 2nd Century ... His relationships with foreign kings, particularly Masinissa, Philip V, and Antiochus, as well as with foreign peoples, particularly the Iberians, Sicilians, and Greek cities in Asia Minor, transcended the

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traditional norms of Roman practice and reflected Hellenistic conceptions of the 'ideal benefactor'. Evidence for Hellenistic precedents allows for the conclusion that Scipio was consciously acting in this way, due to influence from the Hellenistic world and in an attempt to operate in familiar terms that appealed to local audiences. In return, members of the Hellenized Mediterranean elite were actively responding to and developing Scipio's image by honouring him with portrait coinage, honorific titles, gifts, and inscriptions, methods traditionally reserved for a Hellenistic king or benefactor. Not only does this provide insight into Scipio's identity, but it also demonstrates the influence of Hellenistic precedent on the development of Roman foreign diplomacy and engagement with local customs during the Second Punic War. ... The versatility and value of Hellenistic technique in Scipio's self-promotion is most telling in his political and military career after the conclusion of the Second Punic War ... Just as Scipio built on the examples of his predecessors, his own contributions to elite display set the foundations for both his contemporaries, such as Flamininus, Scipio Nasica, and his brother Asiaticus, and the next generations, such as Scipio Aemilianus and the Gracchi. Similarly, it can be concluded that the conservative opposition to Greek culture in the early 2nd Century was, to a considerable extent, an element of political invective catalysed by the scale and success of Scipio's presentation.

ACTIVITY **17.9**



Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Cognition: Justify. To give reasons or evidence to support an answer, response or conclusion; show or prove how an argument, statement or conclusion is right or reasonable.

'Roman victory over Carthage in 202 BCE (the Second Punic War) was perhaps the single greatest event in the life of the Roman Republic. However, it also sowed the seeds of its own destruction.'

Justify this statement through examination of Sources 17.19 and 17.20 and by comparing them with Cincinnatus.

ACTIVITY **17.10**



Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Outline, in dot point form, the essential characteristics shown in Sources 17.19 and 17.20 of this 'new type' of Roman politician.

Titus Livius, known as Livy, began working on his *History of Rome* at the age of 30 and continued for over 40 years, until his death in 17 CE. Although writing during the reign of Emperor Augustus, Livy nonetheless locates the first serious threat to the Senate's unspoken power of *auctoritas* and breach of *mos maiorum* with Scipio Africanus himself.

These are important concepts of Roman Republican identity. The Senate wielded *auctoritas*, but had no power in *imperium* and *potestas*. *Imperium* was the power to command the Roman army, and rested upon duration and completion of political office. These political positions held *potestas*, which was the legal power belonging to the various positions of the *cursus honorum*.

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Auctoritas was more of a social authority tied to reputation and status, such as the status of a father as head of the family, known as ***paterfamilias***. The Senate, with no legal power per se, were the upholders of Republican values and way of life, the fathers of the Republic, and *mos maiorum* was the continuation from year to year of those traditional roles – 'the customs of our fathers'. For example, the custom was for only consuls (elected leaders of the Republic) to consult with the Senate over matters of grave importance, especially relating to treasury and foreign policy. So it is with Livy himself that we first read of a disruption to this 'way of life'.

paterfamilias 'father of the family'; eldest male within a family group held absolute authority over their wife, children, certain other relatives, clients and slaves; his responsibilities were guided by *mos maiorum*



SOURCE 17.21 Hannibal Barca counting the rings of the Roman knights killed at the Battle of Cannae (216 BCE), 1704

SOURCE 17.22 Livy, *History of Rome*, 28:40–43

40. It was now common talk that Scipio was to dispense with the usual process of drawing lots with his colleague and was to take over Africa as his sphere of action – a province never before assigned to a Roman commander. He himself, no longer satisfied with such minor distinction as he had already won, was saying he had been named consul with the object not merely of conducting the war but of bringing it to an end; and this could be achieved only if he personally took an army across to Africa, which, he openly declared, he would do by the people's authority if the Senate opposed him. This plan of campaign was by no means approved by the leaders of the Senate, and while the rest expressed no definite opinion, either because they were afraid to do so or in the hope of ingratiating themselves with their betters, the question was put to Quintus Fabius Maximus [who, at the end of a long speech, said the following] ... [42]

'Remember and compare what you are proposing to do with what your father did. Your father started for Spain, but returned to Italy from his province in order to meet Hannibal as he came down from the Alps; you on the contrary, with Hannibal in Italy, are preparing to leave it, not because you think that such a move would help the country but rather that it would rebound to your own glory and credit – just as without legal authorization or any decree of the Senate you, a general of the Roman people, left your province and army and entrusted to a couple of ships the fortunes of the State and the majesty of our empire, the safety of which was at the moment intimately bound up with your own' ... 'In my view, gentlemen of the Senate, Publius Cornelius Scipio has been made consul, not for his own personal benefit but to serve the country and us, and the armed forces have been raised for the protection of Rome and Italy, not for arrogant consuls who fancy themselves kings to whisk away to any part of the world they please.'

43. Apart from the aptness to the circumstances of Fabius's speech, his personal authority and his established reputation for soundness of judgement had a powerful effect upon a large part of the Senate, especially upon the senior members, who were more inclined to accept the advice of the old statesman and warrior than to praise the high and adventurous spirit of his young rival.

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SOURCE 17.23 Livy, *History of Rome*, 28:45

45. Scipio's speech was received less favourably than it might have been, because it was generally reported that he intended immediately to bring a bill before the people if he failed to prevail on the Senate to grant him Africa as his province. Accordingly Quintus Fulvius, who had been four times consul as well as censor, demanded that Scipio should openly declare in the Senate whether or not he would permit the House to pass a decree about the assignment of duties, and whether he intended to abide by that decree or to bring a bill before the people. Scipio replied that he would do what was for the interest of the State; whereupon Fulvius said; 'When I asked the question I knew what you would do and what your answer would be, since you are making it clear enough that you are not really consulting the Senate at all, but merely sounding it, and that unless we promptly grant you the province you want you have your bill ready to bring before the people.'

SOURCE 17.24 Livy, *History of Rome*, 28:45

After this Scipio's Games were held and were attended by large and enthusiastic crowds. Marcus Pomponius Matho and Quintus Catius were sent as representatives to Delphi to present to the temple a gift from the spoils taken from Hasdrubal; it took the form of a golden crown 200 pounds in weight together with representations in silver of the spoils of war, weighing in all 1,000 pounds.

Scipio had not pressed for permission (which indeed was never granted him) to raise fresh troops; he did, however, have the Senate's consent to take volunteers and, because he had insisted that the fleet would cost the country nothing, to receive any contributions offered by allied communities towards the construction of new vessels.

ACTIVITY **17.11**



Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Scipio Africanus as a politician: In terms of Roman 'values', what is 'different' or 'uncharacteristic' in the behaviour of Scipio Africanus in each of these sources? Complete the table:

	What is the issue?	How did Scipio behave / react?
17.22		
17.23		
17.24		

2. How would Cincinnatus have acted in contrast to Scipio in this situation?

17.22
17.23
17.24

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We see Scipio Africanus ignoring and even threatening the Senate, craving, culturing and relying on popular support to get his way, and using his own money to fund what the Senate chose not to. These are all characteristics we see in subsequent individuals who, blind or indifferent to whether they acted in the best interests of the Republic or to themselves, contribute to the 'Fall' of the Republic.

The cracks open: 146 BCE

Two major conquests in the second century BCE contributed to accelerating internal issues:

1. the sack of Corinth, which guaranteed Rome's pre-eminence in Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean
2. the final defeat of Carthage (Third Punic War), led by Scipio Aemillianus. Rome was now virtually unchallenged in the Western Mediterranean.

Consider the following interview extracts with Mike Duncan, author of *The Storm before the Storm: The Beginning of the End of the Roman Republic.*

SOURCE 17.25 L. Boissoneault, 'Before the Fall of the Roman Republic, income inequality and xenophobia threatened its foundations', interview with Mike Duncan, *Smithsonian Magazine,* 16 November 2017

Most people have been jumping into the story of the Late Republic in the third act, without any real comprehension of what started to go wrong for the Romans in the 130s and 120s BC ...

One topic you describe at length is economic inequality between citizens of Rome. How did that come about?

After Rome conquers Carthage, and after they decide to annex Greece, and after they conquer Spain and acquire all the silver mines, you have wealth on an unprecedented scale coming into Rome. The flood of wealth was making the richest of the rich Romans wealthier than would've been imaginable even a couple generations earlier. You're talking literally 300 000 gold pieces coming back with the Legions. All of this is being concentrated in the hands of the senatorial elite, they're the consuls and the generals, so they think it's natural that it all accumulates in their hands.

At the same time, these wars of conquest were making the poor quite a bit poorer. Roman citizens were being hauled off to Spain or Greece, leaving for tours that would go on for three to five years a stretch. While they were gone, their farms in Italy would fall into disrepair. The rich started buying up big plots of land. In the 130s and 140s you have this process of dispossession, where the poorer Romans are being bought out and are no longer small citizen owners. They're going to be tenant owners or sharecroppers and it has a really corrosive effect on the traditional ways of economic life and political life. As a result, you see this skyrocketing economic inequality.

When did this in-fighting start to threaten the Republic?

It starts to fail after the imperial triumphs [over rival nations]. With Rome being the most powerful nation in the Mediterranean world, and senatorial families controlling unimaginable wealth, there wasn't any kind of foreign check on their behavior. There was no threat making the Senate collectively say, 'We need to stay together and can't let our internal fights get out of hand because that will leave us weak in the face of our enemies.' They didn't have that existential fear anymore.

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The other big thing is, with a new style of popular politics, you start having way more confrontations. Roman politics until about 146 BC was built upon consensus. By the period of my book, it becomes a politics of conflict. People start ignoring the old unspoken ways of doing business and the whole thing rolled down hill till it was warlords crashing into each other.

Are there any lessons the United States can take from Rome?

... if people's way of life is being disrupted, and things are becoming worse for them at the same time that this tiny clique of elites are making out like bandits, that creates a lot of resentful energy. If you ignore genuine reformers, you leave the field open for cynical demagogues. They're going to use that resentful energy not to answer people's problems, but for their own personal advantage. They make themselves powerful by exploiting people's fears, their grief, their anger. They say, 'I know who to blame for all your problems, it's my personal enemies!'



SOURCE 17.26 Bronze statue of a Hellenistic prince (tentatively identified as Scipio Aemillianus), second century BCE, found on the Quirinal in Rome, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome

Inquiry question: What was the impact of rapid expansion and the influx of Greek culture into Rome?

Rome changed dramatically as its influence expanded around the Mediterranean. Rome's supremacy meant it had access to more sources of wealth and slaves than ever before. Consequently, huge amounts of wealth poured into the city from imperial provinces particularly to the advantage of nobles and equites (equestrian, business and merchant class). Agricultural workers also poured into the city because they been replaced by slaves, creating mass urbanisation in the city. Cheap grain and produce imported from the provinces also undercut their prices, forcing them out of the industry.

The lucrative nature of the provinces meant that patricians competed for positions of authority in them, leading to electoral bribery and corruption. The elite in Rome abandoned traditional values to live lives based on luxury. It was not uncommon for a provincial governor to exploit the province to recoup costs for their political appointment. Source 17.27 recounts what Caius Verres often said in Sicily, in the hearing of many persons.

SOURCE 17.27 Cicero, *Verrem* 1.40

[Caius Verres often said]

that he had a powerful friend, in confidence in whom he was plundering the province; and that he was not seeking money for himself alone, but that he had so distributed the three years of his Sicilian praetorship, that he should say he did exceedingly well, if he appropriated the gains of one year to the augmentation of his own property, those of the second year to his patrons and defenders, and reserved the whole of the third year, the most productive and gainful of all, for the judges.

The growing boundaries of Roman provinces meant that soldiers serving overseas could be absent for months or even years. It was not uncommon for them to return and find that their land had been taken from them by rich nobles who could pay caretakers, buy and control large estates (***latifundia*** – large farms with slave labour) and public land.

latifundia extensive Roman rural estates that used slave labour

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It was these issues that Tiberius Gracchus attempted to address in 133 BCE through his land reforms. Lastly, a consequence of increasing Greek influence was the importance of pleasure or individual glory over that of the State. Previously, State issues were more important than those of the individuals (e.g. as shown by the example of Cincinnatus).

A note about sources and evidence

Greek and Roman literary sources at this time all come from the perspective of the elites, and a 'top down' bias is present against the lower social classes. The period is well served for evidence but perspectives vary and individual writers are self-interested, especially Cicero, Caesar, Sallust and other Roman writers. As a biographer, Plutarch has a focus on individuals, rather than history. Greek writers, such as Plutarch, Appian and Cassius Dio, lived in the second and third centuries CE under the Roman Empire. Consequently, they are writing at a great chronological distance, through Greek eyes and under the influence of Greek traditions of history writing.

Ancient writers place importance on moral discourse. Assessments of individual goodness and badness are valued over the identification and assessment of political, socio-economic and other processes to explain developments in conflict and challenges to power and authority. Lastly, modern historians should be conscious of where and when sources were written with the influence of hindsight. For example, Plutarch is aware in his writing that the Republic was fundamentally changed by civil war in the first century BCE. It is thus important to consider whether he emphasises the change in his work.

17.5 Events and developments in Ancient Rome

Reformers or revolutionaries: Did the Gracchi brothers emphasise decline in order to be elected and present themselves as Rome's saviours?

Tiberius Gracchus

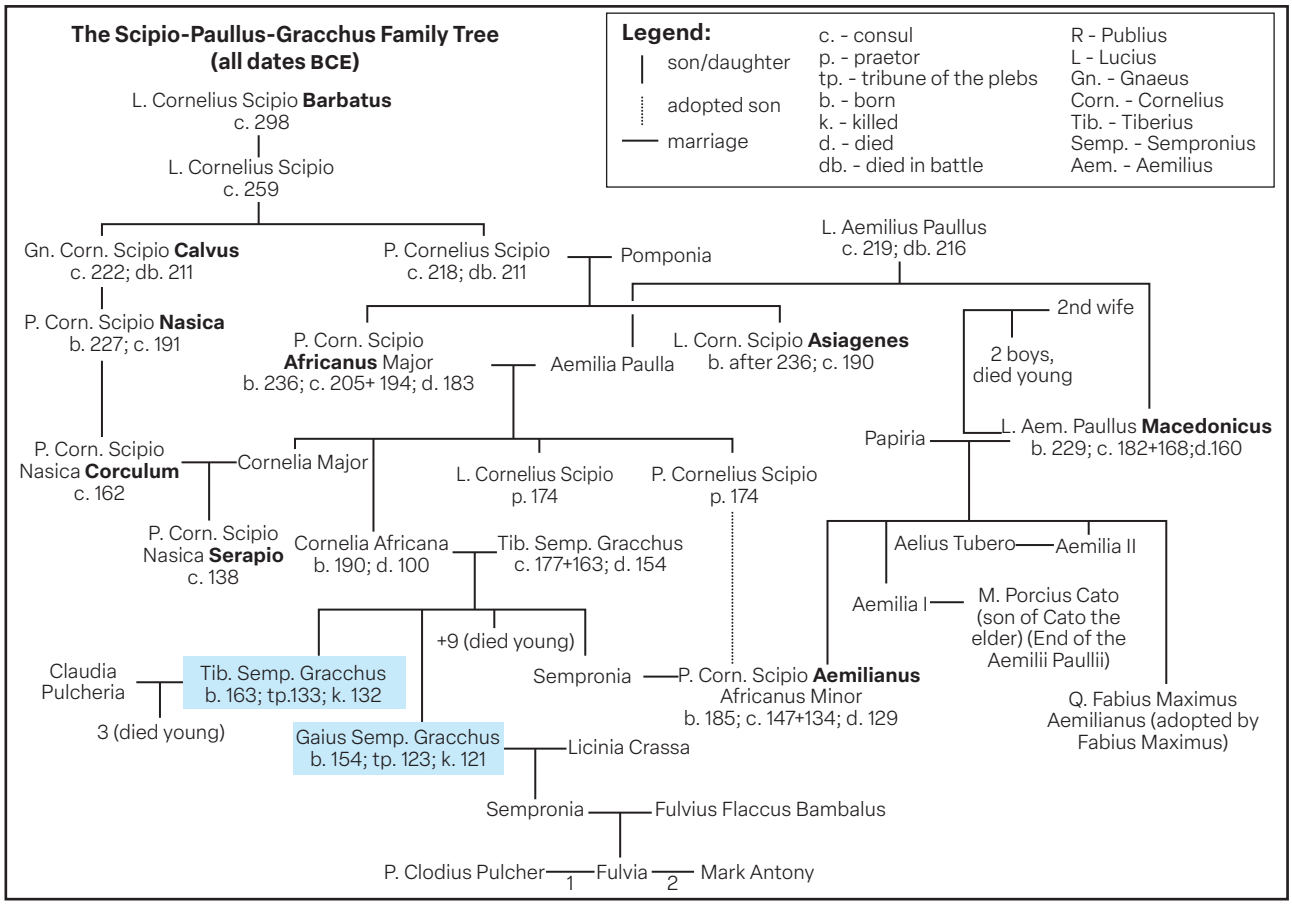
tribune magistracy position representing the plebeian class for one year

When Tiberius Gracchus was elected **tribune** of the plebeians in 133 BCE, Rome was suffering from significant internal struggles. Rome had grown substantially, but the internal governing structures had not been changed or adapted to suit the new environment.

The main problems:

- Wars of expansion had changed Rome from a simple rural society into a complex imperial state (and with all the accompanying problems).
- Wars of expansion had dramatically increased the numbers of slaves in Rome, damaging the economic structure. (Why pay someone to work when you could just buy a slave and make them work for nothing?)
- The emergence of *equites* as an upper-middle class caused a problem for patricians – they could not engage in trade or business, but the *equites* could. Consequently, the *equites* became wealthier.
- Increased contact with Greece saw the arrival of Hellenism, which was particularly influential on religion and education.
- Men who owned small farms often returned from their time on campaign with the army to find their farms and homes ruined. The number of volunteers began to decline, but they were the 'backbone' of the Roman army.
- Senatorial factions emerged and began to block each other's reforms.

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SOURCE 17.28 The Scipio-Paullus-Gracchus family tree, with Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus highlighted in blue

SOURCE 17.29 Velleius Paterculus comments on Tiberius Gracchus, c. 30 BCE, *Roman History*, Book 2, 2.2

> **He was a man otherwise of complete integrity of life, of brilliant intellect, of great consistency of purpose, in short, equipped with all the qualities as the human condition allows when brought to perfection both by nature and effort ...**

Tiberius was from an eminent patrician family (Source 17.28). His father was a consul twice and his maternal grandfather, Scipio Africanus Major, was responsible for defeating the Carthaginian leader Hannibal at the Battle of Zama in 202 BCE, ending the Second Punic War. Notably, he was also the recipient of a progressive, Greek-oriented education. Thus, he associated with liberal aristocrats who saw the need for radical reform to solve Rome's problems.

Unfortunately, Tiberius's career in politics didn't begin well. While quaestor, he was sent to Spain as part of a contingent to fight the Numantines. In order to save the defeated Roman army, Tiberius managed to arrange a treaty with the Numantines. While the Roman people were thrilled and hailed Tiberius as a hero for returning their loved ones safely, the Senate was angry that he had stepped beyond the boundaries of his position and refused to ratify the treaty. This experience with the Senate, along with the suffering of the Roman people he had seen while on campaign, motivated Tiberius to run as tribune of the plebeians. He was successfully elected in 133 BCE.

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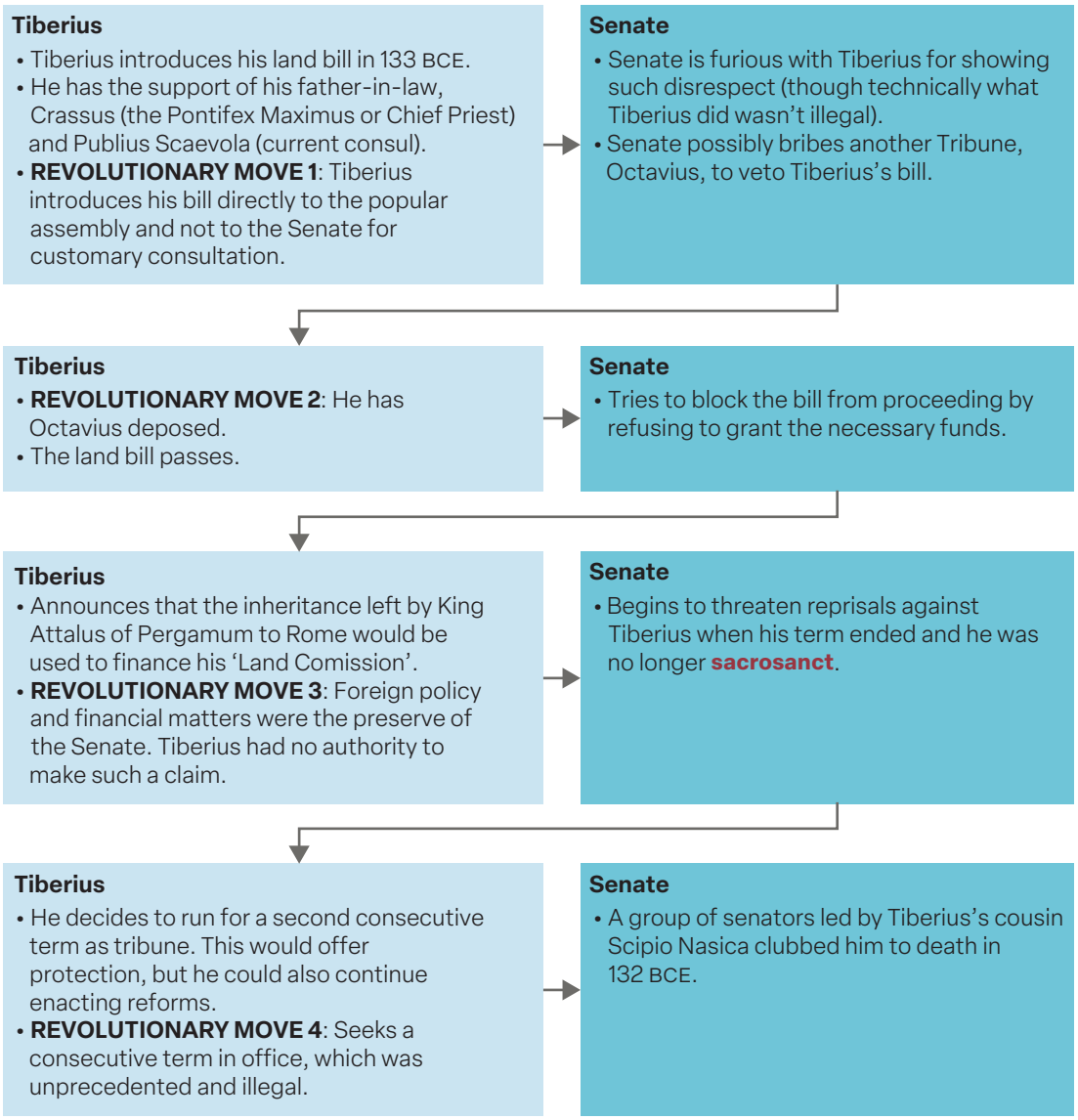
Using his position as Tribune, Tiberius wanted to pass reforms that would alleviate the suffering of the poor. The bill proposed that:

- small farms would be created out of land acquired after the Second Punic War and given to those who had lost land previously or were unemployed
- new owners were to pay a small rent, and were forbidden from selling their holdings
- present landowners could not keep more than 130 hectares.

sacrosanctity the declaration that something is sacred or under religious protection; some magistracy positions were considered sacrosanct

The bill aimed to redistribute land to the poor and enable those with no source of income or employment to establish farms. Increasing the number of landowners also made it possible for these people to become involved in politics, reducing the monopoly that the wealthy had on political power and authority. Its provisions also aimed to stop aristocrats, who would have land taken from them, from seeking revenge.

Tiberius had honourable intentions. He recognised a need of the poor and desired to help them in some way. However, Tiberius made what would become fatal errors in the methods he employed to achieve his aims. Rather than following convention, Tiberius became increasingly revolutionary in his dealings with the Senate.



SOURCE 17.30 Tiberius vs the Senate

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SOURCE 17.31 Cicero, *Lucullus*, 46 BCE

Tiberius Gracchus incurred resentment for his part in the Numantine Treaty, which he helped negotiate while serving as quaestor to the consul Mancinus [137 BC]; and the harsh line which the Senate took in disavowing the treaty made him indignant and apprehensive, and the whole business drove this gallant and distinguished man to abandon the sobriety [gravitas] of his forebears.

SOURCE 17.32 Appian, *The Civil Wars*, I

Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, an illustrious man, eager for glory, a most powerful speaker … delivered an eloquent discourse while serving as tribune, lamenting the fact that the Italians, a people so valiant in war and related in blood to the Romans, were declining little by little into pauperism and paucity [scarceness] of numbers without any hope of remedy.

SOURCE 17.33 Plutarch, *Tiberius Gracchus*, 8, 6–7

He was incited to this step, as most writers say, by Diophanes the rhetorician and Blossius the philosopher … But some put part of the blame upon Cornelia the mother of Tiberius, who often reproached her sons because the Romans still called her the mother-in-law of Scipio, but not yet the mother of the Gracchi. Others again say that a certain Spurius Postumius was to blame. He was of the same age as Tiberius, and a rival of his in reputation as an advocate; and when Tiberius came back from his campaign [Numantine campaign] and found that his rival had far outstripped him in reputation and influence and was an object of public admiration, he determined, as it would seem, to outdo him by engaging in a bold political measure which would arouse great expectations among the people. But his brother Gaius, in a certain pamphlet, has written that as Tiberius was passing through Tuscany on his way to Numantia, and observed the dearth of inhabitants in the country, and that those who tilled its soil or tended its flocks there were imported barbarian slaves, he then first conceived the public policy which was the cause of countless ills to the two brothers. However, the energy and ambition of Tiberius were most of all kindled by the people themselves, who posted writings on porticoes, house-walls, and monuments, calling upon him to recover for the poor the public land.

SOURCE 17.34 Appian, *The Civil Wars*, Book 1, 1.9–10

After speaking thus he again brought forward the law providing that nobody should hold more than 500 iugera [125 hectares] of public domain. But he added a provision to the former law that [two] sons of the occupiers might each hold one half that amount and that the remainder should be divided among the poor by three elected commissioners, who should be changed annually. This was extremely disturbing to the rich because … they could no longer disregard the law as they had done before; nor could they buy from those receiving allotments, because Gracchus had provided against this by forbidding such sales.

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ACTIVITY **17.12**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

In answering the following questions, which of the following motives for Tiberius are seen in Sources 17.31–17.34?

- Personal: ambition, desire for glory, family pride
- Political: reputation, revenge, settlement of a political score
- Social: concern for decline of the small farmer in Italy

1. Why did Tiberius bring in this law restricting the amount of land one person could own?
2. How did Tiberius try to see justice done to the present owners of vast tracts of land?
3. Why do you think Tiberius forbade new holders of land from selling back to the previous owners?
4. Why did the rich object so much to his proposals?
5. Do you think that the motivations of the Gracchi were primarily altruistic or self-serving?

Lex Agraria land and property reforms introduced in 133 BCE by Tiberius Gracchus, intended to close the economic and social gap between classes

After Tiberius was assassinated, the Land Commission that had been established by his ***Lex Agraria*** continued to function. This has led to the argument that the Senate wasn't opposed so much to the bill itself, rather the methods Tiberius used to achieve its passing. It was certainly successful – there was an estimated increase of 76 000 property owners between 131 and 125 BCE.

In creating a crisis of power with the Senate, Tiberius's actions opened wounds that did not heal easily. They set a precedent for what was possible when one individual with power and authority tried to force their own way. The wide support that Tiberius had for the *Lex Agraria* also showed the Senate the real and active power that came with being popular among the plebeians. Crucially, it also revealed that the Senate was not all powerful and invincible. They failed to recognise that their selfishness and condoning of violence also contributed to the crisis of 133–132 BCE, and the years that followed.

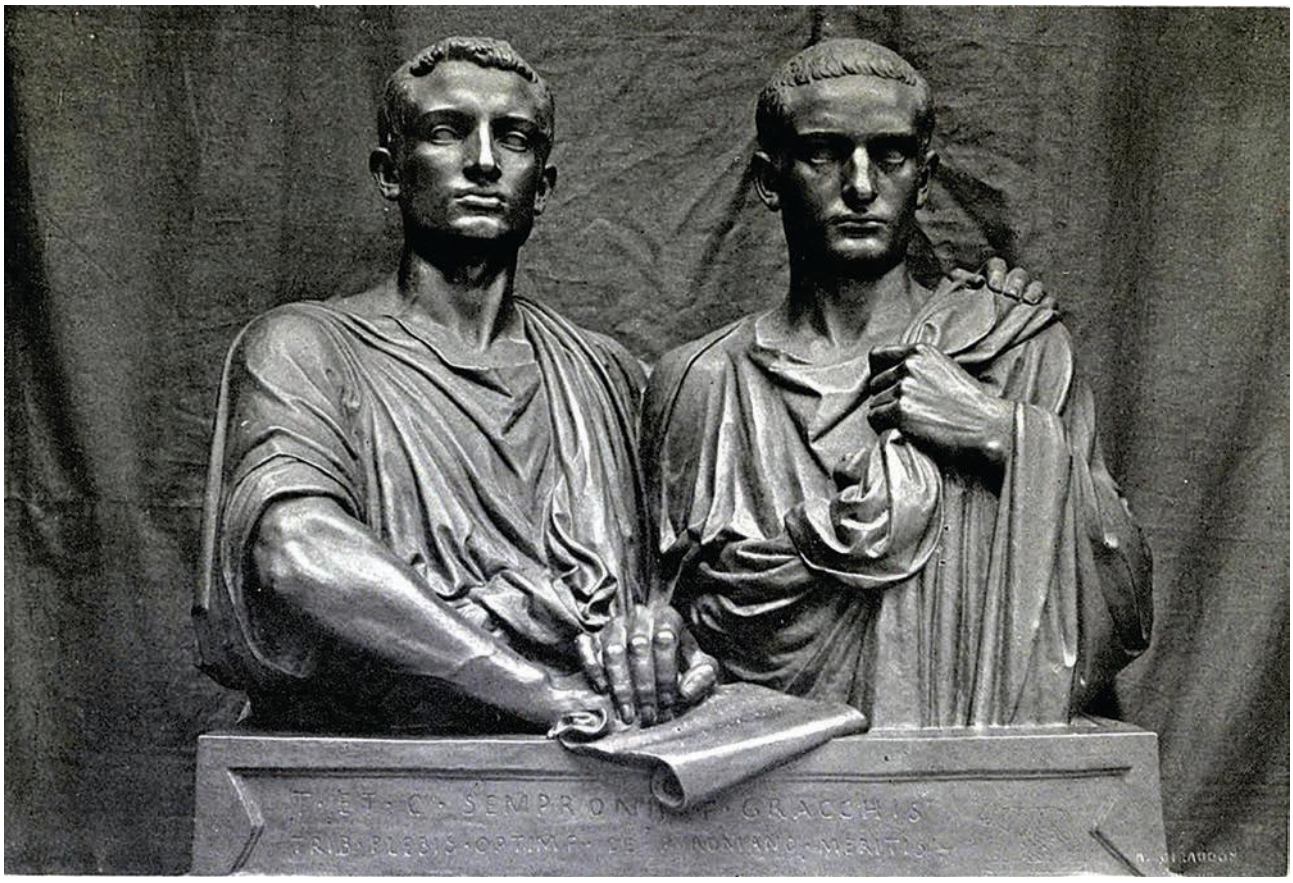
Gaius Gracchus: Reform or revenge?

Gaius Gracchus (the younger brother of Tiberius) was appointed quaestor in 126 BCE and tribune of the plebeians in 123 BCE. He was a more complex and confrontational figure than his elder brother. He had a more extensive agenda that extended beyond simple agrarian reform. Some of his laws were clearly directed towards the people responsible for his brother's death.

As tribune of the plebeians, he renewed Tiberius's land law, pursued land for veterans and the poor in new colonies founded in Italy and Carthage. He also legislated that no one under the age of 17 could be conscripted into the army and any judge who accepted a bribe to convict another Roman would receive the death penalty. Gaius made provision for the state to pay for basic military equipment for soldiers and funded state-subsidised grain.

The Senate, instead of getting a fellow tribune to veto the proposals (as they had tried to do against Tiberius), simply coerced another tribune to make bigger and even more extravagant legislation (which, of course, he had no intention of fulfilling). Thus, Gaius lost support from the general populace. In 121 BCE, a riot broke out on the Capitoline Hill and one of Gaius's opponents was killed.

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SOURCE 17.35 Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus depicted in *The Gracchi*, Jean-Baptiste Claude Eugène Guillaume, 1853. What other representations of the Gracchi can you find in art? Are they consistent?

The 'ultimate decree of the Senate' *(Senatus consultum ultimum)* was passed for the first time, which gave the Senate the power to declare anyone an enemy of the state, and have him executed without trial. Assassins were sent against Gaius and, facing imminent death, he committed suicide. All of his reforms were reversed except for his grain laws, and 3000 of his supporters were subsequently arrested and put to death.

The Gracchi has set a precedent in being able to harness and unleash the power of the people. The Senate in turn had set a precedent in creating state-sanctioned violence and murder. In the following decades, there were to be more young politicians who saw a way to power through the people *(populares)*. There was also to be more violence, more chaos, more death. Inch by inch, the fabric of the Republic was being torn apart – not just its institutions, but the fibre of its values and identity.

ACTIVITY **17.13**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

To learn more about Gaius Gracchus, read these two ancient sources:

- Plutarch, *Life of Gaius Gracchus* (iii–ix)
- Appian, *Civil Wars I*, (iii. 22–26).

After you have read the sources, consider what evidence is presented that supports the hypothesis that the actions of Gaius Gracchus continued to destabilise the Republic.

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17.6 Outcomes and consequences of Ancient Rome

Populares and optimates

optimate 'good man', a man who deemed himself morally superior to others politically, believed in the defence of the republic, and had very conservative tendencies

In the decades after Tiberius's death, political factions began to emerge among the aristocrats. The two main factions, the *populares* and ***optimates***, were both concerned with keeping political power. However, they differed in their preferred methods of gaining such power.

TABLE 17.3 *Populares* and *optimates*

Populares	*Optimates*
• Chose to work through the tribunate and popular assemblies • Believed power and authority were to be gained by working with the people (popularity would equal success) • The 'political successors' of the Gracchi • Designed their political agenda to appeal to the Roman people as a whole • Comprised progressive patricians (usually younger men who had the progressive Greek education like Tiberius)	• Chose to work through the Senate and traditional avenues • Translates as 'best men' • Represented the propertied classes and old aristocratic elite • Saw themselves as the defenders of tradition – maintaining the status quo and senatorial power • Most senators aligned themselves with the *optimates*

Though Cicero called the *populares* 'dissident nobles', the division between the *populares* and *optimates* was generally not a class-based one. Both drew predominantly from the aristocracy, and it was not uncommon for men to switch factions when it suited them.

Trouble brewing in the Republic

In the decades before the civil wars between Marius and Sulla, Rome dealt with an ever-increasing number of conflicts:

- 111–106 BCE: Jugurthine War in Numidia
- 107–101 BCE: Wars against the Cimbri and Teutones in Cisalpine Gaul and Gallia Narbonensis
- 100 BCE: A slave uprising involving 30 000 slaves in Italy
- 91–89 BCE: The Social Wars.

These conflicts placed continual pressure on the Republic and made heavy demands on its resources (people and finances). However, they provided for the emergence of powerful generals who were responsible for building the strong army that would be the backbone of the Roman Empire.

Gaius Marius

novus homo Latin, 'new man'; applied to men who were the first in their family to serve as consul, later widened to include the first man in a family to serve in the Senate

Gaius Marius was born in c. 157 BCE in the district of Arpinum, just outside Rome. Despite coming from a family belonging to the equite class, he was considered a ***novus homo*** or 'new man' as his family had only likely acquired Roman citizenship a few decades before his birth. Marius made his name at the siege of Numantia in Spain in 134–133 BCE under the command of Scipio Aemilianus (Tiberius Gracchus's adoptive cousin) who recognised his capabilities. Approximately 20 years later, he married into the Julian family (his wife was the aunt of Julius Caesar).

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SOURCE 17.36 Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, Book 2.1, 75 BCE

> **He was by nature a virile type, a person devoted to war, whose training had been in the army rather than in civilian life; and when he had power he was incapable of controlling his passions …**

SOURCE 17.37 Sallust, *The Jugurthine War*, chapter 63.6, c. 41–40 BCE

> **He was a hard worker, a man of integrity and an experienced solider. Indomitable on the battlefield, he was frugal in his private life, proof against temptations of passion and riches, and covetous only of glory.**

Marius's military reforms

Before Marius, the Roman army was a part-time citizen army. Soldiers were all conscripts from small farms who were called up to fight when necessary. Each man was expected to provide his own armour, and those with little or no property *(proletarii*, the poorest of the plebeians) were only called up in a crisis (in which case the state paid for their armour). At the beginning of the second century BCE, with the rise in conflicts all around their territories, the Roman army was proving to be increasingly inadequate.

Marius's army reforms

The 'Marian reforms' as they became known, were a series of changes to both the composition and operation of the Roman army that Marius initiated during his various consulships. Arguably the most important of these reforms was the accepted enlistment of any man – regardless of property holdings or qualifications. This change to the socio-economic background of the soldiery was a fundamental one. It meant that any man had the opportunity to 'make his name'. This meant that new training methods were also needed. In 105 BCE, Rutulius Rufus used instructors who had previously worked at gladiator schools to train soliders in the use of more skilled weapons.

On a practical level, the *cohort* replaced the *maniple* as the fundamental tactical unit. Soldiers were also now required to carry all of their equipment themselves, earning the nickname 'Marius' mules'. By carrying all of their equipment, the army became more mobile and could move quickly. The establishment of various 'colonies' as military bases enhanced the manoeuvrability of the **legions**. The iconic Roman eagle also became the standard carried into battle before the army.

legion largest unit of soldiers within the army; approximately 4500 men

Marius's career

As a *novus homo,* the political ladder was a lot harder to climb than the military one. Marius's success against the Germanic tribes was crucial in establishing his political career. He also had the advantage of being a client of the powerful Metellus family from the relatively late age of 38. He won his first magistracy in 119 BCE as tribune of the plebeians, and this was followed by the governorship of Farther Spain. His political prospects improved and he caught the attention of the Senate in 111 BCE when he married Julia Maria (who would become the aunt of Julius Caesar). As a patrician woman, marrying someone like Marius who was below her social status could have reflected negatively upon her and her family. However, despite Marius's later downfall, she was always considered a virtuous and faithful woman.

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After being elected consul in 107 BCE, Marius convinced the Senate to grant him the command against Jugurtha, King of Numidia (modern Algeria). He then took the unprecedented step of enlisting landless recruits to make up the shortfall in his legions. The war against Jugurtha had already dragged out for years, so Marius was charged by the Senate to achieve a quick and decisive victory. He did just that, and it was his quaestor, Sulla, who captured Jugurtha. Marius returned to Rome for a triumph (a public celebration of his victory) and Jugurtha was thrown into prison, where he would starve to death.

In the following years he was also part of Rome's victories over the Germanic Cimbri and Teutones. These significant victories explain why Marius was able to serve as consul for five successive years between 104 and 100 BCE. Consuls could not usually serve successive terms. The fact that Marius did so five times is a strong illustration of the power and authority he held over the Senate and people of Rome.

Career decline

Marius's career began to decline in 100 BCE when he allied himself with Glaucia (praetor) and Saturninus (tribune) in an effort to regain his consulship for yet another successive term. Both Glaucia and Saturninus were notorious and unscrupulous politicians. Glaucia allegedly had a rival to the consulship murdered. Saturninus had attempted to introduce agrarian reforms not dissimilar to those of Tiberius Gracchus but was known to be violent in his dealings with others. Both were killed late in 100 BCE, but Marius's reputation never recovered from association with them and he retired from active politics for a number of years.

Lucius Cornelius Sulla Felix

Sulla, as he was commonly known, was born in 138 BCE in Rome. He was from the Cornelius clan, who were an old, leading Roman family but were relatively poor. Sulla grew up with a good education and developed lifelong love of Greek and Roman literature. While at heart a conservative *optimate*, his driving political ambitions were clear.

SOURCE 17.38 Plutarch, *Sulla*, I, 6.7–6.8, 75 BCE

He [Sulla] seems to have had a character that was very irregular and full of inconsistencies. He would have a man beaten to death for some inconsiderable offence; yet on other occasions he would meekly put up with really serious misdeeds.

SOURCE 17.39 Sallust, *The Jugurthine War*, chapter 95, c. 41–40 BCE

He was eloquent, shrewd and an accommodating friend. His skill in pretence was such that no one could penetrate the depths of his mind … of his subsequent conduct I could not speak without feelings of shame and disgust.

Sulla experienced military success against Jugurtha, under Marius's command. He was also involved in ending the Social War of 90 BCE. As consul in 88 BCE, he was appointed by the Senate to lead the army against King Mithridates VI of Pontus (in modern Turkey), who had invaded a Roman province there. While Sulla was making preparations in southern Italy, Marius decided to return to politics and used his influence in the Senate to attempt to seize the command against Mithridates from him. Motivations for Marius's return to politics could include jealousy of Sulla's success. By this time, Marius and Sulla were considered the leaders of their respective factions – populares and optimates respectively.

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Civil War round one: 88–86 BCE

Tension between Marius and Sulla began to come to a head in 88 BCE at the start of the First Mithridatic War.

- Marius uses support from the Plebeian Tribune in the Concilium Plebis to bypass the Senate and seize the command against Mithridates from Sulla.
- Sulla rallies his legions in Southern Italy and marches on Rome.
- Marius is driven out of Rome and flees to into exile in North Africa.
- Sulla departs Rome again for Pont us to fight Mithridates.
- During Sulla's absence, the consul Cinna betrays him and helps Marius return to besiege Rome (87 BCE).
- Marius and Cinna slaughter *optimates* in Rome.
- Marius and Cinna are elected consuls in 86 BCE.
- Marius dies unexpectedly two weeks later of poor health (possibly from pleurisy, as suggested in Plutarch).

Civil War round two: 83–82 BCE

The death of Marius unfortunately did not mean an end to the conflict. Marius's supporters were still very active in trying to push Sulla out of power.

- Sulla returns from the east and defeats the Marian party (83 BCE).
- Sulla follows the example set by Marius and begins to slaughter the *populares*. He offers prizes to assassins and punishes those who conceal wanted men.
  - Plutarch: 'Sulla now devoted himself entirely to the work of butchery' (*Sulla,* 31).
  - Appian claims that no one dared speak out against Sulla's treatment of the *populares*.
  - Plutarch: Sons and grandsons of those he executed have their civil and property rights taken away from them – effectively eliminating their eligibility for office. It also strips families of their wealth and sources of income.
  - Sallust: 'Sulla is the only man in history who has ever devised punishments for the unborn'.
- Sulla declared dictator by the Senate, with no set time limit for his term in office (82 BCE).



SOURCE 17.40 An artist's depiction of the entrance of Cornelius Sulla into Rome, where he was appointed as dictator in the first century BCE. How consistent is this artistic depiction with events recorded in sources?

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SOURCE 17.41 Appian, *The Civil Wars*, Book 1.99–1.100, c. 162 CE

Thus Sulla became a king, or tyrant, de facto – not elected but holding power by force and violence … There had been autocratic rule of the dictators before but it was limited to short periods. Under Sulla it first became unlimited and so was an absolute tyranny … Nevertheless, by way of keeping up the form of the republic he allowed them to appoint consuls … But Sulla, like a reigning sovereign, was dictator over the consuls.

Sulla's dictatorship and constitutional reforms

Sulla ruled unopposed for three years, until his unexpected retirement. During that time, a significant number of reforms were made to the magistracy. Through these reforms, Sulla aimed to restore stability by strengthening the Senate, reducing the power of the tribunes and reorganising the courts. He made reforms to:

- The Senate
  - Enlarged by 300 members, mainly *equites*
  - Automatic membership to ex-quaestors
  - Senate approval required before legislation was presented to the assembly
- The Tribunate
  - Right of veto was limited
  - Tribunes ineligible for further political office
  - Tribunes lost the power of enacting legislation
- Office holding
  - *Lex Villia* of 180 BCE re-enacted – this meant the *cursus honorum* had to be strictly observed, with age limitations and precursors. To be consul, one had to have been a praetor. To be praetor, one had to have been a quaestor and so on. Two years must pass in between magistracies.
  - No magistracy to be held consecutively (more than one year in a row). A 10-year wait required before running for a magistracy for a second time.
  - Increased number of magistrates to improve the efficiency of government
  - Treason laws forbade governors to leave their provinces or declare war without Senate permission
  - Provincial governors could not overstay in their province
- The law and courts
  - Number of standing courts increased to seven
  - Courts had the power to try serious crimes, previously in the hands of popular assemblies
  - Jurors were all senators

As dictator, Sulla had the right to enforce punishment, death, exile, confiscation of property, across all of Italy. He settled his soldiers in colonies on the land and cities that he took revenge on. He gave Roman citizenship to 10 000 slaves, whom he named Cornelii (after himself).

In 79 BCE, Sulla retired from politics, and died the following year

ACTIVITY **17.14**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Use the information in this section and your own research to justify the statement:
In trying to save the Republic, Sulla, in fact, showed how it could easily be destroyed.
Give your response in a detailed historical paragraph.

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Marius and Sulla: The legacy

Gaius Marius and Cornelius Sulla both held positions of authority, and wielded power over those beneath them. Both were responsible for spreading the authority and reach of the Republic throughout the Mediterranean and bringing some significant foreign threats under control. In enacting reforms, both made changes to the fabric of Roman society that enabled the success of later generals, consuls and, arguably, emperors. Both, however, were influenced by their personal desires for power and glory. Marius and Sulla blatantly broke the guidelines set by the *cursus honorum* yet were not held to account for this. Their actions went as far as to make the city of Rome itself the focus of military action between them. The social struggles highlighted by Tiberius Gracchus evolved into military power struggles under Marius and Sulla.



SOURCE 17.42 Busts of Marius (left) and Sulla (right)

ACTIVITY **17.15**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

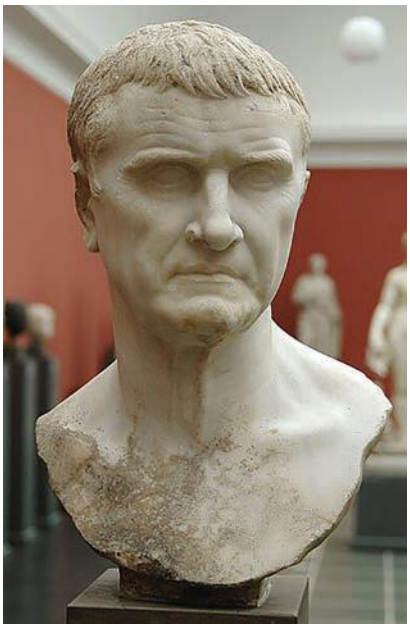
Using material from the sources you have read, answer the following question:
Whose contribution to the 'Fall' of the Roman Republic was greater – Sulla or Marius? Why?

17.7 Differing perspectives on Ancient Rome

Pompey and Crassus

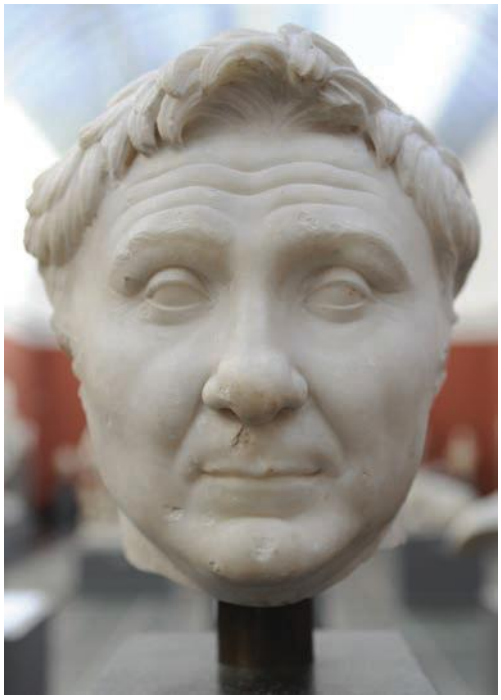
Two men who prospered because of Sulla were Pompey and Crassus (the latter, financially; the former, militarily and politically). In Crassus, one sees the complete absence of key Roman Republican values like *frugalitas, honestas, clementia, pietas,* and *veritas* (see Contextual Study) and their replacement with love of wealth, luxury, and personal military glory.

Crassus came from a rich family with Senatorial traditions. He was the commander of Sullan forces at the Battle of the Colline Gate on 1 November 82 BCE, which ended the resistance of Marian *(populares)* forces in Italy. He enriched himself in many ways – confiscations of property following Sulla's proscriptions, construction, silver mines, slaves, and loaning money at interest. He was deeply jealous of Pompey, another of Sulla's generals. Unlike Pompey, Crassus followed the constitutional requirements of the *cursus honorum*.



SOURCE 17.43 Bust of Crassus found in the Licinian Tombs in Rome

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SOURCE 17.44 Bust of Pompey

In 73 BCE, Rome faced a crisis on three fronts. To the West, the general Sertorius continued the Marian resistance in Spain, mastering guerilla war tactics and recruiting from the native population. To the east, another war against King Mithridates of Pontus (the same man Sulla was previously sent to subdue) was under way, and in Italy itself, a dangerous slave rebellion broke out led by Spartacus. Pompey was sent to Spain; Crassus was to deal with Spartacus, while another competent general, Lucullus, went after Mithridates. While both Crassus and Pompey won, Pompey received a 'triumph' in 71 BCE for his victories and Crassus only got the lesser 'ovation' (his opposition were just slaves, after all!). Thus, Crassus's jealousy of Pompey increased further, and he yearned for greater military glory. With ambitions frustrated, he jumped at the chance to form a power-sharing agreement with an up-and-coming politician whose career he had helped finance – Julius Caesar – who brokered a reconciliation between Crassus and Pompey in 60 BCE. This was the famous First Triumvirate. As part of arrangements during the triumvirate, Crassus and Pompey held the consulship in 55 BCE. Thereafter, Pompey went to Spain with pro-consular authority, and Crassus finally got what he desired most: a military command against Rome's greatest enemy at the time – the Parthians (Persians). In 53 BCE, his forces were wiped out at the Battle of Carrhae. It was rumoured that the captured Crassus was forced to drink molten gold – a symbol of his greed and wealth. With his death, there remained just two. And with two, there could inevitably be only one left standing. Concerning Pompey and Caesar and the beginning of the civil war between them in 49 BCE, Cicero wrote in a letter to his close friend Atticus:

SOURCE 17.45 Cicero, *Letters to Atticus*, 8.11

> **Supremacy has been the object of both; there has been no idea of securing the happiness and virtue of the citizens. Nor, indeed, did he [Pompey] abandon the city because he was unable to protect it, nor Italy because he was driven from it; but his idea from the first was to stir up every land and sea, to rouse foreign princes, to bring barbarous tribes in arms into Italy, to collect the most formidable armies possible. For some time past a kind of royalty like Sulla's has been the object in view, and this is the eager desire of many who are with him. Do you suppose that some understanding between the two, some bargain has been impossible? Today it is still possible. But the object of neither is our happiness: both want to be kings.**

Pompey (b. 106 BCE), Sulla's most devoted disciple, completely undermined the Sullan Constitution that his father-in-law set up to 'save' the Republic.

First civil war

Pompey also came from a conservative family with senatorial nobility. As an *optimate*, he raised his own army to support Sulla in 83 BCE. At the age of 23, Sulla proclaimed him Imperator (a military title recognising a great victory) and appointed him with pro-praetorian imperium, despite Pompey being under the age limit for such a position and holding no qualifying offices beforehand (both requirements of the *cursus honorum* which Sulla was to rigidly enforce, with the exception of Pompey).

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He fought alongside Crassus in securing victories across Italy in 82 BCE; he married Sulla's stepdaughter – Aemilia; he defeated Marian forces in Italy, then in Africa. Plutarch, in his *Moralia*, remarked:

SOURCE 17.46 Plutarch, *Moralia: Sayings of Romans*, 5

When he returned, Sulla received him graciously with many honours, and was the first to call him 'Magnus' [The Great]. He desired to celebrate a triumph, but Sulla would not allow him to do so, since he was not as yet a member of the Senate. When Pompey remarked to those present that Sulla did not realize that more people worship the rising than the setting sun, Sulla cried out, 'Let him have his triumph!' Servilius, a man of noble family, was indignant, and many of the soldiers stood in his way with their demands of largesse before his triumph. But when Pompey said that he would rather give up his triumph than curry favour with them, Servilius said that now he saw that Pompey was truly great, and deserved his triumph.

Lepidus's Revolt

In 78 BCE, Sulla died. Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, who had joined with Sulla in the civil war, was a consul in that year. He tried to overturn and revoke many of Sulla's reforms, appealing to the people and many ex-supporters of Marius. Turning into a *populares* politician, he tried to prevent Sulla from being awarded a public funeral. He then argued for an official *damnatio memoriae* – damnation of his memory – a term for when the government condemned the memory of a person who was seen as a tyrant, traitor or some sort of enemy to the state. His fellow consul Catulus and Pompey championed Sulla. Consequently, another civil war nearly ensued. Lepidus joined a *populares* revolt; the Senate appointed Pompey and Catulus to destroy it (which they subsequently did). Pompey was still the *optimates*' champion!

Sertorius

Quintus Sertorius was the last of the Marian military generals remaining, holding out in Spain (80–71 BCE). He defeated the *optimate* forces under the command of Metellus, and Pompey was sent to Spain to turn defeat into victory. There, he met his match. Only after Sertorius was assassinated (by one of his own in 71 BCE) did Pompey conquer the rest of Hispania (Spain) and return to Italy to help Crassus polish off the slave rebellion led by Spartacus.

Joint consuls

It was the following year, 70 BCE, that both Pompey and Crassus (Sulla's 'disciples') were appointed as consuls. They started to wind back the Sullan Constitution and revoked many of Sulla's reforms, especially the restrictions on the Tribune of the Plebeians.

The East

Pompey next was appointed to rid the Mediterranean of piracy (67 BCE). Years earlier, Rome had destroyed the main naval power in the Mediterranean – the Greek island of Rhodes. Now pirates had managed to cut off Rome's corn supply and other significant imports, without Rhodes to keep them in check. Pompey's response shows a shrewd political mind. He realised that many were driven to piracy because of economic depression. By offering them land to settle on, Pompey managed to eliminate piracy almost entirely within three months.

In a situation eerily similar to how Marius tried to take over the command of Sulla against Mithridates in 83 BCE (which led to the first civil war), Pompey then used the tribunate to usurp command of Roman forces fighting in the Third Mithridatic War from Lucullus.

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Lucullus, a well-born patrician, and all other *optimates* were incensed, with Lucullus even calling Pompey a 'vulture' because he always fed off the work of others. This was a reference to Pompey's new command as well as him taking credit (at the expense of Crassus) for finishing the war against Spartacus. Pompey had turned *populares* completely – it was only because of his standing and popularity among the people that he was able to get away with this purely selfish and vainglorious action.

The Senate, however, patiently bided its time. Pompey's most significant military victory was arguably his defeat of Mithridates in 64 BCE. After bringing Cilicia, Bithynia and Pontus under firm Roman control, Pompey continued through Syria and Palestine to subdue the remaining rebels. Like Alexander the Great, Pompey took scholars on his campaign with the aim of gathering geographical, cultural and scientific knowledge of the area. This 'progress' to bring Roman law and order through the eastern provinces became known as Pompey's Eastern Settlement. Pompey's arrangement of the various provinces and client kingdoms endured through to the third century CE – a testament to Pompey's skill. The client kingdoms were provinces deemed to be too 'backwards' for Roman rule. These were ruled locally and paid a tribute to Rome.

Pompey's return

Pompey returned to Rome in 61 BCE and expected the Senate to give him his third triumph and ratify his political settlements in the east. He received the former, but not the latter, with Cato the Younger leading vitriolic rhetoric against Pompey in the Senate. With Julius Caesar campaigning for the next consulship, a plan was hatched – the first triumvirate (the subject of the Concluding Study which follows 17.8, the next section).

SOURCE 17.47 Cicero, 'Letters to Atticus', 1.13, c. 61 BCE

> As to that friend of yours [Pompey] ... he professes the highest regard for me and makes a parade of warm affection, praising on the surface while below it, but not so far below that it's difficult to see, he's jealous. Awkward, tortuous, politically paltry [lacking importance/worth], shabby, timid, disingenuous [insincere] – but I shall go into more detail on another occasion.

SOURCE 17.48 Cicero, 'Letters to Atticus', 7.8, c. 50 BCE

> ... such a man [Pompey], courageous, experienced, and powerful in prestige.

SOURCE 17.49 Cicero, *De Officiis, Book* III

> As for our friend Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus [Pompey], in every other matter he has my full and unqualified approval.

SOURCE 17.50 Plutarch, 'Pompey', chapter 1, 2–3

> There were many reasons for the love bestowed on Pompey; his modest and temperate way of living, his training in the arts of war, his persuasive speech, his trustworthy character, and his tact in meeting people, so that no man asked a favour with less offence, or bestowed one with a better mien. For, in addition to his other graces, he had the art of giving without arrogance, and of receiving without loss of dignity.

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On receiving news that he had been made commander against Mithridates, in place of Lucullus, Pompey reacted thus:

SOURCE 17.51 Plutarch, 'Pompey', chapter 30

'Alas for my endless tasks! How much better it were to be an unknown man, if I am never to cease from military service, and cannot lay aside this load of envy and spend my time in the country with my wife!' As he said this, even his intimate friends could not abide his dissimulation; they knew that his enmity towards Lucullus gave fuel to his innate ambition and love of power, and made him all the more delighted.

SOURCE 17.52 Tacitus, *Annals*, Book III

[Pompey] was then for the third time elected consul to reform public morals, but in applying remedies more terrible than the evils and repealing the legislation of which he had himself been the author, he lost by arms what by arms he had been maintaining.

SOURCE 17.53 Velleius Paterculus, *History of Rome*, Book 2, chapter 29

A man of exceptional integrity and uprightness, he [Pompey] was also a fair orator; he had a fierce passion for power, provided that it was offered him out of honour and did not have to be seized by force; in war he was a highly experienced commander, in peacetime a most restrained citizen, except when he was afraid he might have some rival ... he rarely, if ever, used his power violently ...

ACTIVITY **17.16**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. What contrasting positive and negative characteristics of Pompey's are noted in Sources 17.47–17.53?
2. Which seem to be contradictions?
3. What conclusions can you make about Pompey's character from the sources?

A triumph for victorious generals was a time-honoured tradition in Rome. The triumph of Pompey on this occasion was on an unprecedented scale and is vividly described by both Plutarch and Appian. The following extract is from Appian.

SOURCE 17.54 Appian, *The Mithridatic Wars*, chapters 116–117

[Pompey] hastened to Rome, having dismissed his soldiers at Brundisium to their homes, a democratic action which greatly surprised the Romans. As he approached the city he was met by successive processions ... last of all came the Senate, which was lost in wonder at his exploits, for no one had ever before vanquished so powerful an enemy, and at the same time brought so many great nations under subjection and extended the Roman rule to the Euphrates. He was awarded a triumph exceeding in brilliancy any that had gone before, being now only thirty-five years of age [in fact, he was forty-five].

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It occupied two successive days, and many nations were represented in the procession from Pontus, Armenia, Cappadocia, Cilicia and all Syria, besides Albanians, Heniochi, Achaeans of Scythia, and Eastern Iberians. Seven hundred undamaged ships were brought into the harbours. In the triumphal procession were two-horsecarriages and litters laden with gold or with other ornaments of various kinds, also the couch of Darius, the son of Hystapes, the throne and scepter of Mithridates Eupator himself, and his image, eight cubits high, made of solid gold, and 75 100 000 drachmas of silver coin; also an infinite number of wagons carrying arms and beaks of ships, and a multitude of captives and pirates, none of them bound, but all arrayed in their native costumes.

Before Pompey himself, at the head of the procession, went the satraps, sons, and generals of the kings against whom he had fought, who were present ... to the number of 324. Among them were Tigranes, the son of Tigranes, and the five sons of Mithridates ... Also his daughters. Olthaces, chief of the Colchians, was also led in this procession, and Aristobulus, king of the Jews, the tyrants of the Cilicians, and the female rulers of the Scythians, three chiefs of the Iberians ... Moreover, a tablet was carried along with this inscription: 'Ships with brazen beaks captured, 800; cities founded in Cappadocia, 8; in Cilicia and Coele-Syria, 20; in Palestine the one which is now Seleucis. Kings conquered: Tigranes the Armenian, Artoces the Iberian, Oreozes the Albanian, Darius the Mede, Aretas the Nabataean, Antiochus of Commagene' ... Pompey himself was borne in a chariot studded with gems, wearing, it is said, the cloak of Alexander the Great, if anyone can believe that. It seems to have been found among the possessions of Mithridates that the inhabitants of Cos had received from Cleopatra ... When he arrived at the Capitol he did not put any of the prisoners to death, as had been the custom of other triumphs, but sent them all home at the public expense, except the kings. Of these Aristobulus was at once put to death, and Tigranes somewhat later.



ACTIVITY **17.17**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Look through Pompey's conquests in Source 17.54. Is Appian justified in claiming that Pompey's conquests were the greatest ever for Rome? What other generals in the past had had remarkable conquests?
2. What does Pompey's plunder, described in this passage, tell us about the East during this period?
3. Explain why Pompey would have included the sons and daughters of the kings he had conquered in his procession.
4. Which information in the passage gave rise to the legend of the Amazons?
5. Suggest reasons for Pompey being dressed in the (supposed) cloak of Alexander the Great.
6. In what respects did Pompey's triumph differ from previous ones? Comment on these differences.
7. What kind of valuable information concerning the Ancient World is to be found in this passage? In what ways can historians make use of such facts?

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17.8 From Caesar's assassination to Actium (44–31 BCE)

[For more detail of issues and events, 61–44 BCE, go to Chapter 21 - Julius Caesar]

Though some might argue that the Republic effectively ended with Caesar – that he set in place a point of no return that doomed the Republic and made autocracy inevitable – this is a contentious issue. Following Caesar's assassination, conflict continued, until the 'last man standing' was Octavian, who became the first emperor of the Roman Imperial period.

Below are some potential topics for IA3 assessment that look beyond the death of Caesar, listed by year, followed by some more general topics.

44 BCE

- Caesar's assassins are hailed as 'Liberators', freeing the republic of tyranny, but what was the immediate reaction to Caesar's death? Consider the Senate and patricians, the plebians and the army.
- How did Mark Antony turn public opinion against the conspirators at Caesar's funeral? Did the public need much convincing? Consider the money left to every citizen in Caesar's will, the settlement of Caesar's veterans by Antony, and the fleeing of the conspirators from Rome.
- What did Octavian do to gain influence on his return to Rome?
- Octavian versus Antony: How did Octavian outmanoeuvre both Antony and the Senate?
- What was the motivation for and effect of Cicero's delivery of his anti-Antony speeches, *The Philippics*?

43 BCE

- How big a threat was Decimus Brutus in Gaul to Antony and Octavian?
- Why and how was the Battle of Mutina fortuitous for Octavian? Consider Cicero's support, Mark Antony's defeat, and the deaths of both consuls Hirtius and Pansa in the battle.
- What was so significant about Octavian's attainment of the Consulship in 43 BCE?

42 BCE

- To what extent has the resistance in Sicily and Sardinia against Sextus Pompey and other republicans like Domitius Ahenobarbus been underrated and overlooked?
- Why did Mark Antony choose to rule the eastern half of the empire, leaving Octavian the west?

41 BCE

- What was Antony's vision for the future of Rome?
- How much influence did Cleopatra have over Antony? (See Chapter 20 on Cleopatra.)
- Octavian had his best friend, Marcus Agrippa. Mark Antony had his brother, Lucius Antonius. What were the roles and contributions of Marcus and Lucius to the growing conflict between the triumvirs?

40 BCE

- In the Pact of Brundisium, Antony took the east, Octavian the west, Lepidus took Africa, and Sextus Pompey went back to Sicily. Given that conflict was, in general, avoided for nearly a decade, to what extent can the Pact of Brundisium be considered a success rather than a failure?

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40–32 BCE

- How did Lepidus and Sextus Pompey 'fall', and what was the significance of that?
- Why did Antony want to invade Parthia? What was the significance of such an undertaking? How and why did this strain relations between Antony and Octavian?
- How and why did Antony's invasion of Parthia fail?
- Who was the most to blame for bringing conflict and war to a head – Octavian or Antony? (Consider the 'Donations of Alexandria' in 34 BCE in your response.)
- Octavian, consul for 31 BCE, recruited a huge army in the vicinity of 80 000 men, who took a personal oath of allegiance to him. Octavian went to great lengths to have this act portrayed as voluntary. Determine to what extent was this true, and assess the significance of this action.

31 BCE

- Octavian held the consulship between 31 BCE and 23 BCE. Does this mean the Republic was still alive, or dead?
- Augustan propaganda portrays Antony as having been abandoned by his Roman supporters. How true is this?
- Octavian never declared war against Antony – only against Cleopatra. Why?

General questions

1. Octavian (Augustus) was named as Caesar's heir. He faced many obstacles and rivals. How did he overcome each of those listed below?
   - **a.** Decimus Brutus, one of Caesar's assassins, who was named an heir in the second degree in Caesar's will
   - **b.** Brutus and Cassius – leaders/figureheads of the conspiracy against Caesar
   - **c.** Mark Antony, a plebian, Caesar's 'right-hand' man, and popular military general
   - **d.** Sextus Pompey, son of Pompey Magnus, who continued his father's cause in Sicily
   - **e.** Queen Cleopatra of Egypt, mother of Caesarion, Caesar's son, who Caesar publicly acknowledged as his own
   - **f.** Cicero, generally acknowledged as protector of the Republic's interests
2. Why and how is the formation of the second triumvirate considered the 'final nail' in the coffin of the Republic? Consider:
   - the Proscriptions, where approximately 300 Senators and 2000 equites lost their lives, including Cicero
   - the war against Brutus and Caesar in the East and the Battles of Philippi (42 BCE)
   - the official deification of Julius Caesar.
3. Who was the most dominant triumvir? How was that domination demonstrated?
4. Regarding the Battle of Actium, instead of asking the question, 'How did Octavian win?', is it more appropriate and insightful to ask, 'Why did Antony lose?'
5. What were the short-term and long-term repercussions of the Battle of Actium?

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CONCLUDING STUDY

The following section is useful for both this chapter and Chapter 21 on Julius Caesar.

Introduction



SOURCE 17.55 The first triumvirate: (left to right) Caesar, Crassus and Pompey. How would you describe these men based on their physical appearance?

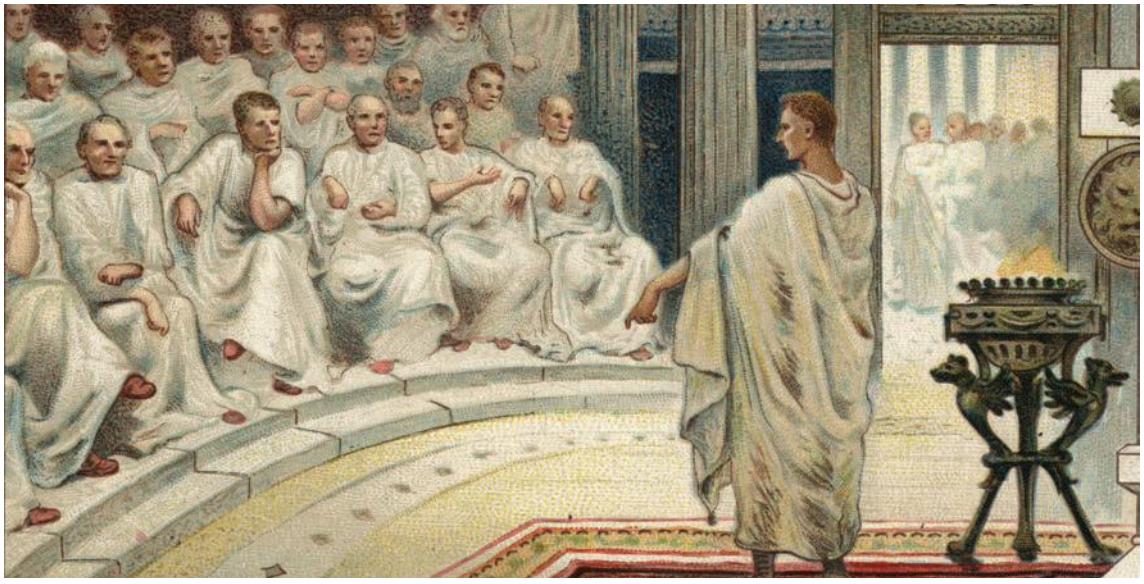
Pompey, Caesar and Crassus each had their own goals when they decided to form the first triumvirate. Pompey was trying to introduce legislation that would enable him to grant his veterans land as acknowledgement of their service. Crassus represented the interests of wealthy *equites* and had been unsuccessfully trying to get a revision of the tax collection contracts in Asia. Caesar desired election to the consulship in 59 BCE. While Pompey and Crassus still did not get along, Caesar reconciled the two as all recognised they had personal advantages to be gained by the alliance. The irony is that the **triumvirate** was formed mostly to fulfil Pompey and Crassus's desires, with Caesar, through the consulship, as the means to make it happen. In the end, however, only one was left standing – Gaius Julius Caesar.

triumvirate joint rule between three individuals, termed *triumvirs*

If you have completed a previous depth study on the breakdown of the Roman Republic, consider the following focus question: To what extent can it be said that the Roman Republic – its values, its identity, its institutions – was already finished, even before the rise of Julius Caesar and Octavian/Augustus?

In answering this question, you should also consider:

- other Roman military generals who did not seek to attain personal ambition and glory above the apparatus and rules of the Republic, such as Lucullus, and (before the first triumvirate at least) Crassus and the Spartacus Slave Rebellion
- Cicero – 'Saviour of the Republic' and the Catilinarian Conspiracy.



SOURCE 17.56 Illustration of Cato the Elder before the Roman senate. Cato was known for ending his speeches with the expression 'Carthago delenda est' ('Carthage must be destroyed'). Illustration from the end of the nineteenth century.

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17.9 Interpretations and debates about the nature of power in Ancient Rome

Historian Solomon Katz highlights the importance of being aware of the perspective from which a source may be written.

SOURCE 17.57 S. Katz, 'Remembrance of things past', *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 38, no. 1, February 1969, pp. 1–20

The historian is not, as he has so often assumed himself to be, an impartial recording angel, for whom history is, as Edward Gibbon said, 'indeed little more than the register of the crimes, follies, and misfortunes of mankind,' to be recorded without comment. The historian, on the contrary, is himself conditioned and prejudiced by the flow of history, inescapably involved in the record he sets forth. However hard he tries, and sometimes he does not try very hard, he cannot avoid providing a commentary on his own age or at least on himself in writing about another age. This is not to say that historians have consciously either been apologists or propagandists for a particular point of view about their present or allowed the present to distort the past. Nevertheless, the study of the past, including the ancient past, has been coloured or conditioned by contemporary intellectual fashions or by dominant contemporary political beliefs, by the ideas in the historian's world rather than in the world of his subject, or by his own philosophical, political, social, and economic values.

Late Roman Republic and Julius Caesar: Modern historiography summary

The Middle Ages

Medieval accounts of the Roman Republic were often based on later sources written in the late imperial period, such as those by Jerome and Eusebius. There was little to no interest in democratic or republican government. But that was about to change.

The Renaissance/early modern history

The Renaissance spawned an interest in all things about the Roman Republic, especially Cicero. Interest in restraining the powers of a king spread through the ideas of the Protestant Reformation, especially after the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in France in 1572. The English civil wars of the 1640s (resulting in the execution of King Charles I) created opportunities to re-evaluate Roman ideas about a Republic. Arguments developed for the existence of a legally empowered *res publica* (Commonwealth).

Seventeenth century: The age of science and reason

There was a new interest in the artefacts of antiquity, rather than just the literary accounts of ancient authors. Historians like Louis Sebastien de Tillemont and Edward Gibbon applied rules that more critically evaluated the ancient literary texts.

The age of revolutions

As new ideas of government developed, the Roman Senate became a focus of greater interest. This came to fruition especially with the French Revolution. The Republican Senate was seen as a bulwark of freedom that catered for factionalism and differences. Of interest, Poland had its own Senate, and the move of linking Polish and Roman Senates already set a precedent for such thinking.

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Cicero, again, was an inspiration for the Founding Fathers of the United States of America. John Adams said: 'As all the ages of the world have not produced a greater statesman and philosopher united than Cicero, his authority should have great weight'.

The age of nationalism and the beginning of modern historiography

Historical views of the Fall of the Roman Republic began to be coloured by politics. Groups saw their own circumstances reflected in those of the *populares* and *optimates*. The contribution of Caesar was also examined – did he simply use the people to establish a personal monarchy or was he part of a larger process of change? Was Caesar a product of historical forces, not a creator of historical change? The Russian Revolution of 1917 motivated a shift in focus from political and military to social and economic history. Cicero was accused of hypocrisy by Friederich Engels, one of the founders of Marxism, who referred to him as the most contemptible scoundrel in history for upholding republican 'democracy' while at the same time denouncing land and class reforms.



SOURCE 17.58 Poster of Russian communist revolutionaries Vladimir Lenin, Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx

SOURCE 17.59 K. Marx, Preface to the Second Edition (1869), *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, London, June 23 1869

In this superficial historical analogy the main point is forgotten, namely, that in ancient Rome the class struggle took place only within a privileged minority, between the free rich and the free poor, while the great productive mass of the population, the slaves, formed the purely passive pedestal for these combatants. People forget Sismondi's significant saying: The Roman proletariat lived at the expense of society, while modern society lives at the expense of the proletariat.

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World War II and after: The prosopographers

Prosopographers concentrate their studies on the Roman nobility, its family relationships, marriages, friendships, its political and social groupings, and its intrigues. Prospographers believed the best explanation for the Fall of the Roman Republic was that the usual competition between Roman elites, especially the old patrician families, got out of hand.

Ernst Badian (1925–2011) became a classical scholar and served as a professor at Harvard University. He was the leading scholar to begin viewing Alexander 'the Great' as an egotistical and ideological exterminator.

SOURCE 17.60 E. Badian, *Roman Imperialism in the Late Republic*, Cornell University Press, 1968

In Badian's view, the rise of Roman imperialism, an aggressive system marked by exploitation and annexation, can be best explained by looking at the *weltanschaug* of the Roman ruling class – the Senate. By the late Republic, he argues, the principles of the Senate were no longer guided by morality or virtue traditionally associated with that group. The quest for personal power was ushered in by Sulla, perfected by Pompey, and mastered by Caesar. The introduction of taxes made the returns on imperialism quite large, especially as administration, as by tradition, was quite limited. Social and political restraints had acted to reign in imperialism and exploitation by the Senate; by the late republic these restraints had gradually eroded, according to Badian. Sulla's example was too strong and ultimately led to the 'bankruptcy' of the aristocracy ... Badian writes that 'no administration in history has ever devoted itself so whole heartedly to fleecing its subjects for the private benefit of the ruling class.' By the late Republic opportunities for economic exploitation were deliberately sought and created, unlike the middle Republic when they had been merely a happy coincidence of securing Rome's borders. This, to Badian, is the key difference between the mid- and late-Republican imperialism as exercised by the unquestioned foreign policy elites, the Senate. Pompey's solutions, taxation without governing, were eagerly embraced. In closing, Badian describes the Senate of the late Republic as a class of early 'robber barons,' unshackled by traditional restraints on personal behavior and public policy on the pursuit of personal wealth through official action.

Anti-prosopography

Other historians writing after World War II created doubts about the prosopographer's claim of aristocratic in-fighting being the factor that brought on revolution. In fact, there wasn't even a revolution.

SOURCE 17.61 K. R. Bradley, 'Review of *The Fall of the Roman Republic and Related Essays', The International History Review*, vol. 12, no. 2, May 1990, pp. 349–53

... if the term were to be confined to 'those moments in the history of class struggle during which a radical, violent change occurs in the class basis of the political structure', then there never was a Roman revolution, as the change from Republic to Principate did not, as Brunt forcefully shows in this book, bring a radical alteration of Rome's class structure. Yet such a formulation, it might be said, is overly affected by ideology. So in what sense is it possible, or accurate, to speak of 'the Roman revolution'? That is the question that is central to Brunt's book.

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17.10 The significance of the way power was exercised in Ancient Rome

Power in the late Republic: Who really dominated?

The case for the patricians

The following sources make the case for the contribution of the patricians towards the breakdown of the Republic.



SOURCE 17.62 H. W. Schmidt, *Cicero's speech attacking Catilina in the Roman Senate*, 1912

W. Lintott, D. Daube, A. Momigliano: 'Upper class Roman Society was like an elite club. Men displayed their riches in order to impress the electorate and secure political offices. Sumptuary legislation was an effort to maintain equality between the members of society and so to preserve the integrity of the group as a whole. These "gentes" – patrician families/nobility, formed a society of peers whose power and political dominance would hold together only if the rights of each other were guaranteed.'

R. H. Smith: 'The Republic fell because of the Moral failings of the upper class/aristocracy.'

Ernst Badian: 'The restored Sullan oligarchy failed miserably in their unwillingness to do their duty, which opened up the way to Pompey and Caesar.'

Friedrich Munzer: 'The Roman aristocracy, so competitive as individuals, could unite in a show of solidarity around a general who had suffered a military defeat. It was of fundamental importance to safeguard the monopoly on military command enjoyed by the group.'

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SOURCE 17.63 C. Steel, 'Introduction: The legacy of the Republican Roman Senate', *Classical Receptions Journal,* vol. 7, iss. 1, 2015, pp. 1–10

> **The Senate embodied a number of paradoxes. It was composed of elected members, who often behaved as though they were a hereditary aristocracy. It was a body charged with offering advice, which often took decisive action. It functioned within a state where the citizen body as a whole was sovereign, yet acted as though it had the capacity to deprive citizens of their rights and status. And while claiming to embody the virtue of the past, it constantly innovated.**

The case for the people/plebeians

The following sources make the case for the contribution of the plebeians towards the breakdown of the Republic.

SOURCE 17.64 D.B. Hollander, 'Ancient Rome successfully fought against voter intimidation – a political story told on a coin that resonates today', *The Conversation*, 11 March 2024

> **... [V]oting procedures that sometimes heavily favored elites. In the *comitia centuriata*, the assembly that elected Rome's chief magistrates, each citizen was a member of a voting unit based on wealth. Unit members voted to decide which candidates they collectively supported ... The wealthiest Romans controlled more than half of the voting units in this assembly. The poorest citizens had just one voting unit; since they voted last, and only during uncertain outcomes, they might not vote at all. Furthermore, citizens voted orally and openly. Elites could directly observe and potentially intimidate poorer voters. That all began to change in 139 BCE when the Roman politician Aulus Gabinius passed a law mandating written ballots for elections. Two further laws, both passed in the 130s, extended the use of written ballots to legislative voting and most trial juries. These written ballots made it more difficult for elites to influence voting ... The aristocrats never managed to repeal the voting laws and were still grumbling about them even as the Republic collapsed.**



SOURCE 17.65 *The Secession of the People to the Mons Sacer*, engraving by Bartolomeo Barloccini, 1849; this event is also known as the First Secession of the Plebeians, 471 BCE

Fergus Millar: 'The Roman plebs were highly involved in political debate. The Senate was NOT the governing organ of the republic; it was the importance of persuading the people and then voting BY the people that showed were power really lay.'

Alexander Yakobson: 'at elections, the People were sovereign'.

Peter Garnsey: 'The Roman plebs – of paramount importance in understanding the late republic is the maintenance of food supply and avoiding famine.'

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Nicholas Purcell: 'The plebs were a mobile and fluid social entity, largely unaffected by political violence and class hatred. Economic activities flourished within Rome, which demolished the idea that Rome simply consumed and offered nothing in return.'

SOURCE 17.66 F. Millar, *The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic*, University of Michigan Press, June 1998. Fergus Millar is Camden Professor of Ancient History, Brasenose College, Oxford University.

The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic ... explores the consequences of a democracy in which public office could be gained only by direct election by the people. And while the Senate could indeed debate public matters, advise other office-holders, and make some administrative decisions, it could not legislate. An office-holder who wanted to pass a law had to step out of the Senate-house and propose it to the people in the Forum – where there were few guarantees. ... There were nearly a million adult male voters in the time of Cicero, but there were no constituencies, and no absentee ballots. To exercise their rights, voters had to come in person to Rome and to meet in the Forum. ... [T]he crowd was central to the great changes that took place year after year, and altered the Republic forever. ... [Should] we understand the Roman Republic: as a network of aristocratic families dominating the people, or an erratic and volatile democracy in which power was exercised by the tiny proportion of citizens who actually came to listen to speeches and to vote?

Particular individuals blamed for bringing the Republic down



Scipios



Gracchi



Marius and Sulla



Caesar and Pompey



Mark Antony and Octavian

SOURCE 17.67 Individuals commonly blamed for the fall of the Republic

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Scipio Africanus and Scipio Aemilianus

Scipio Africanus's extraordinary career based much on his popular appeal, and appeals to the people, and created suspicion and envy that led to the *Lex Villia Annalis* (180 BCE), which stipulated the order in which magistracies must be held and the conditions for holding office – *(the cursus honorum)*. Both Scipios placed their own advancement above normal procedures of the Republic by cultivating and exploiting popular favour in defiance of the wishes of the Senate. Perhaps this might be down to their 'Greek' education and cultivation of the image of a 'Greek' hero, who seeks personal glory above all things.

Tiberius Gracchus

Many historians, such as eminent British historian Dame Mary Beard, ascribe the beginning of the end to the Gracchi.

SOURCE 17.68 D. Franzen, 'A victim of its own success: Mary Beard discusses the collapse of the Roman Republic', *Los Angeles Review of Book,* 8 November 2016

> **Tiberius Gracchus, who gets into terrible trouble once he has been elected tribune of the people, twice. The tradition was you only held that position once. Tiberius was flouting tradition. Some of the old guard would say that was a revolutionary move. Rome didn't have a written constitution, but the rules are there. And one general rule was that you didn't repeat offices back to back, only possibly with a few years' gap. But Tiberius is elected twice in a row, and you can see exactly what the conservative position against that is. The answer from Tiberius Gracchus is, 'The popular assembly elected me. It is up to the popular assembly to elect whoever it wants. And if they want me twice, they have me twice.'**

The Sulla paradox

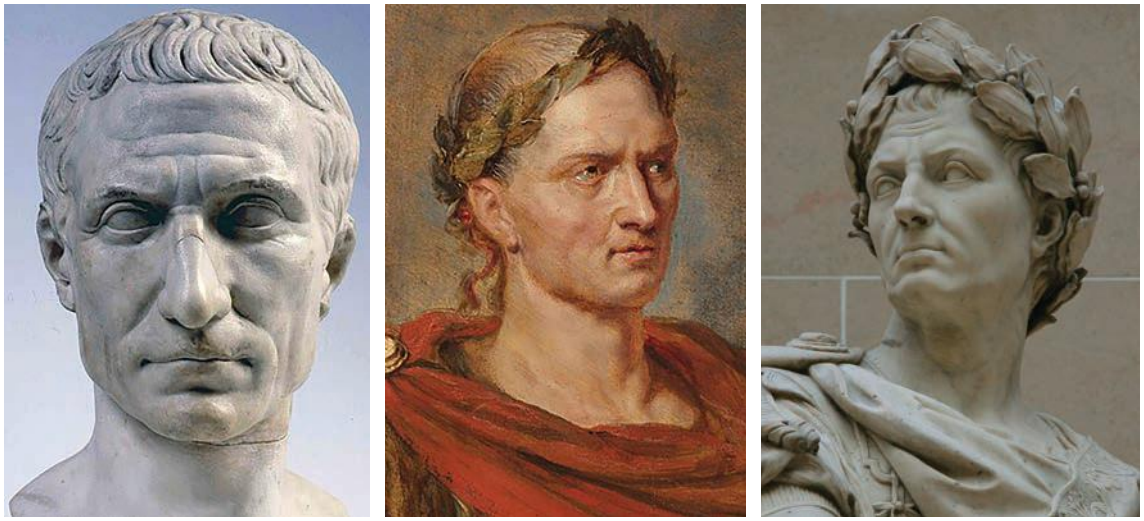
SOURCE 17.69 B. Levick, 'Morals, politics and the Fall of the Roman Republic', *Greece and Rome*, vol. 29, no. 1, April 1982, pp. 53–62

> **In manoeuvring his way to the consulship, however devious and treacherous his conduct towards his original patron Marius, Sulla was acting according to accepted canons of Roman political behaviour. But the struggle for the Mithridatic command, the invasion of Italy in 83 [his march on Rome] and the seizure of the Dictatorship and the extraordinary honours that accompanied it, all advanced Sulla further along the path that led towards the liberation of individual ambitions from the restraints of law and custom, the path that Africanus and Aemilianus had trodden before him. It was personal ambition that carried him along it.**

Sulla's reforms as dictator tried to restore senatorial power and government. J Carcopino, in an extension of Badian's view, argued that it failed because Sulla was 'pushed out'. He did not resign his powers voluntarily but was forced to do so by a coalition of Pompey, Cicero and members of the Metellan faction.

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Julius Caesar



SOURCE 17.70 Representations of Caesar: the Chiaramonti bust c. 30–20 BCE (left), portrait by Rubens c. 1626 CE (middle), statue by Coustou c. 1696 CE (right)

SOURCE 17.71 D. Franzen, 'A victim of its own success: Mary Beard discusses the collapse of the Roman Republic', *Los Angeles Review of Book,* 8 November 2016

> We tend to see the end of the Republic as a period in which Julius Caesar, the would-be emperor, was locked in conflict with Pompey the Great who was representing senatorial traditions. The fact is, they were both practically emperors, and Pompey lost. Pompey is a guy who, in many ways, presents himself as a traditionalist, but he was breaking through the boundaries of republican office holding just as much as Caesar was. So, Rome is a culture that implodes. It implodes. It is a victim of its own success.

The 'accidental' dictator

Against this, Tom Stevenson (perhaps following in the footsteps of the McDonald and Momogliono tradition), argues:

SOURCE 17.72 J. P. Wickham, 'Review of *Julius Caesar and the Transformation of the Roman Republic', Bryn Mawr Classical Review* by Tome Stevenson, 27 July 2015

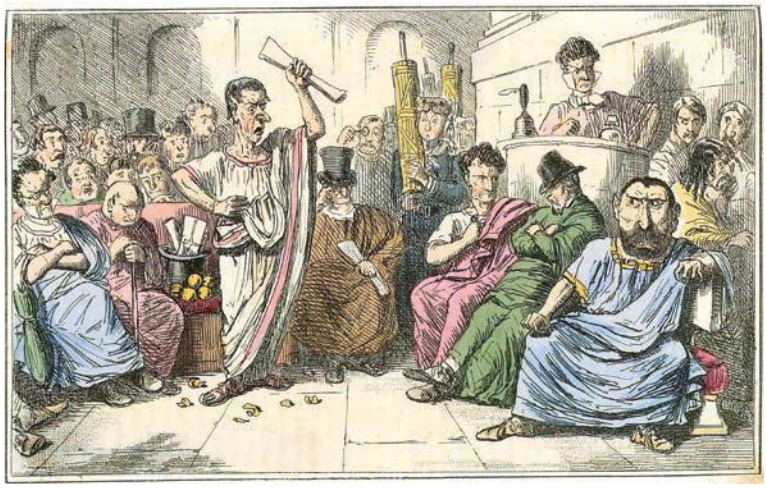
> In the final chapter Stevenson asserts his case that Caesar did not seek kingship. He argues that Caesar operated within the confines of the political system of his day, seeking at first to climb the *cursus honorum* by conventional means and then to surpass all his contemporaries in *dignitas*. His goal was by no means different from that of other aspiring Roman nobles; however, such were the stakes in surpassing Pompeius Magnus that he became a de facto autocrat. Any notion that Caesar gained his position in order to reform politics is dispelled by his ad hoc and limited reforms. Stevenson ends by posing a philosophical question regarding the role of individuals in shaping history. Here, in agreement with Badian, he opposes Meier's view that Caesar must be held accountable for precipitating the events that led to the destruction of the Republic.

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Fall of the Roman Republic: Individuals vs groups

As you conclude this depth study, consider the different nuances when concentrating on individuals, as opposed to groups or broader historical forces, regarding the nature of power in the Late Roman Republic. Reflect on the following guiding questions.

- Are we merely products of our groups and contexts?
- Can an individual really make a difference, or are we all prisoners of our own upbringing?
- Can an individual take credit if he or she cannot be held responsible?
- Was Caesar special, or was he simply the Roman noble who happened to be there at the time?
- If Caesar had not commanded the Gallic legions in 49 BCE, would another Roman have crossed the Rubicon and achieved what he subsequently did?
- If the individual does not have at least the potential to make a difference, what is the point of going on?
- Military changes – was there a manpower shortage, were the legions beginning to struggle (e.g. against Jugurtha in Numidia, and especially against the Germans in Gaul) OR were legionary tactics, equipment and leadership responding constantly and vigorously to new challenges in the second century BCE? Was Marius really responsible for the 'Marian' reforms?
- Friction in the provinces – greed, extortion, corruption, exploitation and cruelty in the provinces. The narrative of Roman oppression. Does it go too far?
- Marius defeats the Germans and goes into decline – did the state deal powerfully with a potential monarch?
- The Social War (91–88 BCE): Rome and its Italian (i.e. non-Roman) 'allies' – the result of longstanding or more recent frictions since the time of the Gracchi?
- Citizenship for the Italians after the Social War – a wise and overdue move or a play for political influence by Roman political leaders?
- Events of 88–82 BCE: Why did Rome experience very few indications of rebellion in the provinces during the period of the civil wars?
- 81–78 BCE: Sulla's reforms – were they reactionary conservatism or support for his friends among the optimates?
- The challenge presented by Pompey (78–63 BCE) – why were his political opponents less able to sideline him than they were with Marius?
- Senatorial corruption: To what extent were the Senators their own worst enemies?
- Did Cicero join the optimates because he was fundamentally conservative in politics or because he saw in his opposition to Catiline a chance to become elected consul with *optimate* support? How patriotic and idealistic was Cicero?



SOURCE 17.73 John Leech, 'Cicero denouncing Catiline', published in Gilbert Abbott À Beckett, *The Comic History of Rome*, Bradbury, Agnew, & Co., 1852

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- At its height, the Roman Empire expanded across what is now 25 countries and held supreme standing in the Mediterranean.
- In 509 BCE, a new Roman Republic was built to fulfil the concept of *Senatus Populusque Romanus*: a collective government.
- Annual elections were held for various magistracy positions, where voting preference was typically given to those of noble birth.
- The growing domination of the elite over political affairs caused resentment and tension between the patricians and plebians.
- The Roman Republic encountered political corruption, slave uprisings, reformations, wars, the emergence of political factions and a new social class, and resource scarcity.
- Scipio Africanus famously defeated the Carthaginians at the Battle of Zama in 202 BCE. He leveraged this popularity for personal gain, going so far as to ignore and threaten the Senate.
- Tiberius Gracchus aligned himself with other liberal aristocrats who saw the need for radical reform and so ran for election as Tribune of the Plebs. He ignored accepted customary procedures for introducing legislation and the methods he used to get his land reforms passed put the Senate further offside.
- Tiberius's short-lived political career highlighted the real power that came with being popular with the people and was the first visible 'chip' in the image of the 'untouchable' Senate.
- Gaius Gracchus aimed to continue the drive for reform but lacked his brother's charisma. The Senate ordered his assassination (the first time they had given such a decree) but he committed suicide. The arrest and subsequent execution of 3000 of his supporters set a precedent for state-sanctioned violence and murder.
- Marius's military reforms transformed the Roman army from a citizen militia into a professional force. His victories over Germanic tribes made him extremely popular, enabling him to break custom and serve five consecutive terms as consul.
- Marius's rivalry with Sulla culminated in two civil wars, deeply affecting Roman politics and society. The legacy of their conflict demonstrated how personal ambitions could destabilise the Republic, foreshadowing the rise of autocratic rule in Rome.
- The sudden death of Marius gave Sulla free reign to eliminate his *populares* rivals. He ruled unopposed as dictator for three years, aiming to restore political stability, before his unexpected retirement.
- Personal rivalry between Pompey and Crassus over military commands and political power led to another civil war and the eventual First Triumvirate with Julius Caesar.
- Julius Caesar rose to power and the Roman Republic fell.



SOURCE 17.74 *Triumph with child in the triumphator's chariot*, Francis William Warwick Topham, 1838

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
Explain the different stages that constitute the 'Fall of the Roman Republic'.

DEVISE
What is more important in explaining the 'Fall' of the Roman Republic: groups/historical forces, or the actions of individuals?

ANALYSE
Identify the main ancient authors who write on this subject and their motives for doing so.

EVALUATE
How useful and reliable are sources from the Augustan era regarding issues relating to the 'Fall' of the Roman Republic?

SYNTHESISE
Which modern viewpoints do you think best explain the reasons for the 'Fall' of the Roman Republic'?

COMMUNICATE
What made the Roman Republic 'work'?

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions
1. Why didn't the Sullan Constitution 'save' the Republic?
2. 'Through its own actions, the Senate was more of a danger to itself than any popular leader'. Assess the validity of this statement.

Investigation tasks
1. How has territorial expansion and the creation of an empire affected the political stability of other ancient (and even modern) civilisations?
2. Assess the impact of Hellenism on Roman 'identity'.

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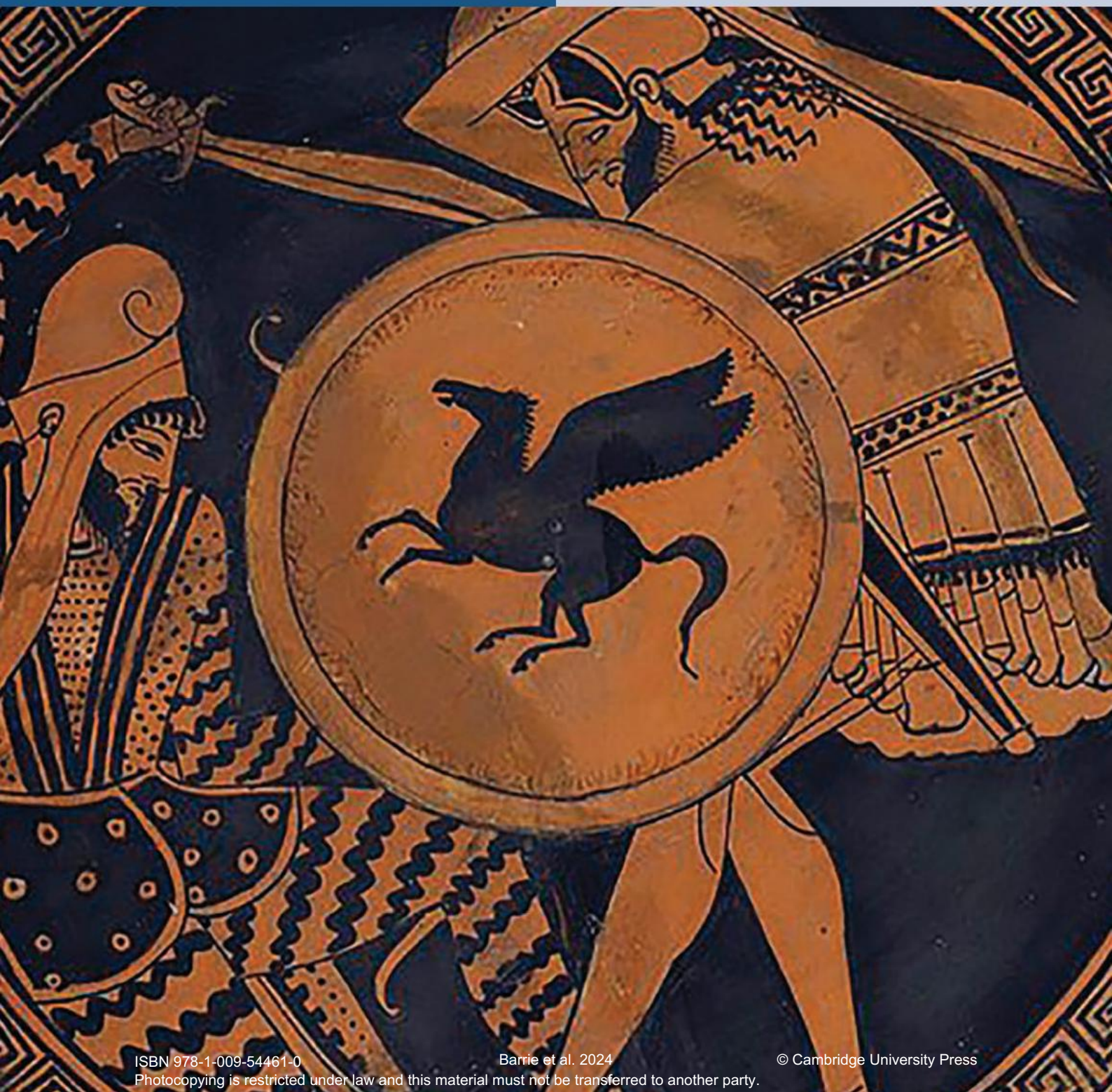
Chapter 18

THE PERSIAN WARS (DIGITAL)

Syllabus reference:
Unit 4, Topic 1: Historical periods

ALAN BARRIE

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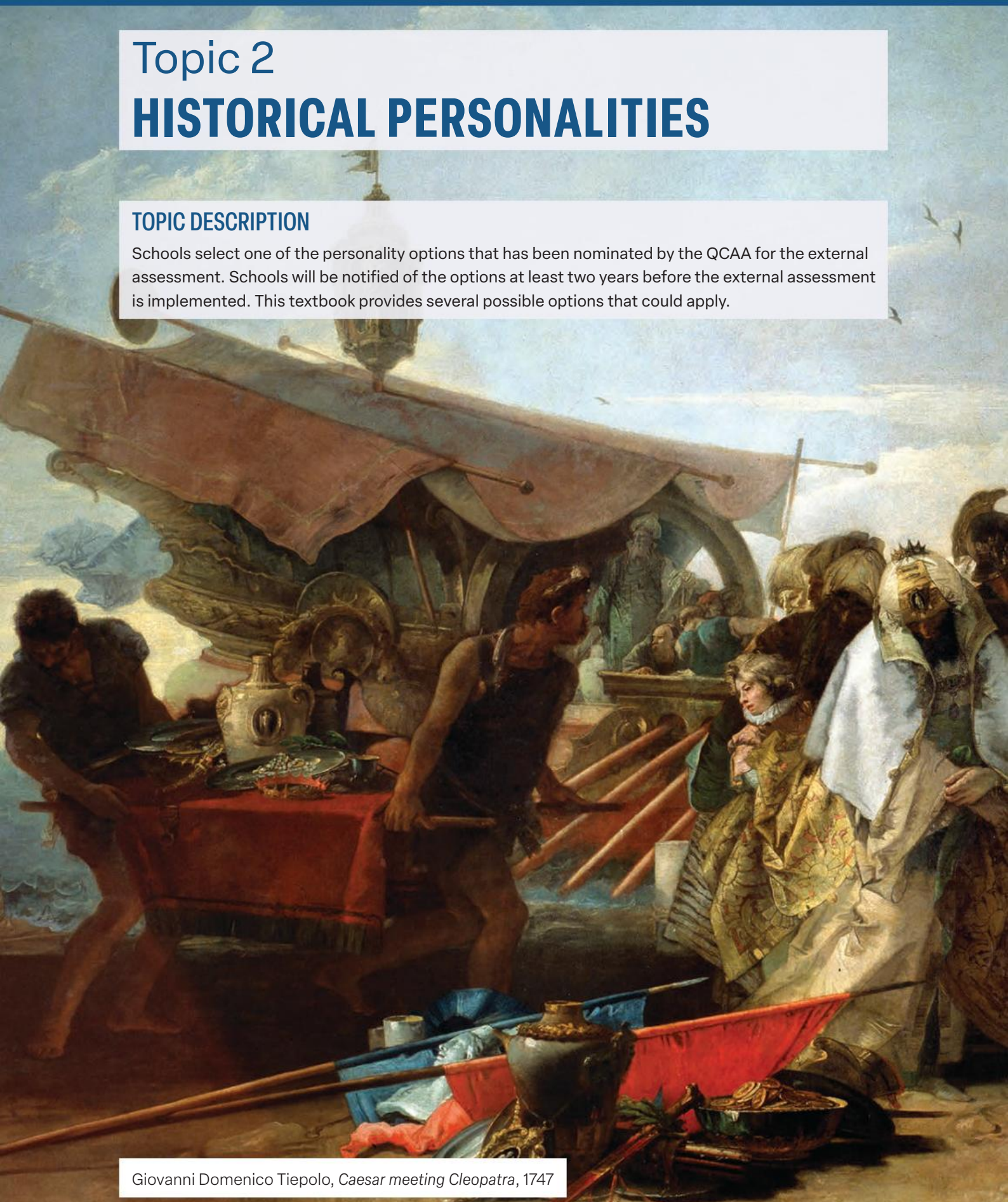


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Topic 2
HISTORICAL PERSONALITIES

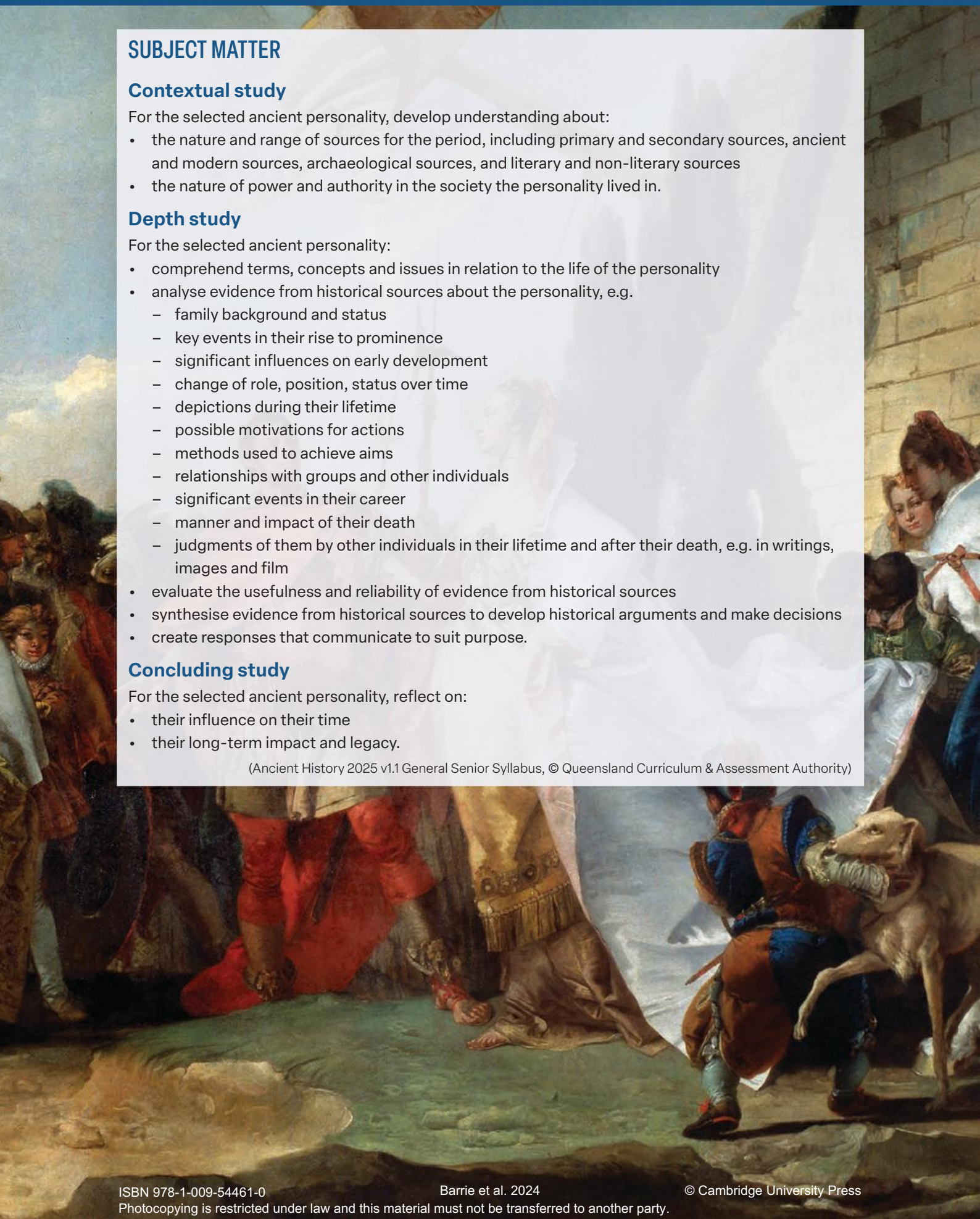
TOPIC DESCRIPTION

Schools select one of the personality options that has been nominated by the QCAA for the external assessment. Schools will be notified of the options at least two years before the external assessment is implemented. This textbook provides several possible options that could apply.



Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, *Caesar meeting Cleopatra*, 1747

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SUBJECT MATTER

Contextual study

For the selected ancient personality, develop understanding about:

- the nature and range of sources for the period, including primary and secondary sources, ancient and modern sources, archaeological sources, and literary and non-literary sources
- the nature of power and authority in the society the personality lived in.

Depth study

For the selected ancient personality:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the life of the personality
- analyse evidence from historical sources about the personality, e.g.
  - family background and status
  - key events in their rise to prominence
  - significant influences on early development
  - change of role, position, status over time
  - depictions during their lifetime
  - possible motivations for actions
  - methods used to achieve aims
  - relationships with groups and other individuals
  - significant events in their career
  - manner and impact of their death
  - judgments of them by other individuals in their lifetime and after their death, e.g. in writings, images and film
- evaluate the usefulness and reliability of evidence from historical sources
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to develop historical arguments and make decisions
- create responses that communicate to suit purpose.

Concluding study

For the selected ancient personality, reflect on:

- their influence on their time
- their long-term impact and legacy.

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Chapter 19

RAMESES II

Syllabus reference: Unit 4, Topic 2: Historical personalities

BEN HEGERTY

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How was power and authority gained, maintained and challenged in the Ancient World?
- How was power exercised by ancient personalities in the Ancient World?

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SOURCE 19.1 Colossal statue of Rameses II in the entrance hall of the Grand Egyptian Museum, Giza

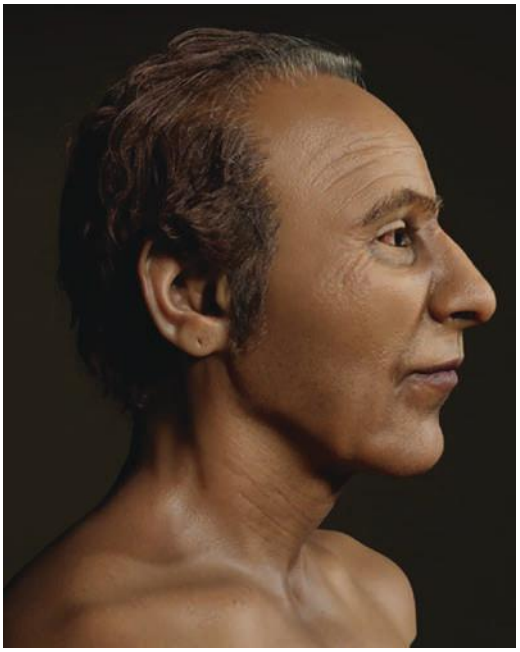
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FOCUS: HOW RAMESES II IS VIEWED TODAY



SOURCE 19.2 A banknote from Egypt featuring Rameses II

Apart from King Tutankhamun, there is perhaps no other Egyptian pharaoh more well known today than Rameses II (reigned 1279–1213 BCE), the third pharaoh of Egypt's 19th Dynasty. His reign is seen as a Golden Age in Egypt's history, lasting for over 66 years and resulting in the production of more artefacts, monuments and buildings than any other Egyptian pharaoh. He is famous for his military accomplishments, his building projects, and his diplomatic successes, including the world's first recorded international peace treaty, a replica of which sits in the United Nations headquarters in New York City. Rameses' legacy remains clearly visible throughout Egypt, from his portrait and temples featuring on banknotes, to the colossal statue of Rameses that welcomes visitors into Egypt's newest flagship museum, the Grand Egyptian Museum, to the body of Rameses himself, which is on display for public viewing at the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Cairo, Egypt.



SOURCE 19.3 A computer-generated image showing what Rameses may have looked like at age 45, based on scans of his remains

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ACTIVITY **19.1**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Making thinking visible: Take a position on an attitude scale: the ethics of displaying Rameses' remains

Since the discovery of Rameses' mummified body in 1881 CE, scientists have learnt much about Rameses' appearance and physical traits. Studies of the body have revealed that he likely had dental problems and severe arthritis – not unexpected for a pharaoh who lived to 90 years of age. He was likely above average height for his time and had a prominent nose, as well as red hair. His body is now on display to the public at the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization in Cairo, Egypt.



SOURCE 19.4 The mummified body of Rameses II on display at the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization, Cairo

1. With a partner or as a whole class, discuss responses to the question: Should museums continue to display human remains to the public?
2. If time permits, conduct a little more research into the arguments for and against the public display of human remains in museums. Consider issues such as how these displays can increase public awareness, interest and engagement in the Ancient World, how these remains were acquired, the rights of the deceased, and the benefit to tourism and historical knowledge.
3. In your class, create an attitudinal scale from one end of the classroom to the other. At each end will be the absolute opposing viewpoints:

Museums should continue to display human remains such as those of Rameses	⟷	Museums should not continue to display human remains.

   a. Each student will place themselves along the scale continuum. Various students may be asked to justify why they are standing where they are.
   b. You will then have the opportunity to move after hearing the viewpoint of others in your class. Students may again be asked for justifications.

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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

19.1 When and where did the events of Rameses II's life take place?

When did the events of Rameses' life take place?

Born around 1304 BCE, Rameses II, also known as Rameses the Great, reigned as the **pharaoh** of Egypt for nearly 67 years during Ancient Egypt's **New Kingdom**. He is believed to have been the longest-serving pharaoh (or perhaps the second-longest) in all of Egypt's history. Along with King Tutankhamun, he is widely recognised as one of the most well-known pharaohs of Egypt today and is regarded as a highly successful leader, builder and military general.

The Ancient Egyptian civilisation lasted for an extraordinarily long time – nearly 3000 years. Remarkably, by the time Rameses II was crowned as pharaoh, Egypt had already been under the rule of pharaonic **dynasties** for over 2000 years, and nearly 1000 years had elapsed between the era of the 4th Dynasty pharaohs who built the Great Pyramids of Giza, and the beginning of Rameses II's reign as the third king of the 19th Dynasty.

pharaoh the ruler of Egypt

New Kingdom one of three main periods of Egyptian history, which began roughly in 1550 BCE and lasted until 1069 BCE

dynasty a sequence of rulers from the same family

TABLE 19.1 A list of Egypt's dynasties and their approximate dates. Rameses II was the third pharaoh of the 19th Dynasty, which occurred during the period of Egypt's New Kingdom.

Period	Dynasties	Date
Predynastic Periods (Neolithic)	–	5300–3000 BCE
Early Dynastic Period	1–2	3000–2686 BCE
Old Kingdom	3–8	2686–2160 BCE
First Intermediate Period	9–11	2160–2055 BCE
Middle Kingdom	11–14	2055–1650 BCE
Second Intermediate Period	15–17	1650–1550 BCE
New Kingdom	18–20	1550–1069 BCE
Third Intermediate Period	21–25	1069–715 BCE
Late Period	25–31	715–332 BCE
Macedonian Era	–	332–304 BCE
Ptolemaic Era	Ptolemaic Dynasty	304–30 BCE
Roman Era	–	30 BCE – 395 CE
Byzantine Era	–	395–641 CE
Arab Conquest	–	641 CE

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TABLE 19.2 Timeline of key events in Rameses II's life

Dates	Year of reign	Event
1304 BCE	–	Birth of Rameses II, second child of Seti I and Queen Tuya
1288 BCE	–	Marries Nefertari, the most well-known of his eight Royal Wives
1279 BCE	1	Becomes pharaoh; completes construction of his father's **mortuary temple**
1278 BCE	2	Repels a minor invasion of the Sea People (**Sherden**); orders sinking of a well in Nubia
1276 BCE	4	Initial, short-lived conquests in Syria-Palestine
1275 BCE	5	Battle of Kadesh
c. 1264 BCE – c. 1244 BCE		Probable dates for the construction of **Abu Simbel**
1273–1270 BCE	7–10	Suppression of rebellions in Syria-Palestine; siege of Dapur; begins large-scale building projects
1259 BCE	21	Peace treaty between Egyptian and **Hittite empires**
1256 BCE	23	Death of Nefertari
1250 BCE	30	Celebrates first Sed Festival
1246 BCE	34	Diplomatic marriage to daughter of Hattusili III
1213 BCE	66	Death of Rameses II

Significant individuals and groups

The Egyptians

- Thutmose III
- Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV)
- Horemheb
- Rameses I
- Seti I
- Rameses II (Sesostris, Ozymandias), 1279–1213 BCE
- Nefertari
- Merenptah

The Hittites

- Muwatalli II
- Urhi-Teshub (Mursili III)
- Hattusili III
- Maathorneferure

mortuary temple a temple constructed during a pharaoh's reign to commemorate their reign, as well to act as a place of worship for the pharaoh following their death where family and others could make offerings for the deceased

Sherden a mysterious seafaring people, also commonly referred to as the Sea Peoples; they invaded Egypt unsuccessfully during Rameses II's reign, and would eventually cause the downfall of the Hittite Empire

Abu Simbel area in Nubia where Rameses II completed a temple in Year 34 to commemorate victory at the Battle of Kadesh

Hittite Empire Egypt's main antagonist and a rival superpower in the New Kingdom

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ACTIVITY 19.2

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. In your own words, write a definition of what is meant by a 'dynasty'.
2. Using Table 19.1, identify how many separate dynasties ruled over Egypt.
3. Conduct some research online to explain why Egypt's final dynasty came to an end in c. 332 BCE.
4. Conduct some additional research online to identify the dynasty associated with the following significant events or individuals:
   a. the reign of Pharaoh Tutankhamun
   b. the death of Pharaoh Cleopatra
   c. the construction of the Sphinx and the Great Pyramids at Giza
   d. the worship of the Aten sun disc
   e. the reign of Pharaoh Hatshepsut
   f. the unification of Egypt under King Menes/Narmer
   g. the expansion of Egypt's empire by the warrior pharaoh Thutmose III.
5. Using the timeline in Table 19.2, identify the following:
   a. the first year of Rameses' reign
   b. the year when Rameses died
   c. Rameses' age at his death
   d. the length of Rameses' reign as pharaoh of Egypt
   e. which dynasty of Egypt Rameses reigned in.
6. Conduct additional research online to identify whether Rameses' reign occurred before or after the following events:
   a. foundation of the city of Rome by Romulus and Remus
   b. construction of the Parthenon at Athens
   c. unification of China under the first Emperor, Qin Shi Huang Di.

What was Rameses' Egypt like?

When Rameses came to the throne as Pharaoh of Egypt, Egypt was already an influential superpower in possession of an empire. During the New Kingdom, Rameses' predecessors gained control over gold-rich Nubia to its south, enriching Egypt with a source of immense wealth and tradeable goods. The vast deserts to the east and west of the Nile River provided natural protection from invasion, and the river Nile itself provided fertile soil for growing food, as well as an effective means of transporting people and goods from one end of the kingdom to the other.

However, throughout the period of the New Kingdom, Egypt competed with a rival superpower, known as the Hittite Empire, for control over a region along the Mediterranean coast between the two kingdoms known as the Levant. This region, occupied in modern times by southern Syria, Palestine and Israel, gave control over the trade routes that passed through it from Asia to Europe and Africa, and therefore held strategic and economic benefits for whoever could control it. In Rameses' time, this area was referred to as the land of Canaan (modern-day Israel-Palestine) and **Amurru** (modern-day southern Syria).

Amurru the region around Kadesh

Gaining control over the lands to the east became a top priority for Rameses and his predecessors. Key to achieving this was subduing the fortress city of Kadesh, which was situated near a strategic crossing over the Orontes River and was occupied by the local Amurru people of the region.

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SOURCE 19.5 Map of the Egyptian Empire in the reign of Rameses II (1279–1213 BCE)

Pi-Rameses Rameses II's capital city; he moved the capital here from Thebes and built the city near the previous site of Avaris, in the eastern region of the Nile Delta; the choice of this location was probably an acknowledgement of the strategic need to have a power base closer to the contested area of the Levant

ACTIVITY 19.3

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Throughout this chapter, you will encounter references to an important region known as the Levant. Conduct some research online to identify what modern-day countries form the region known as the Levant.
2. Conduct research online to identify and list the modern countries that now exist in the regions of the ancient Egyptian and Hittite empires.
3. Using Source 19.5, suggest why the Egyptians of Rameses' time might have considered the Hittites to be a significant threat.
4. Identify and describe the location of the city of Kadesh, which was one of the most strategically important cities of Rameses' time. Explain why control over this particular city might have been considered very important to Rameses.
5. With reference to Source 19.5, explain how Egypt's geographical position was ideal in terms of defence, trade and transport.
6. Identify the location of **Pi-Rameses**, Rameses' new capital city. Suggest one motive that Rameses II may have had for relocating his capital city from Thebes to this new site.

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19.2 The early years and rise to prominence of Rameses II

Egypt's empire under Rameses' predecessors

Egypt expanded its wealth and influence throughout the period of the New Kingdom, particularly during the reigns of some prominent pharaohs of the 18th and 19th Dynasties. Through a series of successful military campaigns, a warrior pharaoh of the 18th dynasty named Thutmose III expanded Egypt's control over the Levant and **Nubia**, creating the biggest empire Egypt had ever seen. However, near the end of the 18th Dynasty and at the start of the 19th Dynasty, control over the Levant changed hands multiple times. Much of Egypt's influence over the lands to the east, including Kadesh, was lost during the turbulent reign of **Akhenaten** (18th Dynasty), who appears to have shown little regard for foreign affairs while implementing his religious reforms. After Akhenaten's reign, his successors Tutankhamun and Horemheb (the last pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty) tried and failed to recapture the city of Kadesh, recognising its importance for Egypt.

Rameses I, grandfather of Rameses II, was the first pharaoh of the 19th Dynasty. Little is known of Rameses I, except that he was from a military background rather than of royal blood and had served as Horemheb's **vizier** and chief of the army. He was appointed Horemheb's successor as pharaoh and, on Horemheb's death, Rameses I began a new dynasty of pharaohs. Rameses I's son, Seti I, was the second pharaoh of the 19th Dynasty. He **subdued** rebellious peoples in Palestine and southern Syria, and waged war on the Hittites to temporarily recover land that had been lost by Egypt. Seti I managed to conquer the city of Kadesh, but on his return to Egypt it was again lost to the Hittites, where it once more became a valuable stronghold for them.

Rameses II (1304–1213 BCE) became pharaoh in 1279 BCE at the age of 25, following the death of his father, Seti I. He had been prepared for this moment by sharing a **co-regency** with Seti from around the age of 14 and by participating in some military campaigns with his father. There is not a great deal of evidence from the first four years of his reign.

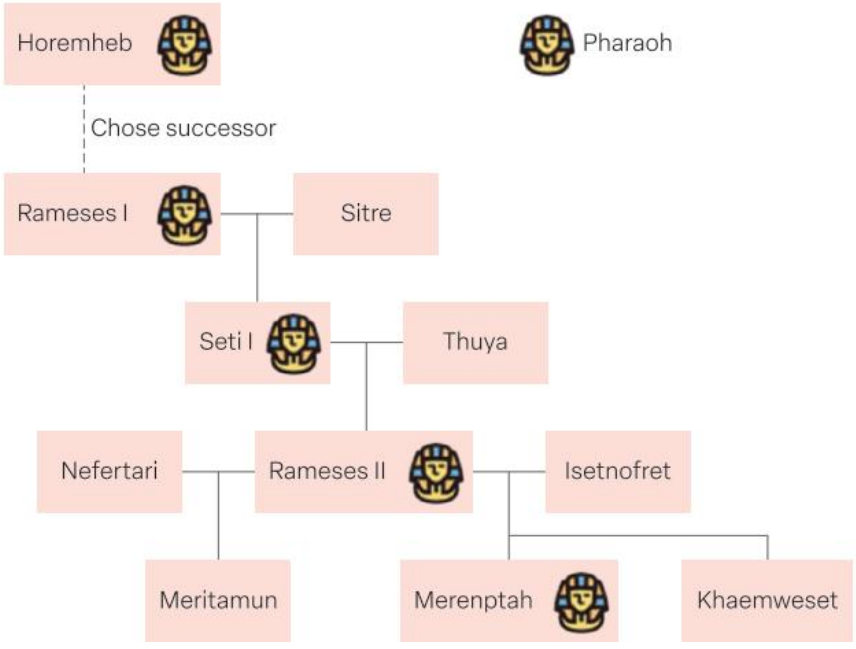
Nubia the kingdom to the south of Egypt; came under Egyptian control in the 18th Dynasty and enriched Egypt due to its significant gold resources

Akhenaten a pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty whose reign brought in significant, but short-lived changes, including the introduction of a new chief god, the Aten, and the shifting of the capital to a location called Akhetaten

vizier the highest government position beneath the pharaoh, who managed the administration of the empire and was often a prince or other relation of the pharaoh

subdued put down; repressed

co-regency a period during which the monarchical position is shared by two people; this was used as a way to prepare a successor or heir



SOURCE 19.6 The 19th Dynasty family tree from Horemheb to Merenptah

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ACTIVITY **19.4**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Use Source 19.6 to identify the relationship between Rameses II and the following people:

a. Rameses I
b. Nefertari
c. Merenptah
d. Seti I
e. Thuya.

19.3 Power and authority in Rameses II's Egypt

The role of the pharaoh

The position of the pharaoh in Ancient Egypt was very different from the political leaders of today. As well as being the head of state, the pharaoh was the **intermediary** between the gods and the people, and was considered to be **semi-divine**; the pharaoh ruled with the blessing and support of the **deities**. The pharaoh's overall responsibility was to ensure that temples to the gods were built and maintained, including the temples dedicated to the previous pharaoh, who was believed to have become a god upon death.

intermediary a person who provides a connection between the people and the gods
semi-divine more than mortal but not completely divine
deity a god



SOURCE 19.7 The role of the pharaoh in the New Kingdom

New Kingdom pharaohs such as Rameses II were responsible for maintaining *Ma'at* (order and harmony), dispensing justice, overseeing matters of domestic administration, defending Egypt's empire through military campaigns, and maintaining diplomatic relations with foreign kingdoms. In the New Kingdom, the pharaoh was supported by two deputies called viziers (one for Upper Egypt and one for Lower Egypt) who oversaw a complex government bureaucracy of nobles, scribes, regional governors (known as 'nomarchs'), priests, military officers and other officials. An additional high-ranking official with the title Viceroy of Kush was responsible for overseeing the lands of Nubia to the south.

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SOURCE 19.8 This image depicts Rameses II in battle against the Nubians. It was carved into the exterior wall of a temple built by Rameses at Beit el-Wali in Lower Nubia, where it was highly visible to the public and acted as royal propaganda to intimidate the local population.

ACTIVITY **19.5**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Consider Rameses' responsibilities as shown in Source 19.7. Compare these to the responsibilities of the Australian prime minister, and note similarities and differences you can identify.
2. Analyse Source 19.8 to explain how it supports the idea that Rameses II successfully completed his duties as a pharaoh.
3. Evaluate one strength and one limitation of using Source 19.8 to gain an accurate understanding of Rameses' actions as pharaoh.

Rameses' relationship with the gods

Rameses II made sure to emphasise the close relationship he had with the gods of Egypt from the very beginning of his reign; in his first year he visited important temples at **Karnak** and Luxor and completed construction of his deceased father's temple at Abydos (a city associated with Osiris, the god of the underworld). An inscription known as the great Abydos inscription, on his father's temple, supposedly relays Seti I's words from the underworld: Rameses II is declared to be the rightful king, and will enjoy victory and joy, and rule for the eternity of his lifetime. Rameses built new temples and expanded existing temples to the gods throughout his life.

Rameses II used the exterior walls of temples, probably visible to the public, as a canvas for inscriptions to advertise his achievements and to reinforce to his people that he was the chosen one of the gods. In many of these inscriptions he connects himself to the most powerful god of the New Kingdom, **Amun-Re**, who was primarily worshipped at Thebes.

Karnak Egypt's major temple complex in the New Kingdom; Rameses II's main contribution to the complex was the addition of the huge Hypostyle Hall

Amun-Re one of the most worshipped gods of the New Kingdom era; composite of two gods, Amun and Re

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From the start of the New Kingdom, when the god Amun-Re was elevated to the status of chief god, the Amun-Re temples and the priests who worked there received significant wealth in return for their support of the pharaoh and the recognition of his divine nature.

The considerable wealth, power and political influence of the priests of Amun-Re appears to have been a factor in the religious reforms implemented by the earlier pharaoh Akhenaten. Akhenaten may have feared that the priests could threaten the pharaoh's position of unquestioned authority, so he radically attempted to take power back from them. Akhenaten did this by promoting the worship of the Aten sun disc at the expense of the old gods, and by moving the royal court away from the influence of Amun-Re through building a new capital city, Akhetaten, in between Thebes and Memphis.

Later pharaohs, including Rameses II, undid Akhenaten's reforms by tearing down the temples dedicated to the Aten and restoring the worship of Egypt's traditional gods. However, Rameses II seems to have taken measures to prevent Amun-Re's priests from challenging the pharaoh again. While Rameses glorified Amun-Re as assisting him in warfare, he made sure to pay similar homage to other important gods, including Ptah, Atum and Re. Probably inspired by the example of Amenhotep III, Rameses II appears to have elevated himself to an equal status with the gods in many of his statues and temples (especially in Nubia), further cementing his, the pharaoh's, unquestioned authority.



ACTIVITY 19.6

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Explain the relationship between the pharaoh and the gods in the New Kingdom.
2. Explain how the 'great Abydos inscription' would have reassured Rameses II's subjects that he was the rightful heir to the throne.
3. Explain why Akhenaten's actions would have seemed controversial to Egyptians of the New Kingdom.
4. Explain how Rameses II used religion to his advantage during his reign.

19.4 Types of sources and source issues

How do we know about Rameses II?

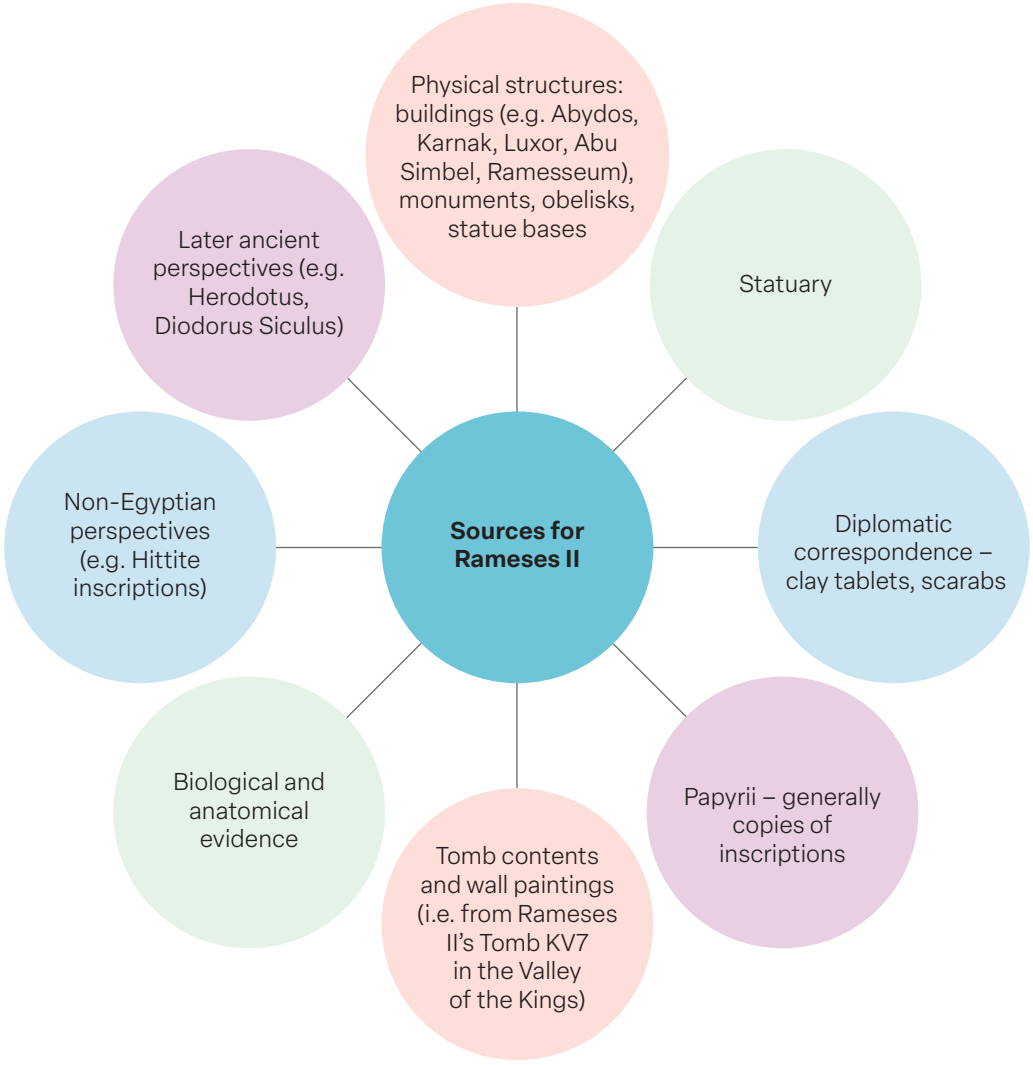
Most of our knowledge of Rameses II's reign comes from the evidence he left behind in the form of hundreds of written inscriptions and visual representations carved on the buildings, stelae and statues he constructed at Abydos, Karnak, Luxor, Abu Simbel and the **Ramesseum**. There are, however, other sources, including earthworks, biological and anatomical evidence, tomb contents and wall paintings, which can further inform our understanding of his life.

Ramesseum a temple in Thebes constructed by Rameses II for future worship after death

A few Hittite inscriptions describing Rameses II's actions have been discovered, which help to provide different perspectives on some aspects of Rameses II's reign, such as the short- and long-term outcomes of the Battle of Kadesh.

Later ancient sources by authors such as Diodorus Siculus and Herodotus also refer to the reign of Rameses II, offering some insight into how he was perceived in later times.

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SOURCE 19.9 Some common categories of sources for Rameses II

Common issues with the evidence for Rameses II

As you encounter these sources throughout this chapter, keep in mind that as most were produced by Rameses II himself for propaganda purposes, they will tend to present a useful yet limited perspective on his reign. Issues of bias, gaps (also known as lacunae and fragmentation), narrow views, hyperbolic language and inaccuracy are encountered frequently in evidence from the era of Rameses II. Some common issues you will encounter when analysing and evaluating evidence for Rameses II:

- Accuracy: Sometimes an event may not be presented accurately; for example, where specific numbers are given, such as the figure of 2500 enemy chariots at the Battle of Kadesh, these are invariably inaccurate, likely exaggerated and cannot really be proven.
- Perspective: Sources from Rameses II's reign offer very narrow perspectives, which only represent the official view of the royal court or Rameses II himself. We do not get much sense of how others, such as his subjects, perceived him. However, these sources are useful for showing how Rameses wished to be portrayed and how he used propaganda to spread his desired messages. On rare occasions, some contemporaneous non-Egyptian perspectives exist, such as the discovery of Hittite inscriptions presenting their view on the outcome of the Battle of Kadesh.

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- Time of production: If a source is created a considerable time after an event, there is a good chance that information may have been lost or misinterpreted at some point. This is an issue with ancient literary sources such as Diodorus Siculus or Herodotus, who lived a long time after the New Kingdom and whose information is quite faulty as a result. Conversely, sources created during Rameses II's reign, while they have other faults, can at least be said to give an insight into what Egyptians at the time were exposed to.
- Representation (idealised or traditional imagery versus reality): A common problem with depictions of the pharaoh smiting enemies or defeating opponents in battle is that they generally cannot be taken literally as true records of specific events. These are stylised images, intended to reinforce the traditional ideals of the office of the pharaoh, rather than providing any particular information about a specific pharaoh. However, in some cases, visual representations clearly do depict specific events, such as with images of Rameses II at the Battle of Kadesh or the siege of Dapur, and can provide us with information about how Rameses II wished to have these events remembered, even if these were deliberate misrepresentations of what actually happened.
- Physical condition (damaged, fragmented, deteriorated evidence): An unfortunate problem with many sources of Rameses II's reign is that once they were rediscovered and excavated, their exposure to the elements resulted in deterioration and weathering. On occasions where an inscription is obscured and difficult to read, interpretations of the evidence may not be accurate and are often based on educated guesswork by Egyptologists. In many cases, images and inscriptions were deliberately defaced in antiquity, meaning it can be hard to accurately attribute the source to the correct pharaoh.

Analysing and evaluating evidence for Rameses II

Analysing

The analysis of a source means studying it in detail by breaking it down into its component parts. The skill of analysis requires close and multiple examinations of a source to understand the explicit (immediately apparent or obvious) meanings, as well as the implicit (not outwardly stated or obvious) meanings. Remember when analysing that you are identifying the **features of evidence** and considering their implications in relation to your inquiry. These features can also help inform your judgements about the usefulness and reliability of a source. Not all features necessarily need to be identified for every source.

features of evidence context, origin, motive, audience, perspective, implicit and explicit meaning – various acronyms can be used to recall these, such as COMA PIE

Evaluating

The skill of evaluating requires you to make judgements about the usefulness and reliability of evidence that you use to support your arguments. As the strength of your arguments may be weakened if your evidence is of poor quality or extremely biased, it is important to critically assess the sources before using them, or at least to acknowledge that you are aware of the strengths and limitations of your sources. Evaluations of usefulness and/or reliability should refer to specific features of evidence.

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ACTIVITY **19.7**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

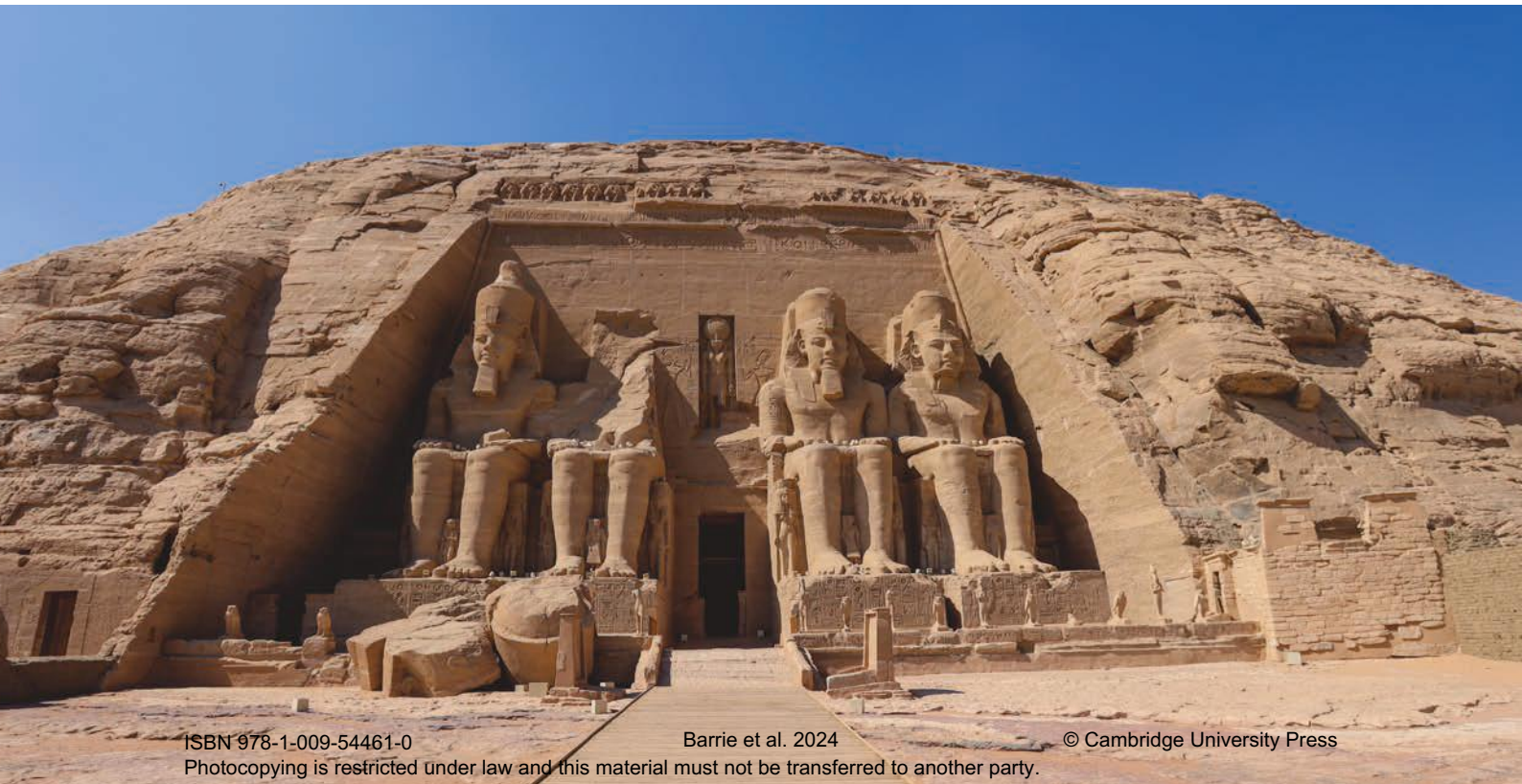
Copy the template below to summarise the common issues with evidence from the time of Rameses II. Each summary should be 25 words or less. If you can think of any additional issues with the evidence, add them to the list below.

Issue	Summary
Accuracy	
Perspective (point of view)	
Time of production	
Representativeness	
Physical condition	
Other	

Source analysis: Rameses II's use of propaganda

Rameses II constructed twin temples at the site of Abu Simbel, located in Nubia, a resource-rich region to the south of Egypt, that Egypt controlled. The Great Temple (the larger of the two) features huge statues of Rameses II, as well as smaller statues of his wife and children. Within the Great Temple are carved reliefs celebrating Rameses' heroic leadership against the Hittite army at the Battle of Kadesh. Temples such as these were constructed throughout Nubia as a public display of Egypt's might.

SOURCE 19.10 Four colossal statues of Rameses II in front of Abu Simbel



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The carved relief from the walls of the central hallway of the Great Temple at Abu Simbel (Source 19.11) depicts Nubian prisoners of war who had been defeated by Rameses II and are being presented to the god Amun-Re. Other scenes within the temple show Rameses II 'smiting' (crushing) Nubian prisoners in the presence of Amun-Re.



SOURCE 19.11 Depiction of Nubian prisoners of war, inscribed on the wall of Abu Simbel

The following inscription (Source 19.12) describes the enemy chief who Rameses II fought at the Battle of Kadesh (Year 5 of his reign). It was carved into the walls of the temples at Luxor, Abu Simbel and the Ramesseum, and is accompanied by a visual depiction of the chief.

SOURCE 19.12 A description of a Hittite chief at the Battle of Kadesh. Copies of this inscription are found on Luxor Temple, Abu Simbel and the Ramesseum.

> **The vanquished, wretched chief of the Hittites, standing before his infantry and chariots with his face turned round, and his heart afraid. He went not forth to battle, for fear of his majesty, after he saw his majesty prevailing against the vanquished chief of the Hittites and all the chiefs of all the countries who were with him. His majesty he overthrew them. The vanquished chief of the Hittites said: 'He is like Set, great in might; Baal is in his limbs'.**

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The following source (Source 19.13) is an extract from the Greek writer Diodorus Siculus, an ancient Greek historian who wrote in 60–30 BCE. In this extract he describes the Ramesseum, constructed by Rameses to be used by his people to worship him after his death. The ancient Greeks referred to Rameses II as 'Ozymandias'.

SOURCE 19.13 Description of the Ramesseum by the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus

... a monument of the king known as Ozymandias ... beside the entrance are three statues, each of a single block of black stone from Syene, of which one, that is seated, is the largest of any in Egypt, the foot measuring over seven cubits, while the other two at the knees of this, the one on the right and the other on the left, daughter and mother respectively, are smaller than the one first mentioned. And it is not merely for its size that this work merits approbation, but it is also marvellous by reason of its artistic quality and excellent because of the nature of the stone, since in a block of so great a size there is not a single crack or blemish to be seen. The inscription upon it runs: 'King of Kings am I, Ozymandias. If anyone would know how great I am and where I lie, let him surpass one of my works.' There is also another statue of his mother standing alone, a monolith twenty cubits high, and it has three diadems on its head, signifying that she was both daughter and wife and mother of a king. Beyond the pylon, he says, there is a peristyle more remarkable than the former one; in it there are all manner of reliefs depicting the war which the king waged against those Bactrians who had revolted; against these he had made a campaign with four hundred thousand foot-soldiers and twenty thousand cavalry, the whole army having been divided into four divisions, all of which were under the command of sons of the king. [Note: Diodorus is describing the Battle of Kadesh]

On the first wall the king, he says, is represented in the act of besieging a walled city which is surrounded by a river, and of leading the attack against opposing troops; he is accompanied by a lion, which is aiding him with terrifying effect. Of those who have explained the scene some have said that in very truth a tame lion which the king kept accompanied him in the perils of battle and put the enemy to rout by his fierce onset; but others have maintained that the king, who was exceedingly brave and desirous of praising himself in a vulgar way, was trying to portray his own bold spirit in the figure of a lion. On the second wall, he adds, are wrought the captives as they are being led away by the king; they are without their privates and their hands, which apparently signifies that they were effeminate in spirit and had no hands when it came to the dread business of warfare.

... Such, they say, was the tomb of Ozymandias the king, which is considered far to have excelled all others, not only in the amount of money lavished upon it, but also in the ingenuity shown by the artificers.

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The Ramesseum, Rameses' mortuary temple, where Egyptians could worship Rameses II after his death, is shown in Source 19.14.



SOURCE 19.14 The Ramesseum, Rameses' memorial temple

ACTIVITY **19.8**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. For Sources 19.10–19.14, complete the source analysis table available in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 3*.
2. Analyse two of the sources to explain how these would have helped Rameses II to reinforce his power over his people. Refer to specific features of evidence to support your response.
3. For each source, evaluate the extent to which it would be useful for responding to the question: How did Rameses II use propaganda to project a powerful image to his people?
4. Practice question (evaluate): Evaluate the extent to which evidence from Source 19.13 is reliable and useful for learning about Rameses II's use of propaganda. Explain two judgements of reliability and one judgement of usefulness.

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DEPTH STUDY

19.5 Significant achievements in Rameses II's career

Rameses II's reputation as 'Rameses the Great' and as one of Egypt's most successful pharaohs is largely based on his achievements in three main areas:

1. military success
2. diplomatic achievements
3. extensive building projects.

In this section, you will use evidence to evaluate Rameses II's achievements in these fields to determine if his reputation is truly deserved.

Military success: Does Rameses II really deserve his reputation as a great military leader?

Rameses II is widely considered to have been a great military leader. His most significant battle is known as the Battle of Kadesh, fought between Egypt and the Hittite empire. In the aftermath of the battle, Rameses II commissioned hundreds of inscriptions and illustrations throughout his kingdom celebrating his achievements in this battle. While the battle lasted for only a single day, it was the largest chariot battle ever fought in the Ancient World, and resulted in the first ever international peace treaty. Guinness World Records also recognises the battle as the first fully documented war and first use of written propaganda. Using the following evidence for the Battle of Kadesh, you will critically evaluate the accuracy of Rameses II's claim that it was a decisive military victory.

Why was the city of Kadesh important to Rameses?

The city of Kadesh is located in Syria, about 24 kilometres south-west of the modern city of Homs. In Rameses II's time, it was a heavily fortified city, highly prized by both the Egyptians and their main rivals, the Hittites, due to its vital strategic position. In addition to being situated near the boundary between the two empires, the location of the city of Kadesh was at a crossing point of the Orontes River, which linked some of the major trading routes of the day, allowing access between the Mediterranean Sea and the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers (and linking Asia with Europe and Africa). The population of the city had strengthened its defences by diverting the Orontes River to create a moat around the city.

Control over the city and the surrounding region, known as Amurru (after the Amurru people who occupied the area) changed numerous times throughout the 18th and 19th Dynasties. Under Akhenaten and the Amarna pharaohs of the 18th Dynasty, Egypt lost control of the region, but Rameses' father, Seti I, engaged in expansionist campaigns to reassert Egypt's influence and rebuild the empire, recapturing cities in Amurru as well as **Canaan** (modern-day Israel, and Palestinian territories). Rameses II accompanied his father on one of these military campaigns, where Seti I was able to recapture the city of Kadesh and return the region to Egyptian control. However, in the period immediately preceding Rameses II's reign, Egypt once again lost control of Kadesh, with the region returning to Hittite control.

Canaan southern region of the Levant roughly where Israel and Palestine are located today

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In Year 4 of Rameses II's reign, at the age of 29, he mounted his first major military campaign into the Levant, where he had success against the Hittites and gained control over the region of Amurru. However, not long after Rameses II's initial success in the region, Amurru was recaptured by the Hittite King **Muwatalli II**. In Year 5 of his reign, Rameses II assembled a large force of infantry and chariots at his new capital city of Pi-Rameses (meaning 'House of Rameses') and marched to Amurru with his sights set on retaking the city of Kadesh.

Muwatalli II king of the Hittites in Rameses II's early years; Rameses II's opponent at the Battle of Kadesh



SOURCE 19.15 A map of the Levant, showing the location of Kadesh

ACTIVITY 19.9

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Describe the location of the city of Kadesh in Source 19.15.
2. Use the map as well as the information in the text to explain at least two possible motives that Rameses II might have had for wanting to capture the city of Kadesh

Rameses' use of temples as canvas for propaganda

Political leaders today have many options for sharing news of their successes, from social media to television advertisements. For Egyptian pharaohs such as Rameses II, inscriptions on temples, stelae, statues and other monuments throughout the empire served as a medium for celebrating military successes.

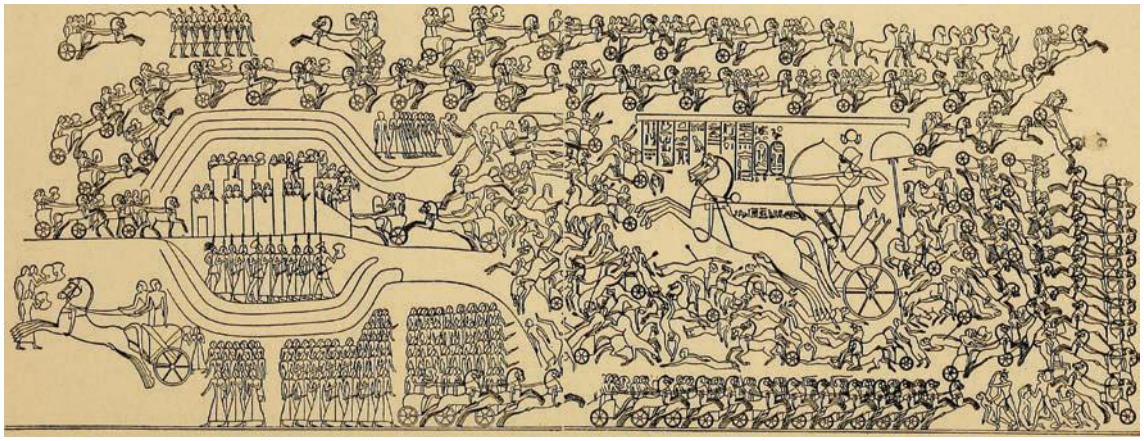
Luxor Temple was one of the most important temples of Rameses' reign, and any image used to decorate this temple would have reached a large public audience. It was, along with Karnak, one of the two main temples at Thebes. Though the temple existed before Rameses II's time, he added the two pylons (towers) to the front of the temple, as well as six colossal statues depicting him. The pylon on the left was decorated with a large-scale depiction of the Battle of Kadesh, which occurred in the fifth year of his reign. As the temple complex in Rameses II's time was surrounded by a high wall made of mudbrick, these front pylons were the only element of the temple visible to the public.

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SOURCE 19.16 Luxor Temple complex at Thebes

The depiction of the Battle of Kadesh in Source 19.17 comes from the Luxor Temple. Illustrations of inscriptions like these are commonly used where the original inscription has deteriorated or is unclear.



SOURCE 19.17 Visual representation of the Battle of Kadesh, from Luxor Temple

ACTIVITY **19.10**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Making thinking visible: SEE, THINK, WONDER

The See, Think, Wonder routine encourages you to make careful observations and thoughtful interpretations. Complete this activity on three sticky notes before doing any further reading on the Battle of Kadesh.

1. On your sticky notes, write your responses to the following questions.
   - **a.** What do you SEE in the image in Source 19.17? Identify details that you notice or that stand out to you.
   - **b.** What do you THINK is occurring in this image? What does the image suggest the outcome of the battle might have been?
   - **c.** What does this image make you WONDER? What questions do you have? What other information might be needed to better understand the image?
2. Discuss your responses as a class. What did the class See, Think and Wonder? What patterns emerged? Were there any ideas that stood out?

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ACTIVITY **19.11**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

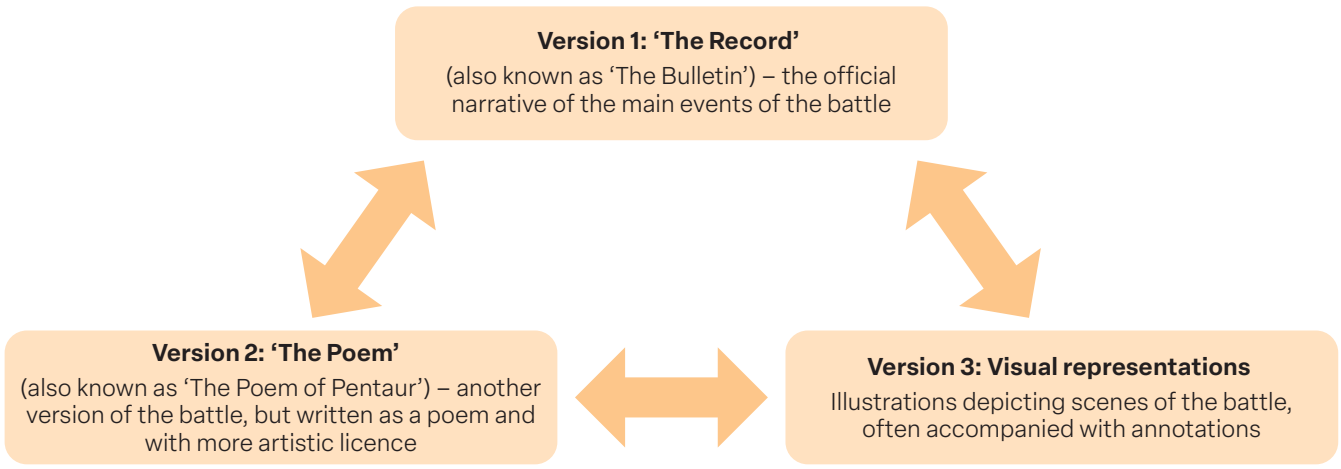
Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Examine Source 19.17 and answer the following questions.

1. Identify which figure is Rameses II and explain your reasoning.
2. The city of Kadesh is depicted on the left side of the image. Describe one feature of the city, according to the image.
3. Infer what the outcome of the Battle of Kadesh may have been. Support your answer with reference to features of evidence from the image.
4. Analyse the image to identify two features of warfare in the time of Rameses II.
5. Suggest what Rameses II's motive might have been in having this image created.
6. View a 3D reconstruction of Luxor Temple here: https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/10732 and suggest who the intended audience of the depiction of the battle might have been.
7. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of Source 19.17 for gaining an understanding of Rameses II's military activities/ability. Refer to features of the source to support your evaluation.
8. Practice question (analysis): Analyse the evidence in Source 19.17 to explain how Rameses II is portrayed.

What evidence is available for understanding the Battle of Kadesh?

Inscriptions and visual representations celebrating Rameses II's military campaigns in the Levant, particularly the famous Battle of Kadesh, feature so prominently on buildings throughout his kingdom that it is clear he considered this to be the greatest achievement of his reign. Multiple versions of Rameses' official account of the Battle of Kadesh were inscribed on temples at Karnak, Luxor, Abydos, Abu Simbel and the Ramesseum. Depictions of the battle can be classified into three main versions: an official record of events known as 'The Record'; a more poetic and dramatic version known as 'The Poem'; and visual depictions illustrating scenes from the battle, often accompanied by annotations explaining what is occurring in various scenes.



SOURCE 19.18 The three main versions of events used by Rameses II throughout his empire to advertise his actions at the Battle of Kadesh

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A summary of the main events of the Battle of Kadesh

In the fifth year of Rameses' reign (c. 1275 BCE), his army departed Pi-Rameses, his capital city in the Nile Delta, on a campaign to recapture territory lost by previous pharaohs, including the Hittite stronghold of Kadesh on the Orontes River. Rameses was likely motivated by a desire to emulate previous pharaohs, including his own father, by pursuing a successful expansionist policy and increasing Egypt's empire. His main army was divided into four main battalions, each named after an Egyptian god (Re, Amun, Ptah and Set), and each consisted of around 5000 men, including infantry and chariots. Along the way, a smaller group of recruits was split off from the main army with a separate mission to march to the coast to capture the nearby port at Simyra, which would further help secure Egyptian control over the region of Amurru.

About 13 kilometres south of Kadesh, Rameses crossed the Orontes River, near a town known as Shabtuna, and then passed through a wooded area to arrive at a plain just south of the city. Two Hittite spies, referred to in the Egyptian sources as **Shasu tribesmen**, purposefully allowed themselves to be captured so they could provide false information to Rameses. They convinced Rameses and his officers that the main Hittite army was a great distance away – still in the region of Aleppo, to the north – and that Kadesh was therefore mostly undefended and vulnerable to an Egyptian attack, with only the local garrison to defend it.

Shasu tribesmen the name given to some local nomadic tribesmen; also known as Bedouin

armistice a temporary agreement to cease fighting

Acting on this information, Rameses impetuously left the other divisions behind and headed towards Kadesh with only his own division (the Amun division) acting as an advance force, in hopes of easily capturing the city and overpowering the local garrison. The next closest division, the Re division, was still up to a day's march away. As Rameses' division neared Kadesh, they received word that the Re division had been ambushed and its soldiers routed by the army of King Muwatalli, which was now on its way north to attack Rameses' own Amun division. Rameses, surprised by this information, sent word to the other Egyptian divisions to join him promptly, but the Hittite chariots attacked his division before Egyptian reinforcements could arrive, scattering his soldiers. Rameses and his personal bodyguard were left surrounded, only to be rescued by the timely arrival of the recruits who had earlier been sent to capture the seaport at Simyra.

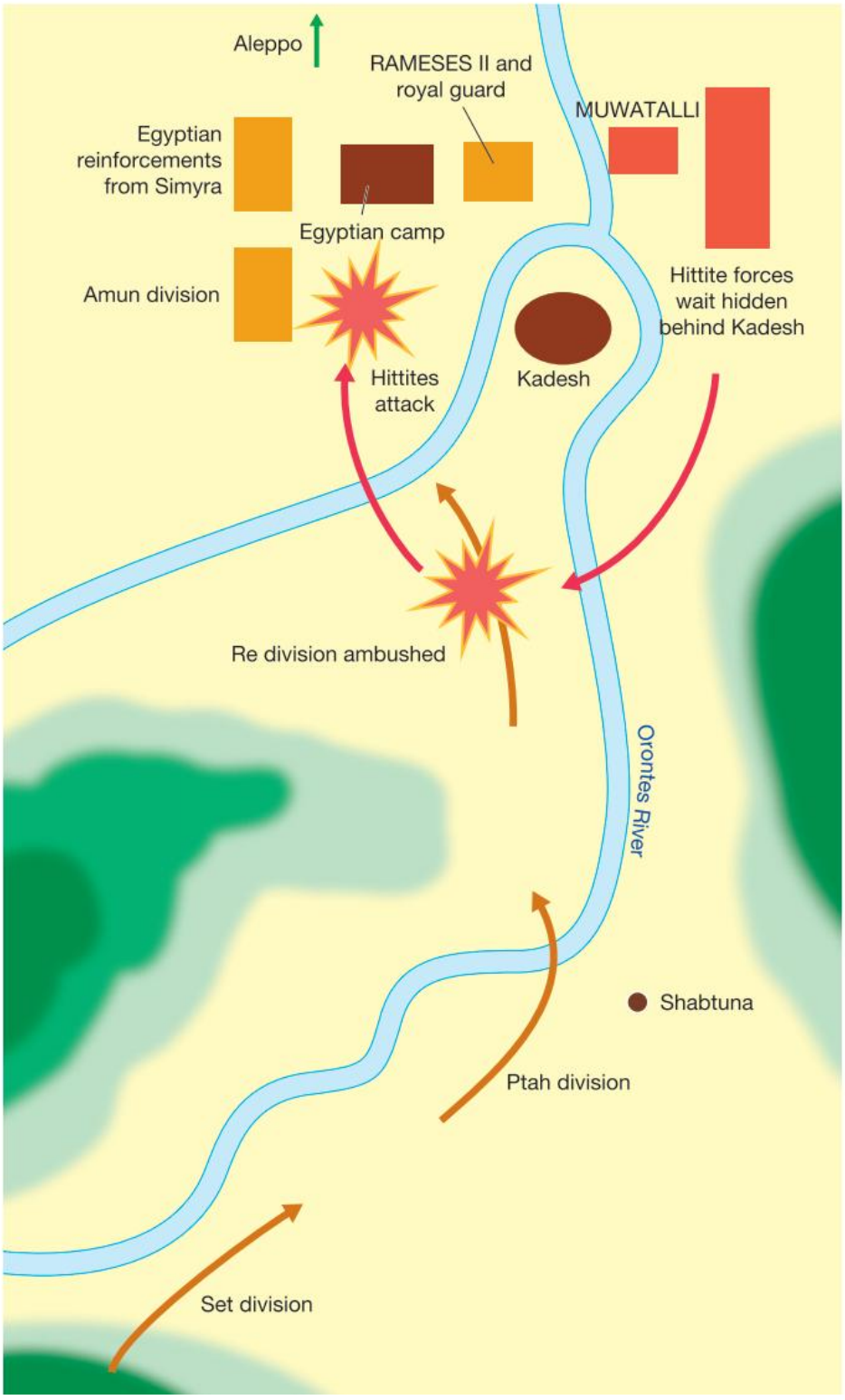
With the aid of the reinforcements, the Egyptians forced the Hittite chariots off the battlefield and were victors on the first day of battle. On the second day, perhaps as there had been considerable casualties on both sides, neither side was willing to continue the battle and an **armistice** was agreed upon. The Egyptians departed the battlefield and returned to Egypt without achieving their objective of capturing Kadesh.

Rameses II responds to rebellions (Years 7–10 of his reign)

Rameses' return to Egypt after failing to conquer the city of Kadesh had almost immediate consequences for Egyptian control over kingdoms in Syria and Palestine. A number of princes in the region must have sensed weakness, and they rebelled against Egyptian rule. In Years 7–10 of Rameses II's reign, he conducted a series of campaigns in the Levant with the goal of re-establishing Egyptian control in the region. Rameses achieved some successes, capturing Jerusalem, Jericho and the land of Upi (Damascus), before proceeding as far north as the land of Amurru (in southern Syria), where he marched against the cities of Dapur and Tunip to the north of Kadesh. However, due to their distance from Egypt, Rameses was unable or unwilling to maintain control over these territories, which reverted to Hittite control soon after the Egyptian forces returned home.

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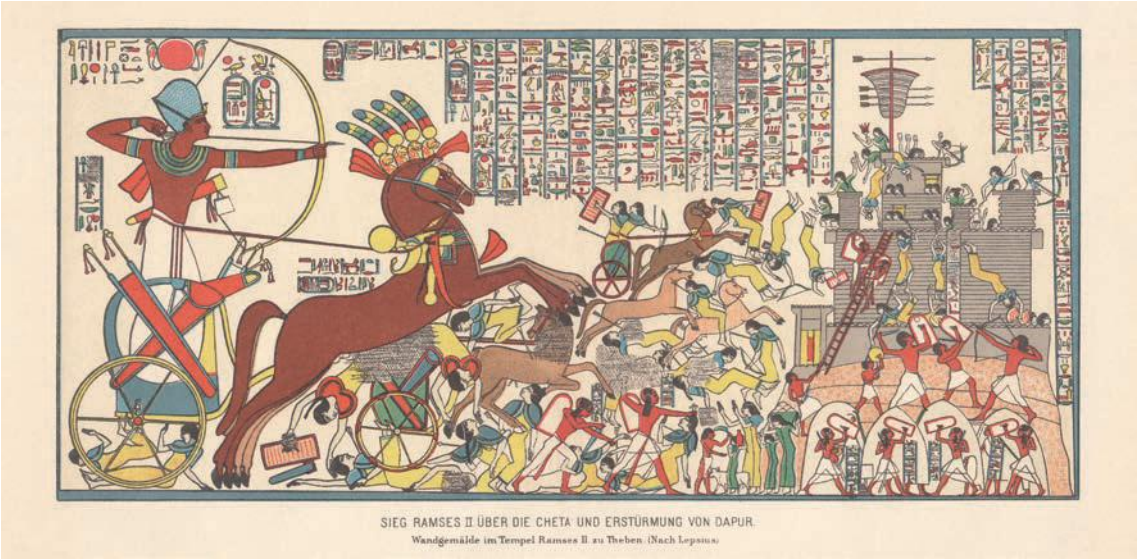
As with the Battle of Kadesh, Rameses nevertheless advertised his accomplishments in Dapur and Tunip on the walls of temples across Egypt. Eventually, after around 16 years of hostilities between Egypt and the Hittite empires, they agreed upon the first recorded international peace treaty in history, which was honoured by both sides until Rameses' death.



SOURCE 19.19 The relative positions of the Egyptians and Hittites at the Battle of Kadesh

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SOURCE 19.20 A visual representation from Luxor Temple (the illustration is based on the original inscription) of Rameses II besieging the town of Dapur

'The Record'

The following official narrative of the Battle of Kadesh is an example of 'The Record' version of events. It was mainly adapted from the version inscribed on the Ramesseum, with gaps filled in by copies of the same narrative from Abu Simbel and Luxor temples. It provides information on events leading up to the battle, as well as the battle itself.

SOURCE 19.21 'The Record' – Rameses' official account of the Battle of Kadesh

[When] his majesty [Rameses II] had arrived at the locality south of the town of Shabtuna, there came two Shasu tribesmen, to speak to his majesty as follows: 'Our people, who belong to the greatest of the families with the vanquished chief of the Hittites [Muwatalli], have made us come to his majesty, to say: 'We will be subjects of Pharaoh and we will flee from the chief of the Hittites; for the chief of the Hittites sits in the land of Aleppo, on the north of Tunip. He is too afraid of the Pharaoh to come southward.' Now, these Shasu spoke these words to his majesty falsely, for the chief of the Hittites made them come to spy where his majesty was, in order to cause the army of his majesty not to be prepared for fighting him ...

The chief of the Hittites came with every chief of every country, their infantry and their chariots, which he had brought with him by force, and stood, ready and armed, drawn up in line of battle behind Kadesh, while his majesty [Rameses II] was unaware. Then Rameses proceeded northward and arrived on the northwest of Kadesh; and his army made camp there.

Then, as Rameses sat upon a throne of gold, there arrived a scout who was in the following of his majesty, and he brought two scouts of the vanquished chief of the Hittites. They were conducted into his presence, and his majesty said to them: 'What are you?'

They said: 'As for us, the chief of the Hittites has commanded that we should come to spy out where his majesty is.'

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Said Rameses to them: 'He! Where is he, the chief of the Hittites? Behold, I have heard, saying: 'He is in the land of Aleppo.' [a town over 200 kilometres north of Kadesh]

Said they: 'See, the chief of the Hittites is ready, together with many countries ... they are standing, drawn up for battle, behind Kadesh.'

Then his majesty had the princes called into the presence, and had them hear every word which the two scouts of the chief of the Hittites, who were in his presence, had spoken ... Said the princes who were in the presence of his majesty: 'It is a great fault, which the governors of the countries and the officials of Pharaoh have committed in not informing you that the chief of the Hittites was near the king ...'

Then the vizier was ordered to hasten the army of his majesty, while they were marching on the south of Shabtuna, in order to bring them to the place where his majesty was.

While his majesty sat talking with the princes, the chief of the Hittites ... crossed over the channel on the south of Kadesh, and charged into the army of his majesty while they were marching, and not expecting it. Then the infantry and chariots of his majesty retreated before them, northward to the place where his majesty was. [The Hittites] surrounded the bodyguard of his majesty, who were by his side.

When his majesty saw them, he was enraged against them, like his father, **Montu**, lord of Thebes. He seized his weapons, and dressed himself in his coat of mail. He was like **Baal** in his hour. Then he went to his horses, and led quickly on, being alone by himself. He charged into the army of the chief of the Hittites, and the numerous countries which were with him. His majesty was like **Set**, the great in strength, smiting and slaying among them; his majesty hurled them headlong, one upon another into the water of the Orontes.

Montu Egyptian god of war
Baal the chief god of the Levantine region
Set Egyptian god of chaos, violence, storms

'I charged all countries, while I was alone, my infantry and my chariots having forsaken me. Not one among them stood to turn about. I swear, as Re loves me, as my father, Atum, favours me, that, (everything I stated), I did it in truth, in the presence of my infantry and my chariots.'

ACTIVITY 19.12

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Answer the questions based on your reading of Source 19.21.

1. Create a flowchart or sequence to explain the main events and turning points of the Battle of Kadesh. An example has been begun for you.

Four Egyptian army battalions (Re, Amun, Ptah, Set) depart Pi-Rameses (Rameses' capital city). Their mission is to capture the city of Kadesh and secure control over the region of Amurru. → A small group of recruits is sent to capture the seaport at the town of Simyra. → Shortly after crossing the Orontes River, Rameses' army pauses south of the city of Kadesh.

2. Analyse Source 19.21 to explain what impression it presents of Rameses as a warrior and military commander.

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'The Poem'

The following source is an extract from 'The Poem', another version of the events of the Battle of the Kadesh. This particular version is adapted from inscriptions found on Luxor and Karnak temples, as well as from versions that exist on papyri. 'The Poem' does not mention Rameses being tricked by spies.

SOURCE 19.22 'The Poem' – another widely copied version of the Battle of Kadesh

And when the King (Rameses II) approached the city (of Kadesh), behold, the miserable King of the hostile [Hittites] had arrived. He had assembled with him all the peoples from the uttermost ends of the sea ... Their number was endless; nothing like it had ever been before. They covered mountains and valleys like grasshoppers in number.

Then the King (Rameses II) arose like his father Montu; He seized his weapons and put on his armour, like Baal in his time. And the noble pair of horses which carried Pharaoh, and whose name was ' Victory in Thebes,' they were from the court of King Ramses Miamun. When the King had quickened his course, he rushed into the middle of the hostile [Hittite army] all alone, no other was with him. When Pharaoh had done this, he looked behind him, he was surrounded by two thousand five hundred pairs of horses, and his retreat was beset by the bravest heroes of the miserable King [of the Hittites]

[Rameses says] 'And not one of my princes, not one of my captains of the chariot, not one of my chief men, not one of my knights was there. My warriors and my chariots had abandoned me, not one of them was there to take part in the battle.

'And my voice found an echo in Hermonthis, and Amon heard it and came at my cry. He reached out his hand to me, and I shouted for joy. He called out to me from behind: 'I have hastened to thee, Ramses Miamun. I am with thee. I am he, thy father, the Sun-god Re. My hand is with thee. Yes! I am worth more than hundreds of thousands united in one place.

I was changed, being made like the god Monthu. I hurled the dart with my right hand, I fought with my left hand. I was like Baal in his time, before their sight. I had met two thousand five hundred pairs of horses; I was in the midst of the charioteers; but they were dashed in pieces before my horses. Not one of them raised his hand to fight; their courage was sunken in their breasts, their limbs gave way, they could not hurl the dart, nor had they the courage to thrust with the spear. I made them fall into the waters just as the crocodiles fall in. They tumbled down on their faces one after another. I killed them at my pleasure, so that not one looked back behind him, nor did another turn around. Each one fell, he raised himself not up again.

[On the second day of battle]

The King [Rameses] returned in victory and strength; he had smitten hundreds of thousands in one place with his arm. When the earth was again light in the morning he arranged the hosts of his warriors for the fight, and he stood there prepared for the battle, like a bull which has whetted his horns.

Then the King of [the Hittites] sent a messenger to pray piteously to the great name of the King, speaking thus: Thou art Re-Harmakhu. Thou art Sutekh the glorious, the son of Hut, Baal in his time. Thy terror is upon the land of [the Hittites], for thou hast broken the neck of [**Hatti**] forever and ever ... Do us no injury, glorious spirit, whose anger weighs upon the people of [Hatti] ... Do not carry out thy purpose, thou mighty King. Better is peace than war. Give us freedom.

Hatti the kingdom of the Hittites

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Then the King (Rameses) gave order to listen to the words of him the King of [the Hittites], And he let his hands rest, in order to return to the South. Then the King went in peace to the land of Egypt...

[Rameses] rode at a gallop, and charged the enemy army of the Hittites, being all alone and having none with him.

When his majesty looked behind him he saw that 2500 enemy chariots had him surrounded

...

the wretched Prince of the Hittites (Muwatalli) stood in the midst of his army and watched the fight, which his majesty (Rameses II) fought all alone without infantry or chariots. He stood with face averted and irresolute

...

[On the second day of the battle]

the wretched fallen prince of the Hittites sent and revered the great name of his majesty [Rameses II]: 'You are Re-Harakhty, you are Set, great in strength, son of Nut; Baal is in your limbs, and you terrorise the land of the Hittites. You have broken forever the back of the prince of the Hittites.' He sent his envoy with a letter, which was addressed to the great name of my majesty ... [the letter said] 'You are the son of Re, who came from his limbs, and he has given you all lands united in one. The land of Egypt and the land of the Hittites, they are your servants and they lie at your feet ... Yesterday you slew hundreds of thousands, and today you come and leave us no heirs surviving. Be not severe in your words, O mighty king; peace is better than strife of battle. Give us breath!'

ACTIVITY **19.13**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Analyse Source 19.22 to identify the following features of evidence: audience, motive, perspective, explicit meaning, implicit meaning.
2. Create a simple T-chart to compare the personal characteristics of Rameses II and Muwatalli II as presented in Source 19.22. Include two quotes from the source for each leader that illustrate how they are respectively presented.

Rameses II	Muwatalli II

3. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of Source 19.22 for learning about the outcomes of the Battle of Kadesh (be specific – i.e. for usefulness, explain 'useful for what?'; for reliability, identify one strength and one limitation and connect these to features of evidence).
4. Compare the account of events as described in 'The Poem' in Source 19.22 with 'The Record' in Source 19.21 and identify one similarity and one difference between the two versions of events (e.g. Hittite king is presented worse in the poem).

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Visual representation of the battle

As well as the written versions of events given in 'The Record' and 'The Poem', Rameses decorated his temples with illustrations depicting scenes from the Battle of Kadesh. This particular depiction of Rameses fighting in the battle (Source 19.23) is from Abu Simbel Temple in Nubia.



SOURCE 19.23 Visual representation of Rameses II at the Battle of Kadesh

ACTIVITY **19.14**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Analyse Source 19.23 to identify the following features of evidence: audience, motive, perspective, explicit meaning, implicit meaning.
2. Conduct some research online to identify similarities and differences between Egyptian and Hittite chariots.
3. With reference to Source 19.23, suggest a motive for Rameses II to represent the battle visually as well as through his written inscriptions.
4. Evaluate the usefulness of this visual representation of the Battle of Kadesh – suggest how it might further increase the understanding we have of the battle from 'The Record' and 'The Poem'.

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An annotation, or caption, beside a visual representation

Rameses II's visual representations of the Battle of Kadesh, which decorate the temples at Luxor, Abu Simbel and the Ramesseum, are annotated with captions to help explain various scenes and provide additional information for the viewer. This particular annotation accompanied the scene depicting the recruits, who had been diverted to capture the port at Simyra, arriving just in time to save Rameses.

SOURCE 19.24 An annotation that accompanies the visual representations

> **The arrival of the recruits of [Rameses II] from the land of Amurru [Simyra]. They found that the force of [Muwatalli] had surrounded the camp of [Rameses II] on its western side. [Rameses II] had been camping alone, no army with him, awaiting the arrival of his officers and his army and the division with which Pharaoh was, had not finished setting up the camp. Now the division of Re and the division of Ptah were on the march; they had not yet arrived, and their officers were in the forest of Bewey. Then the recruits cut off the enemy belonging to [Muwatalli], while the enemy were entering into the camp, and Rameses' officers slew them; they left not a single survivor among them. Their hearts were filled with the mighty valour of Rameses, their good lord.**

A Hittite perspective on Kadesh

Ancient Egyptians and Hittites used inscriptions on clay tablets as a form of communication. Much like a letter, these clay tablets were carried by messenger from the sender to the receiver. One particular clay tablet discovered in the ruins of the Hittite capital city, **Hattusa** (modern-day Boğazkale in Turkey) provides a valuable insight into the Hittite perspective of the outcome of the Battle of Kadesh. Written a few years after the battle by a later Hittite King named **Hattusili III**, it states, 'At the time that Muwatalli took the field against [Rameses II] and when he had defeated [Rameses II], he returned to the country Upi [Damascus]. When Muwatalli, my brother, had [also] defeated Upi, he [returned to] the Hatti land ...'

Hattusa the name of the Hittite capital city

Hattusili III the king of the Hittites in the middle years of Rameses II's reign

Secondary perspectives on Rameses' actions at the Battle of Kadesh

Perspective 1

The English novelist (and first ever winner of the Booker Prize) Percy Howard Newby offers his evaluation of Rameses at Kadesh:

SOURCE 19.25 P.H. Newby, *Warrior Pharaohs: The Rise and Fall of the Egyptian Empire*, Book Club Associates, 1980, pp. 151–2

> **Rameses II, as he approached Kadesh, showed surprising lack of prudence and even gullibility ... Believing what he wanted to believe, Rameses swallowed the story that Kadesh was his for the taking and pressed on at the head of the Amun division, not even waiting for the rest of the army.**

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Perspective 2

Cambridge historian Toby Wilkinson evaluates the Egyptian tactics at Kadesh:

SOURCE 19.26 T. Wilkinson, *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt*, Random House, 2010, pp. 305–6

> But then, as if in answer to Rameses' desperate prayers, help arrived in the nick of time. It was not a miracle but the result of the Egyptians' tactical genius. While the main Egyptian army had marched overland to Kadesh, a reserve force of elite warriors had been sent by sea, up the Phoenician coast. Its instructions were to land at the Syrian port of Simrya and cut inland … to link up with Rameses at Kadesh on the day of his arrival. They had done exactly as instructed.

Perspective 3

Austrian Egyptologist Hans Goedicke comments on Rameses II's promotion of the Battle of Kadesh:

SOURCE 19.27 H. Goedicke, 'Considerations on the Battle of Kadesh', *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, vol. 52, 1966, p. 71

> [The Battle of Kadesh] was not exactly an Egyptian victory, but from the military point of view was rather a defeat for Ramesses II, despite his personal bravery. Of course the Pharaoh had some justification for boasting about his deeds, but this concentration on the royal heroism could be done only at the expense of the royal followers whose behaviour must have seemed rather cowardly. With all due regard for the personal pride and the frequently quoted self-adulation of the Ramesside monarchs, there still remains an unexplained element in the emphasis given to the description of this event in the reign of Ramesses II, which contained other undertakings with more glorious results.

Perspective 4

Historian Antonio Santosuosso evaluates the outcome of Kadesh:

SOURCE 19.28 A. Santosuosso, 'Kadesh Revisited: Reconstructing the Battle Between the Egyptians and the Hittites', *The Journal of Military History*, vol. 60, no. 3, 1996, p. 443

> But again, the battle aftermath suggests that the Egyptian losses must have been fairly high. Otherwise, why would Ramesses have withdrawn to Egypt? … We also should be very skeptical about the Egyptian claim that (Muwatalli) asked for peace after the battle. The Hittites kept an aggressive posture. What must have happened is that Ramesses realized that his only choice now was to withdraw to safety. The Hittites followed him and by the end of the campaign extended their control over Amurru and even Upe, which had been traditionally part of the Egyptian Empire. Ramesses had escaped disaster in the first day of fighting at Kadesh, but could this be considered a victory? … few would claim that Ramesses won both the encounter and the war. He clearly lost the war … However, to argue that Ramesses lost at Kadesh is probably going too far. At least initially, he must have remained master of the battlefield, which meant, according to the battlefield rules of most periods, that he was the winner. However, did he lose the second day? … as most scholars agree, he was compelled to withdraw, pursued by the Hittites.

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ACTIVITY **19.15**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

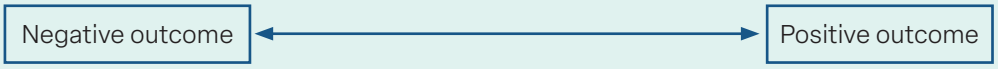
Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Answer the following questions based on your reading of Sources 19.25–19.28.

1. Copy and complete the table below by identifying each author's point of view on Rameses' abilities as a warrior and commander at the Battle of Kadesh. Select a relevant quote that best represents each author's point of view. Historians and experts on the topic disagree on some aspects of Rameses' military competence; rank each point of view from 1 to 4 to indicate which you found most and least convincing, and explain the reasoning for your decisions.

Perspective	Point of view on Rameses II	Quote from the author	Rank of how convincing
1 Newby			
2 Wilkinson			
3 Goedicke			
4 Santosuosso			

2. If time permits, you may wish to conduct some additional research to improve your knowledge of the topic before beginning this activity.
   - **a.** Class discussion: 'The Battle of Kadesh had a positive outcome for Rameses II'.
   - **b.** In your class, create an attitudinal scale from one end of the classroom to the other. At each end will be the absolute opposing viewpoints:



   - **c.** Each student will place themselves along the scale continuum. Various students will be asked to justify why they are standing where they are.
   - **d.** You will then have the opportunity to move after hearing the viewpoint of others in your class. Students will again be asked for justifications.
3. Based on a comparison of the primary and secondary sources, evaluate the usefulness and reliability of Rameses II's propaganda for gaining an accurate understanding of what happened at the Battle of Kadesh.
4. Discuss with a partner: 'Do you think Rameses' subjects would know if the official version of events advertised on the walls of buildings around Egypt was true or not?'
5. Practice question (synthesis): Synthesise evidence in Sources 19.25–19.28 to develop a historical argument in response to one of the following questions or statements. Aim to include references to at least two primary and two secondary sources in your answer:
   - **a.** Question: To what extent do these sources suggest Rameses deserves his reputation in history as a great warrior and military commander?
   - **b.** Question: To what extent do these sources suggest the Battle of Kadesh had a positive outcome for Rameses II?
   - **c.** Statement: Rameses II won the battle, but he lost the war.
   - **d.** Statement: The result of Kadesh shows that Rameses II deserves his reputation as a master of spin.

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Does Rameses II really deserve his reputation as a great diplomat?

The Egyptian–Hittite peace treaty (Year 21 of reign)

In Year 21 of Rameses II's reign, after approximately 16 years of conflict, the Egyptian and Hittite Empires agreed to a formal peace treaty. Remarkably, this peace treaty was honoured until the eventual collapse of the Hittite Empire nearly 80 years later. It is unclear which side had first requested the treaty, but it appears to have suited the strategic situation of both empires: Egypt faced increased pressure in the west from the growing threat of the Sherden (Sea Peoples) and the Hittites found themselves under threat from the rise of the Assyrian Empire to their east.

The Egyptian–Hittite peace treaty is particularly interesting as it is the only peace treaty from the ancient Near East for which we have versions from both sides: the Hittite version, originally written in Akkadian, was inscribed on a silver tablet then presented to Egypt, where it was translated and inscribed for posterity on stelae in the temples of Karnak and the Ramesseum. A copy of the Egyptian version was discovered in the early 1900s on a clay tablet in the archaeological site of Boğazkale (roughly 200 kilometres east of the Turkish capital, Ankara), once the location of the Hittite capital city of Hattusa. The Egyptian version was discovered in what would have originally been the administrative archives of the Hittites; it is a copy made in ancient times of the version of the treaty that would have been sent from Egypt to the Hittites. Today it can be found in the Museum of the Ancient Orient, in Istanbul.



SOURCE 19.29 A copy of the Egyptian version of the Egyptian–Hittite peace treaty, inscribed on a clay tablet and discovered in the Hittite archives. This is a copy of the original version that was given to the Hittites from Egypt, which would have been inscribed on a silver tablet.

SOURCE 19.30 An excerpt from the introductory section of the peace treaty from the Egyptian perspective – the original version would have been inscribed on a silver tablet. This version is from a copy found on a mudbrick tablet in the archives of the Hittite capital, Hattusa.

And so be it, Rameses, the great king of Egypt, the strong, with Hattusili, the great king, king of the land Hatti, his brother, in order to give good peace, good brotherhood and to obtain a mighty kingdom between them as long as we live and forever a treaty has made.

Thus speaks Rameses (II), the great king, king of Egypt, the strong in all lands ... unto Hattusili, the great king, king of the land Hatti ... behold now I give good brotherhood, good peace between us forever, in order to give good peace, good brotherhood by means of a treaty of Egypt with Hatti forever. So it is.

An excerpt from the introductory section of the peace treaty from the Hittite perspective – this version was composed by the Hittites and sent to the Egyptians on a silver tablet. The Egyptians inscribed a copy of this for the public to see on the walls of their temples at Karnak and the Ramesseum.

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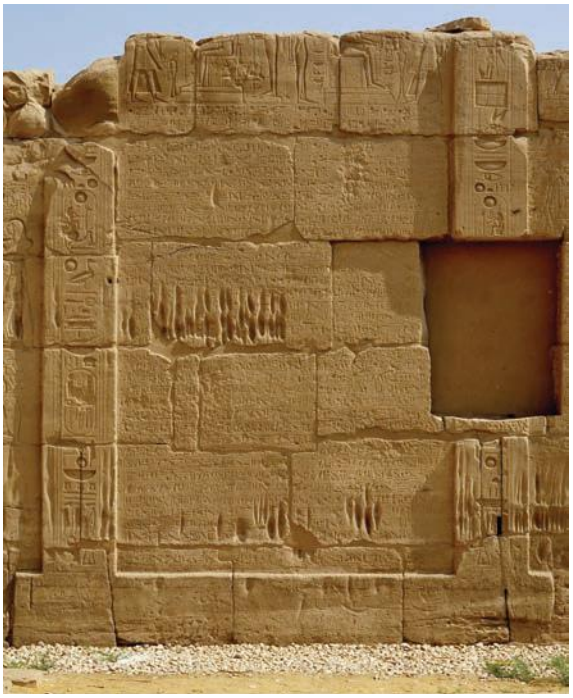
SOURCE 19.31 An excerpt from the introductory section of the peace treaty from the Hittite perspective – this version was composed by the Hittites and sent to the Egyptians on a silver tablet. The Egyptians inscribed a copy of this for the public to see on the walls of their temples at Karnak and the Ramesseum.

Copy of the tablet of silver which the great chief of Hatti, Hattusili, caused to be brought to Pharaoh by the hand of his messenger ... in order to beg peace from the Majesty of Usermaatre-Setepenre (Rameses II), son of Re ... who makes his boundary where he will in every land.

The treaty which the great prince of Hatti, Hattusili, the strong ... made upon a tablet of silver for Usermaatre-Setepenre (Rameses II), the great ruler of Egypt, the strong

...

the good treaty of peace and brotherhood, giving peace and brotherhood between us by means of a treaty of Hatti with Egypt forever.



SOURCE 19.32 The exterior wall of the Temple of Karnak, where a copy of the terms of the peace treaty was inscribed for public display

Source 19.33 is a selection of some of the terms of the peace treaty made in Year 21 of Rameses II's reign, adapted from inscriptions on the temples at Karnak and the Ramesseum.

SOURCE 19.33 A selection of some of the terms of the peace treaty from inscriptions on the temples at Karnak and the Ramesseum

Behold then, Hattusili, the great chief of Hatti, is in treaty relation with Usermaatre-Setepenre [Rameses II], the great ruler of Egypt, beginning with this day ...

Behold, I, even the great chief of Hatti, am with Rameses II, the great ruler of Egypt, in good peace and in good brotherhood. The children of the children of the great chief of Hatti shall be in brotherhood and peace with the children of the children of Rameses II, the great ruler of Egypt, being in our relations of brotherhood and our relations of peace, that the land of Egypt may be with the land of Hatti in peace and brotherhood like ourselves, forever.

There shall be no hostilities between them, forever. The great chief of Hatti shall not pass over into the land of Egypt, forever, to take anything therefrom. Rameses, the great ruler of Egypt, shall not pass over into the land of Hatti, to take anything therefrom, forever.

If another enemy come against the lands of Usermaatre-Setepenre [Rameses II], the great ruler of Egypt, and he shall send to the great chief of Hatti, saying: 'Come with me as reinforcement against him,' the great chief of Hatti shall come, and the great chief of Hatti shall slay his enemy. But if it be not the desire of the great chief of Hatti to come, he shall send his infantry and his chariots, and shall slay his enemy.

If another enemy come against the great chief of Hatti, and he shall send to the great chief of Egypt, Usermaatre-Setepenre [Rameses II] for reinforcements then he shall come to him as reinforcement, to slay his enemy. But if it be not the desire of Rameses, the great ruler of Egypt, to come, he shall send his infantry and his chariots and shall slay his enemy.

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If any great man of the land of Egypt shall flee and shall come to the great chief of Hatti, from a town of the lands of Rameses, the great ruler of Egypt, and they shall come to the great chief of Hatti, then the great chief of Hatti shall not receive them, but the great chief of Hatti shall cause them to be brought to Usermaatre-Setepenre [Rameses II], the great ruler of Egypt, their lord therefore.

Or if any great man shall flee from the land of Hatti, and he shall come to Usermaatre-Setepenre [Rameses II], the great ruler of Egypt, from either a town or a district or any region of those belonging to the land of Hatti, and they shall come to Rameses, the great ruler of Egypt, then Usermaatre-Setepenre [Rameses II], the great ruler of Egypt, shall not receive them, but Rameses, the great ruler of Egypt, shall cause them to be brought to the great chief of Hatti. They shall not be settled.

ACTIVITY **19.16**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Use Source 19.33 to identify at least three of the agreed terms of the peace treaty between Egypt and the Hittites.
2. Infer why Rameses II had copies of the treaty (Source 19.32) made and displayed publicly on the walls of Karnak temple and the Ramesseum.
3. Evaluate how Sources 19.29–19.33 might be useful for determining whether the peace treaty should be considered a diplomatic success for Rameses II.

Secondary perspectives on the peace treaty

Perspective 1

Professor Stephen Langdon and Alan Gardiner offer an observation on the peace treaty:

SOURCE 19.34 S. Langdon and A.H. Gardiner, 'The Treaty of Alliance between Hattusili, King of the Hittites, and the Pharaoh Ramesses II of Egypt', *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, vol. 6, no. 3, 1920, p. 201

There can be no shadow of doubt that the Karnak and Ramesseum stelae preserve the final version of the treaty as accepted by Hattusili ... Students have not hitherto drawn the correct inference from the passages referring to Muwatalli – passages which, as we have shown, stood in the Hittite original. They seem to contain an acknowledgment of Hatti aggression which, whether exacted by Rameses or not, indicates a certain humility of attitude on the part of the Hittite king. There has been a tendency of late to assume that the Egyptians were the real losers in the war with Hattusili; our researches, if they suggest any conclusion on this point, suggest rather that Hattusili was the one who sued for peace and was ready to cry *peccavi* [acknowledge he was wrong].

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Perspective 2

Egyptologist James Breasted discusses the relations of Egypt and Hatti after the peace treaty:

SOURCE 19.35 J.H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest*, vol. 3, Histories & Mysteries of Man, 1988, p. 175

> This is the light then, in which the Egyptians chose to represent their relations with Hatti. But the peace was not broken, and we are able to trace the amicable relations between the two nations through the thirty-fifth year of Rameses' reign, and we know it continued also into that of his successor.

Perspective 3

French Egyptologist Bernadette Menu evaluates the outcome of the peace treaty:

SOURCE 19.36 B. Menu, *Ramesses the Great: Warrior and Builder*, translated by Laurel Hirsch, Thames & Hudson, 1999, p. 97

> The pharaoh thus magnificently fulfilled his fundamental obligations as son and heir to the gods. An era of peace and prosperity, even of opulence, followed the war, and Egypt experienced decades of wellbeing, until the death of Rameses II.

ACTIVITY **19.17**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Answer the following questions based on your reading of Sources 19.34–19.36.

1. Complete the table by identifying each author's perspective on the outcomes of the peace treaty between the Egyptians and Hittites.

Perspective	Perspective on outcomes of Egyptian–Hittite peace treaty
1 Langdon and Gardiner	
2 Breasted	
3 Menu	

2. If time permits, you may wish to conduct some additional research to improve your knowledge of the topic before beginning this activity.
   - **a.** Class discussion: 'The peace treaty between Egypt and the Hittites was overall a failure for Rameses II and his reputation as a great military leader.'
   - **b.** In your class, create an attitudinal scale from one end of the classroom to the other. At each end will be the absolute opposing viewpoints:

     A failure ⟷ Not a failure

   - **c.** Each student will place themselves along the scale continuum. Various students will be asked to justify why they are standing where they are.
   - **d.** You will then have the opportunity to move after hearing the viewpoint of others in your class. Students will again be asked for justifications.
3. Practice question (synthesis): Synthesise evidence in Sources 19.34–19.36 to develop a historical argument in response to the question: To what extent do these sources suggest the peace treaty with the Hittites was a victory for Rameses II?

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Marriage alliance with Hittites (Year 34 of reign)

In Year 34 of Rameses' reign, nine years after the peace treaty between Egypt and the Hittites was agreed upon, the alliance was strengthened with a diplomatic marriage between Rameses II and Maathorneferure, the eldest daughter of Hattusili III, the Hittite king. Maathorneferure became one of Rameses' eight royal wives (including a second Hittite princess whom he married later), travelling south from the Hittite capital, Hattusa, from late 1246 BCE to February 1245 BCE, to marry Rameses in his capital city, Pi-Rameses. Our knowledge of the marriage ceremony comes mostly from Rameses' commemoration of the event on a stele, known as the Marriage Stele, at his temple in Abu Simbel.

Does Rameses II fully deserve his reputation as Egypt's greatest builder?

One of Rameses II's most significant achievements was his expansive building program, which began soon after his return from the Battle of Kadesh. Rameses has a reputation today as a prolific builder, constructing more temples and monumental structures than any other pharaoh. Some of Rameses II's most well-known building projects include the construction of Pi-Rameses (the new capital city near Avaris in the eastern Nile Delta), the expansion of the temple complex at Karnak (with the addition of the huge Hypostyle Hall), the construction of the Ramesseum at Thebes, and temples at Abu Simbel, Luxor and Abydos. Rameses' reign also produced hundreds of statues and stelae to advertise his achievements and promote him to his people. In addition to this religious infrastructure, he built a line of defensive forts to the west of Egypt and sunk a well in Nubia to service gold-mining operations there.



SOURCE 19.37 An aerial photograph of the Ramesseum, built by Rameses II to be his mortuary temple – the place where his subjects could continue to worship him after his death.

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SOURCE 19.38 The two temples built by Rameses II at Abu Simbel: the Great Temple of Rameses II (left) and the Small Temple of Hathor and Nefertari (right). These temples were built in Nubia, to Egypt's south, as a reminder to the Nubian people of Egypt's might. They were decorated with inscriptions and images of Rameses' military victories.



SOURCE 19.39 Luxor Temple of Rameses II

Secondary perspectives on Rameses' reputation as a builder

Perspective 1

Egyptologist Alan Gardiner on Karnak, the Ramesseum, Abydos, Memphis and Abu Simbel:

SOURCE 19.40 A. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, 1972, pp. 255–6

> If the greatness of an Egyptian Pharaoh be measured by the size and number of the monuments remaining to perpetuate his memory, Seti's son and successor Rameses II would have to be adjudged the equal, or even the superior, of the proudest pyramid-builders. The great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak is in the main his achievement, and on the west bank at Thebes his funerary temple known as the Ramesseum still retains a large part of its original grandeur. At Abydos his temple stands as a not unworthy second side by side with that of his father, which he finished.

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The edifices at Memphis have been largely demolished by later marauders greedy for suitable building stone, but portions of great statues of Rameses II attest the former presence of a vast temple of his; moreover, this is referred to in a well-known [stele] preserved in the Nubian temple of Abu Simbel, where Rameses acknowledges the blessings conferred upon him by the Memphite god Ptah … It is in Nubia, however, that his craze for self-advertisement is most conspicuous.

Perspective 2

Egyptologist Jacobus Van Dijk on Pi-Rameses Memphis and building in general:

SOURCE 19.41 J. Van Dijk, 'The Amarna Period and the Later New Kingdom', in I. Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 292–3

Many of Rameses' high officials lived and worked in Pi-Rameses, but most of them appear to have been buried elsewhere, particularly in the necropolis of Memphis. About thirty-five tombs of the Ramesside period have so far been excavated there, some of them very large. These tombs still took the form of an Egyptian temple, but, compared to the tombs of the late 18th dynasty, the workmanship had declined … In addition, the quality of the limestone itself was often not very good, and, rather than carefully make the blocks fit against each other, a liberal amount of plaster was used to fill the gaps between the blocks. Nor do the reliefs carved on them compare favourably with those in the older tombs in the cemetery. This general decline in the quality of the workmanship can be observed throughout the country, even in the king's own temples; of the two main relief-sculpting techniques, the superior, but more time-consuming and more expensive raised relief all but disappeared after the first years of the reign, in favour of the common sunk relief. Generally speaking, Rameses' monuments impress more by their size and quantity than by their delicacy and perfection.

Perspective 3

Egyptologist Cyril Aldred on Pi-Rameses and other constructions:

SOURCE 19.42 C. Aldred, *The Egyptians* (3rd edn), Thames & Hudson, 1998, pp. 171–2

[Rameses] usurped a great deal of the work of earlier kings to adorn the new capital of Pi-Rameses on which he expended so much treasure. These appropriations have won him the reputation in modern times of being the arch-plunderer of others' monuments. This judgement, however, is too harsh. According to Egyptian beliefs a statue that had not received its annual consecration was deprived of its virtue, and belonged to no one. There were still many monuments remaining from the time of Akhenaten that had lain neglected and required reconsecration on new sites during the reign of Rameses II. Much of his work, particularly the latter half of his long reign, is coarse, tasteless and tired, and involved the usurpation of much earlier work, particularly that of Amenhotep III, but he left so universal and impressive a legend of superhuman qualities that his successors could only attempt a pale reflection of it.

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ACTIVITY **19.18**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Analyse the perspectives in Sources 19.40–19.42 to complete the table. In the middle column, identify whether the author of the source would support or refute the following statement: Rameses II truly deserves his reputation as the greatest builder of Ancient Egypt.

Perspective	View (supports or refutes)	Quotation from the source
1 Gardiner		
2 Van Dijk		
3 Aldred		

2. Luxor Temple (Source 19.39) is located at the site of the ancient city of Thebes. Conduct additional research online to find out what alterations Rameses made to this temple and explain whether they support the argument that Rameses was a great builder.
3. Practice question (synthesis): Synthesise evidence in Sources 19.37–19.42 in this section to develop a historical argument in response to the question: To what extent do these sources support Rameses II's reputation as Egypt's greatest builder?

19.6 The later years and death of Rameses II

In Year 30 of Rameses' reign, he celebrated his first Sed festival (also referred to as a jubilee). The origins of this festival go back to predynastic times, when the early kings of Egypt may have been ritually sacrificed upon reaching an age at which they could no longer adequately perform their duties. From the 1st Dynasty onwards, the Sed Festival was conducted in the 30th year of a pharaoh's reign and then every three years afterwards. By this time, human sacrifice was a distant memory. The festival involved a series of rituals that were intended to symbolically renew the pharaoh's powers to enable them to continue to rule successfully. As the Sed festival could not be conducted until three decades into a pharaoh's reign, celebrating one was a significant achievement, generally indicating that the pharaoh had enjoyed a successful rule, and had overcome any significant challenges and threats that had come their way. Most pharaohs would have been fortunate to celebrate a single Sed festival, but Rameses II remarkably celebrated a total of 13 or 14.

Compared with the first 30 years of Rameses' reign, there is relatively little known about the second half of his rule. However, he evidently continued to construct numerous statues and temples, completing the construction of Abu Simbel in Year 34, the same year that he had his first diplomatic marriage to a Hittite princess. He had many wives and famously fathered at least one hundred children. One of the consequences of having such a long reign was that Rameses outlived a number of his heirs, but he was eventually succeeded upon his death in 1213 BCE, Year 66 of his reign, by his 13th son, Merenptah.

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CONCLUDING STUDY

19.7 Contested views on Rameses II's impact and legacy

In this section, consider the following perspectives from a range of historians on how Rameses should be remembered.

Perspective 1

James Breasted appraises the state of Egypt's borders left by Rameses II for his successor:

SOURCE 19.43 Adapted from J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest*, vol. 3, Histories & Mysteries of Man, p. 238

> For this [the invasion of Libyans and Mediterranean peoples], one of the most serious invasions which have ever threatened Egypt ... sources enable us to see the already aged Merenptah facing the evil conditions on his Libyan frontier, inherited from the decades of neglect which concluded his great father's reign. The Libyans [had] for years past been pushing into and occupying the western Delta. They pressed in almost to the gates of Memphis, eastward to the district of Heliopolis, and southward to the two oases nearest the Fayum. Worse than this, they had made a coalition with the maritime peoples of the Mediterranean, who now poured into the Delta from Sardinia on the west to Asia Minor on the east ... With the sympathy, if not the direct assistance of the Hittites, the Libyan king, Meryey, put himself at the head of these combined allies and invaded the Delta, bringing his wives and belongings, and apparently intending a permanent occupation.

Perspective 2

Marc Van de Mieroop assesses the state of Egypt at the end of Rameses II's reign:

SOURCE 19.44 M. Van de Mieroop, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, p. 240

> When Rameses II died of old age in 1213, the country he left behind seems to have been in good shape. Egypt was secure in its fortified borders, it was at peace with other great states, and economically it was strong. One hundred and forty years later, if not earlier, it was in ruins. Foreign rulers no longer treated it with respect and politically the country was divided.

Perspective 3

Nicolas Grimal comments on the consequences of the length of Rameses II's reign:

SOURCE 19.45 N. Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford, 1992, p. 267

> Rameses II died after one of the longest reigns ever known in Egypt. He left the country at the peak of its strength and international influence, but his own family was wracked by successional problems, despite the fact that tradition credits him with about a hundred children. By the time he had celebrated fourteen jubilee festivals, he had outlived many of his sons: Sethirkhepeshef, who became crown prince in the nineteenth year of his reign; Rameses, who became heir in the twenty-fifth year; and Khaemwaset, the prince-archaeologist and restorer of the Memphite monuments ... the Nineteenth Dynasty survived for only a generation after Rameses II's death.

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Perspective 4

Toby Wilkinson presents his views on the consequences of the length of Rameses II's reign:

SOURCE 19.46 T. Wilkinson *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt*, Random House, 2010, p. 323

> Rameses II's extraordinary reign of sixty-seven years certainly had its positive and negative effects on the government of Egypt. On the plus side, the king's determination and charisma enabled him to restore Egypt's reputation as an imperial power, while the plethora of monuments erected during his reign testified to the country's renewed confidence and prosperity. On the down side, Rameses' longevity combined with his extraordinary fecundity – he fathered at least fifty sons and as many daughters – sowed the seeds for major problems in the royal succession in the following decades.

Perspective 5

Jacobus Van Dijk appraises the border defences left by Rameses II:

SOURCE 19.47 J. Van Dijk, 'The Amarna Period and the Later New Kingdom', in I. Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 294

> The major event of Merenptah's reign occurred in his year 5 ... a campaign against the Libyans. They had been a problem even during his father's and grandfather's reigns, but the fortresses Rameses II had built along the western borders of the Delta were obviously unable to prevent the invasion of a massive coalition of Libyan and other tribes led by their king Meryey.



ACTIVITY **19.19**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Answer the questions based on your reading of Sources 19.43–19.47.

1. Many histories of Rameses II begin by emphasising the remarkable length of his reign. Evaluate the extent to which the historians above would agree that the length of his reign was ultimately good for Egypt. Support your answer with examples from the sources.
2. Use evidence from Sources 19.43–19.47 to explain how Rameses II was perceived by the later pharaohs of the 19th and 20th Dynasties.
3. Analyse the experiences of Rameses II's successor Merenptah (Source 19.47) to infer what the state of Egypt may have been at the time of Rameses II's death.
4. The nature of the legacy Rameses II left for his successors is contested by the historians above. Some argue that he left Egypt in a good position domestically (within Egypt) and internationally, but others argue that he left Egypt in a poor condition for his successors. In the table, analyse each historian's overall view on the legacy Rameses II left.

Perspective	Analysis
1 Breasted	
2 Van de Mieroop	
3 Grimal	
4 Wilkinson	
5 Van Dijk	

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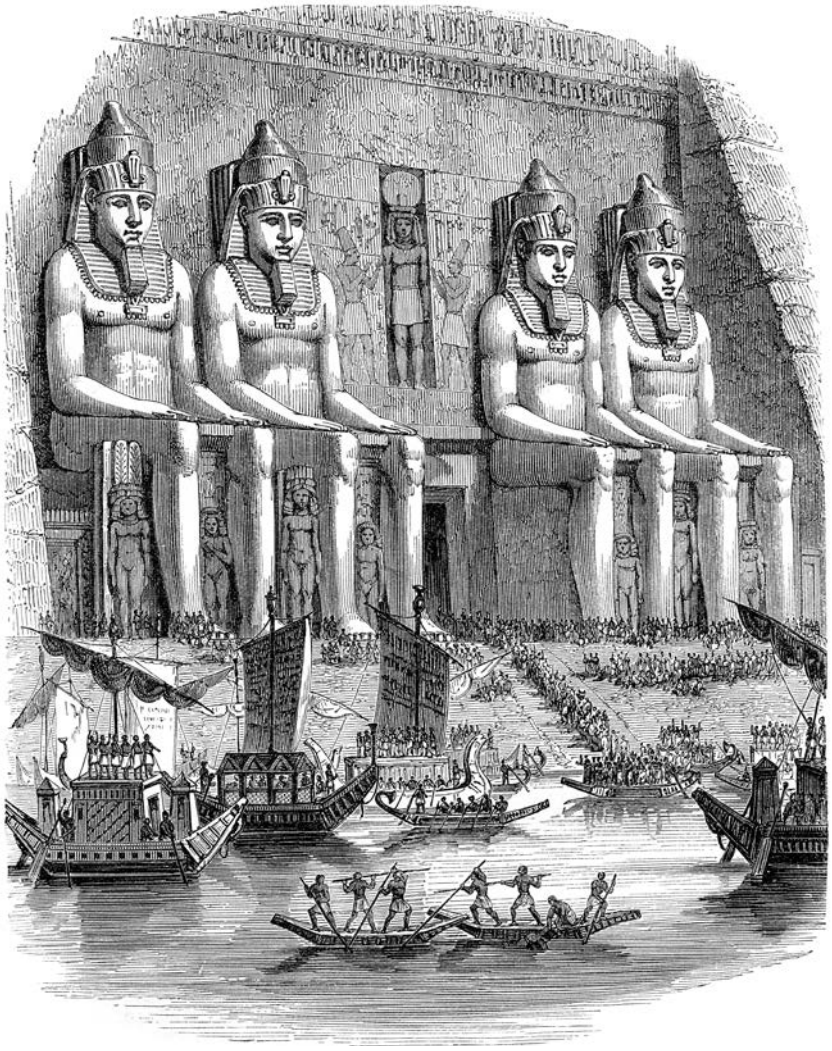
ACTIVITY **19.20**

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

For each of these statements, write a well-structured paragraph in response that:

- clearly addresses whether the historical evidence supports or refutes the claims made
- refers to at least three sources in this chapter
- includes some evaluation of the usefulness and reliability of the evidence.

1. Based on his achievements in the Battle of Kadesh and his subsequent suppression of rebels, Rameses II deserves to be considered a great warrior and military strategist.
2. Rameses II's excellent diplomatic skills ensured Egypt's supremacy over its neighbours.
3. The size, quantity and quality of Rameses II's buildings and monuments places him unquestionably at the top of the list of Egypt's great builders.
4. Due to unparalleled length of his reign, one of Rameses II's greatest legacies was to be able to ensure that he left Egypt stable and secure for the long-term benefit of his successors.
5. Rameses II 'the Great' was only really great at propaganda – rather than being accurate insights into his reign, his depictions of events from his rule are fabricated and false.
6. Rameses II distinguished himself in the way he overcame the many challenges he encountered throughout his reign, and thus clearly deserves to be called 'the Great'.



SOURCE 19.48 An illustration of the Abu Simbel temple

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Rameses II has a reputation as one of the greatest pharaohs in the history of Ancient Egypt, but this reputation needs to be carefully examined.
- Rameses II was a master of propaganda, advertising his achievements widely through the construction of more buildings and monuments than any other pharaoh.
- Some areas in which his reign can be evaluated are warfare, diplomacy, building projects, and the legacy he left for his successors.
- The main threat to Egypt in the New Kingdom was the Hittite Empire, which was based in Hatti, now present-day central Turkey.
- The battle over the strategic fortress-city of Kadesh was the most significant event in Rameses II's reign. He presented it as a victory but it was most probably a stalemate at best as Egypt gave up its possessions in Syria. Rameses II claims to have won the battle through personal bravery, but visual representations of the battle suggest that he was saved by the timely arrival of reserve forces.
- Rameses appears to have redeemed himself through a series of victories in Syria-Palestine in response to rebellious princes, though Egypt gave up most of these possessions once Rameses returned to Egypt.
- Rameses' abilities as a diplomat can be assessed through the Egyptian–Hittite peace treaty, for which we have versions from both sides, and from diplomatic weddings to Hittite princesses.
- Rameses was a prolific builder, though historians have criticised the quality of his buildings and point out that his name appears on many of the buildings that were begun by other pharaohs but completed by him. He is also known to have usurped many monuments created by earlier pharaohs.
- Rameses II's reign of 66 years was longer than any other pharaoh, but he left a mixed legacy. His successors were forced to deal with invasions of the Sea Peoples, and it appears that the defences built by Rameses on the western border of Egypt were inadequate.



SOURCE 19.49 The wooden coffin of Pharaoh Ramses II

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND

Use evidence from 'The Poem' (Source 19.22) to explain how Egyptians understood the relationship between the pharaoh and the gods.

ANALYSE

Compare how two modern historians characterise the nature of Rameses' rule. In your response, use evidence from two sources to explain two similarities and two differences in their accounts.

EVALUATE

1. Evaluate the extent to which evidence from the sources is reliable and useful for assessing the validity of the statement: Rameses used propaganda to legitimise his power. For each source, explain one judgement of reliability and one judgement of usefulness.
2. Evaluate the extent to which evidence from the sources is reliable and useful for determining the role played by religion in Rameses II's reign.
3. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of inscriptions and visual representations in making judgements about Rameses II's reign.

SYNTHESISE

1. To what extent was Rameses II's claim to be the victor at Kadesh justified?
2. To what extent was the peace treaty between Egypt and the Hittite Empire a successful outcome for Rameses' foreign policy aspirations?
3. Assess Rameses II's main achievements in the fields of warfare, diplomacy and building. What criticisms of his achievements in these areas have been raised by historians?

COMMUNICATE

Create a historical argument in response to the question: 'To what extent did Rameses II deserve his reputation as a great builder?'

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions

1. Evaluate the accuracy of the statement: The outcome of the Battle of Kadesh should be seen as a success for Egypt and Rameses II.
2. To what extent does the archaeological evidence from Rameses II's reign provide an accurate insight into his achievements?

Investigation tasks

1. Examine the inscriptional and visual evidence for Rameses II. To what extent do these provide us with an accurate window into his reign?
2. Which aspect of Rameses II's reign – for example, his military achievements, diplomatic negotiations, building projects or another area of your choice – should be seen as his greatest achievement?
3. To what extent does Rameses II deserve his reputation as 'the Great'?
4. Investigate the role played by propaganda in Rameses II's reign.

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Chapter 20

CLEOPATRA

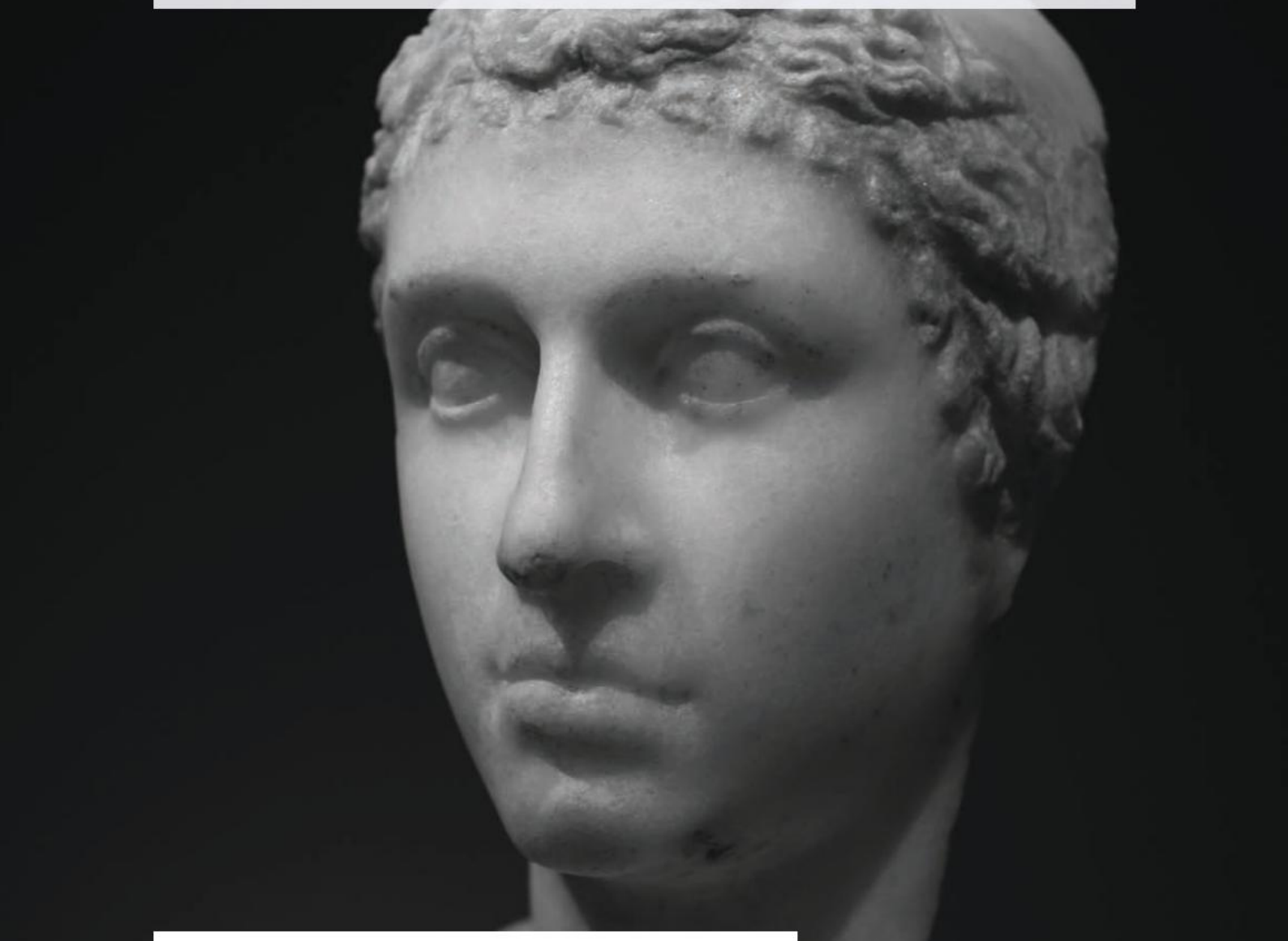
Syllabus reference: Unit 4, Topic 2: Historical personalities

ALAN BARRIE

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How was power and authority gained, maintained and challenged in the Ancient World?
- How was power exercised by ancient personalities in the Ancient World?

(Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 20.1 Marble bust of Cleopatra VII of Egypt from 30–40 BCE

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FOCUS: WHY STUDY CLEOPATRA?

What lies behind the idea that Romans hated Cleopatra? Self-evident in the following extracts and with overwhelming evidence from Roman primary sources is that the heart of Roman vehemence to this ruler was **misogynistic** intent. Already a society drowning in **patriarchalism**, the influx of Greek (AKA Athenian) ideas, learning, attitudes and influences on Rome during the second century BCE reinforced not only submissive expectations of women, but also the corrupting influences and negative consequences of women with power (Source 20.2), made even more dangerous when sprinkled with 'eastern' attributes of exoticism: luxury, extravagance, sensory (Source 20.3).

misogynistic contempt and prejudice against women

patriarchalism a system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it

SOURCE 20.2 M. Beard, *Women & Power: A Manifesto*, Profile Books, 2017

> But Athenian drama in particular, and the green imagination more generally, has offered our imaginations a series of unforgettable women: Medea, Clytemnestra and Antigone among many others,
>
> They are not, however, role models – far from it. For the most part, they are portrayed as abusers rather than users of power. They take illegitimately, in a way that leads to chaos, to the fracture of the state, to death and destruction. They are monstrous hybrids, who are not, in the Greek sense, women at all. And the unflinching logic of their stories is that they must be disempowered and put back in their place. In fact, it is the unquestionable mess that women make of power in Greek myth that justifies their exclusion from it in real life, and justifies the rule of men.

Dame Winifred Mary Beard (born 1955) is an English scholar of Ancient Rome, trustee of the British Museum and formerly Professor of Classics at the University of Cambridge. Beard is the classics editor of *The Times Literary Supplement*, and has been dubbed 'Britain's best-known classicist' for her frequent appearance and challenging public statements.

SOURCE 20.3 M. Beard, 'Cleopatra: From history to myth', *London Review of Books*, 19 March 2003

> After Cleopatra's death in 30 BC, the quantity of material – mostly from Rome itself – increases vastly. But, even for the most hard-headed of historians, the real Cleopatra is impossible to extricate from her Roman myth – or, for that matter, from the complicated and loaded myths of gender, passion, desire and transgression woven by the love poets, in whose work she plays a significant part. There is plenty of **excoriation** here. The 'whore queen' (*meretrix regina*), as Propertius once calls her, becomes a symbol of the Oriental excess that threatened, by her relationship with Mark Antony, to unman the very centre of Roman political and military authority. If Octavian can be seen 'as the champion of male liberty', then Cleopatra and her paramour are his dangerous anti-types – with their debauchery, drunkenness and mosquito nets (strongly associated by both Propertius and Horace with the furthest reaches of effeminate luxury).
>
> I take for my Introduction these three texts as an explanation of why the Romans were so hostile to Cleopatra, and offer an extension of this sentiment in understanding the reasons behind their antagonism.

excoriation to denounce or berate severely

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SOURCE 20.4 M. Butt, 'Cleopatra: Seductress of Men or an Intelligent Leader?' *TheCollector.com*, 18 February 2023

How Should Cleopatra Be Remembered?

Cleopatra was an intelligent and politically savvy leader in her own right. Her reduction to a seductress who prays on the weaknesses of men is unfortunate. The romanticism surrounding her politically necessary 'love' affairs was introduced by Roman writers who could not accept that a foreign matriarchal power could compete with Rome and was perpetuated by an Empire that ruled long after her death. Its appeal as a tragic love story only ensures its notoriety. In reality, Cleopatra attempted to restore her country's position, and for a while, Egypt regained some of its former power. Perhaps instead of her 'romances,' Cleopatra's role as a leader should be the focus.

Just as the Greeks (AKA Athenians), trusting in their sense of self-discipline and love of freedom, chose to resist the temptation of joining Xerxes and his Persian horde, with all the luxurious decadence that it entailed, so too did Rome have to 'resist' having its moral character defiled by the seductive influences of a woman, like Medea, using the binding spells of 'eastern' pomp, mystery, and intoxicating extravagance. But are we to believe that she had no political ambition other than selfishness and self-preservation? It is one thing to lay the blame for Roman views against Cleopatra on their natural and base misogynistic character, but is there more to it than that? What if she represented a real danger to Rome?

Hypothesis: Perhaps Roman misogyny is simply the veneer behind which the ultimate victor, Octavius, operated. And history is written by the victors after all! Today, it is widely and correctly acknowledged that both Caesar and Antony were captivated more by Cleopatra's intelligence than beauty, but why is that? What manifestation did that intelligence dare to imagine? Vision: Rome and Egypt, united together against their greatest foe – the Parthians/Persians. It was Rome's greatest desire to conquer it militarily. Crassus tried and failed, Caesar was assassinated just before he was about to embark, Antony tried but was hindered by his distrust (rightfully) of Octavian. Had he succeeded, where next? India – where Alexander the Great, whom both Rome and Egypt almost worshipped, wanted to go?

Queen Cleopatra herself was the embodiment of what a fusion between two great civilisations (Macedon and Egypt) could do together. Was Cleopatra only interested in survival and self-preservation, or did she have a clear ambition and plan to maintain Egypt's sovereignty and independence – a mutually advantageous ambition, to be achieved with Caesar, then Antony, and maybe even Octavian had he been asked and acquiesced? Why, then, did this vision fail? Because Rome does not share power. And Octavian, perceiving this fundamental truth, paved the way for his own ascension to absolute power, and used it to doom both Antony and Cleopatra, and the vilification of that woman's memory. For how could a true Roman, like Antony, betray Rome, unless he was bewitched? And who was there left to tell their side of the story?

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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

20.1 When and where did the events of Cleopatra's life take place?

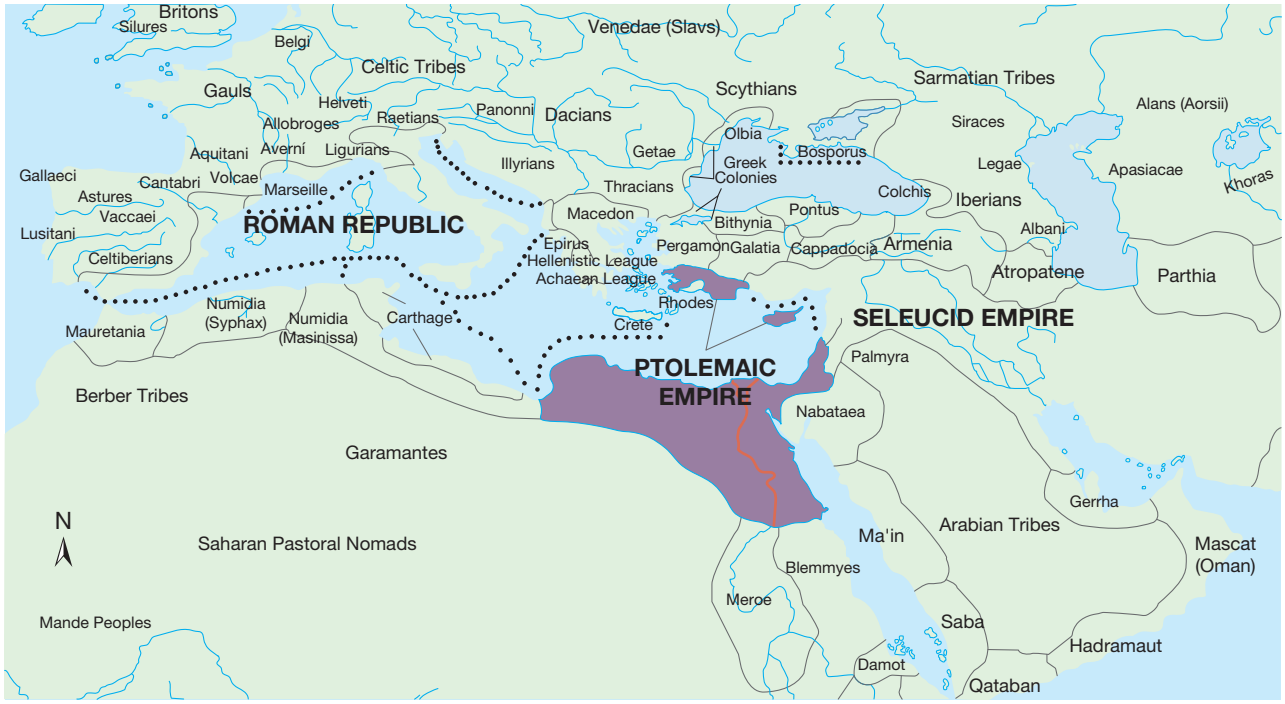
Cleopatra VII was the last of the Ptolemaic Dynasty (305–30 BCE) that ruled in Egypt since it was established by Ptolemy I, friend and General of King Alexander III of Macedon (the 'Great'). They made Alexandria their capital city, ruled both as Egyptian 'Pharaoh' and Macedonian/Greek 'monarch', intermarried within their own family (often leading to jealousies, intrigue and murder), and acquired immeasurable wealth. Despite this, many of its rulers were inept and relied on Rome for assistance.



SOURCE 20.5 Ptolemaic Kingdom in the third and second centuries BCE

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SOURCE 20.6 The Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt in 200 BCE

Background to the Ptolemaic period

The Ptolemaic period refers to the time in Egypt's history under which **Hellenistic** culture flourished and became the dominant influence on the people living in the Nile River valley. The period commences with Alexander the Great's arrival in Egypt in 332 BCE as a part of his conquest of much of the classical world during the fourth century. It ends with Rome's conquest of Egypt in 30 BCE. Alexander initially invaded Egypt after his defeat of Darius III at Issus in 332 BCE. The Persians had ruled Egypt as a province (satrapy) of their empire since 525 BCE. With the Persian defeat at Issus, the **satrap** of Egypt, Mazakes, could not mount a resistance against Alexander.

Hellenistic a period relating to Greek history, language and culture starting from the death of Alexander the Great through to the defeat of Cleopatra and Mark Antony by Octavian in 31 BCE

satrap a provincial governor in the Persian empire

dynasty a sequence of rulers from the same family

Alexander founded the city of Alexandria in 331 BCE but departed soon after and never returned to Egypt, dying in Babylon in 323 BCE. Initially Alexander's half-brother and nephew ruled as co-regents; however, after Alexander's death his empire was split and ruled by the Diadochi, a group of Alexander's generals. One of these generals, Ptolemy I, seized power in Egypt and founded the Ptolemaic Dynasty, first as satrap from 323 BCE and then as king from c. 306 BCE. Once established, the **dynasty** began the process of turning a once-again occupied Egypt into a Hellenistic society, based largely on Greek and Macedonian language and culture. The empire is ruled by a succession of kings carrying the name Ptolemy, and queens with the name of Cleopatra. The dynasty is famous for its incestuous relationships and history of family intrigues and murders.



SOURCE 20.7 Busts depicting Ptolemy I Soter

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Kings of the Ptolemaic period (323–30 BCE)

The Ptolemaic Dynasty was the longest serving and final dynasty of Ancient Egypt, before it became part of the Roman Republic.

- Ptolemy I Soter (332–282 BCE)
- Ptolemy II Philadelphos (282–246 BCE)
- Ptolemy III Euergetes (246–222 BCE)
- Ptolemy IV Philopator (221–204 BCE)
- Ptolemy V Epiphanes (204–180 BCE)
- Ptolemy VI Philometor (180–145 BCE)
- Ptolemy VII Neos Philopator (145–144 BCE)
- Ptolemy VIII Euergetes Tryphon (170–164/3, 145–116 BCE)
- Ptolemy IX (116–107 BCE)
- Ptolemy X Alexander (107–88 BCE)
- Ptolemy XI (80 BCE)
- Ptolemy XII (80–58 BCE, 55–51 BCE)
- Neos Dionysos (80–51 BCE)
- Cleopatra VII (51–30 BCE)
- Ptolemy XIII (47–44 BCE)
- Ptolemy XIV (co-regent with Cleopatra VII)
- Ptolemy XV Caesarion (d. 30 BCE, son of and co–regent with Cleopatra VII)



SOURCE 20.8 Coin depicting Ptolemy III Euergetes



SOURCE 20.9 Ring of Ptolemy VI wearing an Egyptian pschent



SOURCE 20.10 Ptolemy XII making offerings to Egyptian Gods, in the Temple of Hathor, Dendera, Egypt



SOURCE 20.11 Depictions of Cleopatra VII



SOURCE 20.12 Relief of Cleopatra VII and her son by Julius Caesar, Caesarion, at the Dendera Temple

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ACTIVITY **20.1**

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. Can you think of a word, ending in '-cide' that isn't a killing word?
2. The Ptolemies committed all of the following. Can you define them?
   - **a.** patricide
   - **b.** matricide
   - **c.** sororicide
   - **d.** fratricide
   - **e.** filicide
   - **f.** homicide
   - **g.** infanticide
   - **h.** gynaecide
   - **i.** mariticide
   - **j.** parenticide
   - **k.** parricide
   - **l.** prolicide
   - **m.** uxoricide
   - **n.** suicide

SOURCE 20.13 'The worst family in history? – The Ptolemies', *Portals to the Past,* 2024

The worst family in history?

Ptolemy IV murdered his mother (who had killed her husband because he was having an affair with her mother). He then married his sister Arsinoe III, who was immediately murdered after her husband/brother's death.

Ptolemy V then had his mother's murderers ripped to pieces by a mob.

Ptolemy VI fought his brother for the throne and married his sister Cleopatra II.

Ptolemy VII was murdered by his uncle (Ptolemy VIII) or possibly his father (Ptolemy VI).

Ptolemy VIII also married Cleopatra II but began an affair with her daughter, Cleopatra III. He had his son cut into pieces and sent them to his mother, Cleopatra II. His daughter murdered her sister, Cleopatra IV, and she was later murdered by her widowed brother-in-law.

Ptolemy IX tried to murder his mother, Cleopatra III, and then married one sister, and then another sister, both called Cleopatra.

Ptolemy X fought Ptolemy IX for the throne and murdered his mother, Cleopatra III (who had repeatedly changed sides).

Ptolemy X married the daughter of Ptolemy IX – Berenice III. Ptolemy XI also married Berenice III – who was either his sister or mother or both! However, after 19 days of marriage, he had her killed and he was promptly torn to pieces by an enraged Greek mob.

Ptolemy XII was hated by his children, particularly his daughter Berenice IV, and they drove him from power. She then ruled briefly where she had her sister killed and her husband strangled. Ptolemy XII returned to power and had his rebellious daughter beheaded.

The other daughter of Ptolemy XII was Cleopatra VII (the really famous one). She certainly had one brother killed and was married to another one. She had her sister, Arsinoe, dragged through the streets of Rome as a prisoner (thanks to Julius Caesar, her lover/husband) and later had Arsinoe gutted in a temple (thanks to Mark Antony her lover/husband).

Feeling exhausted after all that? Well don't you dare moan about your next family gathering ... it might be boring/cringeworthy/embarrassing but at least nobody is plotting to kill you (hopefully).

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Political features and terms of Ptolemaic Egypt

The Ptolemaic kings ruled absolutely with the support of a clear administrative hierarchy, including:

- close advisers *(philoi)*
- Royal secretary for diplomatic affairs *(epistolographos)*
- Chancellor *(hypomnematoraphos)*
- Overseer of the civil administration *(dioicete)*
- Head of finance *(oikonomos)*
- Commander of troops *(strategon)*
- Supreme military overseer *(epistrategos)*.

Ptolemaic Egypt was divided into districts (*nomes),* overseen by a *nomarch* who was responsible for the district's agricultural production, and a *strategon* who was responsible for troops stationed in the area. High officials were initially exclusively Greek during the third century BCE, and most local officials were Egyptian. During the rule of Ptolemy VIII, Egyptians were permitted to higher offices. As in traditional Ancient Egypt, the king was the owner of all lands, much of which was farmed by royal tenants. The remainder consisted of temple lands, the cities themselves, and other feudal and private holdings. Officials were given large estates and active soldiers *(cleruchs)* were given smaller holdings. Though traditionally fertile, arable land was increased substantially during the Ptolemaic period via irrigation projects and the creation of artificial lakes for this purpose.

As well as managing the land, the king was supervisor of the judiciary and also the chief legislator. Both Egyptian and Greek law was observed as valid. Temples persisted in a similar fashion as they had since the New Kingdom. Temples were exempt from taxation and were subject to different legal expectations. They were closely affiliated with the state and were centres of public life and learning, as well as large economic entities. The Ptolemaic economy was also largely dependent on trade both to the north in the Mediterranean but also to the south and south-east on the Red Sea coast. Competition over trade routes caused conflict, however, with their neighbours, the Nabataeans in particular.

Cultural and religious features of Ptolemaic Egypt

Ptolemaic Egypt continued much of the religious practice seen in previous ages. Having deposed the hated Persian rule, Alexander the Great fulfilled the traditional task of an Egyptian pharaoh by restoring order. Egyptian priests and the Macedonians allowed this ideology to permeate the new dynasty, establishing clear religious justification for the new line of kings. Divine office was therefore maintained, with Alexander himself thought of as the son of Zeus-Ammon and therefore the legitimate heir of the gods.

Kingship changed somewhat as Ptolemy I ascended, with two ideals of kingship practised: the Hellenistic *basileus* (representative of traditional personal kingship) and the Egyptian pharaoh. Statues of the Ptolemaic kings represented both, with Egyptian double crowns and Greek features depicted. Two currents of cultural representation (Greeks and Egyptians) were consistent throughout the Ptolemaic era, particularly with respect to religion. A national cult of Alexander developed in Alexandria and grew into a dynastic cult. The Ptolemies pursued a policy of using the existing Egyptian cults for the Egyptian population.

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Arsinoeia the most important ancient metropolis of Ionian Asia Minor

gymnasia a large exercise yard surrounded by a series of rooms, including changing rooms, practice rooms and baths

Museion library

Serapeum temple

papyrus a plant common to the Nile River Valley that was most notably used to create a writing material, similar to paper

These were not completely exclusive, however, and over the course of the dynasty, actions were carried out to unite the varied beliefs of the populace, including the founding of a Hellenistic cult of Serapis under Ptolemy I and the deification of **Arsinoeia** in both Egyptian and Greek temples under Ptolemy II.

Greek education also became substantial and widespread within Egypt in both urban and village centres, with Greek ***gymnasia*** becoming a regular feature. The School of Alexandria was the peak of this movement, with the **Museion** and **Serapeum** established with numerous eminent scholars serving, and thousands of **papyrus** scrolls recording the learning of the time. Scholars such as Praxagoras, Heorphilos, Euclid and Aristarchus visited and taught various members of the Ptolemaic dynasty.



SOURCE 20.14 Temple of Kom Ombo constructed in Upper Egypt in 180–47 BCE by the Ptolemies and modified by the Romans. It is a double temple with two sets of structures dedicated to two separate deities.

20.2 The early years and the rise to prominence of Cleopatra

Before Cleopatra's ascension

Alexandria, the capital city, became the centre of learning and culture in the Hellenistic World. The Ptolemies maintained a respect for Egyptian culture and custom, but also sought to impose their imperial cult within the Egyptian belief systems. In foreign dealings, Egypt was still a substantial influence in the Mediterranean, particularly sought after as a source of trade and resources, with Egypt's grain and access to trade routes highly prized. Rome held a keen interest in Egypt due to long food shortages in Rome. Egypt's consistent supply of grain saw it looked upon enviously as a supplier to an expanding empire, and the Romans saw themselves as 'protectors' of Egyptian monarchs.

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SOURCE 20.15 'Will the real Cleopatra please stand up?', *History Skills*

When trying to discover who the 'real' Cleopatra was, there are several problems that arise with the surviving primary sources. These issues make it challenging to paint an accurate and unbiased picture of her life and character. There are very few surviving primary sources from Cleopatra's own time that provide direct information about her life and reign. Many of the contemporary accounts have been lost, leaving only fragments, quotations, and references in later works. This scarcity of sources limits our understanding of Cleopatra's perspective and experiences. This absence of first-hand accounts leaves us with a limited and mediated view of her character, filtered through the perspectives of others.

Those writings that have survived were written by her enemies or by Roman historians who lived several decades after her death. These accounts, such as those by Plutarch, Cassius Dio, and Suetonius, often portray Cleopatra in a negative light, emphasizing her seductive and manipulative qualities to serve their own political agendas. As a result, these sources tend to present a one-sided and biased view of her character. These problems with the surviving primary sources make it difficult to construct a definitive, unbiased portrait of the 'real' Cleopatra.

SOURCE 20.16 S. Makri, 'Has Cleopatra's tomb finally been found?', *Greek Reporter,* 20 May 2023

The Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities announced the discovery in the Fall of 2022, describing the 1,300-meter tunnel located forty-three feet underground as a 'geometric miracle.' It was said that it looks similar to the Tunnel of Eupalinos on the island of Samos in Greece. Excavations continue under the direction of Kathleen Martinez, an archaeologist at the University of San Domingo. About twenty years ago, Martinez began searching for Cleopatra's tomb in Egypt, confident that after more than a decade of continuous research that Taposiris Magna, dedicated to god of the dead, Osiris, was a leading candidate for the queen's burial spot. After endless attempts and multiple ignored emails, Martinez managed to successfully book a meeting with archaeologist and former Head of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities Zahi Hawass in Cairo. Even though work has been ongoing since 2004, the new find is the most interesting to date. 'This is the perfect place for the tomb of Cleopatra,' Martinez said according to a report by the blog Heritage Key. 'If there's a one percent chance that the last queen of Egypt could be buried there, it is my duty to search for her. If we discover the tomb it will be the most important discovery of the 21st century. If we do not discover the tomb … we made major discoveries here, inside the temple and outside the temple.' The excavations have also revealed mummies with golden tongues and a cemetery containing Greco-Roman-style mummies buried facing the temple. This supports Martinez's theory that a royal tomb was built in the area. In addition, twenty-two coins depicting her image as well as a bust believed to depict Cleopatra were found …

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SOURCE 20.17 M. Rybachuk, 'Queen Cleopatra's sole surviving handwriting is a single Greek word', *Greek Reporter,* September 20, 2023

The sole surviving sample of Queen Cleopatra's handwriting, found on an ancient papyrus, reveals a single Greek word, 'ginesthoi' (Greek: γίνεσθοι), meaning 'make it happen' or 'so be it'. This remarkable document is a royal decree dated back to 33 BC. It granted tax exemption to Publius Canidius, a Roman officer closely associated with Mark Antony. According to the papyrus, Canidius was permitted to annually export ten thousand bags of wheat and import five thousand amphorae of wine without taxation. However, what captured imaginations was a Greek postscript, which could be translated as 'make it so.' Believed to be Cleopatra's handwriting, it hinted at her direct involvement. Notably, this paper was signed two years before the Battle of Actium in 31 BC. In that prominent fight, Mark Antony and Cleopatra faced defeat against Roman Emperor Octavian Augustus. Dutch professor of ancient history Peter van Minnen stated that 'this document was supposed to be an internal note from Cleopatra to a high-ranking official.' According to him, it bore the distinct handwriting of a court scribe. Furthermore, van Minnen emphasised the personal nature of the message, pointing out that it lacked a formal introduction from the queen herself. The composition of the manuscript is laconic. It consists of the text of the decree, Cleopatra's handwritten consent, and the date of receipt in Alexandria, Egypt. Experts agreed that Cleopatra would have been the sole authority to endorse such decrees given the papyrus' nature. High-ranking officials would have recognized her handwriting as they reproduced and disseminated the documents. To this day, this remains the sole text potentially bearing Cleopatra's handwriting. In many respects, the survival of this document can be attributed to sheer luck. Egypt, with its arid climate, allows a vast amount of ancient manuscripts to endure the test of time. An unexpected source for uncovering historical material lies in the realm of mummies. Discarded and fragmented old papyri were once deemed worthless. They found new intended purpose, as they were used to fill the cavities of newly embalmed mummies. Alongside aged fabrics, these documents absorbed excess moisture, inadvertently preserving historical treasures. This particular decree sheds light on Cleopatra's role as a ruler deeply engaged in the day-to-day governance of her realm. It stands as just one among thousands of texts that she likely dictated and possibly personally signed during her administration of Egypt. Today, this papyrus containing Cleopatra's handwriting has found its place in the Egyptian Museum and Papyrus Collection in Berlin.

ACTIVITY **20.2**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Prediction uses reasoning based on what has happened, and what is now happening, to make a judgement about what will happen. It also is great for the imagination, especially in historical fiction. For example, *Fatherland* is a 1992 alternative history detective novel by English writer and journalist Robert Harris, which was subsequently made into a film. It takes as its premise that D-Day failed, the USA abandons Britain, Churchill resigns and is exiled to Canada, Germany wins the war in Europe, but the war in the East continues.

1. Wouldn't it be fascinating to think and write about how history might have unfolded if Antony and Cleopatra had won at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE and defeated Octavian? Write a paragraph about what you think could have happened if this scenario were true.
2. Using Sources 20.15–20.17 write a detailed paragraph about where, and what, our knowledge and perceptions about Queen Cleopatra might be in the year 2050.

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DEPTH STUDY

20.3 Significant events in Cleopatra's life

Cleopatra was born in Alexandra, Egypt, in 69 BCE. In 51 BCE, her father, Ptolemy Auletes, Egypt's pharaoh, died. He left his kingdom to Cleopatra, aged 18 at the time, and her brother Ptolemy XIII. While Egypt remained an independent kingdom, Rome was in control of most of the Mediterranean region, and the Roman General Pompey 'the Great' was considered 'a friend' of both Cleopatra and Ptolemy XIII. However, during the Roman 'civil war', Cleopatra was removed from power in 48 BCE by the guardians of Ptolemy XIII: Theodotes, Pothinus and Achillas. Following Pompey's defeat at Pharsalus in August and subsequent murder on 28 September as he sought refuge in Egypt, Julius Caesar restored Cleopatra to the Egyptian throne and helped destroy her opponents. They became lovers, and a son was born on 23 June, Caesarion (Ptolemy Caesar).

When Caesar returned to Rome, Cleopatra soon followed. The queen tried to flatter and impress the Romans, but some, like Cicero, hated her. Caesar acknowledged Caesarion as his son and Cleopatra as his consort, and they lived together (even though he was already married) until Caesar was assassinated on 15 March 44 BCE. In the turmoil that followed, the queen and Caesarion fled back to Egypt. Her other younger brother, Ptolemy XIV, soon died, and Cleopatra and Caesarion (Ptolemy XV) ruled together.

Meanwhile, back in Rome, Antony, Octavian and Lepidus formed the Second Triumvirate in 43 BCE. They crushed all opposition before dividing the Mediterranean among themselves, with Antony claiming the East. In 41 BCE, Cleopatra met Antony at Tarsus (located near the southern coastline in modern-day Turkey).

Cleopatra and Antony became lovers, stayed together for nearly 10 years, had three children together, and eventually married in 32 BCE, which prompted another civil war between Octavian and Antony, as this meant Antony had to divorce Octavia, Octavian's sister.



SOURCE 20.18 L. Alma-Tadema, *The meeting of Antony and Cleopatra*, 1885

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SOURCE 20.19 Plutarch, *Life of Antony,* 26/27

poop the highest deck of a sailing ship which forms the roof of a cabin in the stern

[She sailed] up the river Cydnus in a barge with gilded **poop**, its sails spread purple, its rowers urging it on with silver oars to the sound of the flute blended with pipes and lutes. She herself reclined beneath a canopy spangled with gold, adorned like Venus in a painting, while boys like Loves in paintings stood on either side and fanned her. ... Wondrous odours from countless incense-offerings diffused themselves along the river-banks. ... [Antony went to her]. He found there a preparation that beggared description, but was most amazed at the multitude of lights. For, as we are told, so many of these were let down and displayed on all sides at once, and they were arranged and ordered with so many inclinations and adjustments to each other in the form of rectangles and circles, that few sights were so beautiful or so worthy to be seen as this.

In the immediate lead-up to the decisive battle of Actium in 31 BCE, Plutarch, in his *Life of Antony*, wrote:

SOURCE 20.20 Plutarch, *Life of Antony,* 60

When Caesar [Octavian] had made sufficient preparations, a vote was passed to wage war against Cleopatra, and to take away from Antony the authority which he had surrendered to a woman. And Caesar said in addition that Antony had been drugged and was not even master of himself, and that the Romans were carrying on war with Mardion the eunuch, and Potheinus, and Iras, and the tire-woman of Cleopatra, and Charmion, by whom the principal affairs of the government were managed.

Cassius Dio, writing about 100 years after Plutarch, added even more detail in his *Roman History*. Antony's will had been placed in the Temple of Vesta. Octavian requested access to the will, and the Vestal Virgins refused as it was illegal for them to do so. However, they said that if he wanted the will, he could just enter into the temple and take it. They couldn't (or wouldn't) stop him. So, that's what he did.

SOURCE 20.21 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Book 50

and then carrying it into the senate and later into the assembly, and reading it. For the clauses contained in it were of such a nature that this most lawless procedure on Caesar's [Octavian's] part brought upon him no reproach from the citizens; for Antony had borne witness to Caesarion that he was truly sprung from Caesar, had given some enormous presents to his children by the Egyptian queen, who were being reared by him, and had ordered that his body be buried in Alexandria by her side. This caused the Romans in their indignation to believe that the other reports in circulation were also true, to the effect that if Antony should prevail, he would bestow their city upon Cleopatra and transfer the seat of power to Egypt ... This was the reason they voted for war against Cleopatra, but they made no such declaration against Antony, forsooth, knowing full well that he would become an enemy in any event, since he certainly was not going to prove false to her and espouse Caesar's cause.

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But, perhaps even more importantly, Antony declared Caesarion to be Caesar's true son and heir, thus challenging the legitimacy (and primacy) of Octavian's claim. Despite Antony's numerical advantage in ships and soldiers, Octavian emerged as the victor at Actium on 2 September 31 BCE. Antony and Cleopatra returned to Alexandria and took their own lives. Caesarion died soon after, on Octavian's orders.

20.4 Key perspectives on the reign of Cleopatra

Cleopatra was assertive in her reign, eliminating opposition and ruling in her own right despite officially serving as co-regent. She employed personal qualities in her rulings, demonstrating substantial political strategy in her dealings both domestically and with a foreign power in Rome, openly challenging the largest empire of the day. She observed both Macedonian Greek cultural norms but also those of Egyptians. She was the only Ptolemaic ruler to learn the traditional hieroglyphs. Assertiveness and a mix of strategic and personal relationships, ultimately, negatively impacted Cleopatra's reign over Egypt and its subjugation by Rome.

Let's look at the following sources, their perspectives and the issues that they raise:

- Roman (in texts)
- Judaean
- Greek
- Egyptian
- Arab
- archaeological (Roman and Egyptian)
- secondary (Concluding study).

Roman perspective: History is written by the victors

Below are some Roman authors writing at the time and soon after Cleopatra's death.

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BCE), Roman statesman, orator, lawyer, scholar and writer and upholder of the virtues of the Roman Republic.

SOURCE 20.22 Cicero, *Letters to Atticus*, 15.15.2, 44 BCE

> **I detest the queen. The guarantor of her promises, Ammonius, knows that my feelings are justified. Indeed, the promises concerned literary matters, appropriate to my status … I cannot recall the arrogance of the queen, when she lived on an estate across the Tiber, without great anguish. Let me have nothing to do with them; do they think I have no spirit or that I scarcely have the capacity for indignation?**

The author of the *Elegies for Maecenas* is unknown, but the poems were probably written early in the first century CE. Drusus died in 9 BCE, and Maecenas died in 8 BCE.

SOURCE 20.23 *Elegies for Maecenas and Drusus*, translated by J. W. and A. M. Duff, 1934

> **[1.51] The very god of Actium {Apollo} smote the lyre with ivory quill after the bugles of victory were hushed. He was of late a warrior to prevent a woman {Cleopatra} from having Rome as a marriage-gift for her foul lewdness: he sped his arrows after the runaways – so mighty the bow he had bent – far as the furthest steeds of the rising sun.**

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Horace is considered one of Rome's greatest poets.

SOURCE 20.24 Horace, 'The Cleopatra ode', *Odes*, 1.37

The Queen, with her gang of shameful, polluted and vicious half-men, plotted insane destruction for the Capitol and violent death for our Empire … she looked for a nobler death. She did not tremble, like woman, at the dagger, nor did she use her swift fleet to hunt out secret shores. She dared even to look at her devastated palace with a calm face, was brave enough to handle angry snakes so that she might drink the black poison right to her heart, growing wilder with her decision to die, hating the thought of being carried off by enemy ships, robbed of her status, to grace a proud triumph. This was no ordinary woman.

Other similar sentiments can be found in:

- Propertius, *Elegies*, Book III.11:1–72: On woman's power. Propertius, poet of the Augustan age was born around 50–45 BCE and died shortly after 15 BCE. He was a friend of the poets Horace and Virgil, all of whom were patronised by Maecenas and, through him, the emperor Augustus.
- Ovid, *The Metamorphoses,* Book 25, lines 745–842. Ovid also wrote under Augustus. Like several others, he refused even to use the name 'Cleopatra'.
- Virgil, *The Aeneid,* Book VIII:671–713. Virgil (70–19 BCE) was the main poet under Augustus. His *Aeneid* is considered one of the finest epics about Ancient Rome.
- Livy, *Periochae,* 130. Livy was a Roman historian, authorised by Augustus to write the history of the Roman Republic.
- Publius Annius Florus, *The Epitome of Roman History by Florus,* 2:13–14. Publius Annius Florus (c. 70–140 CE). Writing during the reign of the Emperor Hadrian, Florus compiled an overview of the history of Rome based mostly on Livy. The work was much used in the Middle Ages.
- Strabo, *Geography,* XVII.1.25-54. Strabo (64 or 63 BCE – c. 24 CE) was a Greek geographer, philosopher and historian who lived in Asia Minor during the transitional period of the Roman Republic into the Roman Empire.

ACTIVITY **20.3**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Select the best quote from each source that reveals the author's opinion about Cleopatra and write it in the table.

Source 20.22	
Source 20.23	
Source 20.24	

2. Compare the quotes you have selected. Are they similar to or different from each other? Why do you think that is? Consider the time when they are written.

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Roman authors writing under Nero

Seneca was the tutor of Agrippina the Younger's son, Nero – the last of the Julio-Claudians. Later, Seneca was forced to commit suicide by Nero for suspected involvement in a plot to assassinate Nero.

SOURCE 20.25 Seneca, *Moral letters to Lucilius*, Letter 83

Mark Antony was a great man, a man of distinguished ability; but what ruined him and drove him into foreign habits and un-Roman vices, if it was not drunkenness and – no less potent than wine – love of Cleopatra? This it was that made him an enemy of the state; this it was that rendered him no match for his enemies; this it was that made him cruel.

Lucan (3 November 39 – 30 April 65 CE), nephew of Seneca, was a much admired Roman poet. In this extract from his epic *Pharsalia*, he dramatically depicts Caesar's infatuation and relationship with Cleopatra.

SOURCE 20.26 Lucan, *Pharsalia*, Book X, translated by Sir EE Ridley, Longmans, Green, and Co., 1896

The story so far ... After the battle of Pharsulus, the defeated Roman General Pompey flees to Egypt, where he is promptly beheaded. Caesar arrives in pursuit. Cleopatra devises a way to see Caesar (the famous rolled up in a carpet scene), and Caesar falls for her.

Caesar's ears in vain had she implored, but aided by her charms, the wanton's prayers prevailed, and by a night of shame ineffable, passed with her judge, she won his favour. When between the pair, Caesar had made a peace, by costliest gift purchased, a banquet of such glad event made fit memorial; and with pomp the Queen displayed her luxuries, as yet unknown to Roman fashions. [163–177] Upon either hand lay kings, and Caesar in the midst supreme. There in her fatal beauty lay the Queen, thick daubed with unguents, nor with throne content, nor with her brother spouse; laden she lay on neck and hair with all the Red Sea spoils, and faint beneath the weight of gems and gold. Her snowy breast shone through ... Blind in soul, by madness of ambition, thus to fire by such profusion of her wealth, the mind of Caesar armed, her guest in civil war!

ACTIVITY **20.4**



Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Select the best quote from each source that reveals the author's opinion about Cleopatra and write it in the table.

Source 20.25	
Source 20.26	

2. Compare the quotes you have selected. Are they similar to or different from each other? Why do you think that is? Consider the time when they are written.

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Roman authors writing under Flavians and Nerva-Antonines

Pliny the Younger (61 – c. 113 CE) served as an imperial magistrate under Emperor Trajan and was a friend of the historian Tacitus, and may have employed Suetonius (see below). Many of his private letters have survived.

SOURCE 20.27 Pliny the Younger, letter to Laberius, c. 95 CE

> Cleopatra boasted that she could spend 10,000,000 **sesterces** on a single banquet. Antony was keen to learn how it could be done, though he doubted its possibility, so bets were laid. Next day, when the wager was to be settled, she set before him a banquet splendid enough, but of the kind they had daily ... she ordered the last course to be served. Following their instructions, the servants put before her a single vessel with vinegar ... Antony was curious to see what on earth she'd do. She took one earring off and dropped the pearl into the vinegar; and when it melted, swallowed it. Plancus, umpiring ... declared that Antony had lost the bet.

sesterces Roman coin, at this stage, the coin was made of silver

Suetonius (c. 69 – after 122 CE), Roman historian, author of 'The Twelve Caesars' – a set of biographies of the first rulers of Rome, from Julius Caesar to Domitian. He had access to the Imperial Archives, and included all sorts of scandalous stories in this *Lives*.

SOURCE 20.28 Suetonius, *The Life of Julius Caesar*, 52, translated by J. C. Rolfe

> He had love affairs with queens ... but above all with Cleopatra, with whom he often feasted until daybreak, and he would have gone through Egypt with her in her state-barge almost to Ethiopia, had not his soldiers refused to follow him. Finally he called her to Rome and did not let her leave until he had ladened her with high honours and rich gifts, and he allowed her to give his name to the child which she bore ...

Appian of Alexandria (c. 95–165 CE) was a Greek historian with Roman citizenship who first lived in Alexandria, Egypt, before moving to Rome. He wrote during the reigns of Emperors Trajan, Hadrian and Antoninus Pius.

SOURCE 20.29 Appian, *The Civil Wars*, Book V

> Straightway Antony's former interest in public affairs began to dwindle. Whatever Cleopatra ordered was done, regardless of laws, human or divine. [For example], while her sister Arsinoe was a suppliant in the temple of Artemis Leucophryne at Miletus, Antony sent assassins thither and put her to death ... So swiftly was Antony transformed, and this passion was the beginning and the end of evils that afterwards befell him.

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ACTIVITY 20.5

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Select the best quote from each source that reveals the author's opinion about Cleopatra and write it in the table.

Source 20.27	
Source 20.28	
Source 20.29	

2. Compare the quotations you have selected. Are they similar to or different from each other? Why do you think that is? Consider the time when they are written.

The Severans and beyond

Cassius Dio (c. 165–235 CE), Roman historian, senator, consul, and provincial governor of Africa and Pannonia. He retired to his native Bithynia, where he wrote his *Roman History*.

SOURCE 20.30 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Book 56

> Cleopatra had hastened to Egypt, for fear that her subjects would begin a revolt if they heard of the disaster before her arrival. [As] as soon as she [landed], she slew many of the foremost men, inasmuch as they had always been displeased with her and were now elated over her disaster, and she proceeded to gather vast wealth from their estates and from various other sources both profane and sacred, sparing not even the most holy shrines, and also to fit out her forces and to look about for allies … [Cleopatra's] qualities of character [are as follows]: Cleopatra was of insatiable passion and insatiable avarice; she was swayed often by laudable ambition, but often by overweening effrontery. By love she gained the title of Queen of the Egyptians, and when she hoped by the same means to win also that of Queen of the Romans, she failed of this and lost the other besides. She captivated the two greatest Romans of her day, and because of the third she destroyed herself.

Claudius Aelianus (c. 175–235 BCE) was a Roman author and teacher of rhetoric who flourished under Septimius.

SOURCE 20.31 Aelianus, fragment 55 'On the nature of animals'

> Cleopatra declared herself queen of kings: into such an extreme of arrogance did she drift. Cleopatra also did other things which possessed profaneness, which bring me a decorum as I keep silent.

Other writers of this era who wrote savagely about Cleopatra include Sextus Aurelius Victor Afer (c. 320–390 CE), *De viris illustribus Romae*. He was a historian and politician of the Roman Empire. Under the emperor Julian (361–363 CE), Victor served as governor of Pannonia Secunda; in 389 CE he became urban prefect, a senior imperial official in Rome.

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Eutropius, *Roman History*, Book VII, wrote that Cleopatra 'aspired with a womanish ambition to reign at Rome'. Eutropius, wrote his *Short History of the Roman Empire* in the year 369 CE, and served as the imperial secretary in Constantinople. And St Jerome, *Chronological Table for Olympiad*, wrote that 'Caesar established Cleopatra as queen of Egypt, in return for sexual favours'.

However, Johannes Malalas, (c. 491–578 CE), a Byzantine chronicler of Syrian origin, provides a more favourable opinion. Note also what he says about who seduced whom!

SOURCE 20.32 Johannes Malalas, *Chronicle*, Book 8, 565 CE

Caesar went off to Alexandria the great and constructed there, naming it after his son by his beautiful concubine Cleopatra – he found this Cleopatra in the Thebaid … Caesar seduced [Cleopatra] and made her pregnant; and she bore a son, whom she called Caesarion … Cleopatra had constructed the Pharos in Alexandria the great on the so-called island of Proteus, which is about two miles off the shore of Alexandria. She piled up earth and stones in the sea to such a height, that men and beasts could walk across the sea as far as the island and the Pharos. Cleopatra achieved this awesome feat with the help of the Dexiphanes of Cnidus, who turned the sea into land.

ACTIVITY **20.6**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Select the best quote from each source that reveals the author's opinion about Cleopatra and write it in the table.

Source 20.30	
Source 20.31	
Source 20.32	

2. Compare the quotations you have selected. Are they similar to or different from each other? Why do you think that is? Consider the time when they are written.

ACTIVITY **20.7**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Write a detailed historical paragraph that answers the following question: To what extent did the evolution of Roman perspectives on Cleopatra change, or remain consistent, over time? Why? Give reasons for your position and quote the best examples from the sources to support your viewpoint.

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Judaean perspective

Flavius Josephus (c. AD 37 – c. 100) was a Jewish historian and military leader involved in the Jewish revolt against Roman rule in 66–70 CE. Having been saved by the future Roman Emperor Vespasian, he turned to writing history. His *Jewish Antiquities* makes use of the memoirs of Herod the Great.

SOURCE 20.33 Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 15.88, translated by R. Marcus

She had a great influence over him because of his passion for her. Since she was prone to covetousness by nature, there was no lawless deed which she did not commit … For the sake of any money that there was the slightest hope of getting, both temples and tombs were violated. No sacred place was considered so inviolable that it did not have its furnishings removed and there was no secular place that did not suffer every kind of forbidden treatment so long as it was likely to satisfy the greed of this wicked woman to the full … In sum, nothing was enough by itself for this extravagant woman, who was enslaved by her appetites, so that the whole world failed to satisfy the desires of her imagination. That was why she continually prodded Antony to take away the possessions of others and give them to her. And when she passed through Syria with him, she thought of ways to get it into her possession … Herod had for a long while been far from friendly to Cleopatra, knowing how vicious she was to everyone, and at this time he had reason to think her particularly contemptible if it was through lust that she went so far [for him]; and if she was making such advances to trap him, he would have to hurt her before she could hurt him.

SOURCE 20.34 Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 15.3, translated by W. Whiston

[E]arnestly entreating Antony that the kingdom [of Herod's] might be given to her, [she] labored with her utmost diligence to have him out of the way; but that he still found Antony just to him, and had no longer any apprehensions of hard treatment from him … [He] got clear of the entreaties which she made him to have Judea bestowed upon her.

SOURCE 20.35 Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 4, translated by W. Whiston

Now Herod had a great while borne no good-will to Cleopatra, as knowing that she was a woman irksome to all; and at that time he thought her particularly worthy of his hatred, if this attempt proceeded out of lust

ACTIVITY **20.8**



Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Select the best quote from each source that reveals the author's opinion about Cleopatra and write it in the table.

Source 20.33	
Source 20.34	
Source 20.35	

2. Compare the quotes you have selected. Are they similar to or different from each other? Why do you think that is? Consider the time when they are written.

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Greek perspective

Galen of Pergamon (129–216 CE) was a Greek physician, surgeon, scientist and philosopher. His interest in the story of Cleopatra's death stems from his interest in snakes and poison, rather than political biography.

SOURCE 20.36 Galen, *De Temperamentis*, 1.657

> They say that it was by means of one of these creatures (for there are three kinds of asps) ... that queen Cleopatra, wishing to foil her guards, died swiftly and without arousing suspicion. For Augustus, after conquering Antonius, wished to take her alive and wished very much to keep her alive, as is reasonable, so that he might exhibit to the Romans in his triumph so famous a woman. But she, they say, perceived this and, choosing to leave the human race still a queen rather than to appear before the Romans as a private citizen, engineered her own death by this beast. And they say that she called her two most trustworthy maids to her - they were the ones who attended to her toilette and cared for her body; their names were Naeira and Carmione. The one arranged her hair becomingly and the other dexterously trimmed the tips of her nails. Then Cleopatra ordered the creature brought in hidden among grapes and figs, so that, as I have said, she might elude the guards. She tried this method beforehand on these women to determine whether it could cause death quickly, and after they perished swiftly, she turned it upon herself, and they say that, on this account, Augustus was greatly amazed, in part because of the affection these women had to die with their queen, and in part because she did not wish to live in slavery, but preferred to die nobly. Indeed, they say that her right hand was found resting on her head, holding her crown, as was appropriate, so that she might appear to those who saw her to be a queen even in death.

Plutarch (c. 46–119 CE) was a Greek philosopher, historian, biographer, essayist, and priest at the Temple of Apollo in Delphi. He is known primarily for his *Parallel Lives*, a series of biographies of illustrious Greeks and Romans, and *Moralia*, a collection of essays and speeches. He lived most of his life at Chaeronea, was initiated into the mysteries of the Greek god Apollo, probably took part in the Eleusinian Mysteries, and visited Rome as a municipal ambassador for Delphi.

SOURCE 20.37 Plutarch, *Antony*, 25 / 46

> Cleopatra observed in the jests of Antony much of the soldier and the common man, and adopted this manner also towards him, without restraint now, and boldly. For her beauty, as we are told, was in itself not altogether incomparable, nor such as to strike those who saw her; but converse with her had an irresistible charm, and her presence, combined with the persuasiveness of her discourse and the character which was somehow diffused about her behaviour towards others, had something stimulating about it. There was sweetness also in the tones of her voice; and her tongue, like an instrument of many strings, she could readily turn to whatever language she pleased, so that in her interviews with [others] she very seldom had need of an interpreter, but made her replies to most of them herself and unassisted ... Nay, it is said that she knew the speech of many other peoples also, although the kings of Egypt before her had not even made an effort to learn the native language, and some actually gave up their Macedonian dialect. ... it was not easy to see how Cleopatra was inferior in intelligence to anyone of the princes who took part in the expedition, she who for a long time had governed so large a kingdom by herself, and by long association with Antony had learned to manage large affairs.

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SOURCE 20.38 Plutarch, *Antony*, 54

Cleopatra, indeed, both then and at other times when she appeared in public, assumed a robe sacred to Isis, and was addressed as the New Isis.

ACTIVITY **20.9**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Select the best quote from each source that reveals the author's opinion about Cleopatra and write it in the table.

Source 20.36	
Source 20.37	
Source 20.38	

2. Compare the quotes you have selected. Are they similar to or different from each other? Why do you think that is? Consider the time when they are written.

Egyptian perspective

Words of Cleopatra herself have survived the passage of time through several decrees.

SOURCE 20.39 Translations of Hellenistic Inscriptions: 5: Decree of Cleopatra, from Heracleopolis, Egypt, 41 BCE, translated by E. R. Bevan

Queen Cleopatra Thea Philopator, and king Ptolemy, who is also Caesar, Theos Philopator Philometor, to the ***strategos*** of the Herakleopolite ***nome***, greeting. Let the subjoined decree, with the present royal letter, be transcribed in Greek and in native letters, and let it be put up publicly in the metropolis and in the principal places of the nome, and let all else be done according to our commands. Farewell. Year 11. Daisios 13, which is Pharmouthi 13 [12 April 41 BC].

To Theon. Whereas those from the City who do agricultural work in the Prosopite and Bubastite nomes have addressed a petition to us in audience on the 15th of Phamenoth [15 March] against the officials of the Ten Nomes, setting forth how these, contrary to our will and to the orders repeatedly sent out in accordance with our decision, by those over the administration [dioikountes], to the effect that no one should demand of them anything above the essential royal dues, essay to act wrongfully and to include them amongst those of whom rural and provincial dues, which concern them not, are exacted, we, being exceedingly indignant and judging it well to issue a general and universal ordinance regarding the whole matter, have decreed that all those from the City, who carry on agricultural work in the country, shall not be subjected, as others are, to demands for stephanoi and epigraphai such as may be made from time to time, and on special occasions, in the nomes, nor shall their goods be distrained for such contributions,

***strategos* (pl. *strategoi*)** an elected role, these 10 generals were elected for one-year terms but could hold the office repeatedly. In addition, during each *prytany* (10 administrative months) the Assembly voted on whether an individual *strategos* should retain the office.

nome an administrative district; comes from the Greek *nomos*, meaning 'district'; the borders of *nomes* fluctuated but were generally centred upon a town after which the *nome* was often named

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nor shall any new tax be required of them, but when they have once paid the essential dues, in kind or in money, for corn-land and for vine-land, which have regularly in the past been assigned to the royal treasury, they shall not be molested for anything further, on any pretext whatever. Let it be done accordingly, and let this be put up publicly, according to law.

The document, known as Berlin P 25 239, is on display at the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung in Berlin. Given the nature of this particular papyrus, Cleopatra herself would have been the only one who would have had the authority to approve such edicts.

SOURCE 20.40 Papyri – Royal Ordinance, February 23, 33 CE, granting tax exemption to one Publius Canidius, an associate of Mark Antony's who would command his land army during the Battle of Actium

We have granted to Publius Canidius and his heirs the annual exportation of 10,000 **artabs** of wheat and the annual importation of 5,000 Coan **amphras** of wine without anyone exacting anything in taxes from him or any other expense whatsoever. We have also granted tax exemption on all the land he owns in Egypt on the understanding that he shall not pay any taxes, either to the state account or to the account of me and my children, in any way in perpetuity. We have also granted that his tenants are exempt from personal liabilities and from taxes without anyone exacting anything from them, not even contributing to the occasional assessments in the nomes or paying for expenses for soldiers or officers. We have also granted that the animals used for ploughing and sowing as well as the beasts of burden and the ships used for the transportation (down the Nile) of the wheat are likewise exempt from 'personal' liabilities and from taxes and cannot be commandeered. Let it be written to those to whom it may concern, so that knowing it they can act accordingly.

Make it happen.

artabs a unit of measurement
amphra ancient clay jars with a large oval body, narrow cylindrical neck, and two handles

This inscription probably belongs to the reign of Cleopatra VII, in which case the date is March 46 BCE. At that time, Cleopatra was still in Egypt; but in the summer of 46 BCE, she went to join Julius Caesar in Rome. The single Greek word γινέσθω in part C is the same word used when Cleopatra granted privileges to P. Canidius in 33 BCE.

SOURCE 20.41 Privileges for a Temple of Isis at Ptolemais, 46 BCE, translation adapted from K. J. Rigsby, *Asylia*, no. 226

[A] Theon to the city of Ptolemais, greetings. Subjoined is a copy of the proclamation transmitted to us together with the command in response, so that you may know it and deposit it in your public archives as is fitting. Take care of yourselves, that you be well. Farewell. Year 6, Phamenoth 12.

[B] To Theon. Let the relevant persons be told that the temple of Isis built on behalf of our well-being by Kallimachos the epistrategos to the south of Ptolemais is to be free from taxes and inviolable together with the houses built around it, as far as the wall of the city.

[C] Let it be done. Year 6, Phamenoth 5.

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The *Chronicle* records facts in chronological order. John, the Bishop of Nikiu, a province in Egypt, describes Cleopatra working tirelessly in the interest of her people.

SOURCE 20.42 John, Bishop of Nikiu, *The Chronicle* 67.1–11, c. 690 CE, Greek prose, translated by R. H. Charles

> Cleopatra ... the most illustrious and wise of women ... she was great in herself and in her achievements in courage and strength. There was none of the kings who precede her who wrought such achievements as she ... constructed a canal to the sea, and she brought water from the river Gihon and conducted it into the city ... so that ships could sail thereon, and by this means fish became abundant in the city. And she conducted all these works in vigilant care for the well-being of the city. And before she died, she executed many noble works and created important institutions.

ACTIVITY **20.10**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Select the best quote from each source that reveals the author's opinion about Cleopatra and write it in the table.

Source 20.39	
Source 20.40	
Source 20.41	
Source 20.42	

2. Compare the quotes you have selected. Are they similar to or different from each other? Why do you think that is? Consider the time when they are written.

Arab perspective

SOURCE 20.43 Al-Mas'udi, *Prairies of Gold*, tenth century CE, translated by C. Gomez-Rivas

> Ptolemy [XII Auletes, king of Egypt] was succeeded by his daughter, Cleopatra. Her reign lasted twenty-two years. She was wise, tried her hand at philosophy and was a close companion to wise men. She has works, both bearing her name and ascribed to her, of medicine, and science, known by those versed in medicine.

ACTIVITY **20.11**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

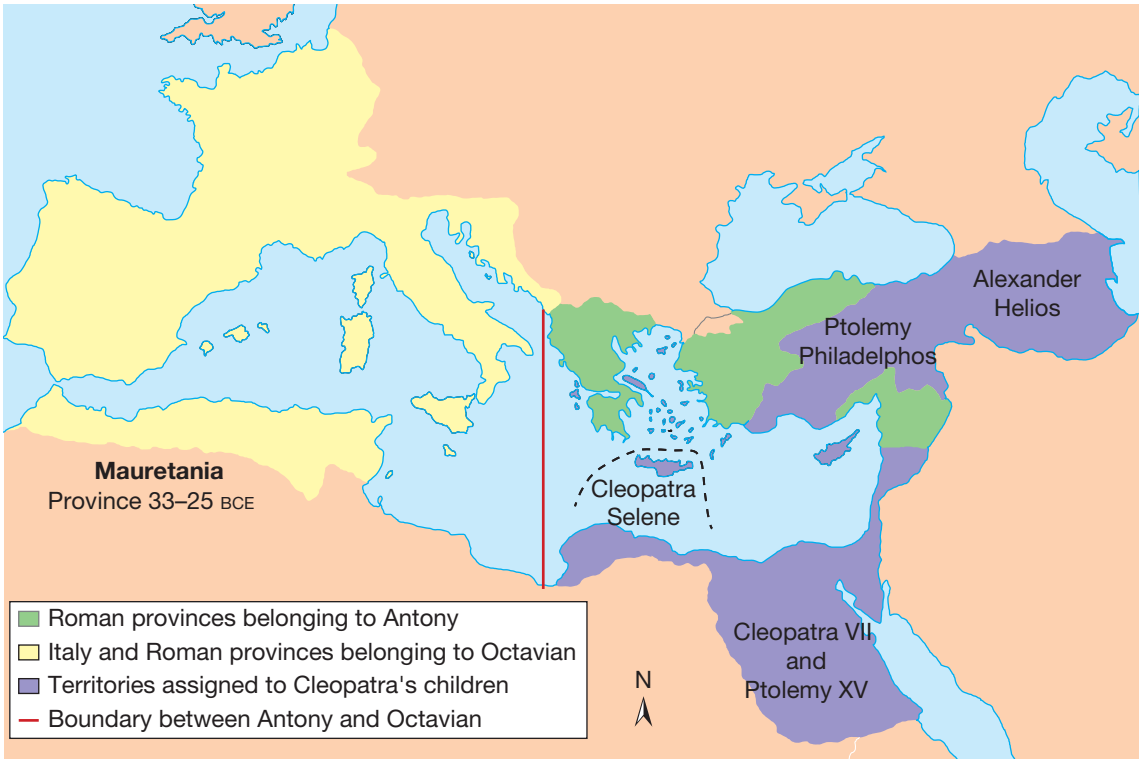
Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Compare Source 20.43 with the quotations you selected earlier. Are they similar to or different from each other? Why do you think that is?

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Archaeological sources

In the Donations of Alexandria (36 and 34 BCE), Cleopatra VII and Mark Antony gave lands and titles to Cleopatra's children, especially Caesarion.



SOURCE 20.44 Map of the Donations of Alexandria

Plutarch wrote:

SOURCE 20.45 Plutarch, *Antony*, 36

> **These gifts particularly annoyed the Romans … the shamefulness of the honours conferred upon Cleopatra gave most offence. And he heightened the scandal by acknowledging his two children by her, and called one Alexander and the other Cleopatra, with the surname for the first of Sun, and for the other of Moon.**

Coins such as the one shown in Source 20.46 were issued during the alliance of Antony and Cleopatra. On the coin, their profile is very similar; however, Cleopatra is shown on the front of the coin to indicate her importance.



SOURCE 20.46 Tetradrachm (coin) portraying Queen Cleopatra VII and Mark Antony, 37–33 BCE, issued by Mark Antony in the Eastern Mediterranean (possibly Antioch, Syria), which was territory given to Cleopatra in the Donations of Alexandria

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The seal gemstone is believed to have been used to indicate the loyalty of an individual to Cleopatra. Cleopatra appears in the style of a Hellenistic Greek queen, with her hair and dress shown in the Greek style. However, the Egyptian royal symbol of the three snakes (or triple uraeus) shows her origin.

Source 20.48 is a portrait from Herculaneum, believed to be of Cleopatra, which survived the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. The diadem on her head indicates royal status.



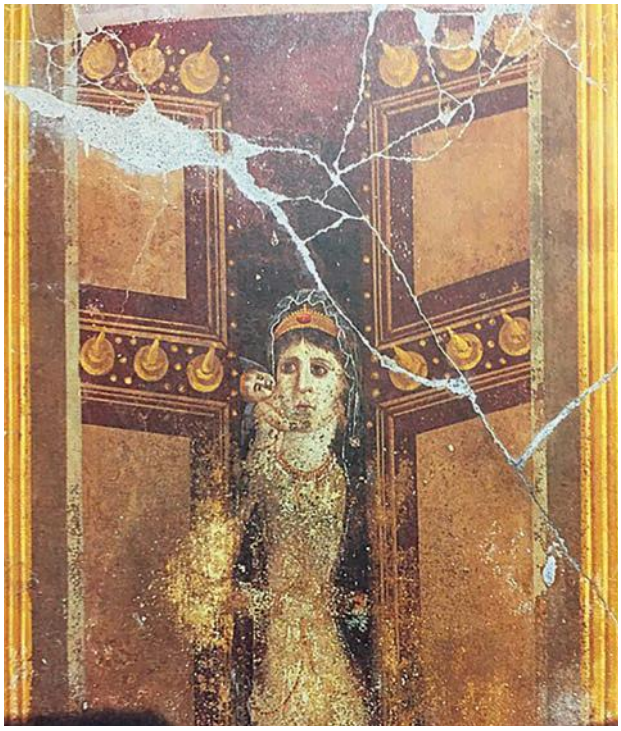


SOURCE 20.47 Blue glass intaglio with a portrait of Cleopatra VII, the seal gemstone, British Museum



SOURCE 20.48 Portrait believed to be Cleopatra VII, first century CE

Susan Walker's reinterpretation of a painting in Pompeii suggests that Cleopatra is being depicted as Venus.



SOURCE 20.49 Venus and Cupid from the House of Marcus Fabius Rufus at Pompeii

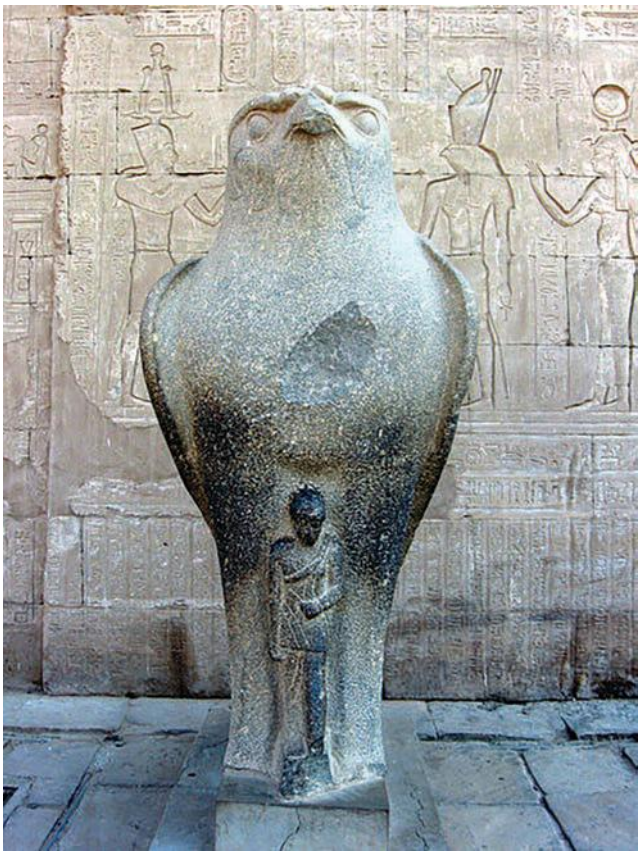
SOURCE 20.50 S. Walker, 'Cleopatra in Pompeii?', *Papers of the British School at Rome*, vol. 76, 2008, pp. 35–46, 345–8

> Early in 2007, while reviewing the context of the two cameo glass plaques found in the large oecus (room 62) of the House of Marcus Fabius Rufus in the Insula Occidentalis at Pompeii, I had the opportunity to examine a wall-painting of considerable interest ... I suggest that the principal figure does not represent the goddess Venus herself, but Cleopatra VII of Egypt as Venus Genetrix. The painting was most likely inspired by the dedication, in September 46 BC, of Caesar's temple to Venus Genetrix in his forum at Rome, where, according to Appian, Caesar dedicated a gilded statue of the Egyptian queen.

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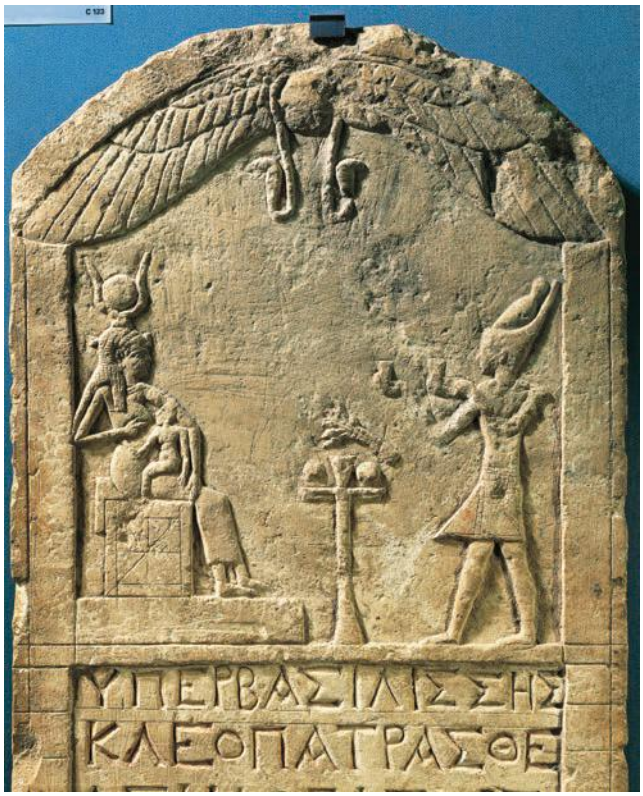
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In front of the falcon god Horus stands a smaller figure. This is a depiction of Cleopatra's son Caesarion (Ptolemy XV).



SOURCE 20.51 Horus and Caesarion at the Temple of Horus in Edfu, Egypt

In this limestone stele, Cleopatra is depicted on the right dressed as a pharaoh presenting offerings to Isis.



SOURCE 20.52 The Stone of Onnophis, 51 BCE. Queen Cleopatra making an offering to the Goddess Isis, the Louvre, Paris

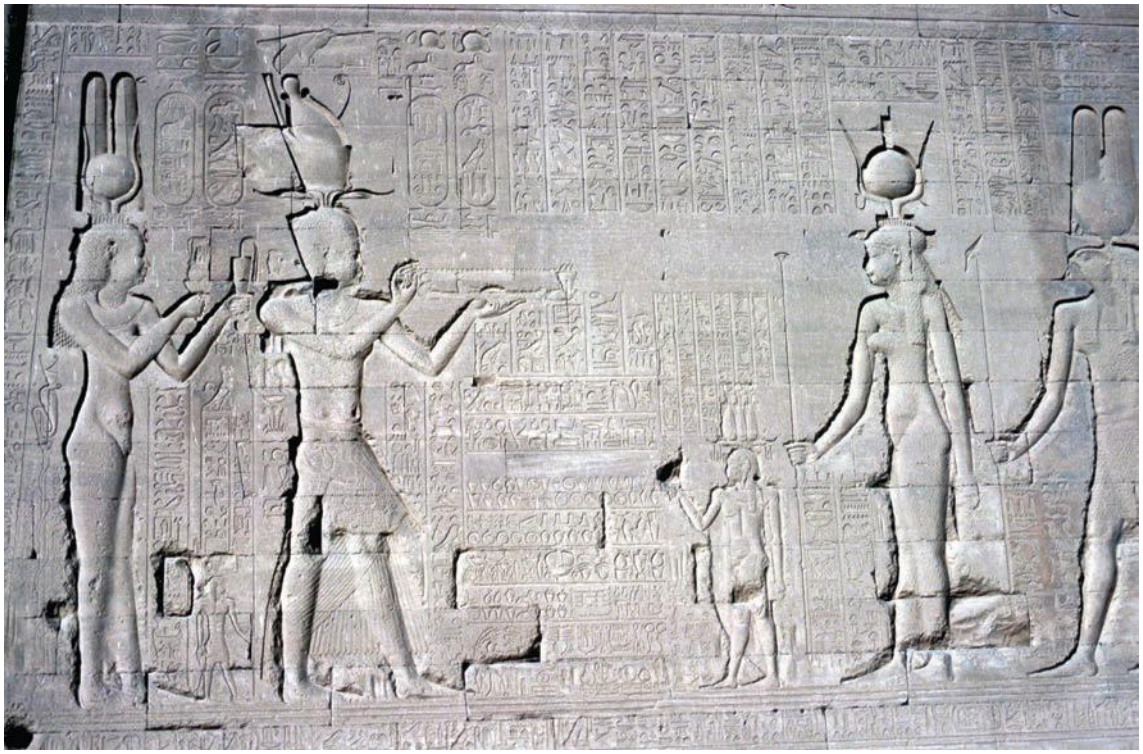
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SOURCE 20.53 Soapstone figurine of Cleopatra in Egyptian dress, first century BCE, the Louvre, Paris

In the western corner of the south wall of the Temple of Hathor in Dendera is a depiction of Cleopatra and Caesarion/Ptolemy XV. In her right hand, Cleopatra holds a musical instrument called a sistrum, and in her left she holds a lotus. Caesarion holds an incense burner, which is being offered to Hathor, in his left hand.



SOURCE 20.54 Depiction of Cleopatra and Caesarion in the Temple of Hathor in Dendera

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This is one of the only two contemporary busts of Cleopatra that have survived, and the only one that is complete. There is still debate on how she actually looked; however, this bust is consistent with what is seen on coins.



SOURCE 20.55 Bust of Cleopatra, c. 40–30 BCE, via Altes Museum Berlin

ACTIVITY **20.12**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

What is the importance of each of these sources with regard to understanding primary source artefacts relating to Cleopatra?

Source 20.45	
Source 20.46	
Source 20.47	
Source 20.48	
Source 20.50	
Source 20.52	
Source 20.53	
Source 20.54	
Source 20.55	

ACTIVITY **20.13**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Perspectives are applied broadly to a) include the positions from which people view or interpret events, developments and issues 2) explain why people and groups at certain times have particular points of view. Perspectives are held by people and groups living during or after a historical event. They are shaped by a range of factors, such as people's beliefs, values, culture, gender, age and experiences. When different perspectives are required, these distinctions must be clearly shown.

(Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

With this in mind, write an IA3 type essay, fully referenced, with introduction, 3–5 body paragraphs, and conclusion, on the following question: 'To what extent are opinions about Cleopatra from writers in the Ancient and early Medieval world similar or different, and how do you account for both similarities and differences?'

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CONCLUDING STUDY

20.5 Depictions and judgements of Cleopatra and her legacy

As seen in the previous section, Roman sources are critical of Cleopatra, representing her as a manipulative, debauched seductress. History is written by the victors, so Augustine propaganda vilifies her. The Greco-Egyptian perspective holds her in high esteem. Statues were still being maintained and cared for in remembrance of her up until the fourth century CE. The Roman opinion has held sway for centuries. In a way, it still dominates in popular culture but, in academic circles, consensus reigns in admiring her positive attributes and achievements; for her vision, rather than ambition; for her intelligence, rather than beauty; for being independent of, rather than a puppet of, Rome.

ACTIVITY 20.14

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Explicit meaning: something very clear and obvious. The key message of the source.
Implicit meaning: something that is understood, but not described clearly or directly, and often using implication, assumption and subtlety.
Below is an example of how to analyse explicit and implicit meaning in a source, before you are given a source to analyse.



SOURCE 20.56 Alexandre Cabanel, *Cleopatra testing poisons on condemned prisoners*, 1887

What is the *explicit* message of the source? What features in the source help support that message?
Answer: Wealth, luxury, decadence, peacefulness. Cleopatra – reclining position, semi-naked, clothes and show, fanned by a female companion (also semi-naked), pet cheetah, couch and rug.
What is the *implicit* message of the source? What features in the source relate to that meaning?

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Answer: The opposite/contrast – she watches coldly as a body is being taken away. She is emotionally and physically detached from the spectacle.
Note: Further investigation into a source may lead to a change of, variation to, or greater understanding about your original decisions or opinion. For example, the title of the painting is *Cleopatra Testing Poisons on Condemned Prisoners,* but the context is that she is planning to commit suicide. Plutarch provides this context:

SOURCE 20.57 Plutarch, *Life of Antony*, 71

> Cleopatra was getting together collections of all sorts of deadly poisons, and she tested the painless working of each of them by giving them to prisoners under sentence of death. But when she saw that the speedy poisons enhanced the sharpness of death by the pain they caused, while the milder poisons were not quick, she made trial of venomous animals, watching with her own eyes as they were set upon another. She did this daily, tried them almost all; and she found that the bite of the asp alone induced a sleepy torpor and sinking, where there was no spasm or groan, but a gentle perspiration on the face, while the perceptive faculties were easily relaxed and dimmed, and resisted all attempts to rouse and restore them, as is the case with those who are soundly asleep.

However, does this new information really change the correctness of the original answers? Your turn now:



SOURCE 20.58 A scene from the film *Cleopatra*, 1963. Cleopatra, played by Elizabeth Taylor, arrives in Rome on a giant sphinx drawn by slaves.

1. What is the explicit message of Source 20.58? What features in the source help support that message?
2. What is the implicit message of Source 20.58? What features in the source relate to that meaning?

Stacy Schiff, Pulitzer Prize-winner, is the author of several bestselling biographies and historical works. Her book *Cleopatra: A Life* appeared on most year-end best books lists, including the *New York Times*' Top Ten Books of 2010.

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Susan Walker is a specialist in the study of Roman art. She has held positions at the British and Ashmolean Museums (London and Oxford respectively) and at British School at Rome.

SOURCE 20.59 S. Walker, 'Cleopatra: From history to myth', *History Today*, vol. 51. issue 4, April 2001, commenting on a major exhibition on her life at the British Museum

Cleopatra ... 'the most illustrious and wise of women', an unexpected endorsement from John, Bishop of Nikiu in Upper Egypt in the 7th century AD. In a similar vein, the Arab historian Al-Masúdí, writing three centuries later, describes Cleopatra as 'the last of the wise ones of Greece.' How have we come to see Cleopatra as the embodiment of unfettered passion and intrigue, even in death clasping the asp in ardent embrace?

In contrast, the bishop and the historian were writing from the perspective of Egypt, whose inhabitants had a much higher regard for the last of the Ptolemaic monarchs. Here Cleopatra was long remembered as a great ruler of divine status, and we hear of an image of her being reverently gilded as late as AD 373, when the empire was nominally Christian. We are also informed by Plutarch, at the close of his Life of Antony, that a certain Archibios, a high-ranking confidant of the queen, bribed Octavian with 2,000 talents (sufficient funds to maintain his army for a year) to save the statues of Cleopatra in Egypt. Indeed, the Egyptian-style images of the queen displayed in the exhibition may be some of the survivors of Archibios's brave intervention. Already dependent on Rome for endorsement of their power, by Cleopatra's day the Ptolemaic monarchs had lost their empire, which had once encompassed much of the lands surrounding the eastern Mediterranean. Cleopatra followed her predecessors in securing her hold on the Egyptian population by winning the allegiance of the priests, completing and initiating temple-building projects and observing, even rescuing, religious festivals. Cleopatra's position within this system was boosted in 34 BC by an event known as the Donations of Alexandria, in which Cleopatra's children by Antony were given Armenia and overlordship of the territories to the south-east, overlordship of Asia Minor, and control of Cyrenaica. Cleopatra herself would continue to rule Egypt with Caesarion, the pair respectively titled 'Queen of Kings' and 'King of Kings'. Though still dependent on Rome in the shape of Antony, Cleopatra had recovered much of her ancestral empire. No wonder she was well remembered in Egypt, and her style of government with Antony – a socially if not fiscally relaxed regime much given to feasting and festivity – increased her popularity.

The two consuls of 31 BC, Sosius and Ahenobarbus, fought on Antony's side, and there is some evidence to suggest greater support for and interest in Cleopatra than we have been led to believe. As Caesar's guest, she stayed in Rome for two years from 46 until his assassination in 44 BC. With her was the infant Caesarion, her co-ruler and younger brother Ptolemy XIV and a substantial retinue, whose high-handedness offended the republican Cicero. Egyptian art and culture, long admired in the Greek cities of the Bay of Naples but regarded with some suspicion at Rome, became the rage. Cleopatra's influence on Rome has been underrated, and the exhibition seeks to redress the balance.

Cleopatra was the first of the Ptolemies to learn Egyptian.

ACTIVITY **20.15**



Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

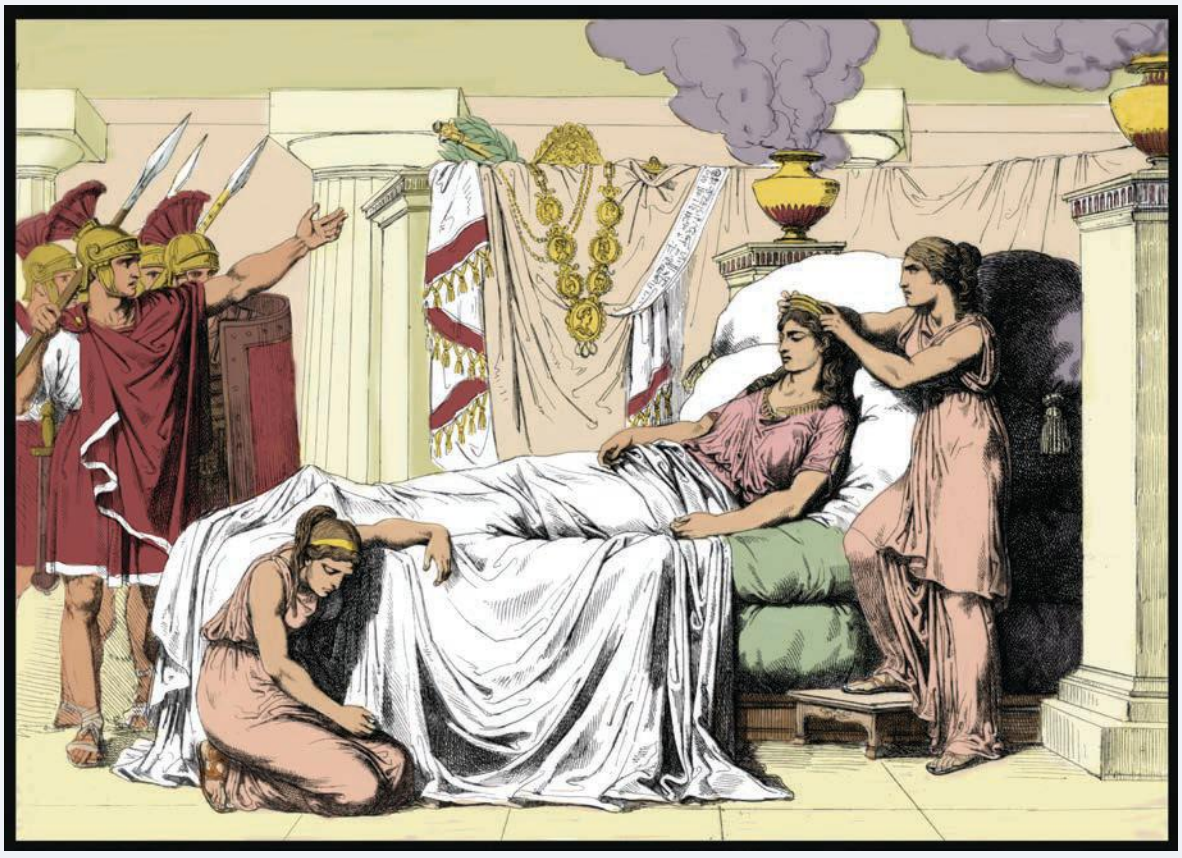
Use Source 20.59 and the following Stacy Schiff article, https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/10977, to justify the statement: 'Had Cleopatra been a man, she would be remembered as a hero, not a villain'.

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Egypt flourished as a Hellenistic culture during the Ptolemaic period, which lasted from 332 BCE until 30 BCE.
- Rome was attracted to Egypt's resource supply and highly prized trade routes.
- Cleopatra VII was the last ruler of the Ptolemaic dynasty.
- The few primary sources surviving from Cleopatra's reign suggest she was engaged not only with foreign dealings, but also the day-to-day governance of her realm.
- Julius Caesar championed Cleopatra's monarchic rule and together they had a son, Caesarion.
- Cleopatra was largely despised by the Romans given their patriarchal views and aversion to 'Eastern' attributes.
- The marriage of Cleopatra and her second lover, Mark Antony, incited a civil war in Rome.
- Most Roman sources depict Cleopatra as a manipulative, debauched seductress, which still dominates in popular culture.
- In academic circles, Cleopatra is recognised for her vision, intelligence, political strategy and independence.



SOURCE 20.60 Bartolomeo Pinelli, *Death of Cleopatra*, c. 1823

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND

1. How did Cleopatra change the role of queen during her time in power?
2. What key issues arise when comparing the key written sources of this period and the nature of this evidence?

DEVISE

How was Cleopatra historically constructed in terms of her gender? Are these representations accurate or the product of the propaganda of the day?

ANALYSE

Identify contentious interpretations of Cleopatra in ancient source evidence. Present an argument for one particular interpretation of this evidence.

EVALUATE

1. How is Cleopatra perceived in contemporary cultural depictions?
2. Evaluate these perspectives and why she is considered in this fashion.

SYNTHESISE

How have historiographical approaches regarding the legacy of Cleopatra changed over time?

COMMUNICATE

Debate the topic: Cleopatra is ultimately responsible for Egypt becoming a Roman province. Create a case for and a case against the notion.

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions

1. To what extent was Cleopatra more interested in her own self-preservation through her relations with Rome, rather than the betterment of Egypt itself and the security of its own independence and future?
2. What role did Cleopatra meeting Antony at Tarsus have on the future of both Rome and Egypt?

Investigation tasks

1. Ptolemaic rule was a cross-cultural pollinisation [fusion] of the Greco–Macedonian civilisation with that of Egyptian civilisation. Therefore, to what extent was Ptolemaic Egypt more Greek/Macedonian in character than Egyptian? Or, to put it another way, was the nature of Ptolemaic rule more dissimilar from than similar to previous dynasties of Egypt?
2. Was Cleopatra more of a 'Macedonian' Queen of Egypt, than an 'Egyptian' Queen of Egypt? And in answering this, what effect did it have on Cleopatra's handling of Egyptian relations with Rome?

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Chapter 21

JULIUS CAESAR

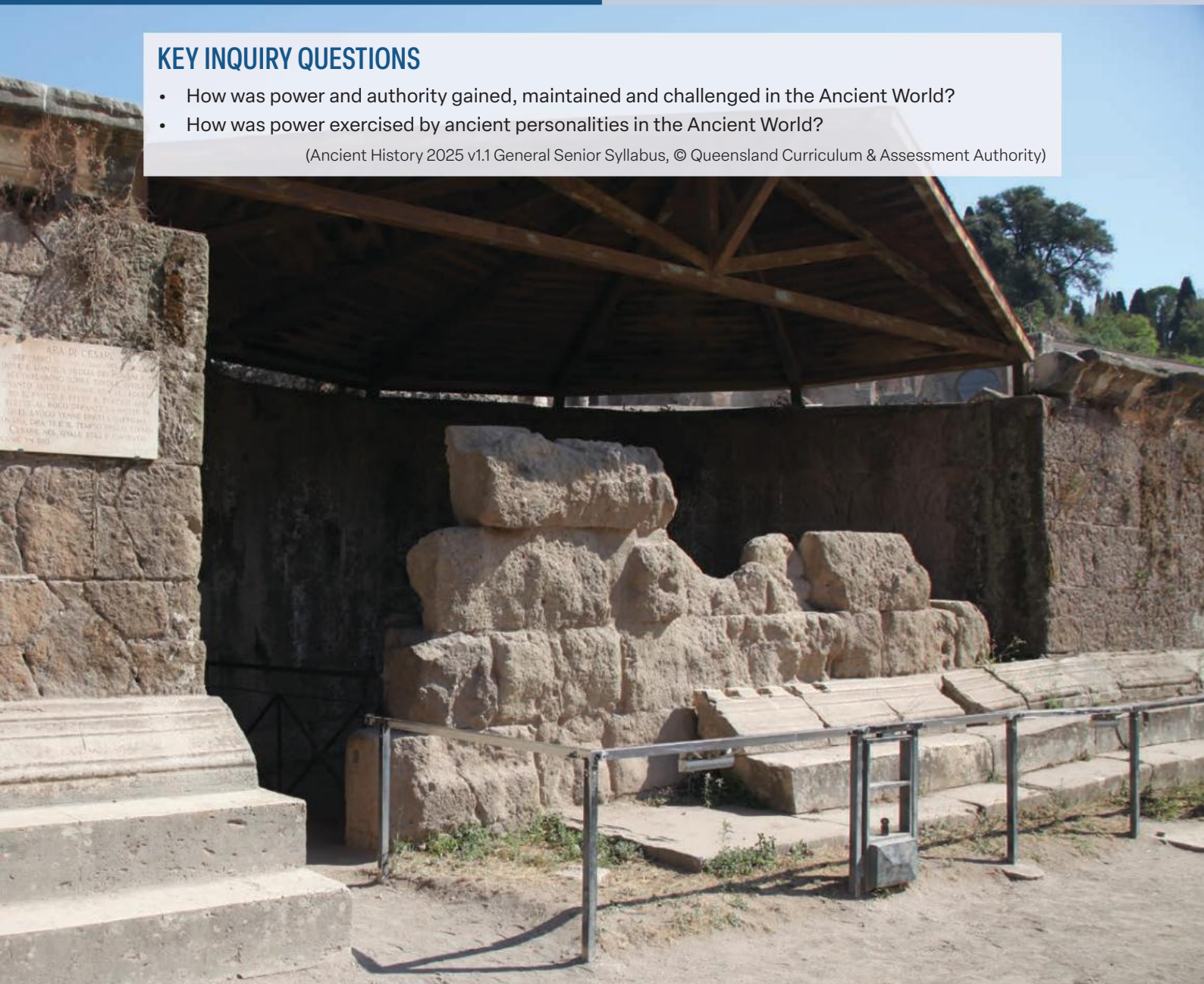
Syllabus reference: Unit 4, Topic 2: Historical personalities

SARAH COLEMAN

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How was power and authority gained, maintained and challenged in the Ancient World?
- How was power exercised by ancient personalities in the Ancient World?

(Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 21.1 Temple of the Divine Julius in the centre of the Roman Forum, constructed on the site of Caesar's cremation in 44 BCE

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FOCUS: THE IMPACT OF CAESAR

Every year, some four million visitors file through the Temple of the Divine Julius in the Forum Romanum, in the heart of Rome. Not far from there is the Largo Argentina, which holds the remains of Pompey's theatre, the place where Caesar met his maker at the hands of a band of conspirators, in 44 BCE. A question worth asking is why so many people seek out the Temple of Caesar on their Roman holiday? Why does this man of another time and age continue to draw people, not merely to visit, but to leave bunches of flowers in honour of a long dead dictator?

Caesar's long-held influence and significance is not only evidenced by those who visit the temple or the theatre, but in other historical figures who have used the legacy of Caesar to develop their own political ends, most notably Napoleon, Mussolini and even Hitler. The legacy of Caesar is one that he could not possibly have imagined, and so we embark on a journey to discover the life and times, the person, the power, and the authority of Gaius Julius Caesar.



SOURCE 21.2 In 1932 Mussolini marched on Rome, emulating the actions of Caesar some 2000 years prior. It was no coincidence, that upon entering Rome, the fascist leader stopped in front of a statue of Julius Caesar to deliver his speech.

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CONTEXTUAL STUDY

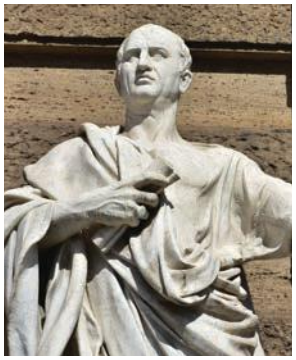
Introduction

In the middle of the second century BCE, the once-stable Roman government entered an extended period of civil disorder and unrest, which virtually destroyed the Republic. Following the wars of expansion, culminating with the defeat of Carthage in the second century, Rome spiralled into moral and social decay. The financial gains from Carthage, in addition to the introduction of slaves, resulted in the development of extremes; on the one hand, senatorial corruption and excessive wealth, and on the other, mass unemployment and social discontent. A series of popular revolutionaries sought to bring rights to the disenfranchised, though their methods often saw them meet an early and grisly demise. This was the case for Gaius Julius Caesar, a man whose legacy continues to divide opinion. Hailed simultaneously as a man seeking to save Rome from itself and an individual bent on personal power, Caesar and his deeds must be considered in the context of the breakdown of republican structures in the first century BCE. The focus of this chapter is the methods used by Caesar to gain power, and the extent to which the less conventional of them were a consequence of the hard-line senators who sought to defend their own positions.

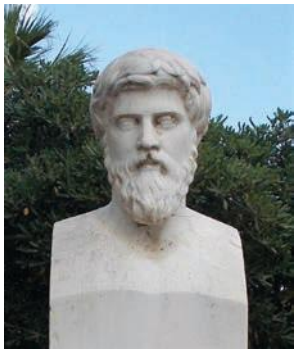
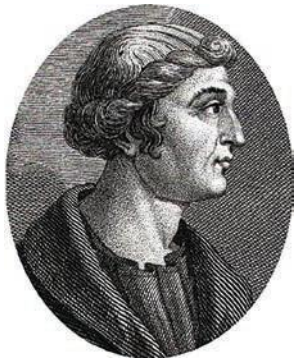


SOURCE 21.3 Adolphe Yvon, *Caesar*, 1875

TABLE 21.1 A list of significant individuals

Cicero 	• Marcus Tullius Cicero served as Roman consul in 63 BCE. • He is considered one of Rome's greatest orators and prose stylists. • A contemporary of Caesar, Pompey and Cato, he died during the proscriptions of Octavian. • He wrote treatises, speeches and philosophical reflections, but is best known for his letters, which he had published. • He left behind close to 800 private letters in which he expressed his honest observations and opinions. • Letters to friends provide a rare, eyewitness insight to the political machinations of the last decades of the *res publica*.

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Suetonius 	• Suetonius was a Roman historian and biographer of the early imperial era, approximately 100 years after Caesar's death. • He wrote a series of biographies on the first 12 Caesars, called *De vita Caesarum* (*Lives of the Caesars*) • He held a series of positions in the imperial services, including controller of the Roman libraries, keeper of the archives, and adviser to the emperor on cultural matters. • He was promoted to secretary of the imperial correspondence (c. 121 CE). • Though prone to salacious detail, he does have access to the imperial archives, which gives a degree of credibility.
Plutarch 	• Plutarch was Greek by birth, but Roman by conviction. • He was a biographer and moralist writing in the second century BCE. • He wrote 'not histories but lives' and compares great Romans with their Greek counterparts. • He emulates the virtues and vices of noble and illustrious men.
Appian 	• Appian of Alexandria was a Greek historian with Roman citizenship under the Flavians in the second century CE. • The Civil Wars, books 13–17 of the *Roman History*, cover the end of the Roman Republic. • Despite the lack of cited sources for his works, these books of the *Roman History* are the only comprehensive description of this period of Roman history, which make them very valuable.
Cassius Dio 	• Cassius Dio was a prominent politician in the third century CE. • He was the author of an 80-volume *History of Rome* that covers approximately 1000 years of history and took him 21 years to complete.

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21.1 When and where did the events of Julius Caesar's life take place?

Roman society at the time of Julius Caesar

When Gaius Julius Caesar was born in 100 BCE, Rome was a republic. The *res publica* or 'public thing' was founded in 509 BCE following the expulsion of the last king of Rome, Tarquinius Superbus, whose son had raped a patrician woman. The founders of the Roman Republic established a democratic government, headed by two consuls whose term of office was restricted to an annual service, and no magistrate was permitted to hold office in consecutive years. Additionally, the *mos maiorum* – the way of the ancestors – developed from this time as a moral code, and within the aristocratic nobility, it underscored their existence. Concepts such as ***virtus***, ***dignitas***, ***gloria***, ***nobilitas*** and ***auctoritas*** underscored the deeds of noble men in the republican era. These concepts are crucial in any study of Caesar, as his actions and reactions are rooted in this ancient aristocratic ethos.

virtus 'acting like a man'
dignitas Roman sense of honour
gloria reputation
nobilitas meaning one was 'well known' or 'noteworthy'
auctoritas social authority, reputation and status; an intangible prestige that was both earned through actions and inherited through social and political connections

Virtus and dignitas

Morality was also a key concept in the Roman Republic, and was connected with prestige and power. The ideal of *virtus* initially referred to military courage, but was later used to refer to people who were 'good men' *(boni)* and did the 'right thing'. *Virtus* consisted of public actions, such as service to the state, rather than personal virtue. The glowing terms in which *boni* would be described to establish *virtus* sometimes verged on the hyperbolic. One example of this is Lucius Cornelius Scipio, whose epitaph read, 'This man Lucius Scipio, as most argue, was the best of all good men at Rome'.

The ideal of *virtus* required a noble to behave with *dignitas*. For example, he was expected to gain wealth in an appropriate manner (inheritance or investment) and use it for honourable purposes.

Gloria

A definition of *gloria* can be found in Cicero's judicial speech defending Publius Sestius (56 BCE): 'praise given to right actions and the reputation for great merits in the service of the Republic which is approved not merely by the testimony of the multitude but by the witness of all the best men'. Sallust – a first-century-CE historian and contemporary of Caesar's successor, Augustus – believed that the memory and knowledge of the great and brave deeds one's ancestors had carried out would drive a person to uphold and continue the glory of the family name. Thus, tombstones often contained a record of the deceased's deeds and actions, for future generations to remember them. For example, that of Lucius Cornelius Scipio records that he 'captured Corsica and Aleria' and that he was '***aedile***, consul and censor'.

aediles magistrates responsible for maintaining public buildings and spaces

Enormous importance was placed on preserving the honour of the family name, and this may explain the possibly exaggerated descriptions of *virtus* found on tombstones.

Nobilitas

The wealthy families who made up the Roman aristocracy were known as *nobilitas*. Interestingly, the *nobilitas* included not only the hereditary patrician families; a plebeian who had achieved the consulship was ennobled, as were his descendants.

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One such 'new man' was Marcus Tullius Cicero, who would observe that a cost of *nobilitas* was the loss of privacy: a distinguished name is open to scrutiny, and so the words and deeds of a member of the nobility cannot be kept secret. While this might be inconvenient for the individual, it had the potential of offering greater transparency in government.

Related to *nobilitas* is the institution of *clientage*, whereby a person could acknowledge their dependence on a member of the *nobilitas*, and in return receive various protections, such as financial aid and legal representation. Scipio Aemilianus, for example, was said to have been the patron of many. *Clientia* added to the prestige of a member of the Senate, and of course patrons often influenced their clients when it came to voting in public assemblies.

Auctoritas

The highest powers of the Roman Republic lay within the hands of approximately 20 families who greatly influenced political legislation, governed outer-lying areas of the Empire and commanded Roman armies.

A young noble would typically serve in the military for a decade, and would be expected to achieve distinction. Throughout this ascent, he would define himself as stalwart and honourable in order to become a candidate to enter the Senate, for it was here that the Roman noble could accomplish *auctoritas*, initiating and implementing public policy and gaining the highest form of regard from his peers. The senator Scipio Aemilianus is an example of someone who combined military and political talents, having been both a general and a skilled orator. The ability to give persuasive speeches was a key element of *auctoritas,* and may even have been more important than good policy in enabling politicians to get ahead.

Scipio Aemilianus said, 'From innocence is born dignity, from dignity honour, from honour the right to command, from the right to command liberty'. These concepts of morality underpinned the system of the Roman Republic.

ACTIVITY **21.1**



Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Complete the following questions/exercises based on the material you have read in this section. You may find it helpful to go back over it, highlighting key ideas, and noting down links to other sources where concepts and ideas are corroborated or contested.

1. Define the terms *gloria, nobilitas, virtus* and *auctoritas*.
2. Explain the importance of these ideals in Republican Rome, especially among the nobility.
3. Identify and justify which of these ideals seem to be the most significant.
4. Explain how these ideals were used by powerful and ambitious men to underscore their careers.
5. Identify the processes that existed in the Republic to curtail the power of those who were particularly ambitious.
6. Define the term *boni*. Explain the implications of such a word.
7. Suggest some possible shortcomings in this moral code.
8. Based on your knowledge of Rome, and of Caesar at this point, what role do you anticipate the concepts of *gloria, nobilitas, virtus* and *auctoritas* will have in your study of Julius Caesar?

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21.2 The early years and rise to prominence of Julius Caesar

The role of Caesar's ancestry

Key to Caesar's rise were his own ancestral connections and the capacity to exploit these for his own benefit. The *Iulii* were one of the original patrician families, but one that had so far left little mark upon history. His father held the consulship in 101 BCE and his mother, Aurelia, was, by all accounts, a formidable woman. The key development in the ancestral history of the *Iulii* occurred in c. 110 BCE when Caesar's aunt Julia married the general Marius (famed for his reforms of the Roman Army in 88 BCE). This moment was to be of immense significance for Julius Caesar.

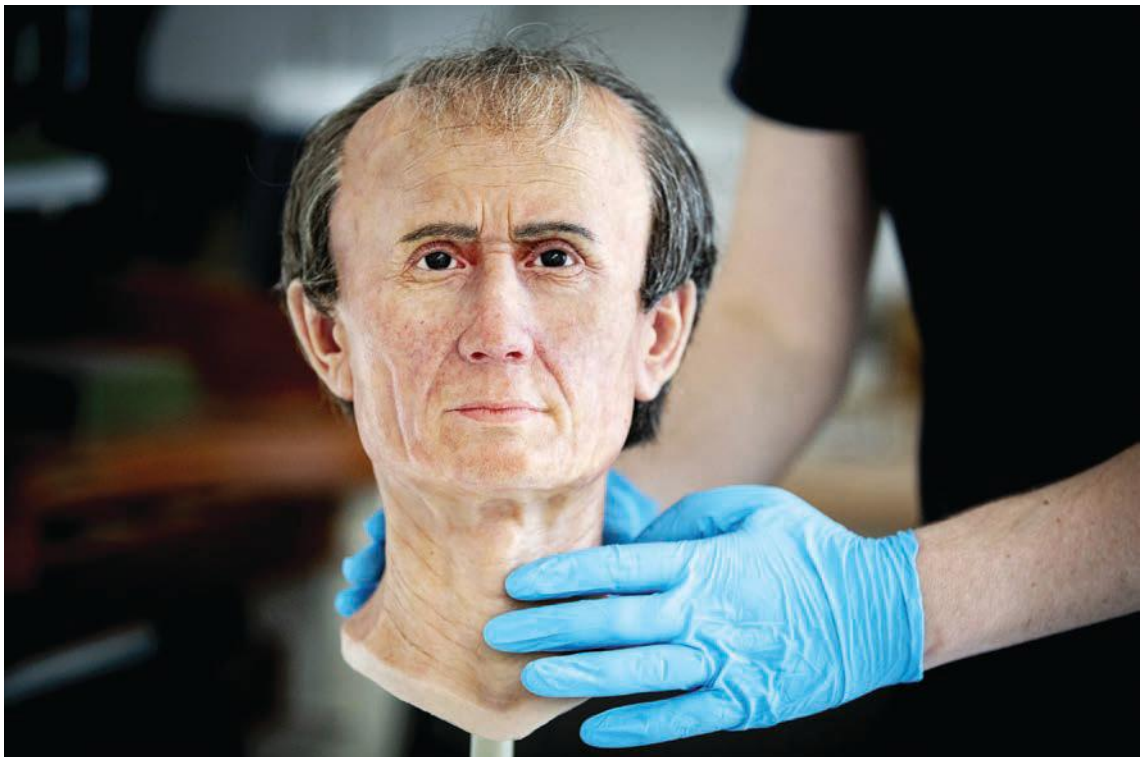
The following sources pertain specifically to the family of Caesar. The modern sources are provided here, and the ancient ones you can look up online. In Activity 21.2, summarise information, annotate key ideas, and note down links to other sources, where concepts and ideas are corroborated or contested.

- Read Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*,1–6; 13.
- Read Plutarch, *Parallel Lives: Julius Caesar*, 1; 6; 7.

Christian Meier is a professor emeritus of ancient history at the University of Munich.

SOURCE 21.4 C. Meier, *Caesar: A biography*, Harper Collins, 1995, pp. 54–5

... they [the *Iulii*] had to compensate for the fact that, unlike many of his peers, he could boast no illustrious republican ancestors ... His mother's relatives were to be of great service to Caesar in his political career ... Caesar's family not only basked in the reflected glory that it acquired through the surprising rise of their relative by marriage [the marriage of Marius and Julia], but seems at some stage to have become quite closely connected with him – a connection that had a decisive influence on Caesar's youth and subsequent career.



SOURCE 21.5 A 2018 3D reconstruction of Caesar from The National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, The Netherlands

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Matthias Gelzer was a twentieth-century classical historian and author of a highly regarded biography of Caesar.

SOURCE 21.6 M. Gelzer, *Caesar: Politician and Statesman*, Harvard University Press, 1985, p. 25

> He was co-opted into the college of pontifices in 73 on the death of his cousin, the consular Gaius Cotta ... We should pay special attention to this co-option. If Caesar was taking the place of Gaius Cotta, it is reasonable to suppose that his mother Aurelia played a part in the business ... it evidently met with no opposition ... The nobility accepted him as one of themselves.

ACTIVITY 21.2



Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Annotate Sources 21.4 and 21.6 and the ancient sources using the table.

Source	Information	Evidence	Links to Republican ideals
Suetonius			
Plutarch			
Meier			
Gelzer			

2. Explain the significance of the Marian connection for Caesar's political future.
3. Describe how Caesar exploited his ancestral connections. What influence do you think this had on his later career?
4. Gaius Marius represented the popular faction, or *populares*, in Roman politics. The other side of this was the *optimates*, led in Marius's time and Caesar's early years by Sulla. Conduct some research, and explain what the terms *populares* and *optimates* mean, and how you think they might be applicable to our study of Caesar.
5. Explain whether the relatives on Caesar's mother's side were valuable to Caesar's early career. Provide evidence for your answer.
6. Hypothesise why Caesar chose to make divine connections in his aunt's funerary speech. What benefit could this have?
7. To what extent do these sources reflect key elements of traditional republican values in Caesar's early years? Be sure to use evidence in your response.
8. Reconsider the elements of the 'ideals of the Roman Republic' as described in Section 21.1 of this chapter. To what extent do the actions and accounts of Caesar detailed here match up with those morals?

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DEPTH STUDY

Introduction

In 59 BCE, three powerful and wealthy men, backed by the army and the people, dominated the political arena of Ancient Rome. It was the year of the consulship of Gaius Julius Caesar and Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus, and arguably the year that mapped the Republic's inevitable downfall. Marcus Porcius Cato wanted to maintain conservative control; the moderates followed Cicero; Caesar had the **mob**, and wielded its power like no one had done before him.



SOURCE 21.7 Cesare Maccari, *Cicero denounces Catiline*, 1889

The collapse of the Roman Republic, and the career of one of its most influential figures in Caesar, is one of the most significant periods, arguably, in world history. It was a hugely complex period in Roman history, but also one of the best documented by the ancient historians themselves. These are the historians who give us these amazing characters to work with; people who bore witness to a great political upheaval of the Ancient World.

mob group who were largely unemployed and used by savvy politicians to gain and exert power and influence

optimate 'good man', a man who deemed himself morally superior to others politically, believed in the defence of the republic, and had very conservative tendencies

populares politicians who believed in the rights of the populace, or who used popular support to gain political power

Rivalries and tensions came to a head in 63 BCE with the Catilinarian Conspiracy. The conspiracy was an attempted political coup, led by Catiline, to oust the consuls Marcus Tullius Cicero and Gaius Antonius Hybrida, and take control. Catiline was a known associate of Caesar. The conspiracy was uncovered (betrayed), Catiline and his fellow conspirators were either executed without trial or later killed in battle. Caesar, praetor-elect, argued against the death sentence in the Senate, and nearly turned the Senate to his way of thinking, until Cato the Younger intervened and spoke for the motion of execution, even accusing Caesar of being complicit in the conspiracy.

The years following the courtroom drama of the Catilinarian Conspiracy were very busy for Caesar, and tensions between the ***optimates*** and the ***populares*** were increasing. There was intrigue and scandal aplenty, and Caesar's name was often mentioned in dispatches, especially those of Cicero to his friend Atticus. Allegations of political bribery were rife, and the wedge between popular and conservative politics grew ever deeper. Cato the Younger was the self-appointed leader of the 'good men' and opposed Caesar with a vehemence that was scarcely believable. Even historians of the late Republic, such as Sallust, recognised that Cato was the antagonist of the situation.

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21.3 Motivation and methods of Julius Caesar

Caesar's early career

The type of leader Caesar would become can be gleaned in his early political career and progression up the ***cursus honorum*** – the Roman ladder of office. Table 21.2 presents an overview of Caesar's political activity prior to 60 BCE.

cursus honorum the ladder of offices that an aspiring politician was expected to climb, which had age limits and set periods between the holding of consecutive offices by one person

TABLE 21.2 An overview of Caesar's political activity prior to 60 BCE

Year	Position/s	Actions
73 BCE	Military tribune	• Legate and tribune in the Roman army and prerequisite to progress in *cursus honorum*
69 BCE	Quaester	• First office of the *cursus honorum* • Served quaestorship in Spain • Granted an early discharge and returned to Rome to enter politics
66 BCE	Curator of the via Appia	• Took out large loans and worked on reconstructing the road • Placed him in early and significant debt • Meant voters travelling to the city could see the work for which he was responsible
65 BCE	*Aedile*	• Continued his accumulation of debt by hosting lavish games and public works
63 BCE	Pontifex Maximus	• Chief priest of the cult of Jupiter • Caesar was accused by Catalus of being involved in the Catilinarian Conspiracy • Caesar spoke at length in the trial as documented by Sallust and Cicero
62 BCE	Praetor	• Sought recall of Pompey from the East to deal with issues at home • Duties disbanded • Clodius Pulcher crashes the female-only festival of the Bona Dea ('good goddess') held at the Caesar's residence as *pontifex maximus*, disguised as a woman. Caesar gave no evidence against Clodius at his trial for sacrilege and Clodius was acquitted after rampant bribery and intimidation.
61 BCE	Pro-Praetorian Governorship in Hispania	• Caesar was in a lot of debt, and needed to assure his creditors (the men he owed money) that he would have the money before he left the city. • Marcus Licinius Crassus was one of Rome's richest men • Crassus paid some of Caesar's debts and acted as guarantor for others
60 BCE	Campaign for the consulship	• Caesar returned to Rome in 60 BCE and the Senate granted him the title of imperator, which meant he was permitted a triumph for his victories. • Also wanted to stand for consul • Triumph meant staying outside the city as a soldier • Senate would not allow him to run for the consulship in absentia • Forwent the triumph and ran for consul

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ACTIVITY **21.3**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

In *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust gave an account of the speeches delivered by Cato and Caesar during the proceedings of the Catilinarian Conspiracy.

1. Find an online translation of Sallust's work and read these two speeches: Caesar's is in chapter 51, and Cato's in chapter 52.
2. Identify important quotations, annotate key ideas, and note down links to other sources where concepts and ideas are corroborated or contested.
3. Identify the arguments regarding the fate of the conspirators put forth in each speech.

	Arguments	Evidence (including quotes)	Possible implications
Caesar			
Cato			

4. Examine the extent to which each case reflects the values of Roman traditionalism.
5. Describe the characteristics attributed to each man. What does this suggest to you about the perspective of the author?
6. Review the profile of Sallust in the *Primary sources* downloadable document. Based on this information, evaluate the reliability and usefulness of this source as evidence for understanding the events – and the role of Caesar in them – that took place between 60 and 49 BCE.
7. Explain the purpose of including speeches in historical narratives.
   a. What is the likelihood speeches like this took place?
   b. Do you think it plausible that these are the exact speeches?
   c. What are the shortcomings of using speeches such as these as historical evidence?
8. Examine Table 21.2 of Caesar's career up to 60 BCE. Identify the strategies used by Caesar to build his authority and power base.

21.4 Relationships in Julius Caesar's life

The Catilinarian Conspiracy very much set the scene for the following years. Cicero fled Rome, fearing retribution for the execution of Catiline, and the role of mob-led violence in the Roman political landscape grew ever more prevalent. Characters such as Clodius – political agitator and leader of street gangs – responsible for both the exile of Cicero and Caesar's divorce from his wife, Pompeiia, dominate the historical narrative, along with Cato, Cicero, Crassus, Pompey, and of course, Caesar. Pompey, Caesar and Crassus were forced together by the ultra-conservative actions of Cato and his supporters.

The forming of the first triumvirate

In 60 BCE, Pompey, Crassus and Caesar had each been snubbed by the Senate. Pompey had not been given land for his soldiers, and his settlement of the East had not been ratified. Crassus was refused a tax refund for his companies in Asia, while Caesar had been refused a triumph and the consulship. Caesar organised a secret alliance with the other two, so each could get what they wanted from the Senate.

The following sources highlight the struggle for power playing out in 60 BCE.

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Sir Ronald Syme was an Oxford University professor and regarded as one of the twentieth century's greatest historians on Ancient Rome. Here he describes how Cato set himself up for failure.

SOURCE 21.8 R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 34

> The great triumph was Cato's, and the greater delusion. The leader of the *optimates* had fought against the consuls and tribunes of Pompeius Magnus, mocked the flaunting victories over effeminate orientals, and scorned alliance with the conqueror of the world ... Cato went too far. The knights who farmed the taxes in the East sought a rebate from the Senate, Cato denounced their rapacity and repelled their demand. Crassus was behind the demands and waited with rancour.

Twentieth-century British historian H. H. Scullard discusses events that led to the triumvirate.

SOURCE 21.9 H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, Methuen, 1979, p. 112

> The demands of Pompey, Caesar, and Crassus [in 60 BCE], were by no means outrageous, and the short-sighted reaction of the die-hard *Optimates* ... under the leadership of men like Metellus Creticus, Lucullus and Cato [who] began to obstruct and quibble over details ... was unrealistic.

This extract is from Gene Callahan's Cardiff University PhD in political science, which was subsequently published. Here he illustrates how the *optimates*' inability to compromise led to the undermining of their authority.

SOURCE 21.10 G. Callahan, *Oakeshott on Rome and America*, Andrews UK Limited, 2012

> an adamantly conservative faction, called the *Optimates*, appeared in the Senate. Consisting of nostalgic traditionalists and led by Cato the Younger, [they] were committed to thwarting all proposed departures from customary political practices, seemingly without regard for whether or not they offered the most promising response to the existing political realities ... the *Optimates* were fighting to preserve a system in which every individual's yearning for political power, including their own, was restrained by respect for principles greater and more lasting than himself, while, on the other hand, they themselves were the most privileged participants in that order- the actual effect of their efforts often was to hasten along the very changes that they desperately sought to prevent ... By frustrating the achievement of the relatively modest goals their three leading foes initially had pursued, the *Optimates*' chosen course prompted the trio to join forces and create an alliance with enough power that they no longer needed to confer with the Senate at all.

Here Tom Stevenson, Associate Professor at the University of Queensland's School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry, emphasises the triumvirs' craving for power.

SOURCE 21.11 T. Stevenson, *Julius Caesar and the Transformation of the Roman Republic*, Routledge, 2016, p. 73

> It seems not to have occurred to their opponents that it might have been unwise to insult Pompey and Crassus at the same time. The *optimates* apparently felt that an alliance between the two men was unlikely. Caesar, however, had worked in Pompey's interest in the past and was close to Crassus ... The three men also approached Cicero ... [who] refused to join the triumvirs. The level of dominance to which they aspired was not to his liking.

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ACTIVITY **21.4**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Annotate the sources above using the table.

Source	Key information	Key quotations
Source 21.8		
Source 21.9		
Source 21.10		
Source 21.11		

2. Explain the difference between the views of modern scholars versus the ancient writers. How would you account for these differences?
3. According to the modern sources, identify who holds the greatest responsibility for the formation of the triumvirate.
4. To what extent is the claim of the modern historians, that Caesar was underestimated, supported in the evidence?
5. In your analysis of both the ancient and modern historians, identify any contested views. Explain why this might be the case.
6. According to the modern historians, what role did traditional Roman values have in the actions taken, especially by the triumvirs? (Hint: It may be an implied suggestion, rather than an explicit reference to the Latin terminology.)
7. Consider the evidence provided thus far in its entirety. Gelzer says that Caesar was 'a born enemy of the *optimates*'. In 3–5 sentences, assess the validity of this statement, with reference to Caesar's ancestral connections and his actions in the period 69–59 BCE.

Consulship and pro-consular governance

Once Caesar had achieved success in the elections for 59 BCE (amid gratuitous bribery), he found himself co-consul (in the aedileship of 65 BCE) with an arch-conservative and former colleague, Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus. Caesar's consulship can at best be described as necessarily farcical, and at worst, grossly corrupt. In keeping with the commitments of the political friendship between Pompey, Crassus and himself, Caesar put forward a land bill that went beyond the promised land for Pompey's soldiers but aimed at desperately needed wide-scale relief to the urban poor, which would have garnered the three men with significant patronage; a fact that was not lost on Cato.

SOURCE 21.12 Appian, *The Civil Wars,* Book II, 2.13

He brought forward new laws to win the favour of the multitude, and caused all of Pompey's acts to be ratified, as he had promised him. The knights, who held the middle place in rank between the Senate and the plebeians, and were extremely powerful in all ways by reason of their wealth, and of the farming of the provincial revenues which they contracted for, and who kept for this purpose multitudes of very trusty servants, had been asking the Senate for a long time to release them from a part of what they owed to the treasury. The Senate regularly shelved the question. As Caesar did not want anything of the Senate then, but was employing the people only, he released the publicans from the third part of their obligations. For this unexpected favour, which was far beyond their deserts, the knights extolled Caesar to the skies.

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> **Thus a more powerful body of defenders than that of the plebeians was added to Caesar's support through one political act. He gave spectacles and combats of wild beasts beyond his means, borrowing money on all sides, and surpassing all former exhibitions in lavish display and splendid gifts, in consequence of which he was appointed governor of both Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul for five years, with the command of four legions.**

Despite Caesar's attempts to assuage his fears, and consistent occupation of the moral high ground, Cato attacked the bill on the grounds of self-interest and promotion on the part of Caesar. Cato spoke at length to ensure that the day ended before any voting could take place, so Caesar took the bill to the popular assembly where, with the help of 'friendly' tribunes and 'supporters' in the form of Pompeian veterans, the bill was ratified. As Tom Stevenson of the University of Queensland notes, 'the use of force should not be underestimated'. The ancient sources refer to this in different ways, depending on their context and perspective, but they agree that Bibulus returned to his house for the remainder of his term to watch the skies for omens, and Caesar essentially ruled as sole consul.

As observed by Scullard:

SOURCE 21.13 H. H. Scullard, *From Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome*, Routledge, 2011, p. 107

> **When by the lex *Vatinia*' in 59 Caesar received the provinces of Cisalpine Gaul and Illyricum, he must have been well satisfied. Cisalpine Gaul provided a fine recruiting ground and it was near enough to Rome to allow him to keep in touch with political events.**

Since the Marian reforms of the early first century BCE, the loyalty of the army had shifted away from the Roman state, and to the generals who rewarded them with booty and land. Caesar was under no illusions as to the power base the military provided him. He had already seen the result of this in the support he received from Marius's veterans, and the continuing loyalty of Pompey's veterans. In Caesar's rise to and establishment of power, the role of the army was paramount, and there was no better arena to exploit this than in the province of Gaul.

While Caesar's activities in Gaul are a topic of great interest and deserve study in their own right, as an example of the sheer strategic brilliance of Caesar and the brutality of the Roman military, this chapter is not the place for that study. Of interest here is the significance of these campaigns for Caesar's power base, namely the soldiers of the Roman army, and the wealth gained through the spoils of war. The next sources describe Julius Caesar as an inspiring and magnanimous leader of his army, who created an indomitable military force.

Suetonius reviews Julius Caesar's achievements as military commander and coloniser of new territories – the equal of which Rome had never seen.

SOURCE 21.14 Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 25

> **He was the first Roman to build a bridge and attack the Germans beyond the Rhine; and he inflicted heavy losses upon them. He invaded the Britons too, a people unknown before, vanquished them, and exacted moneys and hostages.**

SOURCE 21.15 Plutarch, *Parallel Lives: Julius Caesar*, 16

> **His ability to secure the affection of his men and to get the best out of them was remarkable. Soldiers who in other campaigns had not shown themselves to be any better than the average became irresistible and invincible and ready to confront any danger, once it was a question of fighting for Caesar's honour and glory.**

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SOURCE 21.16 Plutarch, *Life of Pompey*, 51

He [Caesar] was making his army into something which he controlled as though it were his own body; these native tribes were not the main point; he was merely using his campaigns against them as a form of training ... with the final aim of creating a force of his own which would be both alarming and invincible.

SOURCE 21.17 Plutarch, *Parallel Lives: Julius Caesar*, 17

It was Caesar himself who inspired and cultivated this spirit, this passion for distinction among his men. He did it in the first place because he made it clear, by the ungrudging way in which he would distribute rewards and honours, that he was not amassing a great fortune from his wars in order to spend it on his personal pleasures or on any life of self-indulgence; instead he was keeping it, as it were, in trust, a fund open to all for the reward of valour, and his own share in all this wealth was no greater than what he bestowed on his soldiers who deserved it. And secondly, he showed that there was no danger which he was not willing to face, no form of hard work from which he excused himself.

SOURCE 21.18 Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 24–26

Presumptuous now with his success, he added, at his own private charge, more legions to those which he had received from the republic; among the former of which was one levied in Transalpine Gaul, and called by a Gallic name, Alauda [meaning 'The Crested Lark'], which he trained and armed in the Roman fashion, and afterwards conferred on it the freedom of the city ... He doubled the pay of the legions in perpetuity; allowing them likewise corn, when it was in plenty, without any restriction; and sometimes distributing to every soldier in his army a slave, and a portion of land.

SOURCE 21.19 M. Gelzer, *Caesar: Politician and Statesman*, Harvard University Press, 1985, p. 167

The wealth which Caesar took from the country in booty, confiscations and war contributions cannot be calculated, but must have been quite enormous. The restoration of his own shattered fortune was the least important factor, but his extravagant generosity towards all who served him knew no bounds. The enthusiastic support of the soldiers for their general rested partly on the splendid rewards with which he recognised the services of his army.

SOURCE 21.20 Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 38

To every foot soldier in his veteran legions, besides the two thousand sesterces paid him in the beginning of the civil war, he gave twenty thousand more, in the shape of prize-money. He likewise allotted them lands, but not in contiguity, that the former owners might not be entirely dispossessed.

SOURCE 21.21 M. Gelzer, *Caesar: Politician and Statesman*, Harvard University Press, 1985, p. 188

To be sure, Caesar's army with its centurions formed a reliable following, the like of which no previous Roman statesman had been able to employ in a political battle. In addition, there were the senior officers who had been taught in his school to render efficient service, as well as members of the equestrian order who served him with absolute loyalty and could be fully relied upon to carry out his political instructions.

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ACTIVITY 21.5

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Use the sources to respond to the following questions.

1. Plutarch was both a moralist and a biographer. Explain how his moral perspective influenced the way in which he documents the life of Caesar. (Support your response by directly using Sources 21.15 to 21.17).
2. According to the evidence, how did Caesar use his position as both general and proconsular governor (the governorship he received after being consul) to build his power base?
3. To what extent do you think Caesar had a long-term plan for his army in the pursuit of personal glory? Or was he simply fulfilling his duty as a member of the Roman nobility, by building its power and influence?
4. Following the conference at Luca, Caesar had his tenure as governor extended for five years. Based on your understanding of both Caesar and Roman politics, explain whether the motive here was for the glory of Rome, or himself. Justify your response.
5. In the long-term, how would military support be helpful for Caesar?



SOURCE 21.22 Lionel Royer, *Vercingetorix throwing down his weapons at the feet of Julius Caesar,* 1899

21.5 Significant events in Julius Caesar's life

How to maintain popularity in Rome while away on campaign

Julius Caesar wrote a firsthand account of his conquests throughout Gaul in a work called *Commentarii de Bello Gallico* (The Gallic Wars). Written as a third-person narrative, he describes the events that took place in the nine years he spent fighting in Gaul.

A *commentarium* is a record of camp notes, a field marshall's personal account of campaigns fought, not a formal or annalistic history, but nonetheless an important source of evidence of deeds and events. It is widely agreed among the historical community that ***commentarii*** were written to be used as information for reputable historians at a later date.

commentarii 'commentaries', field notes and dispatches from the battlefront

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This was recognised by Cicero at the time of Caesar, referring to his *commentarii* as 'raw material to draw on if they [others] wanted to write history' (*To Brutus*, 262). Caesar wrote with the utmost clarity and precision, as was observed by Cicero, who was most certainly no friend of Caesar, when he says the *commentarii* are 'naked, upright and charming, stripped of all stylistic ornament … for there is nothing sweeter in history than pure, shining brevity' (*To Brutus,* 262). One must remember that Caesar was a perfectionist and a grammarian, who was able to choose and manipulate the Latin language as he wished. He chose simplicity in vocabulary and a formal, clear-cut syntax.

The style of Caesar is very effective as a political tool, as the absence of moralising and emotion gives the impression that it is simply a provision of the 'bare facts' and therefore unbiased and true. When considering a historical source, we need to be aware of purpose, bias, reliability and so on. Caesar's work has caused much debate. Was Caesar writing a history for posterity? Or was there more of a political agenda? Read the following two sources and decide for yourself.

SOURCE 21.23 T. R. Kimbrough, *The Contextual Audiences of Caesar's De Bello Gallico,* Chancellor's Honors Program Projects, 2014

Caesar's *De Bello Gallico* was composed during a period in which Caesar's absence due to his proconsular appointment in Gaul lessened his political influence at Rome. *De Bello Gallico,* however, provided him with an avenue through which to maintain and expand his power base at Rome through reports of success. Underneath the general propaganda are targeted reports of speech which both react to contemporary events back in Rome and aim to augment Caesar's standing within Rome. Through discourse both direct and indirect, Caesar crafts rhetorical appeals intended to react to the contemporary political climate in Rome while simultaneously maintaining in the mind of the general populace his worth as a political ally and reinforcing the necessity of his Gallic command in the eyes of both the populus and the Senate.

SOURCE 21.24 B. Thayer, 'Introduction' to *Caesar's Gallic War,* Loeb Classical Library, 1917

The manner in which Caesar's *Commentaries on the Gallic War* were published is … held by some scholars that the first seven books were composed in the winter of 52–51 BC, and published early in 51. Their publication at that season would undoubtedly have been of particular value, as an indication to the Roman people of Caesar's pre-eminence in strategy and statesmanship, and as a vindication to the Senate of his campaigns and conquests in defence of the Roman Empire … But it does not necessarily follow that because they were published together they were composed at one time; and, in reading and translating them continuously, I have found myself unable to resist the impression that these books are in effect a popular edition, with introductions, notes, and digressions – in other words, a commentary – of the despatches (epistulae) sent by Caesar to the Senate at the end of each year of operations. There is no need to suppose, and to argue from differences of style in certain passages, that Caesar's Commentaries represent the actual words and reports and despatches received from general and staff officers: but he may well have used these as material for his own despatches, and incorporated passages from them *verbatim* in the Commentaries. The despatches to the Senate were extant when Suetonius wrote his life of Caesar; and the biographer himself says that they were presented in the form of note-books, with pages duly numbered.

Therefore, to understand the events that come to play in 50 BCE, we need to have our eye on events back in Rome, while Caesar was in Gaul. While Caesar was gaining fame and fortune from his Gallic conquests, events in Rome were seriously undermining the first triumvirate.

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The following is a summary of these events:

In 58 BCE, Caesar's nomination for tribune, Clodius, began working in his master's interests by gaining popular support for his master through the corn laws. Clodius also organised gangs, which went around Rome terrorising opponents of the triumvirs – he had Cicero exiled. In 57 BCE Clodius went too far and attacked Pompey's house. Pompey was furious and organised his own gangs to battle Clodius. An ally of Pompey and the *optimate* faction, Titus Annius Milo was a notorious gang leader in the late 50s BCE, using armed slaves, gladiators and hired thugs to oppose Caesar, the *populares*, and their supporters. In 52 BCE, Milo was prosecuted for the murder of Publius Clodius Pulcher and exiled from Rome. Pompey organised the return of Cicero, who, in gratitude, proposed that Pompey be given control of the corn supply. Caesar became increasingly alarmed at the divisions emerging in the triumvirate. He also feared the recall of his candidature for the consulship of 55 BCE.

To realign the triumvirate, Caesar called for a conference at the town of Luca in 56 BCE. At the conference it was decided that Crassus and Pompey were to be elected consuls for 55 BCE. Caesar was given another five years in Gaul.

SOURCE 21.25 *The Civil Wars,* Appian, Book II, 2.17–18

All things were now possible to Caesar by reason of his large army, his great riches, and his readiness to oblige everybody. Pompey and Crassus, his partners in the triumvirate, came also. In their conference it was decided that Pompey and Crassus should be elected consuls again and that Caesar's governorship over his provinces should be extended for five years more ... Accordingly, Pompey and Crassus were chosen consuls and Caesar's governorship was extended for five years according to the agreement.

The beginning of the end

All was going splendidly until Julia (Caesar's daughter and Pompey's wife) died in 54 BCE, thus ending the marriage alliance, while Crassus was killed in a Parthian campaign in 53 BCE. Political instability increased as disorder broke out in Rome. In 54 BCE, mob violence between the supporters of Pompey and Caesar increased, putting great stress on the relationship of the remaining triumvirs. In 52 BCE, Clodius was killed by Milo (Pompey's man). The machinations of Cato and the *optimates* to lure Pompey away from Caesar were in full flight and ultimately successful. The Senate appointed Pompey as sole consul to deal with the disorder. Pompey now had three commands: governorship of Spain, corn supply and sole consulship of Rome. Pompey turned towards the *optimates* and passed a law for a five-year interval between magistracy and pro-magistracy (a clear attack on Caesar's proconsular governance in Gaul). Caesar proposed a joint disarmament. Pompey refused and recalled Caesar early.

ACTIVITY 21.6

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

In a detailed historical paragraph, evaluate the nature and interpretations of Caesar's power and authority when:

a. he was consul

b. when he was governor of Gaul.

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The following outlines the chain of events from 49 BCE.

Lay down your arms

With his governorship of Gaul ending on 1 March, Caesar was going to be exposed to the courts of Rome, and sought to avoid this at all costs. Caesar was not on his own, however, in terms of breaching conditions of his governorship, and Pompey likewise still held an army. Caesar would stand for nothing less than joint disarmament.

Appian was a second-century-CE Greek historian with Roman citizenship, also known as Appian of Alexandria. His *Roman History* covers nine centuries in 24 volumes. Here he describes how Caesar's adversaries, while desiring to get rid of him, were cautious of any potential repercussions that could strengthen Pompey's position or jeopardise their own.

SOURCE 21.26 Appian, *Bellum Civile*, 2:27

> **Claudius proposed the sending of successors to take command of Caesar's provinces, as his term was now expiring. Paulus was silent. Curio, who was thought to differ from both, seconded the motion of Claudius, but added that Pompey ought to resign his provinces and army just like Caesar, for in this way he said the commonwealth would be made free and be relieved from fear in all directions. Many opposed this as unjust, because Pompey's term had not yet expired. Then Curio came out more openly and harshly against sending successors to Caesar unless Pompey also should lay down his command; for since they were both suspicious of each other, he contended that there could be no lasting peace to the commonwealth unless they should all be reduced to the character of private citizens.**

Marcus Caelius Rufus, an orator and politician who sided with Julius Caesar, is known for his exchange of letters with Cicero, 17 of which remain. Here he relates the turmoil in the Senate, exacerbated by Pompey's need to protect his own position.

SOURCE 21.27 Marcus Caelius Rufus, letter to Cicero

> **As for politics, every controversy centres on one point – the provinces. In this matter Pompey as yet seems to have thrown all his weight on the side of the senate's wish that Caesar should leave his province on the 13th of November, when it was held, or whether it was held at all, and he would be influenced by the convenience of public business. Curio is resolved to submit to anything rather than allow this: he has given up all his other proposals. Our people, whom you know so well, do not venture to push matters to extremes. The situation turns entirely on this: Pompey, professing not to be attacking Caesar, but to be making an arrangement which he considers fair to him, says that Curio is deliberately seeking pretexts for strife. However, he is strongly against, and evidently alarmed at, the idea of Caesar becoming consul-designate before handing over his army and province. He is being attacked with some violence, and his whole second consulship is being roughly criticised by Curio. Mark my words – if they push their suppression of Curio to extremes, Caesar will interpose in favour of the vetoing tribune; if, as it seems they will do, they shrink from this, Caesar will stay in his province as long as he chooses.**

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In this extract Syme outlines the seeming stalemate between Caesar and the Senate.

SOURCE 21.28 R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 48

> His [Caesar's] enemies appear to have triumphed. They had driven a wedge between the two dynasts, winning over to their side the power and prestige of Pompeius. They would be able to deal with Pompeius later. It might not come to open war; and Pompeius was still in their control as long as he was not at the head of an army in the field. Upon Caesar they had thrust the decision of civil war or political extinction. But Caesar refused to join the long line of Pompeius's victims, to be superseded ... to be discarded and disgraced. If he gave way now it was the end. Returning to Rome a private citizen, Caesar would at once be prosecuted by his enemies for extortion or treason ... Cato was waiting for him, rancorous and incorruptible.

SOURCE 21.29 Cicero, letter to Atticus

> Do we admit Caesar's candidacy while he has his army, either through the Senate or through the tribunes of the plebs obtaining that concession? Or are we to persuade Caesar to give up his province and his armies, and thus become consul? Or if that is not persuasive to him, do we hold the election without his candidacy – he enduring it, and so retaining his province? Or, if by means of the tribunes of the plebs he does not endure it and nevertheless remains peaceful, is the matter to be brought to a state of affairs where there are no consuls? Or, if for that reason (because his candidacy is not upheld) he brings up his army, then by arms are we to contend with him? He moreover, might make a beginning of arms, either immediately, while we are less prepared, or later ... Moreover, once war is undertaken either the city must be held or, if it is abandoned, that man from food and the rest of his resources must be shut off – Which of these evils – of which some one certainly must be undergone – do you think the least? ... Indeed, day and night I am tortured.

SOURCE 21.30 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 41:1–6

> He [Caesar] promised to disband his legions and give up his office if Pompey would also do the same ... No one voted that Pompey should give up his arms, since he had his troops in the suburbs; but all, except one Marcus Caelius and Curio ... voted that Caesar must do so ... Afterward the senators went outside the pomerium to Pompey himself, declared that there was a state of disorder, and delivered to him both the funds and the troops. And they voted that Caesar should surrender his office to his successors and dismiss his legions by a given day, or else be considered an enemy, because acting contrary to the interests of the country [the *senatus consultum ultimum*]

Highly regarded as an orator and author, Julius Caesar wrote poems and autobiographical texts, of which only the war commentaries have survived. In this address to his soldiers, he enumerates the injustices committed by his enemies in Rome.

SOURCE 21.31 Julius Caesar, *Bellum Civile*, 1:7

> These things being made known to Caesar, he harangued his soldiers; he reminded them 'of the wrongs done to him at all times by his enemies, and complained that Pompey had been alienated from him and led astray by them through envy and a malicious opposition to his glory, though he had always favored and promoted Pompey's honor and dignity.

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He complained that an innovation had been introduced into the republic, that the intercession of the tribunes … was branded as a crime, and suppressed by force of arms … that Pompey, who pretended to restore what they had lost, had taken away the privileges which they formerly had … he exhorted them to defend from the malice of his enemies the reputation and honor of that general under whose command they had for nine years most successfully supported the state; fought many successful battles, and subdued all Gaul and Germany.' The soldiers of the thirteenth legion, which was present (for in the beginning of the disturbances he had called it out, his other legions not having yet arrived), all cry out that they are ready to defend their general, and the tribunes of the commons, from all injuries.

ACTIVITY **21.7**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Fill out the table below and use it to answer the following questions.

Source	Key information	Key quotations	Evaluation – reliability and usefulness in understanding Caesar's decision to march on Rome
21.26			
21.27			
21.28			
21.29			
21.30			
21.31			

1. Explain Cicero's concerns about Caesar's actions.
2. Caesar's *commentarii* have been considered by some to be propaganda. To what extent do these accounts of his actions suggest a need for justification? Does this by extension suggest that his actions were wrong?
3. Suggest why Caesar chose to write his *commentarii* in third person.
4. According to the sources, what were the demands of:
   a. Caesar?
   b. the Senate?
5. To what extent were the demands of the Senate unreasonable? What were the consequences for Caesar if he complied?
6. Ronald Syme suggested that 'upon Caesar they [the *optimates*] had thrust the decision of civil war or political extinction'. To what extent was Caesar's *dignitas* under threat here? How did he appeal to Roman traditions to garner support?
7. To what extent had Caesar's time in Gaul provided him with the power base to march on Rome?
8. Complete a 5W analysis on Caesar's decision to march on Rome.

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Alea acta est – the die is cast

SOURCE 21.32 Suetonius, *Divi Julius*, 32

> Caesar exclaimed, 'Let us go where the omens of the Gods and the iniquity of our enemies call us. The die is now cast.'

On 7 January 49 BCE, the *senatus consultum ultimum* was invoked. First used against Gaius Gracchus in 121 BCE, and then against Catiline in 63 BCE, it was referred to by Julius Caesar as 'that extreme and final decree of the senate … That the consuls, praetors, tribunes of the people, and proconsuls in the city, should take care that the state received no injury' (*Commentarii de Bello Civili,* 1.5). Pompey was given full powers by the Senate to bring Caesar down. However, he underestimated the capabilities of the younger Caesar, and the value that the latter placed on his *dignitas* and *gloria*.

With this information, Caesar made the decision to enter Rome under arms, crossing the Rubicon, a river in the north of Italy, on 10 January 49 BCE, signalling the beginning of civil war.

Cassius Dio aptly summed up what happened next.

SOURCE 21.33 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 41:1–6

> When Caesar was informed of this … he set out and marched straight upon Rome itself, winning over all the cities on the way without any conflict, since the garrisons either abandoned them, because they were powerless to resist, or preferred his cause. Pompey, perceiving this, became afraid, especially when he learned all his rival's intentions … Pompey, because of what was told him about Caesar and because he had not yet prepared a force sufficient to cope with him, changed his plans.

SOURCE 21.34 Cicero, letter to Atticus

> Pompey never had this notion and least of all in the present cause. Absolute power is what he and Caesar have sought; their aim has not been to secure the happiness and honour of the community. Pompey has not abandoned Rome, because it was impossible to defend, nor Italy on forced compulsion; but it was his idea from the first to plunge the world into war, to stir up barbarous princes, to bring savage tribes into Italy under arms, and to gather a huge army. A sort of Sulla's reign has long been his object, and it is the desire of many of his companions. Or do you think no agreement; no compromise between him and Caesar was possible? Why, it is possible today: but neither of them looks to our happiness. Both want to be kings.

SOURCE 21.35 Cicero, letter to Atticus

> Never in greater danger was our state, never have the wicked citizens had a more prepared leader. Wholly on our side also we are most diligently preparing; this is happening by the authority and zeal of our Pompey, who – too late – begins to fear Caesar.

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Scullard comments on the senators who voted against Caesar.

SOURCE 21.36 H. H. Scullard, *From Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome*, Routledge, 2011, p. 104

It was the small Optimate clique, the twenty-two senators who voted against disarmament that forced the issue. Caesar had been compelled either to resort to force or go to Rome as a private citizen which would lead at least to political extinction and possibly to physical danger ... The hands of none of the leaders were spotless: behind them all gleamed the corrupting influence of power.

Suetonius outlines the actions of Caesar, having crossed into Italy.

SOURCE 21.37 Suetonius, *Divi Julius,* 34

He took possession of Picenum, Umbria, and Etruria; and having obliged Lucius Domitius, who had been tumultuously nominated his successor, and held Corsinium with a garrison, to surrender, and dismissed him, he marched along the coast of the Upper Sea, to Brundusium, to which place the consuls and Pompey were fled with the intention of crossing the sea as soon as possible. After vain attempts, by all the obstacles he could oppose, to prevent their leaving the harbour, he turned his steps towards Rome, where he appealed to the Senate on the present state of public affairs.

SOURCE 21.38 Julius Caesar, *Bellum Civile,* 1.15

Caesar meanwhile leaving Auximum, traversed the whole country of Picenum; where he was joyfully received in all parts by the inhabitants, who furnished his army with everything necessary. Even Cingulum itself, a town founded by Labienus, and built at his own expense, sent deputies to him, with an offer of their submission and services. He demanded a certain number of soldiers, which were sent immediately. Meantime the twelfth legion joined him; and with these two he marched to Asculum, a town of Picenum. Here Lentulus Spinther commanded with ten cohorts; who, hearing of Caesar's approach, quitted the place with his troops, who almost all deserted him upon the march.

SOURCE 21.39 T. Stevenson, *Julius Caesar and the Transformation of the Roman Republic*, Routledge, 2016

Caesar wanted to make it clear that he had no intention of emulating Sulla. There would be no wholesale slaughter, and no confiscations. He would be merciful, rather than cruel ... This policy was wise for many reasons. Caesar needed a peaceful Italy in order to concentrate on his enemies elsewhere. Clementia gave him a significant advantage over the *opitimates*. Caesar's message to the people of Rome and Italy was that if they did not join him, he would not automatically assume they were against him. The optimates had threatened to assume the very opposite. As a result, Italian sentiment inclined steadily toward Caesar.

SOURCE 21.40 Plutarch, *Life of Pompey*, 60–2

Word was brought that Caesar ... was marching directly upon Rome with all his forces. But this was false. For he was marching with no more than three hundred horsemen and five thousand men-at-arms; the rest of his forces were beyond the Alps, and he did not wait for them, since he wished to fall upon his enemies suddenly, when they were

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in confusion and did not expect him, rather than to give them time and fight them after they were prepared ... As soon as the report of this came flying to Rome and the city was filled with tumult, consternation, and a fear that was beyond compare, the senate at once went in a body and in all haste to Pompey, and the magistrates came too ... order[ing] Pompey to stamp upon the ground and call up the forces which he used to promise ... Under these circumstances he issued an edict in which he recognized a state of civil war, ordered all the senators to follow him, declared that he would regard as a partisan of Caesar anyone who remained behind, and late in the evening left the city ... A few days after this, Caesar entered and took possession of Rome. He treated everybody with kindness and calmed their fears.

THE FLIGHT OF POMPEY	THE PURSUIT OF CAESAR	DYRACCHIUM	THE MIRACLE OF PHARALUS	DEATH OF POMPEY	THAPSUS
49 BCE	**49 BCE**	**48 BCE**	**48 BCE**	**47 BCE**	**46 BCE**
Pompey flees east via Brundisium (modern-day Brindisi on the Adriatic coast) with a plan to recruit from Pompey's veterans, but leaving Caesar in Italy largely unopposed, although the remaining Senate is hostile.	Caesar does not pursue Pompey immediately, as he knows it will take time for Pompey to organise his legions. Spain was a more pressing concern, and so Caesar heads west to suppress any potential uprising. He returns largely victorious, and is in Rome for 11 days, where he is elected consul for 48 BCE.	Pompey has been joined by Cicero, Cato and many of the *optimates*, and Caesar's detour to Spain has given him nine months to raise approximately 50 000 men and 300 ships. Caesar takes a gamble and sails east in January, doing it in stages, as he has insufficient naval forces to move all his legions at once. His planned element of surprise is quashed, and Caesar's forces are defeated at Dyracchium.	Following Dyracchium, Caesar withdraws to Thessaly, where he meets 15 cohorts of reinforcements. Caesar wants to fight, but Pompey refuses. According to Caesar, Pompey is faced with much internal squabbling, and while Pompey's forces significantly outnumber Caesar's, the latter's tactics, and the ferocity and discipline of his soldiers, mean a Caesarian victory. Pompey escapes.	47 BCE Pompey sails to Egypt, hoping to find a friendly alliance in the young Ptolemy. The Egyptian prince, or perhaps his advisers, recognise where the victory would be, and kill Pompey as he comes ashore at Alexandria. Upon his arrival, Caesar is presented with Pompey's head, as well as a dynastic struggle to settle. Caesar backs the young Ptolemy's sister, Cleopatra VII, and installs her on the Egyptian throne, before spending significant time in Egypt, fathering a child by Cleopatra.	Following his return to Italy, and resettling of business there, Caesar and his forces cross to Africa to deal with the remnants of the Pompeians, led by Cato and Scipio, who have been given almost a year to prepare, due to Caesar's dalliances in Egypt. The *optimate* faction continues to be arrogant, alienating the native population, and fractious. Caesar moves through Africa, victorious at Ruspina and Uzita, before the final decisive victory at Thapsusc, which is perhaps better described as a massacre. Following the defeat, Cato commits suicide.

SOURCE 21.41 A timeline of key events following Caesar's taking of Rome

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21.6 The death of Julius Caesar

In the civil war period, Caesar was, at various intervals, appointed dictator, starting with a period of 11 days in 49 BCE and culminating with the title '**Dictator** for Life' in 44 BCE. Many historians believe that autocratic power was what he had always desired. An alternative view is put forth by Gelzer, who suggests instead that once Caesar had power, he did not want to relinquish it.

dictator position in the *cursus honorum* held in times of political emergency by decree of the Senate

Professor Tom Stevenson presents two alternatives that could have underpinned Caesar's decisions and reforms in the period 49–44 BCE.

- Caesar had long cherished a desire to achieve autocratic power so that he could supplant the corrupt nobility and establish a new, more just form of the Roman states.
- A chain of separate measures, hardly unprecedented, which in fact imply little structural change to the state, meant that Caesar was only attempting to deal with specific abuses as he saw them.

Suetonius provides a detailed account of the reforms introduced by Julius Caesar in his new role. Read it online: Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 40–44.

ACTIVITY 21.8

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

With reference to Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 40–44, respond to the following:

1. Create a summary of the reforms of Caesar.
   a. What was the reform?
   b. Who benefited from it?
   c. Which interpretation of Caesar's actions does it fit?
2. Conduct some research into Caesar's dictatorial reforms, especially the accounts provided by the likes of Cassius Dio and Plutarch. What are the attitudes towards Caesar that prevail in these accounts? Evaluate the interpretation of Caesar's actions provided by the sources.
3. Assess the extent to which these reforms could be seen to create a more 'just' Rome.
4. Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of Suetonius as a source in understanding the dictatorship of Caesar.



SOURCE 21.42 Vincenzo Camuccini, *The death of Julius Caesar*, 1806

The Ides of March

In 44 BCE, the same year as he gained the title 'Dictator for Life', Caesar was brutally assassinated in the Senate by a group of conspirators. It seems the knowledge of the conspiracy was widespread, with some 60 people involved, though led by Brutus and Cassius and a core in the *optimate* faction. There are many reasons for such a conspiracy to develop, some of which are outlined in the following pages.

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In this extract, Scullard examines the issues around and the motives for Caesar's assassination.

SOURCE 21.43 H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, Methuen, 1979, pp. 156–7

Whatever his future plans may have been, his present power and conduct were sufficient to bring about his death. Many nobles were not reconciled to the overshadowing of their traditional powers in the Senate and resented his autocratic behaviour. They will have disliked the oath by which the Senate bound itself to protect his life, while his dismissal of his personal bodyguard of Spanish horsemen enabled them to break it with greater ease. They naturally took offence at any lack of courtesy on his part, as when he failed to stand up to greet members of the Senate who went in a body to inform him of a grant of honours: he will have appeared to some as a patron receiving his clients … his earlier geniality and humanity were overshadowed at times by bitterness and overbearing conduct (superbia). Whether this change was superficial or was due to more deep-seated causes, arising from the corrupting influence of power, it was sufficient to emphasise his despotism and provoke his assassination. His enemies tried to undermine his popularity by spreading wild rumours of his alleged intentions and then turned to more drastic action.

A conspiracy was formed and since many of the conspirators were men who had served Caesar faithfully and could expect further support from him, it must be assumed that their motives were not mean or petty. They regarded him as a tyrant and tyrannicide became a duty in the interest of Liberty and the Republic … Despite the fact that there were at least sixty men involved in the conspiracy, the secret was well kept. The leader of the move was C. Cassius Longinus, praetor in 44, who had once described Caesar as his 'old and merciful master'. The figurehead was his colleague and brother-in-law, M. Junius Brutus, who claimed descent from that Brutus who had killed Tarquinius Superbus, the last king of Rome in 510 BCE … Urged on by the prospect of Caesar's departure for the East, the conspirators decided to strike on the Ides (15th) of March … Caesar attended the fatal meeting of the Senate. Unarmed, he was surrounded by a group of conspirators who drew their hidden daggers and stabbed him to death: he fell at the foot of Pompey's statue.

SOURCE 21.44 J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *Julius Caesar and Rome*, Penguin, 1971, p. 167

The leaders of the conspiracy were idealists, men who not only resented … the imperial image of Caesar, but who recognised that, with Caesar alive, autocracy would take a more and more stifling grip on Rome. They believed, in the nobility of their simple hearts, that republicanism could be saved.

Cicero expressed great joy at the events of 15 March, though was eminently disappointed that he was not one of the 60 men privy to the conspiracy. This is evident in his letter to Gaius Trebonius:

SOURCE 21.45 Cicero, *Ad Fam,* 10, 28, To Gaius Trebonius, in Asia, Rome, 2 February 43 BCE

How I could wish that you had invited me to that most glorious banquet on the Ides of March! We should have had no leavings! While, as it is, we are having such a trouble with them, that the magnificent service which you men then did the state leaves room for some grumbling. In fact, for Antony's having been taken out of the way by you – the best of men – and that it was by your kindness that this pest still survives.

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SOURCE 21.46 The Eid Mar, also known as the Ides of March, coin. The silver coin commemorates the assassination of Caesar by Brutus.

SOURCE 21.47 R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution,* Oxford University Press, 2002

> The great triumph was Cato's and the greater delusion.

SOURCE 21.48 H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, Methuen, 1979, p. 113

> By uncompromising refusal to meet the demands of Pompey, Caesar and Crassus the Senate naturally drove them into each other's arms ... Its formation was a turning point in the history of the Free State ... Three men, backed by armed force, by the urban populace and by many of the Equites, imposed their will on the State and destroyed the power of the Senate.

SOURCE 21.49 Cicero, *Letters*, To Tire (at Patrae), Outside Rome, 12 January 49 BCE

> The long and short of it is that Caesar himself—once our friend— has sent the senate a menacing and offensive despatch, and is so insolent as to retain his army and province in spite of the senate ... Never has the state been in greater danger: never have disloyal citizens had a better prepared leader. On the whole, however, preparations are being pushed on with very great activity on our side also. This is being done by the influence and energy of our friend Pompey, who now, when it is too late, begins to fear Caesar.

ACTIVITY **21.9**

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Respond to the following questions in the form of an essay.

1. To what extent can Cato be held responsible for the deterioration of the Republic in the period 60–49 BCE, culminating in the civil war?
2. Assess the validity of the statement in Source 21.48 by examining the role of the Senate in the formation of the first triumvirate.
3. To what extent was the friendship that existed between Pompey and Caesar in the 60s and 50s BCE a significant factor in the outbreak of civil war in 49 BCE?

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CONCLUDING STUDY

21.7 Julius Caesar's long-term impact and legacy

Julius Caesar is as polarising as historical figures come. Though from a patrician background, he very much relied on building his own influence and power base – very successfully – allowing him to reach the consulship, and to make his mark on Roman and world history. He has been depicted in film, literature, television, art and poetry, and has been a source of inspiration for many a monarch and dictator since. His death marked the death of the *res publica* and made way for the rise of one-man rule in the form of his nephew, Octavian.



SOURCE 21.50 Ciaron Hinds as Caesar in HBO's production, *Rome*

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- By any standards, Caesar was exceptionally successful and had an enormous impact on his time, despite his assassination.
- Caesar has been emulated by various personalities throughout history, including Napoleon and Mussolini.
- Significant debate exists as to his intentions throughout his career.
- Caesar was a polarising figure in his time, and this is reflected in the ancient sources. He is equally polarising in a modern context.
- Early on in his career, Caesar used ancestral connections to garner support.
- Caesar understood and used popular support bases for gaining power, especially that of the army and urban mob.
- His capacity to bring together Pompey and Cato in the first triumvirate suggests a superbly charismatic and forward-thinking individual.
- The Gallic Campaigns were a very successful means of gaining wealth and support.
- Caesar was underestimated by Pompey and Cato, to their own detriment.
- Caesar's assassination created a power vacuum that facilitated the emergence of his adopted son, Octavian, and subsequently the rise of imperial rule in Rome.



SOURCE 21.51 Julius Caesar refusing the imperial crown offered him by Antony, a woodcut by Tadema

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CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
Outline Caesar's rise to prominence in the period 88–62 BCE.

DEVISE
Create three historical questions to focus your study of Caesar and his power.

ANALYSE
Explain the nature and limitations of the historical record in a study of Julius Caesar.

EVALUATE
Assess the value of Caesar's *commentarii* as a historical source.

SYNTHESISE
Based on the evidence and your historical knowledge, write a paragraph evaluating the significance of the first triumvirate.

COMMUNICATE
Create a visual representation of Caesar's power, including the means he used to gain it and then maintain it.

ASSESSMENT
Extended-response questions
1. Sulla is alleged to have said, 'There are many Mariuses in this Caesar' (Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 2). To what extent was he correct?
2. Assess the significance of the army in Caesar's rise to power.
3. To what extent does the evidence suggest that Caesar's ambition was sole power?

Investigation tasks
1. Conduct some research into Caesar's role in the Catilinarian Conspiracy. Examine how this supported his ambition.
2. Examine the Marian reforms in the early first century BCE. How did Marius pave the way for men like Caesar and Pompey to gain power?
3. Compare the careers of Pompey, Caesar and Cicero.

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GLOSSARY

18th Dynasty the 18th Dynasty of Egypt is classified as the first dynasty of the Ancient Egyptian New Kingdom period

absolute dating refers to scientific techniques that can calculate the age, in years, of different artefacts or sites

Abu Simbel area in Nubia where Rameses II completed a temple in Year 34 to commemorate victory at the Battle of Kadesh

Achaemenid Empire ruled by the Persian dynasty of kings from Cyrus the Great to Darius III (550–331 BCE)

acropolis a Greek city's strong vantage point, citadel

adobe compacted clay that was dried in the sun and used as building material

aediles magistrates responsible for maintaining public buildings and spaces

agoge 'a raising/upbringing', Spartan education

agriculture the practice of farming, including the growing of crops and the use of animals to provide food, wool and other products

akh fully resurrected form of the deceased person in the afterlife, similar to the modern concept of ghosts

Akhenaten a pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty whose reign brought in significant, but short-lived changes, including the introduction of a new chief god, the Aten, and the shifting of the capital to a location called Akhetaten

Amarna Akhenaten's new capital city, which was also called Akhetaten (meaning 'horizon of the Aten')

Amarna Letters small clay tablets covered in cuneiform writing, which were discovered in the ruins of Amarna; these tablets were official letters that were sent by rulers in Canaan and Syria to the Amarna period pharaohs

Amarna period the period when Akhenaten and his successors moved the capital city of Egypt to the new location of Amarna, c. 1350–1330 BCE

Amduat New Kingdom funerary text, translates to *Book of What is in the Underworld*

amphitheatre an oval-shaped building providing seating; entertainment venue

amphra ancient clay jars with a large oval body, narrow cylindrical neck, and two handles

Amun-Re one of the most worshipped gods of the New Kingdom era; composite of two gods, Amun and Re

Amurru the region around Kadesh

anarchy a society in which there is no government, order or control

ancient source written or non-written source created from the earliest human communities until the end of the Middle Ages, used to investigate the past

anteroom a small space that leads onto a larger, or main, space

anthropogenic originating via human activity

antiquarian someone who studies or collects things from the past but does not engage with the systematic and scientific practices of modern archaeology

aquaculture breeding, reading and harvesting of organisms, like fish, in water environments

archaeobotanical an archaeological sub-discipline that is the study of ancient plant remains

archaeologist a person who studies the physical aspects of the human past, including landscapes, archaeological sites and artefacts

archaeology the study of the human past through the excavation of sites and the analysis of physical remains

archaic period sometimes considered the earliest phases of a culture; for Greece, the archaic period is considered to be from about 650 to 480 BCE

archon chief magistrate in a *polis*

Areopagus a council that originally advised the kings; members of the *Areopagus* served for life; its power was reduced after Ephialtes's reforms in 462/1 BCE and it became the court presiding over cases of homicide and other serious crimes

arête meaning 'excellence of any kind'

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Argead Dynasty Ancient Macedonian royal house whose origins trace back to Argos in the Peloponnese, 700–310 BCE

Argolid coming from the Greek region of Argolis or Argolida

aristocracy power is held by the aristocrats or nobles (a small, privileged ruling class)

armistice a temporary agreement to cease fighting

Arsinoeia the most important ancient metropolis of Ionian Asia Minor

arson burning property on purpose

artabs a unit of measurement

artefact an object made by a human, typically of cultural, social and historical importance

ascribed status financial position and cultural privilege that is inherited by an individual at birth, rather than gained over one's life through specific achievements

assemblies various groups that held voting authority in the Republic; membership of assemblies varied; the Senate was the only one with authority to make laws

Aten the sole god of Akhenaten's religious revolution, depicted the sun as a round disc, often accompanied by rays of light in the form of arms, holding ankh symbols

Atenism a modern name to describe Akhenaten's religious system, which replaced the traditional Egyptian gods with one single divinity known as the 'Aten'

Attica an ancient district of Greece that encompassed Athens

auctoritas social authority, reputation and status; an intangible prestige that was both earned through actions and inherited through social and political connections

Augusta empress of Rome

authenticity refers to the genuine nature of a site, artefact or culture: is it real, dated to the correct period in history and geographic location?

autocrat a ruler who has absolute power

ba part of the soul that holds personal characteristics of an individual, represented as a human-headed bird

Baal the chief god of the Levantine region

Bactria region of ancient Central Asia north of the Hindu Kush and south of the Amu Darya river; modern-day Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan

basilikoi paides royal pages

baulk the unexcavated ground between the trenches on an excavation site, often used as a section face

berserker a Viking warrior who fought with uncontrollable anger

bias demonstration of prejudice or the preference of a particular world view or group of people over others

bioarchaeological bioarchaeological analysis refers to the subdiscipline of bioarchaeology and the analysis of human remains to determine key characteristics such as cause of death, age and sex

Book of the Dead a collection of spells, prayers and hymns that emerged at the start of the New Kingdom

boule a council of 500 members

Bronze Age a historic period, lasting approximately from 3300 BCE to 1200 BCE known for the proliferation of bronze, the chemical mixture of tin and copper

cache an archaeological term used to refer to a deposit of artefacts purposely buried in the ground

Canaan southern region of the Levant roughly where Israel and Palestine are located today

canopic jar jars used to store mummified lungs, stomach, liver and intestines of the deceased

cartouche an oval or oblong enclosing a group of Egyptian hieroglyphs, typically representing the name and title of a monarch

caupona a bar, tavern or inn

caveat a warning or stipulation of specific conditions or limitations that must be taken into consideration

cena the evening meal

chorus in Greek theatre, a group of actors who describe and comment upon the main action of the play through song, dance and chanting; they act as a social barometer for the audience, telling them how they should react to the events of the play

chronicles annual accounts of significant events

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circa otherwise written as c.; refers to an approximate and uncertain date

citadel a fortress, used in times of warfare for citizens to shelter from danger

citizenship free men over the age of 18, born within a legitimate marriage between a citizen and the daughter of a citizen

client kingdoms a kingdom with a native ruler loyal to Rome, these territories formed buffer zones at the edges of the empire, and in many cases were ultimately absorbed by the empire

coloniae as colony; in the case of Rome, these were settlements of retired Roman soldiers

commentarii 'commentaries', field notes and dispatches from the battlefront

conservation methods used to preserve material, artefacts and sites

constitutionalist a government according to a constitution

consul most powerful position of the *cursus honorum*

context often includes the place of discovery or information regarding artefacts or authors and assists in providing meaning about purpose to assist in interpretation

co-regency a period during which the monarchical position is shared by two people; this was used as a way to prepare a successor or heir

core the stone from which one or more flakes have been removed

cornucopia a horn that was a symbol of fortune and plenty

Country the land of a particular First Nations community or Traditional Custodian group

Crusades a struggle or fight against the enemies of Christianity, a holy war

cult a religious group focused on the worship of a particular god

cultivation care, loosening and breaking up of soil to encourage the growth of plants

cultural heritage refers to tangible artefacts or sites and intangible practices, like storytelling and music, that are intrinsic to the values and customs of a particular people or society

cultural landscape associated with the sub-discipline of landscape archaeology, which analyses how people use, and interact with, the environment around them; incorporates several individual archaeological sites into a broader understanding of cultural practices and past landscape use

cursus honorum the ladder of offices that an aspiring politician was expected to climb, which had age limits and set periods between the holding of consecutive offices by one person

curule an ornate stool or chair, usually folding, to be taken to meetings, for magistrates to sit on as a symbol of their status and imperium; also used as a metaphor for high status

damnati in metallum slaves condemned to work in the mines

Dane Danish Vikings

Danelaw the area of England ruled by the Danish

deification the action of making someone or something into a god

deity a god

delenda est Carthago 'Carthage must be destroyed'; the phrase used by Cato the Elder whenever he spoke in the Roman Senate

Delian League an alliance of Greek maritime *poleis*, led by Athens, organised after the Persian Wars to defend Greece against Persia; Athens' allies eventually became tribute-paying subjects of the Athenian Empire, and revolts against Athens were put down ruthlessly

demagogue a political leader in Ancient Greece who appealed to the causes of the common people

deme a small division or area of the Attica region surrounding Athens that was used for voting and civil purposes in Athenian democracy based on the reforms of Cleisthenes

democracy a government controlled by the citizens of a state

demos the common people

dendrochronology dating method based on the cross-section of trees using the tree rings, which are indicative of annual growth as well as environmental factors

desiccating removal of moisture from something, causing it to become completely dry

despot a ruler who exercises power in a cruel or oppressive way

diadem a jewelled crown or headband

dictator position in the *cursus honorum* held in times of political emergency by decree of the Senate

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didactic intended to teach; moral instruction is the motive of the text

dignitas Roman sense of honour

Dreaming an explanation of how life came to be, including several Creation Stories and beliefs; it exists within a continuum of past, present and future

druid Celtic priest and scholar often associated with British resistance to Roman rule

Duat realm of the dead in Egyptian mythology

dynasty a sequence of rulers from the same family

Ekklesia the main body and public Assembly of Athens; all male citizens over the age of 18 could attend; they would debate and vote on motions prepared by the *boule*, make decisions on war, peace and alliances, and elect officials such as *archontes*

Elder a First Nations community member who is highly respected due to the level of cultural knowledge they have received over time; recognised as a Custodian of their Country and able to disclose information about their Country and its practices, when appropriate

electrum a material made from the mixture of gold, silver and copper

enigmatic a puzzling or contradictory personality

Enlightenment the European intellectual movement of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries emphasising reason and individualism rather than tradition

entablature the upper part of a classical building supported by columns, comprising the architrave, frieze and cornice

ephor one of five officials elected each year; possessed powers – even over the king – and took a leading role in the state's affairs; could not be re-elected

equite a 'middle class' that grew during the second and third centuries BCE, as provision was made for plebeians who could afford to equip their own horse to enlist in the cavalry

ethnographic account the written description of a culture's beliefs, practices and language, often by an observer who does not belong to the culture; for example, ethnographic accounts were often written by European colonialists about Australian Aboriginal communities

Eurocentric assuming the superiority of European culture and history

excavate the process of removing layers of earth to discover what lies beneath

excoriation to denounce or berate severely

familia family or household

features of evidence context, origin, motive, audience, perspective, implicit and explicit meaning – various acronyms can be used to recall these, such as COMA PIE

Field of Reeds Egyptian heavenly paradise that individuals hoped to reach in the afterlife; a mirror image of one's life on Earth

flake stone chips produced by striking the edge of a stone with another hard material

forum a public Roman space with buildings used for town gathering, official religion and trade

Forum Romanum a large open area in the centre of the city of Rome; it lay between the Palatine and Capitoline Hills; the Forum and the buildings around it were the main business and religious area of Rome, and it was also the centre of political life

freedom fighter someone perceived to have justly resisted oppressive rule; in ancient contexts, this usually involved armed and violent resistance

frieze a horizontal band of sculpted or painted decoration

fugitivarii professional slave catchers

fullonica cleaning and production of cloth for clothing and laundry

garum fish sauce

geophysical survey refers to the collection of information and data from below the surface of the earth to detect objects such as burials on land or shipwrecks underwater

gladiatora munera a commemorative duty owed by the person's descendants where gladiators fought during funeral games

gloria reputation

God's Wife a powerful royal title

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Golden Age of Athens the period ascribed to Perikles's rule where philosophical thinking, writing, art and science flourished

golden ratio a special rule of proportion occurring in nature that was discovered by the Ancient Greeks (1:1.618)

grave goods artefacts or other offerings, such as food, that were interred with the dead upon their burial

grindstone a stone tool used to process (grind and crush) plant foods and other materials

gunyah a type of Aboriginal hut or shelter

gymnasia a large exercise yard surrounded by a series of rooms, including changing rooms, practice rooms and baths

Hatti the kingdom of the Hittites

Hattusa the name of the Hittite capital city

Hattusili III the king of the Hittites in the middle years of Rameses II's reign

hegemony the leadership and dominance by one state or social group over another

Heliaia the supreme court of ancient Athens

Hellenisation the adoption of Greek culture by Roman society

Hellenism another word for Ancient Greek culture; the Ancient Greeks called Greece *Hellas*

Hellenistic a period relating to Greek history, language and culture starting from the death of Alexander the Great through to the defeat of Cleopatra and Mark Antony by Octavian in 31 BCE

Hellenistic World after the conquests of Alexander the Great, the lands that fell into the Macedonian Empire were referred to as the Hellenistic World; it roughly corresponds with the Hellenistic period of Ancient Greece

helot local inhabitants of Laconia and Messenia, owned by the Spartan state and required to work for its citizens in total subjection; they might on occasion be freed for military service

heretic a person holding a religious belief that is in direct conflict with the majority-held religious belief of the culture

hetairoi companion of the king or elite cavalry

hipparchies cavalry unit (approximately 1000) with the intention to flank

historian an expert in history, specifically that of a particular period, geographical region, or social phenomenon; can also refer to a student of history

historical source relates to or focuses on the study of the past; in Ancient History, historical sources are often categorised into ancient and modern sources, and primary and secondary sources

Hittite Empire Egypt's main antagonist and a rival superpower in the New Kingdom

hoplite heavily armed foot soldier

hunter-gatherer people who consistently move across the landscape and rely on the hunting of animals and the foraging and collecting of plants and other resources

hymn a religious song that was addressed to a particular god or gods

hypaspists stood between the phalanx and cavalry in battle formation

hypertrophy the enlargement, or increased size, of an organ or tissue caused via repetitive physical activity

Iceni an Iron Age tribe in modern-day Kent, one of the first tribes to capitulate to Rome, despite rejection of Roman friendship following the expeditions of Caesar in 54 BCE

imperialism refers to a deliberate government policy that seeks military expansion through the establishment of colonies

Imperium The authority granted to military commanders to lead troops in war, and granted to magistrates to administer justice and enforce the law

in situ in its original place

incest sexual activity between family members or close relatives

infer a well-informed guess or deduction based on available evidence or reasoning

intangible something that does not have a physical presence (for example, a spoken story)

integrity a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the cultural heritage and its attributes

intermediary a person who provides a connection between the people and the gods

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Iron Age period following the Stone and Bronze Ages, and immediately preceding Roman occupation; refers to the use of iron implements, and in developmental terms is the most advanced age prior to classical civilisation

jarl upper-class Vikings

jihad a struggle or fight against the enemies of Islam, a holy war

Julio-Claudian Roman imperial family the first five Roman emperors and their families, descendants of the Emperor Augustus (the Julian branch) and his wife Livia's children (the Claudian branch)

ka a person's life force; death occurred when the *ka* left the body

karl farmer and craftsmen Vikings

Karnak Egypt's major temple complex in the New Kingdom; Rameses II's main contribution to the complex was the addition of the huge Hypostyle Hall

kiln a type of oven used for firing clay

kingship the state or position of being a king

***kleros* (pl. *kleroi*)** an allotment of land

krypteia secret police

kurioi guardians of women

Lacedaemonia the name of the city of Sparta from late antiquity to the 19th century

Lacedaemonian inhabitant of Sparta and surrounding area

Laconia the territory around Sparta's city centre

lapilli rock fragments ejected from a volcano

lararium private shrine of household gods

larnax a chest usually of terracotta, often ornamented and used in Ancient Greece as a vessel for remains

latifundia extensive Roman rural estates that used slave labour

League of Corinth also referred to as the Hellenic League, it was the federation of Ancient Greek states, except Sparta, after the battle of Chaeronea; an offensive and defensive alliance under the leadership of Philip II

legion largest unit of soldiers within the army; approximately 4500 men

Lex Agraria land and property reforms introduced in 133 BCE by Tiberius Gracchus, intended to close the economic and social gap between classes

liberti freedmen and freedwomen

Linear B an ancient syllabic script used for writing Mycenaean Greek, predating the Greek alphabet and deciphered in 1952 by Michael Ventris

liturgy a public duty performed voluntarily by rich Athenians

longship Viking ships, also known as *drakkars* (dragon) for the shape of the prow

looting the act of stealing goods or artefacts

lore customs and traditions that govern all aspects of life, passed down through generations by practices such as song, story and dance

ludi gladiator training schools

Ma'at the goddess of order, truth and balance; evolved into a concept meaning justice, harmony and balance

maat kheru translates to true of voice, used to denote someone whose soul had been judged to be morally righteous

magistracy any of a number of elected (therefore political) executive positions of the Roman Republic, ranked according to the cursus honorum

magnetic gradiometry remote sensing technology that can detect materials rich in iron and thermoremanent magnetisation, which occurs after an event has taken place, such as burning

manumission the process of freeing a slave

matrona Roman mother

Messenia the fertile territory over the mountains to the west of Sparta

metic foreigners who lived permanently in Athens, and had some rights but not political ones

metope a rectangular, decorated element that fills the space between two triglyphs in a Doric frieze

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misogynistic contempt and prejudice against women

mob group who were largely unemployed and used by savvy politicians to gain and exert power and influence

modern source written or non-written material created after the end of the late Middle Ages that can be used to investigate the ancient past

monarchic autocracy a state or nation in which the supreme power is held by a monarch who has unlimited authority over others

monarchy a form of government where power and authority is held by a monarch; the position of monarch is usually inherited

monotheism the religious belief that only one god exists and that other gods are either false or are manifestations of the one 'true' god

Montu Egyptian god of war

mortuary practices cultural practices relating to the death of an individual

mortuary temple a temple constructed during a pharaoh's reign to commemorate their reign, as well to act as a place of worship for the pharaoh following their death where family and others could make offerings for the deceased

mos maiorum 'ancestral custom'; Roman traditions that informed social behaviour and etiquette, separate from the law

mummification process of preserving a human body to ensure it remains as lifelike as possible

Museion library

Muwatalli II king of the Hittites in Rameses II's early years; Rameses II's opponent at the Battle of Kadesh

mythologisation process by which a historical figure takes on mythical proportions, often to such an extent that the realities of the historical figure are lost

Native Title as set out by the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), the recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have rights and interests to lands and waters according to traditional cultural practices and customs

natron a naturally occurring mineral that is often found in saline lake beds, used by the Egyptians to remove moisture from bodies during mummification

New Kingdom one of three main periods of Egyptian history, which began roughly in 1550 BCE and lasted until 1069 BCE

nexum a contract in the early Roman Republic where a free man pledged himself as a bond slave

nobilitas well known or noteworthy

nomarch the provincial governor or mayor of a *nome*

nome an administrative district; comes from the Greek *nomos*, meaning 'district'; the borders of *nomes* fluctuated but were generally centred upon a town after which the *nome* was often named

Norse loosely translates as 'north' and refers to Scandinavians

novus homo Latin, 'new man'; applied to men who were the first in their family to serve as consul, later widened to include the first man in a family to serve in the Senate

noxius condemned criminals who were used as opponents of gladiators

Nubia the kingdom to the south of Egypt; came under Egyptian control in the 18th Dynasty and enriched Egypt due to its significant gold resources

numismatics the study of coins and other currencies

nymph Greek mythology, minor nature deity of land forms or locations

obelisk a tapering stone pillar, typically having a square or rectangular cross-section, set up as a monument or landmark

Odin the Allfather, king of the Viking gods

oikos house, household

oligarchy a form of government where power rests with a small number of people; in Ancient Greece, oligarchies were made up of wealthy and influential citizens

Opening of the Mouth ceremony performed on the mummy immediately before burial by a priest to allow the deceased to eat and drink in the afterlife

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optimate 'good man', a man who deemed himself morally superior to others politically, believed in the defence of the republic, and had very conservative tendencies

oral tradition a form of communication where knowledge, art and ideas are passed down through the generations by word of mouth

ostracism exclusion from a society or group; in ancient Athens, ostracism was the result of a public vote and the individual was banished for 10 years

palaeoanthropology the study of the members of the genus *Homo* (humans are *Homo sapiens*), to investigate the origins and traits of the often extinct members over millions of years

palimpsest something reused or altered but still bearing visible traces of its earlier form

papyrus a plant common to the Nile River Valley that was most notably used to create a writing material, similar to paper

paterfamilias 'father of the family'; eldest male within a family group held absolute authority over their wife, children, certain other relatives, clients and slaves; his responsibilities were guided by *mos maiorum*

patriarchalism a system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it

patrician wealthy social class; small group of privileged elite that came from old aristocratic families

pax Romana the Roman peace

pediment triangular upper part of the front of a classical building, often filled with sculptures

Peloponnesian War a conflict between Sparta and Athens and their allies (431–404 BCE) for control over Greece; after nearly three decades of fighting, Athens was defeated

perioikoi 'the dwellers round about'; communities of free people occupying land in Laconia and Messenia granted them by the Spartan state in exchange for military service

phalanx heavily armed infantry formation where soldiers stand shoulder to shoulder in ranks 16 men deep

pharaoh the ruler of Ancient Egypt

philoi roughly translates to 'friend', and was a relationship based on reciprocity; members of the 'friends' class were called *philia*

Pi-Rameses Rameses II's capital city; he moved the capital here from Thebes and built the city near the previous site of Avaris, in the eastern region of the Nile Delta; the choice of this location was probably an acknowledgement of the strategic need to have a power base closer to the contested area of the Levant

plebeian the lower social class; the majority of Rome's population

polemarch chief military commander

***polis* (pl. *poleis*)** politically independent Greek city-state, which consisted of the city and its defensible acropolis and the surrounding land, usually farming land

polytheistic the belief in multiple deities simultaneously

poop the highest deck of a sailing ship which forms the roof of a cabin in the stern

populares politicians who believed in the rights of the populace, or who used popular support to gain political power

Praetorian Guard responsible for the defence of the city of Rome, and the emperor's personal bodyguards

preservation maintaining material, artefacts and sites in their original or current state

primary source an object or document created or written during the time being investigated

princeps 'first man among equals'; the Roman emperor

principate rule of a *princeps*, name given to the early Roman Empire period

principle of superposition a key archaeological assumption that assumes the order in which the different parts of a site have been laid down will reflect the sequence of events that occurred at the site in the past; more recent deposits will be laid down on top of older ones

proclamation a public and official announcement

promiscuous casual sexual relations with a number of partners

properties the official UNESCO term used for any archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, monuments or other cultural heritage nominated or inscribed on the World Heritage List

protagonist the leading character in a play

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Protestant a member of a church that denies the universal authority of the Pope; believes in the principles of justification by faith alone, the priesthood of all believers, and the Bible as the only source of revealed truth; broadly speaking, a Christian not of a Catholic or Eastern Orthodox church

provenance information concerning the artefact's origin and history

Punt a semi-mythical land that is likely to be present-day Ethiopia

pyroclastic flow volcanic debris and gas flowing at a fast pace, similar to a snow avalanche

quarry a spot on the landscape where a particular raw material is retrieved for cultural use, such as a type of stone for the creation of stone tools

radiocarbon dating method used to determine the age of organic material by testing the residual level of carbon-14

Ramesseum a temple in Thebes constructed by Rameses II for future worship after death

reciprocal done, given or felt equally by both sides; modern archaeological research with Indigenous communities prioritises this two-way exchange of knowledge

Reformation the process of reforming the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century, but ended in the establishment of other Christian denominations

regent a temporary ruler who acts as a caretaker when the pharaoh is too young to rule

relative dating orders artefacts and sites into a chronology, based on something being older (or younger) relative to something else

repatriation the return of objects or human remains to their original homeland

repoussé a metalwork technique of hammering the reverse side

rhetra oracle or law

Roman Britain period during which Britannia was a province of the Roman Empire; commenced with the Claudian invasion of 43/44 CE and concluded with the removal of Roman garrisons in 476 CE

romanisation a term that suggests the adoption of Roman customs in place of traditional ones; has evolved, as evidence emerges that suggests fusion, and a heterogeneous Romano-British culture, rather than a purely homogeneous Roman one

runestone a large carved stone, often funerary

Rus Swedish Vikings who invaded and settled in eastern Europe

sacrosanctity the declaration that something is sacred or under religious protection; some magistracy positions were considered sacrosanct

saga semi-historical and mythical tales

sarissa long spear or pike (5–6 metres) introduced by Philip II in Macedonian phalanxes

satrap a provincial governor in the Persian empire

satyr in mythology a man with horse-like ears and tail; companions of Dionysus

Scandinavia the countries of Norway, Denmark and Sweden

secondary source an account about the past that was created after the time being investigated and which often uses or refers to primary sources and presents a particular interpretation

sedentary the practice of living in one place for an extended period of time

semi-divine more than mortal but not completely divine

Senate oldest and most powerful assembly in the Republic, had the legislative power to make laws but its membership was dominated by the patricians

***Senatus Populusque Romanus* (SPQR)** 'The Senate and People of Rome'; used in reference to the government of the people

Serapeum temple

seriation a dating method that establishes a timeline based on the frequency of sites or artefacts as a result of defining features, such as decoration, shape, function or method of creation

servus a slave born into a household, family farm or agricultural estate

servus publicus public slaves

sesterces Roman coin, at this stage, the coin was made of silver

Set Egyptian god of chaos, violence, storms

shabti a small figurine (wooden, stone or faience) placed in the tomb to complete any work the deceased person may be called upon to do in the afterlife

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shaft grave a deep rectangular pit often covered by a stone slab or burial chamber

Shasu tribesmen the name given to some local nomadic tribesmen; also known as Bedouin

Sherden a mysterious seafaring people, also commonly referred to as the Sea Peoples; they invaded Egypt unsuccessfully during Rameses II's reign, and would eventually cause the downfall of the Hittite Empire

shroud an enveloping garment in which a dead individual is wrapped for burial

signillography the scholarly discipline that studies the wax, lead, clay, and other seals used to authenticate archival documents

Sogdiana a region in ancient Central Asia between the Oxus and Jaxartes rivers located in territories of modern-day Tajikistan and Uzbekistan

somatophylakes the king's bodyguard; a select group of seven

songlines songs sung on Country that act as navigational guides, including information about landscape features, directions and plant and animal species

sophist skilled in the art of oratory, someone who was influential in public speaking, especially in the Assembly and law courts

Sparta Athens' main rival for the leadership of Greece

Spartiate full Spartan citizens through birth, successful completion of the agoge and election to a mess

State Parties countries that have adhered to the World Heritage Convention

static lacking in movement or change

stele an upright stone slab or column typically bearing a commemorative inscription or relief design, often serving as a gravestone

***strategos* (pl. *strategoi*)** an elected role, these 10 generals were elected for one-year terms but could hold the office repeatedly; in addition, during each *prytany* (10 administrative months) the Assembly voted on whether an individual *strategos* should retain the office

stratify the division of soil into different layers or deposits, according to natural or cultural events

stratigraphy the interpretation of different layers or deposits of soil to understand what happened at an archaeological site

Struggle of the Orders series of conflicts between plebeians and patricians in the second and third centuries BCE due to increasing social, economic and political disparity between the classes

stucco crushed or burned lime or gypsum mixed with sand and water to make a plaster; it was easily moulded into relief decoration and could also be painted and can last a long time

stylobate a continuous base supporting a row of columns; acts as the foundation for a building

subdued put down; repressed

succession the order of those entitled to become Roman emperor

symposia drinking practices that included intellectual debates, entertainment and discussion of strategy

talent a unit of currency

tangible something perceptible by touch (for example, an artefact)

tell a raised mound created by repetitive building of earth and stone constructions

temporal relating to worldly, as opposed to spiritual, affairs; secular authority

thalassocracy a state whose power comes from its naval or commercial supremacy on the seas

thermopolium a shop that produces and serves hot food and drinks

thrall Viking slaves

three-age system naming and categorising artefacts according to their material, which became the basis of the archaeological cultures of the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages

timocracy possession of property is required to hold office and participate in government

trade routes used by Indigenous communities to transport goods, such as stone tools, across vast distances; many were then used by Europeans and have shaped the way we travel around Australia today

treason attempting to overthrow the government or kill the head of the government

tribune magistracy position representing the plebeian class for one year

triclinium dining room

Trinobantes also called the Trinovantes, the tribe immediately to the south of the Iceni, who were among the first to join the revolt

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trireme Greek warship, powered by sail and oars with a battering prow to smash other ships

triumvirate joint rule between three individuals, termed *triumvirs*

tula a stone tool used for wood working (e.g. scraping) and butchery

tumuli a mound of earth and stones over a grave

tutelary guardian or protector

tyranny a form of government where all power is held by a single ruler who is cruel and oppressive; there is no control over or limits on the authority or use of power by the tyrant

tyrant a single ruler who is cruel and oppressive

UNESCO World Heritage places on Earth that are of significant universal value to humanity (landmark or area) that is legally protected by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

univira a woman married only once; the ideal Roman *matrona*

Valkyrie a powerful warrior woman who took souls to the afterlife

Valley of the Kings main location for pharaonic burials during the New Kingdom; it is on the western bank of the Nile, opposite Thebes

Vestal Virgins priestesses of Vesta, goddess of the hearth; they cultivated the sacred fire and took a vow of chastity and their wellbeing was regarded as fundamental to the continuance and security of Rome

Viking Scandinavian seafaring raiders and conquerors

villa an ancient Roman farmhouse or country house often built on a hillside, which could display the owner's wealth and prosperity via the extravagant nature of the property

virtus 'acting like a man'

vizier the highest government position beneath the pharaoh, who managed the administration of the empire and was often a prince or other relation of the pharaoh

votive offering an object that is displayed or deposited in a sacred place without the intention of recovery to gain favour with the gods

Weighing of the Heart a judgement test that the deceased faced before they were granted a place in the afterlife; the heart (symbolic of their Earthly life) was weighed against the feather of Ma'at

weir a small barrier built across a stream or river to control the water level, which can also assist with the trapping of fish

well-stratified distinct formations of layers, called strata, within the earth

Wheeler box-grid grid excavation method using squares of 2 x 2 metres surrounded by unexcavated baulks; developed by Sir Mortimer Wheeler

Wheeler-Kenyon method grid excavation method of trenches (squares) usually 5 x 5 metres, bound by unexcavated sides, called baulks; the method was refined by Kathleen Kenyon, based on her mentor Sir Mortimer Wheeler's box-grid

World Heritage Fund established in 1977; State Parties to the World Heritage Convention contribute to the fund, which is supplemented by voluntary contributions from governments, charities, the private sector and the general public

xiphos a one-handed, double-edged straight sword

Zeus-Amun Egyptian god Amun (god of sun and air and king of the gods) associated with the Greek counterpart, Zeus

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Chapter 2

DIGGING UP THE PAST: FURTHER CASE STUDIES

Syllabus reference: Unit 1, Topic 1: Digging up the past

DIANA PLATT AND GEORGIA WILLIAMS

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What types of sources are important for developing an understanding of the Ancient World?
- What issues of evidence are important to consider when investigating the Ancient World?
- How does archaeological evidence contribute to an understanding of the Ancient World?

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SOURCE 2.1 Mask of Agamemnon

DEPTH STUDY

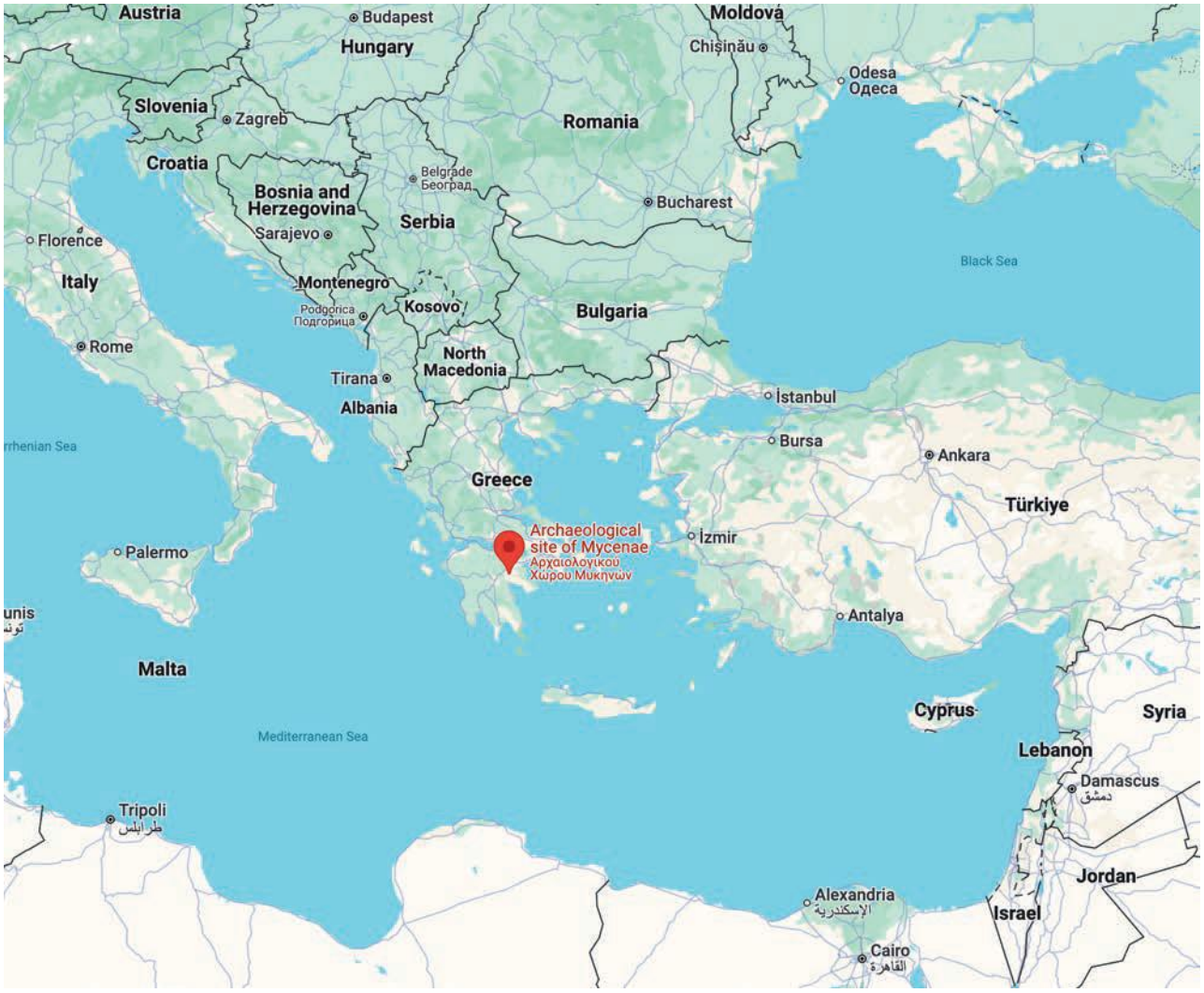
2.1 Mycenae: The Bronze Age wonder

Mycenae was a major centre of **Bronze Age** Greek civilisation, at its height from 1600 BCE to 1100 BCE, also known as the Mycenaean age. The Mycenaean civilisation heavily influenced Greek culture and architecture. The city was attacked by its neighbour, Argos, in 468 BCE and though eventually re-settled, Mycenae never regained the status it once held.

The archaeological site of Mycenae is located near Mykines (Angolis), north-eastern Peloponnese, Greece. In 1999, it was added to the **UNESCO World Heritage** list.

Bronze Age a historic period, lasting approximately from 3300 BCE to 1200 BCE, known for the proliferation of bronze, the chemical mixture of tin and copper

UNESCO World Heritage places on Earth that are of significant universal value to humanity (landmark or area) that is legally protected by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



SOURCE 2.2 Map showing the location of Mycenae

Greek geographer Pausanias first wrote extensively about the 'ruins' of Mycenae in the second century CE. However, the first modern and detailed documentation of the archaeological site was undertaken in 1700 by Venetian engineer Francesco Vandeyk, who was tasked with registering all properties in the Peloponnese by the government of Venice. In 1841 the site was excavated and studied by the Archaeological Society of Athens. The British School of Archaeology undertook its own excavations during the early to mid-twentieth century. In the twenty-first century, the Mycenaean Foundation, an American non-profit organisation, has been using cutting-edge technology to bolster understandings of the site.

However, the archaeological findings of Mycenae are often associated with the work of German businessman and amateur archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann, who excavated at the site during 1876. Schliemann was eager to find material evidence to support the tales told in Homer's epics, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey,* specifically relating to Mycenae's King Agamemnon. Though modern archaeologists are critical and disapproving of Schliemann's quest, there is no doubt that the site of Mycenae was a foundational anchor point for classical Greek culture and identity. For example, **Linear B** tablets discovered in Mycenae and nearby Tiryns constitute some of the earliest examples of Greek writing. Therefore, the site demonstrates important examples of architecture, art and technology, which reflect the astonishing creativity and innovation of the people at the time. By exploring this site, we gain a deeper understanding of the period and its people.

Linear B an ancient syllabic script used for writing Mycenaean Greek, predating the Greek alphabet and deciphered in 1952 by Michael Ventris

2.2 Nature of the site

The remains of Mycenae are described as those of a **citadel** situated on top of a low hill. Stone walls encircle several key structures that would have been considered important for the Myceneans to protect when under attack from enemies. The entrance to the citadel has come to be known as the 'Lion Gate' because of the sculpture of two lions atop the archway. The structures within the citadel include several graves, the ruins of a palace and some houses. The palace is situated in the centre of the citadel. The sequence of palace rooms extends to the east with a porch (classical temple) that leads through to an **anteroom** and then the *megaron* or Great Hall space. This main room housed a large circular hearth (fireplace) in the centre and was supported by four posts and a roof. The other buildings within the citadel are referred to as 'houses', though archaeologists have uncovered paintings and terracotta figures, which suggests at least one dwelling was used for religious purposes. Other structures included storerooms (such as the 'granary'); therefore, it is likely they would have been used by officials or elites who assisted with the city administration. The presence of a citadel indicates that fortifications were deemed necessary around particular buildings, such as the ruler's palace, and that the threat of attack was well known. However, a citadel also separates community members by class and status; those with more wealth and privilege were able to reside inside the walls.

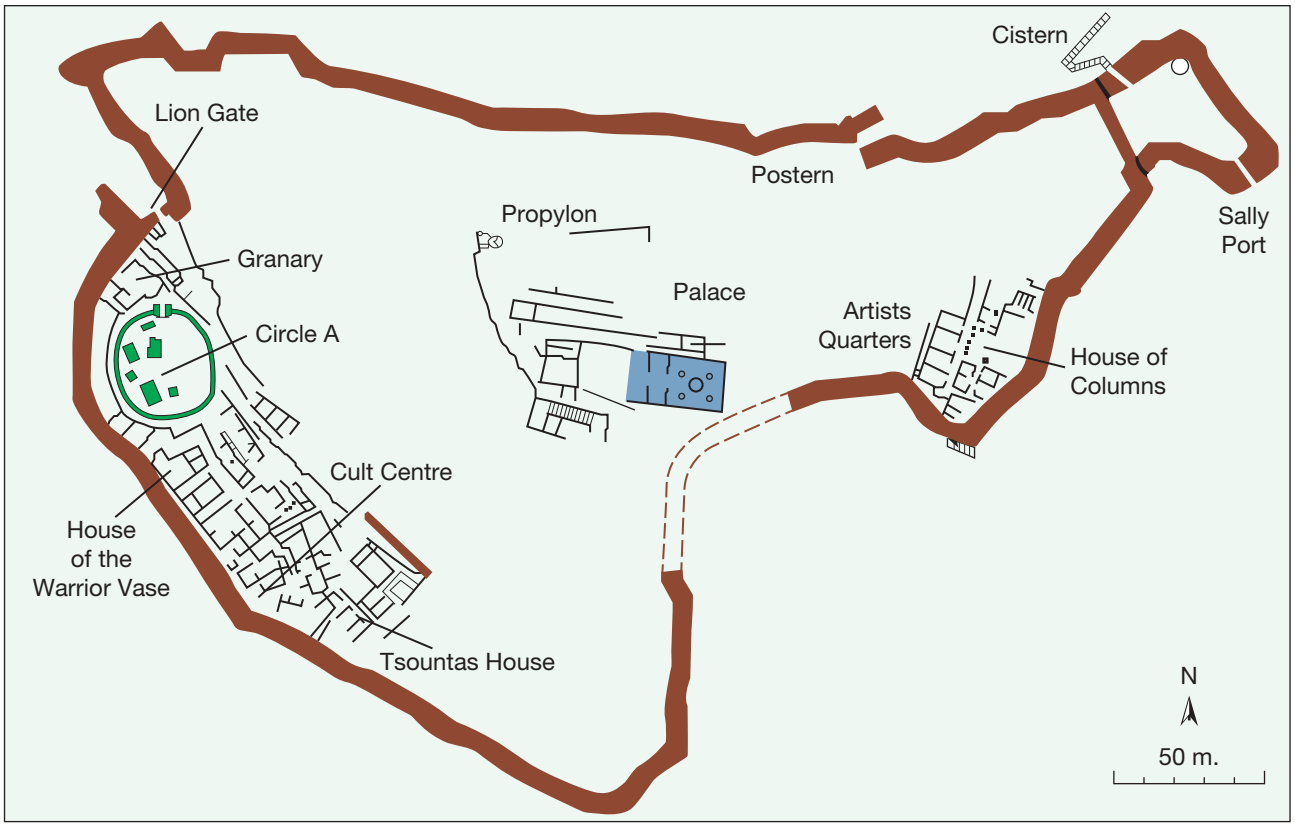
citadel a fortress, used in times of warfare for citizens to shelter from danger

anteroom a small space that leads onto a larger, or main, space

grave goods artefacts or other offerings, such as food, that were interred with the dead upon their burial

shaft grave a deep rectangular pit often covered by a stone slab or burial chamber

It is somewhat unusual that several burials have been found within the citadel of Mycenae, suggesting the individuals interred here were of particular importance. The archaeological site of Mycenae is perhaps best known for the **grave goods** discovered along with the **shaft graves** of Grave Circle A. The artefacts uncovered here were integral to Heinrich Schliemann's infamous legacy as 'the father of Mycenaean archaeology'.



SOURCE 2.3 Diagram showing the archaeological remains of Mycenae



SOURCE 2.4 The archaeological site of Mycenae



SOURCE 2.5 The wall around the tombs of Grave Circle A, Mycenae, 1550–1500 BCE



ACTIVITY **2.1**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Evaluate the usefulness of Source 2.5 in understanding the nature of the Mycenae site.

2.3 Significant finds

Many of the significant finds from Mycenae were retrieved from Grave Circle A and others located outside of the citadel. Grave Circle A comprises six shaft graves and the human remains of approximately 19 individuals, including a mix of men, women, at least one teenager and a young child. More than one individual was often buried in each shaft grave. Schliemann and his supervisor, Panayiotis Stamataki, excavated shaft graves I–V.

bioarchaeological bioarchaeological analysis refers to the subdiscipline of bioarchaeology and the analysis of human remains to determine key characteristics such as cause of death, age and sex

hypertrophy the enlargement, or increased size, of an organ or tissue caused via repetitive physical activity

Bioarchaeological analysis has since been conducted on the human remains from Grave Circle A. Findings suggest that all individuals were relatively young, all under the age of 50. The skeletal remains suggest good dental and general health; however, at least five individuals had an iron deficiency or similar condition. Many of the bodies had also engaged in strenuous physical activities throughout their lives, as evident via **hypertrophy** of various muscle, tendon and ligament attachments. A consensus has not been reached as to whether the individuals represent a singular family group.

A commonality between the burials within Grave Circle A is the presence of a vast array of lavish grave goods, which attests to the high social ranking and wealth of the buried individuals. Their wealth could be **inferred** as **ascribed status** as one infant, lying atop the chest of a woman (likely their mother), was wrapped head to toe in a gold-plated **shroud**. Artefacts uncovered include gold cups, gold jewellery, silver and bronze vases, swords, daggers, various pottery designs and lavish gold death masks. One particular mask retrieved from Grave V piqued Schliemann's interest for he believed the mask belonged to King Agamemnon.

infer a well-informed guess or deduction based on available evidence or reasoning

ascribed status financial position and cultural privilege that is inherited by an individual at birth, rather than gained over one's life through specific achievements

shroud an enveloping garment in which a dead individual is wrapped for burial



SOURCE 2.6 Clay tablet with Linear B script, House of the Oil Merchant Room 2, Mycenae



SOURCE 2.7 The infant's gold-leaf shroud found in Grave Circle A of the Mycenae citadel, National Archaeological Museum, Athens



SOURCE 2.8 Mycenaean gold roundels with repoussé decoration depicting a bee, sixteenth century BCE, National Archaeological Museum, Athens



SOURCE 2.9 A horse and chariot with two charioteers – detail from a fourteenth-century-BCE ceramic vessel excavated in 1952 at Mycenae

Though the mask has been dated to an earlier time, its authenticity has been repeatedly questioned, given Schliemann's reputation.

SOURCE 2.10 Mycenaean funerary gold mask, National Archaeological Museum website

> Gold death-mask, known as the 'mask of Agamemnon'. Mycenae, Grave Circle A, Grave V, 16th cent. BC. The mask depicts the imposing face of a bearded man. It is made of a gold sheet with **repoussé** details. Two holes near the ears indicate that the mask was held in place over the deceased's face with twine.

repoussé a metalwork technique of hammering the reverse side



SOURCE 2.11 The 'Mask of Agamemnon' was found in shaft grave V, created in 1550–1500 BCE. Is this truly the face of Agamemnon or an elaborate forgery?

ACTIVITY 2.2

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues
Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Refer to Sources 2.10 and 2.11 and answer the questions:

1. Identify the issues that arise for the authentication of the Mask of Agamemnon.
2. Explain why these issues exist.
3. Evaluate the reliability of Source 2.11 as Agamemnon's mask.



SOURCE 2.12 Mycenaean gold signet ring from Tiryns, picturing a fertility rite. A lion-headed genie and a goddess who holds a chalice, thirteenth century BCE



SOURCE 2.13 Silver and gold bull's head from Grave IV, Circle A

ACTIVITY **2.3**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research
Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

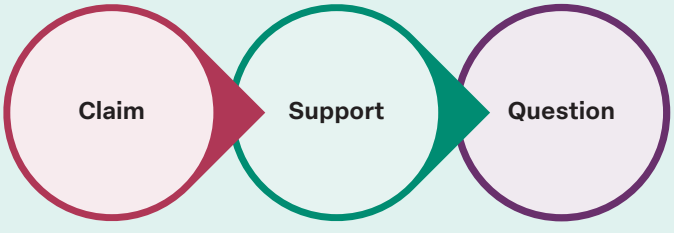
1. Examine Sources 2.6–2.13 to complete the See, Think, Wonder table.

	SEE	THINK	WONDER
Source 2.6			
Source 2.7			
Source 2.8			
Source 2.9			
Source 2.10			
Source 2.11			
Source 2.12			
Source 2.13			

2. A gallery walk gets you to actively engage in discussions with your peers about learning. Using gallery walks promotes the development of thinking skills, including analysis, evaluation and synthesis, together with effective communication and team-building skills.
   a. Place sources about the discoveries at Mycenae around the classroom.
   b. Working in pairs, use a graphic organiser to record your ideas about the sources. Some examples include a See, Think, Wonder Y Chart, a retrieval chart or a cluster diagram.
   c. Pairs should work at their own pace, and your teacher might monitor and question you to challenge your thinking.
   d. Join with another pair together to discuss what you discovered.
   e. This could include a reflective activity such as an exit slip, I used to think … Now I think… or a 3-2-1- Bridge.

3. Investigate the questions you have about the finds at Mycenae.

4. Complete a Claim, Support, Question.



- Make a claim about the importance of the Mycenae site for understanding this period.
- Identify support (evidence) for your claims.
- Ask a question about your claim. What isn't explained?

2.4 Issues

Nineteenth-century archaeologists often lacked the training and academic expertise that is now considered the norm for archaeologists of the twenty-first century. Many early archaeologists were wealthy, semi-retired European men who enjoyed history and archaeology as a hobby. Their wealth enabled them to fund excavations; however, they were not always motivated to engage with archaeology to improve understandings of the past. Rather, early archaeologists are often called **antiquarians**, as they focused on finding and collecting valuable artefacts and did not often concern themselves with overall site interpretation or the study of **stratigraphy**.

antiquarian someone who studies or collects things from the past but does not engage with the systematic and scientific practices of modern archaeology

stratigraphy the interpretation of different layers or deposits of soil to understand what happened at an archaeological site

While pioneers of archaeology did emerge and develop techniques and strategies still in use today, Heinrich Schliemann remains a controversial figure due to his lack of precision and his narrow-minded dedication to finding material evidence for Homer's mythologically epic tales. Schliemann is said to have exclaimed, 'I have gazed upon the face of Agamemnon', when he uncovered a golden death mask in Grave Circle A. There were several other similar death masks found in Grave Circle A. Why did Schliemann attribute this specific mask to Agamemnon? What supporting evidence did Schliemann use to corroborate his claim? He deduced that the skeletal remains underneath the death mask 'very much resembles the image which my imagination formed long ago of wide-ruling Agamemnon'.

Modern archaeologists understand the fragile nature of their discipline. Excavation is a destructive process. Once an artefact is found, detailed recording must take place to ensure everything about it and its context or surrounding environment are documented. Once the artefact is removed and catalogued, anything that was not noted down is lost. Therefore, Schliemann is criticised for taking minimal and vague field notes. For example, his initial excavation of Grave Circle A did not note the number of individuals uncovered, nor determine their sex. Furthermore, Schliemann never published his findings in an academic journal but rather provided a summary, including edited letters he had written during the excavation, to the *London Times* newspaper. Luckily, several other archaeological teams have since excavated at Mycenae and re-evaluated Schliemann's findings, ensuring we still have a comprehensive understanding of the site.



SOURCE 2.14 Professor Maggidis and The Dickinson Excavation Project and Archaeological Survey of Mycenae team, 2003

Since 2002, Professor Christofilis Maggidis (Dickinson College and Mycenae Foundation President) has been the field director at Mycenae (Lower Town) as part of a decades-long systematic archaeological investigation. He has led an international and multidisciplinary team of approximately 20 archaeologists and specialists as they dig deeper into understanding the past of this site.

In 2003, remote-sensing surveys began, taking advantage of the advancements in technology. The **geophysical survey** used various methods to map buried structures in the area around the citadel to create a 3D model of the Lower Town of Mycenae.

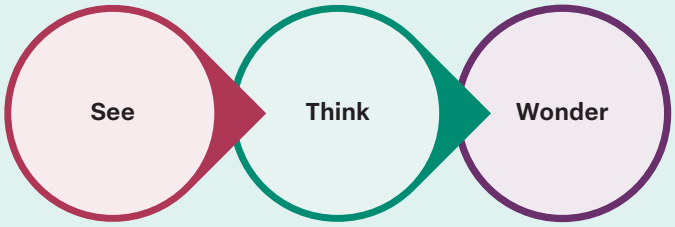
geophysical survey refers to the collection of information and data from below the surface of the earth to detect objects such as burials on land or shipwrecks underwater

ACTIVITY **2.4**



Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

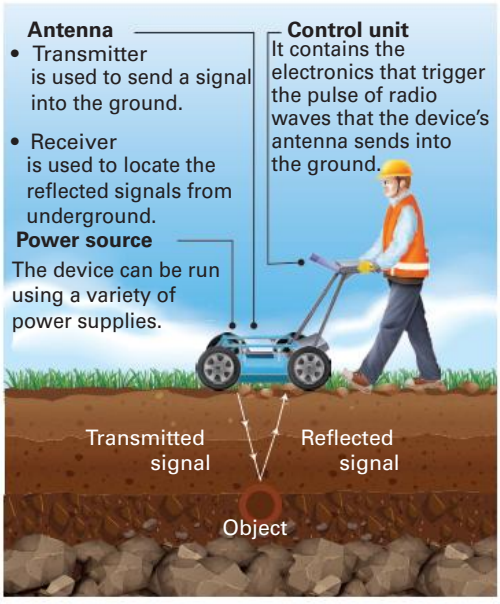
View the 3D Virtual Model of the Mycenae site at: https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/10725.
Complete the See, Think, Wonder activity.



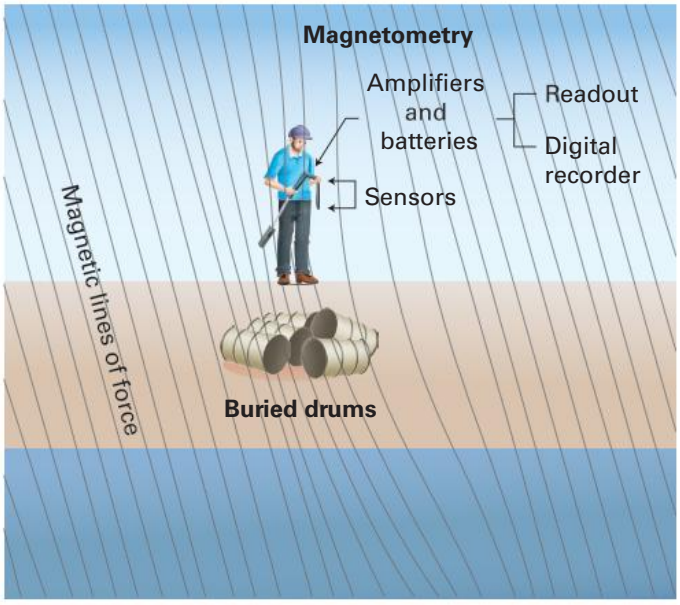
- What do you see in the 3D model?
- What did it make you think about the use of technology in archaeology?
- What questions do you have?

Some of the methods and techniques used in the investigation at Mycenae:

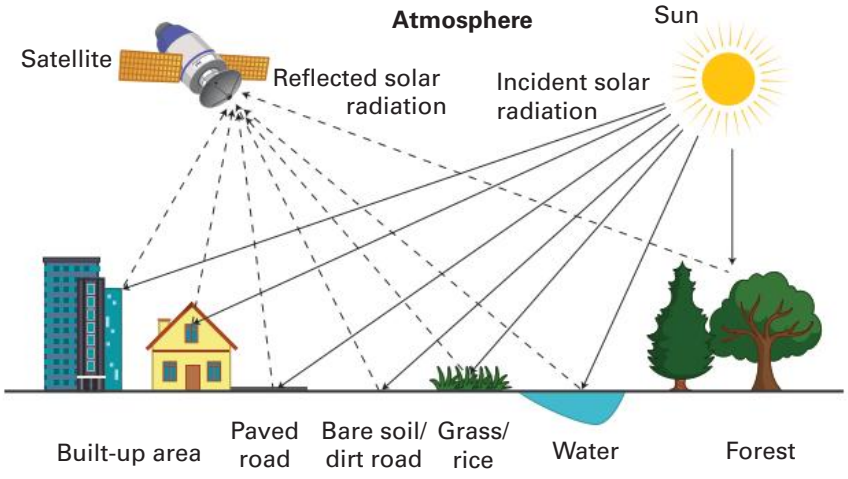
- **Ground penetrating radar (GPR):** GPR uses radar pulses to create images of the subsurface landscape. It works by measuring the strength and time it takes for the reflected pulses to return to the surface. GPR can detect metals, and excavated and back-filled areas, meaning it is especially useful for uncovering subsurface burials.
- **Magnetometry:** Magnetometry measures the effects buried materials have upon geomagnetic fields. Subsurface walls, hearths or disturbed areas such as ditches and burials produce different magnetic variations in the soil. Magnetometry measures the strength and direction of the Earth's magnetic fields, particularly the field's strength and orientation at a specific location. A magnetometer can create a two-dimensional map of the various magnetic contrasts across a site. The resulting map is used to identify areas of interest for excavation, such as buried structures or ferrous metal artefacts.
- **Satellite/aerial photography:** Using satellite or aerial photography is the easiest way for archaeologists to receive a 'bird's eye view' of a site that one cannot get from the ground. There are two key types of imagery that can be captured from above. An oblique image is taken at an angle and is best for seeing shadows of buried structures and variations in the landscape. A vertical image is best for making maps and plans of a potential site. Depending on what is beneath the surface, vegetation can grow differently, causing the development of crop markings that can be seen from above. For example, paving or other materials directly beneath the surface will stunt vegetation growth.



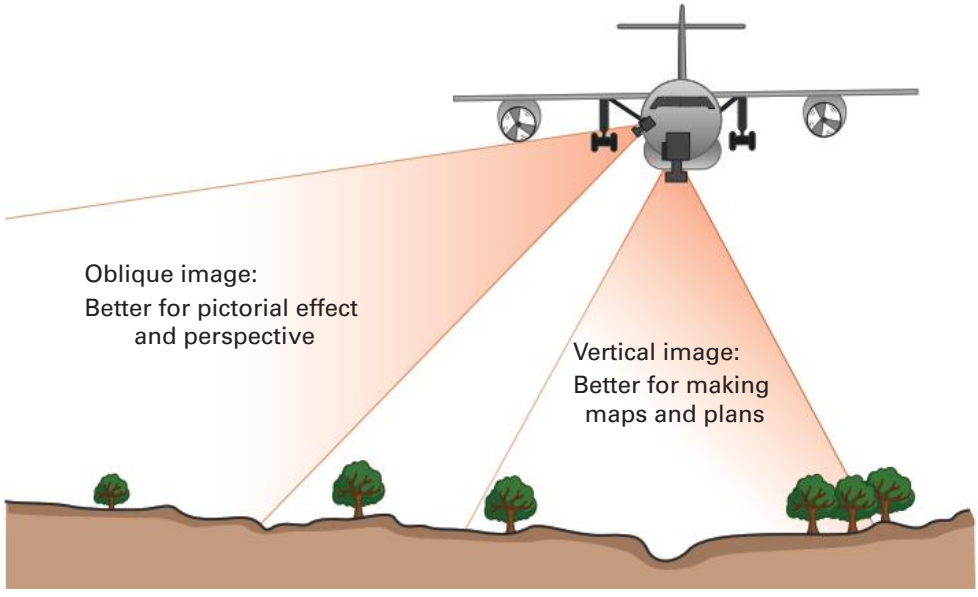
SOURCE 2.15 Ground penetrating radar



SOURCE 2.16 Magnetometry



SOURCE 2.17 Satellite photography



SOURCE 2.18 Aerial photography

ACTIVITY **2.5**

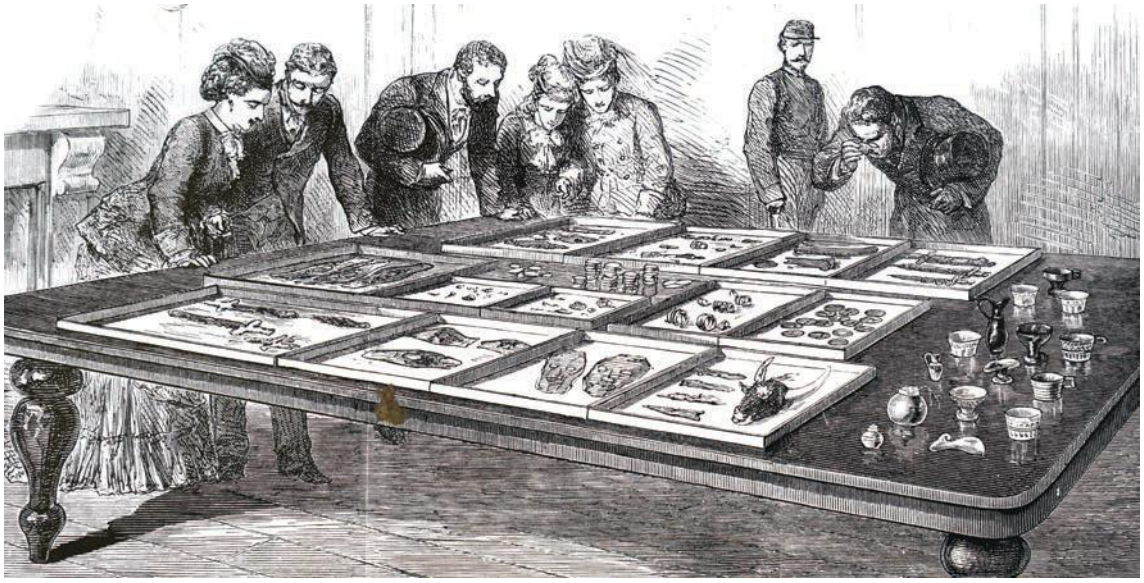
Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Choose one of the methods on the previous page and describe how it may have assisted archaeologists on the Mycenae project.

While technology has made a significant contribution to the field of archaeology, these advancements are relatively recent. Mycenae has been excavated and studied for over a century and provides a perfect case study to consider not only the evolution of the archaeological discipline but also ethical issues such as forgery. Though Schliemann was convinced he had found the death mask of Agamemnon, additional research later revealed that the mask dated to 1550–1500 BCE, 300 years before Agamemnon's time; disagreement among ancient historians persists as to whether Agamemnon ever existed at all. However, the controversy surrounding this particular death mask doesn't end here.

Some researchers believe that the Mask of Agamemnon was not found **in situ**. Instead, they believe that the mask was a fake, planted by Schliemann. Furthermore, these claims suggest that Schliemann inflated the treasures found in Grave Circle A by including artefacts found elsewhere. Others refute this claim, suggesting the implausibility of having to quickly provide the exact measurements and details needed to create a convincing forgery. A ruse such as this would have likely required the collusion of his workforce and the Greek archaeologists who supervised him during the project. Others claim that confusion remains as to which death mask Schliemann associated with Agamemnon, as several other death masks were also uncovered in Grave Circle A, though this can be attributed back to Schliemann's inadequate field recording.

in situ in its original place



SOURCE 2.19 Engraving depicting Heinrich Schliemann's excavations at Mycenae inside the Treasury of Atreus

SOURCE EXPLANATION This depiction demonstrates the antiquarian nature of Schliemann's excavations at Mycenae. Artefacts are spread out on a table, many assigned to trays with similar items placed next to each other. This is not part of modern archaeological practice as it is important that finds are recorded, appropriately bagged and stored for further analysis, rather than immediately displayed. All the finds depicted were likely considered impressive or otherwise valuable. Thus, interpretations of the site are automatically skewed towards these diagnostic pieces, and a broader understanding of Mycenae is not prioritised.



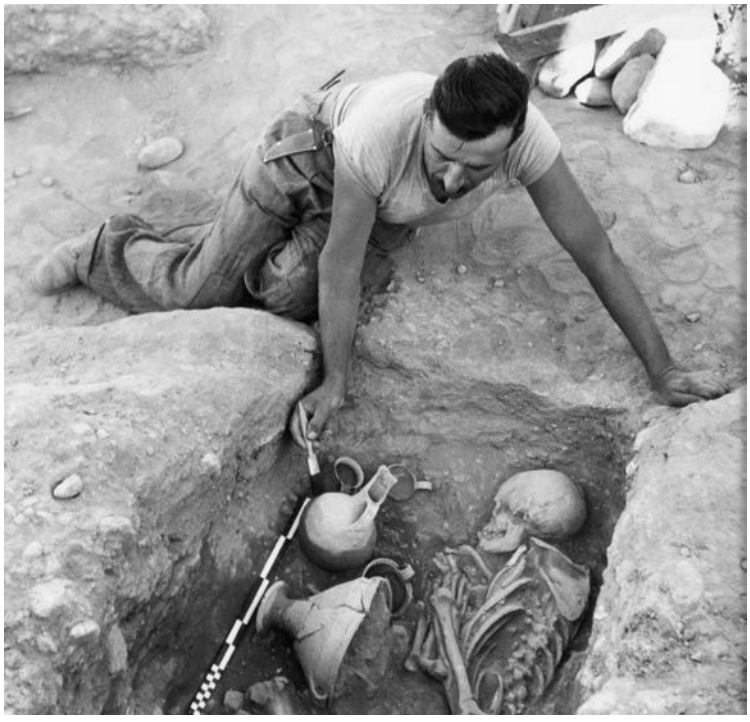
SOURCE 2.20 Archaeological plan of Mycenae with shaft grave, Grave Circle A

SOURCE EXPLANATION There is a lack of more detailed recording or depictions because Schliemann did not take detailed notes. Taking detailed notes is the only way to understand a site once it has been excavated.



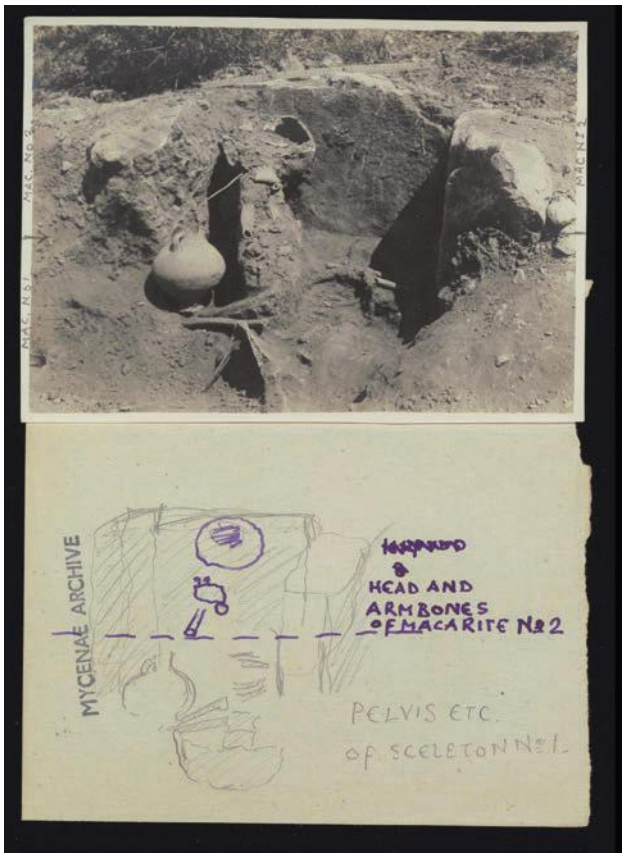
SOURCE 2.21 Excavation of Grave Circle A

SOURCE EXPLANATION It is hard to understand what area is being excavated as there are no string lines demarcating specific excavation areas. There is also no clear separation of archaeological tasks being completed by the individuals in the photo. It is important for modern archaeological excavations to be undertaken efficiently and effectively. The three most important tasks on an excavation are excavating, sieving sediment from the excavation areas to find smaller artefacts potentially missed by a trowel, and artefact recording. All tasks must occur simultaneously to ensure there is not a backlog of one, which may halt progress of the entire excavation.



SOURCE 2.22 Excavating a grave at Mycenae, c. 1951–1952

SOURCE EXPLANATION This photo showcases the careful archaeological hand excavation that has taken place to uncover this grave and its grave goods in situ. Detailed archaeological excavation such as this often requires a soft brush, as is seen in the photo, rather than a trowel that could easily damage the human remains or other artefacts. Archaeology can be a slow, painstaking process but the results are incomparable. If this level of care were not exhibited, our interpretation of the grave would be impacted. The black-and-white scale on the left-hand side of the photo also provides the viewer with an understanding of the grave's size.



SOURCE 2.23 Tomb 508, view facing north, with attached hand-drawn diagram of burial

SOURCE EXPLANATION This excavation drawing is an important improvement from Schliemann's lack of detailed recording. The depiction records the placement of the human remains (head and arm bones) and other grave goods in situ, or as they were uncovered in the ground before being removed. The use of drawings and photos is vital for archaeologists as it provides two complementary records of an excavation and its recovered artefacts. The inclusion of the handwritten note about the corresponding photograph also highlights that the recorder knew a note like this would be helpful at some point in time. Archaeological record keeping must be logical and make sense not only to the people doing the recording but to others who may continue work at a site in the future.



SOURCE 2.24 Excavation of the western long exterior wall of the large rectangular building of the *megaron* type. In both the Mycenaean and post-Mycenaean worlds, *megarons* (large buildings with a porch and central hearth, and sometimes a throne) were used as meeting and ceremonial halls.

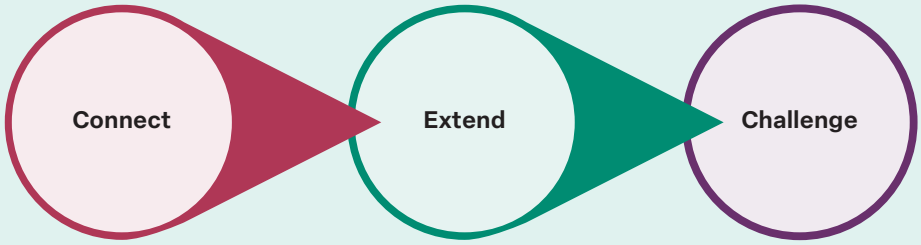
SOURCE EXPLANATION This photo showcases a modern archaeological excavation in action! Clear excavation areas have been created via the presence of string lines outlining specific excavation units or trenches. Each area is covered by a gazebo, which assists the archaeologists to keep cool and remain somewhat protected from the sun and wind. The archaeologists appear to be using pickaxes and trowels, implying that the sediment might be dense and difficult to excavate. Using different hand tools is an accepted practice in modern archaeology so long as no delicate features, such as graves, are being uncovered.

ACTIVITY **2.6**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Consider Sources 2.19–2.24 in response to the following.

1. Identify the methodology and techniques used in earlier excavations compared to today.
2. Complete a Connect, Extend, Challenge.



- How was the information in the sources connected to what you already knew about archaeology at the Mycenae site?
- What new ideas did the sources provide that extended your thinking about archaeological issues at Mycenae?
- In what new direction did the sources take you?
- What challenges or puzzles emerge for you in understanding issues in the continued excavations at Mycenae?

SOURCE 2.25 Mycenaean Foundation, 'Excavations at Mycenae', 2014. The Mycenaean Foundation is a US non-profit organisation that operates exclusively for scientific, educational, cultural and charitable purposes.

The geophysical survey and systematic excavation of the Lower Town at Mycenae (2003–2013) revealed an extensive Mycenaean settlement outside the citadel, which was protected by an outer fortification wall with gates, as well as overlying structures and buildings dating to the early Iron Age (workshops, silos, retaining walls, graves) and the **archaic period**, thus establishing for the first time a continuous, **well-stratified** occupation of Mycenae in all the successive periods from the thirteenth century BCE to the sixth century BCE. Such strong confirmation of continued presence following the decline of the palatial centre of Mycenae, and the subsequent political decentralisation, economic collapse and social dissolution, becomes very important, as it complements and reinforces the post-Mycenaean archaeological picture of transition in the early Iron Age in the **Argolid** and substantiates cultural continuity in the region.

archaic period sometimes considered the earliest phases of a culture; for Greece, the archaic period is considered to be from about 650 to 480 BCE

well-stratified distinct formations of layers, called strata, within the earth

Argolid coming from the Greek region of Argolis or Argolida

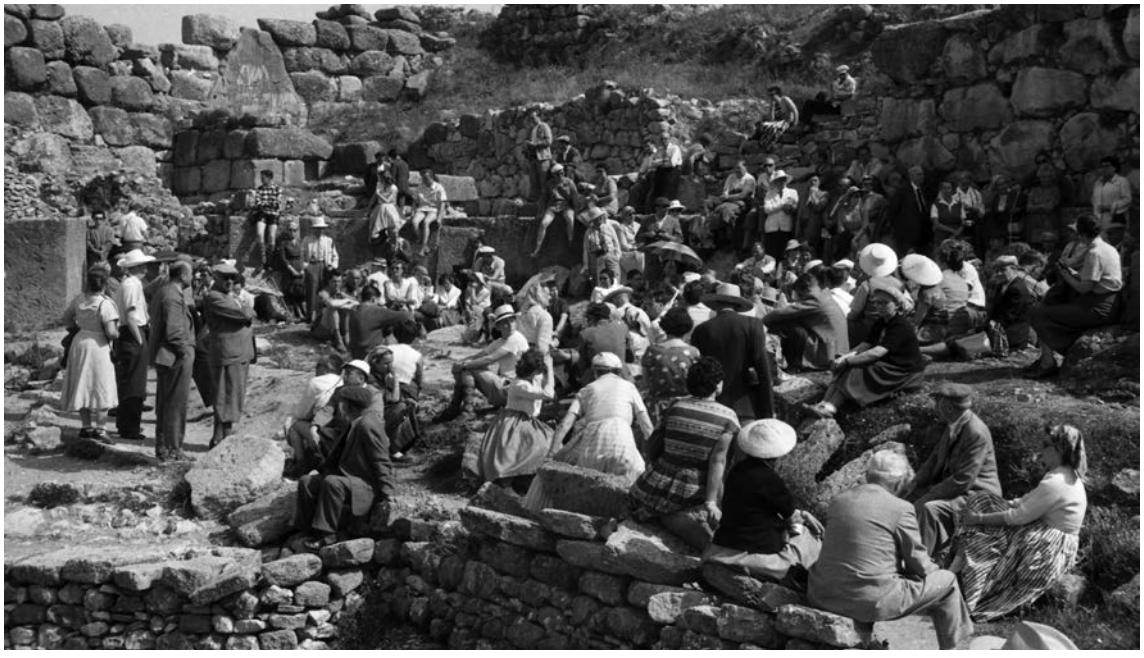
ACTIVITY **2.7**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research
Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. Before exploring the digital archive of the British excavation at Mycenae, devise 3–5 questions on Mycenae excavation methods. Think about how excavation and recording practices may have changed over time, and the similarities and changes you notice while analysing the recordings from different decades. You can also refer to Sources 2.19–2.24.
2. Explore the digital archive (available here: https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/10726) to answer the questions you came up with in question 1.

3. Conduct a Fishbowl.
   a. Students sit in two circles, one circle inside the other. Students in the inner circle discuss what they have discovered about a specific topic.
   b. Students in the outer circle take notes from the discussion. They then ask the inner group questions before contributing to the discussion. The process can be repeated with another topic and the two groups swap roles.

Schliemann appears to have been more concerned with the fame, glory and riches associated with the excavations rather than the systematic and scientific procedures required to properly preserve the archaeological sites and their artefacts.

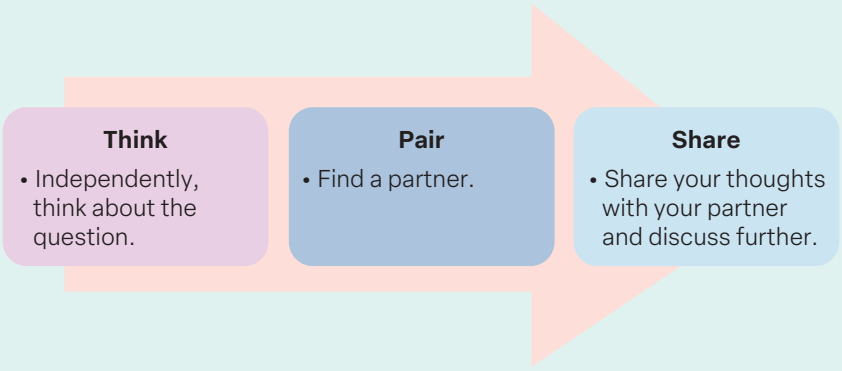


SOURCE 2.26 A group of tourists listens to their guide at the archaeological sites of Mycenae, 1950s

ACTIVITY **2.8**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Consider what is happening in Source 2.26 and the possible impact such an activity could have on the conservation and preservation of the site. Complete a Think, Pair, Share activity:



2.5 Preservation and conservation

Protection of archaeological sites and artefacts is a complex task. Preservation strategies must ensure that things do not deteriorate over time; however, engaging the public is also vital. At its broadest, the past belongs to everyone because it is where we all have come from. Humans are curious beings. We want to feel connected to the past and see the material evidence of people who once lived. While archaeologists are often focused on answering specific questions relating to artefacts and sites, preservation is not only for the benefit of the archaeologists. Ultimately, archaeologists have a professional responsibility to ensure they are providing the wider public with a better understanding of the human past. Therefore, preservation of archaeological sites and artefacts must be done so that they remain accessible (if possible) for the public to experience, learn about and enjoy.

integrity a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the cultural heritage and its attributes

authenticity refers to the genuine nature of a site, artefact or culture: is it real, dated to the correct period in history and geographic location?

However, questions can arise over who has the right or authority to determine how or why a site should be preserved. Funding for ongoing preservation is another, ever-present concern. As was mentioned, the archaeological site of Mycenae was inscribed onto the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1999. To be included on the World Heritage list, sites must meet at least one of 10 selection criteria. Mycenae met five of the criteria, in addition to its **integrity** and **authenticity** being acknowledged.

SOURCE 2.27 The UNESCO World Heritage Listing Outstanding Universal Value Criteria for the Archaeological Sites of Mycenae and Tiryns

Criterion (i): The architecture and design of Mycenae and Tiryns, such as the Lion Gate and the Treasury of Atreus and the walls of Tiryns, are outstanding examples of human creative genius.

Criterion (ii): The Mycenaean civilisation, as exemplified by Mycenae and Tiryns, had a profound effect on the development of classical Greek architecture and urban design, and consequently also on contemporary cultural forms.

Criterion (iii): Mycenae and Tiryns bear unique testimony to the political, social and economic development of the Mycenaean world, thus representing the peak of this early stage of Greek civilization.

Criterion (iv): Both sites illustrate in a unique manner the achievements of Mycenaean civilization in arts, architecture and technology, which laid the foundations for the evolution of later European cultures.

Criterion (vi): Mycenae and Tiryns are intricately linked with the Homeric epics, the Iliad and the Odyssey, which profoundly influenced European literature and arts for more than three millennia.

Cultural heritage protection is a responsibility of the Greek government. As such, Mycenae is protected under the Greek Antiquities Law No. 3028/2002. This legislative act has developed a comprehensive and detailed system of protection for monuments and artefacts within Greece, including that all monuments pre-dating 1453 are owned by the Greek state. In 1964, a ministerial decree outlined the official boundaries of the archaeological site of Mycenae, including a buffer zone around the citadel, areas outside the walls and the wider surrounding area, which captures the natural environment of the site. A scientific Committee for Mycenae was established in 1999 to undertake stabilisation and conservation around the site, in addition to enhancing tourist accessibility of the monuments, such as pathways and informational materials, and other visitor facilities.



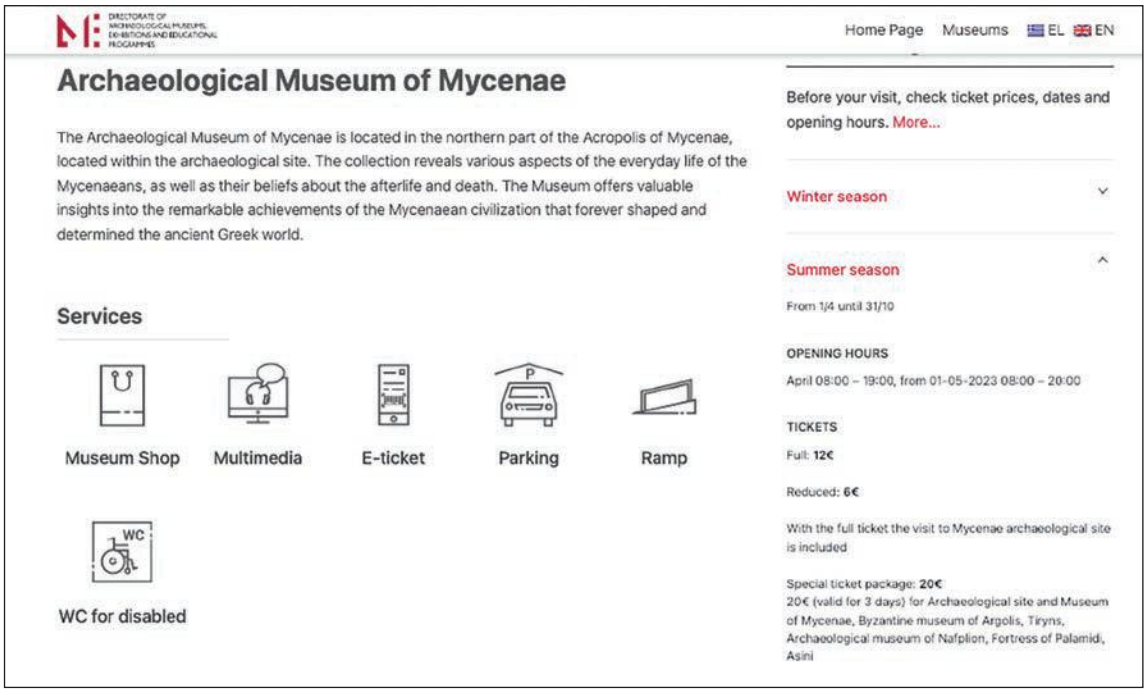
SOURCE 2.28 Illustration representing reconstruction of Ancient Mycenae

An accompanying archaeological museum was created in 2003. Archaeological museums or public collections accompany most, if not all, key sites across Greece. The Directorate of Archaeological Museums, Exhibitions and Educational Programmes is a central service of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports, which oversees the development and management of public archaeological museums and collections in the country. While these smaller museums and collections are beneficial for visitors of specific archaeological sites, the National Archaeological Museum in Athens is the largest in the country. This museum also boasts a comprehensive collection of Mycenaean antiquities, including many of the artefacts originally excavated by Schliemann, such as Agamemnon's alleged death mask.

SOURCE 2.29 'Archaeological Museum of Mycenae: Description', Ministry of Culture and Sport, 2012

The Archaeological Museum of Mycenae is located within the archaeological site of Mycenae. It is configured to serve both the preservation of the material that comes from the excavations in the acropolis of Mycenae, its immediate area and its wider surrounding area, as well as to function as an exhibition space, to inform visitors, complementing their tour.

The museum is housed in a modern building, which was erected at the foot of the hill of Mycenae and in the immediate vicinity of the acropolis. It was built in a way that ensures direct communication with the ancient remains, parts of which are visible from its large windows and which the visitor encounters on his way from the entrance to the archaeological site, where the publishing house is located. It is built on three levels and covers a total area of 2000 sq.m. A large area of the museum is dedicated to the safekeeping of the archaeological material that comes from the excavations carried out in the past and which continue today.



SOURCE 2.30 Screenshot of information about the Archaeological Museum of Mycenae on the Greek Directorate of Archaeological Museums, Exhibitions and Educational Programs website

In 2022, the Greek Ministry of Culture approved several new 'Cultural Routes' throughout Greece. The Cultural Routes program was an initiative launched by the Council of Europe in 1987. The program has created over 40 certified routes or cultural trails across Europe, inviting people to travel across the landscape and discover rich heritage. A 'Monumental works of Cyclopes and people during the Mycenaean period' route, which will focus on the archaeological sites and architecture of early Greece, especially Mycenae, has been allocated 500 000 euros. Finding new and innovative ways for people all over the world to engage with archaeological sites is vital for increasing our knowledge and understanding of the ancient past.

ACTIVITY 2.9

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Visit the Archaeological Museum of Mycenae website.

1. Describe the role of this museum.
2. Explain how the museum fulfils this role for the Mycenae site.

2.6 Mycenae case study: Summing up

Mycenae is tied up with Homer's mythology and Schliemann's controversial antics. However, as ancient historians and archaeologists, you must push past the drama to assess the material remains and what the evidence can reveal about the ancient past. Mycenae was a Bronze Age city, reaching its peak from 1600 BCE to 1100 BCE. Its remaining citadel, including a palace and lavish burials, indicate that individuals with great influence and wealth once resided there. Mycenae showcases the evolution of archaeological practices through time and highlights the important power of heritage preservation.

ACTIVITY **2.10**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues
Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Complete a Generate, Sort, Connect, Elaborate activity about the archaeological discoveries at Mycenae.

Generate	Sort	Connect	Elaborate
• Create a list of facts and ideas related to the archaeological site at Mycenae. • Consider the nature of the site, significant findings, issues and preservation.	• Sort your facts and ideas from the most central to the least. • Place your central ideas near the centre and other related ideas at the edges of your page.	• Connect your ideas by drawing lines between ideas that have something in common. • Explain how the ideas are connected.	• Elaborate on any of your facts or ideas by adding new ideas or interpretations that expand and extend your initial notes.

2. Synthesise evidence from historical sources to create a historical argument in response to the question: To what extent was the archaeological site at Mycenae significant to the field of archaeology?

2.7 Pompeii: How a disaster froze time

Despite the devastation of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE, it has frozen the Ancient Roman way of life for modern interpretation and scholarship. Pompeii is located in the Campania region of Italy, near Naples. Although it was first re-discovered in the sixteenth century by architect Domenico Fontana, excavations did not begin until 1748. It was not until Giuseppe Fiorelli (1860) that the archaeological site became well known. Fiorelli, as the director of the site, developed a methodology that combined discovery with conservation, and this dual focus remains a priority today as Pompeii continues to be an active archaeological park.



SOURCE 2.31 Map showing the location of Pompeii

2.8 Nature of the site

Pompeii is a unique archaeological marvel as the volcanic eruption effectively froze the town and its inhabitants in time, preserving a snapshot of Ancient Roman daily life. As such, archaeological excavation and research continue to reveal new discoveries and provide insight into Pompeiian and Roman lifestyles during the first century CE.

villa an ancient Roman farmhouse or country house often built on a hillside, which could display the owner's wealth and prosperity via the extravagant nature of the property

lapilli rock fragments ejected from a volcano

desiccating removal of moisture from something, causing it to become completely dry

The eruption of Mount Vesuvius ravaged two ancient towns, Pompeii and Herculaneum, though the former will be the focus of this depth study. Several **villas** on the outskirts of these areas were also impacted. The commercial town of Pompeii was once home to 11 000–15 000 residents and encompassed approximately 170 acres, roughly four times the size of South Bank Parklands, Brisbane. Mount Vesuvius is about 10 kilometres from Pompeii, and research suggests the town would have been buried under volcanic ash and **lapilli** in less than half an hour. The intense heat and thick layer of volcanic material ultimately created a seal over the site, **desiccating** all remains. Extreme heat, causing the removal of moisture that would otherwise lead to decay, is considered one of the best ways to ensure archaeological preservation. Therefore, the eruption of Mount Vesuvius has produced unparalleled preservation of buildings, such as homes, temples and businesses, connecting streets, and Pompeii's human and animal occupants.

When Italian archaeologist Giuseppe Fiorelli became site director of Pompeii in 1860, systematic and detailed excavations began. The site, now known as an archaeological park, was divided into nine regions, and every block within each region and each door on every street was numbered. This three-numeral system ensured all buildings could be conveniently located and referenced in analysis and research.

Approximately two-thirds of the well-preserved town has been excavated to date. Portions of the site are open to the public via an open-air museum. An on-site applied research laboratory also supports continuing research and conservation projects.



SOURCE 2.32 Via di Mercurio



SOURCE 2.33 Mount Vesuvius from Pompeii



SOURCE 2.34 Engraving of ruins of Pompeii, 1881



SOURCE 2.35 Map of the Archaeological Park of Pompeii

ACTIVITY **2.11**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research
Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Research the regions of Pompeii and outline the types of buildings in that region.
2. Consider what you found in that region, and make a judgement about that region, the status of its inhabitants or its overarching purpose (e.g. commercial or residential).

2.9 Significant finds

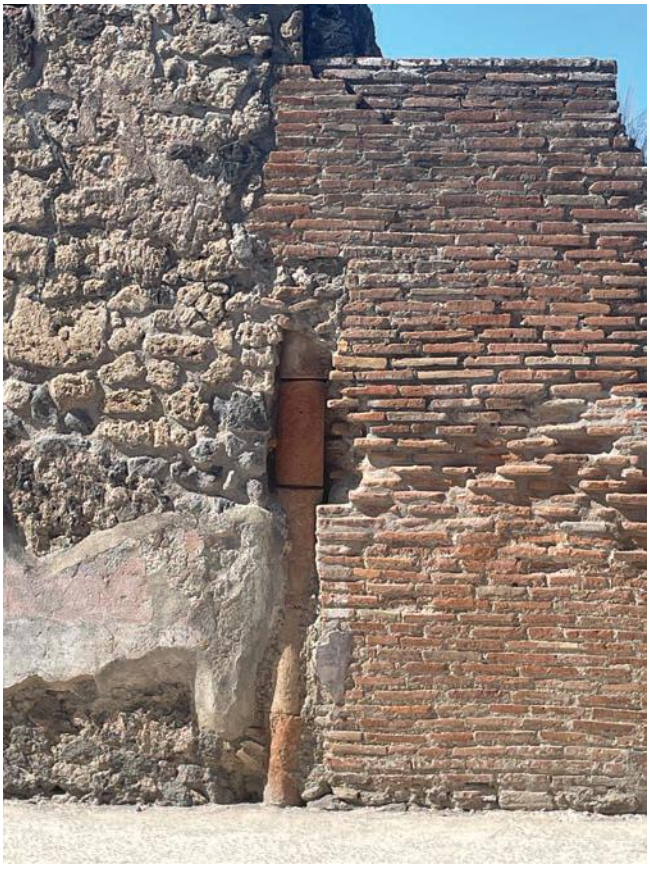
Pompeii has provided a wealth of evidence about the daily lives of the Ancient Romans. The large archaeological park contains finds such as baths, thermopolio (fast-food vendors), bakeries, villas, temples, and human and animal remains encased in volcanic ash.

Some significant discoveries:

- **House of the Vettii:** a lavish villa owned by two brothers who were ex-slaves (freedmen)
- **Villa of Diomedes:** a lavish villa that was one of the first to be excavated (1771–1774)
- **Graffiti:** a record of the everyday Roman. Graffiti has preserved arguments between residents via insults and accusations, romantic declarations between lovers, quotations from Roman poet Virgil, word puzzles and even children practising their letters and the alphabet.
- **Villa of Mysteries:** a well-preserved villa, likely owned by a powerful family
- **Roman launderettes:** laundry shops used human and animal urine, mixed with water to wash the clothes!
- **Shrines with frescoes:** Pompeii is well known for its well-preserved fresco art. Its preservation is likely due to an ancient painting technique which applied paint onto a damp layer of limestone plaster. The paint pigments would dry along with the plaster, sealing the artwork to the wall.
- **Stabian Baths:** There are three main public bathing complexes in Pompeii, the largest being the Stabian Baths, located on the corner of two main streets. For a small fee, residents could catch up with friends, work out at the gym, play games, eat and relax in several baths.



SOURCE 2.36 Frescoes as wall decorations



SOURCE 2.37 Original clay piping used in villas



SOURCE 2.38 Remains of a horse encased in the volcanic ash



SOURCE 2.39 Original mosaic floor found in a villa

ACTIVITY **2.12**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research
Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Using Sources 2.36–2.39, create a concept map for the discoveries at Pompeii.
2. Make connections between the evidence listed by drawing lines between evidence and annotating.
3. Complete an 'I used to think … now I think …' activity.
4. Research the excavation plans of Pompeii online and choose one to explore. Complete a cluster diagram and share with the class.



2.10 Issues

The evolution of archaeology has allowed for the modification of techniques to mitigate against damage to artefacts and skeletal remains. Additionally, archaeological thinking and concepts must evolve alongside these practical advancements. Approximately a third of the Pompeii archaeological park has yet to be excavated. This is a purposeful decision made by modern archaeologists to allow future generations of professionals to excavate and potentially use new technologies to uncover even more about the lives and society of Pompeii.

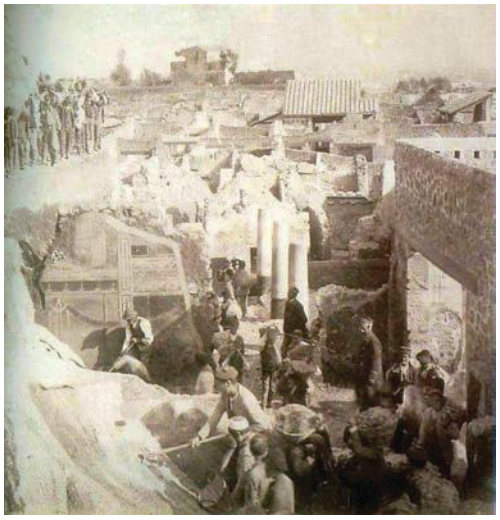
The Fiorelli Method

As with many archaeological sites discovered in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, initial excavations of Pompeii in the mid to late 1700s were haphazard and unscientific. This changed when Italian archaeologist Giuseppe Fiorelli became site director. He is most well known for pioneering a body plaster-cast technique, now known as the Fiorelli Method. Once the plaster and glue mixture had set around the cavities of skeletal remains, the surrounded ash was excavated away to reveal a cast! This method has been used on over 100 individuals since 1863; however, many of the original casts were destroyed or damaged during World War II bombings in 1943.



SOURCE 2.40 Illustration of the Fiorelli Method

Though the Fiorelli Method provided valuable insights, the technique destroyed the bones of the individual that was being cast. Modern archaeologists, though still using the key principles of the Fiorelli Method, use clear resin as it is more durable than plaster and the remaining skeletal elements can now be observed and studied to learn more about the residents of Pompeii. Casts have also been made of wooden shutters, doors, furniture, other structural features and garden root cavities to understand what plants Pompeiians were using.



SOURCE 2.41 Excavations of a house in Pompeii at the end of the nineteenth century

Pompeii Premise

Pompeii is often considered to be the perfect archaeological site, due to its high preservation and the wealth of information that has been gathered. However, some **caveats** must be acknowledged when assuming archaeologists analyse a frozen slice of time. Since this notion has become so commonly used in association with Pompeii, it has become known as the Pompeii Premise. Ultimately, no archaeological site is perfect or completely undisturbed.

caveat a warning or stipulation of specific conditions or limitations that must be taken into consideration

Firstly, Pompeii must be understood within its broader historical context.

- In 62 CE, Pompeii and the surrounding region experienced a devastating earthquake.
- Although contested, some residents may have abandoned Pompeii after 62 CE.
- Although contested, some scholars suggest looters visited the site to recover valuable items, as evidenced by missing bronze statues and marble from the forum.
- Several people survived the 79 CE eruption of Mount Vesuvius.
- Some scholars suggest residents returned to town after the eruption to retrieve belongings that could be salvaged.
- Early tourists visited the site in the decades and centuries after the eruption, as evidenced by several lanterns dated to periods after 79 CE.
- Pompeii is not a tomb, or an accurate representation of all people who ever resided in the town.

The Pompeii Premise is an uncritical assumption that the archaeological remains produced by Mount Vesuvius's eruption can reveal everything there is to know about Pompeii. This is not the case. Archaeologists and historians must rely on other forms of evidence, particularly surviving ancient literary sources, and work of early archaeologists who worked at Pompeii, to provide additional context to their research. And even then, archaeologists will never have all the pieces to the ancient puzzle as things, texts and thoughts are ultimately lost over time and never captured again.

Human remains

Pompeii has been able to preserve and showcase human remains in a unique way that many other sites are unable to replicate. While these casts have become synonymous with the archaeological site, ethical concerns remain over the public display of human remains. There may not be particular cultural sensitivities as there are with many Indigenous communities, including First Nations peoples, but some things should still be considered.



SOURCE 2.42 Volcanic ash and plaster shell of a person killed by the eruption at Mount Vesuvius in 79 ce



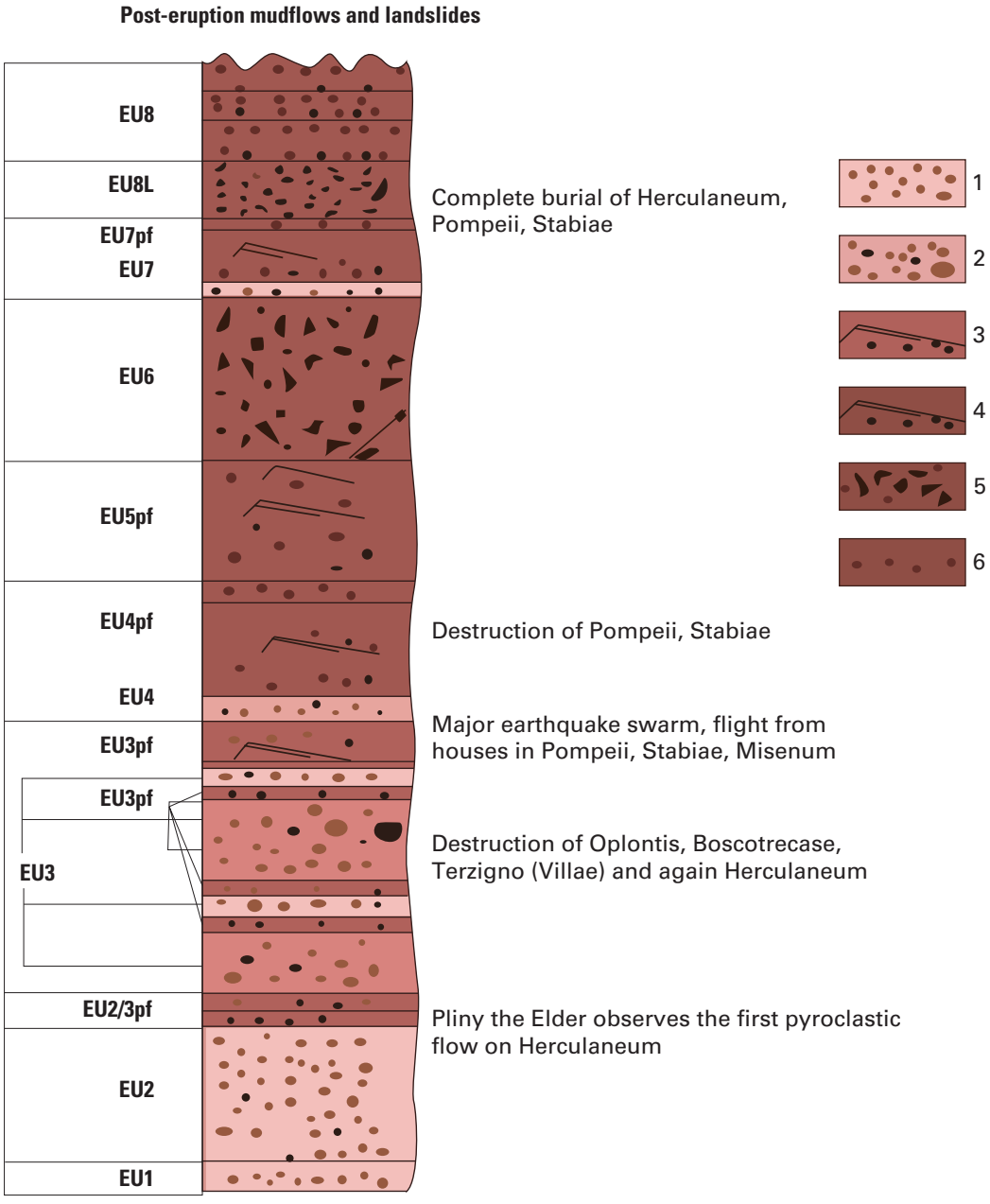
SOURCE 2.43 Remains of a pregnant woman encased in volcanic ash and plaster

When human remains are displayed publicly, they often cease being 'human' and instead become objects that can be observed and studied. It is important that a certain level of respect be maintained when viewing human remains in a public setting. The Pompeii Museum appears to be aware of these ethical concerns as it conducted a two-day 'Human remains: Ethics, conservation and display' conference in 2019, which included several presentations about experience, issues and perspectives concerning the display of human remains and an excursion to Pompeii for all attendees.

ACTIVITY **2.13**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Identify issues with displaying human remains, including their treatment and discussion.



SOURCE 2.44 The sequence of events in relation with the stratigraphy of Pompeii



SOURCE 2.45 Archaeologist discovering antique bakery with bread in Pompeii, 1864

SOURCE 2.46 UNESCO World Heritage Convention for the Archaeological Areas of Pompei, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata

Criterion (iii): Pompeii and Herculaneum are the only Roman cities ruins preserved in such an exceptional way and have no parallels in integrity and extent in the world. The villas in Torre Annunziata have the best preserved wall paintings of the Roman period.

Criterion (iv): The sites of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata provide a full picture of Roman life from the 1st century BC to the 1st century AD through the urban, architectural, decorative and daily life aspects that have been preserved. The villa A in Torre Annunziata is the most significant example of suburban villa of the Roman period.

Criterion (v): The sites of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata are outstanding examples of urban and suburban Roman settlements. They also provide a vivid and comprehensive picture of Roman life at one precise moment: the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD.

ACTIVITY **2.14**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues
Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Explain how the site meets the criteria for World Heritage status.
2. Compare the site's criteria with another site.

Due to the incredible preservation and detailed insights into Ancient Roman life that Pompeii has been able to provide, the site was inscribed onto the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1997. The site is considered of universal importance due to its exceptional testimony of an ancient civilisation and its outstanding examples of Ancient Roman architecture, technological achievements and Roman settlement and culture.

2.11 Preservation and conservation

Pompeii is owned by the Italian state and is managed by the Archaeological Park of Pompeii (local heritage authority). This institution is autonomous, and its establishment was part of a ministerial reform that wanted to ensure archaeological preservation was closely tied to overarching site management. The Archaeological Park of Pompeii staff includes a team of archaeologists, architects and restorers, in addition to security and reception personnel.

Pompeii receives over two million visitors, often international tourists, each year. Fiorelli first encouraged the archaeology of Pompeii to be left in situ. This concept soon evolved into an open-air museum, which is still used at Pompeii today. This model allows visitors to walk along the streets of Pompeii and observe frescoes and buildings. While there are barricades in place, so visitors do not trample over and damage features, an open-air museum gives people an authentic experience and insight into the ancient town of Pompeii. Though beneficial for visitors, open-air museums are vulnerable to vandalism and modern-day looting. Over 200 artefacts, including mosaic tiles, ceramic pieces and other architecture fragments, in addition to natural resources, such as rocks or pebbles, have been returned to Pompeii by individuals in the past decade. Many of the returned pieces included letters detailing their reason for return, with many admitting they had felt cursed or experienced bad luck. Perhaps the greatest threat to open-air museums remains pollutants from the air that may cause archaeological decay or damage.



SOURCE 2.47 Thermopolia with marble counter, and railings to keep tourists out of the area. There are approximately 80 thermopolia in Pompeii.



SOURCE 2.48 Panifici di Popidio Prisco with oven and flour grindstones. This is one of approximately 36 bakeries.

Further research is being undertaken into the casts of the human remains from Pompeii with non-invasive CAT scans, revealing further insight into the age, sex, diet, potential diseases and social classes of the individuals. Furthermore, 3D-printed copies of the casts have also been created to loan out for international museum exhibits. Relying on these types of technological advancements ensures no additional damage is done to the casts and the human remains.



SOURCE 2.49 The courtyard of the House of the Vettii in Pompeii



SOURCE 2.50 Restored artwork in the House of the Vettii in Pompeii



SOURCE 2.51 Plaque on a reconstructed dining room wall in the House of the Vettii in honor of the Minister Guido Baccelli. The plaque is translated as: 'This house discovered in the years MDCCCLXXXXIIII (1894) and MDCCCLXXXXV (1895) not without its furnishings, or its marble statues, or its paintings with its small porch typical of an ancient garden with its flowers again flourishing, with the fountains still gushing. A full example of the resurrection of Pompeiian private life.'

An important part of Pompeii's open-air museum model is restoration work. Visitors must be able to envisage what life would have once been like for the residents of the town. Furthermore, such duties are necessary to ensure the continued safety and stability of the ancient structures.

For example, a multidisciplinary project concerning the Villa of Diomedes has been under way since 2012. The villa has been photographed and scanned with a drone to create a high-precision 3D model of the complex, covering an area of over 3800 square metres. Further archaeological and engineering research has also developed 3D reconstructions of the villa's six construction phases between mid-second century BCE and 62 CE. This groundbreaking research allows people to examine the intricacies of the villa and trace back the development and evolution of the villa and its architecture.

Additionally, Region V of the archaeological park has undergone restoration works since 2018. Parts of Pompeii are perched on escarpments that are largely composed of thick volcanic ash and lapilli. These areas are vulnerable to collapse, especially after heavy rain, which can destroy artefacts and structures. Archaeologists and engineers have been involved in gradually reshaping the escarpment to a more level slope; however, this has also meant uncovering a small area of previously uncovered streets and structures. The restoration of Pompeii is a delicate balance between ensuring structural and landscape stability, while also not putting unexposed archaeology at risk.



ACTIVITY **2.15**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

1. Consider what you have learnt about archaeological issues and preservation/conservation, and write questions about what else you'd like to know about the Archaeological Park of Pompeii.
2. Visit the Archaeological Park of Pompeii website to find answers to your questions.

2.12 Pompeii case study: Summing up

Pompeii is a remarkable and unique archaeological site. The events of a natural disaster have managed to preserve evidence for nine periods of occupation and of over 4000 years of ancient history. Unlike other archaeological sites (see the Mycenae case study), the excavation of Pompeii was scientifically and systematically undertaken by Fiorelli in the nineteenth century. The dedication of many centuries of archaeologists and Italian officials has allowed the site to become a highly popular open-air museum. Restoration works have also been vital to Pompeii's enduring popularity with visitors. Pompeii also provides a cautionary reminder that no archaeological site ever provides a perfect, undisturbed snapshot of the past. Pompeii may appear frozen in time, but it is important to take into consideration various historical contexts to gain a better understanding of the material remains.



ACTIVITY **2.16**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

1. Create an infographic that demonstrates the advancement in archaeological processes over time at Pompeii. You may need to do some further research to complete this task.
2. Take a virtual tour of key sites at Pompeii and complete a See, Feel, Think, Wonder activity.

See	Feel
• What do you see?	• What feelings emerge for you as you look at this site?
Think	**Wonder**
• What does this site make you think about?	• What do you wonder about this place?

CONCLUDING STUDY

2.13 Who should own the Elgin Marbles?

There has been much controversy over who should own the Elgin Marbles, also known as the Pantheon Marbles. Currently, only 50 per cent of the original sculptures survive. These surviving originals have been (approximately) halved between the British Museum and Athens. Greece has continued to request the return of the Marbles held by the British Museum, as they continue to fight for repatriation of remaining fragments contained in other museums. As the British Museum continues to refuse their requests, the debate continues:

- Did Elgin legally remove the marbles?
- Should the British Museum return the Marbles to Greece?
- Should the British Museum keep the Marbles?
- Is there a compromise or solution to the debate?
- Who are the winners and losers?

SOURCE 2.52 Excerpt from the final report on 'Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation', UNESCO, 2018

> **The Parthenon is a unique monument of classical antiquity and an emblematic World Heritage monument of Outstanding Universal Value. The return of its sculptures would confirm the basic principle of the 1970 UNESCO Convention, namely the integrity of the monument.**

ACTIVITY 2.17



Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

Refer to the UNESCO criteria for World Heritage to justify the inclusion of the Marbles.

SOURCE 2.53 Excerpt from the final report on 'Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation', UNESCO, 2018

> **The British stressed that the Parthenon Sculptures in the British Museum were legally acquired by Elgin and that Trustees had clear title to the sculptures since 1916.**

ACTIVITY 2.18



Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Consider, if something is 'legal', does it also make it right?

SOURCE 2.54 C. Sandis, 'Britain has kept the "Elgin Marbles" for 200 years – now it's time to pass them on', *The Conversation*, 7 June 2016

... on the 200th anniversary of the British parliamentary vote to purchase the sculptures that Lord Elgin sawed off the Parthenon, the British Museum continues to insist that its trustees are legally entitled to the sculptures. And it's the reason why human rights lawyers, marshalled by Amal Clooney, have once again advised a Greek government unwilling to put forward a legal claim that it should take this museum to court.

... In 1801, Elgin was the British Ambassador to the Ottoman court from which he obtained a limited license to collect 'some stones of no value' from the Acropolis, with which to adorn his estate back in Scotland. The excised sculpted blocks were shipped back to the UK and in 1811, on the verge of bankruptcy, Elgin offered to sell them to the nation. Five years later, the state bought 15 metopes, 17 pedimental sculptures, and 80 metres of frieze for £35,000 (equivalent to at least £2.4 m today), placed in the trust of the British Museum.

... A recent British Museum press statement claimed that the Parthenon sculptures are 'a part of the world's shared heritage and transcend political boundaries'. Greece's minster of culture, Aristides Baltas, similarly said that 'we do not regard the Parthenon as exclusively Greek but rather as a heritage of humanity'. Yet the British Museum also asserts that the sculptures are 'a vital element in this interconnected world collection' and the usually diplomatic Baltas was also quoted as saying, 'We are trying to develop alliances which we hope would eventually lead to an international body like the United Nations to come with us against the British Museum.'

ACTIVITY **2.19**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Identify issues concerned with the Elgin Marbles.
2. Describe one of the issues in more detail.

SOURCE 2.55 Michael Faraday, letter to Henry Milman, a commissioner for the National Gallery providing a solution to the deteriorating marbles surface problem, 1838

The marbles generally were very dirty ... from a deposit of dust and soot ... I found the body of the marble beneath the surface white ... The application of water, applied by a sponge or soft cloth, removed the coarsest dirt ... The use of fine, gritty powder, with the water and rubbing, though it more quickly removed the upper dirt, left much embedded in the cellular surface of the marble. I then applied alkalies, both carbonated and caustic; these quickened the loosening of the surface dirt ... but they fell far short of restoring the marble surface to its proper hue and state of cleanliness. I finally used dilute nitric acid, and even this failed ... The examination has made me despair of the possibility of presenting the marbles in the British Museum in that state of purity and whiteness which they originally possessed.

SOURCE 2.56 'The Parthenon Sculptures: The Trustees' statement', *British Museum*, 2023

The Museum is a unique resource for the world: the breadth and depth of its collection allow a global public to examine cultural identities and explore the complex network of interconnected human cultures. The Trustees lend extensively all over the world and over 4.5 million objects from the collection are available to study online. The Parthenon sculptures are a vital element in this interconnected world collection. They're a part of the world's shared heritage and transcend political boundaries.

The Acropolis Museum allows the Parthenon sculptures that are in Athens (about half of what survives from the ancient world) to be appreciated against the backdrop of Athenian history. The Parthenon sculptures in London are an important representation of ancient Athenian civilisation in the context of world history. Each year millions of visitors, free of charge, admire the artistry of the sculptures and gain insight into how ancient Greece influenced – and was influenced by – the other civilisations that it encountered. The Trustees firmly believe that there's a positive advantage and public benefit in having the sculptures divided between two great museums, each telling a complementary but different story.

Common misconceptions

All of the sculptures from the Parthenon are in the British Museum

The Parthenon sculptures now in the British Museum were stolen

The Greek government has asked for a loan of the sculptures which has been turned down by the British Museum

The British Museum argues that the sculptures in their collection should remain in London because there's nowhere to house them in Greece and that the Greek authorities can't look after them

The division of the Parthenon sculptures is a unique case. The sculptures can only be appreciated as a complete set

The sculptures could be reunited on the Parthenon

The matter could be solved by the British Museum setting up an outpost in Athens

UNESCO have offered to mediate on the issue but the British Museum has refused



SOURCE 2.57 Part of the Elgin marbles: statues of Leto, Artemis and Aphrodite

SOURCE 2.58 Greek Minister of Culture Theodoros Pangalos, speaking to London journalists, 13 May 2000, cited in 'Policy statement on the return of the Parthenon Sculptures', *www.parthenon.newmentor.net/greece.htm*

> The issue is not confined to the agenda between two governments. It is a matter between two peoples and their respective parliaments. The British Parliament, having entrusted the Parthenon sculptures to the British Museum, is the only authority that can change the situation. The British Government with its parliamentary majority can naturally bring this about speedily but we do not consider this simply as an issue between our two governments.
>
> There need not be any winners and losers in the solution of this long-standing problem. There is no legal claim against anyone in this case and no adjudication is required.
>
> The return of the Parthenon sculptures is simply a matter of co-operation between the Greek and the British peoples in the wider European context to which they both belong ...
>
> Returning the Parthenon sculptures to Greece need not and should not create a precedent, leading to claims for the general restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin and thus depleting the great museums of valuable exhibits. I wish to emphasize yet again that we request the return, of only those sculptures removed from the Parthenon by Lord Elgin and that we make no general claim for the restitution of any other artefacts. We simply want to restore the unity of a unique monument which is the supreme symbol of the Greek cultural heritage and western civilization.

Melina Mercouri, in her tireless campaign for the return of the Parthenon Marbles to their home in Athens, addressed the British Authorities.

SOURCE 2.59 M. Mercouri, 'The Parthenon Marbles', *Melina Mercouri Foundation*, 2022

> You must understand what the Parthenon Marbles mean to us. They are our pride. They are our sacrifices. They are the supreme symbol of nobility. They are a tribute to democratic philosophy. They are our aspiration and our name. They are the essence of Greekness.

ACTIVITY **2.20**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Complete a Tug of War for the dilemma: Who should own the Elgin Marbles?

Identify the factors that 'pull' at each side of the dilemma.

- Keep the Elgin Marbles in Britain OR
- Return the Elgin Marbles to Greece.

Think of 'tugs' or reasons why you support a side of the dilemma.

- Be sure to think of reasons of the other side of the dilemma as well.

Generate 'What if?' questions to explore the topic further.



SOURCE 2.60 The room containing the Elgin Marbles in the British Museum

CHAPTER SUMMARY

DEPTH STUDY: MYCENAE

- Bronze Age archaeological site located in Peloponnese (Greece), immortalised in Homer's epics *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.
- German businessman and amateur archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann is known for his excavations since 1876 and his fascination with Homer's epics.
- There are many issues with Schliemann's work, such as his excavation methods, looting and alleged forgery, as he was more concerned with discovering material objects than in archaeology.
- The site contains buildings such as a citadel, houses, palace, graves, a cultural centre and granary.
- Technology such as ground penetrating radar (GPR), magnetometry and satellite/aerial photography has assisted the ongoing study of the site.
- Mycenae was listed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1999.
- Cultural heritage is the responsibility of the Greek government, which continues to preserve artefacts and sites like Mycenae, and ensure sites and museums are accessible for tourists.

DEPTH STUDY: POMPEII

- The town was preserved under volcanic ash and lapilli due to the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.
- Methods of preserving remains use plaster and glue.
- Pompeii is now an archaeological park and an open-air museum, which provides tourists with an immersive experience of the Ancient Roman past.
- It raises the ethics of human remains as objects.
- The site utilises a system of scientific and systematic excavation with a model of restoration that seeks to protect and stabilise the archaeological site and the surrounding landscape.
- No archaeological site provides a perfect undisturbed snapshot of the past.

CONCLUDING STUDY: ELGIN MARBLES

- Approximately half of the Parthenon sculptures are divided between Athens and the British Museum.
- Greece continues to request the return of the Elgin Marbles from the British Museum to reunite the remaining sculptures at the Parthenon.
- The British Museum argues that Lord Elgin obtained the Marbles legally and is under no obligation to return them.
- An ongoing debate continues.



SOURCE 2.61 The Buddhas of Bamiyan were two sixth-century monumental statues, Salsal and Shahmama, which were carved into the side of a cliff in the Bamyan valley of central Afghanistan. The statues were blown up and destroyed in March 2001 by the Taliban.

CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND

1. Describe the methods of excavation used, over time, at Mycenae or Pompeii.
2. Explain cultural heritage using examples from the archaeological sites at Mycenae or Pompeii.

DEVISE

Devise a key inquiry question and 3–5 sub-questions on one of the following topics:

- Significance of Pompeii for archaeologists
- Treatment of human remains as artefacts
- Significance of UNESCO World Heritage classification for Mycenae
- Mycenae as an evolution of archaeological methods.

ANALYSE

Explain how the same artefact could be interpreted differently at different times.

EVALUATE

1. Evaluate how useful the artefacts discovered in a particular region of Pompeii would be to understanding daily life in that region.
2. Evaluate the reliability of early excavations at either Mycenae or Pompeii.

SYNTHESISE

1. How might scientific advancement in the field of archaeology change our understanding of Ancient Pompeiians?
2. To what extent did Schliemann's methods damage the archaeological site of Mycenae?

COMMUNICATE

Why is it important for archaeologists to consider the involvement or inclusion of the general public during preservation and conservation activities?

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions

1. To what extent is the display of human casts at Pompeii considered unethical?
2. To what extent should the Parthenon Marbles be returned to Greece?

Investigation tasks

1. Investigate the archaeological methodology of a significant archaeologist at one of the sites discussed in this chapter.
2. Investigate 4–6 sources that demonstrate the issues for archaeologists and historians in making sense of the past.

Chapter 9

AKHENATEN

Syllabus reference: Unit 2: Personalities in their times

GLENN DAVIES WITH MICHAEL COCKS

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How can we determine the motivations, attributes and achievements of significant ancient personalities?
- How have ancient personalities been represented throughout time and why do these representations change?

(Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 9.1 A carved face representing the 'heretic pharaoh', Akhenaten

FOCUS: THE HERETIC PHARAOH

Akhenaten was a pharaoh who ruled Egypt in the middle of the fourteenth century BCE during the 18th Dynasty. He is best known for his radical attempt to change Egyptian religion based upon his own revolutionary ideas. Due to this, he is often referred to as the '**heretic** pharaoh'. During his 17 years in power, he abolished the traditional religious practices of Ancient Egypt, created a brand-new capital city and sought to transform thousands of years of artistic conventions. While his attempted changes were practically all reversed after his death, his actions had long-term consequences for Egyptian society.

Akhenaten a pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty whose reign brought in significant, but short-lived changes, including the introduction of a new chief god, the Aten, and the shifting of the capital to a location called Akhetaten

heretic a person holding a religious belief that is in direct conflict with the majority-held religious belief of the culture

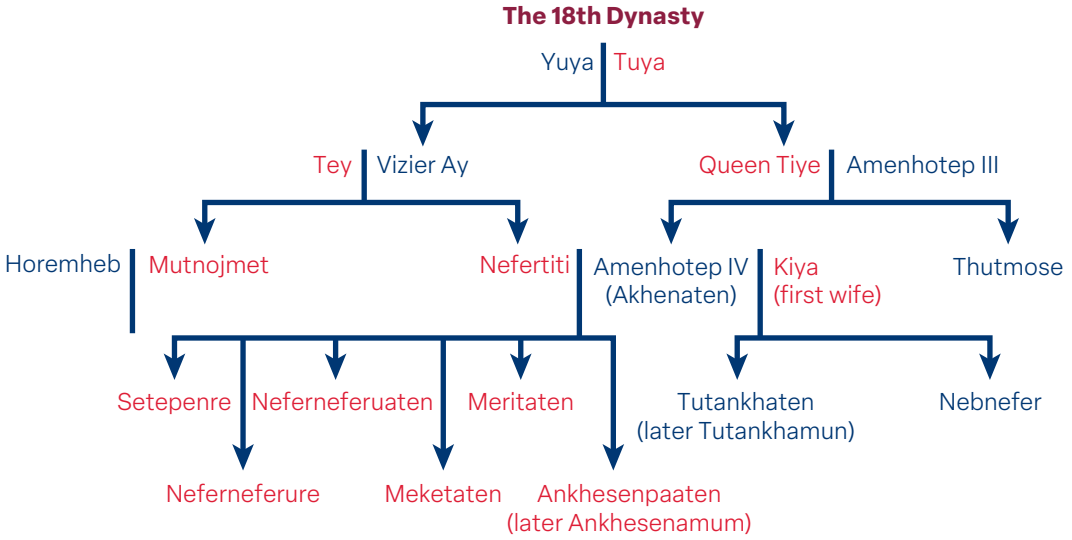


SOURCE 9.2 Bust of the 'heretic pharaoh', Akhenaten, Luxor Museum

CONTEXTUAL STUDY

9.1 Akhenaten's personality and achievements

At the start of Akhenaten's rule as pharaoh, there was no clear indication that he was any different from the rulers who had preceded him. Originally ruling under the name Amenhotep IV, Akhenaten took charge of an Egyptian empire that was at the height of its power and prestige. Egypt's dominant position was the direct result of the successful reigns of a series of competent pharaohs such as Thutmose III and Amenhotep III, who had expanded Egypt's borders south into Nubia and north into Canaan and Syria. Akhenaten was the son of Amenhotep III, and his mother was Amenhotep's Great Royal Wife, Tiye.



SOURCE 9.3 A potential reconstruction of Akhenaten's family tree, with males shown in blue and females in red. It must be noted that historians still disagree on the exact relationship of many members of the 18th Dynasty. What famous names do you recognise in this family tree?

Significant individuals

- Akhenaten: originally known as Amenhotep IV, a pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty who is best known for his attempt to revolutionise Egyptian society based upon his religious system of Atenism
- Amenhotep III: a pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty, the father of Akhenaten
- Ay: a member of Akhenaten's court during the **Amarna period** and who later became pharaoh himself
- Meketaten: Akhenaten's second daughter with Nefertiti
- Meritaten: Akhenaten's first daughter with Nefertiti, and who became the wife of Smenkhkare
- Neferneferuaten: an obscure female pharaoh who ruled Egypt briefly between the reigns of Smenkhkare and Tutankhamun. Some scholars argue that she may have been Nefertiti or Meritaten.
- Nefertiti: Akhenaten's wife who played a key role in his religious revolution
- Smenkhkare: an obscure pharaoh who ruled Egypt immediately after Akhenaten's death. Some scholars argue that he may actually be Nefertiti.
- Tiye: Amenhotep III's wife and Akhenaten's mother
- Tutankhamun: a pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty who was probably Akhenaten's son. He officially reversed the religious policies of Akhenaten.

Amarna period the period when Akhenaten and his successors moved the capital city of Egypt to the new location of Amarna, c. 1350–1330 BCE

During the reign of Akhenaten's father, Amenhotep III, the Egyptian royal court had been relocated from the city of Memphis in the north to Thebes in the south. While Memphis remained the administrative centre of the Egyptian empire, Thebes became the ceremonial and royal heart of Egypt. Akhenaten's selection as the heir to his father at this time is described by modern Egyptologist Toby Wilkinson. Wilkinson described, during the reign of Akhenaten's father, Amenhotep III, the Egyptian royal court had been relocated from the city of Memphis in the north to Thebes in the south. While Memphis remained the administrative centre of the Egyptian empire, Thebes became the ceremonial and royal heart of Egypt. There is virtually nothing known about the young prince Amenhotep, who was later to rule as Akhenaten. What is known is that his elder brother, Thutmose, was the heir apparent. However, when Thutmose died prematurely he not only emerged as the new crown prince but was also crowned at Karnak as his father's co-regent. He was initially titled Amenhotep IV. During the reign of his father there had been a dazzling jubilee celebration held at Thebes involving boats covered in gold and electrum sailing in a specially constructed artificial harbour. It seems that this spurred on Amenhotep IV to resolve to outshine his father when he became sole ruler.



SOURCE 9.4 A statue of Akhenaten's father, Amenhotep III, and mother, Queen Tiye, at the Cairo Museum. What do the postures of the two figures suggest about their relationship to each other?

After the death of his father, Akhenaten became pharaoh at about the age of 19. During his first four years in power, he followed a typical path for a pharaoh, upholding the traditional religious, social and political policies of his predecessors.

This was no surprise, as Egyptian religion had existed for over a thousand years at that point and a complex theology had developed on how the various gods of Egypt looked and what role they played in the people's everyday lives. Egypt's religion, with its traditional gods, is summed up by mid-twentieth-century Egyptologist Alan Gardiner:

SOURCE 9.5 A. H. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, 1961

> The Egyptian religion, as it had already persisted for well over 1500 years, resulted from the fusion of a large number of originally independent tribal **cults**. Every town had its own particular deity, sometimes manifested in a material fetish but more often in some animal shape; such were the cat-goddess Bast of Bubastis, the cobra-goddess Edjō of Butō ... the ibis Thoth of Merhopolis Magna ... or Wepwawe (Ophois) the jackal-god of Lycopolis ... As the pantheon gathered coherence, these animalic divinities were furnished with the bodies and limbs of ordinary mortals and credited with human attributes and activities. Their resulting double nature paved the way for two opposing tendencies. On the one hand the innate Egyptian conservatism, coupled with a keen local patriotism, militated against the suppression of individual difference.

cult a religious group focused on the worship of a particular god

ACTIVITY 9.1

Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Create a timeline (with a minimum of 6 dot points) of Amenhotep's life up until he became sole ruler of Egypt.
2. Could there be reason to doubt Wilkinson's claims about how Akhenaten was feeling during his childhood? (Hint: How accurately can we know what another person is thinking?)
3. By the time of Akhenaten, how old was the Egyptian religion?
4. According to Source 9.5, how had the concept of the traditional Egyptian gods developed?
5. Due to the nature of how they developed, what features did the Egyptian gods have?

Aten the sole god of Akhenaten's religious revolution, depicted the sun as a round disc, often accompanied by rays of light in the form of arms, holding ankh symbols

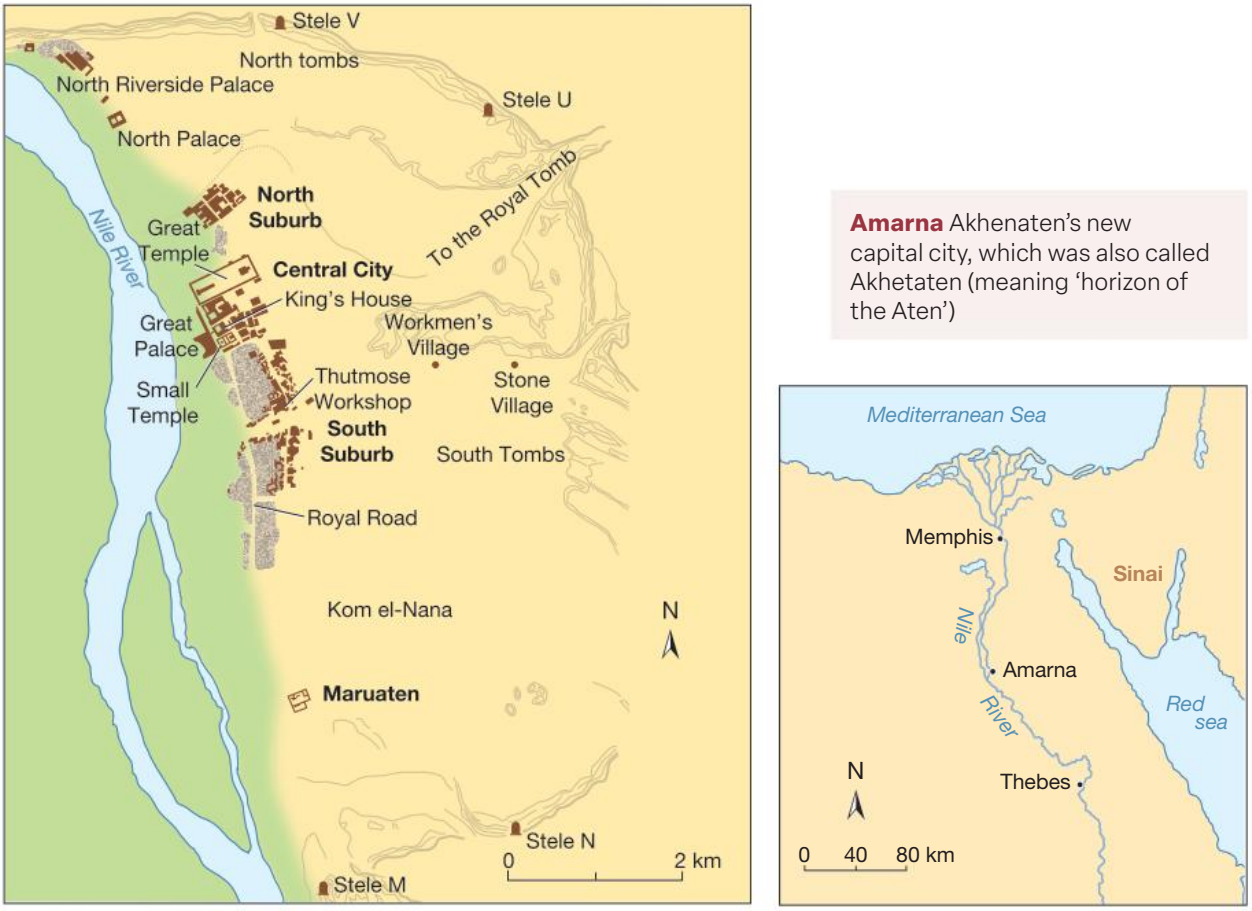
Amun-Re one of the most worshipped gods of the New Kingdom era; composite of two gods, Amun and Re

monotheism the religious belief that only one god exists and that other gods are either false or are manifestations of the one 'true' god

Atenism a modern name to describe Akhenaten's religious system, which replaced the traditional Egyptian gods with one single divinity known as the 'Aten'

9.2 Aten: The Sun god

After only a few years of rule, Akhenaten instituted a significant change in his religious policies. He began promoting a single god called the **Aten** instead of the various traditional gods, especially the powerful cult of the god **Amun-Re** of Thebes. Rather than being depicted as a half-animal half-human god as the traditional deities were, the Aten was represented as the sun itself, typically shown as a round disc in the sky. Shortly after this, Akhenaten then officially abolished all other gods and religious practices and, in their place, potentially created the first **monotheistic** religion in Egypt's history: **Atenism**.



Amarna Akhenaten's new capital city, which was also called Akhetaten (meaning 'horizon of the Aten')

SOURCE 9.6 The layout of Akhenaten's new capital city, **Amarna**, is shown on the left. The map on the right shows Amarna's relative location on the Nile River.

The following extract by Jeffrey Spencer, deputy keeper in the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan at the British Museum, describes Akhenaten's early reign in relation to his religious changes:

SOURCE 9.7 A. J. Spencer, *The British Museum Book of Ancient Egypt*, British Museum Press, 2007, p. 99

> The tension between the hidden creator Amun and the visible sun Aten as source of life found temporary and violent resolution in the reign of Amenhotep IV/[Akhenaten] with a new theology and corresponding innovations in art. The reign opens with the construction east of the Amun temple at Karnak of a new sanctuary to the sun-god. The god is depicted in traditional manner as a falcon, with human body so as to hold human attributes such as sceptres. In the third year the style of depiction of both [pharaoh] and god switches abruptly and without warning to a radically new art in which the sun-god is the solar sphere Aten alone, with its rays extended to give life to the [pharaoh] and his family, and the [pharaoh] becomes a grotesque figure with drawn features, female hips and slight torso but lacking genitalia. The name of the [pharaoh] changed from Amenhotep, 'Amun is content', to Akhenaten, 'of service to the Aten', and the word Amun was hacked out of every inscription in Egypt and Nubia, even at the tips of obelisks. The Aten was given the royal serpent or ***uraeus*** and a name written in two cartouches as if for a [pharaoh], reading 'Ra-Horakhty jubilant in the horizon, in his name as Shu who is in the Aten'.



SOURCE 9.8 Pre-heretical Akhenaten Karnak temple relief, with a depiction of the hawk-headed Aten with the sun disc and the pharaoh Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten), c. 1350 BCE, Egyptian Museum of Berlin

Even though Akhenaten's abrupt religious changes must have been a surprise to the Egyptians themselves, the pharaoh hadn't simply invented a brand-new god. Imagery and references to the Aten have been found in inscriptions during the time of Amenhotep III. It appears that Akhenaten simply developed the early ideas into a far more sophisticated form. Akhenaten's monotheism is described in this extract from Ian Shaw, an Egyptologist from the University of Liverpool.

SOURCE 9.9 I. Shaw, *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt,* Oxford University Press, 2004

The name of the god could be shortened to 'the living sun-disc' or simply 'the sun-disc' (or, to use the Egyptian word, the Aten). The word itself was not new; it had previously been used to refer to the visible celestial body of the sun. During the reign of Amenhotep III this aspect of the sun-god had become increasingly important, especially in the later years of his reign. During the king's sed-festivals, his deified self had been identified with the sun-disc and in several inscriptions, most clearly in one on the back pillar of a recently discovered statue, the [pharaoh] calls himself 'the dazzling Aten'. Originally this 'new' form of the sun-god was depicted in the traditional manner, as a man with a falcon's head surmounted by a sun-disc, but early in the reign of Amenhotep IV this iconography was abandoned in favour of a radically new way of depicting a god – as a disc with rays ending in hands that touch the [pharaoh] and his family, extending symbols of life and power towards them and receiving their offerings. Although the Aten clearly takes precedence over the other gods, he does not yet replace them entirely.



SOURCE 9.10 A depiction of Akhenaten in the form of a sphinx worshipping the Aten. Why might Akhenaten have depicted himself as a sphinx in this image?

ACTIVITY 9.2

Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. According to Source 9.7, how did Akhenaten's artwork at Karnak indicate that he was following the traditional Egyptian religion during his early years as pharaoh?
2. How did the artwork change in his third year of rule?
3. What did Amenhotep IV's old and new names mean? What do you think the pharaoh's reason was for choosing this new name?
4. How do Sources 9.8–9.10 corroborate one another regarding the early depictions of the Aten?
5. According to Source 9.9, how had Amenhotep III used the concept of the Aten during his time in power?
6. When Akhenaten took over as pharaoh, how did he change the portrayal of the Aten?

9.3 Akhenaten: The pharaoh erased from history

The sources most useful in reconstructing the life of Akhenaten are connected with the founding of Akhetaten, Akhenaten's capital. This includes the several so-called 'boundary stelae' found around the city to mark its boundary, as well as a cache of 382 diplomatic texts and literary materials called the **Amarna Letters**, which have provided important evidence about Akhenaten's reign and foreign policy. The letters were discovered between 1887 and 1979, and named after Amarna, the modern name for Akhetaten.

Amarna Letters small clay tablets covered in cuneiform writing, which were discovered in the ruins of Amarna; these tablets were official letters that were sent by rulers in Canaan and Syria to the Amarna period pharaohs

There is very little evidence that survived from the last five years of Akhenaten's reign from about 1341 or 1339 BCE. As a result, the late period of Akhenaten's reign has become a controversial and contested area among Egyptologists. With Akhenaten's death, the Aten cult quickly fell out of favour, even with his own son. Tutankhaten changed his name to Tutankhamun in about 1332 BCE and abandoned the city of Akhetaten.

There also appears to have been the implementation of a *damnatio memoriae* against Akhenaten, with his successors having attempted to erase him and his family from the historical record. *Damnatio memoriae* is a Latin phrase meaning 'condemnation of memory', and consisted of erasing all traces and heritage of a person considered dishonourable by the people or by their political enemies.

After Akhenaten's death, Egyptians started to destroy temples to the Aten and reuse the building blocks in new construction projects, including in temples for the newly restored god, Amun. Almost all evidence of Akhenaten, his wife Nefertiti, and the worship of Aten were erased from history until the rediscovery of Armana (Akhetaten) in the late nineteenth century by the archaeologist Flinders Petrie.

ACTIVITY 9.3

Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

1. Explain the purpose of Akhetaten.
2. Define the term *damnatio memoriae*.
3. List the names excised from official lists of pharaohs. What was the purpose of this activity?
4. How has Akhenaten been described?

DEPTH STUDY

Introduction

Akhenaten's attempt to completely transform Egyptian society affected multiple facets of his empire. It appears that these changes focused predominantly on three areas: religion, politics and art. To try to understand what Akhenaten wanted to achieve with his reforms, it is necessary to explore these three areas of change in detail. This section of the chapter will explore the specific changes in religion, politics and art separately, but it must be noted that they are all interrelated. The new art forms were used in religious worship, and the political reforms were justified in religious language. Likewise, the new theology of the Aten influenced artistic styles, and courtiers used them to justify their political influence. As you read each of the three areas, keep in mind the ways that they would have worked in tandem with the other two.

TABLE 9.1 A list of key dates

c. 1352 BCE	Amenhotep III dies and Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) becomes pharaoh.
c. 1349 BCE	Amenhotep IV celebrates a Heb-Sed festival at Thebes, which was usually held in a pharaoh's 30th regnal year.
c. 1347 BCE	Amenhotep IV adopts his new name, Akhenaten.
c. 1346 BCE	Akhenaten founds a new capital city at Akhetaten (Amarna).
c. 1343 BCE	The attempt to erase the Amun-Re cult occurs.
c. 1340 BCE	Akhenaten holds a great ceremony where he receives foreign tribute.
c. 1335 BCE	Akhenaten dies and Smenkhkare becomes pharaoh.
c. 1334 BCE	Neferneferuaten becomes pharaoh.
c. 1332 BCE	Tutankhamun becomes pharaoh.
c. 1330 BCE	Tutankhamun overturns the religious revolutions of Akhenaten.
c. 1319 BCE	Horemheb becomes pharaoh and attempts to erase the memory of Akhenaten and Atenism.

9.4 Akhenaten's religious changes

Akhenaten's revolution seems to have been motivated primarily by his desire to transform the religious beliefs of Egypt. The main change introduced by Akhenaten was the attempt to remove all of the traditional gods of the Egyptian pantheon in favour of a single, all-powerful god, known as the Aten. Shaw describes this in the following extract:

SOURCE 9.11 I. Shaw, *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt,* Oxford University Press, 2004

> Probably at the same time as [Akhenaten's] name change took place, the traditional gods were banned completely and a campaign was begun to remove their names and effigies (particularly those of Amun) from the monuments, a Herculean task that can only have been carried out with the support of the army. The traditional state temples were closed down and the cults of their gods came to a standstill. Perhaps most important of all, the religious festivals with their processions and public holidays were no longer celebrated either.

SOURCE 9.12 *Great Hymn to the Aten*, apparently written by Akhenaten, fourteenth century BCE

You shine forth in beauty on the horizon of heaven,
O living Orb, the creator of life!
When you rise on the eastern horizon,
You fill every land with your beauty
...
How manifold are your deeds,
Though hidden from sight,
Sole god, apart from whom there is no other!
You created the Earth according to your desire, when you were alone:
All people, cattle, and flocks,
All upon Earth that walk on legs,
All on high that fly with wings,
The foreign lands of the Levant and Kush,
The land of Egypt.
You put every man in his place;
You supply their needs.
Everyone has his food, and his allotted lifespan.
Their tongues differ in speech, their characters likewise.
Their skins are different, because you made the foreigners distinct
...
You are in my heart.
There is none other who knows you,
Only your son, [Akhenaten], Ra's only one,
You have informed him of your plans and your might.
Everyone who has passed by since you founded the Earth,
You have raised them for your son,
The one who has come from your body,
The Dual King who lives on Truth, the Lord of the Two Lands,
[Akhenaten], Ra's only one,
The son of Ra who lives on Truth, the lord of appearances,
Akhenaten, great in his lifetime;
And the King's Great Wife, whom he loves,
The Lady of the Two Lands,
[Nefertiti], living and youthful for ever and ever.

Once Akhenaten had removed the old gods, he replaced them with the sole god, the Aten. However, in the absence of the traditional gods and their religious festivals, Akhenaten had to provide new ways of worship for the people of Egypt. Festivals and processions were public events that occurred every year according to a religious calendar. Akhenaten sought to replace the old events with brand-new ones. Based upon the evidence that survives, it seems that Akhenaten himself had a personal hand in developing the new religious practices, perhaps even writing the new **hymns** for Atenism.

hymn a religious song that was addressed to a particular god or gods



SOURCE 9.13 An artist's depiction of Akhenaten and his family at Amarna. What impression of Akhenaten and his family do you think this artist was trying to create?



SOURCE 9.15 Sunrise over the ruins of the Aten Temple at Amarna. The columns in the distance are modern reconstructions.

In addition to replacing the many traditional Egyptian gods with the Aten, Akhenaten transformed the role that the pharaoh himself played in the religious system. While pharaohs were always considered to have a special relationship with the many gods of the old religion, Akhenaten seems to have made his particular position in the religion even more important than it had been traditionally. This can be seen in the new architecture of the temple of the Aten, the design of which is described:

SOURCE 9.14 I. Shaw, *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, 2004

> **The most conspicuous difference between, on the one hand, the Aten temples both at Amarna and earlier on at Karnak, and, on the other hand, the traditional temples is that the former are open to the skies. A typical temple of the traditional type began with a pylon and an open peristyle court followed by a succession of further courts and rooms, which gradually became smaller and darker as the worshipper penetrated further into the building. In the innermost sanctuary the cult image of the god was kept in a shrine that for most of the time was in total darkness. Akhenaten's god was there for all to see, however, and no man-made cult image was, therefore, needed. The only statues to be found in Atenist temples are representations of Akhenaten and other members of the royal family. In the architecture of these temples a deliberate effort has been made to create as little shadow and darkness as possible ... Light was the most essential aspect of the Aten, who was a god of the light that emerged from the sun's disc and kept every living being alive in continuous creation.**

For centuries, temples were looked after by priests who served the gods on behalf of the Egyptian people and the pharaoh. However, in Akhenaten's new religion, the pharaoh alone became the main intermediary between the Aten and the people. Not only did this increase his personal religious influence, but it also changed how Egyptians were meant to worship and pray to the Aten, given Akhenaten's very intimate role in Atenism.

Egyptologist Alan Gardiner discusses this change:

SOURCE 9.16 A. H. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, 1961

> Akhenaten's own portrait was always very much in the centre of the [new religion], and the manner in which his cartouches are set side by side with those of the Aten show that he was by no means disinclined to claim a share in his divine father's divinity; indeed, one has sometimes the impression that this share approached complete identity ... the implication seems to be that the Aten and his godlike son started simultaneously upon a new phase of their common existence. It is significant also that while Akhenaten prayed to the Aten, his subjects just as often prayed to him ... It seems likely that Akhenaten's dogma never penetrated deeply into the consciousness of the masses. The workmen's village of el-Amarna has brought to light various traces of the older worship, amulets of the dwarf-like god Bes, the sacred eye of Horus and the like.

ACTIVITY **9.4**



Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. According to Source 9.11 what did Akhenaten do to the traditional religious structures of Egypt when he decided to adopt Aten monotheism?
2. Why might Akhenaten have used the army to carry out his orders?
3. According to Source 9.12, what was the Aten responsible for creating?
4. Also according to the hymn, what special relationship did Akhenaten have to the Aten?
5. Since hymns were designed to be sung during religious events to be heard by the attendees of the festivals, what purpose would these words serve?
6. If this hymn was indeed written by Akhenaten himself, what message do you think he wanted to convey to the Egyptian people?
7. What was new about the design of Akhenaten's Aten temple compared to the old temples?
8. Why was light such an important aspect of the new religion?
9. Why do you think Akhenaten would want statues of himself and his family in the temple of the Aten?
10. According to Source 9.16 in what ways did Akhenaten try to equate himself with the god Aten?
11. What did Akhenaten want his subjects to think when they 'prayed to him'?
12. What evidence does the source provide to show that Atenism never successfully changed the religious practice of the commoners?

9.5 Akhenaten's political changes

One of the most profound changes that Akhenaten brought to Egypt was the creation of a new capital city, one that had not existed before. The pharaoh decided to move his entire royal court from the city of Thebes to a vacant plot of land where he founded his own new capital city called Akhetaten (also known as Amarna). The site of the new city was chosen because it had not been the site of any previous settlement and, by extension, was not claimed by any other god in Egypt's traditional pantheon. The site also provided easy access to rich agricultural land, which would supply the city's future population with food.

In the following extract, Spencer from the British Museum describes the new location:

SOURCE 9.17 A. J. Spencer, *The British Museum Book of Ancient Egypt*, British Museum Press, 2007

In his sixth year the [pharaoh] abandoned the building projects at Thebes and founded a new city at Amarna on the east bank of the river in Middle Egypt, near Hermopolis the city of Thoth. The new city was called Akhetaten, 'the horizon of Aten', and the eastern edge of the city was marked by an arc of cliffs broken by the entrance to a desert valley at the exact centre of the arc. This dip allowed the sun to become visible at sunrise a fraction earlier at that point in the cliffs, forming the hieroglyph akhet, 'horizon', for the Aten 'solar sphere'. At the boundaries of the city territory Akhenaten had inscribed stelae to record his foundation and his promise that he would never pass by its boundaries; since the [pharaoh] did visit other parts of the country, 'pass by' must refer to his day of burial, and indeed the wadi at the centre of the cliffs leads round to the tomb of the royal family deep in the desert. The city lay along the edge of the fields, with the main temple and palace complexes at the halfway point in line with the dip in the cliffs. Palaces with garden pools stood at the northern and southern extremes of the city.



SOURCE 9.18 The site of Akhenaten's capital city, Amarna, the ruins of which can still be seen in the desert sands. Why might this part of the Nile have been selected by Akhenaten for his new capital city?

stele (pl. stelae) an upright stone slab or column typically bearing a commemorative inscription or relief design, often serving as a gravestone

Some of the **stelae** Akhenaten had placed around the boundary of his new city have survived. Known as the 'boundary stelae', they are an important source for understanding the motivation for Akhenaten's transfer of the capital city from Thebes to Amarna. The words that appear on these inscriptions were official declarations and must have been personally approved by the pharaoh.

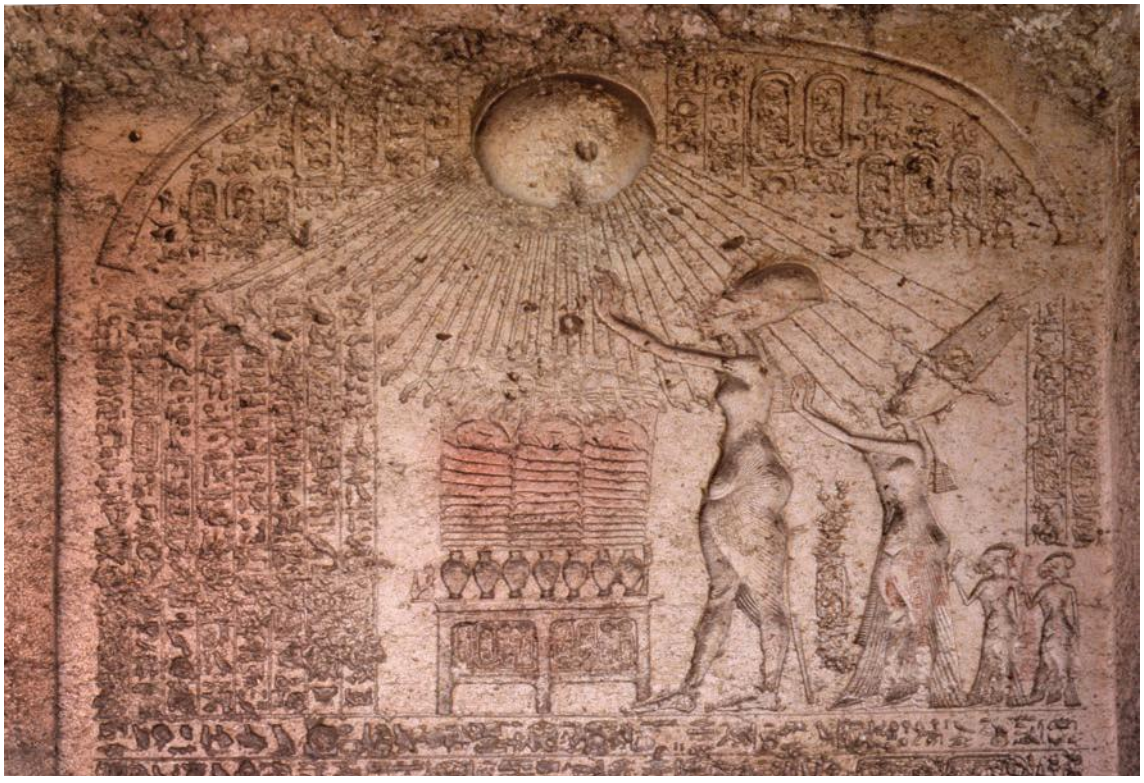
SOURCE 9.19 Boundary stele of Akhenaten, c. 1349 BCE

On this day, when [Akhenaten] was in Akhetaten, His Majesty [appeared] on the great chariot of electrum ... Setting [off] on a good road [toward] Akhetaten, His place of creation, which He made for Himself that He might set within it every day ... There was presented a great offering to the ... Aten, consisting of bread, beer, long- and short-horned cattle, calves, fowl, wine, fruits, incense, all kinds of fresh green plants, and everything good, in front of the mountain of Akhetaten

...

[The pharaoh addresses his gathered courtiers]

As the Aten is beheld, the Aten desires that there be made for him ... as a monument with an eternal and everlasting name. Now, it is the Aten, my father, who advised me concerning it, [namely] Akhetaten. No official has ever advised me concerning it, not any of the people who are in the entire land has ever advised me concerning it, to suggest making Akhetaten in this distant place. It was the Aten, my fath[er, who advised me] concerning it, so that it might be made for Him as Akhetaten ... Behold, it is Pharaoh who has discovered it: not being the property of a god, not being the property of a goddess, not being the property of a ruler, not being the property of a female ruler, not being the property of any people to lay claim to it.



SOURCE 9.20 Each of the surviving Amarna boundary stelae is designated a letter: this one is 'A'.

ACTIVITY **9.5**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. According to Source 9.17, why did Akhenaten choose the location next to a break in the cliffs to build a new capital city?
2. What did Akhenaten write on the stelae placed around the site of Amarna?
3. What buildings were constructed in the new capital city?
4. According to the inscription, why was the city of Akhetaten (Amarna) built?
5. What kinds of religious offerings were made to the Aten?
6. According to Source 9.19, who told Akhenaten where his new city should be built?
7. Why might Akhenaten have wanted this information carved into the cliffs surrounding his new city?

9.6 Akhenaten's changes to art

The changes introduced by Akhenaten appear to have had a profound effect on the artistic styles of Ancient Egypt. For thousands of years before the reign of the 'heretic pharaoh', Egyptian art forms had changed very little. The traditional way of depicting people and gods was highly stylised, with all being presented in a rigid two-dimensional manner and people of great importance being depicted as physically larger than those who were of lesser importance. The Amarna art style developed and changed during Akhenaten's reign. Gardiner describes this change:

SOURCE 9.21 A. H. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, 1961, p. 214

> Though [Akhenaten's] earliest monuments do not present his features and figure as markedly different from those of any earlier Egyptian prince, the representations of only a few years later provide us with frankly hideous portraits the general fidelity of which cannot be doubted. The elongated head slopes forward from a long thin neck; the face is narrow, showing a prominent nose, thick lips and a rounded protruding chin; the body with its sunken chest, swelled out stomach, wide thighs, and slender calves, is the reverse of virile ... the standing colossi from his peristyle court at Karnak have a look of fanatical determination such as his subsequent history confirmed only too fatally.



SOURCE 9.22 Granodiorite seated statue of Amenhotep III, British Museum



SOURCE 9.24 Colossus of Akhenaten, fourteenth century BCE, Cairo Museum

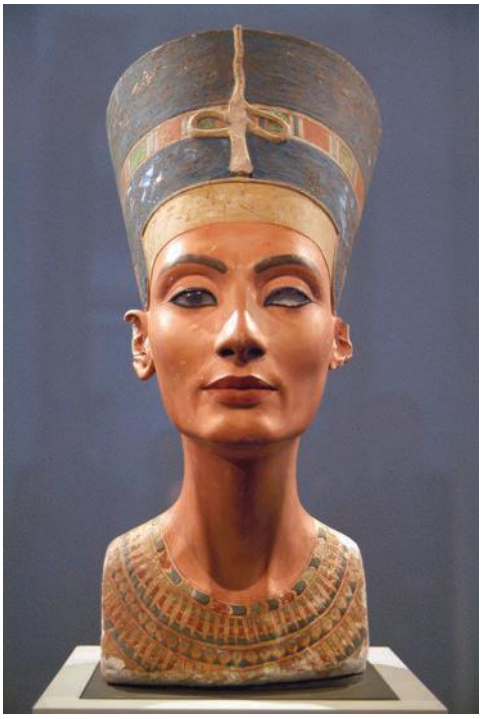
Historians have offered different theories about the changes in Akhenaten's art forms.

SOURCE 9.23 M. Van De Mieroop, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley, 2011

> Art historians and others have debated the intent of these depictions at length. Did Akhenaten and his family truly look like this, and if so why (numerous theories of Akhenaten's exotic illnesses circulate), or do we see representations that are as conventional and artificial as the traditional form in Egyptian art? Amarna art is truly innovative in some of the scenes it depicts. In no other period do we see such intimacy among royal family members and scenes of daily life are much more vivid now than in other periods. The sculptors of Egypt had to learn the new style quickly to produce an enormous output, and archaeologists have found several models with details of the human body, including images of hands in various postures. Most famous today is the model head of Nefertiti, discovered in the house of sculptor Thutmose and now in Berlin's Egyptian Museum.

Akhenaten also used his artistic changes to depict his family in a different way. This is particularly true of how he had his queen, Nefertiti, portrayed in engravings. Akhenaten and Nefertiti had married before the death of Amenhotep III, and Nefertiti became one of the most prominent figures during Akhenaten's reign. After Akhenaten had begun his revolution and moved his capital city to Amarna, he also increased the importance of Nefertiti.

In various images found at Amarna, Nefertiti was portrayed as equal to the pharaoh in power and dignity. In previous generations, queens were usually depicted in carvings as much smaller in size than the pharaoh himself, signifying that they were less important. However, in many engravings during the Amarna period, Nefertiti was portrayed at the same size as Akhenaten, clearly indicating that she was of almost equal importance as the pharaoh. (Although examples like Source 9.26 show that there were some exceptions to this rule.) Furthermore, she is also shown participating in the same royal ceremonies as her husband and even doing the same royal actions. These portrayals seem to show that she was considered equal to her husband in many ways.



SOURCE 9.25 Bust of Nefertiti, c. 1345 BCE, Egyptian Museum of Berlin. Why do you think pharaohs made busts such as this?



SOURCE 9.26 Akhenaten, Queen Nefertiti and daughters in the Tomb of Mahu, Amarna



SOURCE 9.27 House altar showing Akhenaten, Nefertiti and three of their daughters, c. 1340 BCE, Egyptian Museum of Berlin

This new style of artistic representation also changed how the royal family was portrayed. On several inscriptions, Akhenaten's daughters can be seen playfully interacting with their parents. This contrasts with traditional styles of Egyptian artwork, which usually showed people in rigid, emotionless poses.

The attempt to convey the message that Nefertiti was equally as important as Akhenaten himself may have been ultimately successful. While details from the primary sources are fragmentary, they may indicate that Nefertiti took charge of Egypt upon Akhenaten's death. Some scholars have speculated that the pharaoh listed as Akhenaten's successor, Smenkhkare, may have been the throne name of Nefertiti.

SOURCE 9.28 I. Shaw, *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt,* Oxford University Press, 2004

Whether or not Nefertiti survived Akhenaten, who died in his year 17, is uncertain. An ephemeral [pharaoh] Smenkhkare with virtually the same throne name as Nefertiti/Neferneferuaten appears in some inscriptions from the end of the Amarna Period; in one or two rare representations he is accompanied by his queen Meritaten. The identity of this Smenkhkare is uncertain. Many scholars continue to see him as Nefertiti's male successor, perhaps a younger brother or even another son of Akhenaten, but there is a strong possibility that 'he' was actually none other than Nefertiti herself who, like Hatshepsut before her, had assumed a male persona and ruled along for a brief period after the death of Akhenaten, with Meritaten in the ceremonial role of 'Great Royal Wife'. Akhenaten's successor probably did not survive him for very long, and, when he/she died, the very young Tutankhaten, the only remaining male member of the royal family, mounted the throne.

ACTIVITY **9.6**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. According to Source 9.21, how did Akhenaten portray himself in his earliest monuments?
2. Why does Gardiner say that Akhenaten's later images of himself were 'frankly hideous'?
3. Compare the two statues in Sources 9.22 and 9.24. What is different between the two artistic styles? (Hint: Compare the different body shapes.)
4. In what ways does Source 9.24 corroborate the descriptions offered in Source 9.21?
5. According to Source 9.23, what are some of the potential reasons for Akhenaten's peculiar art forms?
6. What was evident in the new style that was seen in 'no other period'?
7. What artefacts have been discovered that show that the Amarna artists were experimenting with the new art style?
8. Study Source 9.26 and answer the questions.
   a. Based on the fact that the scene depicts Akhenaten and Nefertiti giving gifts to the Egyptian people, what might it suggest Akhenaten wanted the people to think about Nefertiti?
   b. This carving was discovered in the tomb of a noble called Mahu at Amarna. Traditionally tombs were decorated with images of the Egyptian gods. Why would this tomb have images of Akhenaten and Nefertiti instead?
9. Study Source 9.27 and answer the questions below.
   a. Akhenaten (on the left) and Nefertiti (on the right) are depicted as being the same size. In terms of Egyptian art, what does that portray about their importance?
   b. Look carefully at how the children in this image are carved. What is each child doing?
   c. What do you think the artist was trying to say about the relationship between Akhenaten and his family by portraying them in this way?
   d. This source is an engraving from a small shrine that was found in a house at Amarna. Why would a shrine to the Aten have his image on it?
   e. What might this carving indicate about the role that the royal family played in the private religious worship of the Egyptian people?
10. According to Source 9.28, for how many years did Akhenaten rule Egypt before he died?
11. What evidence suggests that pharaoh Smenkhkare might actually have been Nefertiti?
12. Who became pharaoh after the death of Smenkhkare?

9.7 Akhenaten's reign

Opinions about Akhenaten and his attempted reforms of Egyptian society have differed widely. Even the Ancient Egyptians themselves had strong views about Akhenaten's time in power. Some have seen him as a passionate social reformer, while others understand him as a politically inept zealot.

While many of Akhenaten's subjects seemed to have willingly adopted his new ideas, there were others who were more critical. Even during his 17 years in power, there were complaints that the pharaoh was not ruling effectively. The amount of money, time and manpower that would have been required to relocate and build his capital city would have diverted a lot of the country's energies away from other projects and concerns. It appears that Akhenaten's focus on Amarna resulted in the neglect of his duties as a commander-in-chief of his armies. Numerous letters were discovered in the ruins of Amarna (known as the Amarna Letters) that include communication with cities in Syria that had been allies with Egypt. However, it appears that during Akhenaten's reign, very little financial or military support was sent to these cities from Egypt. The letter below is one of many sent to Egypt from cities in Syria that complained about the limited concern the pharaoh seemed to demonstrate for the region.

SOURCE 9.29 Amarna Letter EA 59

> **To the [pharaoh] of Egypt, our lord: Message of the citizens of Tunip, your servant. For you may all go well. And we fall at the feet of my lord. My lord, thus says Tunip, your servant: Tunip – who ruled it in the past? Did not [Thutmose III] [your ancestor] rule it? ... And now Aziru is going to hear that in Hittite territory a hostile fate has overtaken your servant, a ruler [and] your gardener. Should his [the pharaoh's] troops and his chariots be delayed, Aziru will do to us just as he did to Nii. If we ourselves are negligent and the [pharaoh] of Egypt does nothing about these things that Aziru is doing, then he will surely direct his hand against our lord. When Aziru entered Sumur, he did to them as he pleased, in the house of the [pharaoh], our lord. But our lord did nothing about things. And now Tunip, your city, weeps, and its tears flow, and there is no grasping of our hand. We have gone on writing to the [pharaoh], our lord, the [pharaoh] of Egypt, for 20 years, and not a single word of our lord has reached us.**

After Akhenaten's death, signs of discontent among the Egyptians become evident in the archaeological record. One of the pharaohs who succeeded Akhenaten was a young boy called Tutankhaten (later Tutankhamun). It was during his short reign that Egypt reversed all of the changes brought about by Akhenaten. The city of Amarna was abandoned and the capital city was returned to Thebes. Atenism was abandoned and the temples of the traditional gods were reopened. To celebrate the return to the traditional way of life, Tutankhamun carved a stele that stood in the Karnak temple of Amun-Re in Thebes, which boasted of the fact that he was responsible for overturning Akhenaten's religious changes.



SOURCE 9.30 The Amarna Letters on clay tablets with cuneiform script, written in Akkadian

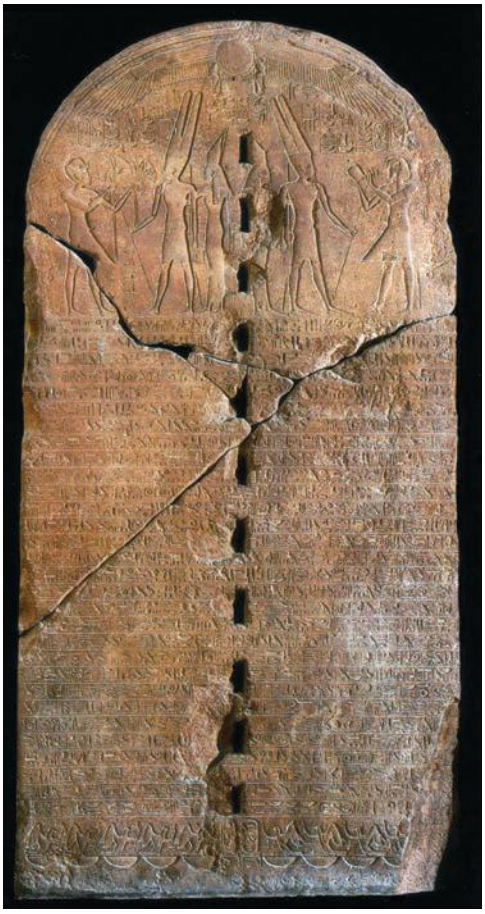
SOURCE 9.31 Translation of the inscription of the restoration stele of Tutankhamun, c. 1330 BCE

The perfect ruler who does whatever is effective for [Amun-Re] his father and all the gods, having restored what was destroyed as a pious act for all time and having driven out Chaos throughout the Two Lands so that Order remains [in her place]; and who causes falsehood [once again] to be an abomination and the Earth [to be] as it was in the beginning.

When His Majesty rose as king, the temples and the cities of the gods and goddesses from Elephantine to the marshlands of the Delta ... were fallen into ruin. Their shrines were fallen into decay and had become weed-strewn mounds. Their sanctuaries were as if they had never been and their enclosures had become footpaths. For the Earth was like a sickness. The gods [had] turned their back on this land. If an army [was] sent to the Levant to extend the borders of Egypt, it met with no success. If supplication was made to a god to ask something of him, he did not come at all. If a goddess was beseeched likewise, she did not come at all. Their spirits were weak in their bodies and they were destroying creation.

When His Majesty was in his palace ... His Majesty made monuments for [all] the gods, [fashioning] their images from the best pure electrum from foreign lands; building their shrines anew as monuments for eternity, endowed with possessions for ever; laying down divine offerings for them – daily offerings – and endowing their food-offerings on Earth. He gave more than had existed before, surpassing what had been done since the time of the ancestors. He appointed lay priests and clergy from among the children of town officials, the reputed sons of well-known men.

The gods and goddesses who are in this land, their hearts are joyful. The owners of shrines rejoice, the riverbanks shout praises, exultation is throughout the [entire] land now that good things have come to pass.



SOURCE 9.32 The restoration stele of Tutankhamun



ACTIVITY **9.7**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Source 9.31 is the translation of Source 9.32. Study Source 9.31 and answer the questions.

1. How does the source describe the state of the traditional religious shrines at the start of Tutankhamun's reign?
2. Even though Akhenaten is not mentioned by name, what is mentioned in the text that clearly shows that Tutankhamun is responding to Akhenaten's changes?
3. Given that this stele was set up in the temple of Amun-Re at Thebes, what do you think the purpose of this inscription was?

CONCLUDING STUDY

9.8 Forgetting and remembering Akhenaten

The memory of Akhenaten and his religious reforms were deliberately forgotten by the Egyptians, as his radical religious revolution was deemed heretical. As a result, many people didn't even know that Akhenaten had existed until his inscriptions were rediscovered during archaeological work in the nineteenth century CE. Due to the concerted attempts to remove Akhenaten's memory by the Ancient Egyptians themselves, ancient sources about his time in power are rare. Egyptologist Barry Kemp explains how this obstruction of sources, and their scarcity, has caused problems for those wishing to study Akhenaten.

SOURCE 9.33 B. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt, An Anatomy of a Civilisation*, Routledge, 1991, p. 264

> **Akhenaten can appear to us as a remarkable and somewhat tragic figure because he seems to have perceived the irrelevance of much of the thought of his day, yet was unable to put into its place anything that satisfied man's universal desire for complexity in thought ... The lack of background sources cripples the historian. It has proved impossible to write a history of Akhenaten's reign which does not embrace an element of historical fiction.**

As a result of the limited ancient sources and the fragmentary information provided by them, historians have drawn quite different conclusions about Akhenaten's time in power and his personality. Each historian bases their conclusions on a similar set of ancient sources.

Early-twentieth-century archaeologist William Flinders Petrie describes Akhenaten as a devotee of truth:

SOURCE 9.34 W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Tell El Amarna*, Methuen & Co., 1894, p. 41

> **No other king ever dedicated himself to an ethical idea as Akhenaten did ... The attainment and spread of truth was the object of his life. In the details of private life the same aim at truth is seen. He, truly devoted to his one queen, is not ashamed of whatever is the truth, and he appears with her on all occasions; he is determined not to suppress anything, but openly kisses the queen as they ride in a chariot, and dances her on his knee with the babies as he sits on a throne. His domestic affection is the truth, and as the truth he proclaims it. Here is a revolution in ideas! No king of Egypt, nor of any other part of the world, has ever carried out his honesty of expression so openly. His domestic life was his ideal of the truth of life, and as part of his living in truth he proclaims it as the true life to his subjects. Thus in every line Akhenaten stands out as perhaps the most original thinker that ever lived in Egypt, and one of the great idealists of the world.**

ACTIVITY **9.8**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. In Source 9.33, what does Kemp mean by 'the lack of background sources cripples the historian'?
2. What does Kemp mean when he says that historians have to 'embrace an element of historical fiction'?
3. Kemp went on to say it is as if one has to choose between portraying him as a dreamer or a madman. Based upon what you have learnt about Akhenaten so far, which description best fits his character in your opinion: dreamer or madman?
4. Study Source 9.34 and answer the questions.
   a. According to Flinders Petrie, what was Akhenaten's main aim as pharaoh?
   b. What evidence does Flinders Petrie provide to prove this?
   c. What evidence is there that Flinders Petrie provides a biased view of Akhenaten? Provide a direct quote to show this bias.

9.9 Modern perspectives on the significance of Akhenaten

Modern Egyptologist Donald Redford is of the opinion that Akhenaten was an insecure dictator:

SOURCE 9.35 D. B. Redford, *Akhenaten, the Heretic King*, Princeton University Press, 1984, p. 233

A man deemed ugly by the accepted standards of the day, secluded in the palace in his minority, certainly close to his mother, possibly ignored by his father, outshone by his brother and sisters, unsure of himself, Akhenaten suffered the singular misfortune of acceding to the throne of Egypt and its empire. We have no idea who or what influenced him in his formative years; but he was not brought into contact with his father's court, nor is there any evidence that he spent time at Heliopolis ... Akhenaten, whatever else he may have been, was no intellectual heavyweight ... I strongly suspect Akhenaten also had a flair for art, sculpture and design, although this might be harder to demonstrate ... To me it is the art associated with his program that remains Akhenaten's single most important contribution.

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.

Cyril Aldred, a twentieth-century Egyptologist and art historian, depicts Akhenaten as a devoted family man:

SOURCE 9.36 C. Aldred, *Akhenaten: King of Egypt*, Thames & Hudson, 1988, p. 305

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 with 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.

ACTIVITY **9.9**



Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Study Source 9.35 and answer the questions.
   - **a.** What does Redford believe was Akhenaten's only real skill?
   - **b.** In what ways does Redford believe that Akhenaten was a totalitarian ruler?
2. Study Source 9.36 and answer the questions.
   - **a.** What descriptions does Aldred provide that make him believe that Akhenaten is 'the good ruler who loves mankind'?
   - **b.** In what ways do Sources 9.35 and 9.36 disagree about the character of Akhenaten?

ACTIVITY **9.10**



Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Do some background research on the three scholars who wrote Sources 9.34–9.36. Find out their academic credentials: where did they study? What field do they specialise in and how many years have they been invested in their field?
2. Based upon your background research, which of the three experts are you more likely to trust? Make sure you use the information you found in your research to justify your answer.
3. Sources 9.34 to 9.36 provide different interpretations of the character and achievements of Akhenaten. Choose one interpretation that you think best explains who Akhenaten really was. Find two other sources from this chapter that would be the best supporting evidence for this interpretation. For each of the two sources you have chosen, answer the questions:
   - **a.** How does this source support your chosen interpretation of Akhenaten?
   - **b.** For what purpose was this source made?
4. An alternative perspective could be that Akhenaten's revolution was not so much religiously motivated, but more politically motivated. Research this position and identify a modern historian who argues for this understanding of Akhenaten.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Akhenaten took power as Amenhotep IV and was a traditional pharaoh for the first few years of rule.
- Around his fifth year of rule, he changed his name and began enforcing his new religion: Atenism.
- Akhenaten banned the worship of the traditional Egyptian gods and replaced their priesthoods with himself.
- The capital city was moved from Thebes to a brand-new city, Amarna, which was purpose-built by Akhenaten.
- A new art style was introduced, which contained both realistic and grotesque forms.
- Nefertiti was Akhenaten's wife and portrayed as of equal importance to Akhenaten.
- Akhenaten's changes were ultimately reversed by the time of Tutankhamun.
- Modern scholars disagree about Akhenaten's real motivations.



SOURCE 9.37 Statue of Nefertiti, wife of Akenaten, at the Neues Museum, Berlin

CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
What were the main differences between Atenism and the traditional Egyptian religion?

DEVISE
Devise 3–5 sub-questions for the following key inquiry question: To what extent did the new theology of the Aten, introduced by the Pharaoh Akhenaten during the 18th Dynasty, change Egyptian religion?

ANALYSE
How did the new Amarna art forms help convey Akhenaten's religious ideas?

EVALUATE
Why do modern historians draw different conclusions about Akhenaten's personality?

SYNTHESISE
What changes did Akhenaten try to enact in Egyptian society?

COMMUNICATE
From the three alternatives provided for Akhenaten's true motives (refer to Sources 9.34–9.36), which do you think is the most convincing? Ensure you provide an analysis and evaluation of your sources as part of your answer.

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions
1. How did Akhenaten use art, politics and religion to promote his personal ideology?
2. What were Akhenaten's primary motivations for attempting to change Ancient Egyptian society?
3. Why did Akhenaten's revolution ultimately fail to change Ancient Egyptian society in a lasting way?

Investigation tasks
1. How important was Nefertiti's role in Akhenaten's attempts to change Egyptian society?
2. How successful was Akhenaten's foreign policy during his reign?
3. Why does Akhenaten remain a controversial figure in ancient history?

Chapter 10

PERIKLES

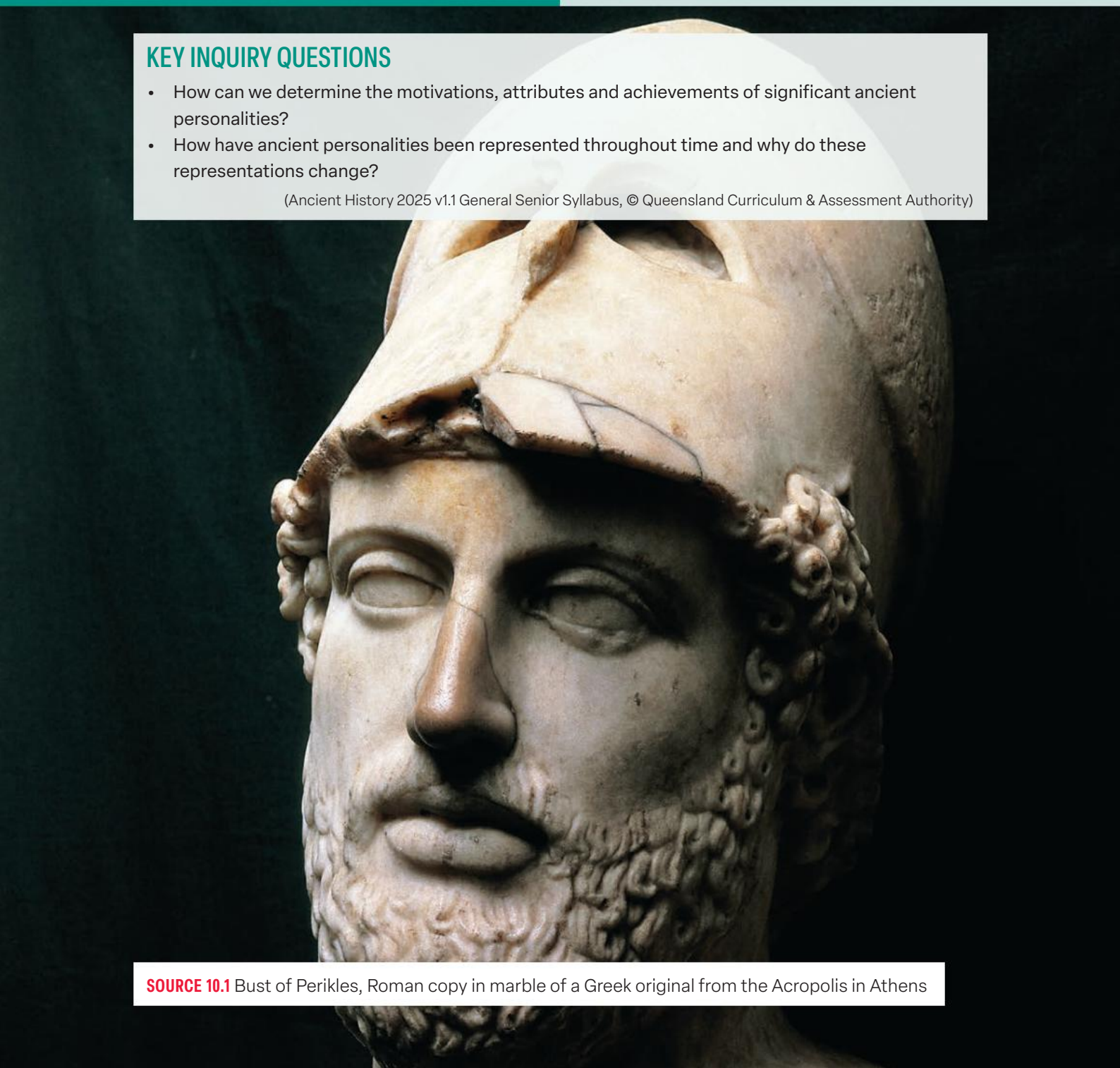
Syllabus reference: Unit 2: Personalities in their times

ALAN BARRIE

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How can we determine the motivations, attributes and achievements of significant ancient personalities?
- How have ancient personalities been represented throughout time and why do these representations change?

(Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 10.1 Bust of Perikles, Roman copy in marble of a Greek original from the Acropolis in Athens

FOCUS: WHY STUDY PERIKLES?

Matthew Sears is Associate Professor of Classics & Ancient History, University of New Brunswick. Below Sears outlines the relevance of Perikles for today.

SOURCE 10.2 M. A. Sears, '"DO SOMETHING!" Trump, Pericles and the art of deflection' *The Conversation*, 7 November 2017

democracy a government controlled by the citizens of a state

Peloponnesian War a conflict between Sparta and Athens and their allies (431–404 BCE) for control over Greece; after nearly three decades of fighting, Athens was defeated

Sparta Athens' main rival for the leadership of Greece

It nearly goes without saying that war has often been a useful distraction for leaders in trouble ... the classical Athenian **democracy** provides a troubling parallel of a leader beset by his political enemies and backed into a corner. An ancient war hawk, Pericles is considered by many to be the supreme practitioner of ancient statecraft who broadened the Athenian democracy to include more citizens than ever before and brought Athens to unprecedented heights of influence and glory. [But], there is a much darker side to Pericles' legacy, however. For one, he narrowed the group eligible for Athenian citizenship, requiring both parents to be Athenian citizens – a requirement, ironically, that his own children did not meet. And, as is increasingly the view among ancient historians, he bore perhaps more responsibility than anyone else for the outbreak of the **Peloponnesian War**, a ruinous 27-year conflict between Athens and **Sparta** that ended in Athens' defeat and the temporary overthrow of the world's first democracy. A frequent criticism of Pericles among his contemporaries was that he took a hard line against Sparta and pushed his city toward war not due to any higher principle or strategic goal, but to deflect charges brought against his closest friends and political allies.

Thucydides has been popular as of late, especially in the use and abuse of the so-called 'Thucydides Trap' coined by Harvard's Graham Allison, which implies that conflict between the United States and China might be inevitable just as war was between Athens and Sparta ... A decade-and-a-half ago, historians Barry Strauss and David McCann edited a book comparing the Korean War with the Peloponnesian War, two conflicts separated by millennia but demonstrating remarkable parallels. Let's hope Trump doesn't react to the current crisis by forging another parallel between classical Greece and modern America. I, for one, don't think that a new war with North Korea (let alone China) need be any more inevitable than it was between Athens and Sparta.

Chris Mackie is Professor of Greek Studies at La Trobe University, and below provides his own assessment of Perikles's contemporary relevance.

SOURCE 10.3 C. Mackie, 'Can we learn from Thucydides' writings on the Trump of ancient Athens?', *The Conversation*, 8 August 2016

demagogue a political leader in Ancient Greece who appealed to the causes of the common people

sophist skilled in the art of oratory, someone who was influential in public speaking, especially in the Assembly and law courts

The term '**demagogue**' could easily have been used to describe Pericles – the urbane and respectable voice of Athenian politics in the late 5th century BC. After all, Pericles was brilliantly successful in achieving office and carrying the day in the assembly. But the historian Thucydides, a great admirer of Pericles, never describes him in this way, preferring to use it pejoratively of his opponent Cleon, a controversial figure with populist leanings. Cleon was fiercely anti-Periclean, and seems to have been a kind of Donald Trump of ancient Athenian politics. Classical scholars have described him in the following way – he was an effective, if vulgar, speaker, and seems to have been given to extravagant promises and extravagant accusations against opponents. He was one of the first of a new kind of politician, who were not from the old aristocracy, and whose predominance depended on persuasive speeches in the assembly and lawcourts rather than on regular office-holding ...

The rise of the demagogues like Cleon in late 5th-century Athens might be seen as a culmination of various social, political and economic factors. Some of these elements also have resonances in our own times. Political power could be achieved by speaking well in the assembly, regardless of one's background. Indeed, being from a different, non-establishment, background could be a positive virtue. And there were plenty of people who were prepared to offer instruction on how to handle oneself in the Athenian assembly (especially philosophers called '**sophists**', or 'wise men'). One should not really press the Cleon/Trump parallel too much, given the 2,500 years between them ... but we will need to wait and see how things play out in our own times before reaching a conclusion.



ACTIVITY **10.1**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Summarise each source in one or two sentences.
2. Why should we study Perikles? Of what relevance is he to us today?

CONTEXTUAL STUDY

Introduction

Whether it be in Athenian democracy or in modern democracy, the politician is both loved and hated, but it is their ability to persuade, manipulate, dissuade, deflect, blame and outmanoeuvre that guarantees their power. Whether the motive be that of a selfish demagogue, or that of a true believer in democracy and its values and processes, history will determine judgement. Character and integrity may be qualities of leadership, but are they necessary if outcomes and success justify the means and actions to which they are achieved? In that sense, what are the common features between leading figures in a democracy – then and now; past and present; between Donald Trump and Perikles?

10.1 When and where did Perikles live?

TABLE 10.1 A list of key dates

c. 495 BCE	Perikles is born.
c. 478 BCE	At age 17, Perikles inherits his family's wealth and becomes a patron of the arts.
472 BCE	Perikles funds Aeschylus's play *The Persians.*
470 BCE	Perikles enters politics.
463 BCE	Perikles leads the prosecution against Kimon on charges of corruption (which fails).
c. 462–458 BCE	Perikles radicalises democratic institutions in Athens. Kimon is ostracised.
460–429 BCE	The Age of Perikles. The Agora is rebuilt, the Parthenon is built, the arts flourish.
454 BCE	Perikles leads his first military expedition in Sicyon and Acarnania.
453 BCE	Athenians are victorious over the Sikyonians.
448 BCE	Perikles defeats Spartans at the Battle of Delphi.
447 BCE	Perikles's army expels people living at Gallipoli and establishes Athenian colonies there.
447 BCE	Building starts on the Acropolis. Perikles marries a close relative; they have two sons together: Paralus and Xanthippus.
c. 445 BCE	Marriage ends in divorce.
443 BCE	Perikles is elected *strategos.*
440 BCE	Perikles leads the Athenian navy in the siege against Samos.
436–435 BCE	Expedition to Black Sea. Alienates Corinth through diplomatic machinations with Corcyra and Epidamnos.
431 BCE	Athens invades Megara, and Sparta declares war on Athens. Archidamus II invades Attica. Perikles evacuates Attica's residents to Athens, leaves the Spartans with no one to fight. Meanwhile, he uses the navy to attack Sparta's allies.
429 BCE	Temporarily removed from power, Perikles returns when the Athenian attempts to settle disagreements with Sparta fail.
430 BCE	Perikles dies from the plague.



SOURCE 10.4 Map of the major regions of mainland Ancient Greece

Who was Perikles?

Perikles was a renowned Greek statesman whose period of rule became known as the **Golden Age of Athens**. He was most prominent in the period between the Persian War and the Peloponnesian War (material on the Persian Wars and the Peloponnesian War can be found in the downloadable resources on Cambridge GO). Perikles had such a significant effect on society in Athens that he was referred to as the 'first citizen of Athens' by his contemporary historian Thucydides.

Golden Age of Athens the period ascribed to Perikles's rule where philosophical thinking, writing, art and science flourished

Perikles was born c. 495 BCE to the distinguished Alcmaeonidae family – wealthy, noble and powerful. His father, Xanthippus, was a hero of the Persian Wars, and his mother, Agariste, was niece of the reformer Cleisthenes. Perikles was tutored by famous artists and philosophers such as Protagoras, Zeno and Anaxagoras. At the age of 17, Perikles inherited the family's wealth and became a patron of the arts, while also becoming involved in politics. In 472 BCE he funded Aeschylus's play *The Persians*, which echoed Perikles's support for Athens' populist leader Themistocles over Themistocles's political opponent, the aristocrat Kimon. An important political mentor to Perikles was Ephialtes, leader of the democratic party. Ephialtes argued that the powers of the ***Areopagus***, the traditional council controlled by the aristocracy, should be reduced, and the Athenian Assembly accepted this.

In this era of 'radical democracy', Perikles and his allies supported populist social policies, such as increasing wages for citizens who served as jurymen and allowing the poor to attend plays without paying. Perikles continued to oppose Kimon, who was ultimately **ostracised** following an accusation that he had aided Sparta against Athens. Following the murder of Ephialtes in 461 BCE, Perikles became leader of the democratic party and effectively ruler of Athens, owing to lack of opposition. Between 460 BCE and 445 BCE there was a series of clashes between two associations of Greek city-states: the **Delian League** led by Athens, and the Spartan-dominated Peloponnesian League. These conflicts marked the start of Perikles's vocation in leading military expeditions. The first expedition was in 454 BCE, in Sicyon and Acarnania, and in 448 BCE Perikles's forces defeated the Spartans at the Battle of Delphi. When Sparta invaded the Attica peninsula in 446 BCE, Perikles returned with his troops but ultimately used his negotiation skills (and bribery) to make the Spartans withdraw. In 444 BCE he crushed a revolt in Euboea. In 443 BCE, Perikles was elected ***strategos*** for the first time: he continued to be re-elected to this role, with one short break, for the rest of his life. He continued to lead military expeditions, including the 440 BCE naval siege against Samos. Under his leadership, the Athenian Empire continued to grow by taking control of the other Greek states.

Areopagus a council that originally advised the kings; members of the *Areopagus* served for life; its power was reduced after Ephialtes's reforms in 462/1 BCE and it became the court presiding over cases of homicide and other serious crimes

ostracism exclusion from a society or group; in ancient Athens, ostracism was the result of a public vote and the individual was banished for 10 years

Delian League an alliance of Greek maritime *poleis*, led by Athens, organised after the Persian Wars to defend Greece against Persia; Athens' allies eventually became tribute-paying subjects of the Athenian Empire, and revolts against Athens were put down ruthlessly

***strategos* (pl. *strategoi*)** an elected role, these 10 generals were elected for one-year terms but could hold the office repeatedly. During each *prytany* (10 administrative months) the Assembly voted on whether an individual *strategos* should retain the office

During the 440s and 430s BCE, Perikles drew on the funds of the Delian League to pay for a series of ambitious building projects in Athens, including the construction of the Parthenon and several buildings around the agora. The grandeur of these buildings was unprecedented. The arts also flourished during this period. In 443 BCE there was a resurgence of the conservative faction in Athens, with the politician Thucydides attacking Perikles's spending on the building program. Perikles successfully defended himself and offered to pay back some of the funds from his own property.

In 431 BCE, when Sparta attacked Attica, Perikles evacuated residents to Athens. While this move was initially successful, overcrowding contributed to the spread of a ruinous plague in the city. This led people to become disenchanted with Perikles's war policy. In 430 BCE he was temporarily removed from power, but returned when the Athenian attempts to settle disagreements with Sparta failed. However, Perikles himself contracted the plague, and died in 429 BCE. Following his death, the Peloponnesian War continued for 25 more years, culminating with Athens' surrender. The contemporary historian Thucydides argued that this defeat was because Perikles's successors did not have the great abilities of Perikles.



SOURCE 10.5 The Acropolis of Athens, containing the Parthenon. The Acropolis sits high above the city. What effect do you think these great buildings would have had on the general population of Ancient Greece?

The period 460–429 BCE is often called not only 'the Golden Age of Athens', but 'the Age of Perikles'. His social reforms saw the rise of Athenian democracy. Athens also gained prestige and a lasting legacy from Perikles's building program and support of the arts, as well as for his military leadership that saw expansion of the Athenian Empire. Perikles is lauded for these achievements. But just how close to the truth are these judgements? Did Perikles act for public or personal interest? Was he free of corruption himself? Was he as wise and far-seeing as was commonly assumed? To what extent were these achievements built on the back of violence and oppression? Did he really hold no animosity towards others? Was he the greatest democrat or the greatest tyrant who disguised his power under the banner of 'the people'? Is his great reputation really deserved?

This chapter will engage with these questions, using an extensive range of primary sources and modern opinions, incorporating analytical and evaluation strategies when dealing with sources, and providing synthesis strategies in dealing with these complex issues.

Politics in Ancient Athens

Ekklesia the main body and public Assembly of Athens; all male citizens over the age of 18 could attend; they would debate and vote on motions prepared by the *boule*, make decisions on war, peace and alliances, and elect officials such as *archontes*

The creation of Athenian democracy

In the sixth century BCE, an Athenian statesman called Solon attempted to institute a series of constitutional, economic and moral reforms. These included reducing the power of the aristocracy by opening up the Assembly of Athenian citizens (the ***Ekklesia***) to all classes, and creating a court. It is often said that Solon laid the foundations for Athenian democracy – foundations that would be built upon in the time of Perikles.

After the death of Solon, Peisistratos ruled Athens as a tyrant between 561 BCE and 527 BCE. Peisistratos built on the work done by Solon through his support of the lower classes of Athens, his confrontation and weakening of the aristocracy, and his emphasis on religious and artistic programs. He paved the way for the emergence of Athenian democracy.

Cleisthenes is referred to as 'the father of Athenian democracy'; in 508 BCE he reformed the constitution of Ancient Athens. He changed the organisation from four powerful clans to 10 tribes, basing the tribes on area of residence. He also reorganised the court system, and introduced *sortation*, by which citizens were randomly selected to fill government positions.

Athenian democracy was meant to prevent individual power, such as that held by Peisistratos. The selection of officials by lot was one method of being more democratic. Another was the creation of the *strategoi*. While the *strategoi* were generals, they also had political influence – they could directly address the Assembly and propose policies. Perikles was elected as *strategos* 15 times, which suggests how well he was regarded by his contemporaries.

The emergence of Athenian leadership in the region

The Persian Wars led to the concept of **Hellenic** Unity: Greek city-states banded together for mutual support against the Persians. In 478 BCE, Athens took leadership of the League, and it was renamed the Delian League.

There were some prominent individuals who gained recognition as leaders in this period. Kimon, the son of Miltiades, helped to ensure the development of the Athenian navy after the failed Persian invasion. He was raised to the rank of admiral after the Battle of Salamis, and in 466 BCE he destroyed the Persian fleet and army at the Battle of the Eurymedon. He was celebrated for his military prowess.

Another significant leader was Aristides. An esteemed statesman nicknamed 'the just', Aristides organised the contributions of the Delian League. His approach was viewed as equitable and continued to form the basis of taxation throughout most of the League's existence.

Hellenism another word for Ancient Greek culture; the Ancient Greeks called Greece *Hellas*

hoplite heavily armed foot soldier

Athenian political factionalism

In the late 460s BCE, Ephialtes oversaw reforms that diminished the power of the aristocratic and conservative *Areopagus*. Considered to be the father of radical democracy, Ephialtes was assassinated in 461 BCE, and Perikles took over the political leadership of Athens.

Kimon, at this time the leader of the Athenian aristocratic party, had opposed the reforms of Ephialtes. In 461 BCE, Kimon was ostracised from Athens after being accused of supporting the Spartans. In 451 BCE, however, he was called back to organise a peace treaty between Sparta and Athens.

The rise of Perikles

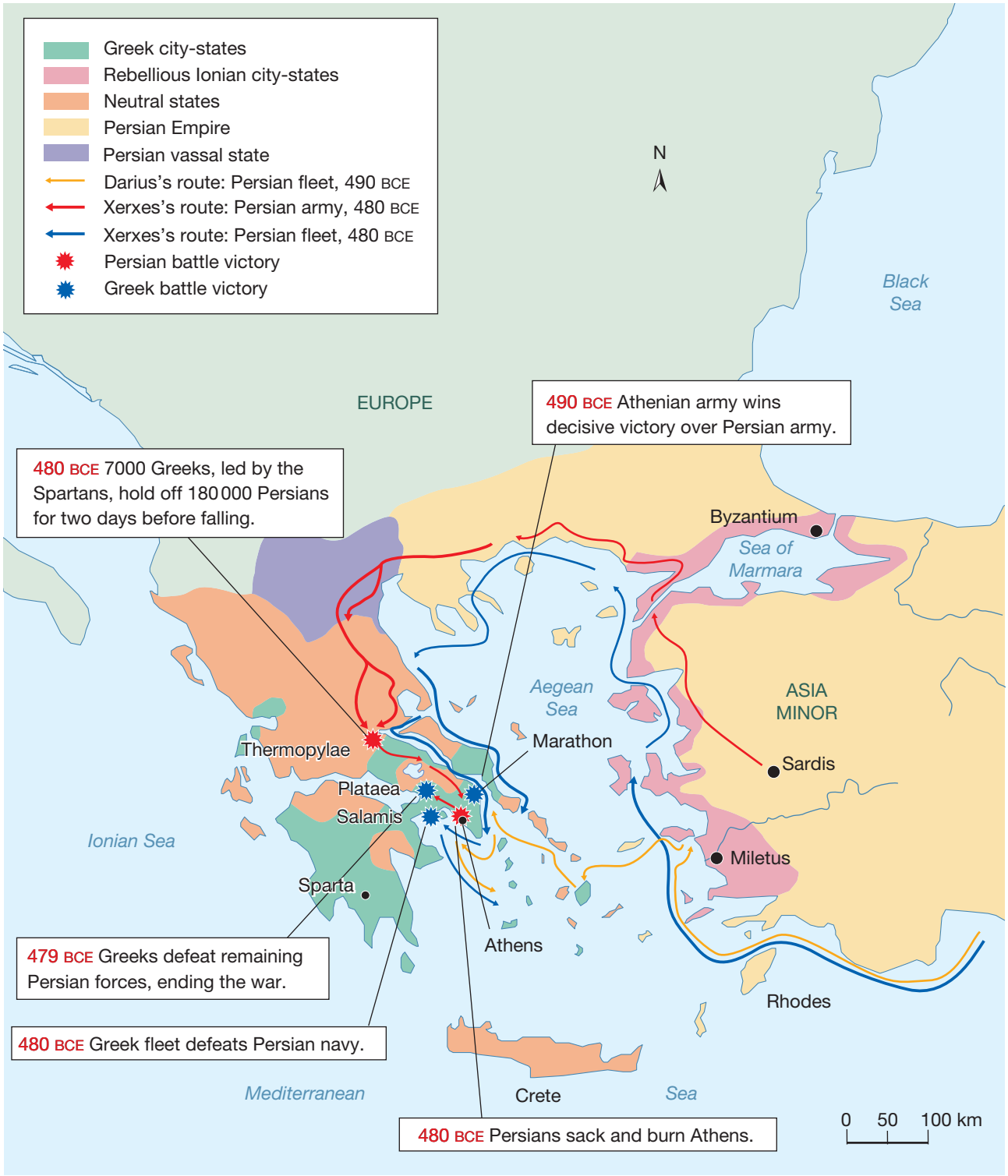
Politics in fifth-century-BCE Athens was dominated by two factions.

1. There were the aristocrats who wished to limit the role of the people (*demos*) in its system, and also favoured good relations with Sparta. These men included Miltiades, Aristides, Kimon, Thucydides (not the historian) and Nicias.
2. Against these ideas arose a new group who gained momentum for their ambitions from support from the wider populace. These included Cleisthenes, Themistokles, Ephialtes, Perikles and Alcibiades. Generally, they gained support by taking an anti-Spartan stance.

It is also important to be aware of the class distinctions within the military. Athenian **hoplites** came from the aristocratic and middle classes, while the sailors of Athenian triremes (large shipping vessels) came from the lower class of *thetes*. This was an element of the evolution of political factionalism in fifth-century-BCE Athens.

The Greco-Persian Wars, 499–479 BCE

While Sparta was anti-Athens and its growth of democracy, Sparta still joined forces with Athens to fight off several Persian invasions. During Perikles's childhood and early political career, the Greek city-states were engaged in a series of conflicts with the Persian Empire. This is an important background to Perikles's rise to power, as Athens' heavy commitment to the war allowed the growth of factions within the city's leadership.



SOURCE 10.6 The Greco-Persian Wars, 499–479 BCE

The Persian Wars began with the Ionian Revolt in 499 BCE, when Athens supported the cities of Ionia in their attempt to throw off Persian rule. Miltiades led Athens in triumph in 490 BCE at the Battle of Marathon. King Leonidas led 300 Spartans in a last stand at Thermopylae in 480 BCE. While the battle led to the death of the Spartans, it did delay a Persian attack on Greece during which a storm destroyed 200 Persian naval vessels. Meanwhile, the Athenian fleet, under Themistokles, tactically withdrew from Artemisium, before defeating the Persian navy at Salamis.

The following year, in 479 BCE, King Pausanias of Sparta led a Greek coalition (with Aristides leading the sizeable Athenian contingent) into victory over the remaining Persian army left in Greece at Plataea.

10.2 How do we know about Perikles and his achievements today?

An important contemporary source on Perikles is Thucydides, an Athenian general and historian. Thucydides was the author of the *History of the Peloponnesian War*, a war in which he was also a significant participant. During the war, Thucydides was blamed for the fall of the city of Amphipolis. He argued that he was unable to arrive in time to save Amphipolis, but some saw his actions as gross negligence. In any case, he was recalled to Athens, placed on trial, and then exiled. While in exile, he travelled through the Peloponnesian states, and this provided material for his history of the war.

Criticism of Thucydides was led by Cleon, which may explain Thucydides's antipathy towards Cleon and his praise for Perikles. Thucydides's views have influenced opinion, right up to today, about why Athens lost the war: that after Perikles's death, Athens collapsed into unsuccessful popular demagogy. But is this view reliable? Thucydides admired Perikles and approved of his power over the people, but he was vehemently critical of the demagogues who followed him. He did not approve of mob rule in Athens, nor the radical democracy that Perikles championed, but he considered democracy acceptable when guided by a good leader.

Another ancient source that refers to Perikles is the *Bibliotheca Historica* by the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus (Diodorus of Sicily) who lived during the first century BCE. Book XII of this monumental history covers the period 450–415 BCE, including an account of the first half of the Peloponnesian War and Perikles's role in it.

However, the most significant ancient source on Perikles is Plutarch, a Greek biographer and author. Plutarch, who lived about 450 years after Perikles, wrote a series of *Parallel Lives* of famous Greek and Roman figures to provide his readers with moral and ethical lessons. He had access to the imperial library in Rome and his writings refer to numerous ancient sources that are now lost. Plutarch maintained that he used source evidence for everything he wrote and did not fabricate anything. While he can be considered reliable in that he is faithful to his source material, his biographical approach and studies of character were vehicles to make moral and ethical lessons about his subjects (that is, which actions and characteristics he believed to be virtues and which he believed to be vices). This means that caution must be used when reading him as a historical source. His opinion of Perikles is very much led by the views of Thucydides.

Contextual study: Summing up

In this contextual study, we have learnt about the factors leading to the Golden Age of Athens: the birth of Athenian democracy, the Persian Wars, political factionalism, and Athenian regional leadership. The following depth study will examine the influences, character and leadership of Perikles, as well as his role in the developing conflict with Sparta.

DEPTH STUDY

10.3 The motivations and influences of Perikles

Born into privilege and aristocracy, Perikles was shaped through his interactions and experiences with many personalities.

TABLE 10.2 Key figures in the life of Perikles

Family	Friends/Mentors
• Cleisthenes: great uncle and democratic reformer • Agariste: mother • Xanthippus: father • Aspasia: mother of his third son, also called Perikles • Paralus, Xanthippus: sons – the name of their mother is unknown, but she was Perikles's wife, whom he later divorced • Alkibiades: Perikles's nephew and ward after his own mother died; became a future leader of Athens	• Phidias: sculptor • Sophokles: playwright • Lampon: seer (a seer was a person believed to be able to predict the future through various mystical ceremonies) • Hippodamus of Miletus: architect and mathematician
Education and influences	**Political associates**
• Protagoras • Zeno of Elea • Anaxagoras	• Ephialtes: leader of the radical democratic faction before Perikles • Themistokles: popular Athenian leader in the Persian Wars • Kallias: brother-in-law of Kimon, whose name is given to the peace treaty with Persia. He was employed by Perikles to negotiate important agreements.
Rivals	**Ancient sources**
• Kimon • Aristides • Thucydides: politician, not to be confused with the historian • Cleon • King Archidamus II of Sparta: a friend of Perikles, but nonetheless invaded Attica with Spartan troops at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War	• Herodotus • Thucydides • Plutarch • Diodorus Siculus

10.4 The personal attributes of Perikles

Civic virtue vs personal ambition

Read the following extracts from Plutarch, and then complete the activity.

SOURCE 10.7 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 3

His personal appearance was unimpeachable, except that his head was rather long and out of due proportion. For this reason, the images of him, almost all of them, wear helmets, because the artists, as it would seem, were not willing to reproach him with deformity. The comic poets of Attica used to call him 'Schinocephalus', or Squill-head (the squill is sometimes called 'schinus'). So the comic poet Cratinus, in his Cheirons, says: 'Faction and Saturn, that ancient of days, were united in wedlock; their offspring was of all tyrants the greatest, and lo! he is called by the gods the head-compeller.' And again in his Nemesis: 'Come, Zeus! Of guests and heads the Lord!' And Telecleides speaks of him as sitting on the acropolis in the greatest perplexity, 'now heavy of head, and now alone, from the eleven-couched chamber of his head, causing vast uproar to arise.' And Eupolis, in his ***Demes***, having inquiries made about each one of the demagogues as they come up from Hades, says, when Pericles is called out last: 'The very head of those below hast thou now brought.'



SOURCE 10.8 Statue of Perikles with the Corinthian helmet exhibited at The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts

deme a small division or area of the Attica region surrounding Athens that was used for voting and civil purposes in Athenian democracy based on the reforms of Cleisthenes

SOURCE 10.9 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 5

The poet Ion ... says that Pericles had a presumptuous and somewhat arrogant manner of address, and that into his haughtiness there entered a good deal of disdain and contempt for others; he praises, on the other hand, the tact, complaisance, and elegant address which Kimon showed in his social intercourse. Zeno, when men called the austerity of Pericles a mere thirst for reputation, and swollen conceit, urged them to have some such thirst for reputation themselves, with the idea that the very assumption of nobility might in time produce, all unconsciously, something like an eager and habitual practice of it.

SOURCE 10.10 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 9

Thucydides describes the administration of Pericles as rather aristocratic, 'in name a democracy, but in fact a government by the greatest citizen'. But many others say that the people were first led on by him into allotments of public lands, festival-grants, and distributions of fees for public services, thereby falling into bad habits, and becoming luxurious and wanton under the influence of his public measures, instead of frugal and self-sufficing.

SOURCE 10.11 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 11

Then the aristocrats, aware even some time before this that Pericles was already become the greatest citizen, but wishing nevertheless to have someone in the city who should stand up against him and blunt the edge of his power, that it might not be an out and out monarchy, put forward Thucydides of Alopece, a discreet man and a relative of Kimon, to oppose him. He, being less of a warrior than Kimon, and more of a forensic speaker and statesman, by keeping watch and ward in the city, and by wrestling bouts with Pericles on the bema, soon brought the administration into even poise. He would not suffer the party of the 'Good and True', as they called themselves, to be scattered up and down and blended with the populace, as heretofore, the weight of their character being thus obscured by numbers, but by culling them out and assembling them into one body, he made their collective influence, thus become weighty, as it were a counterpoise in the balance.

SOURCE 10.12 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 15

Thus, then, seeing that political differences were entirely remitted and the city had become a smooth surface, as it were, and altogether united, he brought under his own control Athens and all the issues dependent on the Athenians – tributes, armies, triremes, the islands, the sea, the vast power derived from Hellenes, vast also from Barbarians, and a supremacy that was securely hedged about with subject nations, royal friendships, and dynastic alliances. But then he was no longer the same man as before, nor alike submissive to the people and ready to yield and give in to the desires of the multitude as a steersman to the breezes. Nay rather, forsaking his former lax and sometimes rather effeminate management of the people, he struck the high and clear note of an aristocratic and kingly statesmanship, and employing it for the best interests of all in a direct and undeviating fashion, he led the people, for the most part willingly, by his persuasions and instructions. And yet there were times when they were sorely vexed with him, and then he tightened the reins and forced them into the way of their advantage with a master's hand, for all the world like a wise physician, who treats a complicated disease of long standing occasionally with harmless indulgences to please his patient, and occasionally, too, with caustics and bitter drugs which work salvation.

SOURCE 10.13 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 16

... he stood first for forty years among such men as Ephialtes, Leocrates, Myronides, Kimon, Tolmides, and Thucydides; and after the deposition of Thucydides and his ostracism, for no less than fifteen of these years did he secure an imperial sway that was continuous and unbroken, by means of his annual tenure of the office of general.

ACTIVITY **10.2**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources
Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. Consider Sources 10.7 and 10.9–10.13. Which sources are being critical of Perikles, and which sources are showing admiration?
2. Synthesise information from the sources and write a detailed historical paragraph to answer the following question: To what extent was Perikles a shrewd, clever and calculating politician in democratic Athens, rather than a calculating and personally ambitious demagogue? In your response, you will need to define and contrast the terms 'democracy' and 'demagogy'. Remember to consider and address all the evidence. Support your argument with evidence. Negate the alternative viewpoint with sound and logical reasons.

Character case study

Perikles and Kimon: Vindictive ruthlessness vs clever politicking?

In 478 BCE, the Greeks went on the offensive. At first, they were led by Sparta, but fear of **helot** revolt and internal disputes led to Athens taking over leadership of the continuing war against Persia led by Kimon (son of Miltiades). Under the leadership of Aristides, the Delian League was created, a federation of Greek city-states from around the Aegean Sea and Islands. They liberated the coast of the Aegean from Persian control, and in 469 BCE (or 466 BCE) Kimon defeated the Persian fleet and army near the mouth of the Eurymedon River in Anatolia.

helot local inhabitants of Laconia and Messenia, owned by the Spartan state and required to work for its citizens in total subjection; they might on occasion be freed for military service



SOURCE 10.14 An artist's interpretation of Kimon commanding the Greek fleet of the Delian League of Athens before his expedition in 466 BCE, during which he destroyed the Persian fleet and army at the Battle of the Eurymedon River

During the late 470s BCE and 460s BCE, the conservative faction under Kimon was gaining power in Athens. Friendly with Sparta, they worked together in continuing to pressure Persia following their defeat in 479 BCE. The defeat of the Persians at the Eurymedon River in c. 469 BCE was Kimon's military and political career apex! In 465 BCE, however, Thasos revolted from the Delian League. The Athenians under Kimon besieged Thasos, who then requested help from Sparta, but an earthquake and a subsequent helot revolt prevented the Spartans from coming to his aid. In 463 BCE, after a three-year siege, Thasos finally fell to the Athenians. Its walls were destroyed, and its ships confiscated. The payment of an immediate fee, followed by an annual contribution to Athens, was enforced. On Kimon's return to Athens, Perikles prosecuted Kimon on a charge of corruption, of which Kimon was acquitted, but in the following year (462 BCE) Sparta suffered a huge earthquake. Its helots (basically slaves, about 90 per cent of the population under Spartan rule) rose up in revolt. Kimon sent Athenian hoplites to help his ally but, feeling embarrassed and wary of the Athenian offer, the Spartans sent them back home. This humiliation changed the political tide in Athens, leading to the fall of Kimon.

Ephialtes, leader of the radical democratic faction and openly hostile to Sparta, was then able in 462/461 to carry measures against the aristocratic court, the Areopagus, stripping it of its political power and strengthening the Ecclesia (the Popular Assembly), the Boule (Council), and law courts. Many of its members were targeted and faced trial for administrative misconduct; Athens revoked its alliance with Sparta and formed a new alliance with Sparta's enemy, Argos; Kimon was exiled; amid the rising tension came the assassination of Ephialtes.

The treatment of Kimon and his family

Political rivalry does not necessarily mean personal animosity. Themistokles and Aristides were able to dismiss their differences and unite against the common threat of Persia in 480 BCE. Think of leaders and opposition leaders today … are they filled with intense hate for each other? In some cases, maybe. So, what of Kimon and Perikles?

SOURCE 10.15 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 28

When Pericles, after his subjection of Samos, had returned to Athens, he gave honourable burial to those who had fallen in the war, and for the oration which he made, according to the custom, over their tombs, he won the greatest admiration. But as he came down from the bema, while the rest of the women clasped his hand and fastened wreaths and fillets on his head, as though he were some victorious athlete, Elpinice drew nigh and said: 'This is admirable in thee, Pericles, and deserving of wreaths, in that thou hast lost us many brave citizens, not in a war with Phoenicians or Medes, like my brother Kimon, but in the subversion of an allied and kindred city.' On Elpinice's saying this, Pericles, with a quiet smile, it is said, quoted to her the verse of Archilochus: 'Thou hadst not else, in spite of years, perfumed thyself.'

SOURCE 10.16 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 29

After this, when the billows of the Peloponnesian War were already rising and swelling, he persuaded the people to send aid and succour to the Corcyraeans in their war with the Corinthians, and so to attach to themselves an island with a vigorous naval power at a time when the Peloponnesians were as good as actually at war with them. But when the people had voted to send the aid and succour, he despatched Lacedaemonius, the son of Kimon, with only ten ships, as it were in mockery of him. Now there was much good-will and friendship on the part of the house of Kimon towards the Lacedaemonians. In order, therefore, that in case no great or conspicuous achievement should be performed under the generalship of Lacedaemonius, he might so be all the more calumniated for his laconism, or sympathy with Sparta, Pericles gave him only a few ships, and sent him forth against his will.

And in general, he was prone to thwart and check the sons of Kimon, on the plea that not even in their names were they genuinely native, but rather aliens and strangers, since one of them bore the name of Lacedaemonius, another that of Thessalus, and a third that of Eleius. And they were all held to be the sons of a woman of Arcadia.

SOURCE 10.17 Plutarch, 'The life of Cimon' in *Parallel Lives*, vol II

The Athenians did not long abide by their displeasure against Kimon, partly because, as was natural, they remembered his benefits, and partly because the turn of events favoured his cause. For they were defeated at Tanagra in a great battle [457 BCE] and expected that in the following springtime an armed force of Peloponnesians would come against them, and so they recalled Kimon from his exile. The decree which provided for his return was formally proposed by Pericles.

ACTIVITY **10.3**



Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Why was Perikles the one to propose the return of his rival, Kimon, and what does this reveal about his political judgement and his character/personality? In other words, did he do this for the benefit of Athens or simply to save his political skin?
2. Why did he deal with the family of Kimon in the way that he did (see in particular Sources 10.16 and 10.17)?
3. Does Perikles's behaviour reflect pure personal vindictiveness or sound political judgement?

The stage was now set for the rise and dominance of Perikles.

SOURCE 10.18 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 7

However, when Aristides was dead, and Themistocles in banishment, and Kimon was kept by his campaigns for the most part abroad, then at last Pericles decided to devote himself to the people, espousing the cause of the poor and the many instead of the few and the rich, contrary to his own nature, which was anything but popular. But he feared, as it would seem, to encounter a suspicion of aiming at **tyranny**, and when he saw that Kimon was very aristocratic in his sympathies, and was held in extraordinary affection by the party of the Good and True, he began to court the favour of the multitude, thereby securing safety for himself, and power to wield against his rival.

SOURCE 10.19 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 9

In the beginning, as has been said, pitted as he was against the reputation of Kimon, he tried to ingratiate himself with the people. And since he was the inferior in wealth and property, by means of which Kimon would win over the poor – furnishing a dinner every day to any Athenian who wanted it, bestowing raiment on the elderly men, and removing the fences from his estates that whosoever wished might pluck the fruit – Pericles, outdone in popular arts of this sort, had recourse to the distribution of the people's own wealth. This was on the advice of Damonides, of the Deme Oa, as Aristotle has stated. And soon, what with festival-grants and jurors' wages and other fees and largesses, he bribed the multitude by the wholesale, and used them in opposition to the Council of the Areopogus. Of this body he himself was not a member, since the lot had not made him either First Archon, or Archon Thesmothete, or King Archon, or **Archon** Polemarch. These offices were in ancient times filled by lot, and through them those who properly acquitted themselves were promoted into the Areopogus. For this reason, all the more did Pericles, strong in the affections of the people, lead a successful party against the Council of the Areopogus. Not only was the Council robbed of most of its jurisdiction by Ephialtes, but Kimon also, on the charge of being a lover of Sparta and a hater of the people, was ostracised – a man who yielded to none in wealth and lineage, who had won most glorious victories over the Barbarians, and had filled the city full of money and spoils, as is written in his life. Such was the power of Pericles among the people.

tyranny a form of government where all power is held by a single ruler who is cruel and oppressive; there is no control over or limits on the authority or use of power by the tyrant

archon chief magistrate in a *polis*

SOURCE 10.20 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 34

For, indeed, there was from the beginning a sort of concealed split, or seam, as it might be in a piece of iron, marking the different popular and aristocratic tendencies; but the open rivalry and contention of these two opponents made the gash deep, and severed the city into the two parties of the people and the few. And so Pericles, at that time, more than at any other, let loose the reins to the people, and made his policy subservient to their pleasure, contriving continually to have some great public show or solemnity, some banquet, or some procession or other in the town to please them, coaxing his countrymen like children with such delights and pleasures as were not, however, unedifying.

ACTIVITY **10.4**



Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Analysis is the examination of the features of evidence in sources and how they contribute to an idea. It requires the identification of explicit and implicit meaning, often through direct quotation from a source. Explicit meaning is something very clear and obvious, the key message of the source. Implicit meaning is something that is understood, but not described clearly or directly.

To help remember: explicit things are explained, implicit things are implied.

For each of Sources 10.18–10.20 on Perikles's rise to prominence, select a quote and explain what it reveals about Perikles's attainment of power in Athens, and what characteristic it reveals about his personality. Create a table like the one below to record your responses.

Source by Plutarch	Quote	Explicit and implicit meanings about Perikles's attainment of power and character
Source 10.18		
Source 10.19		
Source 10.20		

ACTIVITY **10.5**



Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Perikles himself had made the law that prevented illegitimate children from becoming full Athenian citizens, but when his two legitimate sons died of the plague (430 BCE), Perikles the younger became his only living male heir. Plutarch wrote that the Assembly took pity on Perikles's misfortunes and granted his request to make Perikles, his son with Aspasia, a full citizen of Athens.

Consider these two opposing views on Perikles:

1. This shows that Perikles did not have total power in Athens (like a tyrant), but rather was still subject to its laws and the will of the Assembly (witness also the prosecution of his friends). This would support the view that, as leader of the democracy, he was also subject to it.
2. This information shows the real power of Perikles, in that he was above the law; he controlled and manipulated the democratic system to suit his own ends; he was essentially a tyrant cloaked in the disguise of democratic 'freedom'.

In groups, or as a class, discuss these opposite viewpoints. Cite other reasons and evidence from this chapter to support your ideas about which is most appropriate and why. (Bear in mind points such as Plutarch's pro-Perikles sympathies, and the fact that Perikles held the position of leading military general for 15 consecutive years).

10.5 The leadership style of Perikles

In considering Perikles's worth as a leader, it is worth asking the following questions:

- How do individuals and groups shape and experience history?
- What is the nature of change and continuity throughout history?
- How did individuals in Ancient Greece gain power and what sort of power did they have?
- How was power exercised in Ancient Greece?
- How did individuals influence people in Ancient Greece, and what allowed them to do so?
- What groups and people supported these individuals in power? For what reasons?
- What was power used for?
- What did these individuals want to achieve, and how successful were they in achieving their goals? How can you measure this success?
- Were their successes long- or short-term? Which is more important and why?
- If they were, in part, unsuccessful, who or what obstructed them?
- Were their goals realistic?

TABLE 10.3 Individuals as a force for change or a product of change

Shaper of history (cause of change)	Shaped by history (product of change)
Perikles created the Golden Age of Athens, famous for its confident democracy and cultural achievements. He championed the notion of civic/public duty as opposed to private advantage.	There was a movement from 'power of the aristocrats' to 'power to the people'. Perikles came from aristocracy, but used the people as a new power base, much like the Gracchi in Rome, and presided over Athens' enslavement of its allies and descent into popular demagogy.



ACTIVITY 10.6

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

To what extent was Perikles more of a shaper of history (cause of change) than shaped by history (product of change)? Use this as a basis for group/class discussion.

10.6 Challenges and achievements of Perikles

The following sources are some tributes to Perikles from Plutarch, Diodorus and Thucydides.

SOURCE 10.21 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 39:1

So, then, the man is to be admired not only for his reasonableness and the gentleness which he maintained in the midst of many responsibilities and great enmities, but also for his loftiness of spirit, seeing that he regarded it as the noblest of all his titles to honour that he had never gratified his envy or his passion in the exercise of his vast power, nor treated any one of his foes as a foe incurable. ... [he] was so gracious a nature and a life so pure and undefiled in the exercise of sovereign power which were called Olympian

SOURCE 10.22 Diodorus, Bibliotheca Historical, XII, 38:2

This man stood far above his fellow citizens in birth, renown, and ability as an orator.

SOURCE 10.23 Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2:65

For as long as he was in authority in the city in time of peace, he governed the same with moderation and was a faithful watchman of it; and in his time, it was at the greatest. And after the war was on foot, it is manifest that he therein also foresaw what it could do. He lived after the war began two years and six months. And his foresight in the war was best known after his death. For he told them that if they would be quiet and look to their navy, and during this war seek no further dominion nor hazard the city itself, they should then have the upper hand. But they did contrary in all, and in such other things besides as seemed not to concern the war managed the state, according to their private ambition and covetousness, perniciously both for themselves and their confederates.

What succeeded well the honour and profit of it came most to private men, and what miscarried was to the city's detriment in the war. The reason whereof was this: that being a man of great power both for his dignity and wisdom, and for bribes manifestly the most incorrupt, he freely controlled the multitude and was not so much led by them as he led them. Because, having gotten his power by no evil arts, he would not humour them in his speeches but out of his authority durst anger them with contradiction ... So much was in Perikles above other men at that time that he could foresee by what means the city might easily have outlasted the Peloponnesians in this war.

ACTIVITY 10.7

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Learning of historical knowledge is enhanced through highlighting (identification) of sources and rephrasing (condensing), which aids the skill of overall summation (synthesis).

1. Rephrase each of the sources in your own words.
2. Highlight the key words in each of Sources 10.21–10.23 that describe the character of Perikles.
3. Put all these words together in a sentence or two of your own that summarises all three sources.

Revenue and building

In 447 BCE, work began on building the Parthenon. Thucydides of Alopece, Perikles's rival, criticised the spending of money for this ambitious building program. When Perikles said that he would pay for all the constructions himself, but with the proviso that all monuments would then belong to him and not to Athens, the public loudly applauded Perikles. Thucydides suffered an unexpected defeat and was later ostracised in 443 BCE, leaving Perikles unopposed.

Plutarch wrote about Perikles's use of public money for building works.

SOURCE 10.24 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 12

But that which brought most delightful adornment to Athens, and the greatest amazement to the rest of mankind; that which alone now testifies for Hellas that her ancient power and splendour, of which so much is told, was no idle fiction – I mean his construction of sacred edifices – this, more than all public measures of Pericles, his enemies maligned and slandered. They cried out in the assemblies: 'The people has lost its fair fame and is in ill repute because it has removed the public moneys of the Hellenes from Delos into its own keeping, and that seemliest of all excuses which it had

to urge against its accusers, to wit, that out of fear of the Barbarians it took the public funds from that sacred isle and was now guarding them in a stronghold, of this Pericles has robbed it. And surely Hellas is insulted with a dire insult and manifestly subjected to tyranny when she sees that, with her own enforced contributions the war, we are gilding and bedizening our city, which, for all the world like a wanton woman, adds to her wardrobe precious stones and costly statues and temples worth their millions.'

Pericles would instruct the people that it owed no account of their moneys to the allies provided it carried on the war for them and kept off the Barbarians; 'not a horse do they furnish,' said he, 'not a ship, not a hoplite, but money simply; and this belongs, not to those who give it, but to those who take it, if only they furnish that for which they take it in pay. And it is but meet that the city, when once she is sufficiently equipped with all that is necessary for prosecuting the war, should apply her abundance to such works as, by their completion, will bring her everlasting glory, and while in process of completion will bring that abundance into actual service, in that all sorts of activity and diversified demands arise, which rouse every art and stir every hand, and bring, as it were, the whole city under pay, so that she not only adorns, but supports herself as well from her own resources.'



ACTIVITY **10.8**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources
Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

1. According to Plutarch, who were the winners and who were the losers in Perikles's building program?
2. What did Perikles's critics think, and were their views valid or simply subversive?
3. Respond to the following statement as a TEEAL historical paragraph: Was Perikles's building program motivated more by genuine civic pride and duty than by personal power and propagandistic manipulation?

As a reminder, a TEEAL paragraph should use the following structure:
Topic sentence: Introduces an aspect of your argument relating to the essay question and reflects what the paragraph is about
Explanation: Explains in more detail and elaborates on relevant aspects of the topic sentence
Evidence: Relevant, specific, important evidence and examples to support your argument
Analysis/Counter argument: Your interpretation of the evidence and its significance for your argument/considers any relevant counter argument as required
Link to the question: A concluding sentence that links your paragraph to the essay topic and adjacent paragraphs.

Perikles's leadership: Problems, failures and negatives

The Thucydides Trap is a term coined by American political scientist Graham T. Allison to describe the inevitability of war when an emerging power threatens to displace a previous power as a regional or international leader. For Allison, he meant modern war between the USA and China, and used the Peloponnesian War as an analogy: Sparta's fear of the growth of Athenian power. Allison led a study at Harvard University's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. Of a sample of 16 historical instances of an emerging power rivalling a previous ruling power, 12 ended in war. It's a political theory, but not necessarily historically correct. Upon closer examination, it becomes clear that Athens, under Perikles, was the aggressor.

Did Perikles arrogantly lead Athens into a war that it could not win? To what extent did Perikles's war strategy lead to the great plague and his own death? Thucydides would claim that deviation from Perikles's war strategy would eventually lead to Athens' defeat, but would adherence to the Periklean strategy have ensured victory? Or hastened defeat? Thucydides lamented the lack of strong leadership and drift into demagogy after Perikles's death, but was Perikles himself the accidental architect of this development?

Issue 1: The Greeks – The fifth-century-BCE irony

Towards the beginning of the fifth century BCE, Athens and Sparta helped unite the Greeks against a common enemy: the foreigners, the Persians. In the middle, and at the end of that same century, the Ancient Greek world was drawn into two civil wars between the former allies – Sparta and Athens – a conflict that would ultimately end with Athens' unconditional surrender in 404 BCE. How could such a turnaround have occurred so quickly?

The Peloponnesian League (c. 550–366 BCE), led by Sparta, was a confederation of Greek city-states in the geographical region of its namesake. Unlike other confederations (such as the Delian League), the Peloponnesian League was a non-binding agreement, with each city-state having negotiated its own terms with dominant Sparta. The League began in c. 550 BCE so that Sparta might protect itself against both a possible uprising of Sparta's helots and its regional rival Argos (located in the north of the Peloponnese). In 461 BCE, two members of the League, Megara and Corinth, went to war against each other over a border dispute. Megara, faced with defeat, left the Peloponnesian League and went on to become Athens' ally. This drew the Peloponnesian League and Delian League into a 15-year conflict, often called the First Peloponnesian War (460–445 BCE). This war consisted of a series of conflicts and minor wars, such as the Second Sacred War.

The following extracts from Plutarch concern the origins and causes of the conflict between Athens and Sparta, the First Peloponnesian War.

SOURCE 10.25 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 17

When the Lacedaemonians began to be annoyed by the increasing power of the Athenians, Pericles, by way of inciting the people to cherish yet loftier thoughts and to deem itself worthy of great achievements, introduced a bill to the effect that all Hellenes wheresoever resident in Europe or in Asia, small and large cities alike, should be invited to send deputies to a council at Athens. This was to deliberate concerning the Hellenic sanctuaries which the Barbarians had burned down, concerning the sacrifices which were due to the gods in the name of Hellas in fulfilment of vows made when they were fighting with the Barbarians, and concerning the sea, that all might sail it fearlessly and keep the peace. To extend this invitation, twenty men, of such as were above fifty years of age, were sent out, five of whom invited the Ionians and Dorians in Asia and on the islands between Lesbos and Rhodes; five visited the regions on the Hellespont and in Thrace as far as Byzantium; five others were sent into Boeotia and Phocis and Peloponnesus, and from here by way of the Ozolian Locrians into the neighbouring continent as far as Acarnania and Ambracia; while the rest proceeded through Euboea to the Oetaeans and the Maliac Gulf and the Phthiotic Achaeans and the Thessalians, urging them all to come and take part in the deliberations for the peace and common welfare of Hellas. But nothing was accomplished, nor did the cities come together by deputy, owing to the opposition of the Lacedaemonians, as it is said, since the effort met with its first check in Peloponnesus. I have cited this incident, however, to show forth the man's disposition and the greatness of his thoughts.

SOURCE 10.26 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 19

> But he [Perikles] was admired and celebrated even amongst foreigners for his circumnavigation of the Peloponnesus, when he put to sea from Pegae in the Megarid with a hundred triremes. He not only ravaged a great strip of seashore, as Tolmides had done before him, but also advanced far into the interior with the hoplites from his ships, and drove all his enemies inside their walls in terror at his approach, excepting only the Sicyonians, who made a stand against him in Nemea, and joined battle with him; these he routed by main force and set up a trophy for his victory.

SOURCE 10.27 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 20

> He considered it a great achievement to hold the Lacedaemonians in check, and set himself in opposition to these in every way, as he showed, above all other things, by what he did in the Sacred War.



ACTIVITY **10.9**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources
Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

In small groups or as a class, discuss your responses.

1. Who was really the aggressor in the First Peloponnesian War?
2. Explicitly, as with the Thucydides Trap, the blame seems to fall on Sparta. However, implicitly (reading between the lines), is it possible that the war was provoked by Athens, especially Perikles, as a way of cementing his own power?

Issue 2: Athens – The fifth-century-BCE paradox

Liberty, equality, freedom, independence – all bywords we associate with democracy. How then, and why, was Athens thus viewed by its fellow Greeks as a bastion of brutal authoritarianism, suppressor of liberty and enslaver of fellow Greeks?

After Athens' failed intervention in Egypt, in which they attempted to aid the Egyptians to overcome the Persians, the Delian League treasury was moved to the Parthenon on the Athenian acropolis in 454 BCE. In 451/0 BCE, Kimon, a pro-Spartan Athenian politician who had been forced into exile (ostracised) by Perikles, returned from his 10-year banishment but died soon after. His successor, Thucydides of Alopece, led the conservative faction in Athens. The Peace of Kallias in 449 BCE represented the end of conflict between the Greeks and the Persians. The federation of Greeks was no longer obligated to continue as members of the league because of the cessation of the war with Persia. By this time, however, Athens had profited much from the monetary contributions of their 'allies'. Thus, the allies of the League morphed into subservient subjects of the Athenian Empire, and were not allowed to leave, although unofficially this had been the case for some time. Boeotia and Euboea drifted away from Athens. Megara returned to its alliance with Sparta. The Spartans also invaded Attica.

In 446/5 BCE, Athens made a Thirty Years' Peace with Sparta, but continued to subject its former allies to a state of servitude. In 440 BCE, Samos revolted, and was then repressed and subjugated. Aristotle, an Athenian himself, wrote:

SOURCE 10.28 Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens*, XXIV

> **After the Athenians had gained their empire, they treated their allies rather dictatorially, except for Chios, Lesbos and Samos. These they regarded as guardians of the empire, allowing them to keep their own constitution and rule over any subjects they happened to have.**

The following two extracts are from Thucydides's *History of the Peloponnesian War*. The first extract is Perikles's speech to the *demos* encouraging them to continue the war (after the plague had decimated the city and they were thinking of suing for peace terms with Sparta).

SOURCE 10.29 Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2:63

> **For already your government is in the nature of a tyranny, which is both unjust for you to take up and unsafe to lay down. And such men as these, if they could persuade others to it or lived in a free city by themselves, would quickly overthrow it. For the quiet life can never be preserved if it be not ranged with the active life, nor is it a life conducible to a city that reigneth but to a subject city that it may safely serve.**

SOURCE 10.30 Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 13:2–5

> **He also gave the citizens some advice on their present affairs in the same strain as before. They were to prepare for the war, and to carry in their property from the country. They were not to go out to battle, but to come into the city and guard it, and get ready their fleet, in which their real strength lay. They were also to keep a tight rein on their allies – the strength of Athens being derived from the money brought in by their payments, and success in war depending principally upon conduct and capital. Here they had no reason to despond. Apart from other sources of income, an average revenue of six hundred talents of silver was drawn from the tribute of the allies; and there were still six thousand talents of coined silver in the Acropolis, out of nine thousand seven hundred that had once been there, from which the money had been taken for the porch of the Acropolis, the other public buildings, and for Potidaea.**

ACTIVITY **10.10**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources
Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. What do Sources 10.28–10.30 reveal about the importance of allied revenue to Athens at the start of the Second Peloponnesian War (431 BCE)?
2. What do these sources reveal about the nature of allied contributions? Think about willing and voluntary contributions as opposed to contributions made via force and fear.

10.7 Impact on the times, and interpretations and representations of Perikles

The perspectives of ancient sources

Modern perceptions of Perikles are shaped by the praise heaped upon him by ancient authors. Throughout Plutarch's *Life of Pericles*, where a criticism of Perikles is recorded, Plutarch himself evaluates the author of the analysis and always dismisses their criticism. See, for example, the following, in which Perikles is accused of brutality following the suppression of the revolt of Samos in 440 BCE.

SOURCE 10.31 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 28

To these details Duris the Samian adds stuff for tragedy, accusing the Athenians and Pericles of great brutality, which is recorded neither by Thucydides, nor Ephorus, nor Aristotle. But he appears not to speak the truth when he says, forsooth, that Pericles had the Samian trierarchs and marines brought into the marketplace of Miletus and crucified there, and that then, when they had already suffered grievously for ten days, he gave orders to break their heads in with clubs and make an end of them, and then cast their bodies forth without burial rites. At all events, since it is not the wont of Duris, even in cases where he has no private and personal interest, to hold his narrative down to the fundamental truth, it is all the more likely that here, in this instance, he has given a dreadful portrayal of the calamities of his country, that he might calumniate the Athenians.

SOURCE 10.32 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 13:11

And earlier, he wrote: '... and why should anyone be astonished that men of wanton life lose no occasion for offering up sacrifices, as it were, of contumelious abuse of their superiors, to the evil deity of popular envy'.

Should these revered ancient authors themselves be thought guiltless of bias? For example, during the rule of Perikles, Athens offered patronage to the playwright Herodotus, who had previously been rejected by Corinth and Thebes. When he read his *Histories* aloud, Athens paid him 10 talents – a small fortune – from the public purse. Might there have been a pro-Athenian bias in his work?

The following extract is Herodotus's only direct reference to Perikles in his *Histories*. In it he describes a dream by Perikles's mother, Agariste, who was the niece of the democratic reformer Cleisthenes.

SOURCE 10.33 Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VI:131

Agariste dreamt during her pregnancy that she gave birth to a lion, and a few days later become the mother of Pericles.

Similarly, we need to consider the possibility of bias in both Plutarch and Thucydides.

SOURCE 10.34 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 2

For such reasons I have decided to persevere in my writing of Lives, and so have composed this tenth book, containing the Life of Pericles, and that of Fabius Maximus, who waged such lengthy war with Hannibal. The men were alike in their virtues, and more especially in their gentleness and rectitude, and by their ability to endure the follies of their peoples and of their colleagues in office, they proved of the greatest service to their countries.

SOURCE 10.35 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 15:5

The reason for his success was not his power as a speaker merely, but, as Thucydides says, the reputation of his life and the confidence reposed in him as one who was manifestly proven to be utterly disinterested and superior to bribes. He made the city, great as it was when he took it, the greatest and richest of all cities, and grew to be superior in power to kings and tyrants.

SOURCE 10.36 Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2:65

Therefore, whensoever he saw them out of season insolently bold, he would with his orations put them into a fear; and again, when they were afraid without reason, he would likewise erect their spirits and embolden them. It was in name a state democratical, but in fact a government of the principal man. But they that came after, being more equal amongst themselves and affecting everyone to be the chief, applied themselves to the people and let go the care of the commonwealth.

ACTIVITY **10.11**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research
Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Conduct research into the strengths and weaknesses of Herodotus, Thucydides and Plutarch as sources of information about Perikles. Use the sources in this chapter as a starting point, but also conduct your own research. Create a chart summary like the one below:

Author	Opinion (quote)	Author evaluation/reasons behind the opinion (i.e. influences, bias)
Herodotus		
Plutarch		
Thucydides		

2. To what extent does knowing more about the authors detract from or strengthen your confidence in their viewpoint on Perikles?
3. Just because an author might be biased in a viewpoint, it does not necessarily mean the viewpoint is less valid or weak. Discuss this idea in a group or with a partner.

ACTIVITY **10.12**

Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose

Based on your research in Activity 10.11, craft a well-written historical essay, article or multimodal presentation. This is the process you need to follow in order to create your response:

1. Formulate a working thesis.
2. Review focus questions and information collected to ensure you have no glaring gaps.
3. Organise your research into sub-arguments. These will form your body paragraphs.
4. Review your thesis to ensure that it will work with the evidence that you have.
5. Plan your response: identify key evidence, quotes, references.
6. Write the body of your essay.
7. Write your introduction, ensuring that the thesis you established is what you have actually written about.
8. Write your conclusion.
9. Ensure you have used a consistent form of referencing.
10. Ensure you have used the appropriate historical terminology and subject-specific vocabulary.
11. Check that you have written in the formal third-person form, and have used analytical language, including signposting when you evaluate sources.

Depth study: Summing up

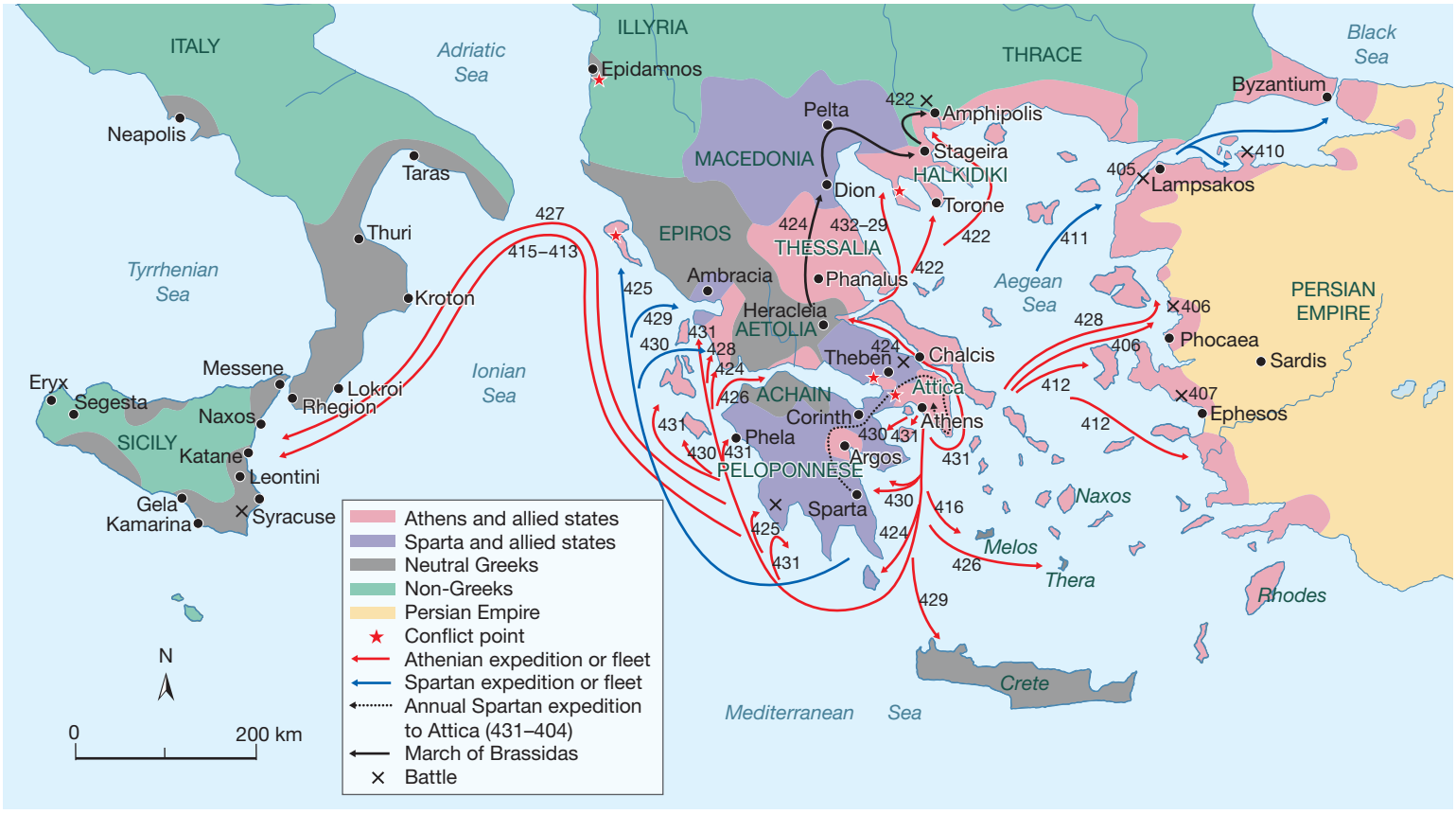
You have looked at the character and leadership of Perikles through examination of primary source material on him and his role and contributions to Athens in the fifth century BCE. In the concluding study, we will look at his legacy: firstly, his short-term legacy – his contribution to the direction, course and results in the Peloponnesian War; secondly, how (and why) historiographical perspectives on Perikles have changed over time.

CONCLUDING STUDY

10.8 Short-term view: Contemporary perspectives on Perikles

The Second Peloponnesian War

The Second Peloponnesian War was fought in 431–404 BCE between two associations of Greek city-states: the Delian League led by Athens, and the Spartan-dominated Peloponnesian League.



SOURCE 10.37 The extent of the Peloponnesian War, 431–404 BCE

Towards war

Given the anti-Spartan policy of Athens, and the increase of its own empire, war became a matter of when, rather than if.

SOURCE 10.38 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 29

> Notwithstanding all, since embassies were repeatedly sent to Athens, and since Archidamus, the king of the Lacedaemonians, tried to bring to a peaceful settlement most of the accusations of his allies and to soften their anger, it does not seem probable that the war would have come upon the Athenians for any remaining reasons, if only they could have been persuaded to rescind their decree against the Megarians and be reconciled with them. And therefore, since it was Pericles who was most of all opposed to this, and who incited the people to abide by their contention with the Megarians, he alone was held responsible for the war.

SOURCE 10.39 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 31

> ... whatever the original ground for enacting the decree – and it is no easy matter to determine this – the fact that it was not rescinded all men alike lay to the charge of Pericles.

SOURCE 10.40 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 31

> Some say that he persisted in his refusal in a lofty spirit and with a clear perception of the best interests of the city, regarding the injunction laid upon it as a test of its submissiveness, and its compliance as a confession of weakness; while others hold that it was rather with a sort of arrogance and love of strife, as well as for the display of his power, that he scornfully defied the Lacedaemonians.

ACTIVITY **10.13**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

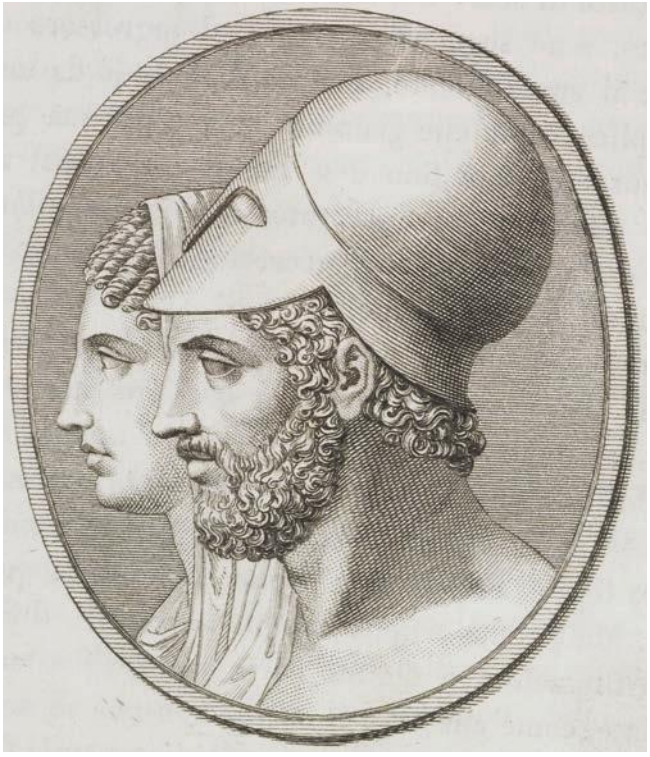
The Thucydides Trap theory (discussed earlier) assigns the blame to Sparta for causing the conflict, due to simple jealousy. To what extent do Sources 10.38–10.40 suggest otherwise?

Growing resentment towards Perikles

Perikles's opponents attacked him and his close associates, such as his friends Phidias (the artist) and Anaxagoras (the philosopher), and Aspasia (his mistress), through the law courts. Plutarch writes that Phidias was prosecuted by Perikles's enemies for abuse of an employee, Menon. Phidias lost and was imprisoned. He may have died in prison, but recent research has proposed that he was in fact exiled and went to Elis. The people loved Phidias, who created the statue of Zeus at Olympia, which was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, and the public grew resentful towards Perikles for doing nothing. Next, Perikles's lover Aspasia was put on trial for impiety. Fearing the jury's verdict so soon after Phidias's unexpected prosecution, Plutarch wrote:

SOURCE 10.41 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 32

> [Perikles] so kindled into flame the threatening and smouldering war, hoping thereby to dissipate the charges made against him and allay the people's jealousy, inasmuch as when great undertakings were on foot, and great perils threatened, the city entrusted herself to him and to him alone, by reason of his worth and power.



SOURCE 10.42 Aspasia and Perikles

10.9 Long-term view: Modern perspectives and judgements on Perikles

Perikles of Athens is often portrayed as one of the greatest leaders in the Ancient World. He is renowned for his vision, conduct, virtue, intellect and persuasiveness through both his personal actions and through his oratory skill. Perikles is often represented as orchestrating Athens' Golden Age in the fifth century BCE. The Canadian Museum of History offers a description of this Golden Age that can be considered a fairly typical viewpoint:

SOURCE 10.43 'Who Was Pericles, the Architect of the Athenian Golden Age?', *TheCollector.com*, Aug 24, 2022, Aiden Nel, BA Classical History and Psychology, MA Classical History

Pericles, the first citizen of Athens, helmed the Athenian golden age. Through his policies and leadership, he guided and improved Athenian democracy and helped to establish the Athenian Empire. The 5th century BCE represented the apex of cultural, political, and economic prosperity in one particular area in ancient Greece. Socrates began to establish the foundations of western philosophy. Playwrights such as Euripides, Aeschylus, and Sophocles were sponsored to create narratives that we still enjoy today. Phidias, the sculptor, created one of the seven wonders of the world, the statue of Zeus at Olympia. Herodotus began recording world history and Hippocrates, the father of western medicine, established the Hippocratic oath. All of these people lived and breathed in one place at the same time: Athens. This era is sometimes called the golden age of Athens, however, it is also called by another name: the Age of Pericles. Named after the man who guided the city to prosperity, the first citizen of Athens. ... Pericles bolstered Athenian democracy. He passed laws allowing any citizen participating in activities such as jury duty, to be paid for their time, thus eliminating the stranglehold of the rich on the assembly. He also blatantly stole money from his allies but he used this money to improve the city that he loved dearly. It is thanks to this selfish love that today we can gaze upon the Acropolis of Athens and marvel.

ACTIVITY 10.14

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Read Source 10.43 and identify examples of:

a. language that idealises the Golden Age

b. generalisations made about the period.

In 431 BCE, Perikles gave the speech for which he became famous – an oration as part of an annual public funeral for the war dead at the end of the first year of the Peloponnesian War. This speech was recorded by Thucydides, although not word for word, so it is likely Thucydides did some editing. The speech begins with praise of the dead, but rather than talking in detail about Athens' military achievements (which might have been expected in this context), Perikles instead spoke of the greatness of Athenian democracy, and the need for the citizens to continue to support the war. The Funeral Oration is remembered as one of the great speeches extolling the virtues of democracy and public duty to preserve democracy.

In the following extract, history professors Nels Bailkey and Richard Lim discuss the importance of this speech:

SOURCE 10.44 N. M. Bailkey and R. Lim, *Readings in Ancient History*, Houghton Mifflin, 2002, p. 167

No finer expression of the ideals of democracy exists than the famous Funeral Oration delivered by Perikles in honour of the Athenians who fell fighting Sparta during the first year (431 BC) of the Peloponnesian War. Like Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, with which it is frequently compared, it is considered one of the greatest speeches in literature. (Unlike Perikles, however, Lincoln does not say that death in battle is the best end a man can come to. Nor would he have taken for granted, as Perikles does at the end of his oration, the inferior nature of women and their seclusion.) Perikles appeals to the patriotism of his listeners, confronted by the crisis of a great war, by describing the superior qualities and advantages of their democracy as a heritage won for them by their ancestors and worthy of any sacrifice to preserve. He emphasises as the outstanding feature of their democracy – and, we can add, of any democracy – the harmonious blending of opposite tendencies in politics, economics, and culture that it contains. This is perhaps the finest expression of the Greek ideal of a man between extremes. All this is described in sharp contrast to the rigid totalitarianism of Sparta, which regulated every detail of its citizens' existence. An outstanding example of this happy blending of control and freedom in all phases of life was the Athenian acceptance of the leadership of Perikles as the recognised superior individual voted into power by the people to 'lead them', as Thucydides noted, 'instead of being led by them'. Perikles extends the same argument, that order and liberty are compatible, to justify the existence of the Athenian Empire, which had emerged after the Persian Wars to fill the vacuum left by the failure of Spartan leadership in Greek affairs.

Before a peace treaty with Persia was signed in 448 BCE, Athens and its allies had countered Persian expansionism by aiding anti-Persian uprisings in Cyprus and Egypt. Like the Americans in Vietnam, the Athenian-led Greeks failed in their mission. Bogged down in the Nile Delta after eight years of fighting and the loss of some two hundred ships and many men, Perikles had to withdraw the Greek forces. But he went on to complete the formation of the Athenian Empire, which unified and brought peace and prosperity to half of the Greek world. It was at present under attack by Sparta and its allies as the 'tyrant city' that had extinguished the liberties of many Greek states and was now threatening the remainder. Perikles' reply to this charge is an idealised rationalisation of the need to replace the anarchy of narrow city-state 'nationalism' with an 'international' organisation of Greek states under Athenian leadership. The goal was peace and prosperity – or what can be called freedom from fear and want, two of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's stirring 'Four Freedoms', the idealistic goals for which World War II was fought.

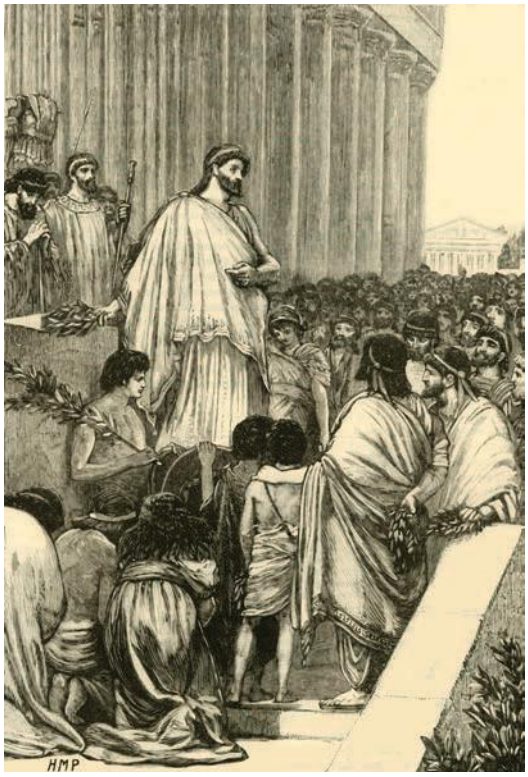
Such also is the meaning of Perikles' inspired conception of Athenian imperialism: 'We secure our friends not by accepting favours but by doing them ... We are alone among mankind in doing men benefits, not on calculations of self-interest, but in the fearless confidence of [bringing] freedom. In a word I claim that our city as a whole is an education to Greece.'

ACTIVITY **10.15**

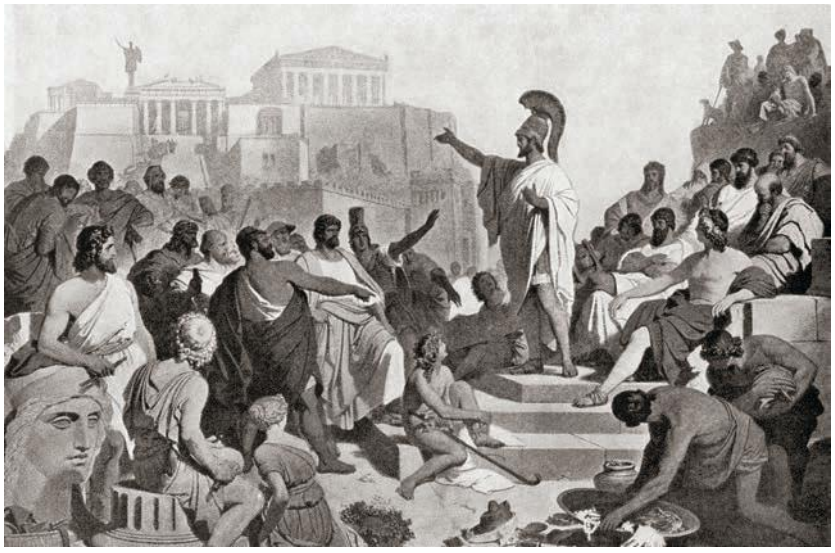
Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Study Source 10.44. Some aspects of Bailkey and Lim's evaluation of the Funeral Oration offer an inaccurate picture of events. For example, they do not mention that while the goal of the Athenian Empire was mutual protection against Persia, members were not allowed to leave, and Athens used it to increase its own wealth.

1. Do you think the authors express unqualified admiration of the speech? Give evidence to support your view.
2. Why do you think Bailkey and Lim made an explicit comparison with the Gettysburg Address? (You may need to look up the context and wording of the Gettysburg Address.)



SOURCE 10.45 Philipp Foltz, *Perikles' Funeral Oration*, 1852. This painting shows Perikles standing on the speaker's rostrum at the Pnyx, a hill in central Athens, though his Funeral Oration was actually delivered outside the walls of the city.



SOURCE 10.46 E. Ollier, 'Perikles delivering the Funeral Oration over the Athenians', *Cassell's Illustrated Universal History, Vol. I – Early and Greek History*, Cassell and Company, 1890

ACTIVITY **10.16**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Consider Sources 10.45 and 10.46. Both are nineteenth-century depictions of the Funeral Oration. In what ways have the artists idealised Perikles? Consider both the presentation of Perikles and that of the listening crowd.

There are, however, differing opinions. In the following article, Cambridge University classicist Mary Beard considers the opinions provided on Perikles by various writers. The text highlighted in yellow indicates pro-Perikles sentiment, blue indicates criticism of Perikles, and green shows consideration of Cleon as leader.

SOURCE 10.47 M. Beard, 'Which Thucydides can you trust?', *The New York Review of Books*, 2010

One of the clearest cases where Thucydides takes a revisionist view is his judgement on the quality of the different Athenian war-leaders. He was a tremendous admirer of Pericles, whom he saw as playing a clever waiting game at the start of the war, letting the Spartans invade Athenian territory for a month or so each year and wreak havoc on the countryside, but not engaging them in battle – merely retreating behind the city walls and staying put until the enemy left. It was an unprecedented plan in the history of Greek warfare (for, as Kagan rightly observes, in the Greek tradition 'willingness to fight, bravery, and steadfastness in battle were the essential characteristics of the free man and the citizen'). But Thucydides compares the strategy favourably with the rash military decisions of the successors of Pericles, who embarked on all kinds of incautious policies – such as the Sicilian expedition – that led to disaster. In Thucydides' view, Pericles was right.

But not in Kagan's [historian and classicist at Yale; considered among the foremost American scholars of Greek history and is notable for his four-volume history of the Peloponnesian War]. He calculates the financial cost of Pericles' wait-and-see policy against the total amount of Athens' monetary reserves, as we know them from Thucydides. His conclusion is that the Athenians could only have afforded to adopt that strategy for three years at the most – and that was certainly not long enough for the Spartans to have become demoralised (which was Pericles' aim) with their repeated, fruitless, annual invasions.

Although it might have made sense on paper, 'the plan did not work'; far from being a stroke of cautious genius, as Thucydides thought, it was leading Athens to almost certain defeat. It was hardly surprising then that before his death, from the great plague, the Athenians had turned against Pericles. In fact, toward the end of his History, Thucydides reports more explicitly than in his earlier books the popular view of the Periclean strategy: 'Some thought that Athens could hold out for a year, some for two, but no one for more than three years.' According to Kagan's economic calculations, popular opinion was right, and Pericles' apparently cautious policy – so admired by Thucydides and by many modern scholars – was dangerous in the extreme.

The most notorious successor to Pericles in the military leadership of Athens was a man named Cleon, vehemently attacked by Thucydides for his reckless, ill-informed, aggressive schemes, as well as his vulgar, nouveau riche image. Here too Kagan reverses Thucydides' judgement, showing repeatedly that Cleon's policy worked, despite Thucydides' opposition to it – and despite the fact that the only laugh to enter his rather humourless *History* is reported as a response (in apparent disbelief) to Cleon's bravado boast, not long after the death of Pericles, that he would capture a large party of Spartan soldiers, marooned on the island of Sphacteria off the western Peloponnese, within just twenty days. In fact, Cleon did exactly that, as well as initiating a number of other policies either derided or left unmentioned by Thucydides (for example, a major reassessment – upward – of the financial contributions paid to the imperial fighting fund by Athens' allies). For Kagan, it was these initiatives of Cleon, rather than the cautious policies of Pericles, that nearly won the war for Athens.

Professor Stephen V. Tracy, of Ohio State University and the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, looks at differing views on Perikles and democracy:

SOURCE 10.48 S. Tracy, *Pericles: A Sourcebook and Reader*, University of California Press, 2009, p. 23

> **Admiration of Pericles and of the democracy has not, of course, been unanimous. The hostile tradition that treats Pericles as a crass demagogue began with his contemporaries; it was adopted by no less a figure than Alexander Hamilton, who in the [essay] Federalist Papers no. 6 singles out Pericles as a leader who for personal reasons 'was the primitive author of that famous and fatal war,' namely, the Peloponnesian War. Further, J. Tolbert Roberts in her book Athens on Trial, traces the sometimes-virulent indictments of Athenian democracy to the anti-democratic tradition that continues to plague western thought.**

Historian Dr Paul Halsall edited a book on Perikles, in which he talks about the policy of turning allies into subjects.

SOURCE 10.49 P. Halsall (ed.), '11th Britannica', *Ancient History Sourcebook*, 1999

> **Turning to Pericles' policy towards the members of the Delian League, we find that he frankly endeavoured to turn the allies into subjects. A special feature of his rule was the sending out of numerous cleruchies [colonies that were politically dependent on Athens], which served the double purpose of securing strategic points to Athens and converting the needy proletariat of the capital into owners of real property. The land was acquired either by confiscation from disaffected states or in exchange for a lowering of tribute. The chief cleruchies of Pericles are: Thracian Chersonese (453–452); Lemnos and Imbros, Andros, Naxos and Eretria (before 447); Brea in Thrace (446); Oreus (445); Amisus and Astacus in the Black Sea (after 440); Aegina (431).**

Stella Lange, an academic at Notre Dame, Indiana, comments on Plato's view of Perikles.

SOURCE 10.50 S. Lange, 'Plato and Democracy', *The Classical Journal*, vol. 34, no. 8, 1939, pp. 480–6

> **In his youth Plato had seen or heard about demagogues like Cleon and Hyperbolus: ignorant, self- seeking, caring nothing for the real good of the people. He knew that even Pericles' democracy had been but a veiled dictatorship.**

Philosopher and political economist Nicholas Partyka of the Hampton Institute discusses the example democratic Athens had on nearby Rome.

SOURCE 10.51 N. Partyka, 'American Gracchi', *Politics and Government: Analysis*, 7 December 2016

> **... while the Senate dithered, Tiberius acted. But his action directly challenged the Senate's traditional prerogatives, threatening to take away some, perhaps in the long term all, of their power. By the time of Tiberius Gracchus the example of democratic Athens was well known. Pericles, Ephialtes, and others had successfully broadened the scope of the power of the Assembly at the direct expense of that of the Athenian version of the Senate, the Areopagus, stripping it of all functions save adjudicating murder trials by 462 BCE.**

Loren J. Samons II, Associate Professor of Classical Studies at Boston University, challenges the popular idea that majority rule leads to good government.

SOURCE 10.52 L. Samons, *What's Wrong with Democracy? From Athenian Practice to American Worship*, University of California Press, 2004, p. 6

> The modern desire to look to Athens for lessons or encouragement for modern thought, government, or society must confront this strange paradox: the people that gave rise to and practiced ancient democracy left us almost nothing but criticism of this form of regime (on a philosophical or theoretical level). And what is more, the actual history of Athens in the period of its democratic government is marked by numerous failures, mistakes, and misdeeds – most infamously, the execution of Socrates – that would seem to discredit the ubiquitous modern idea that democracy leads to good government.

ACTIVITY **10.17**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Create a table like the one below to help you summarise modern scholastic viewpoints on Perikles. Use Sources 10.47–10.52 as a starting point, and you may then wish to add to this table other viewpoints that you come across through further investigation on the internet or in your school library.

Modern historian	Viewpoint (summary)	Evidence (points and quotes)

ACTIVITY **10.18**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Read the modern perceptions and judgements in Sources 10.47–10.52 first before answering these questions.

1. Was Perikles's decision to lead Athens into war against Sparta motivated by self-interest (to deliberately distract the Athenians from his own personal issues and problems) or was it a reflection of good, conscientious governance and far-sighted leadership that would have ultimately led to Athenian victory (had he not died in 429 BCE)?
2. To what extent was Perikles responsible for not only starting the war, but also, because of his personal example and strategy, for Athens' defeat in it?

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Perikles was a Greek statesman who was most prominent in the period between the Persian and Peloponnesian wars.
- He is often viewed as a 'great man of history'.
- His political views were considered radical and progressive in his lifetime.
- After the death of Ephialtes, Perikles became leader of the democratic party, and effectively ruled Athens.
- He led a number of military expeditions.
- He had popular support and was elected *strategos* 15 times.
- His reforms led to the rise of a direct democracy and social reforms supported the poor.
- He undertook an ambitious building program, including constructing the Parthenon.
- He saw the expansion of the Athenian Empire.
- His Funeral Oration is remembered as one of the great speeches about democracy and public duty.
- Some historians argue he has been overly idealised.



SOURCE 10.53 Left: Bust of Athena, type of the 'Velletri Pallas' (inlaid eyes are lost). Copy of the second century CE after a votive statue of Kresilas in Athens (c. 430–420 BCE). Right: Idealised marble bust of Pericles. Roman copy of the second century CE after a Greek original of the Late Classical era (c. 440 and 430 BCE). These two images are statues of the Goddess Athena and Perikles, made around the same time. Viewed together, what conclusions could you make about the public image of Perikles?

CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
Create a table with two columns: one outlining the importance of the individual in history, and the other outlining criticisms of taking this first view in regard to historical causality. Use this table to answer the following question: Was Perikles a mover, shaker and changer of history, or simply a product of his time?

DEVISE
Choose an aspect of Perikles's life and rule, and describe how you would frame an inquiry into this aspect.

ANALYSE

SOURCE 10.54 Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 39

> The progress of events wrought in the Athenians a swift appreciation of Pericles and a keen sense of his loss. For those who, while he lived, were oppressed by a sense of his power and felt that it kept them in obscurity, straightway on his removal made trial of other orators and popular leaders, only to be led to the confession that a character more moderate than his in its solemn dignity, and more august in its gentleness, had not been created. That objectionable power of his, which they had used to call monarchy and tyranny, seemed to them now to have been a saving bulwark of the constitution, so greatly was the state afflicted by the corruption and manifold baseness which he had kept weak and grovelling, thereby covering it out of sight and preventing it from becoming incurably powerful.

In your own words, what is Plutarch saying about the loss (and legacy) of Perikles? Refer to at least three parts of the text in support of your interpretation.

EVALUATE
Use your knowledge of information about the authors to make judgements about their viewpoints.

SYNTHESISE
What viewpoints exist about the nature of Perikles's rule? Create two lists: one that is favourable about him and the other that is critical. Which general viewpoint do you lean towards?

COMMUNICATE
Was Perikles a great democratic leader or simply a demagogue-cloaked tyrant?

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions

1. Discuss the extent to which Perikles's position as a general (*strategos*) played a more important role than his oratory persuasiveness in establishing the basis of his power.
2. Evaluate the impact on Athenian democracy of Perikles's introduction of paying people for holding office.
3. To what extent did the power of Perikles either enhance or negate the principles of Greek democracy?
4. 'Perikles's fame as leader of a democratic Athens is not truly deserved.' Assess the validity of this statement.

Investigation tasks

1. To what extent did the problems within Greek democracy outweigh its benefits in fifth-century-BCE Athens? (In your response, refer specifically to the era of Perikles.)
2. Assess the importance of Perikles in the development of Athenian democracy.
3. To what extent should Perikles be criticised rather than praised for his war strategies?



SOURCE 10.55 Farewell of the warrior: Illustration taken from a vase drawing from the time of Perikles

Chapter 14

EARLY IMPERIAL ROME FROM AUGUSTUS TO NERO

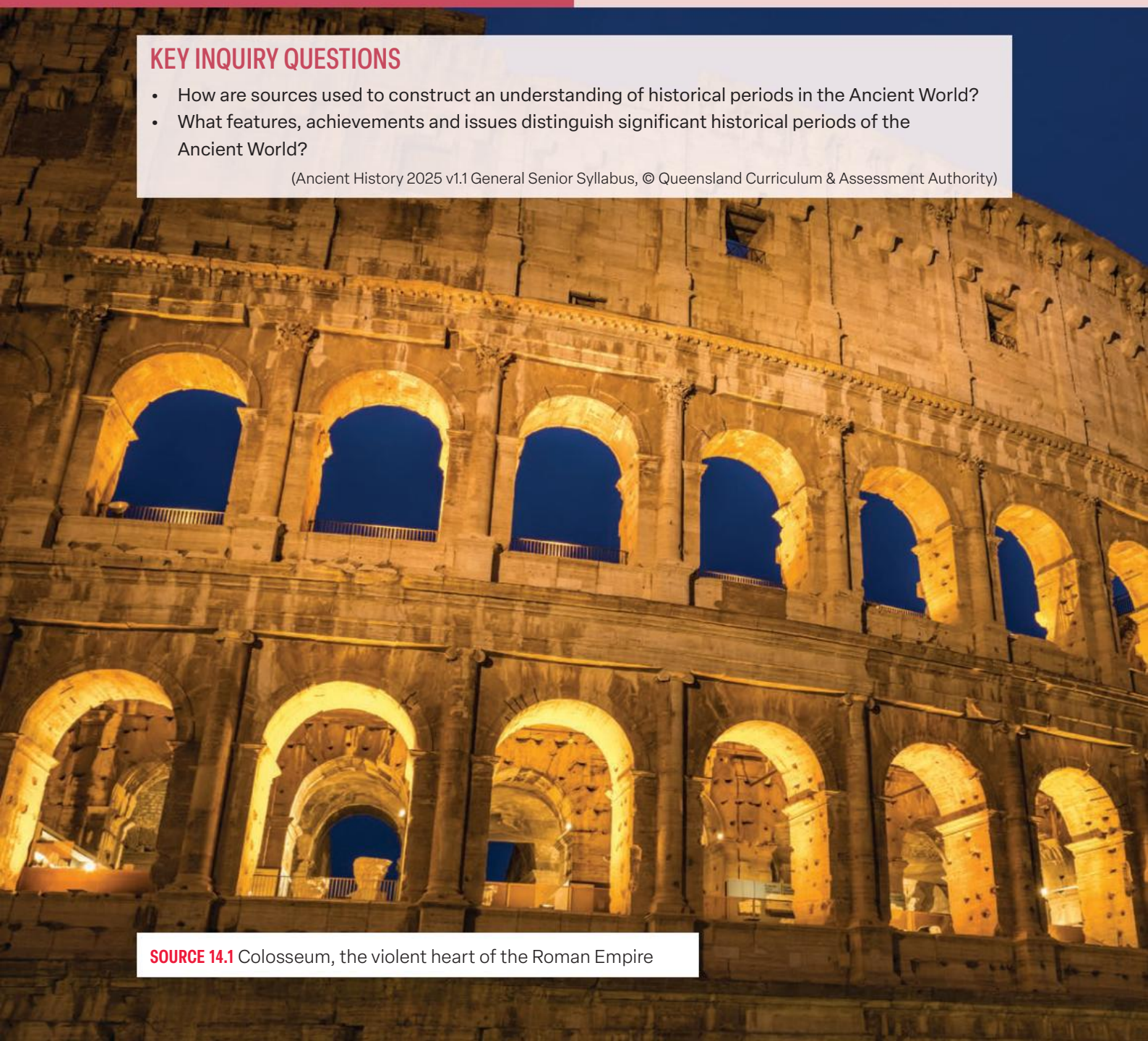
Syllabus reference: Unit 3, Topics 1 and 2: Historical periods

GLENN DAVIES

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How are sources used to construct an understanding of historical periods in the Ancient World?
- What features, achievements and issues distinguish significant historical periods of the Ancient World?

(Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 14.1 Colosseum, the violent heart of the Roman Empire

FOCUS: THE DRAMA OF THE JULIO-CLAUDIAN IMPERIAL FAMILY

In 1911 the Italian historian Guglielmo Ferrero reflected on how the **Julio-Claudian imperial family** was viewed as tragic and the most constantly persecuted and plotted-against family in the Ancient World.

SOURCE 14.2 Guglielmo Ferrero, *The Women of the Caesars*, 1911

> We are at a loss to know whether to call it the most fortunate or the most unhappy of all the families of the ancient world. It is impossible for the historian who understands this terrible drama, filled with so many catastrophes, not to feel a certain impression of horror at the vindictive ferocity that Rome showed to this house, which, in order to bring back Rome's peace and to preserve her empire, had been fated to exalt itself a few degrees above the ordinary level of the ancient aristocracy. Men and women, the young and the old, the knaves and the large-hearted, the sages and the fools of the family, alike, all without exception, were persecuted and plotted against. ... What was the cause of all this? we ask. How were so many catastrophes possible, and how could tradition have erred so grievously? It is almost a crime that posterity should virtually always have studied and pondered this immense tragedy of history on the basis of the crude and superficial falsification of it which Tacitus has given us. For few episodes in general history impress so powerfully upon the mind the fact that the progress of the world is one of the most tragic of its phenomena ...
>
> He who wishes to preserve, often destroys, so that virtue seems vice, and vice seems virtue.

The Roman Empire, at its height around 117 CE, was the most extensive political and social structure in Western civilisation. The first emperor of Rome was Augustus, who reigned from 27 BCE to 14 CE. He is said to have found Rome a city of clay but left it a city of marble. Augustus reformed the laws of the city of Rome as well as the empire, secured Rome's borders, initiated vast building projects, and secured the empire a lasting name as one of the greatest powers in history. Augustus introduced the ***pax Romana*** (Roman Peace), a time of peace and prosperity that would last over 200 years.

Following Augustus's death, the next emperor was his stepson Tiberius. Tiberius continued many of Augustus's policies, but lacked his strength of character and vision. This trend continued with the next three Julio-Claudian emperors: Gaius Caligula, Claudius and Nero. These five emperors ruled the Roman Empire from 27 BCE to 68 CE and are referred to as the Julio-Claudian **dynasty** for the two 'family names' they descended from (either by birth or through adoption) – Julian and Claudian. Nero's suicide in 68 CE ended the Julio-Claudian dynasty and initiated the period of social unrest known as The Year of the Four Emperors. At the end of this struggle, Vespasian emerged victorious. He founded the Flavian dynasty, which was characterised by building projects such as the Flavian Amphitheatre (the famous Colosseum of Rome), economic prosperity and an expansion of the Roman empire.

Julio-Claudian imperial family the first five Roman emperors and their families; descendants of the Emperor Augustus (the Julian branch) and his wife Livia's children (the Claudian branch)

pax Romana the Roman peace

dynasty a sequence of rulers from the same family

Emperor Vespasian's reign and those of his two sons, Titus and Domitian, ended in 96 CE, bringing to an end a century of relative peace and prosperity for the early Roman Empire.

CONTEXTUAL STUDY

14.1 When and where did the events of early imperial Rome take place?

TABLE 14.1 A list of key dates

27 BCE	Beginning of the Roman Empire, Augustus becomes Emperor.
10 BCE	Claudius born at Lugdunum, in Gaul.
6 BCE	Tiberius withdraws from politics and retires to island of Rhodes.
12 CE	Gaius Caligula is born at Antium.
14 CE	Augustus dies and Tiberius becomes Roman emperor.
26 CE	Tiberius retires completely to island of Capri.
31 CE	Gaius Caligula summoned to join Tiberius on island of Capri.
37 CE	Tiberius dies and Gaius Caligula becomes Roman emperor. Nero is born.
41 CE	Gaius Caligula is assassinated and Claudius becomes Roman emperor.
48 CE	Claudius's wife Messalina tried for treason and executed.
54 CE	Claudius dies, possibly from poisoning by his wife, Agrippina the Younger. Claudius's stepson Nero becomes Roman emperor.
59 CE	Nero has his mother, Agrippina the Younger, murdered.
64 CE	Nero allegedly watches as Rome burns.
68 CE	Nero dies by suicide.
68 CE	Year of the Four Emperors.
69 CE	Vespasian becomes Roman emperor.
70 CE	The Emperor Vespasian orders the building of the Colosseum.
79 CE	Vespasian dies and his son, Titus, becomes Roman emperor. Mount Vesuvius erupts and destroys Pompeii and Herculaneum.
80 CE	The Colosseum in Rome is completed.
81 CE	Titus dies, and his younger brother Domitian becomes Roman emperor.
96 CE	Domitian is assassinated and brings an end to the early Roman Empire.
117 CE	The Roman Empire reaches its greatest extent.

After the Civil War era, this is what the Julio-Claudians had to rule over. Roman emperors were expected to quell revolts and extend Roman territory.



SOURCE 14.3 The Roman Empire at its greatest, in 117 CE

14.2 How do we know today about early imperial Rome?

Ancient historians

The main sources of evidence for the Julio-Claudian dynasty are the ancient historians Tacitus, Suetonius and Cassius Dio. Tacitus was a member of the upper class who, after being dismissed from an administrative position, held a grudge against the Emperor Trajan. As a result, he tended to romanticise the earlier Republican era. Suetonius, at one time the secretary to Emperor Hadrian, concentrated on personal lives and gossip, rather than on matters of policy. Cassius Dio, the son of a Roman senator, spent 10 years collecting the information he needed to write his *History of Rome*. Unfortunately, most of this information was obtained from secondary sources. All three wrote after the last of the Julio-Claudians had gone and took the side of the Senate in most conflicts with the emperor, as well as the senators' views of the emperor. This resulted in biases, both conscious and unconscious.

Cassius Dio provided the only full-length account of Emperor Augustus's reign; however, he should be read with care as he was sympathetic to the imperial system created by Augustus. Suetonius's work includes some reliable factual details, but he was more concerned with personal weaknesses and the tendency of power to corrupt. Tacitus did not deal specifically with Augustus. He devoted his attention to Augustus's successors and in doing so made some harsh judgements about the Augustan system. The *Res Gestae Divi Augustus* (Things Achieved) was composed by Augustus over a period of time and was intended to be read in the Senate after his death. However, of more importance was the intention of Augustus to influence what people in the future would think of him.

The *Res Gestae* was to be engraved upon bronze tablets attached to the pillars of his mausoleum in the Campus Martius and other places throughout the Roman Empire. Since the tablets were for public display, they were most likely historically reliable because they could easily have been challenged at the time.

By most accounts, Emperor Tiberius was not a sociable man. However, it is not easy to gain a clear picture of the character and rule of Tiberius from the primary sources because most of them were so clearly biased against him. While Tacitus saw the emperors as disguised monarchs with their own interests at heart, Velleius had no stated aim in writing his history; however, the loyal service shown by his extended family, the Velleii, to both Augustus and Tiberius, and the advancements the family achieved under the Julio-Claudian emperors, should be considered. Suetonius recorded livid tales of sexual perversity and cruelty and, most of all, Tiberius's paranoia. While perhaps these accounts were sensationalised, the stories at least paint a picture of how Tiberius was perceived by the Roman people during his 23 years of rule.

Unfortunately, Emperor Caligula's reign was the most poorly documented reign of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. The only surviving sources are Cassius Dio and the scandal-mongering Suetonius. Tacitus's account of the reign was lost. As a result, not only were many of the events of the reign unclear, but Gaius Caligula himself appeared more as a caricature than a real person. There were many famous stories about Caligula's bizarre behaviour as Roman emperor, but there is almost unanimous agreement among ancient sources as to the cause of Gaius Caligula's downfall: he was insane.

Cassius Dio and Suetonius presented Emperor Claudius as a weakling, easily manipulated, and as a man with the capacity for cruelty. The philosopher Seneca mocked him as a fool. This was the view that has been preserved by history. The most generous view of Claudius is to be found in Robert Graves's historical novels, *I, Claudius* and *Claudius the God*. The diagnosis of Claudius's physical disabilities as shown in Graves's novels published in the 1930s, and widely accepted, was polio. More recent scholars have suggested it was cerebral palsy.

The majority of what is known of Emperor Nero comes from Tacitus, Suetonius and Cassius Dio, who were all of the senatorial class. These sources disagree on a number of events in Nero's life: for instance, the deaths of Claudius and Agrippina, and the Roman fire of 64 CE. However, they are all consistent in their condemnation of Nero. His unpopularity among ancient historians may reflect his decision to lessen the power of the senatorial aristocracy, whose interests they supported. Tacitus's *Annals* was the most detailed and comprehensive history on the rule of Nero. He was unkind to Nero, but unlike other historians, he minimised the use of sensational stories. According to Tacitus, the population searched for a scapegoat after the Great Fire and rumours held Nero responsible. To shift the blame, Nero targeted a new religious group called the Christians.

The sources for the Flavian period include Tacitus's *Histories* as well as Plutarch's *Lives of the Roman Emperors*. However, the main ancient source is the often unreliable Suetonius. Material sources from this time include coins, inscriptions, the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and buildings such as the Colosseum.

Poets

The early Roman Empire produced one of the world's greatest epic poets, Virgil, whose *Aeneid* was intended to flatter Emperor Augustus. *The Aeneid* is still enjoyed today as a powerful tale of adventure, love and war. Other ancient writers include Ovid, whose erotic poems were the excuse to have him banned from the court at Rome; Horace, composer of satires as well as lyrics; the philosopher Seneca, tutor of Nero, who wrote essays and tragedies; and the historian Livy, who shared with Augustus an admiration of the Republic and the old virtues. Livy incorporated his republican views into his history of Rome, along with the myth and legend associated with the foundation of the city of Rome.

The Roman poet Juvenal was best known for his biting satires. These satires ridicule the extravagance, corruption and immorality he saw in Rome. The third satire attacked Rome because it was noisy, uncomfortable, dangerous, and full of criminals and foreigners.

SOURCE 14.4 Juvenal, *Satires III*, 35

> Many a sick man dies here from want of sleep, the sickness itself having been produced by undigested food clinging to the fevered stomach. For what rented lodgings allow of sleep? Rich men alone can sleep in the city. Hence the origin of the disease. The passage of carriages in the narrow windings of the streets, and the abuse of the drovers from the herds brought to a stand, would rob of sleep even [the heaviest of sleepers].

Architecture

Emperor Augustus carried on the traditional practice of prominent citizens under the Republic who had public works constructed at their own expense.

SOURCE 14.5 Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*, 29

> The city, which was not built in a manner suitable to the grandeur of the empire, and was liable to inundations of the Tiber, as well as to fires, was so much improved under his administration, that he boasted, not without reason, that he 'found it of brick, but left it of marble.'



SOURCE 14.6 Thomas Cole, *The Consummation* from *The Course of Empire* series, 1836

ACTIVITY **14.1**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Juvenal was a satirist, as opposed to a historian. How reliable is Source 14.4 likely to be?
2. Compare the views of Juvenal and Suetonius on the city of Rome in Sources 14.4 and 14.5. Do the ideas in these sources and Source 14.6 appear to agree with or contradict each other? Support your answer with direct quotes.

DEPTH STUDY



SOURCE 14.7 Augustus statue, Musei Capitolini, Rome

Introduction

After Julius Caesar's assassination in 44 BCE, Rome was divided into two factions: the one supported the assassins led by Brutus and Cassius; the other remained true to Caesar's memory led by Mark Antony, Lepidus and Caesar's adopted son, Octavian. These three Caesarians formed the Second Triumvirate and led Caesar's veteran soldiers to victory over the assassins and their legions. However, this did not bring lasting peace to Rome. Antony, with the help of the Egyptian Queen, Cleopatra, then struggled for power against the other members of the Second Triumvirate. Octavian emerged as the winner and took over the political inheritance of Caesar. The new ***princeps***, or 'first citizen', was shrewd and able. Octavian ended the Roman civil wars and brought a much-needed stable government.

Although it could certainly be argued that some of the Julio-Claudian emperors were bad, some mad and some both, the underlying reason for their behaviours was based on fear: not only for their ***auctoritas***, but also for their lives. None of the emperors who followed Augustus was convinced of their right to rule and all lived in the steadily waning light of Augustus. The chief aim of all four was to secure their position. They all feared rivals whose claim to the succession was equal to or greater than their own. Their lives were full of palace intrigues in which the women in the imperial family, who were often more ambitious and capable than the men, played a large and sometimes decisive part in the constant plots. All the emperors faced attempts by the Senate to regain its influence and were haunted by the idea of a Senate restored to the power it had enjoyed during the time of the Roman Republic. The Senate was still an influential body and some senators did carry the hope of recovering their old positions. Emperors were so fearful that every sign of opposition in the Senate was immensely exaggerated and every plot, real or imaginary, led to regular massacres among prominent members of the senatorial aristocracy. As a result, one by one, noble families vanished forever. It was within this power-hungry and personally dangerous world that the Julio-Claudian emperors lived.

princeps 'first man among equals'; the Roman emperor

auctoritas social authority, reputation and status; an intangible prestige that was both earned through actions and inherited through social and political connections

14.3 Key individuals in early imperial Rome

The individuals below played key roles as members of the imperial family or imperial administration, or as observers and chroniclers.

- Augustus: the title conferred on Gaius Julius Caesar Octavian, grand-nephew and adopted son of Julius Caesar; the first *princeps* (first citizen) of Rome.
- Tiberius: Augustus's stepson and successor; Julio-Claudian *princeps* 14–37 CE
- Virgil: significant poet of the Augustan age; wrote *TheAeneid*, an epic poem of Aeneas, Prince of Troy
- Horace: significant poet of the Augustan age
- Ovid: significant poet of the Augustan age
- Livy: historian of the Augustan age
- Julio-Claudians: the successors of Augustus, from Tiberius to Nero
- Germanicus: brother of Claudius; father of Gaius
- Gaius Caligula: Julio-Claudian *princeps* 37–41 CE
- Claudius: Julio-Claudians *princeps* 41–54 CE
- Agrippina the Younger: daughter of Germanicus; her second marriage was to Claudius; mother of Nero
- Nero: Julio-Claudians *princeps* 54–68 CE
- Sejanus: Tiberius's prefect of the guard
- Seneca: philosopher and guide to Nero
- Burrus: prefect and guide to Nero
- Flavians: Vespasian and his sons, Titus and Domitian
- Vespasian: Flavian *princeps* 69–79 CE
- Titus: Flavian *princeps* 79–81 CE
- Domitian: Flavian *princeps* 81–96 CE
- Tacitus: historian and prose stylist
- Suetonius: historian and prose stylist

Family rules: The Julio-Claudian family tree

The five Julio-Claudian emperors were very different from each other. Augustus was the most influential of the first emperors. His significant achievements were possible due to his long reign. Tiberius was the only possible successor when Augustus died in 14 CE but, upon the death of Tiberius 23 years later, the next three emperors were a peculiar mix of viciousness, arrogance and inexperience.

The succession problem in the Julio-Claudian imperial household

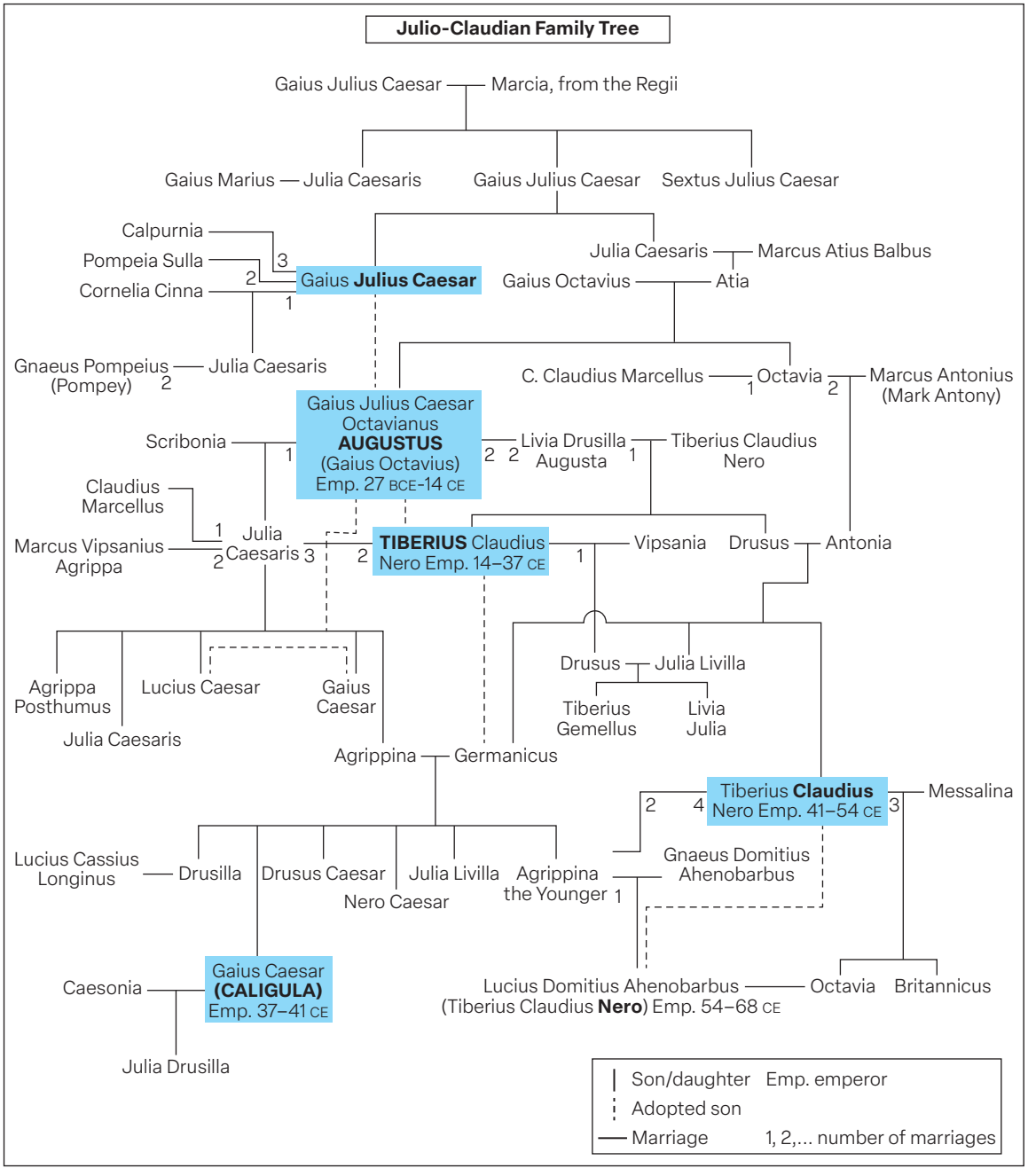
A lasting problem for the emperors of the early Roman Empire was **succession**. A process needed to be established that allowed imperial dignity to be handed from one leader to another. The first Roman Emperor, Augustus, decided to train his own relatives and, in this, he met several disappointments. The intrigues of the imperial household provide a fascinating glimpse into the one issue for which Augustus could find no easy answer: the problem of the succession. Eventually, for the position of *princeps*, he had to settle on his stepson, Tiberius, to be his successor. In doing so, he turned the ***principate*** into a dynasty. This paved the way for imperial family struggles in the future and eventually saw the **Praetorian Guard**, the imperial family bodyguard, and, later, Rome's army making emperors of their own choice.

succession the order of those entitled to become Roman emperor

principate rule of a *princeps*, name given to the early Roman Empire period

Praetorian Guard responsible for the defence of the city of Rome, and the emperor's personal bodyguards

The five Julio-Claudian emperors were connected through marriage and adoption into the Julian and Claudian patrician families. Julius Caesar was sometimes seen as the dynasty founder. It is interesting how common the blood relationship between great-uncle and great-nephew is found between the Julio-Claudian emperors: Augustus was the great-nephew of Julius Caesar; Caligula was the great-nephew of Tiberius; Claudius was the great-nephew of Augustus; and Nero was the great-nephew of Claudius. Also, Tiberius was Claudius's uncle, and Claudius was Caligula's uncle. Interestingly, no Julio-Claudian emperor was a blood descendant of the emperor before him.



SOURCE 14.8 Julio-Claudian family tree

ACTIVITY **14.2**

Objective 1: Devise historical questions and conduct research

1. Look at Source 14.8. Is a family tree a primary or secondary source? Explain your answer.
2. Form a hypothesis about imperial succession in Ancient Rome.
   - **a.** What information is not available from a family tree? What other sources would you use?
   - **b.** Which emperors would you use as examples?
   - **c.** How was the relationship between Julius Caesar and Augustus significant for the future succession model?
   - **d.** What is the evidence that supports your hypothesis? What other evidence or issues should be considered in order to make a valid decision?
   - **e.** In what ways does the evidence provide insights into the lives, personalities and achievements of the Julio-Claudian emperors?

14.4 Early Roman emperors

A study of the Julio-Claudian emperors after Augustus is valuable because it shows a comparison between the very different personalities and styles of rule of each emperor.

Augustus and the Roman Peace

Augustus was the first Roman emperor, and his rule ended a century of civil wars. He changed the political structure of Rome from a republic, where leaders are elected to political positions, to an empire, where the leader gains power through inheritance. Augustus was able to achieve this through maintaining the façade that Rome was still a republic while in reality being the only person in power. Augustus ruled as an **autocrat** for 41 years.

After Mark Antony was defeated by Octavian (Augustus's original name) at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE and killed himself along with his lover, Egyptian Queen Cleopatra, Octavian emerged as the winner of the Roman civil wars. As a result, he took over the political inheritance of Julius Caesar. Octavian brought to an end a century of civil wars and provided a much needed stable government.

autocrat a ruler who has absolute power



SOURCE 14.9 Prima Porta Augustus, Vatican Museum

In 27 BCE, Octavian officially returned power to the Senate, as well as offering to give up his own military command over Egypt. The suggestion of Octavian stepping down as consul and no longer leading Rome led to rioting among the plebeians in Rome. A compromise was reached between the Senate and Octavian's supporters for him to continue in power, known as the First Settlement. At the same time the Senate gave him the title 'Augustus', from the Latin word *augere,* 'to increase', and *'princeps'* which translated to 'first citizen' or 'first leader'. The use of such language to define his power demonstrated Augustus's skilful use of tact and manipulation.

In 23 BCE, Augustus again stepped down as consul, leading to a second compromise with the Senate, known as the Second Settlement. In order to keep Augustus as Rome's leader, the Senate granted him the power of a tribune of the people, as well as the right to watch over public morals and laws to make sure they were in the public interest. This system, termed the *principate,* was far from perfect. As Roman Emperor, Augustus established an era of peace, prosperity and imperial greatness, known as the *pax Romana*, or Roman peace, which was to last for over 200 years.

The statue of the victorious Augustus once stood in front of the imperial villa at Prima Porta. It represented Augustus proclaiming a diplomatic victory to the people.

The *Res Gestae Divi Augustus* was an autobiographical record of the rule of Augustus. It was inscribed in many places, but the best known is on the walls of the Temple of Rome and Augustus at Ankara, in Turkey. The version is also known as the *Monumentum Ancyranum*.

SOURCE 14.10 Augustus, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti,* 34

During my sixth and seventh consulships, after I had quenched the flames of civil war and received by universal agreement complete control over the constitution, I handed over the Republic from my jurisdiction to the will of the Senate and the Roman people. For rendering this service, the title of Augustus was conferred on me by decree of the Senate, the doorposts of my house were garlanded with laurels by official act, a civic crown was set over my door, and a golden shield was lodged in the Curia Julia. An inscription on it proclaimed that the Senate and the Roman people had given it to me in recognition of my bravery, clemency, justice and sense of duty. From that time on I surpassed all in prestige, yet I had no more power than those who were associated with me in any magistracy.

Cassius Dio described how the Senate wanted to pretend that Rome was a republic with no king, yet insisted that Augustus continue in the role of monarch.

SOURCE 14.11 Cassius Dio, *History of Rome,* 53

Caesar desired ... to have his monarchy confirmed voluntarily by the people, so he would not appear to have compelled them. So having prepared the most reliable senators, in his seventh consulship he entered the Senate and read a speech [Caesar says he is resigning]. While he was reading his speech and afterwards too the Senators kept shouting, begging to have a monarch ... till they finally compelled him of course, to take full power ...

Among Augustus's major monuments was the *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Altar of the Augustan Peace), dedicated in 9 BCE as part of a broad propaganda program.



SOURCE 14.12 The *Ara Pacis Augustae*, Museum of the Ara Pacis, Rome

ACTIVITY **14.3**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Use Sources 14.7 and 14.9–14.12 to answer the questions.

1. The duration and achievement of Augustus's reign left a significant amount of archaeological evidence, including remains of his public works throughout Rome and the empire, as well as coins and inscriptions. List the evidence from the sources that historians use to suggest that Augustus actively promoted his image as the saviour of Rome and the restorer of peace.
2. Based on the sources, form your own complex definition of why the Senate accepted Augustus's claim that he was restoring the Roman republic.

Julio-Claudian emperors: Mad or bad?

Historians have referred to the four Julio-Claudian emperors who followed Augustus as 'The Hypocrite' (Tiberius), 'The Monster' (Caligula), 'The Fool' (Claudius) and 'The Knave' (Nero). To what extent do you think these epithets can be regarded as accurate or fair?

Emperor Tiberius: The hypocrite?

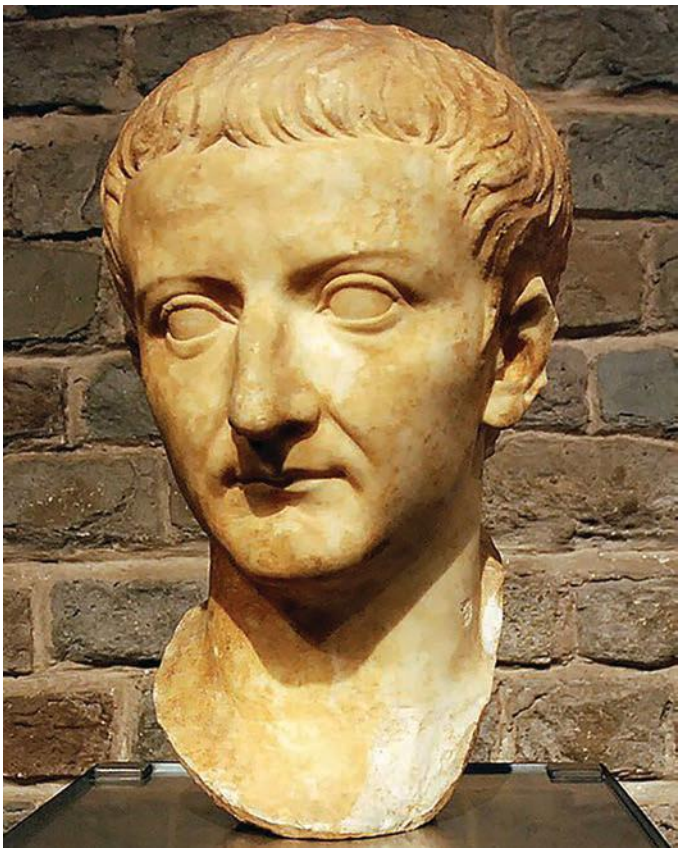
Tiberius was the second Roman emperor of the Julio-Claudian dynasty and ruled from 14 to 37 CE. Tiberius was the son of Tiberius Claudius Nero and Livia Drusilla, and as such was a member of the Claudian patrician family. His mother divorced, then married Augustus in 39 BCE. When Tiberius was an adult he was forced by Augustus to divorce Vipsania, his beloved first wife, and marry Augustus's daughter Julia. This event seemed to have been the breaking point for Tiberius. The marriage between Tiberius and Julia was never a happy one.

In 6 BCE, Tiberius announced his withdrawal from politics and retired to the island of Rhodes. The motives for Tiberius's withdrawal are unclear; however, historians have speculated there could be a connection with the recent adoption by Augustus of his grandsons, Gaius and Lucius. These two brothers were encouraged and supported by Augustus to be part of the succession plan in the same manner as Tiberius and his brother Drusus had been when they were young. Tiberius was then informed by Augustus that he would hold imperial power only until Lucius and Gaius came of age. The very public **promiscuous** behaviour of his unhappily married wife, Julia, may also have played a part in Tiberius's departure for Rhodes.

promiscuous casual sexual relations with a number of partners

treason attempting to overthrow the government or kill the head of the government

When Augustus died in 14 CE, Tiberius was the last living choice for succession to the *princeps*. All of Augustus's grandsons had died. However, Tiberius, an excellent general, was an embittered man of 53 when he succeeded Augustus as emperor. He continued Augustus's policies but lacked his *auctoritas* and charm. Tiberius behaved reasonably during the early years of his reign and treated the Senate with great respect. However, as he became more embittered with the position of *princeps*, he began to depend more and more upon Sejanus, the prefect (captain) of the Praetorian Guard. In 17 or 18 CE, Tiberius had reduced the ranks of the Praetorian Guard, and had moved it from the military barracks outside the city walls into the city of Rome itself. This gave Sejanus access to 9000 troops. After the death of Drusus, Tiberius's son, he began to refer to Sejanus as 'my partner'. During this time Sejanus became more and more important to Tiberius. As a result, he erected statues of Sejanus throughout the city. However, as Sejanus became more visible throughout Rome, Tiberius began to withdraw from Rome altogether.



SOURCE 14.13 Bust of Tiberius, Romisch-Germanisches Museum, Cologne

In 26 CE, Tiberius retired from Rome to the island of Capri, near Naples. Sejanus was left in charge of the Roman Empire, including the city of Rome. The subservience of the Senate became obvious, misunderstandings multiplied, and the suspicion of intrigue completely soured the Emperor–Senate relationship. Tiberius's relationship with the Senate was always an uneasy one. His conservatism won the approval of most of the older senators but he lacked Augustus's tact. Instead, Tiberius used Sejanus to inspire fear in the Roman people. However, when Sejanus tried to take too much power for himself, Tiberius had him killed and a mob of Romans tore his body to pieces. After Sejanus's death, Tiberius's withdrawal from Rome was complete. He became utterly paranoid, and reportedly spent a great deal of time brooding over the death of his son, Drusus. Tiberius's image and reputation had been permanently damaged through the support he appeared to have given Sejanus as well as the **treason** trials during the final years of his reign. According to Tacitus and Suetonius, the last few years of Tiberius's reign constituted a reign of terror.

Mistrust and fear developed between the senate and Tiberius. While some sources are positive, others are less so.

SOURCE 14.14 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Book 57, 10

While expending extremely little for himself, Tiberius laid out very large sums for the common good, either rebuilding or adorning practically all the public works. He assisted many cities and individuals.

Suetonius accuses Emperor Tiberius of going beyond being merely frugal.

SOURCE 14.15 Suetonius, *Tiberius,* 46

[Tiberius] was so ... covetous, that he never allowed to his attendants, in his travels and expeditions, any salary, but their diet only.

The execution of Sejanus and his followers for treachery against Tiberius completed Suetonius's embitterment towards Tiberius.

SOURCE 14.16 Tacitus, *Annals,* Book VI. 19

Frenzied with blood, Tiberius now ordered the execution of all those arrested for complicity with Sejanus. It was a massacre. Without discrimination of sex or age, eminence or obscurity, there they lay, strewn about, or in heaps.

Suetonius describes how Emperor Tiberius maintained peace in Rome through strength.

SOURCE 14.17 Suetonius, *Tiberius*, 37

[Tiberius] was careful to keep the public peace against robbers, burglars, and those who were disaffected to the government. He therefore increased the number of military stations throughout Italy; and formed a camp at Rome for the praetorian cohorts, which, till then, had been quartered in the city. He suppressed with great severity all tumults of the people on their first breaking out; and took every precaution to prevent them.

Why was Tiberius so unpopular?

Was Tiberius a tyrant? On his accession, Tacitus calls him cryptic and insincere. He rejected excessive titles but on the other hand he reinforced treason and *maiestas* laws. Another potential heir, Agrippa Posthumous, was executed pretty much as soon as Tiberius came to power. Tiberius denied giving the order but did not punish the officer who carried out the execution. Tiberius then sent his adopted heir and nephew Germanicus Caesar to the East, some say out of jealousy. The death of Germanicus while in the East was believed by his wife, Agrippina the Elder, to have been by poison and orchestrated by Tiberius. Then there was the bloodbath following Sejanus's removal and Tiberius's retreat to the island of Capri. The subsequent Treason Trials, according to Seneca, cost more lives than any civil war.

Tacitus appeared to write with a moral purpose about Tiberius and his personality.

SOURCE 14.18 Tacitus, *Annals*, 6.50

... while under Augustus he was a private citizen or held high offices; a time of reserve and crafty assumption of virtue, as long as Germanicus and Drusus were alive. Again, while his mother lived, he was a compound of good and evil; he was infamous for his cruelty, though he veiled his debaucheries, while he loved or feared Sejanus. Finally, he plunged into every wickedness and disgrace, when fear and shame being cast off, he simply indulged his own inclinations.

Suetonius's view of Tiberius was not much better than Tacitus's, and apparently reflected the people's view as well.

SOURCE 14.19 Suetonius, *Tiberius*, 75

> **The people were so much elated at his death, that when they first heard the news, they ran up and down the city, some, crying out 'Away with Tiberius to the Tiber;' others exclaiming, 'May the earth, the common mother of mankind, and the infernal gods, allow him no abode in death, but amongst the wicked.'**

Cassius Dio, who wrote about two hundred years after Tiberius's death, followed a similar pattern to other ancient historians.

SOURCE 14.20 Cassius Dio, *History of Rome,* Book 57, 14

> **This is the way he behaved under all conditions so long as Germanicus lived. Subsequent to that event he changed many of his ways. Perhaps he had been minded from the first as he later appeared to feel and had been merely shamming as long as Germanicus existed because he saw that he was lying in wait for the leadership; or perhaps he was excellent by nature but drifted into vice when he was deprived of his rival.**

Velleius Paterculus published his brief history in 30 CE when Tiberius was still in power, and provides a different view.

SOURCE 14.21 Velleius Paterculus, *Roman History*, 2.126.2

> **Credit has been restored in the forum, strife has been banished from the forum, canvassing for office from the Campus Martius, discord from the senate-house; justice, equity and industry, long buried in oblivion, have been restored to the state; the magistrates have regained their authority, the senate its majesty, the courts their dignity.**

The modern historian John Balsdon wrote about Tiberius's ability and personality.The ancient writers have generally portrayed Tiberius as a very capable and experienced general, as well as a conscientious administrator. However, as Tiberius succeeded the Emperor Augustus it was inevitable that he would be compared to him. The problem was Tiberius lacked Augustus's vast prestige, was a grumpy and unsociable character, and possessed none of the first emperor's political skills. As a result, he was to clash greatly with the Senate during his principate and died hated by the Roman patrician class.



SOURCE 14.22 Statue of Tiberius, Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican Museum

ACTIVITY **14.4**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. Use Sources 14.13–14.22 to answer the questions.
   a. How does Velleius Paterculus's view of Tiberius compare with the views of Tacitus, Suetonius and Cassius Dio?
   b. List the evidence that historians use to suggest that it was Tiberius's personality, and not his ability, that was unsuited to the role of emperor.
2. Tiberius was 79 at the time of his death in 37 CE. The statue in Source 14.22 was made shortly after this time, although it does not appear very realistic. What do you think may have been the intention for creating this statue?

Emperor Caligula: The monster?

The third Roman emperor of the Julio-Claudian dynasty was Caligula, who ruled from 37 to 41 CE. Caligula was born as Gaius Julius Caesar Germanicus on 31 August 12 CE. He was the third of six surviving children born to Augustus's adopted grandson, the much-loved general Germanicus Caesar, and Augustus's granddaughter, Agrippina the Elder. Although Caligula ruled the Roman Empire for only four years, he is one of the most famous Roman emperors.

As a small boy, the young Gaius became the mascot of his father's northern legions based on the Germanic frontier. The soldiers were amused whenever Agrippina would put him in a miniature soldier's uniform, including boots and armour. He was soon given his nickname, Caligula, which meant 'little soldier's boot' in Latin, after the small boots he wore as part of his uniform.

However, his childhood was not a happy one as it was spent in an atmosphere of paranoia and suspicion after the murder of a number of imperial family members. Instability within the Julio-Claudian family, created by uncertainty over the succession, led to a series of tragedies. When Germanicus died under suspicious circumstances in Syria in 19 CE, relations between his mother, Agrippina the Elder, and his great-uncle, the emperor Tiberius, deteriorated dramatically. In 31 CE, Caligula was summoned to join Tiberius at his villa on the island of Capri. He remained on Capri until his succession as emperor in 37 CE. Rome was jubilant when the great-grandson of both Augustus and Mark Antony succeeded Tiberius as emperor in March 37 CE.



SOURCE 14.23 Bust of Caligula, Pallazzo Massimo, Rome

At the beginning of his reign, Caligula's actions demonstrated a positive change from the terror of Tiberius's later years. He was 24 years old when he became emperor and remembered by the people of Rome as the son of the popular general, Germanicus. Caligula's popularity soared. It was then revealed to the Senate that in Tiberius's will, he had wanted Caligula to become joint emperor with Tiberius Gemellus, Tiberius's grandson. However, Caligula, using the Senate's hatred of Tiberius to boost support for himself, was able to convince the Senate to set aside Tiberius's will and declare him emperor. Very popular at first, Caligula abolished Treason Trials and proved as generous as Tiberius had been mean. Yet within four years, Caligula was murdered in a palace corridor by officers of the Praetorian Guard.

What brought about the change in Caligula's personality?

In October 37 CE, Caligula had fallen seriously ill, and the changes he exhibited after his illness dramatically changed the tenor of his *principate*. 'Let them hate me so long as they fear me.'

The causes of this illness have been debated by historians. Some ancient writers referred to the illness as 'brain fever'. Modern historians have linked it variously to either a severe nervous breakdown, encephalitis, epilepsy or meningitis. Caligula emerged from this illness with a personality more unbalanced than before.

Following his illness, Caligula began a reign of terror, executing the Praetorian prefect, Macro, and many senators. Caligula's behaviour became increasingly irrational. Details of his love affairs with men and women of high rank in Rome were revealed. There were also rumors about a supposed incestuous relationship with his sisters, most notably with his younger sister, Drusilla. Caligula's actions were particularly harsh to the Senate, the nobility and the equestrians. He had many distinguished men secretly killed and was often quoted as saying that merely at the nod of his head, the head of anyone he wanted dead would be off. One popular rumour, often repeated as an example of Caligula's insanity, was that he appointed his favourite horse, Incitatus, to the Senate, attempted to appoint it to the position of consul, and planned to have the horse 'invite' dignitaries to dine with him in a house outfitted with servants to entertain such events. Cassius Dio indicated that Caligula's horse was attended by servants and fed oats mixed with gold flake.



SOURCE 14.24 Statue of Senator Incitatus

Caligula appeared to neither think nor care about what the people of Rome thought about all the murders and his other actions. He allegedly made parents attend the executions of their own children, fed people to wild beasts, watched people die slowly, claimed to be a living God, and built a temple to himself as co-equal with the Roman god Jupiter.

On 24 January 41 CE, Caligula was caught alone in a palace corridor and murdered by Cassius Chaerea and several other officers of the Praetorian Guard. He was 28 years old and had ruled Rome for three years and 10 months. The Senate attempted to use Caligula's death as an opportunity to restore the Republic. However, the military remained loyal to the office of the emperor and supported Caligula's uncle, Claudius, to become the next Roman emperor. The murder of Caligula established that emperors could not relinquish their powers without simultaneously relinquishing their lives.

The modern historian Howard Scullard theorised that a physical illness contributed to Caligula's later mental illness.

SOURCE 14.25 H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, Methuen, 1979

> **In October [37 CE] Gaius had a serious illness and when he recovered he emerged, according to tradition, a monster of lust and diabolical cruelty.**

In 1934, Robert Graves, a Professor of English Literature, wrote the historical novel *I, Claudius*, based on his translation of Suetonius The Lives of the Twelve Caesars. It was to be a global publishing sensation and was turned into a famous BBC television series in the 1970s. In *I, Claudius*, Graves suggested that Caligula emerged from his sickbed after a month of what the doctors at the time had called 'brain-fever' claiming to have been transformed into a god.

Suetonius referred to Caligula as a 'monster', and the surviving sources were universal in their agreement.

SOURCE 14.26 Suetonius, *Gaius Caligula*, 27–8

> **He compelled parents to be present at the execution of their sons; and to one who excused himself on account of indisposition he sent his own litter. Another he invited to his table immediately after he had witnessed the spectacle, and coolly challenged him to jest and be merry ... Asking a certain person, whom he recalled after a long exile, how he used to spend his time, he replied, with flattery, 'I was always praying the gods for what has happened, that Tiberius might die and you be emperor.' Concluding, therefore, that those he had himself banished also prayed for his death, he sent orders round the islands to have them put to death.**

ACTIVITY **14.5**



Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Why do you think the portrait in Source 14.23 is designed with Caligula's head tilting downwards?
2. What impact does the universal hostility of the ancient sources have on the reliability of these sources?
3. Robert Graves wrote the historical novel *I Claudius* in 1934. It was made into a famous BBC TV series in the mid-1970s. Is a historical novel a primary or secondary source? Explain your answer.

Emperor Claudius: The fool?

The fourth Roman emperor of the Julio-Claudian dynasty was Claudius, who ruled from 41 to 54 CE. Claudius was born on 1 August 10 BCE at Lugdunum in Gaul, into the heart of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. His father was Drusus, the younger son of Augustus's wife Livia, and his mother was Antonia, the daughter of Mark Antony. His uncle Tiberius became emperor in 14 CE; in 4 CE his older brother Germanicus was adopted by Tiberius with the intention that he would succeed him as emperor.

Claudius was considered a rather unlikely man to become emperor. In an age that despised weakness, he limped, he drooled, he stuttered, and was constantly ill. Claudius had a generous personality, cracked lame jokes, laughed uncontrollably, and lunched with the plebeians. He was also bloodthirsty and cruel, very quick to anger, and fond of gladiator combat and executions.

As a young man, Claudius spent much of his free time reading extensively. He was the last person known who could read the ancient Etruscan language. Claudius became a decent scholar and composed works on many subjects, especially history, the study of which gave him knowledge of how governments worked. These skills helped him when he became emperor.

Claudius's family members kept him out of the public eye as they considered him to be an embarrassment, mistaking his physical disabilities for mental disabilities.

Claudius's mother, Antonia, referred to him as a monster, and sent him to live with his grandmother, Livia, for a number of years. Livia was not much kinder to Claudius than his mother had been, and often sent him short, angry letters. The result was that Claudius's family excluded him from public office. However, it was his physical disabilities that may have saved him from the violent fate of many other Roman nobles during the reigns of Tiberius and Caligula. Claudius's survival as the last adult male of the Julio-Claudian family after Caligula's assassination resulted in him being declared emperor.

Although Claudius's wives considered him to be a fool, he was an able administrator and a great builder of public works. His reign saw an expansion of the empire, including the conquest of Britain. As the powers of the *princeps* became more centralised and the administrative workload increased, Claudius was forced to increase the role of freedmen in the imperial administration. He took a personal interest in the law, presided at public trials, and issued up to 20 verdicts a day. In 48 CE, Claudius's wife, Messalina, was tried for treason and executed. Claudius then married his niece, Agrippina the Younger, who was the daughter of his brother Germanicus, and a sister of the Emperor Caligula. Agrippina already had a son, Nero. Her ambitions for her son proved the undoing of Claudius. In 54 CE, Claudius was assassinated by poisoning, possibly via deadly mushrooms. Many ancient writers record Agrippina as responsible for his death and suggest she acted to ensure her son Nero's succession as emperor.

Why was Claudius considered an enigma?

Claudius was a more **enigmatic** figure than the other Julio-Claudian emperors. He was at once careful, intelligent, aware and respectful of tradition, but was also given to rages, cruelty and utter ruthlessness in his treatment of those who crossed him. There was more to the seemingly timid Claudius than met the eye.

enigmatic a puzzling or contradictory personality

Despite Claudius's reputation as a fool, his relationship with the Senate was generally good.

SOURCE 14.27 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 60.11

> On the occasion of a severe famine [Claudius] considered the problem of abundant provisions not only for that particular crisis, but for all succeeding time. Practically all food used by the Romans was imported, and yet the region near the mouth of the Tiber had no safe landing-places nor suitable harbors ... Claudius undertook to build a harbor and would not be turned aside ... He desired a work worthy of the dignity and greatness of Rome, and he brought it to a successful conclusion.

Claudius created departments within the imperial administration and had nearly all of them run by Greek freedmen. A few of these freedmen became very influential as Claudius's advisers. This caused resentment among the senators.

SOURCE 14.28 Suetonius, *Claudius*, 29

> Being entirely governed by these freedmen [Narcissus and Pallas], and, as I have already said, by his wives [Plautia Urgulanilla, Aelia Paetina and Valeria Messalina], he was a tool to others, rather than a prince. He distributed offices, or the command of armies, pardoned or punished, according as it suited their interests, their passions, or their caprice; and for the most part, without knowing, or being sensible of what he did.

Claudius's 'Letter to Alexandria', though polite in tone, firmly settled the dispute between Greeks and Jews. In the unpromising Claudius, Rome had found an able administrator.

SOURCE 14.29 Letter from Claudius to the citizens of Alexandria

> I tell you once for all that unless you put a stop to this ruinous and obstinate enmity against each other, I shall be driven to show what a benevolent emperor can be when turned to righteous indignation ... The Alexandrians show themselves forbearing and kindly toward the Jews, who for many years have dwelt in the same city, and dishonour none of the rights observed by them in the worship of their god but allow them to observe their customs as in the time of the deified Augustus, which customs I also, after hearing both sides, have confirmed. And, on the other hand, I explicitly order the Jews not to agitate for more privileges than they formerly possessed, and in the future not to send out a separate embassy as if they lived in two separate cities – a thing unprecedented ... Otherwise I will by all means proceed against them as fomenters of what is a general plague of the whole world. If, desisting from these courses, you both consent to live with mutual forbearance and kindliness, I on my side will exercise a solicitude of very long standing for the city, as one bound to us by ancestral friendship.

Source 14.30 is a statue of the emperor Claudius shown in the guise of the god Jupiter. This is often considered to be an implausible role for a person who was considered unimpressive and ungainly.



SOURCE 14.30 Statue of Claudius, Vatican Museum. This statue of Emperor Claudius does not display any of the visible disabilities described by the ancient writers.

Seneca described Claudius arriving at Mount Olympus (the home of the Roman gods).

SOURCE 14.31 Seneca, *Apocolocyntosis*, 5

> **Word comes to Jupiter that a stranger had arrived, a man well set up, pretty grey; he seemed to be threatening something, for he wagged his head ceaselessly; he dragged the right foot. They asked him what nation he was of; he answered something in a confused mumbling voice: his language they did not understand. He was no Greek and no Roman, nor of any known race.**

Robert Graves's novel *I, Claudius* portrays Claudius as a good man with a keen intelligence. Livia, the wife of Augustus, and grandmother of Claudius, held a dinner with the 14-year-old Caligula and Claudius as the guests. It is at this dinner that Livia explains to the young Caligula that because he's sworn an oath to love and protect his brother's children, Caligula can always be sure to expect support from Claudius for as long as he lives.



SOURCE 14.32 Claudius: an implausible god, Vatican Museum

ACTIVITY **14.6**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. List the qualities Livia attributes to Claudius in *I, Claudius*.
2. Compare the image of the statue of Claudius in Source 14.32 with Seneca's satirical story in Source 14.31. What is implicit in the sources about the Ancient World's attitude towards physical disabilities?
3. 'Claudius was no fool but he was easily manipulated by his wives and freedmen'. How fair is this as an assessment of Claudius? Respond in an extended paragraph.

Emperor Nero: The knave?

The fifth and last Roman emperor of the Julio-Claudian dynasty was Nero, who ruled from 54 to 68 CE. He was only 17 when he succeeded his stepfather, Emperor Claudius. Nero was considered one of the worst of Rome's emperors.

Why was Nero one of the worst Roman emperors?

Nero was born in 37 CE, the only son of Agrippina the Younger, the sister of the Emperor Caligula, and the last wife of the Emperor Claudius. The first five years of Nero's rule were customarily called the *quinquennium* (five years), a period of good government, where Nero was guided by his mother Agrippina, the philosopher Seneca, and the Praetorian prefect Burrus. Having helped make her son the emperor, Agrippina never let Nero forget the debt he owed her. This may have been why Seneca and Burrus often worked together to undermine her influence with Nero.

SOURCE 14.33 Suetonius, *Nero*, 9

He paid likewise the highest honours to the memory of his father Domitius. He left the management of affairs, both public and private, to his mother. The word which he gave the first day of his reign to the tribune on guard, was, 'The Best of Mothers,' and afterwards he frequently appeared with her in the streets of Rome in her litter.

However, by 55 CE, with Agrippina's influence over her son Nero diminishing, she began to prepare another candidate for emperor: the nearly 15-year-old Britannicus, son of Claudius. However, Britannicus died suddenly and suspiciously in 55 CE, the day before his **proclamation** as an adult. It was claimed Nero poisoned him. In 59 CE, Nero had his mother murdered. This action proved to be a turning point in Nero's life and the *principate*. It now appeared any action was possible for Nero.

proclamation a public and official announcement

Nero did not really fit the mould of an emperor: he painted, sculpted, wrote poetry, took singing lessons and had secret desires to race his chariot team. In 64 CE he made a public performance as a singer. However, Nero also spent many nights in disguise with numerous companions roaming the streets of the city of Rome, where they terrorised and attacked individuals. Those who dared to defend themselves often faced death afterwards, because they had shown disrespect for the emperor.



SOURCE 14.34 John William Waterhouse, *The remorse of the Emperor Nero after the murder of his mother*, 1878

In 64 CE, a fire began in the south-eastern end of the Circus Maximus. It spread through the nearby shops, and raged for the better part of a week, destroying half of Rome. Many people claimed the fires were deliberately set by Nero and that he sang in stage costume while the city burned. However, upon hearing news of the fire, Nero rushed back from Antium to Rome to organise a relief effort, which he paid for from his own funds. All his efforts to assist the city of Rome could not remove the suspicion that Nero had fiddled while Rome burned. As a result, Nero lost favour even among the plebeians, who had been his enthusiastic supporters.

Suetonius describes how, when the Great Fire destroyed much of Rome, Nero planned to use the available land in the centre of the city to build his dream palace, the Golden House.

SOURCE 14.35 Suetonius, *Nero*, 31

> 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 upon the guests ... 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.'

The Roman people were suspicious of Nero's denial of involvement in the fire, and began to turn against him. As a result, Nero realised that he needed scapegoats who could be held responsible for the disaster. The Christians were ideal. They were already unpopular because of their refusal to worship the Roman emperor, their unconventional way of life, and their secret meetings. The Christians were also unpopular with Romans because they constantly talked about the coming end of the world. However, Nero's attempt to shift all suspicion of **arson** away from himself failed. Nero neglected the Roman army, and it was the army rebellions that ended his rule in 68 CE. The Senate removed Nero as emperor and declared him an enemy of the state. He killed himself on 9 June 68 CE.

arson burning property on purpose



SOURCE 14.36 Hubert Robert, *The Fire of Rome*, 1785



SOURCE 14.37 Henryk Siemiradzki, *Nero's torches* (also known as *Candlesticks of Christianity*), 1882

Tacitus described how Nero deflected the blame for the Great Fire of 64 CE.

SOURCE 14.38 Tacitus, *Annals*, XV.44

> Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular. Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired.

The historian Josephus (37–100 CE), while calling Nero a tyrant, was also the first to mention bias against Nero by other historians.

SOURCE 14.39 Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XX.8

> But I omit any further discourse about these affairs; for there have been a great many who have composed the history of Nero; some of which have departed from the truth of facts out of favour, as having received benefits from him; while others, out of hatred to him, and the great ill-will which they bare him, have so impudently raved against him with their lies, that they justly deserve to be condemned. Nor do I wonder at such as have told lies of Nero, since they have not in their writings preserved the truth of history as to those facts that were earlier than his time, even when the actors could have no way incurred their hatred, since those writers lived a long time after them.

The modern historian Howard Scullard argued that Tacitus's description of Nero's guilt in starting the fire was inaccurate.

SOURCE 14.40 H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, Methuen, 1979

> In their loss and misery, the city populace turned against Nero and accused him of starting the fire, while rumour added that he watched the burning city from the Tower of Maecenas and had sung an aria over his own 'Sack of Troy'. Neither charge can be taken seriously.

ACTIVITY **14.7**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

The ancient historians Tacitus and Josephus wrote their accounts of Nero and the Great Fire at about the same time.

1. Compare the different accounts of Tacitus and Josephus to the same event.
2. Do you agree or disagree that Sources 14.33–14.40 are corroborated by the evidence in Tacitus and Josephus?
3. Based upon your reading of the sources on Nero, do you think he held remorse for the murder of his mother, Agrippina the Younger?
4. To what extent do you think an observer's personal feelings affect their version of history?

ACTIVITY **14.8**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Use Sources 14.7–14.40 to answer the following question:

1. These four Julio-Claudian emperors could be described as a hypocrite, a madman, a fool and a knave. Do you think this is a valid description of them? Answer the questions below to help you to decide.
   - **a.** Tiberius received bad press from Tacitus, Suetonius and Dio Cassius. Would you agree or disagree with describing him as a hypocrite?
   - **b.** How would you support the contention that Gaius Caligula was a madman?
   - **c.** Physical prowess was prized over intellectual ability in the Ancient World. Claudius likely had polio or perhaps cerebral palsy since childhood. He was awkward and unstable on his feet, and portrayed as a fool by many ancient writers. Is this an accurate portrayal of him based on all the ancient sources? In your answer consider Source 14.31.
   - **d.** Nero was known by the ancient writers for his debauchery, cruelty and viciousness. How accurate is the claim that he was a knave?
2. The Julio-Claudian emperors have been portrayed as men who indulged in all kinds of sexual perversions, were negatively influenced by the women in their lives, and were megalomaniacs who made irrational decisions based on greed and lust for power. Use the sources to attempt to account for the fact that although their personal lives may have been colourful, the Roman Empire under their rule continued to expand and prosper.

Legacy: What are the Julio-Claudians best remembered for?

Rome was a city at the centre of the Ancient World. During the first century CE, Rome had a population of around one million people. The Roman people, or plebeians, had lots of free time and there was always the danger that they would riot or rebel. The emperors made sure they kept the plebeians content by giving them 'free bread' and entertainment as often as possible. This was often referred to as 'bread and circuses'.

Most Romans loved spectacle sports, especially violent ones – the more violent the better. The most important features of the Roman games were chariot races, wild animal fights and gladiator combats. The gladiator combats were held in amphitheatres, the best known of which is the Colosseum. These spectacles were scenes of violence and bloodshed on a horrific scale with man fighting man or beast, woman against dwarf, and beast against beast. For the politicians of the equestrian or senatorial classes, financing a ***ludi*** (Latin for 'games') was the way to win popularity with the people. For the plebeians it was a day of gambling, eating and drinking, and a means of forgetting their lack of influence or state of unemployment. These games all occurred at the expense of the Roman government.

ludi gladiator training schools

14.5 Cultural life and practices in early imperial Rome

Roman festivals and feasts

While members of the Julio-Claudian imperial household were scheming over the succession, ordinary Romans enjoyed life through festivals and feasts.

Celebration through food

Roman nobles or patricians held great feasts to celebrate victories in battle, to honour their emperors and to praise their gods. They enjoyed fresh meat, fish, fruits, vegetables and bread. The most popular sauce used on food was called *garum* and was made from fish guts. Honey was used to sweeten food. Poorer Romans existed on a diet of bread, olives and grapes. According to some Romans, the only purpose of food was to restore strength and to comfort the body by satisfying hunger. Those who took this view generally stood up to eat food that was frugal and cold. Soldiers would make do with an evening meal of biscuits washed down with water; travellers would eat bread and figs; and Romans in the city, unwilling to wait until the evening to eat, would gnaw at dry bread and boiled vegetables left over from the day before, or an onion. Breakfast and lunch were usually light meals, with the main meal eaten early in the evening.

The evening meal, or ***cena***, was one of the high points of the Roman day. At the *cena* the food was of better quality and was cooked and eaten warm. The *cena* involved more than simply eating a meal; its purpose was to strengthen links with all the people gathered to share the meal. It was a social ritual that brought together the community. The *cena* took place in the ***triclinium***, or dining room. Three couches, covered with cushions, were arranged in a U-shape around a low table. Romans lay on couches to eat their meals. These couches were large enough to hold three people, and it was considered correct behaviour to rest on the left elbow. Diners were entertained with music, dancing or poetry reading. They would also discuss the important issues of the time. Food was placed on moveable tables. Slaves cut food for the guests as they did not use forks or knives. Instead, they ate with their fingers or a spoon.

cena the evening meal
triclinium dining room

A typical Roman feast included pigeons stewed in a sauce of vinegar, oil, currants, wine, mint, pepper, other herbs and mushrooms, all cooked in honey. Fish was cooked with plums, crushed apricots and quince. During the meal guests usually put some pieces of food into their napkins as it was considered good manners to take some of the meal home. At the end of the meal, serious wine drinking began. Many feasts lasted eight to 10 hours.

In *Satyricon,* Petronius gives a long fictional account of a banquet at the house of Trimalchio, a millionaire freedman pictured as living in riotous splendour that reflects the extremity of Roman luxury in dining.

SOURCE 14.41 Petronius Arbiter, *The Satyricon, vol. 2: The Dinner of Trimalchio*, 31

At length we reclined, and slave boys from Alexandria poured water cooled with snow upon our hands, while others following, attended to our feet and removed the hangnails with wonderful dexterity, nor were they silent even during this disagreeable operation, but they all kept singing at their work. I was desirous of finding out whether the whole household could sing, so I ordered a drink; a boy near at hand instantly repeated my order in a singsong voice fully as shrill, and whichever one you accosted did the same. You would not imagine that this was the dining-room of a private gentleman, but rather that it was an exhibition of pantomimes.

Juvenal describes his dinner menu below.

SOURCE 14.42 Juvenal, *Satires*, XI

Now listen to the courses furnished by no public markets. From my farm at Tivoli will come the well-fatted sucking-kid ... mountain asparagus which the bailiff's wife ... has gathered. Eggs of large size, besides, and warm from the twisted hay, are here, with the very hens that laid them, and grapes preserved for a part of the year just as they were upon the vines: the Signian and the Syrian pear, and, from the same baskets, apples rivaling those of Picenum.

Pliny the Younger did not enjoy expensive food. The menu he describes suggests that treats were uncommon.

SOURCE 14.43 Pliny the Younger, *Letters*, I.15

Who are you, to accept my invitation to dinner and never come? Here's your sentence and you shall pay my costs in full, no small sum either. It was all laid out, one lettuce each, three snails, two eggs, barley-cake, and wine with honey chilled with snow ... besides olives, beetroots, gherkins, onions, and any number of similar delicacies. You would have heard a comic play, a reader or singer, or all three if I felt generous. Instead you chose to go where you could have oyster, sow's innards, sea-urchins, and Spanish dancing-girls.

The poet Horace describes a simple *cena*.

SOURCE 14.44 Horace, *Satires*, I.5

... then go home to seek
My frugal meal of fritter, vetch, and leek:
Three youngsters serve the food: a slab of white
Contains two cups, one ladle, clean and bright:
Next, a cheap basin ranges on the shelf,
With jug and saucer of Campanian delf:



SOURCE 14.45 A wall painting from Pompeii showing a Roman feast, Pompeii Exhibition, British Museum

A day at the races

The Circus Maximus was a gigantic, long stadium used for chariot racing. The stadium was oval and held 250 000 spectators, or one-quarter of the population of Rome. It consisted of a dirt track and tiered seating with an area in the centre of the track for lap counting, award giving and other tasks related to chariot racing. The chariot was a two-wheeled cart pulled by a horse at high speed. Successful chariot drivers were given a purse full of gold and treated as heroes. They raced in teams known by their colours – Blues, Greens, Reds and Whites – and wore metal helmets, pads and leather bandages on their legs. Emperors and the public were supporters of one colour or another. The chariots raced around the track seven times. As the teams rounded the turns, horrible accidents often injured horses and drivers. Fortunes were lost and won on the result of the chariot races.

The following was written on a stone monument to the charioteer Diocles in Rome, 146 CE:

SOURCE 14.46 Inscription on monument to Diocles, 146 CE

Gaius Appuleius Diocles, charioteer of the Red Stable, a Lusitanian Spaniard by birth, aged 42 years, 7 months, 23 days ... Grand totals: He drove chariots for 24 years, ran 4257 starts, and won 1462 victories, 110 in opening races ... He made nine horses 100-time winners, and one a 200-time winner ... the champion of all charioteers ... he excelled the charioteers of all the stables who ever participated in the races of the circus games.



SOURCE 14.47 The Circus Maximus

The Circus Maximus was the centre of Roman entertainment before construction of the Colosseum in 80 CE. Not all Romans loved the circus, however, and here Pliny the Younger describes his boredom at the spectacle:

SOURCE 14.48 Pliny the Younger, *Letters*, IX. 6

> **The Races were on, a type of spectacle which has never had the slightest attraction for me. I can find nothing new or different in them: once seen is enough, so it surprises me all the more that so many thousands of adult men should have such a childish passion for watching galloping horses and drivers standing in chariots, over and over again.**

The poet Ovid treated the circus more lightly. He saw it as an ideal opportunity to ensnare a girl.

SOURCE 14.49 Ovid, *Love Poems*, III.2.1.1–5

> **I am not sitting here an admirer of the spirited steeds; still I pray that he who is your favourite may win. I have come here to chat with you, and to be seated by you, that the passion which yea cause may not be unknown to you. You are looking at the race, I am looking at you.**

ACTIVITY **14.9**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

1. Compare Sources 14.41–14.45 and suggest why there were different points of view on the purpose of meals in ancient Rome.
2. Compare Sources 14.46 and 14.49 and identify points of agreement and of difference. You could also search online for the chariot race scene from *Ben Hur*, and include this in your comparison.

14.6 Religious beliefs and practices in early imperial Rome

Roman religion was a mixture of Etruscan, Greek, Eastern and local religions. The traditional Roman religion was based on the Capitoline Triad. The three most important Roman gods were Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, who could be directly compared with the Etruscan gods Tinia, Uni and Menrva, or the Greek gods, Zeus, Hera and Athena. Rome inherited many myths and legends from the Greeks, and even gods and goddesses. By a change of name, Zeus became Jupiter and Hera, his wife, became Juno. In fact, the whole Greek pantheon, with 12 major gods and goddesses, was taken over and worshipped by the Romans. These gods were at the heart of the official Roman religion practised throughout the Roman Empire. The worship associated with the Roman state religion took place in Rome's many temples. At one end of the ***Forum Romanum*** was the Temple of Vesta and house of the Vestal Virgins. Next to the Temple of Vesta was the Chief Priest's house, and nearby the Temple of Castor and Pollux, which was opposite the Temple of Saturn. There were also the Temple of Julius Caesar, the sacred Spring of Juturna, the Portico of the Twelve Gods, and many other temples and sacred places.

Forum Romanum a large open area in the centre of the city of Rome; it lay between the Palatine and Capitoline Hills; the Forum and the buildings around it were the main business and religious area of Rome, and it was also the centre of political life

On the Palatine Hill, over a dozen temples have been identified by archaeologists, including one to the strangely named goddess Fever, and another to Viriplace, a goddess who acted as a marriage-guidance counsellor. Nearby, on the Capitoline Hill, the 'great gods' had their centre, such as the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, associated in worship with Juno and Minerva.

Romans believed nothing happened through chance or coincidence but rather according to set rules. The gods were offered animal sacrifices at the altars, on festival days and at times of national crisis. Priests called augurs would read the future by looking at the entrails (internal organs) of sacrificed animals. The positions of different colours and marks on the entrails would indicate signs of approval or disapproval from the gods regarding a person's plans. Romans also looked for messages from the gods in natural events such as thunder, lightning, locust plagues and the behaviour of birds. The Roman people believed the gods would protect the city if the priests kept offering sacrifices.

The imperial cult began in the eastern Roman provinces during the time of Emperor Augustus as worship of the emperor's *numen* or spirit. On accepting the title of *princeps*, Augustus promoted the deification of his adoptive father, Julius Caesar. This meant Augustus became a *divi filius*, son of a god. The next step was the worship of a living emperor. This was a step first taken by Emperor Caligula, and later by other, but not all, pre-Christian emperors. The imperial cult was also the focus for the Roman army, who swore an annual oath of loyalty to the emperor. It was also to be one of the factors that led to the persecution of Christians.

Tacitus recorded an incident concerning Nero and the awe even an emperor had in the presence of the Vestal Virgins.

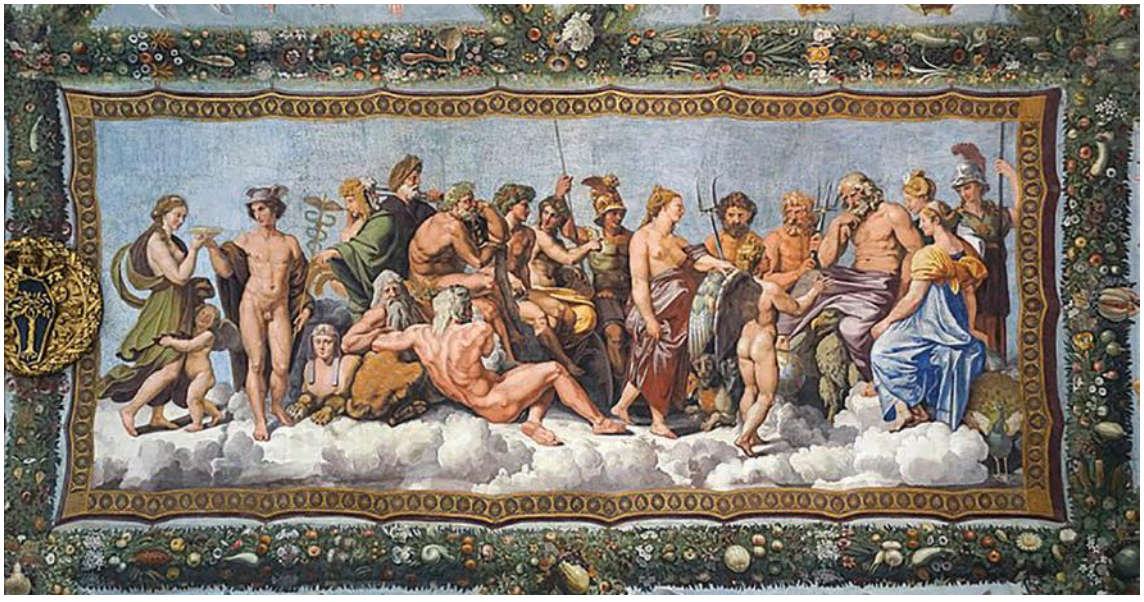
SOURCE 14.50 Tacitus, *Annals*, XV. 36

Nero went to the Capitoline Hill to consult the gods about a journey. He worshipped the Capitoline gods, then entered the Temple of Vesta. Suddenly all his limbs started trembling. He was frightened by the goddess. Or perhaps he was always frightened, remembering his crimes. Anyway, he abandoned his journey.

Religion in first-century-CE Rome was a hodgepodge of cults and rituals: *cultus deorum Romanorum* means cults of the Roman gods.



SOURCE 14.51 Capitoline Triad, National Archaeological Museum of Palestrina



SOURCE 14.52 The cult of the Roman gods

ACTIVITY **14.10**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

1. What information is implicit in Sources 14.50 and 14.51?
2. Do you think Sources 14.50 and 14.51 corroborate the active role religion played at all levels in Roman society shown in Source 14.52? In response, write a short paragraph using quotes and in-text references.

CONCLUDING STUDY

14.7 The role of the gladiatorial games in the early Roman Empire

Vespasian was emperor from 69 to 79 CE and was responsible for starting the building of what is known today as the Colosseum. He came to power as a mature man with a wealth of experience from being a soldier and official; Vespasian had also travelled widely throughout the empire. He possessed abundant common sense and he knew how to deal realistically with men and situations. Through him, the state regained financial stability, its administration was sound, and its frontiers strengthened against external attack. During his time as emperor, Vespasian took a sensible attitude towards the practice of emperor-worship. He permitted the practice to go ahead in the provinces, where he saw political benefits in banding together the people of the empire in a common bond. However, in Rome, he preferred to be considered a mere mortal. He guessed, however, that because of his services to the state, he would be deified after his death. Suetonius wrote in his *Life of Vespasian 23:4* that Vespasian said on his death-bed, 'Alas, I think I am becoming a god.' He was indeed made a god by the Senate, and a special temple was built for his worship.

The Colosseum

The Colosseum was one of the most famous of Rome's monuments and was constructed largely as a means to promote the reputation of the Emperor Vespasian. After the Great Fire of Rome in 64 CE had destroyed a large part of the city, the Emperor Nero built himself an enormous palace, called the Golden House. A few years later, the Emperor Vespasian took advantage of its unpopularity, had it pulled down and began work on an enormous amphitheatre. This was completed by his son Titus the year after Vespasian's death. Opened in 80 CE, the Colosseum had 80 entrances and 45 000 seats. Fights between gladiators, battles between men and wild animals, and other violent public entertainments were held there.

People and animals were slaughtered in their thousands to satisfy the Romans' thirst for bloody entertainment. It was in the Colosseum that Christians were fed to the lions and other wild animals. Emperor Titus was succeeded by his less popular brother, Domitian. Anxious to outdo Titus's lavish shows, Domitian staged a *naumachia*, Latin for 'sea battle', on the flooded floor of the Colosseum, and provided spectacular aquatic entertainments in a special lake near the River Tiber.

Gladiators

Gladiators were professional fighters sometimes forced to fight to the death. By the first century CE, gladiator contests were an enormously popular spectator sport. The best fighters were superstars of the Ancient World. These professional gladiators often fought opponents who were not properly trained. The opponents of gladiators included bankrupt citizens who sold themselves to pay their debts, slaves sold to a gladiator school by their masters, and condemned criminals called ***noxius***. These unlucky people were armed with only a small shield and dagger. However, not all Romans were thrilled with violent arena combats. A small minority of intellectuals found the entertainment encouraged bad behaviour, was needlessly cruel and pointless, and contributed towards falling moral standards.

noxius condemned criminals who were used as opponents of gladiators

Suetonius wrote positively about Vespasian and saw him as a reformer.

SOURCE 14.53 Suetonius, *Vespasian*, 9

> He likewise erected several new public buildings, namely the temple of Peace near the forum, that of Claudius on the Coelian mount, which had been begun by Agrippina, but almost entirely demolished by Nero; and an amphitheatre in the middle of the city, upon finding that Augustus had projected such a work. He purified the senatorian and equestrian orders, which had been much reduced by the havoc made amongst them at several times, and was fallen into disrepute by neglect. Having expelled the most unworthy, he chose in their room the most honourable persons in Italy and the provinces. And to let it be known that those two orders differed not so much in privileges as in dignity, he declared publicly when some altercation passed between a senator and a Roman knight, 'that senators ought not to be treated with scurrilous language, unless they were aggressors, and then it was fair and lawful to return it.'

When the Colosseum was opened in 80 CE, there were lavish ceremonies that lasted for 100 days. It is believed that 9000 animals were killed in the arena during this time.



SOURCE 14.54 The Colosseum today

Ancient sources are universal in their praise for Titus's handling of the Mount Vesuvius disaster as well as the fire in Rome in 80 CE. Suetonius describes the different views people held of Emperor Titus in Source 14.55.

SOURCE 14.55 Suetonius, *Titus*, 7

> Besides his cruelty, he lay under the suspicion of giving way to habits of luxury, as he often prolonged his revels till midnight with the most riotous of his acquaintance. Nor was he unsuspected of lewdness, and his well-known attachment to queen Berenice, who received from him, as it is reported, a promise of marriage. He was supposed, besides, to be of a rapacious disposition; for it is certain, that, in causes which came before his father, he used to offer his interest for sale, and take bribes. In short, people

···>

publicly expressed an unfavourable opinion of him, and said he would prove another Nero. This prejudice, however, turned out in the end to his advantage, and enhanced his praises to the highest pitch when he was found to possess no vicious propensities, but, on the contrary, the noblest virtues.

In 81 CE, Emperor Titus died of a fever. He was succeeded by his brother Domitian, who ruled from 81 to 96 CE. Domitian expanded and secured the boundaries of Rome and repaired the damage to the city caused by the fires of 64 CE and 80 CE. He continued the building projects initiated by his brother, and also improved the economy of the empire. Even so, Domitian's autocratic methods and policies made him unpopular with the Roman Senate, and he was assassinated in 96 CE.



SOURCE 14.56 The Divine Emperor: relief depicting an animal sacrifice from an altar in the Temple of Vespasian, at Pompeii

SOURCE 14.57 Suetonius, *Domitian*, 6–7

[Domitian] made many innovations in common practices. He abolished the Sportula, and revived the old practice of regular suppers. To the four former parties in the Circensian games, he added two new, who wore gold and scarlet. He prohibited the players from acting in the theatre, but permitted them the practice of their art in private houses. He forbad the castration of males; and reduced the price of the eunuchs who were still left in the hands of the dealers in slaves.

The marble relief in Source 14.58 shows Emperor Domitian setting off on a military campaign. He is being farewelled by Minerva, Courage and the Senate.



SOURCE 14.58 Farewell Domitian, Vatican Museum

The spread of the gladiatorial combats was largely due to the emperor's sponsorship, starting with Augustus.



SOURCE 14.59 Domitian, the grim, sometimes paranoid, emperor

SOURCE 14.60 Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*, 43

> [Augustus] treated the people with games upon his own account ... the performances took place sometimes in the different streets of the city, and upon several stages, by players in all languages. The same he did not only in the forum and amphitheatre, but in the circus likewise, and in the septa: and sometimes he exhibited only the hunting of wild beasts ... and also with a naval fight, for which he excavated the ground near the Tiber.

Martial wrote poems designed to flatter Emperor Domitian, the less popular brother of Emperor Titus.

SOURCE 14.61 Martial, *On the Public Shows of Domitian*, XXVIII

> The task of Augustus had been to embattle fleets, and to arouse the waves with the sound of the naval trumpet. How inferior is this to what our Caesar accomplishes! [Behold] in the waves wild animals previously unknown ... chariots glowing along the foaming ocean course, and the steeds of ... [Neptune] passing before ... Whatever is seen in the circus and the amphitheatre, the rich lake of Caesar has shown to thee ... let ages to come remember but this one sea-fight.

The Roman philosopher Seneca disapproved of the gladiatorial combats, decrying them as murder.

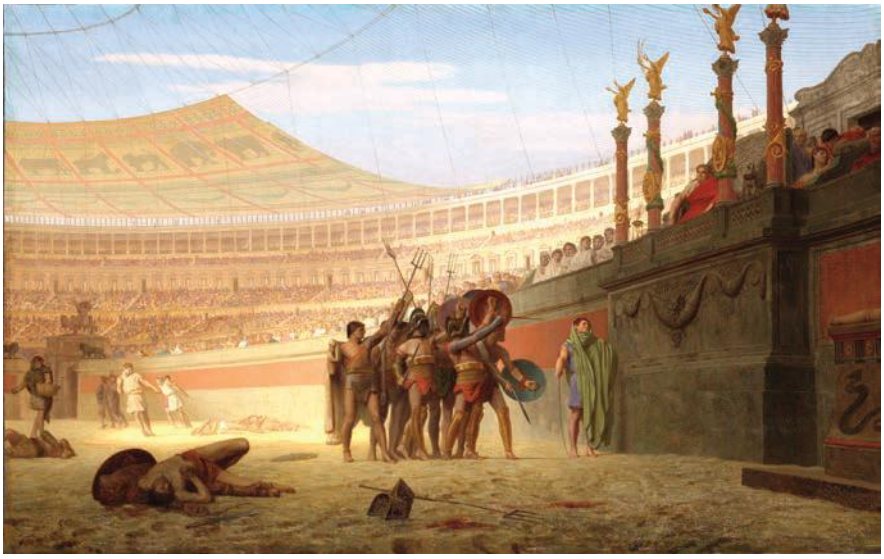
SOURCE 14.62 Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius*, VII

> By chance I attended a mid-day exhibition, expecting some fun, wit, and relaxation, – an exhibition at which men's eyes have respite from the slaughter of their fellow-men. But it was quite the reverse. The previous combats were the essence of compassion; but now all the trifling is put aside and it is pure murder ... The spectators demand that the slayer shall face the man who is to slay him in his turn; and they always reserve the latest conqueror for another butchering. The outcome of every fight is death ...

Juvenal attacked women who chose to take part in the games.

SOURCE 14.63 Juvenal, *Satires*, VI

> What modesty can you expect of a woman with a helmet who denies her sex and likes manly strength.



SOURCE 14.64 Jean-Leon Gerome, *Ave Caesar morituri te salutant*, 1859, Yale University Art Gallery. The Latin phrase *Ave, Imperator, morituri te salutant* means 'Hail, Emperor, those who are about to die salute you'.

ACTIVITY **14.11**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

1. Describe in a paragraph what is happening in Source 14.64.
2. Investigate the meaning of the phrase 'bread and circuses' in Ancient Rome. Why do you think the Roman emperors implemented this policy?
3. Vespasian was responsible for re-establishing the *principate*. Use the text in Sources 14.53 and 14.61 and the images in Sources 14.54, 14.56 and 14.64 to justify this statement.
4. One of the criticisms of the hereditary nature of the *principate* is that as a system of succession it could not guarantee that the office would always be held by a competent man. Describe what you think could be an alternative system to succession.
5. Identify the similarities between the Emperors Nero and Domitian.
6. The building of the Colosseum was a project initially proposed by Augustus. Why do you think Vespasian would have been keen to complete the building of the Colosseum?
7. Compare Sources 14.61–14.62 and identify points of agreement and disagreement.

14.8 Guide to ancient sources and modern historians

A good start for your historiography is to identify the ancient and modern sources in this chapter. The next step could be to use the tables below as a guide for locating relevant ancient sources and identifying modern historians. This is simply a starting point for your research.

TABLE 14.2 Ancient sources

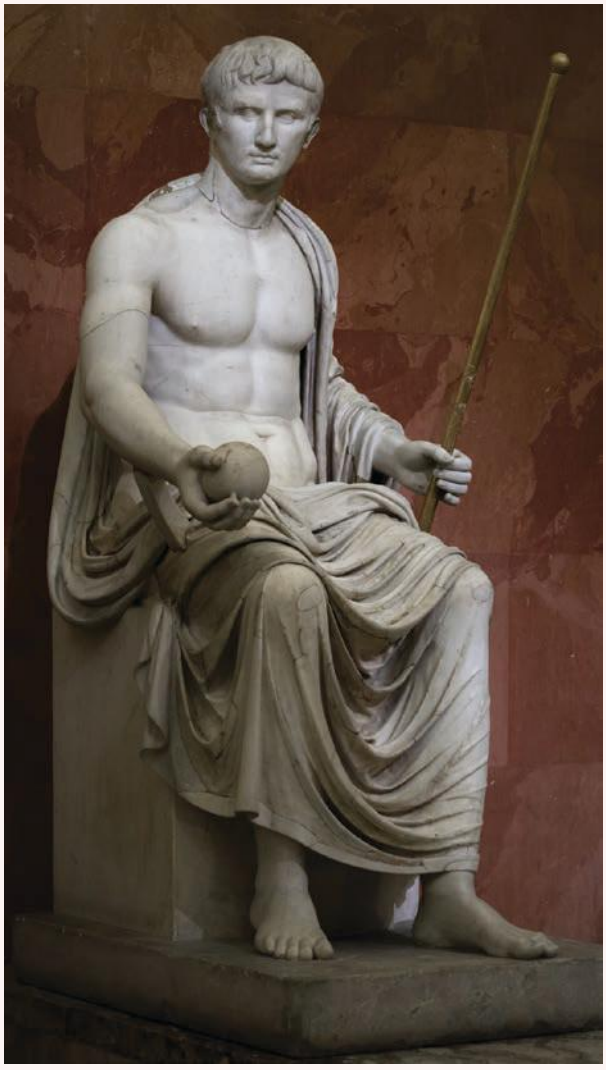
Emperor *(Princeps)*	Ancient sources
Tiberius (14–37 CE)	Tacitus; Suetonius; Cassius Dio; Velleius
Gaius Caligula (37–41 CE)	Suetonius; Cassius Dio Note: Caligula was the most poorly documented of the Julio-Claudians.
Claudius (41–54 CE)	Seneca; Cassius Dio; Suetonius
Nero (54–68 CE)	Tacitus; Cassius Dio; Suetonius; Josephus

TABLE 14.3 Modern historians

Emperor *(Princeps)*	Modern historians
Julio-Claudian Emperors	E. Salmon, *A History of the Roman World from 30 BC to AD 148,* Routledge, 1968 H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome from 143 BC to AD 68,* Routledge, 1976 W. Capes, *Roman History*, Longman, Green & Co, 1897
Tiberius (14–37 CE)	J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *Roman Civilisation,* Pelican, 1965 R. Seager, *Tiberius,* University of California Press, 1972 D. Shotter, *Tiberius Caesar,* Routledge, 1992
Gaius Caligula (37–41 CE)	A. Barrett, *Caligula: The Corruption of Power*, Yale University Press, 1989 J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *The Emperor Gaius,* Clarendon Press, 1934 S. A. Ferrill, *Caligula, Emperor of Rome,* Thames & Hudson, 1991 D. Hurley, *An Historical and Historiographical Commentary on Suetonius' Life of C. Caligula*, Oxford University Press, 1993
Claudius (41–54 CE)	R. Graves, *I, Claudius,* Harrison Smith & Robert Haas, 1934 R. Graves, *Claudius the God,* Vintage Books 1934 B. Levick, *Claudius,* Yale University Press, 1990 J. Osgood, *Claudius Caesar: Image and Power in the Early Roman Empire*, Cambridge University Press, 2010
Nero (54–68 CE)	V. Cronin, *Nero*, Stacey International, 2010 M. Grant, *Nero*, Hippocrene Books, 1989 R. Holland, *Nero: The Man Behind the Myth,* Sutton Publishing, 2000

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Succession was a problem in the Julio-Claudian imperial households as blood links did not always ensure who become emperor, and many in the imperial court were devious and even murderous in their attempts to secure power.
- Festivals and feasts were held to honour victories, emperors and gods.
- Chariot races and gladiator battles were staged partly in an effort to subdue and distract the plebeians.
- The emperors were eager to link themselves to the Roman gods in order to inspire the loyalty and worship of the people.
- Augustus was the first and most important of the Roman emperors. He ruled for 41 years, longer than any future emperor, and established the *pax Romana* – the Roman peace.
- Tiberius was an unpopular emperor with a personality that did not endear him to his people.
- The short reign of Caligula was characterised by his cruelty and probable madness.
- Claudius, underestimated by those around him due to his physical deficiencies, was an able administrator.
- After early popularity, Nero arranged the murder of his mother, which began his descent into tyranny.
- Despite the madness and the badness of the Julio-Claudian emperors, the empire continued to prosper.



SOURCE 14.65 Emperor Augustus as Jupiter. The imperial cult began during the time of Augustus. When Augustus promoted the deification of his adoptive father, Julius Caesar, he became a *divi filius*, son of a god. At his death, Augustus, the 'son of a god', was himself declared a god. The Emperors Caligula and Claudius both associated themselves with the god Jupiter.

CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND

1. Draw a timeline to show the succession of Julio-Claudian emperors.
2. Define the following terms: enigma; *pax Romana*, Praetorian Guard, *principate*.
3. Who were the *noxius*? What modern word is similar to *noxius*? What does it mean?

DEVISE

A key inquiry question:

- begins with one of the following interrogatives: How, To what extent, Why
- uses a historical knowledge skill (cause and effect; change and continuity; consequence; contestability; perspective; motive; significance)
- is extremely specific
- identifies how the use of sources has influenced a change in understanding of the topic between the ancient and modern world (change in historiography).

Rewrite the following draft key inquiry questions so that all the elements above are present:

a. To what extent is the impression of Tiberius as a sinister and bloodthirsty tyrant substantiated by the ancient sources?
b. To what extent does the agreement within the ancient sources that Caligula was insane explain the potential problem with establishing reasons for his actions?
c. To what extent can Nero be classified as one of history's monsters?

ANALYSE

1. What issues of bias are there around the primary sources on the character and rule of Tiberius?
2. There does not appear to be two sides to the rule of Caligula within the ancient sources; they all agree that he was a monster or insane. Explain the potential problem with this depiction.
3. Why do you think the gladiator fights were an important part of life for the Roman mob?

EVALUATE

1. Claudius appeared to have been vastly underrated by the ancient writers. Give reasons for these views.
2. Nero has been accused of murdering his mother, setting fire to Rome and savage treatment of the Christians. Suggest arguments for which of these actions was the most reprehensible. Use quotes to support your decision.
3. Vespasian is generally agreed to have been a very competent emperor. Elaborate on possible reasons for this.

SYNTHESISE

Tacitus wrote from a moral perspective. Is there a place for morality in government? Explain your answer.

COMMUNICATE

Consider the modern world. Over the past few decades some Australians have argued to remove the British monarch as the Australian head of state and create an Australian republic. Are there any parallels to the example of Ancient Rome?

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions

1. Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius and Nero almost certainly deserve the bad reputation given to them by the ancient sources. Evaluate this statement with reference to the reign of each of the Julio-Claudian emperors of the first century CE.
2. The Romans were a cruel, mean-spirited and bloodthirsty people at heart. Evaluate this statement with reference to the public entertainment performed in the Colosseum.

Investigation tasks

1. Evaluate the underlying reason for the personal danger surrounding the succession within the Julio-Claudian dynasty.
2. Tiberius is portrayed by ancient writers as a sinister and bloodthirsty tyrant, who used the treason laws to kill off all who opposed or offended him. Analyse the extent to which this impression is substantiated by the sources.
3. The most generous view of Claudius is to be found in Robert Graves's historical novels, *I, Claudius* and *Claudius the God*. Examine why Graves's novels of the 1930s are the popularly accepted account of Emperor Claudius.
4. Account for the significant role of the gladiatorial games during the early Roman Empire.

Chapter 16

THE MEDIEVAL CRUSADES

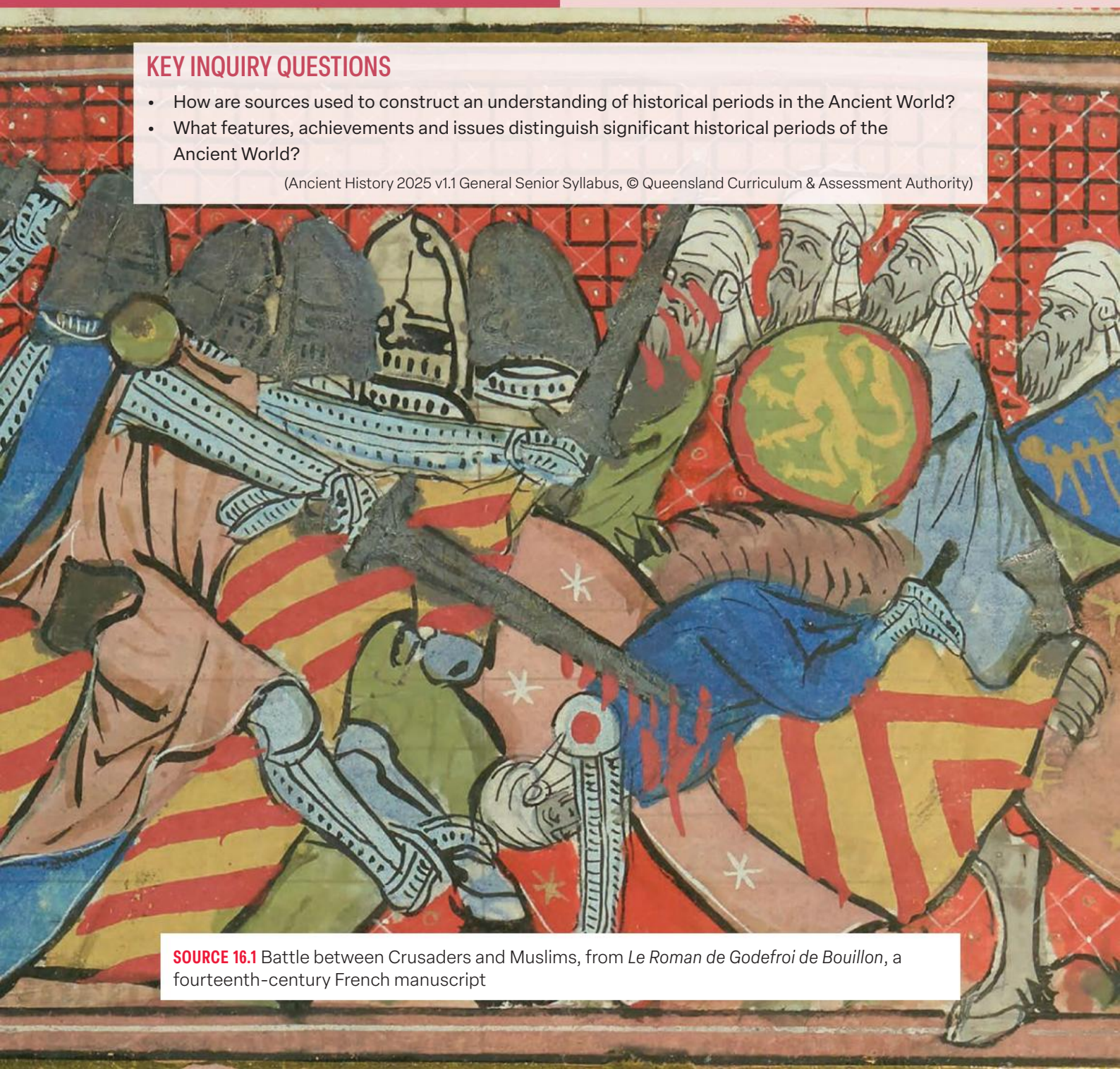
Syllabus reference: Unit 3, Topics 1 and 2: Historical periods

ALAN BARRIE

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How are sources used to construct an understanding of historical periods in the Ancient World?
- What features, achievements and issues distinguish significant historical periods of the Ancient World?

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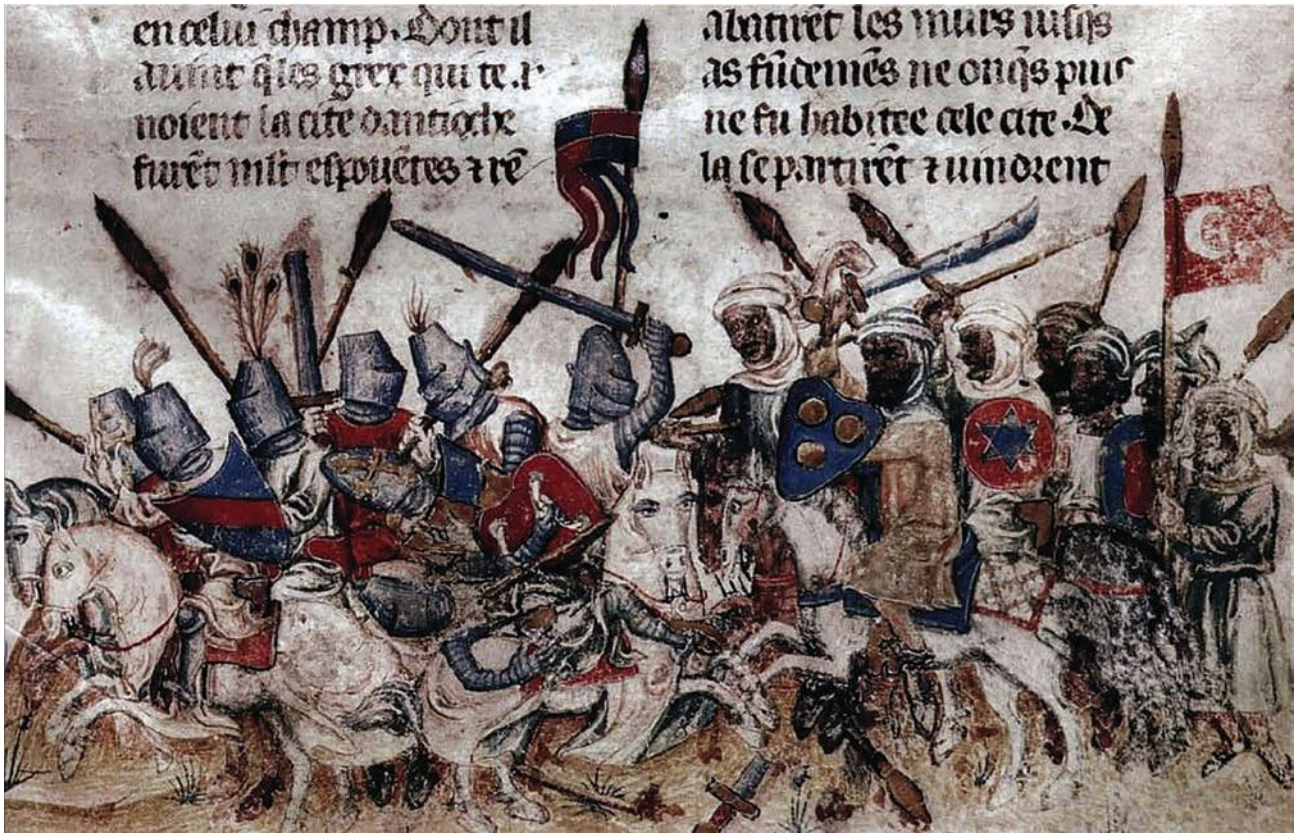


SOURCE 16.1 Battle between Crusaders and Muslims, from *Le Roman de Godefroi de Bouillon*, a fourteenth-century French manuscript

FOCUS: WHY STUDY THE MEDIEVAL CRUSADES?

In the medieval **Crusades**, we are looking at a period where the Eastern world meets the Western world, as we have seen in our studies of Greece and Persia.

Crusades a struggle or fight against the enemies of Christianity, a holy war



SOURCE 16.2 The Siege of Antioch during the First Crusade, c. 1200, from a manuscript in the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France

Carole Cusack, Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Sydney, looks at how contemporary society has been influenced by the Crusades.

SOURCE 16.3 Carole Cusack, 'Did the Crusades lead to Islamic State?', *The Conversation*, 23 February 2016

How do we account for forces and events that paved the way for the emergence of Islamic State? ... In 1996, late US political scientist Samuel P. Huntington published the book The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order. Following the collapse of communism in 1989, he argued, conflicts would increasingly involve religion. Islam, which Huntington claimed had been the opponent of Christianity since the seventh century, would increasingly feature in geopolitical conflict. So, it wasn't particularly shocking when, after the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the then-US president, George W. Bush, used the term 'crusade' to describe the American military response.

Framing the subsequent 'war on terror' as a crusade acted as a red flag to journalists and political commentators, who could treat the events as simply the most recent stoush in a centuries-old conflict. The actual Crusades (1096–1487) themselves evoke a romantic image of medieval knights, chivalry, romance and religious high-mindedness. But representing them as wars between Christians and Muslims is a gross oversimplification and a misreading of history. ... Modern Westerners would find medieval Crusader knights as unappealing as they do Islamic State. And it's impossible to miss the fact that the immediate entry into heaven Pope Urban promised to Christian soldiers who died in battle against the infidel Muslims is conceptually identical to the martyrdom ideology of contemporary **jihadists**. Reality is more complex – and more interesting – than the simple continuation of a historical struggle against the same enemy. Muslims conquered Christian territories, yes, but Christians engaged in reconquest. There were forced conversions to both Islam and Christianity, and – very importantly – actual governments and monarchs were involved. It's a simplistic thing to say that 'Islamic State is neither Islamic nor a state', but there's an element of truth in it. The most important reason we should resist the lure of the crusade tag to any fight against jihadists is that groups like Islamic State want the West to think like that. It justified the Paris bomb attacks of November 2015 as attacks against 'the Crusader nation of France'. Osama bin Laden used the same reasoning after the September 11 attacks. By adopting the role of Crusaders, Western nations play into Islamic State's hands. It's how these jihadists want the West to understand itself – as implacably opposed to Islam. But it's not, and it never has been.

jihad a struggle or fight against the enemies of Islam, a holy war



SOURCE 16.4 (Left) Iranian protesters burn an American flag at a a demonstration to condemn US hostile policies and mark the anniversary of the American Embassy takeover back in 1979. (Right) A meme found across the internet that is particularly popular with far right Republicans in the USA.

CONTEXTUAL STUDY

This section will give you a brief overview of the geography, chronology, key sources and key issues of the medieval Crusades.

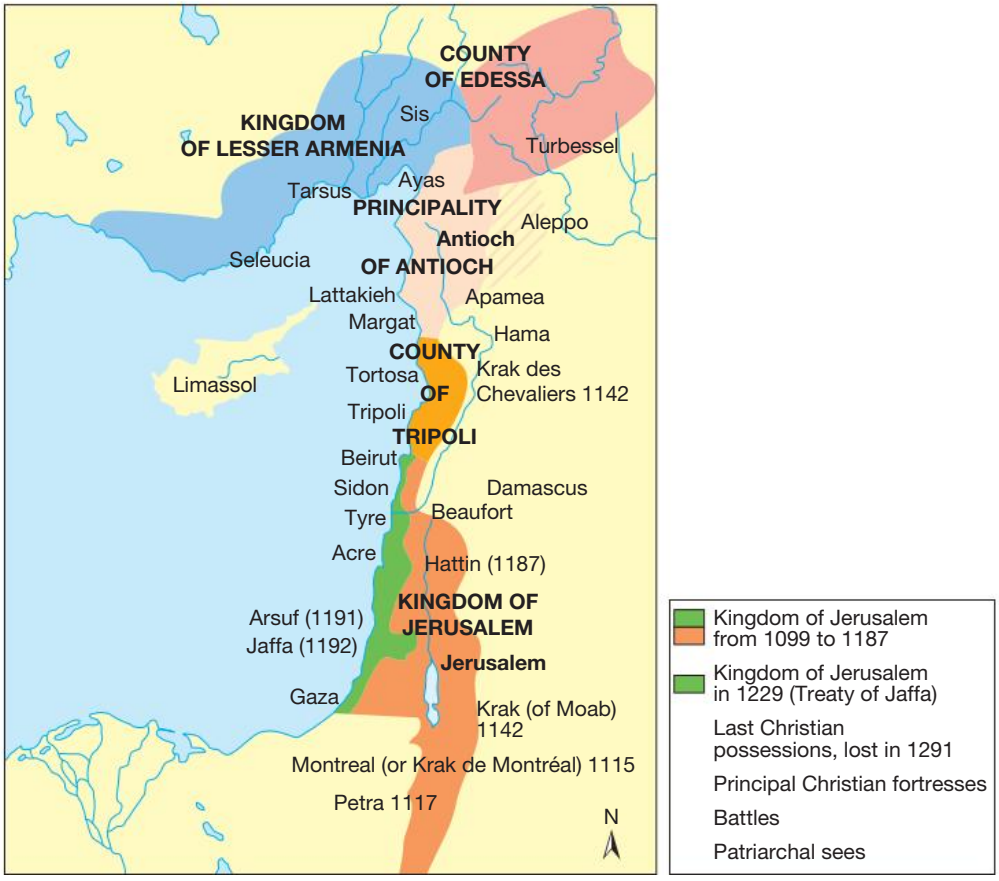
16.1 When and where did the events of the medieval Crusades take place?

TABLE 16.1 A timeline of key dates in Islam–Christian relations

570 CE	Mohammed is born.
610 CE	Mohammed has a vision and Islam as a religion begins.
629 CE	Jews of Khaibar are put to the sword. Mohammed sends messengers to Kings of Persia, Ethiopia and Yemen, and the Christian Emperor Heraclius inviting them to convert to Islam.
630 CE	Mohammed takes Mecca and proclaims it the holy city of Islam.
632 CE	Mohammed dies naming no successor.
635 CE	Muslim armies conquer Damascus, Syria.
637–638 CE	Muslim armies take Jerusalem and Ctesiphon.
641 CE	Muslims conquer Persia and Egypt; found the city of Cairo, Egypt.
660–750 CE	Umayyad caliphate at Damascus.
693–862 CE	Muslims conquer Christian Armenia.
698 CE	Muslims conquer Carthage in North Africa.
711 CE	Muslim conquest of Spain begins.
732 CE	Muslim armies are defeated by Christian forces at Tours, France.
809–810 CE	Muslims defeat Christian forces of Sardinia and Corsica.
827 CE	Muslims conquer Sicily.
846 CE	Muslims (Saracens) attack Rome.
1095 CE	Pope Urban II calls for the protection of Christian pilgrims and proclaims the first Crusade.
1099 CE	Combined Christian armies retake Jerusalem, the birthplace of Christianity.
1187 CE	Saladin defeats Crusaders at the Battle of the Horns of Hattin and temporarily retakes Jerusalem.
1212 CE	Christians defeat Muslim Moors at Las Navas del Toledo, Spain.
1244 CE	Muslims retake Jerusalem.
1291 CE	Mamluke (Egyptian-Turkish) Muslim army captures Acre; end of Crusades and Christian political presence in Holy Land.
1453 CE	Muslim armies conquer Constantinople.
1492 CE	Last of the Muslim armies are driven out of Spain.
1571 CE	Attempted invasion of Europe by Turkish Muslims. Islam spreads from Arabia across North Africa and into Asia Minor, India, Asia and Eastern Europe by the power of the sword wielded by Muslim armies.



SOURCE 16.5 Map of the route of the First to Fourth Crusades



SOURCE 16.6 Map of the Eastern Mediterranean, eleventh to thirteenth centuries

16.2 How do we know today about the medieval Crusades?

Primary sources

It is surprising how many primary sources exist for the medieval period. This is a list of some of the ones for the Crusader period.

First Crusade

- *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*, c. 1100. Latin chronicle by an anonymous author but thought to be a soldier of Bohemond.
- Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere*. Includes an eyewitness account of the Siege of Antioch.
- Ralph of Caen, *Gesta Tancredi*, 1113.
- Raymond of Aguilers, *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*. The history is a partial eyewitness account, as Raymond, chaplain of Raymond IV of Toulouse, followed the Provençal army of Crusaders to Jerusalem. Some of it was based on *the Gesta Francorum*.
- Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta per Francos,* c. 1108. Based in part on the *Gesta Francorum*. It includes an account of the preaching of Peter the Hermit. Guibert was Benedictine monk.
- Albert of Aix, *Historia Hierosolimitana*. The work is in 12 books from the Council of Clermont to later events up to 1121. Albert covers much of the People's Crusade and recorded the extermination of the Jews in that time.
- Fulcher of Chartres, *Chronicle*, c. 1127 or later. He was a priest who participated in the First Crusade.
- Balderic of Dol, *Historiae Hierosolymitanae*, c. 1046–1130. Bishop of Dol-Bretagne, he was present at Clermont and witnessed Pope Urban II's preaching of the First Crusade.
- Ekkehard of Aura, *Hierosolymita*. Ekkehard was a Bavarian abbot and eyewitness of the Crusade of 1101.
- William of Tyre, *Historia* (1170–1184). A history in 23 books. For events prior to 1127, sources include Fulcher of Chartres, Albert of Aix, Raymond of Aguilers, Baldric of Dol and the *Gesta Francorum*.

Literature

- Marcabru, Old French cycle of *chansons de geste* concerning the First Crusade and its aftermath.
- *Chanson d'Antioche*, c. 1180. On the First Crusade, notably the sieges of Antioch and Jerusalem.
- *Chanson de Jérusalem,* late twelfth century. A *chanson de geste* on the First Crusade; covers the Siege of Jerusalem.

Second Crusade

- Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in Orientem* (On Louis VII's journey to the East). French historian who went on the Second Crusade as chaplain to Louis VII of France.
- Otto of Freising, *Gesta Friderici imperatoris* (Deeds of Emperor Frederick). A German historian and participant in the Second Crusade who wrote based on his experiences.

Third Crusade

- Tageno, *Descriptio expeditionis Asiaticae Friderici* (Description of the Asian Expedition of Frederick). A Bavarian clergyman who went on the Third Crusade as part of King Frederick Barbarossa's army (he died in Syria on the expedition). His account covers the period 1189–1190.
- Richard de Templo, *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi*. This account of the Third Crusade from 1189 to 1192 has a detailed account of Saladin's conquest of Jerusalem and the subsequent campaign of Richard I of England.
- Roger of Howden, *Gesta Regis Ricardi and Gesta Henrici Regis Secundi*. An English chronicler who accompanied Richard I of England on the Third Crusade.

Fourth Crusade

- Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Chronicle De la Conquête de Constantinople* (On the Conquest of Constantinople), 1207. A knight and historian who was an eyewitness to the events.
- Robert de Clari, *La Conquête de Constantinople*. He was a knight who participated in the Fourth Crusade and the sacking of Constantinople.
- Gunter of Pairis, *Historia Constantinopolitana*. Wrote about Martin, abbot of the monastery of Pairis in Alscase, who participated in the Fourth Crusade.
- *The Deeds of the Bishops of Halberstadt*, records the work of Conrad of Krosigk, who served as the bishop of Halberstadt from 1201 until 1208 and took part in the Fourth Crusade.

Fifth Crusade

- Jacques de Vitry was a theologian and historian who wrote a history of the Holy Land from the advent of Islam until the Fifth Crusade. Afterwards he helped organise the Sixth Crusade.
- Cardinal Oliver of Paderborn, also known as Oliverus scholasticus, *Historia Damiatina*. He went on the Fifth Crusade.
- *Gesta Crucigerorum Rhenanorumis,* c. 1219, is an eyewitness account of the Fifth Crusade by a cleric who travelled with a fleet from Germany. It ends with the return of the Rhenish Crusaders and does not describe the disastrous end of the Crusade.

Sixth Crusade

- Freidank, *Bescheidenheit*. A German poet who provided an eyewitness account of the city of Acre during the Sixth Crusade.

Seventh–Eighth Crusades

- Jean de Joinville, *Life of Saint Louis*. A French chronicler who wrote this biography of King Louis IX of France, accompanied him on the Seventh Crusade and Eighth Crusades, and was with Louis during his captivity by the Egyptians in 1250 after the battle of al-Mansurah.
- Thaddeus of Naples, *Hystoria de desolacione civitatis Acconensis*. Based on eyewitness accounts of the fall of Acre of 1291.

Byzantine sources

- Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad,* c. 1148. Byzantine biographical text on the reign of Anna's father Emperor Alexius I (r. 1081–1118).
- Matthew of Edessa, *Zhamanakagrutyun,* c. 1113–1140. An Armenian historian who wrote a chronicle covering the years 952–1136 and was continued by Gregory the Priest up to 1162.
- John (Ioannes) Zonaras, *The Extracts from History*. He wrote a World Chronicle (from the Creation up to 1118), but it also has an interesting description of the First Crusade.

Arab sources

- Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami, *Kitab al-Jihad* (The Book of Jihad). A scholar from Damascus and the first to preach Jihad against the Crusaders in the aftermath of the First Crusade.
- Ibn al-Qalanisi, *Dhail/Mudhayyal Ta'rikh Dimashq* or *The Chronicle of Damascus*. An Arab politician and historian in Damascus.
- Ibn al-Athir, *The Complete History of al-Kamil fi'at-Tarikh*. A historian whose family settled in Mosul in 1181.

ACTIVITY **16.1**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Author information is a key feature for successful evaluation of sources. By learning about the author, their audience, and the intention/purpose of the sources, one can draw further conclusions as to the reliability and usefulness of the information contained within the source. Research the following key authors of the First Crusade to answer the question: Which are the best and most reliable primary sources of the First Crusade?

Consider: Who is the source by? Who is it for (the audience)? Is this information useful with regard to understanding the intent of the source? How?

1. Anonymous author associated with Bohemond, *Gesta Francorum et aliorum Hierosolimitanorum*
2. Peter Tudebode, priest from Poitou, *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere*
3. Ralph of Caen, *Gesta Tancredi*
4. Raymond of Aguilers, *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem*
5. Guibert of Nogent, *Dei gesta per Francos*
6. Robert the Monk
7. Albert of Aix, *Historia Hierosolimitana*
8. Fulcher of Chartres, a chronicle/history
9. Baldric of Dol, *Historiae Hierosolymitanae*
10. Ekkehard of Aura

Archaeological evidence

Archaeological evidence acts to verify (or refute) literary accounts of events and places, especially with regard to urban and rural settlements, surveying agriculture, industry, the military (especially castles), the church, public and private architecture, arts and crafts, leisure pursuits, death and burial rituals/practices, and building techniques/materials.

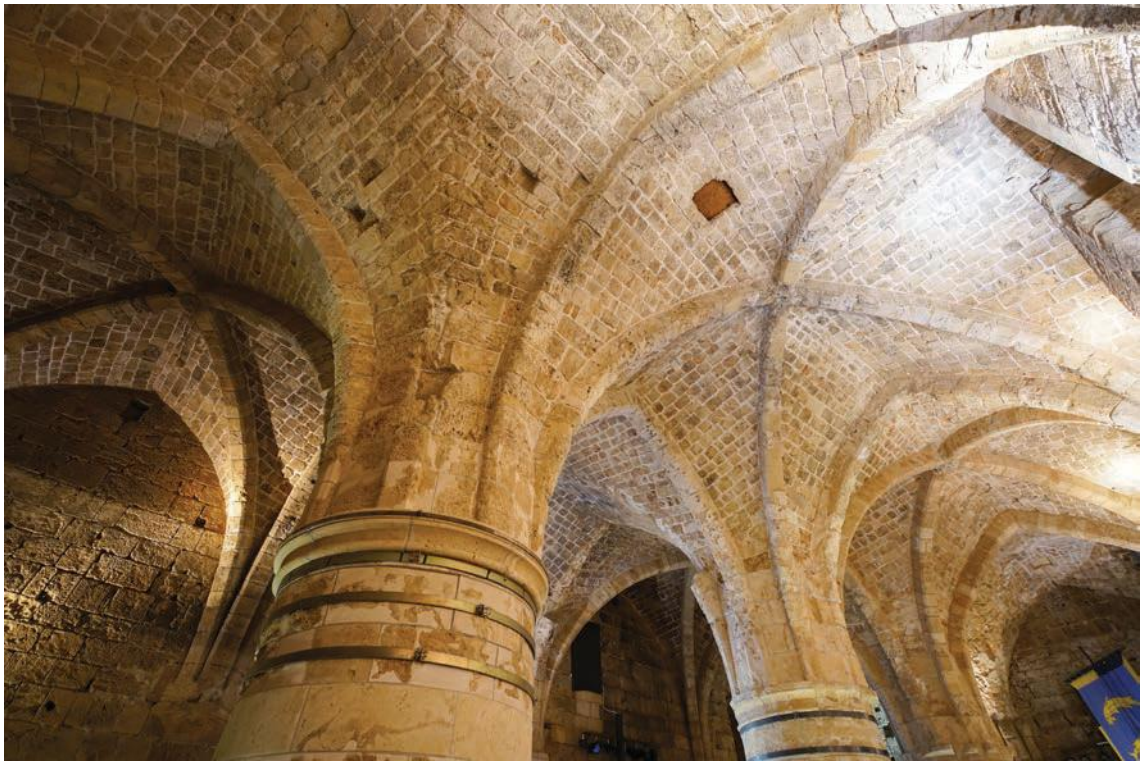
Numismatics (the study of coins) and **signillography** (studies in the way that wax, lead, clay and other seals are used to authenticate archival documents) are also useful non-literary sources for the Crusades.

numismatics the study of coins and other currencies

signillography the scholarly discipline that studies the wax, lead, clay, and other seals used to authenticate archival documents



SOURCE 16.7 Seal of the Knights Templar



SOURCE 16.8 Knights' Hall, an underground Crusader fortress at Acre

Adrian J. Boas is a famous Australian archaeologist of the Crusader period. He has excavated numerous medieval sites and published several academic books, including two award-winning edited volumes, *Montfort: History, Early Research and Recent Studies of the Principal Teutonic Fortress in the Latin East*, and *The Crusader World*. He is president of the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East.

SOURCE 16.9 H. P. Schrader, 'Crusader archaeology by Adrian Boas – A review', *defendingcrusaderkingdoms.blogspot.com*, 7 November 2014

Modern archaeology increasingly provides evidence to challenge many presumptions and prejudices about crusader 'barbarity' – or decadence. The exquisite quality of crusader sculpture, frescoes, manuscripts, and glass-work, the evidence of glass-panes in sacred and secular buildings, the bright and wide-range of colours of the textiles, paintings and enamel work are all evidence of a culture that was anything but primitive. Equally important, the artifacts that have come to light demonstrate the unique and distinctive nature of crusader arts, crafts and, indeed, lifestyle. As Boas underlines with respect to a variety of fields, far from simply adopting the allegedly more civilized life-style of their enemies or predecessors, the crusaders blended familiar styles, particularly Romanesque art and architecture, with Byzantine traditions in mosaics, wall-painting and sculpture. On a more mundane level, textiles in the crusader states were not simply made of the wide range of materials from goat's and sheep's wool and linen to cotton and silk, they also included hybrid fabrics using silk and one of the other kinds of thread.

Take, for example, a recent discovery in Sidon, Lebanon, in 2021. Two mass graves were unearthed by archaeologists, containing the remains of Crusaders believed to have died in battle either in 1253 or 1260 CE.



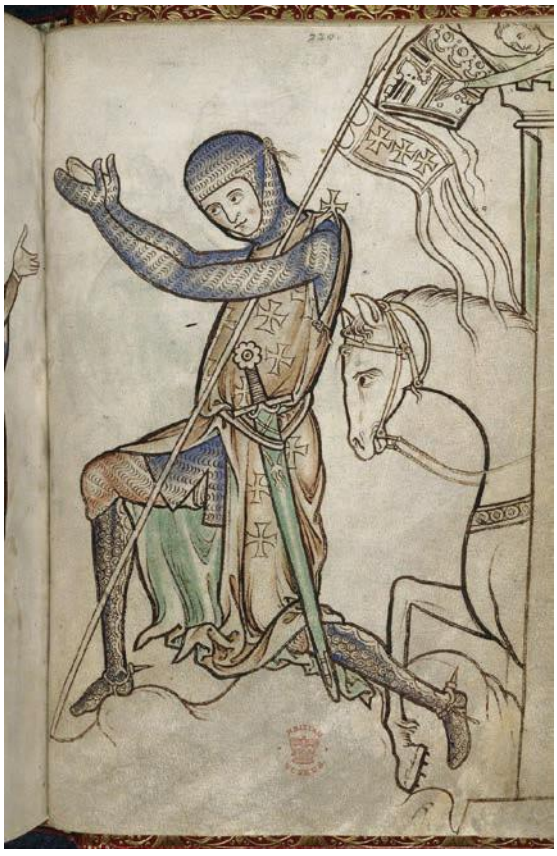
SOURCE 16.10 Sidon Sea Castle, built by the Crusaders in 1228 CE

Livia Gershon is a daily correspondent for the *Smithsonian Magazine*. She is also a freelance journalist and has written for *JSTOR Daily*, the *Daily Beast*, the *Boston Globe*, *HuffPost* and *Vice*, among others.

SOURCE 16.11 L. Gershon, 'Mass graves of 13th-century Crusaders reveal brutality of medieval warfare', *Smithsonian Magazine*, 20 September 2021

Archaeologists in Lebanon have unearthed two mass graves containing the remains of 25 Crusaders killed in the 13th century. The team found the skeletons of the young men and teenage boys in Sidon, on the Mediterranean coast ... All of the bones bear unhealed wounds from stabbing, slicing or blunt force trauma. Most of the injuries

were to the fighters' backs, suggesting they may have been killed while fleeing—possibly by adversaries on horseback, based on where the blows fell on their bodies ... 'When we found so many weapon injuries on the bones as we excavated them, I knew we had made a special discovery,' says lead author Richard Mikulski, an archaeologist at Bournemouth University in England. Analysis of tooth isotopes and DNA showed that some of the deceased were born in Europe, while others were the offspring of European Crusaders who had children with locals in the Middle East, the Daily Mail's Stacy Liberatore reports. The researchers also found European-style belt buckles and a Crusader coin, along with artifacts like fragments of Persian pottery and iron nails.



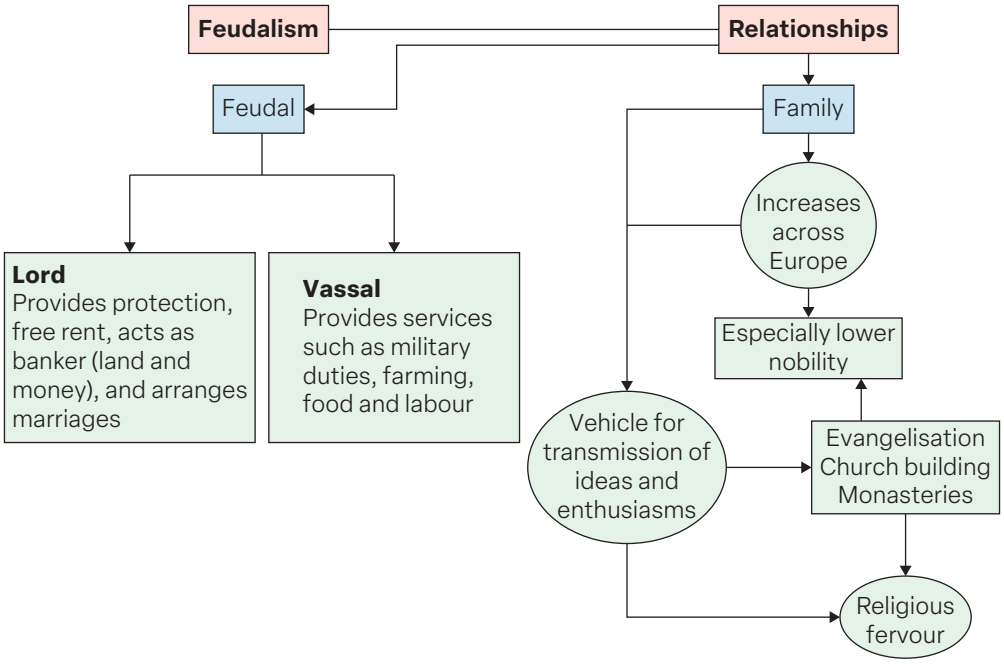
SOURCE 16.12 A kneeling knight with his horse before setting off on the Crusades. His servant leans over the turret with his master's helmet, from the *Westminster Psalter*

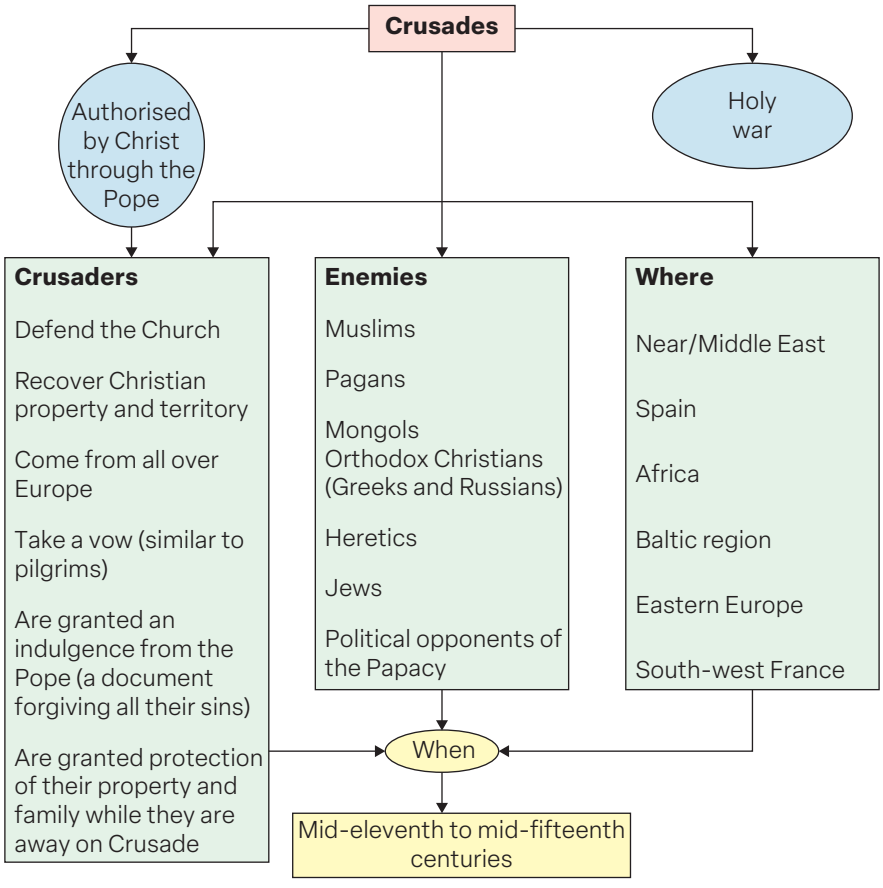
European forces captured Sidon—an important port city—in 1110 C.E., after the First Crusade, and held it for more than a century. But in 1253, Mamluk forces attacked and destroyed the fortress that the Crusaders were using to defend the city. The next year, Louis IX of France had the structure rebuilt as the Castle of St. Louis, but it fell again, this time to the Mongols, in 1260. The mass graves are located near the castle, and the researchers say it is 'highly likely' that the Crusaders died in one of these two battles. 'Crusader records tell us that King Louis IX of France was on crusade in the Holy Land at the time of the attack on Sidon in 1253,' says study co-author Piers Mitchell, a biological anthropologist at the University of Cambridge, in the statement. 'He went to the city after the battle and personally helped to bury the rotting corpses in mass graves such as these. Wouldn't it be amazing if King Louis himself had helped to bury these bodies?' Based on the positioning of body parts, the researchers say the remains were probably left to decompose on the surface for some time before being dropped into a pit. Some of the bones show signs of charring, suggesting a number of the bodies were burned. 'To distinguish so many mixed-up bodies and body parts took a huge amount of work, but we were finally able to separate them out and look at the pattern of wounds they had sustained,' says study co-author Martin Smith, a biological anthropologist at Bournemouth University, in the statement.

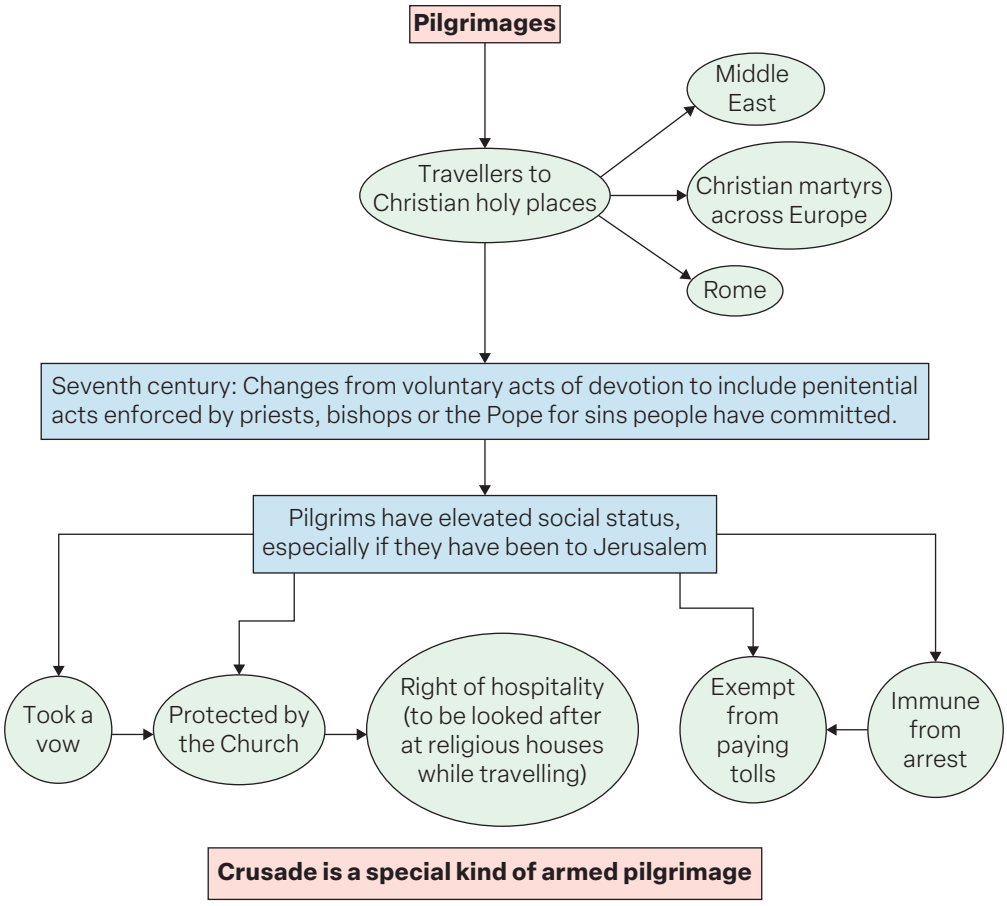
The attacks on Sidon came during the gradual fall of the Crusader states. The last major Crusades set out from France in 1270 and England in 1271 but met with little success, per History.com. In 1291, Acre, one of the final remaining Crusader cities, fell to the Mamluks, marking what many historians see as the Crusades' end. 'So many thousands of people died on all sides during the Crusades, but it is incredibly rare for archaeologists to find the soldiers killed in these famous battles,' says Mitchell in the statement. 'The wounds that covered their bodies allow us to start to understand the horrific reality of medieval warfare.'

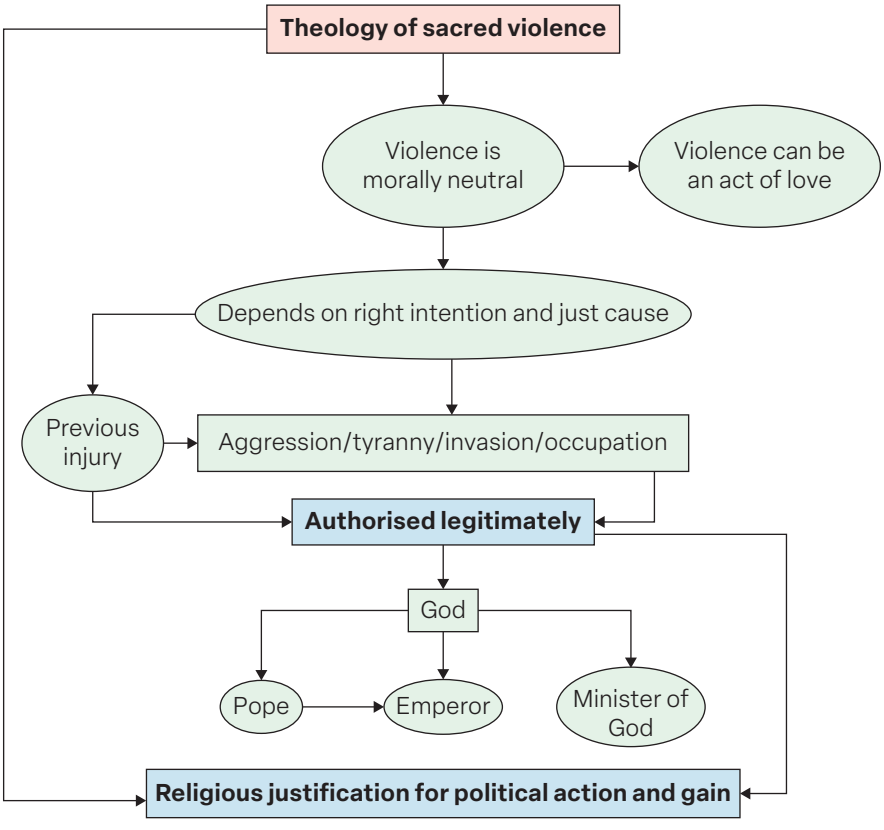
16.3 Key concepts for understanding the medieval Crusades

Visual organisation of information (pattern notes, concept map, spidergram, tree diagram) is an alternative to linear note-taking in the organisation of material. In spidergrams, the concept box is placed in the middle and other ideas are extended from it to other boxes. In these examples, the concept is placed at the top and the information flows downward from it.






Pilgrimages
Middle East
Travellers to Christian holy places
Christian martyrs across Europe
Rome
Seventh century: Changes from voluntary acts of devotion to include penitential acts enforced by priests, bishops or the Pope for sins people have committed.
Pilgrims have elevated social status, especially if they have been to Jerusalem
Took a vow
Protected by the Church
Right of hospitality (to be looked after at religious houses while travelling)
Exempt from paying tolls
Immune from arrest
Crusade is a special kind of armed pilgrimage


Theology of sacred violence
Violence is morally neutral
Violence can be an act of love
Depends on right intention and just cause
Previous injury
Aggression/tyranny/invasion/occupation
Authorised legitimately
God
Pope
Emperor
Minister of God
Religious justification for political action and gain



SOURCE 16.13 Pope Urban II chairing the Ecumenical council of Clermont and preaching the Crusade, 27 November 1095, detail from fifteenth-century manuscript by Sebastien Mamerot, 1490

ACTIVITY **16.2**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

In a similar manner to the diagrams shown on the previous pages, research the following concepts and display them as a visual organiser:

- remission of sins
- excommunication
- penance
- purgatory.

ACTIVITY **16.3**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Pope Urban II (c.1035 – 29 July 1099), having received a request for help from the Byzantine Emperor Alexis, started preaching for a Crusade, launching his campaign in a field at Clermont, France, in 1095. Read the six different versions of the speech online:

- Fulcher of Chartres: *Gesta Francorum Jerusalem Expugnantium*
- Robert the Monk: *Historia Hierosolymitana*
- *Gesta Francorum* [The Deeds of the Franks]
- Baldric of Dol
- Guibert de Nogent: *Historia quae dicitur Gesta Dei per Francos*
- Urban II: *Letter of Instruction*, December 1095

1. What do all the versions have in common?
2. Which of the six accounts do you think is most accurate? Give reasons for your answer.

16.4 Key issues for understanding the medieval Crusades

The questions below relate to the core key issues regarding the Crusades.

- Were the Crusades essentially defensive or aggressive?
- Was it simply a grab for power by the papacy to attain supremacy over temporal (secular) rulers (kings and emperors)?
- Did personal opportunism (greed, plunder, selfishness) outweigh religious duties and devotions?
- Has the 'violence' of the Crusaders been overplayed/overexaggerated, especially in relation to Muslim violence and Christian Crusader duties to piety?
- To what extent was it more of a political than a religious conflict?
- Are the Crusades akin to colonialism and imperialism? In what ways are they the same, and in what ways different?
- What is the 'third son theory?
- To what extent were Crusader Christians more interested in converting, rather than killing, Muslims?
- To what extent were divisions between Sunni and Shi'ites more important to Muslims than the division between Christians and Muslims?
- How was the sack of Constantinople (Fourth Crusade) justified by its participants? How was the news received in Christendom (Medieval Europe)?
- To what extent was Crusading more of a burden than a blessing (physical, emotional, financial)?
- To what extent did Crusading create anti-Semitism, or did it just help ignite what already existed?

After the success of the First Crusade, the areas conquered by the Crusaders were divided into four areas: the County of Edessa, the Principality of Antioch, the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the County of Tripoli. These were called the Crusader States.

- How was such a small minority (Crusaders) able to rule over a vast majority (Muslims)?
- Which feature was more predominant in typifying the Crusader States: assimilation, cross-culturalism and diversity, or division, alienation and fear?
- Byzantine empire played a role in starting the Crusades, but what were relations like between the Crusader Kingdoms, the Byzantine Empire, and Muslim emirates/sultanates?
- What were relations like between the Catholic Christians and other Christian groups in the Crusader States?
- What was the relationship between Jews and Christians in the Crusader States? How, and to what extent, was it different from or similar to relations between Jews and Christians in Europe?

To what extent can the Crusades be blamed for present troubles and tension between certain Muslim and Western countries and groups?

DEPTH STUDY

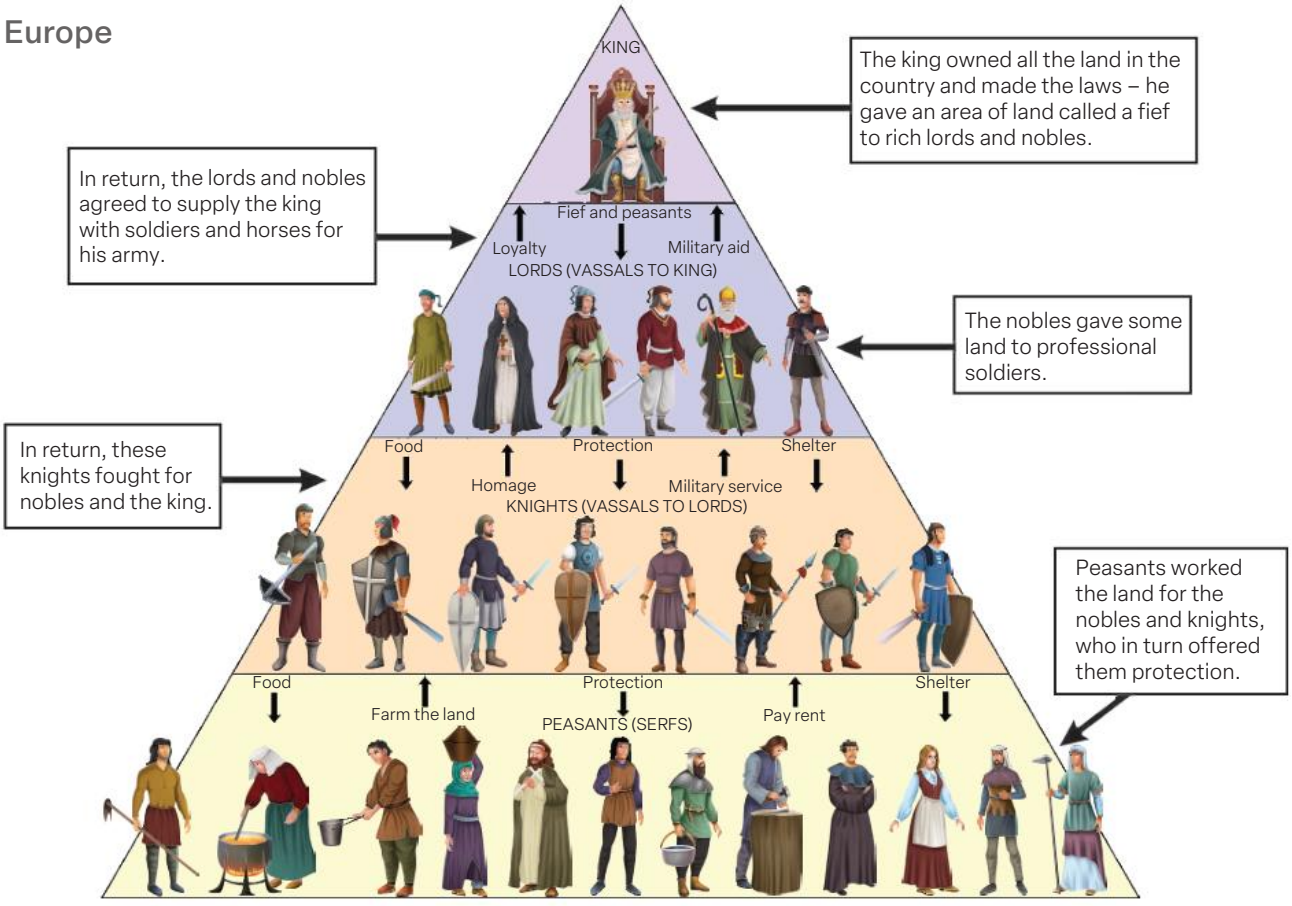
Introduction

This study touches on many fascinating issues associated with the Crusades, offering many options in choosing a topic for further inquiry/assessment. But first, a quick look at the similarities and differences between medieval Christian Europe societies and those of the Islamic Middle East, c. 1100.

16.5 Social structure of each side involved in the Crusades

The two structures outlined below demonstrate the differences in European and Middle Eastern society.

Europe



SOURCE 16.14 Social structure of medieval European societies

Middle East

THE RULERS	URBAN NOTABLES	THE RULED
MILITARY ELITE — 'People of the sword' • Ruler and his family • Guard corps • Administrative council • Religious-judicial institution	• Heads of patrician families • Bureaucrats — 'People of the pen' • Religious classes — 'People of the turban' • International merchants • Patricians of non-Muslim minorities	Urban lower classes • Artisans and retail merchants • Urban poor • Peasants and pastoralists • Domestic slaves

SOURCE 16.15 Social structure of medieval Middle Eastern societies

16.6 Significant events and individuals involved in the Crusades

The Crusades were a religious conflict between Christians and Muslims to secure control of holy sites considered sacred by both groups (namely, Jerusalem). In all, there were eight major Crusade expeditions that occurred between 1096 and 1291. Between the seventh and twelfth centuries, Islam had spread from Arabia across Africa and the Middle East. Muslim armies had conquered the Visigoths in Spain, and the Sassanians in Persia (modern Iraq and Iran), and much territory of the Byzantine Empire had been lost. With the invading Seljuk Turks taking much of Anatolia (modern Türkiye, especially following the Battle of Manzikert in 1071), the Byzantine Empire was in danger of losing all of its territories in Asia. In 1095, Emperor Alexius sent envoys to Pope Urban II asking for a force of elite mercenary troops from Europe to help confront the Turkish threat. In November of the same year, at the Council of Clermont in southern France, the Pope called on Christians to take up arms and help recapture the Holy Land from Muslim control. Instead of a small elite military unit, Alexius got four armies and a wave of poor pilgrims.

First Crusade: 1095–1099

Four armies of Crusaders descended on Constantinople. Their leaders included Raymond of Saint-Gilles, Godfrey of Bouillon, Hugh of Vermandois and Bohemond of Taranto (with his nephew Tancred). A less organised band of knights and commoners known as the 'People's Crusade' set off earlier under the command of the popular preachers Peter the Hermit and Walter the Penniless. This group had been sent unprotected into Seljuk territory and were wiped out. The main Crusader armies left Constantinople in 1096, marched through Anatolia, captured Antioch in June 1098 and, finally, Jerusalem in 1099. Four Crusader States were formed – Jerusalem, Edessa, Antioch and Tripoli – each with a king, but with Jerusalem having pre-eminence.



SOURCE 16.16 Auguste Migette, *Massacre of Jewish people in Metz (Holy Roman Empire) during the First Crusade*

The Rhineland and Danubian massacres of 1096 were a series of mass murders of Jews by mobs of French and German Christians of the People's Crusade. These events, collectively have often been called 'the First Holocaust' (a reference to the organised extermination of Jews across Europe under the German leader, Adolf Hitler, during World War II).

SOURCE 16.17 Ekkehard of Aura, in A. C. Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eyewitnesses and Participants*, Princeton: 1921, pp. 53–4

Just at that time, there appeared a certain soldier, Emico, Count of the lands around the Rhine, a man long of very ill repute on account of his tyrannical mode of life. Called by divine revelation, like another Saul, as he maintained, to the practice of religion of this kind, he usurped to himself the command of almost twelve thousand cross bearers. As they were led through the cities of the Rhine and the Main and also the Danube, they either utterly destroyed the execrable race of the Jews wherever they found them (being even in this matter zealously devoted to the Christian religion) or forced them into the bosom of the Church.

SOURCE 16.18 Albert of Aix, in A. C. Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eyewitnesses and Participants*, Princeton, 1921, pp. 54–6

From this cruel slaughter of the Jews a few escaped; and a few because of fear, rather than because of love of the Christian faith, were baptized. With very great spoils taken from these people, Count Emico, Clarebold, Thomas, and all that intolerable company of men and women then continued on their way to Jerusalem. But while almost everything had turned out favourably for the Christians by some chance or misfortune, I know not what, such great fear entered the whole army that they turned in flight, just as sheep are scattered and alarmed when wolves rush upon them. And seeking a refuge here and there, they forgot their companions ... So the hand of the Lord is believed to have been against the pilgrim who had sinned by excessive impurity who had slaughtered the exiled Jews through greed of money. The Lord is a just judge and orders no one unwillingly, or under compulsion, to come under the yoke of the Catholic faith.

SOURCE 16.19 J. Marcus, *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Sourcebook, 315–1791*, JPS, 1938, pp. 115–20

Emico the wicked, the enemy of the Jews, came with his whole army against the city gate, and the citizens opened it up for him. Emico, a German noble, led a band of plundering German and French crusaders. 'Then the enemies of the Lord said to each other: 'look! They have opened up the gate for us. Now let us avenge the blood of 'the hanged one' [Jesus].' The children of the holy covenant still clung to their Creator. Then young and old donned their armor and girded on their weapons and at their head was Rabbi Kalonymus ben Meshullam, the chief of the community. Each Jew in the inner court of the bishop girded on his weapons, and all moved towards the palace gate to fight the crusaders and the citizens. The bishop's men, who had promised to help them, were the very first to flee, thus delivering the Jews into the hands of the enemy. They were indeed a poor support; even the bishop himself fled from his church for it was thought to kill him also because he had spoken good things of the Jews, having received some of the plunder taken from them. The enemy showered stones and arrows upon them, but they did not care to flee. The women there girded their loins with strength and slew their sons and their daughters and then themselves. Many men, too, plucked up courage and killed their wives, their sons, their infants. The tender and delicate mother slaughtered the babe she had played with, all of them, men and women arose and slaughtered one another. The maidens and the young brides and grooms looked out of the Windows and in a loud voice cried: 'Look and see, O our God, what we do for the sanctification of Thy great name in order not to exchange you for a hanged and crucified one ...'. Righteous and pious women bared their throats to each other, offering to be sacrificed for the unity of the Name. A father turning to his son or brother, a brother to his sister, a woman to her son or daughter neighbour to a neighbour or a friend, a groom to a bride, a fiancé to fiancée, would kill and would be killed, and blood touched blood, The blood of the men mingled with their wives', the blood of the fathers with their children's, the blood of the brothers with the sisters, the blood of the teachers with their disciples', the blood of the grooms with their brides', the blood of the leaders with the cantors', the blood of the judges with their scribes', and the blood of infants and sucklings with their mothers'. For the unity of the honoured and awe-inspiring Name were they killed and slaughtered.

ACTIVITY **16.4**

Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources
Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Read Sources 16.17–16.19 to answer these questions.

1. Who did the persecuting?
2. For what reasons?
3. On what scale?
4. Were there critics of it? Who?
5. Who supported it/how popular was it?
6. What is the main difference in perspective between Sources 16.17 and 16.18?
7. What is the main difference in perspective between Sources 16.17 and 16.18, and Source 16.19?

Second Crusade: 1147–1149

Following the loss of Edessa to a force of Muslims led by Zengi of Mosul in 1144, a new Crusade was launched. Led by King Louis VII of France and King Conrad III of Germany, the Second Crusade began in 1147 and ended in failure due to being outmanoeuvred by Nur al-Din (Zengi's successor), the failure of a siege at Damascus, and mistrust between the two kings. When rumours of the approach of a large Muslim army reached the Crusader camp, they fled.

The Muslim writer Sibt Ibn Al-Jauzi gives this interesting account of the disaster of Damascus:

SOURCE 16.20 F. Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, trans. E. J. Costello. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984

The Franks had with them a great Priest with a long beard, whose teachings they obeyed. On the tenth day of their siege of Damascus he mounted his ass, hung the cross round his neck. He had the Testaments and the crosses and the Holy Scriptures set before him and assembled the army in his presence; the only ones to remain behind were those guarding the tents. Then he said: 'The Messiah has promised me that today I shall wipe out this city.' At this moment the Muslims opened the city gates and in the name of Islam charged as one man into the face of death. Never, in pagan times or since the coming of Islam, was there a day like this. One of the men of the Damascus militia reached the Priest, struck his head from his body and killed his ass too. As the whole Muslim army bore down upon them the Franks turned and fled. The Muslims killed 10,000, smote their crosses and their cavalry with Greek fire, and pursued the army as far as the tents. Night separated them, and in the morning the Franks were gone and no trace of them remained.

Third Crusade: 1187–1192

A new leader, Saladin, finally managed to unite the Muslim world and in 1187 began a major campaign against the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem. Saladin defeated the army at the Battle of Hattin and took Jerusalem. Pope Urban III's replacement, Pope Gregory VIII, called for another Crusade to win back Jerusalem. The Pope's challenge was taken up by three of the greatest Christian rulers at the time: Frederick I Barbarossa, the Holy Roman Emperor and king of Germany; King Philip II of France; and King Richard I of England, the 'Lionheart'. Barbarossa, however, drowned at Anatolia before his army reached Syria. The English and French forces took different routes before joining and capturing Acre.

Petty jealousies between King Richard and King Philip, along with Duke Leopold V of Austria, led to the latter two leaving the Crusade. Richard carried on, defeating Saladin at Arsuf, recapturing Jaffa and, in September 1192, Richard and Saladin signed a peace treaty that ended the Third Crusade. The city of Jerusalem, however, was to remain in Muslim hands.



SOURCE 16.21 David Aubert, *The capture of Jerusalem by Saladin*, miniature from the 'Abbreviated Chronicle', c. fifteenth century

SOURCE 16.22 Ansbert, 'Letter from the East to the Master of the Hospitallers', 1187

Moreover, so great is the multitude of the Saracens and Turks that from Tyre, which they are besieging, they cover the face of the earth as far as Jerusalem, like an innumerable army of ants, and unless aid is quickly brought to the remaining above-mentioned cities and to the very few Christians remaining in the East, by a similar fortune they will be plundered by the raging infidels, thirsting for the blood of the Christians.

SOURCE 16.23 Pope Gregory VIII, '*Audita tremendi* – Papal Bull announcing Third Crusade'

We, therefore, should heed and be concerned about the sins not only of the inhabitants of that land but also of our own and those of the whole Christian people so that what is left of that land may not be lost and their power rage in other regions. For we hear from every direction of scandals and conflicts between kings and princes, among cities, so that we lament with the prophet and are able to say: 'There is no truth, no knowledge of God in the land: lying, murder and adultery abound, and blood pursues blood' [Hos 4:1–2]. For this reason, everyone must understand and act accordingly, so that by atoning for our sins, we may be converted to the Lord by penance and works of piety and we may first alter in our lives the evil that we do. Then we can deal with the savagery and malice of our enemies. And what they do not fear to try against God, we will not hesitate to do for God. Therefore, sons, consider how you came into this world and how all pass on, and thus you will pass on ... Work for the recovery of that land in which for our salvation Truth has arisen from the land and did not disdain to carry the forked wood of the cross for us. Pay attention not to earthly profit and glory, but to the will of God who himself taught us to lay down our souls for our brothers. Give your riches to him, which whether willingly or unwillingly, you do not know to which greedy heirs they will be left ... We promise full remission of their sins and eternal life to those who take up the labour of this journey with a contrite heart and a humble spirit and depart in penitence of their sins and with true faith.

SOURCE 16.24 *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*

Muslim Hostages Slain at Acre, 1191

Later, indeed, after the time limit had more than passed, King Richard determined that Saladin had hardened his heart and cared no longer about ransoming the hostages. He assembled a council of the greater men among the people and they decided that they would wait in vain no longer, but that they would behead the captives. They decided, however, to set apart some of the greater and more noble men on the chance that they might be ransomed or exchanged for some other Christian captives. King Richard always hoped to overwhelm the Turks completely, to crush their impudent arrogance, to confound the Moslem law, and to vindicate Christianity.

On the Friday next after the feast of the Assumption of Blessed Mary, [August 16, the date when the decision to massacre the Muslims was made. It was done on August 20] he ordered that two thousands even hundreds of the vanquished Turkish hostages be led out of the city and decapitated. Without delay his assistants rushed up and quickly carried out the order. They gave heartfelt thanks, since with the approval of divine grace, they were taking vengeance in kind for the death of the Christians whom these people had slaughtered with the missiles of their bows and ballistas.

Beha-ed-Din was a member of Saladin's court and (along with much of the Saracen army who watched from a distance) witnessed the massacre of 2700 of his comrades.

SOURCE 16.25 Beha-ed-Din, in 'Richard the Lionheart Massacres The Saracens, 1191', *EyeWitness to History*, 2001

Then the king of England, seeing all the delays interposed by the Sultan to the execution of the treaty, acted perfidiously as regards his Musulinan prisoners. On their yielding the town he had engaged to grant their life, adding that if the Sultan carried out the bargain he would give them freedom and suffer them to carry off their children and wives; if the Sultan did not fulfill his engagements they were to be made slaves. Now the king broke his promises to them and made open display of what he had till now kept hidden in his heart, by carrying out what he had intended to do after he had received the money and the Frank prisoners. It is thus that people of his nation ultimately admitted. In the afternoon of Tuesday, 27 Rajab, [August 20] about four o'clock, he came out on horseback with all the Frankish army, knights, footmen, Turcoples, and advanced to the pits at the foot of the hill of Al 'Ayadiyeh, to which place be had already sent on his tents. The Franks, on reaching the middle of the plain that stretches between this hill and that of Keisan, close to which place the sultan's advanced guard had drawn back, ordered all the Musulman prisoners, whose martyrdom God had decreed for this day, to be brought before him. They numbered more than three thousand and were all bound with ropes. The Franks then flung themselves upon them all at once and massacred them with sword and lance in cold blood. ... On the morrow morning our people gathered at the spot and found the Musulmans stretched out upon the ground as martyrs for the faith. They even recognised some of the dead, and the sight was a great affliction to them. The enemy had only spared the prisoners of note and such as were strong enough to work.

ACTIVITY **16.5**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources
Objective 6: Communicate to suit purpose
Use Sources 16.22–16.25 to construct a one-paragraph narrative about the causes and course of the Third Crusade.

Fourth Crusade: 1202–1204

Pope Innocent III called for a new Crusade in 1198 to retake Jerusalem. Crusaders arrived in Venice to await transport to the Holy Land. However, becoming indebted to the Venetian Doge (Duke), who had his own monetary ambitions, the target ended up being Constantinople, which was captured and sacked on 12 April 1204. Stripped of its riches, relics and artworks, the Byzantine Empire was divided up between Venice and its allies. The irony! The city that started the Crusades movement ended up being its victim. Clearly, profiteering had replaced religious zeal.

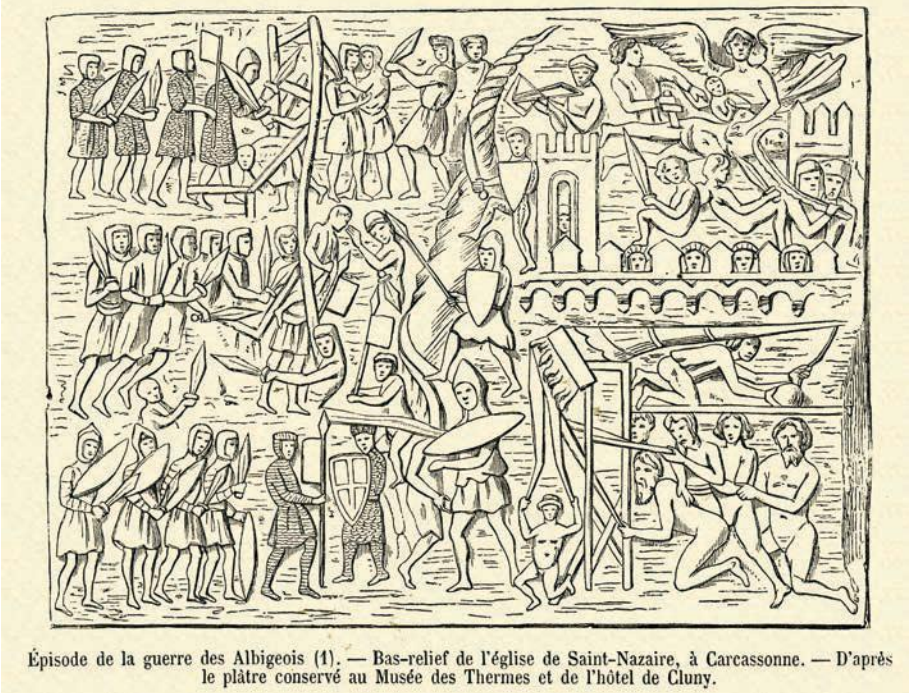
Final Crusades

Before his death in 1216, Pope Innocent III preached for another Crusade (the Fifth). The target this time, however, was Egypt itself – the heartland of the Ayyubid Sultanate that had been established by Saladin in 1171. The Crusaders attacked Egypt from both land and sea, but eventually surrendered to Saladin's nephew, Al-Malik al-Kamil, in 1221. The Sixth Crusade (1229) was a diplomatic success for the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick II, who achieved a bloodless transfer of control to Christians over Jerusalem, Nazareth and Bethlehem, through negotiation with Al-Malik al-Kamil. (al-Kamil had already offered up Jerusalem as part of negotiations with the Fifth Crusaders.) This, however, was not popular with his rivals – the papacy, the Crusader nobles, and even the commoners. In fact, when leaving Acre in May 1229 to return back to Europe, he was pelted with mouldy meat and offal! Pope Gregory IX even called for a new Crusade from rivals of the Holy Roman Emperor – England, France and Hungary. Called the Barons' Crusade, it also achieved success through diplomacy (not violence) by successfully playing the two warring factions of the Ayyubid dynasty (Syria and Egypt) against one another, and thus won even more concessions than Frederick II had. However, following the battle of La Forbie in 1244, in which 5000 Crusaders died and 800 were taken prisoner, Jerusalem was retaken, resulting in the Seventh Crusade, led by King Louis IX of France, and ending with its failure and the capture of King Louis IX himself in 1250. (He was soon released after a huge ransom was paid.) A new **dynasty**, known as the Mamluks, descended from former slaves of the Islamic Empire, took power in Egypt. Under Sultan Baybars, the Mamluks demolished Antioch in 1268, which led to King Louis IX launching another Crusade, the Eighth, against the Hafsid dynasty in Tunisia, Africa, in 1270. Louis died there of dysentery, little fighting took place, and a treaty was negotiated, though no territorial gains were made. King Edward I of England (known as 'Longshanks', 'The Hammer of the Scots', and conqueror of Wales) took on another expedition in 1271, (the Ninth Crusade) in which Edward clashed with the Egyptian Mamluk Sultan Baybars. Both achieved limited victories. Finally, in 1291, one of the last Crusader cities, Acre, fell to the Mamluks. So ended the last Crusader presence in the Middle East.

dynasty a sequence of rulers from the same family

Other Crusades

The Albigensian Crusade in southern France (1208–1229) was aimed at a dangerous heretical group – the Cathars, also known as Albigensians. The Baltic Crusades (1211–1230) were fought by the Knights of the Teutonic Order against pagans in modern-day Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Russia. The Children's Crusade took place in 1212 when large groups of young children vowed to march to Jerusalem, but ended being kidnapped and sold into slavery.



Épisode de la guerre des Albigeois (1). — Bas-relief de l'église de Saint-Nazaire, à Carcassonne. — D'après le plâtre conservé au Musée des Thermes et de l'hôtel de Cluny.

SOURCE 16.26 The Albigensian War. Engraving of the bas-relief of the Church of Saint-Nazaire in Carcassonne, from the plaster kept at Musée des Thermes and at the hôtel de Cluny.



SOURCE 16.27 Detail of the Cantiga #63 (thirteenth century), which deals with a late-tenth-century battle in San Esteban de Gormaz involving the troops of Count García and Almanzor. Note the absence of religious paraphernalia.

In addition, there was the 'Reconquista' in Spain, where the Christian Kingdoms in the north of Spain began to take back territory from the Muslims (a process that finally ended with the Fall of Granada in 1492). The Reconquista actually began decades before the First Crusade (1096) with King Sancho the Great of Aragon and his successors. Therefore, it was in many regards different from a 'Crusade'. Christian, Jewish and Islamic peoples there had been living alongside each other for centuries. The religious crusading spirit of the late eleventh century scarcely affected Spain. The Reconquista needs to be seen more in the context of a local power conflict between warlords, regardless of religion. In fact, many a time did Christian forces ally with a Muslim ruler against another Christian ruler, and vice-versa.

Significant individuals of the Crusades

TABLE 16.2 Significant individuals of the Crusades

First Crusade (1095–1099)	**Peasants' Crusade** Peter the Hermit Walter the Penniless **Princes' Crusade** Bohemond, Prince of Taranto and founder of the Principality of Antioch, and Tancred of Hauteville, his nephew, founder of the Principality of Galilee Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lower Lorraine and first Defender of the Holy Sepulchre, along with his brothers Eustace III of Boulogne and Baldwin, founder of the County of Edessa and first King of Jerusalem Raymond de Saint-Gilles, Count of Toulouse and founder of the County of Tripoli Robert Curthose, Duke of Normandy	
Crusade of 1101	Raymond of St. Gilles Anselm IV, Archbishop of Milan William II of Nevers William IX of Aquitaine	
Second Crusade (1147–1149)	From Europe: Louis VII of France Conrad III of Germany	From the Crusader States: Baldwin III of Jerusalem Amalric, Count of Jaffa Melisende of Jerusalem
Crusader State personalities	Guy of Lusignan and Sibylla of Jerusalem Balian and Hugh of Ibelin Raynald of Châtillon	
Third Crusade (1189–1192)	Conrad of Montferrat Richard I, King of England Philip II of France Frederick I, Holy Roman Emperor	
Crusade of 1197	Henry VI, Holy Roman Emperor Henry I, Duke of Brabant	
Fourth Crusade (1202–1204)	Boniface of Montferrat Louis I, Count of Blois Enrico Dandolo	
Fifth Crusade (1217–1221)	King Andrew II of Hungary Leopold VI, Duke of Austria	
Sixth Crusade (1228–1229)	Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor Theobald I, King of Navarre Richard, 1st Earl of Cornwall	
Seventh Crusade (1248–1254) and Eighth Crusade (1270)	Louis IX of France	
Ninth Crusade (1271–1272)	Edward I of England	

The Crusades have been the inspiration for many dramatic works of art, such as those shown below.



SOURCE 16.28 Cornelis Claesz van Wieringen, *Crusaders attack the tower of Damietta, 1219*, c. 1625

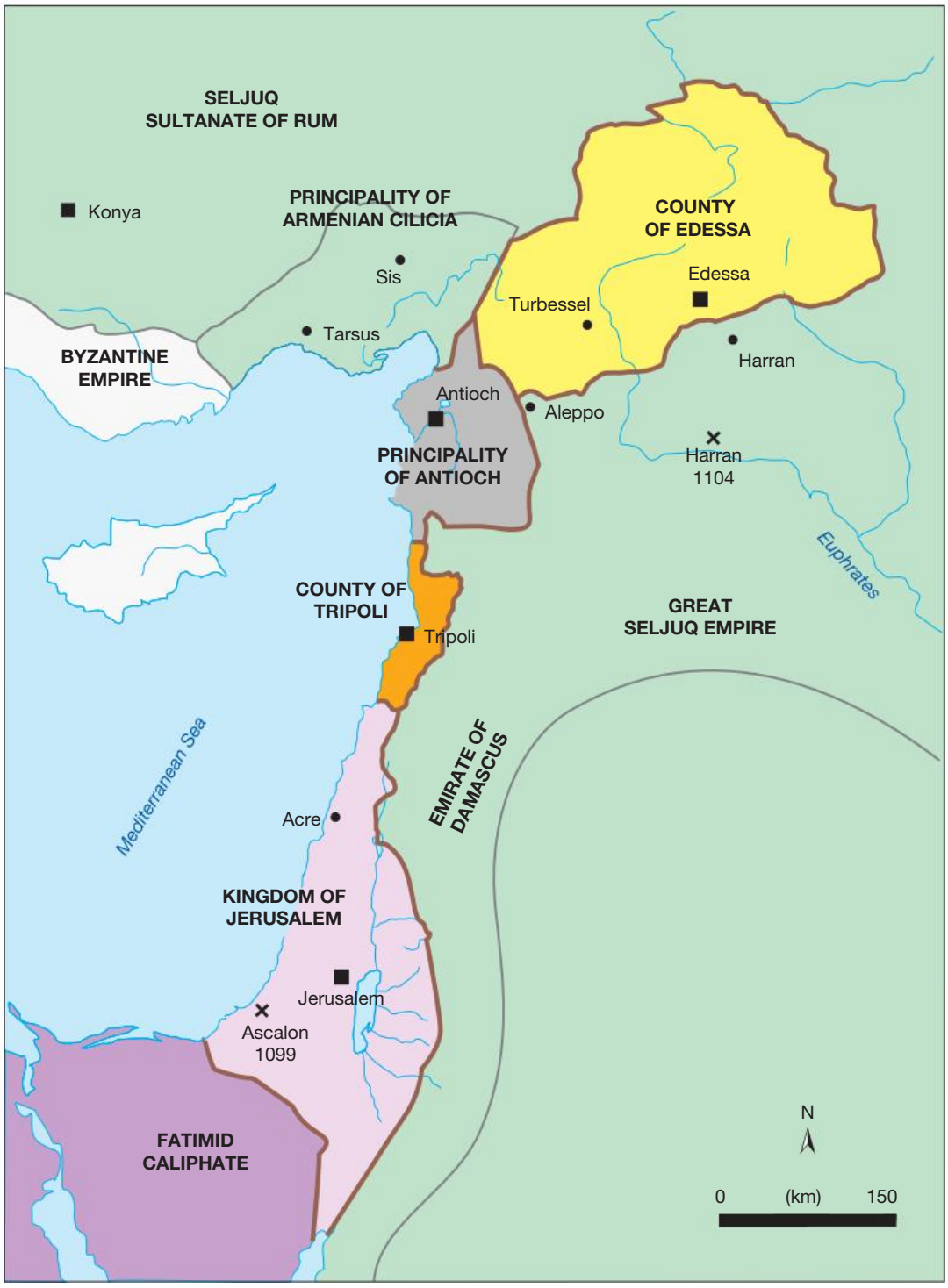


SOURCE 16.29 Karl Friedrich Lessing, *The return of the Crusader*, 1835



SOURCE 16.30 Frederic Schopin, *Battle under the walls of Antioch*, c. nineteenth century

16.7 The Crusader States: Governance and politics, religion and the lives of women



SOURCE 16.31 Map of the Crusader States, 1135

Governance and politics

The Crusader States, established by the Western European Crusaders in the eastern Mediterranean during the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, were governed by a feudal system (like in Europe), with a king or prince at the top, supported by a hierarchy of nobles, who were granted rulership over areas of land in return for their loyalty and military service to the king.

Fulcher of Chartres, the chaplain of Baldwin of Boulogne, wrote of the Crusader Kingdoms:

SOURCE 16.32 Fulcher of Chartres, 1127, in A. C. Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eyewitnesses and Participants*, Princeton, 1921, pp. 280–1

Fulcher of Chartres:

The Latins in the East (Chronicle, Bk III)

Consider, I pray, and reflect how in our time God has transferred the West into the East, For we who were Occidentals now have been made Orientals. He who was a Roman or a Frank is now a Galilaean, or an inhabitant of Palestine. One who was a citizen of Rheims or of Chartres now has been made a citizen of Tyre or of Antioch. We have already forgotten the places of our birth; already they have become unknown to many of us, or, at least, are unmentioned. Some already possess here homes and servants which they have received through inheritance. Some have taken wives not merely of their own people, but Syrians, or Armenians, or even Saracens who have received the grace of baptism. Some have with them father-in-law, or daughter-in-law, or son-in-law, or stepson, or step-father. There are here, too, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. One cultivates vines, another the fields. The one and the other use mutually the speech and the idioms of the different languages. Different languages, now made common, become known to both races, and faith unites those whose forefathers were strangers. As it is written, 'The lion and the ox shall eat straw together.' Those who were strangers are now natives; and he who was a sojourner now has become a resident, Our parents and relatives from day to day come to join us, abandoning, even though reluctantly, all that they possess. For those who were poor there, here God makes rich. Those who had few coins, here possess countless besants; and those who had not had a villa, here, by the gift of God, already possess a city. Therefore why should one who has found the East so favorable return to the West?

The King of Jerusalem was considered to be the leader of the Crusader States (also called Outremer). The High Court, composed of the leading nobles, could elect and depose kings, which was a significant difference from the kings in Europe. The Church, led by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, was also very important, controlling vast landholdings and wealth, and having its own system of law and administration.

For these kingdoms, revenue consisted of rents on land, duties for things like mills (grinding grain into flour), use of ovens (which were usually communal), use of wine presses and sugar factories, payment for use of bath-houses and tolls on roads and at gates, import and export duties, anchorage and harbour fees, rights of salvage, taxes on garden produce and orchards, and fines given by the courts to people found guilty of certain infringements and crimes.

Religious life: The military orders

SOURCE 16.33 A. Latham, '2 knights, 1 horse – how a legendary Knights Templar symbol has puzzled and fascinated since the Middle Ages', *The Conversation*, 28 May 2024

The Knights Templar, a legendary monastic military order forged in the fires of the Crusades, continue to enthrall 21st-century audiences. From the time of their founding in 1119 CE to their dissolution in 1312 CE, the Templars' mission was to defend

Christian kingdoms in the Holy Land against the various Muslim powers that sought to return the region to Islamic rule. In service of this mission, the order fused two defining institutions of the early Middle Ages: the mounted knight and the pious monk. At the time, this made the Templars something of a puzzle. How could someone be both a pious monk and a ferocious warrior? The Templars themselves tried to address this question in their symbology, which proved as puzzling as the order itself.

One of the Templars' more enigmatic symbols was their wax seal – two knights riding a single horse. While researching medieval geopolitics and the Third Crusade, I came across several interpretations of the Templar seal. The most popular ties the shared steed to the Templars' vow of poverty. ... Another draws a connection to the Gospel of Matthew, where one figure represents a knight and the other Jesus Christ. This interpretation stems from a Bible passage where Christ says, 'For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I with them.' The idea is that the two knights on a single horse embody the ever-present companionship of Christ with the Templars who had gathered in his name. ... Some propose that the two knights represent a duality within the order itself. The single horse could signify the unification of their seemingly contrasting roles as warrior-monk. ... The seal serves as a window into the Knights Templar's identity and impact on medieval Christian history. It is a symbol likely to continue to spark curiosity for centuries to come.

The different orders of Knights (Hospitaller, Templar and, to a lesser extent, Teutonic) all accumulated considerable wealth through benefaction, donation, and an extensive network system of branch houses, which regulated the transfer of goods and money of the orders across both Europe and the Middle East – like an early form of supranational trading houses and credit institutions. Funds deposited in one branch could be withdrawn from another, and loans granted in one country could be repaid in another. These orders, while charitable, were the backbone of military defences of the Christian Crusader Kingdoms. Each wore a habit with a cross on it and showed its wearer's rank. As elite warriors, they were often used as shock troops. In addition, as lay rulers and aristocrats seldom had the funds to cover all costs of border defence, they gave to the military orders many forts and castles (such as Krak des Chevaliers in Tripoli) that were in their territory. The Knights then improved and strengthened these defences and used them as networks to protect and patrol the boundaries of the Crusader Kingdoms.

Templar Knights

The Knights Templar (officially called the Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon) was the wealthiest and largest of the military orders. Founded in 1119 with their headquarters on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, they took monastic vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, and gave armed protection to pilgrims visiting Jerusalem. These 'fighting monks' were supported by the powerful and influential Cistercian abbot Bernard of Clairvaux, and their Rule was confirmed by the Pope in 1129. Wearing a distinctive white cloak with a red cross, they were the elite of fighting forces in the Crusader States. Following the loss of the Crusader Kingdoms to the Muslims, however, the wealth of the order became envied by certain kings, especially King Philip IV of France, who was deeply in debt to them. In 1307, Templars across France were arrested, tortured into giving false confessions, and later burned at the stake. Pope Clement V disbanded the order in 1312.



SOURCE 16.34 Execution of Templar Knights, in Giovanni Boccaccio, *De casibus virorum illustrium*, early fifteenth century

Hospitaller Knights

Early in the eleventh century, merchants from Amalfi, Italy, founded a hospital in Jerusalem to care for the injured, sick and the poor. After the Christian conquest of Jerusalem in 1099 during the First Crusade, a group of Crusaders formed a religious order to support the hospital. The order was formally named and recognised on 15 February 1113, in a papal bull issued by Pope Paschal II. Raymond de Puy, who became Head of the Order in 1118, divided the order into three ranks: knights, men-at-arms and chaplains. Perhaps only second to the Knights Templar, they were the most formidable fighting force in the Holy Land.

They moved to Acre after the Fall of Jerusalem, then to Cyprus, then to Rhodes in 1309 (which fell to the Muslims in 1523), then Malta, from where they became the last outpost of Christian resistance to the expansion of Ottoman Turkish power in the Mediterranean Sea.



SOURCE 16.35 Perez d'Aleccio, *The siege of Malta* (detail)



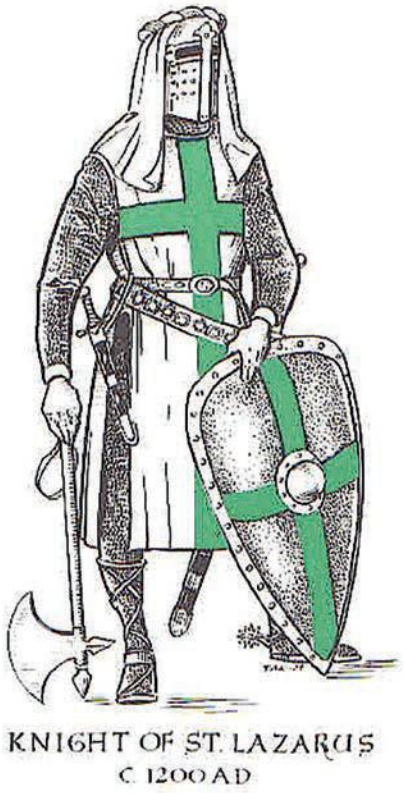
SOURCE 16.36 Malbork Castle, located in Malbork, Poland. By land area, it is the largest castle in the world and it has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Teutonic Knights

Formed at Acre in the year 1191 by German merchants from Bremen and Lübeck, this order was approved by Pope Clement III and operated around Acre, before its removal to Burzenland (south-eastern Transylvania) in 1211. Until 1225, it helped defend the south-eastern borders of the Kingdom of Hungary against the Cuman Turks.
The order later moved to Poland and launched the Baltic Crusades against Prussians and Lithuanians. They became an independent State, controlling newly conquered lands. However, after Christianisation of Lithuania, the order fought against Christian Poland. The order initiated numerous campaigns against its Christian neighbours and became a naval power in the Baltic Sea.

Order of St Lazarus

The Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem was a military order consisting of lepers who were monks and knights. Founded by Crusaders around 1119, it was recognised by King Fulk in 1142 and given papal recognition in 1255. Their biggest military actions were in the Battle of La Forbie in 1244 and the defence of Acre in 1291.



SOURCE 16.37 A knight of St Lazarus

Women

Scholarship on the contribution of women to the Crusades (both in crusading and life within the Crusader Kingdoms) has increased dramatically over the last few decades. Below is a list of famous individuals for you to research and discover.

Women on Crusade

- Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine
- Florine of Burgundy
- Margaret of Provence
- Ida of Austria
- Margaret of Beverly

Queens and princesses in the Crusader Kingdoms

- Queen Melisende of Jerusalem
- Queen Isabella I of Jerusalem
- Queen Sibylla of Jerusalem
- Alice and Constance of Antioch
- Hodierna of Tripoli



SOURCE 16.38 The tomb of Eleanor of Aquitaine, pictured reading her Bible

16.8 Summaries and topics for further investigation

The First Crusade

- Background: A defensive or offensive conflict – European Christian interactions with the Muslim world (Pilgrimages to Jerusalem/Spain/Sicily)
- Preaching of the Crusade and reactions/motivations (the poor, knights and nobles)
  - The relationship between the Crusaders and the Byzantines
- Explaining the slaughter in Europe (Jews, Eastern Europeans, Orthodox Christians)
  - Issues of leadership: Unity or disharmony
  - Victory: Crusader military strengths or Muslim weaknesses and divisions
  - Siege craft: Edessa/Antioch/Jerusalem
  - Battles: Dorylaeum/Outside the Gates of Antioch
  - Western superiority vs Eastern internal divisions

Post–First Crusades

- What next: Securing the Kingdoms. Who stayed? Who returned? Why?
- What was the quality of leadership of the Crusader States?
- What was the significance and effect of the creation of the crusading orders (Hospitallers/Templars)?
- Managing the peace: Christian–Muslim interactions and relations, Sunni–Shiite relations – were the infidels preferable to the heretics?
- The birth of jihad – Zengi and the Muslim fightback

Second Crusade

- Motive: The Fall of Edessa – how and why?
- The preaching of the Second Crusade: Bernard of Clairvaux – indulgences and anti-Semitism
- Why did it fail? Was it campaign planning and leadership or resourcing and battlefield weaknesses?

The Third Crusade

- Baldwin IV the leper king: The difficulties of keeping the kingdom together
- Muslim strengths or Christian weaknesses? – Saladin, Hattin, and the reasons for the Fall of Jerusalem
- The Kings Crusade: Why were national kings directly involved in crusading for the first time? To what extent were they able to put their differences behind them?
- How did the Crusaders manage to recapture Acre and Jaffe?
- Was Richard I's actions at the siege of Acre a war crime?
- Why did it ultimately fail in its mission to recapture Jerusalem – internal divisions or Muslim superiority?
- Overall, was the Third Crusade more of a failure than a success?

The Fourth Crusade

- Despite the Crusade being launched by Pope Innocent III, not many joined – why?
- How important were the issues of transport and finance?
- How and why did this Crusade degenerate from a religions mission to recapture Jerusalem from the Muslims, into a financial grab with the capture and looting of Christian Constantinople/Byzantium?
- How and why did the Orthodox Christian Byzantines come to be regarded as enemies, rather than allies, of the European Crusaders?

The Fifth and Seventh Crusades

- Why were these Crusades fought in Egypt?
- How and why did they both fail?
- What were the short- and long-terms results of these failures?

The Fifth and Sixth Crusades

- Why were these Crusades dominated by Germany/Hungary?
- The Fifth Crusade failed and the Sixth Crusade succeeded (sort of). Why?

The Seventh and Eighth Crusades

- These were the Crusades of King Louis IX of France. Why was he such a fanatical Crusader, and why, despite the size and prestige of his forces, did both Crusades fail?

The Ninth Crusade

- Led by England, its forces were meant to fight with the French in the Eighth Crusade, but arrived too late. Despite the flagging interest in the 'Crusading' spirit, the soldiers moved to the Holy Land and met with moderate successes against Baybars – the man who, in 1291, would bring an end to the Crusader presence in the Middle East by capturing its last place of occupancy – Acre. Why, at the death of the Crusading era, was this Crusade able to achieve success?

Other Crusades

- Against the Muslims: Spain (Reconquest: 1064–1492)/Shepherds' Crusade (1251 and 1320)/ Crusade of the Poor (1309)/Children's Crusade (1212)
- Against the Pagans: Baltic/Northern Crusades (Teutonic Knights: 1198–1290)
- Against the Heretics: Albigensian Crusade (Southern France: 1209–1229)

CONCLUDING STUDY

16.9 Changing interpretations of the medieval Crusades

Protestant a member of a church that denies the universal authority of the Pope; believes in the principles of justification by faith alone, the priesthood of all believers, and the Bible as the only source of revealed truth; broadly speaking, a Christian not of a Catholic or Eastern Orthodox church

Reformation the process of reforming the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century, but ended in the establishment of other Christian denominations

Enlightenment the European intellectual movement of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries emphasising reason and individualism rather than tradition

The Rationalists

The **Protestant Reformation**, followed by the eighteenth-century **Enlightenment**, held up the Crusades as an example of medieval barbarism due to anti-Catholic sentiments by the likes of Edward Gibbon and Voltaire.

SOURCE 16.39 Voltaire, entry for 'Fanaticism, Philosophical Dictionary'

> **What can be said in answer to a man who says he will rather obey God than men, and who consequently feels certain of meriting heaven by cutting your throat?**

SOURCE 16.40 E. Gibbons, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Fred DeFau & Co, 1907, p. 312

> **It was in cruelty alone that [the soldiers of the Albigensian Crusade] could equal the heroes of the Crusades, and the cruelty of [its] priests was far excelled by the founders of the Inquisition, an office more adapted to confirm than to refute the belief of an evil principle.**

SOURCE 16.41 D. Hume, *The History of England*, vol. 1, 1761, p. 209

> **The Crusades – the most single and most durable monument of human folly that has yet appeared in any age or nation.**

The Nationalists/Heroists

By the nineteenth century, however, the growth of nationalism led to a more positive look at the Crusades, both in art and literature, painting the period in a heroic light; an age of romance and grandeur, of chivalry and courage. The popularity of Arthurian romance and stories in Europe at this time also led to this reappraisal of the Crusades.

The Brutalists

In the second half of the twentieth century, Western historiography was more critical of the Crusades, following Steven Runciman in the 1950s.

SOURCE 16.42 K. Deyoung, 'Yeah, well, but what about the Crusades?', *The Gospel Coalition*, 9 February 2015

> **For Runciman, the Crusades were not romantic adventures but the last of the barbarian invasions, albeit ones that brought about the dominance of Western civilisation. His opinion was partly determined by his sympathy for the Byzantine Empire, often at odds with the Crusaders and an oasis of culture surrounded by unappreciative savages.**

Similarly, from a Byzantine and Eastern Orthodox Church perspective, the Crusades are viewed as shameful, in light of the disastrous attack on Constantinople in the Fourth Crusade. In the Islamic world, scholastic interest in the Crusades was mostly ignored prior to the growth of Arab nationalism in the twentieth century.

The Papists

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the Crusades were considered within the context of the increasing power of the papacy. While the spiritual authority of the papacy was supreme, it began to intrude on **temporal** matters. Military endeavours that were penitential in nature were encouraged and promoted.

temporal relating to worldly, as opposed to spiritual, affairs; secular authority

SOURCE 16.43 R. Kerridge, M. Fordham, D. Smith, *A/AS Level History for the AQA The Age of the Crusades, c1070–1204*, Cambridge University Press, 2015

> One of Urban's main motives was the desire to re-establish friendly relations with Byzantium and Alexios. Since the schism of 1054 relations had been difficult. However, relations between Alexios and Urban had improved, and Alexios felt able to write asking for help in his struggle against the Turks. It could be seen as an altruistic act by Urban to oblige and help a fellow Christian in trouble. However, it might have been expected that Urban's altruism would indirectly increase his influence over the Eastern church, expanding the power of the Latin Church eastwards, and he might also have hoped to increase Latin influence over the Christian churches of Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine. Among the five major sees the popes saw themselves as pre-eminent. In reality, the topic rarely surfaced at synods and if it did, it was fudged. For all these reasons, this was a very attractive project for Urban.

Muslim provocation

Current historiographical developments and issues have seen recent revision, particularly in the USA, which highlights Muslim aggression before the First Crusade, both immediately and long before. This point of view argues that the Crusades were, indeed, provoked, and were a defensive response to real Muslim threats.

Paul Crawford is Assistant Professor in the Department of History and Political Science at the California University of Pennsylvania:

SOURCE 16.44 Paul F. Crawford, 'Four myths about the Crusades', *The Intercollegiate Review*, 28 April 2011

> Far from being unprovoked, then, the crusades actually represent the first great western Christian counterattack against Muslim attacks which had taken place continually from the inception of Islam until the eleventh century, and which continued on thereafter, mostly unabated. Three of Christianity's five primary episcopal sees (Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria) had been captured in the seventh century; both of the others (Rome and Constantinople) had been attacked in the centuries before the crusades. The latter would be captured in 1453, leaving only one of the five (Rome) in Christian hands by 1500. Rome was again threatened in the sixteenth century. This is not the absence of provocation; rather, it is a deadly and persistent threat, and one which had to be answered by forceful defence if Christendom were to survive. The crusades were simply one tool in the defensive options exercised by Christians.

Thomas F. Madden, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of History at Saint Louis University in St Louis, Missouri, is one of the leading historians in the USA on the Crusades. Maddern, in a post 9/11 article (available here: https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/10793), asserts that 'the crusades were in every way a defensive war'. Two-thirds of the Christian world had been conquered by the Arabs across the seventh to the tenth centuries. Only in the eleventh century were Europeans able to solve their internal squabbles and turn their attention to the expanding Muslim world. Faced with fresh onslaughts against the Eastern Roman [Byzantine] empire, the Christian emperor in Constantinople, needed the muscle and raw aggression of European knights. 'He got it. More than he wanted, in fact'.

The Byzantines

Oxford University historian Peter Frankopan, Director of the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research, has led the way in redirecting attention to the Byzantine Empire, its role in the causes, course and consequences of the Crusades, and events further East. He reiterates that the true instigator of the First Crusade was the Emperor Alexios I Komnenos, who begged the Pope for military support. Using long-ignored eastern sources, Frankopan argues that while the Crusades consolidated papal power, the Byzantine Empire never recovered and, thus, its contribution to the Crusades has largely been ignored.

The Crusades in popular culture

In popular culture (at least, in Western popular culture) the dominant portrayal of the Crusades, and the Crusader, is that of a virtuous hero. From the bad Prince John (not a Crusader) to the good King Richard (the Lionheart, Crusader) across all Robin Hood stories, books and movies; video game Assassins Creed with good Crusaders and bad Muslims; films throughout the twentieth century; team names (for example, New Zealand Rugby Union – The Canterbury Crusaders), and so it goes on.

This idealised notion of a Crusader (and the accompanying concept of 'Crusade') is often used in rhetoric, especially in political speeches, to distinguish between right and wrong; good and bad; virtuousness and righteousness vs evil. It is a synonym for 'hope'.

SOURCE 16.45 Dwight D. Eisenhower, 'Order of the Day', 2 June 1944

> **Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force! You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you.**

SOURCE 16.46 President Ronald Reagan, speech to the British Parliament at Westminster Hall, 8 June 1982

> **Well, the task I've set forth will long outlive our own generation. But together, we too have come through the worst. Let us now begin a major effort to secure the best– a crusade for freedom that will engage the faith and fortitude of the next generation. For the sake of peace and justice, let us move toward a world in which all people are at last free to determine their own destiny.**

SOURCE 16.47 George W. Bush in John W. Dietrich. *The George W. Bush Foreign Policy Reader: Presidential Speeches and Commentary*, Routledge, 2005, p.41

> **This crusade, this war on terrorism is going to take a while.**

SOURCE 16.48 British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, speech at Labour Party Conference, *The Times*, 2 October 1962

> **The Labour Party is a moral crusade or it is nothing.**

Many would even consider the 'Crusader Spirit' to be one and the same with the 'ANZAC' spirit. Consider the juxtaposition of these two government-sponsored sources about the ANZAC spirit:

SOURCE 16.49 Colonel Arthur Burke OAM, 'The spirit of ANZAC', ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee

> **... the Spirit of ANZAC is not confined to the battlefield. It lives in the schools, on the sports fields, in fact all over these great countries of Australia and New Zealand. The sun invades our bodies and makes us 'mad'; mad for freedom – freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom to live and think as you will. ... The Spirit of ANZAC is not something we can see but a powerful driving sensation that can only be felt. It is a feeling that burns in the heart of every Australian and New Zealand countryman. A warm, tender, fiery, even melancholy ideal that nurtures intense patriotism in the innermost soul of everybody ... The Spirit of ANZAC is invincible. It is the flame that burns forevermore in the heart of every true Australian and New Zealander.**



SOURCE 16.50 Frederick Leist, *Crusader*, 1915

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- The Crusades were a series of 'Holy Wars' largely between Muslims and Christians, ordained by the Pope and other European Christian leaders during the medieval period.
- They were largely fought over the right to control the Holy Land of Jerusalem and the surrounding areas.
- Between 1096 and 1291, eight major Crusade expeditions were launched.
- Crusades were considered a special kind of armed pilgrimage.
- Other Crusades attacked other non-Christian groups throughout Europe, including Jewish peoples and pagans.
- Crusader States were established by Western European Crusaders in the Eastern Mediterranean, and were governed in a similar fashion to the European feudal system.
- Various military orders, including Templars, accumulated great power and wealth during the Crusades.
- In 1291, the final Crusader city, Acre, fell and the Crusader presence in the Middle East ended.



SOURCE 16.51 A brass rubbing of Roger de Trumpington in the parish church of Saints Mary and Michael in Trumpington, Cambridge, England. In 1270, he accompanied the future King Edward on the Seventh Crusade. He is the only known Crusader to be represented in a brass in England. Roger died in 1289.

CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND

What and when were the Crusades?

DEVISE

Were the Crusades an offensive or defensive conflict?

ANALYSE

Why did people go on Crusades: penance or opportunity?

EVALUATE

How reliable and useful are firsthand accounts of the Crusades?

SYNTHESISE

Why were some Crusades successful and others not?

COMMUNICATE

Explain concepts relating to the Crusades in a visual format.



SOURCE 16.52 Third Crusade: Richard the Lionheart witnesses the execution of Turkish prisoners at Saint-Jean-d'Acre. This image is from a fifteenth-century manuscript.

ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions

1. To what extent was the First Crusade just about religion?
2. To what extent was King Richard I of England – the 'Lionheart' – a hero or a war criminal?

Investigation tasks

1. Explain key political and social differences between Christendom (Christian Europe) and Outremer (the Crusader States).
2. Who was the greater Muslim leader: Saladin or Baybars? Why?

Chapter 18

THE PERSIAN WARS

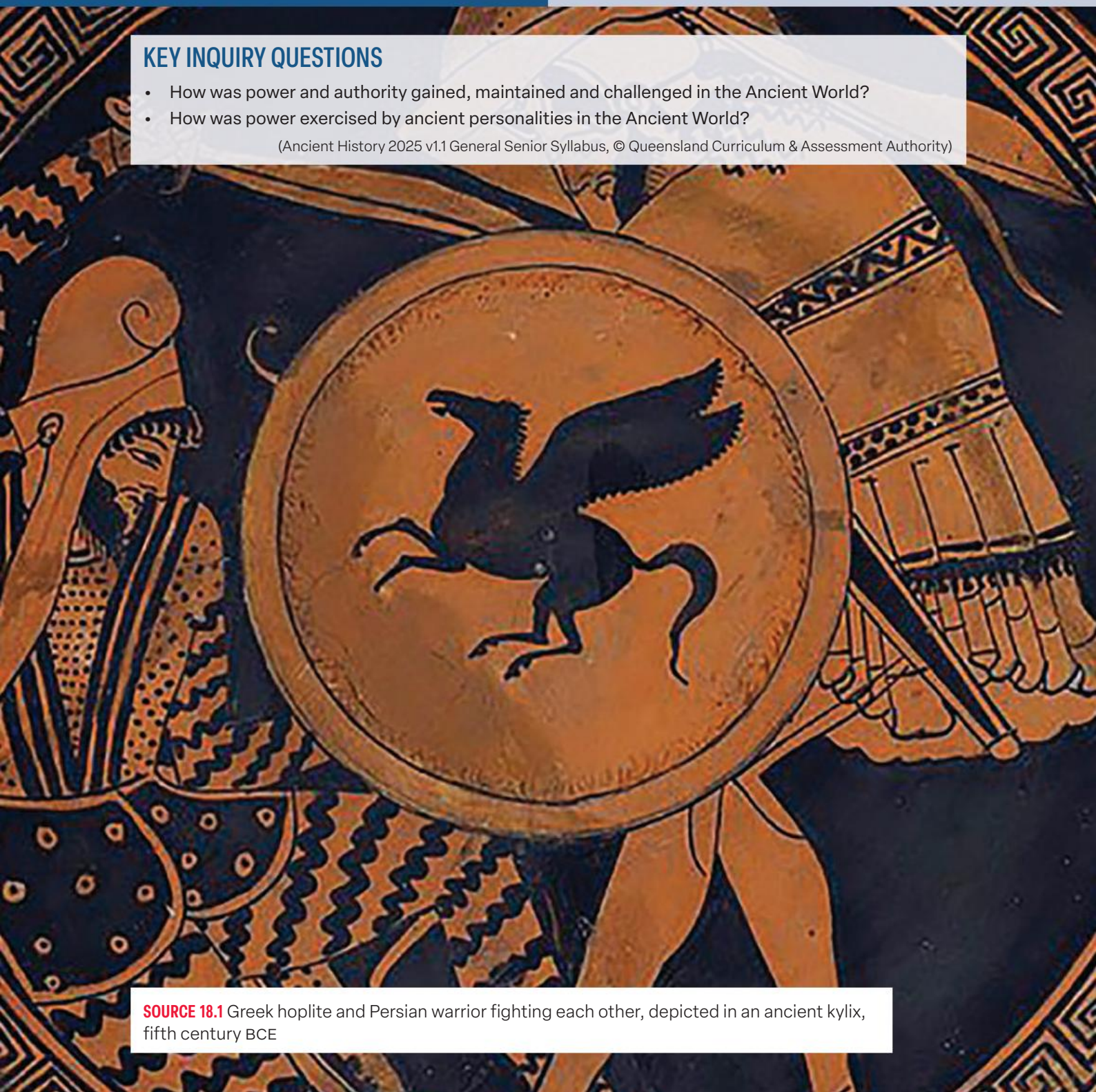
Syllabus reference:
Unit 4, Topic 1: Historical periods

ALAN BARRIE

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How was power and authority gained, maintained and challenged in the Ancient World?
- How was power exercised by ancient personalities in the Ancient World?

(Ancient History 2025 v1.1 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)



SOURCE 18.1 Greek hoplite and Persian warrior fighting each other, depicted in an ancient kylix, fifth century BCE

FOCUS: WHY STUDY THE PERSIAN WARS?

'Eastern' versus 'Western' civilisation. What does this comparison actually mean? How did it come to be? Is the juxtaposition often a racist act, justifying the superiority complex of Europe? Or is the categorisation valid?

The Persian Wars are often classified as 'East meets West' and are the first time in history that this categorisation is applied. For Herodotus, in whose works the Persian Wars are first recorded in the format of a 'History', the victory of the 'West' over the 'East' is ascribed to an essential difference in cultural character. How else could the Greeks win against such odds? The Greeks are presented as freedom loving, free thinking, disciplined, masculine, rational, scientific, inquiring, progressive, with confident masculinity that values rights, equality and personal individualism – in other words, characteristics of 'Western civilisation'. On the other hand, the Persians – 'Eastern' civilisation' – are characterised as often cruel, temperamental and emotional luxury-lovers, ruled with an iron fist by autocratic **despots** who, while all-powerful, are also fickle, close-minded and intolerant of criticism and anything 'new'. Persian society is seen as fixed and conservative, where everyone knows and accepts their place. The landscape is seen as wild, sensual, exotic and intoxicating. Pleasure triumphs over self-discipline.

despot a ruler who exercises power in a cruel or oppressive way

This stereotypical distinction has become embedded and normalised in contemporary thinking. For instance, European imperialism and colonialism were justified as the way in which the 'West' conquers the world because it is more self-disciplined, scientific and inventive. The battles of Marathon, Thermopylae, Salamis and Plataea would continue to be used by European writers centuries later to contrast a free and liberal West with an unfree and authoritarian East. This chapter investigates the historical reality of these claims.



SOURCE 18.2 Jacques-Louis David, *Leonidas at Thermopylae*, 1814

CONTEXTUAL STUDY

Introduction

Why did the 'East' versus 'West' division arise in the first place? Greece had been part of the Mediterranean economic highway throughout the **Bronze Age** and continued to be until the **Iron Age**. Carthage, a Phoenician colony in Tunisia that was Rome's major competitor in the third century BCE, was a republic. The Persian Empire was a multicultural, tolerant and accepting entity that not only accepted but encouraged the cultural independence of its subjects, with regions keeping their own languages, customs, laws and political systems – even allowing democracies in some Greek Ionian city-states under their control.

Bronze Age a historic period, lasting approximately from 3300 BCE to 1200 BCE, known for the proliferation of bronze, the chemical mixture of tin and copper

Iron Age period following the Stone and Bronze Ages, and immediately preceding Roman occupation; refers to the use of iron implements, and in developmental terms is the most advanced age prior to classical civilisation

Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, Professor of Ancient History at Cardiff University and specialist in Persian history, suggests a reason for the East–West division:

SOURCE 18.3 L. Llewellyn-Jones, extracts from interview, *The Eastern Report*, 3 March 2022

[B]y the time we get to the middle of the 19th century there is a sharp divide between an east and a west. The west is seen as freedom loving and democratic; the east is seen as despotic and under the control of tyrants and, therefore, slaves to the whims of individual rulers ... So too, this myth of western superiority grew with it in the 19th century. For instance, a Scottish writer in Britain, John Stuart Mill, a very famous historiographer and sociologist, wrote that as an event in British history, the battle of Marathon (490 BCE) was of more importance to Great Britain than the battle of Hastings (1066 CE) when the Normans invaded Britain. That's quite a remarkable thing to say – that actually, for the foundation of 'Britishness' you can go back to the battle of Marathon where the Greeks repelled the Persian barbarians. That's the depth in what we're dealing with, the idea of this East-West divide, and we're still in this mode.

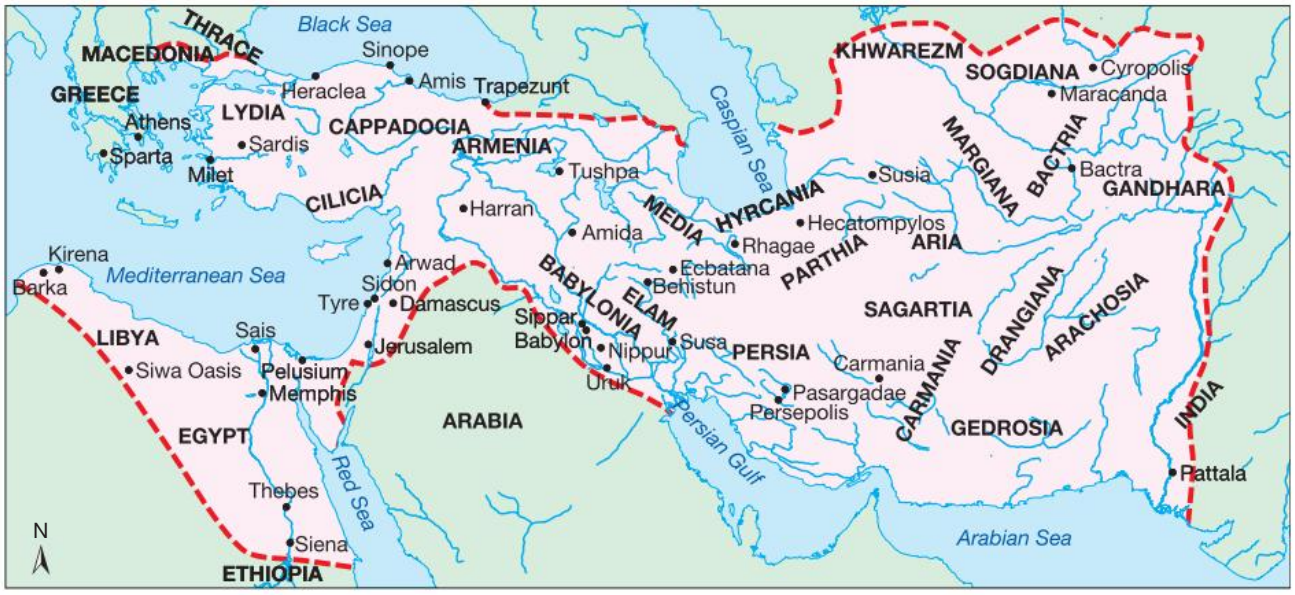
What is 'freedom'?

Athens was a democracy, Sparta was essentially an oligarchy, and many Greek city-states *(polis)* were run by tyrants. In other words, Ancient Greece cannot be defined as unified by one type of political system or government, whereas Persia was a multicultural empire united under a monarchy. In terms of the concept of 'freedom', Sparta was a totalitarian police state; in Athens women and slaves had little to no rights; whereas throughout Persia, its populations were subject to the king, but they were able to keep their own cultures and customs.

Therefore, when considering the concept of 'freedom' and 'independence', we need to consider what that means from an Athenian perspective, from a Spartan perspective and from a Persian perspective.

18.1 Geographical context and Persian imperialism

The borders of the Persian Empire ranged from the Caspian Sea in the north to the Indian Ocean in the south, and from Egypt in the west to the Indus River in the east. It covered over 6 million square kilometres and incorporated a wide range of peoples.



SOURCE 18.4 Map of the Persian Empire

It would be easy to conclude that Greece was the next area earmarked for conquest, given the growth of the Persian Empire. Consider also the table of some key events.

TABLE 18.1 A list of key events

612 BCE	Nineveh and Nimrud, capital cities of the Assyrian Empire, fall to the Babyonians and the Medes. The four regional powers in Eastern Mediterranean are now Egypt, Babylonia, Medes/Persians, Lydians.
586 BCE	King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon captures the Kingdom of Judah and destroys Jerusalem.
559 BCE	Cyrus of the Persians takes power from the Medes and becomes king.
c. 549–546 BCE	Cyrus attacks Lydia and conquers its king (Croesus) at Sardis. The Greeks there now become subjects of the Persians.
530 BCE	Death of Cyrus in battle against the Massagetai (a Scythian tribe).
525 BCE	Cambyses, Cyrus's son, conquers Egypt.
522–521 BCE	The death of Cambyses and the accession of Darius.
521–486 BCE	The reign of Darius in Persia.
513 BCE	Darius's 'Scythian Expedition' – a military expedition across the north of the Black Sea. Darius leaves his governor Megabazus to conquer Thrace.

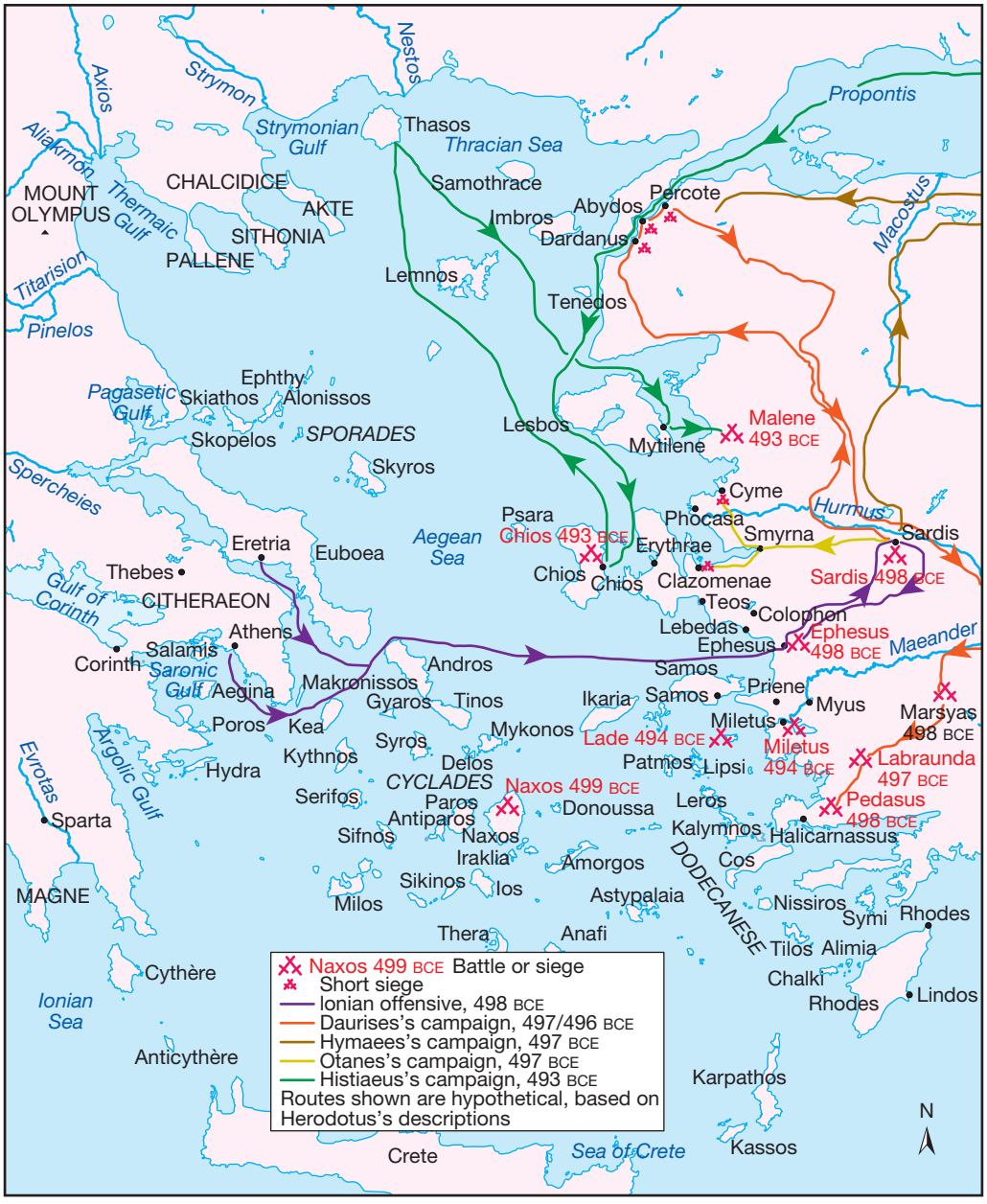
Bit by bit, Persia crept towards Greece. So, did Persia have an intention to conquer Greece? The evidence for this rests purely on what we see in the above timeline. There is no other evidence to indicate Persia intended to conquer Greece (and why would they? What did Greece have to offer?). Future expansion towards the north-west to the Crimea and beyond seems more plausible. If so, though, how does one explain the conquest of Thrace? All is made clearer, however, in 499 BCE.

The Ionian Revolt

Imagine the following scenario:

Country A has citizens of two different groups – those from Country A and those from Country B. In one of Country A's smaller coastal cities, one community is unhappy and asks their old homeland, Country B, for help. Country B sends two warships to that city and, after rescuing its people, fires and destroys the city, killing all the rest of Country A's citizens. Country A raises its forces, Country B recalls its ships, but leaves some of its friends behind. Surprisingly, they are treated well by Country A (they are Country A citizens, after all). Country B has thus invaded the sovereign territory of Country A. What should Country A do? Country B refuses to apologise. Is Country A entitled to some sort of revenge/retribution/compensation?

We can examine the history of the Ionian revolt with Persia representing Country A and 'Greece' as Country B.



SOURCE 18.5 Main events of the Ionian Revolt

The Greek cities of Ionia had come under the control of Persia when it conquered the Kingdom of Lydia in c. 540 BCE. The Persian **satrap** in Sardis appointed native Greek tyrants to rule in the Ionian cities. One such tyrant, Aristagoras of Miletus, decided in 499 BCE to launch an expedition against Naxos with the help of the Persian satrap, Artaphernes. He failed. Fearing punishment, he incited the whole of Ionia to rebel against the Persian King Darius. The asked for help from various mainland Greek cities, but only Athens and Eretria sent ships and soldiers. The Ionian Greeks attacked and razed the Persian regional capital city of Sardis in 498 BCE, but were defeated by Persian troops at the Battle of Ephesus. The Athenians and Eretreans went home; the Ionians went on the defensive; they defeated a force of Persians led by King Darius himself at the Battle of Pedasus in 497 BCE. Finally, in 494 BCE, the Persians took Miletus (Aristagoras's city) and the Ionian fleet was decisively defeated at the Battle of Lade. After mopping up activities throughout the region, a peace settlement – quite generous and forgiving towards the Greeks living within the Persian Empire – was made.

satrap a provincial governor in the Persian empire

Darius then vowed revenge against those mainland Greek states who had dared to interfere in his own domestic affairs. In 492 BCE his son-in-law, Mardonius, was tasked with taking a Persian fleet around the Aegean to retake Thrace and punish Athens and Eretria. Macedonia and Thasos were compelled to become Persian vassals, but the Persian fleet was destroyed in a storm near Mount Athos. The plan to sack Eretria and Athens was not abandoned – just postponed.

SOURCE 18.6 P. Bradley, *Ancient Rome: Using Evidence*, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 118

Herodotus sees the direct cause of the revolt in 499 of the Greeks of Asia Minor against Persian control as simply the ambitions and intrigues of the tyrant of Miletus, Aristagoras, and his father-in-law Histiaeus.

SOURCE 18.7 D. Hennessy, *Studies in Ancient Greece*, Bloomsbury Publishing, 1998, p. 85

One very popular theory was that the Ionians rebelled because of their hatred of tyranny. The philosophical and political sophistication of many Ionian writers and thinkers supports this view. However, the fact that once the revolt had begun most cities allowed their tyrants to go free raises doubts about the intensity of their hostility to tyranny.

SOURCE 18.8 Herodotus, *Histories*, 5.104

In the conflagration at Sardis a temple of Cybebe, a goddess worshipped in that part of the world, was destroyed, and the Persians later made this a pretext for their burning of Greek temples ...

After this battle the Athenians would have nothing more to do with the Ionian rebellion, and in spite of frequent appeals from Aristagoras refused to help him. But the Ionians, in view of the injury they had already done Darius, pressed on the war with no less vigour, even without Athenian aid.

SOURCE 18.9 P. Bradley, *Ancient Rome: Using Evidence*, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 117

Generally, however, the Ionians were treated with great tolerance by the Persians, and Artaphernes introduced several measures which encouraged peace. He bound the Ionians by oath to settle any future conflicts among themselves by arbitration rather than by raids, and he conducted surveys to determine a fair land tax. In the following year Darius, realising the Greeks' hatred of tyranny, sent Mardonius to the coast to set up democracies.

SOURCE 18.10 Herodotus, *Histories*, 5.105

... news was brought to Darius that Sardis had been taken and burnt by the Athenians and Ionians, and that the prime mover in the joint enterprise was Aristagoras of Miletus. The story goes that when Darius learnt of the disaster, he did not give a thought to the Ionians, knowing perfectly well that the punishment for their revolt would come; but he asked who the Athenians were, and then, on being told, called for his bow. He took it, set an arrow on the string, shot it up into the air and cried: 'Grant, O God, that I may punish the Athenians'. Then he commanded one of his servants to repeat to him the words, 'Master, remember the Athenians', three times, whenever he sat down to dinner.

SOURCE 18.11 P. Bradley, *Ancient Rome: Using Evidence*, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 122

Athenian democracy was in its infancy and political events still reflected the rivalries between prominent men and families.

- They were unashamedly ambitious to rule.
- They wanted to be the best and so envied any other individual or faction that dominated the state, and attempted to have them overthrown.
- They hated being ruled by other factions and objected to democracy putting their social 'inferiors' on the same level as themselves. In time they were forced to become reconciled to democracy, and if they could preserve their dignity by leading and persuading the people, then that was second only to totally dominating the state.
- They did not object to despotic rule as a system, and could be placated by marriage links or by being promoted to positions of honour in the state.
- If they were driven into exile they did not hesitate to side with a rival state (for example, Hippias with Persia) to obtain restoration to power.
- They did not regard siding with the enemy or opening the gates to an invader as acting against the people, because their 'own' people were their family, relatives and friends.



ACTIVITY **18.1**

Objective 4: Synthesis of evidence from historical sources

Consider Sources 18.6–18.11 to answer the question: The Ionian revolt was the spark that ignited conflict between Greece and Persia, but what was the predominant reason for the conflict?

In your response, consider the following:

- Persian westward expansion
- the nature of Greek tyrants ruling under the Persians (self-interest)
- Greeks fighting for 'freedom' and the Athenian/Eretrian intervention.

18.2 How do we know today about the Persian Wars?

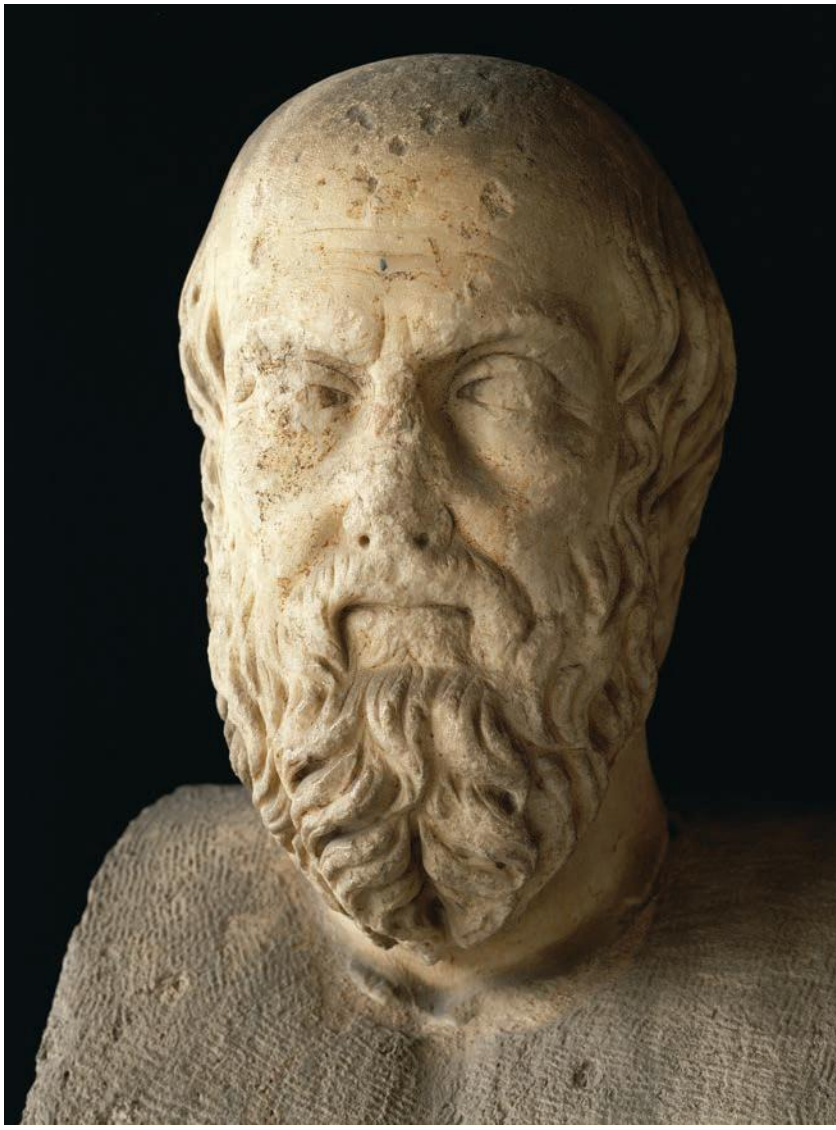
Below is a list of the major ancient sources on the Persian Wars.

- Aeschylus: *The Persians* (play)
- Cornelius Nepos: *Lives of the Eminent Commanders; Miltiades, Themistocles*
- Diodorus Siculus: *Bibliotheca historica*
- Herodotus: *Histories*
- Plutarch: *Parallel Lives; Themistocles, Aristides, Pericles, Cimon*
- Thucydides: *History of the Peloponnesian War*
- Xenophon: *Anabasis*, *Hellenica*

Herodotus

Herodotus (c. 484–429/425 BCE) is the main primary source on the Persian Wars. To critically evaluate what he says about the conflict, one needs to know more about him. Who was he? What was he like? Why did he write about this? Who was his audience? Who were his patrons? What are his strengths and weaknesses?

Herodotus of Halicarnassus travelled throughout Greece, Egypt and the Middle East to collect information for his *Histories*, which was written/completed around 444–443 BCE. Patronised by Perikles of Athens, his skills in oratory (public speaking) were put on display as he read aloud his work to an enthralled Athenian audience. As he was not permitted to become a citizen of Athens, he went to Thurii (now Taranto) in southern Italy, where he refined his *Histories* until his death at the age of 60. Greece descended into civil conflict with the Peloponnesian War between Sparta and Athens during this period. As such, Herodotus's *Histories* might be seen as an appeal for the return of unity, united against a common enemy. If so, then this appeal finally achieves fruition in the following century with the rise and conquests of King Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander 'the Great'. Often praised and described as the first historian or 'the father of history', Herodotus was later called 'the father of lies' by the Roman orator Cicero, and the historian Plutarch (46–119 CE) wrote an essay called *On the Malice of Herodotus,* criticising his prejudice and misrepresentations.



SOURCE 18.12 Bust of Herodotus

These selected extracts are from the *Histories*.

SOURCE 18.13 Herodotus, *Histories*, 1.1

This is the display of the inquiry of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, so that things done by man may not be forgotten in time, and that great and marvellous deeds, some displayed by the Hellenes, some by the barbarians, not lose their glory, including among others what was the cause of their waging war on each other.

SOURCE 18.14 Three extracts from Herodotus, *Histories,* Book VI.44

There is a story that the Priestess also revealed to him the systems of government which continues at Sparta today but the Lacedaemonians themselves say that Lycurgus brought it from Crete ...

The following are certain Persian customs which I can describe from personal knowledge.

... Persian fleet on its way to Greece – they were caught by a violent northerly gale ... a great many of them were driven ashore and wrecked on Athos – indeed reports say that something like three hundred were lost with over 20,000 men. The sea in the neighbourhood of Athos is full of monsters ... they were seized and devoured.

Herodotus travelled widely – across Greece, the Ionian coast, through former Persian held territory, and even Egypt. He collected much eye-witness testimony on the events he writes about. And yet, as he himself declared, most of his material about the war came from Athenian sources, so that his own opinion is weighted by not just those who he is writing about (mostly Athenians), but those he is writing to and for (Athenians), so that his own viewpoint, naturally, is that Athens saved Greece.

ACTIVITY **18.2**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

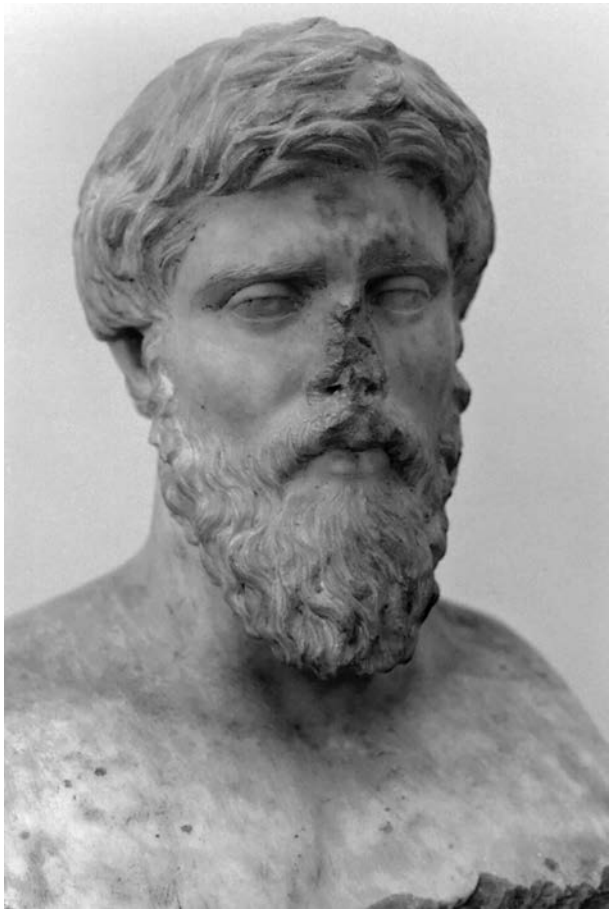
Consider Sources 18.13–18.14.

To what extent can Herodotus be considered as a reliable source for the Persian Wars?

To answer this question, apply a method for compartmentalising information (using different colours through highlighting, or annotation through symbols, or both). See the Historical Skills Toolkit available through the Interactive Textbook for more information on how to do this.

Thucydides

Thucydides (c. 460–400 BCE), an Athenian historian, political philosopher and general, wrote *History of the Peloponnesian War*. He has been called the father of 'scientific history' in that he ascribes historical cause and effect to rational, evidence-based political reasoning, and not to religious interventions (which does creep in to Herodotus's narrative of the Persian Wars). While the political speeches of people in his *History* are not word-for-word, he nonetheless interviewed people who were there and tried to be true to the intent, and consequence, of those speeches.



SOURCE 18.15 Bust believed to be of Plutarch, second century BCE

Plutarch

Plutarch (c. 46–120 CE) was a Greek biographer and philosopher, chiefly known for *Parallel Lives*, a collection of biographies of prominent Greeks and Romans, written for a Roman and Greek audience.

SOURCE 18.16 A. H. Clough, preface to *Plutarch's Lives. The Translation called Dryden's. Corrected from the Greek and Revised by A. H. Clough*, vol. 1, Little Brown, 1906.

> It cannot be denied that [Plutarch] is careless about numbers, and occasionally contradicts his own statements. A greater fault, perhaps, is his passion for anecdote; he cannot forbear from repeating stories, the improbability of which he is the first to recognise.

SOURCE 18.17 'Liberty, responsibility, and character in Plutarch's "Parallel Lives"', *The Online Library of Liberty*

> Plutarch writes biographies focused on individual character, not the details of history. Therefore, he explores his subjects' characters and their responses as free and responsible individuals to moral challenges, whether posed by small things or momentous events. Plutarch concentrates on crucial moments in their lives at which they face difficult decisions. When right and wrong are not obvious in these situations, Plutarch is not reluctant to judge his subjects, but in the end he expects his readers to shoulder the task of evaluating the wisdom of the choices his subjects make. Plutarch's goal in his biographies is to present readers with examples of conduct to imitate and to avoid in their own lives.

ACTIVITY **18.3**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Consider Sources 18.16 and 18.17. To what extent can Plutarch be considered a reliable source for the Persian Wars?

Aeschylus

Aeschylus (c. 525/524–456/455 BCE) was an Athenian playwright and is often referred to as 'the father of tragedy'. More importantly for us, he lived through the conflict and was an eyewitness to the battles of Marathon and Salamis. He wrote *The Persians* in 472 BCE, which tells the story of the Persian response to news of their military defeat under Xerxes at the Battle of Salamis in 480 BCE. He was a firm believer in the power of the gods, and attributes the result of the conflict to Xerxes's own 'hubris' (arrogance).

SOURCE 18.18 Aeschylus, *The Persians*, lines 284–289

MESSENGER: O Salamis, how hateful is thy name! And groans burst from me when I think of Athens.

CHORUS (chanting): How dreadful to her foes! Call to remembrance, How many Persian dames, wedded in vain, Hath Athens of their noble husbands widow'd?

SOURCE 18.19 Aeschylus, *The Persians*, lines 471–482

ATOSSA: Invidious Fortune, how thy baleful power

Hath sunk the hopes of Persia! Bitter fruit

My son hath tasted from his purposed vengeance

On Athens, famed for arms; the fatal field

Of Marathon, red with barbaric blood,

Sufficed not; that defeat he thought to avenge,

And pull'd this hideous ruin on his head.

But tell me, if thou canst, where didst thou leave,

The ships that happily escaped the wreck?

MESSENGER: The poor remains of Persia's scatter'd fleet,

Spread ev'ry sail for flight, as the wind drives,

In wild disorder.

SOURCE 18.20 Aeschylus, *The Persians,* lines 816–822

On the Plataean plain the Dorian lance shall pour blood, blood in unmeasured sacrifice, dead heaped on dead shall bear dumb witness to three generations hence that man is mortal, and must learn to curb his pride. For pride will blossom, soon its ripening kernel is infatuation, and its bitter harvest tears.

ACTIVITY **18.4**

Objective 4: Evaluate evidence from historical sources

Aeschylus fought at Salamis; his brother fought at Marathon (and later died from his injuries). He wrote this play, and the audience was his fellow Athenians. How reliable, then, do you think Aeschylus is as a historical source on the Persian Wars?

DEPTH STUDY

18.3 Key personalities, events and developments in the Persian Wars

490 BCE: First invasion

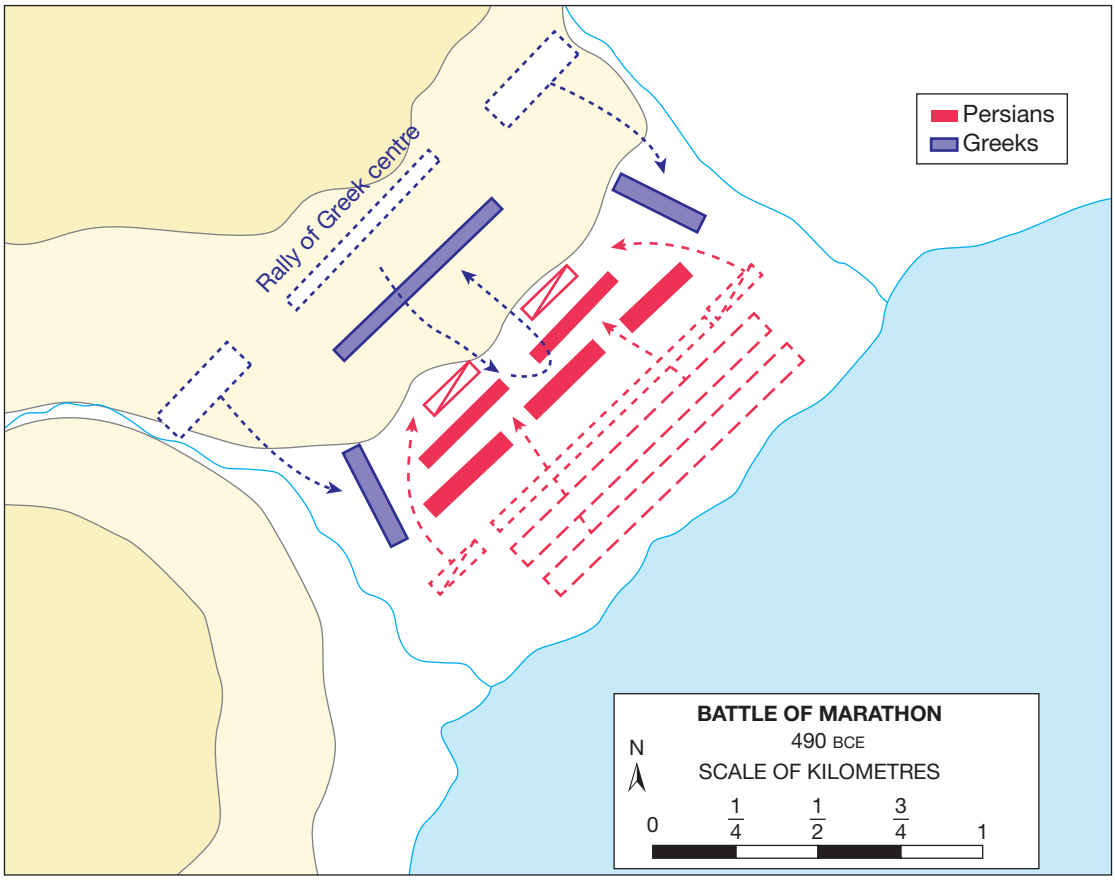
In 491 BCE, King Darius sent ambassadors across Greece to demand 'earth and water' as tokens of submission. Only two refused: Athens and Sparta. The ambassadors, (supposedly sacrosanct, untouchable and protected under international protocols) were executed. Darius then ordered a further military campaign for the following year, under the command of Datis and Artaphernes (Darius's nephew). This invasion force was to island hop across the Aegean Sea, take the island of Naxos, annex the Cycladic Islands, capture and sack Eretria, and then do the same to Athens. Each of these objectives was achieved except the last. The Persian fleet landed near the plain of Marathon and disembarked its cavalry and infantry. Athens sought support from Sparta, but they could not assist the Athenians for another 10 days because of their observation of the Carneia – a religious festival. It is interesting that religious devotions seemed to be more important than a foreign invasion!



SOURCE 18.21 King Darius, from the Treasury Reliefs, originally at Persepolis, now in the National Archaeological Museum, Tehran

Battle of Marathon

Callimachus was in charge of the Athenian forces, but Miltiades led the way, persuading the war council to send its army out to meet the Persian force. Joined by a small force from Plataea, the army marched to Marathon and blocked the two exits from the plain. A stalemate ensued, lasting for five days. When the Athenians saw the Persian cavalry move back onto the ships, at Miltiades's urging they charged at a run, rather than the usual slow, methodical march of a **phalanx** with shields locked together. The Athenians had deliberately weakened their centre and strengthened their wings, in order to envelope the Persians. As their centre pushed forward, the wings collapsed and the main Persian force found themselves surrounded. The Persians fled to their ships – these were captured and the pursuing Greeks then slaughtered the invaders.



SOURCE 18.22 The enveloping of the Persian troops by the Greeks

Herodotus records that 6400 Persians were killed, compared to the Athenians' loss of 192 men and the Plataeans' loss of 11. Among the dead were the war ***archon*** Callimachus and the general Stesilaos. Plutarch wrote that Callimachus was pierced with so many spears that, even when he was dead, he continued to be in an upright posture. Although Herodotus says that the two Persian commanders escaped, Ctesias of Cnidus, a Greek physician to the future Persian King Artaxerxes II (late fifth century) states that Datis (who played a large role in the suppression of the Ionian revolt) was slain at Marathon and that the Athenians refused to hand over his body which, if true, would have outraged King Darius even further.

phalanx heavily armed infantry formation where soldiers stand shoulder to shoulder in ranks 16 men deep

archon chief magistrate in a *polis*

tyrant a single ruler who is cruel and oppressive

Role of Miltiades

Miltiades had been the **tyrant** of the Greek colonies on the Thracian Chersonese, and had even married the daughter of the king of Thrace.

As such, this made him subject to Persian authority. Nonetheless, he joined the Ionian Revolt of 499 BCE. Thus, nearly 10 years later, he was able to use his understanding of Persian tactics to influence the Athenians' decision to fight, and the battle strategy/tactics used at Marathon.

Aftermath

As fast as Miltiades's rise in Athens was, so was his downfall. In 489 BCE he led an expedition against the Greek-inhabited islands that had supported the Persians. Paros was attacked, but held out. Miltiades suffered a severe leg wound and was unable to continue. He returned to Athens, was charged with treason, fined 50 **talents**, sent to prison, and died of gangrene from his wound.



SOURCE 18.23 Helmet given as an offering by Miltiades to the temple of Zeus at Olympia. The inscription on the helmet reads: 'Miltiades dedicates this helmet to Zeus'.

talent a unit of currency

ACTIVITY **18.5**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

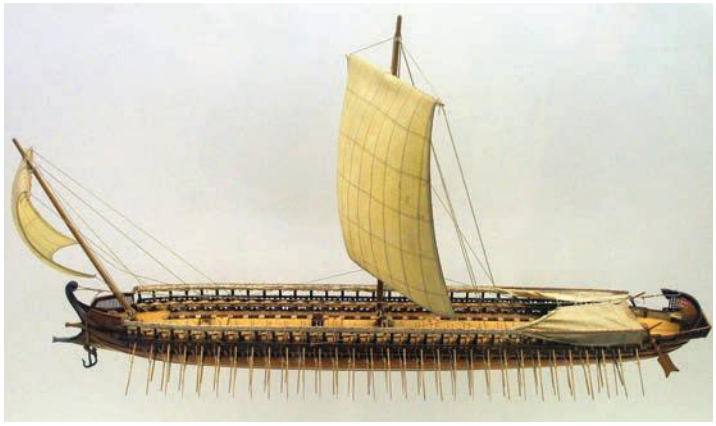
1. Fill out the table and assess who was better suited to win: the Greeks (G) or the Persians (P).

Theme	The Greeks (Hellenes)	Persians	G or P?
Resources			
Decision-making processes			
Leadership			
Allies			
Armed forces: navy			
Armed forces: army			
Campaign strategies			
Battle tactics			
Population			
Motivation			
Technological science and innovation			
Ground/location of conflict			
Righteousness in cause for war			
Unity			

2. Write a detailed historical paragraph answering the following question: How and why did the Athenians win the first Persian War? In your response, consider the results in your table.

3. Had the Persians won at Marathon, what do you think they would have done differently? If everything had gone successfully, what was the ultimate plan?

The interwar period: Preparation and developments in Persia and Greece



SOURCE 18.24 Depiction of a trireme

The Persians

Before Darius had time to organise another invasion, rebellion broke out in Egypt and Babylon. In 486 BCE, Darius died, leaving his son Xerxes to put down the rebellions. In 483 BCE, Xerxes was ready to avenge his father, and started to assemble a huge army and fleet. A channel was dug through Mount Athos (not wanting a repeat of what had happened in 494 BCE), roads were upgraded, provisions stacked through Thrace and Macedonia, and two boat bridges were built across the Hellespont. By 480 BCE, Xerxes was ready.

Envoys were once again sent into Greece. While many regions submitted, Thessaly, Phocis, Doris, Euboea, Thespiae and Plataea did not. Athens and Sparta were not even asked to submit, as this invasion was aimed at them. An alliance with Carthage was made to deprive Greece of support from the powerful Greek fleets of Syracuse and Agrigentum in Sicily.

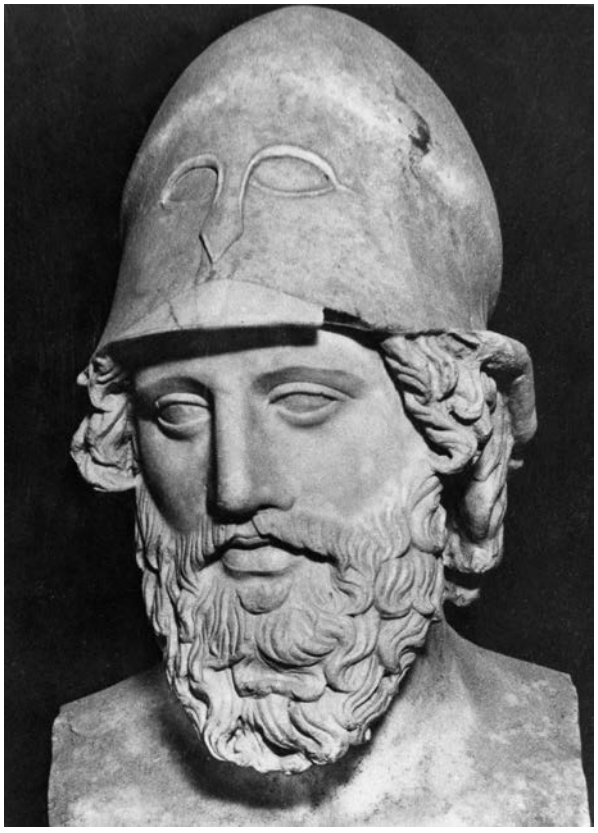
demos the common people

trireme Greek warship, powered by sail and oars with a battering prow to smash other ships

***polis* (pl. *poleis*)** politically independent Greek city-state, which consisted of the city and its defensible acropolis and the surrounding land, usually farming land

The Greeks

The Greeks did nothing at first. In Athens, Themistocles, a citizen-soldier who had fought on the plain of Marathon, had grown in political influence with the Athenian ***demos***. Silver was found in the Athenian mines at Mount Laurium in 483 BCE, and Themistocles proposed that the silver should be used to build a new fleet of **triremes**. Despite some objections from rivals in the aristocratic party, Athenians knew what was coming. The motion passed, the fleet was built and made ready for the inevitable.



SOURCE 18.25 Bust of Themistocles

Finally, a Hellenic (Greek) League was formed at a meeting in 481 BCE. Just 31 ***poleis*** attended. The resistance was placed under Spartan leadership. King Leonidas was given control of the army; the navy was placed under the command of the Spartan Eurybiades. Greek representatives approached the great tyrant of Syracuse, Gelon, who replied that he could supply 28 000 men as well as 200 ships if he was appointed commander of either the Greek navy or army. This was met with a blunt refusal. As a result, Gelon refused to give any supplies or soldiers to the mainland Greeks, and even prepared gifts for Xerxes (in case he won).

Envoys were also sent to Corcyra, Argos and Crete for support, all of whom declined.

Internal disputes between Greeks were put aside; the war between Athens and Aegina ended; the League could muster 40 000 **hoplites** and 350 ships. Spies were sent to shadow and detail Xerxes's forces; a recall of ostracised citizens was made. Aristides, once an opponent of Themistocles, returned. Most, however, did not. Many Athenian exiles had since taken refuge in Persia, and accompanied King Xerxes in his expedition.

hoplite heavily armed foot soldier

Thrace and Macedon declared for Xerxes. After the Spartans decided to abandon the pass of Tempe as a place to resist, Thessaly joined Xerxes. A close eye was placed on Thebe, which was factionally divided. Some troops were sent to fight with Leonidas. After the battle of Thermopylae, Thebes became Xerxes's greatest Greek ally.

480–479 BCE: Second invasion

The road to Thermopylae

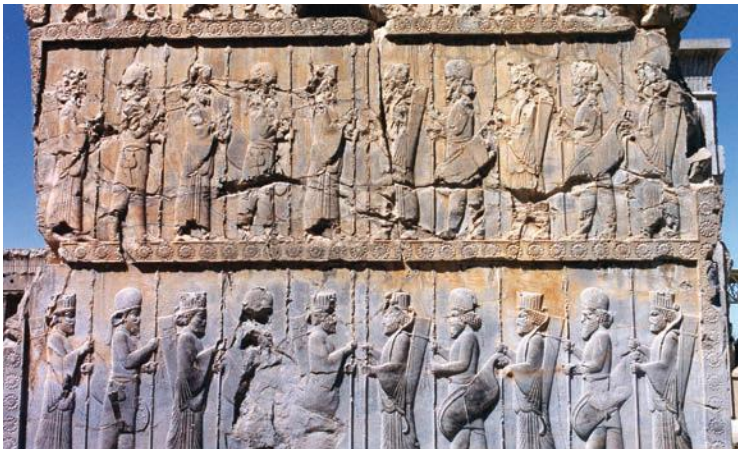
Xerxes's huge army was delayed at the Hellespont where a storm had washed away his bridge of boats. According to Herodotus, he ordered the sea to be whipped. A second bridge was then made for Xerxes and his army to cross unopposed into Thrace. Initially, the Greeks had intended to hold the pass of Tempe between Thessaly and Macedonia, but his plan was abandoned when it was realised that the position could easily be outflanked. The Greeks then retreated to the pass of Thermopylae with 6000 or 7000 hoplites, and 271 triremes stationed nearby at Artemisium in northern Euboea, commanded by the Spartan General Eurybiades. Here, it was hoped, that the numerical advantage of Xerxes's huge army would be reduced by the narrowness of the pass.



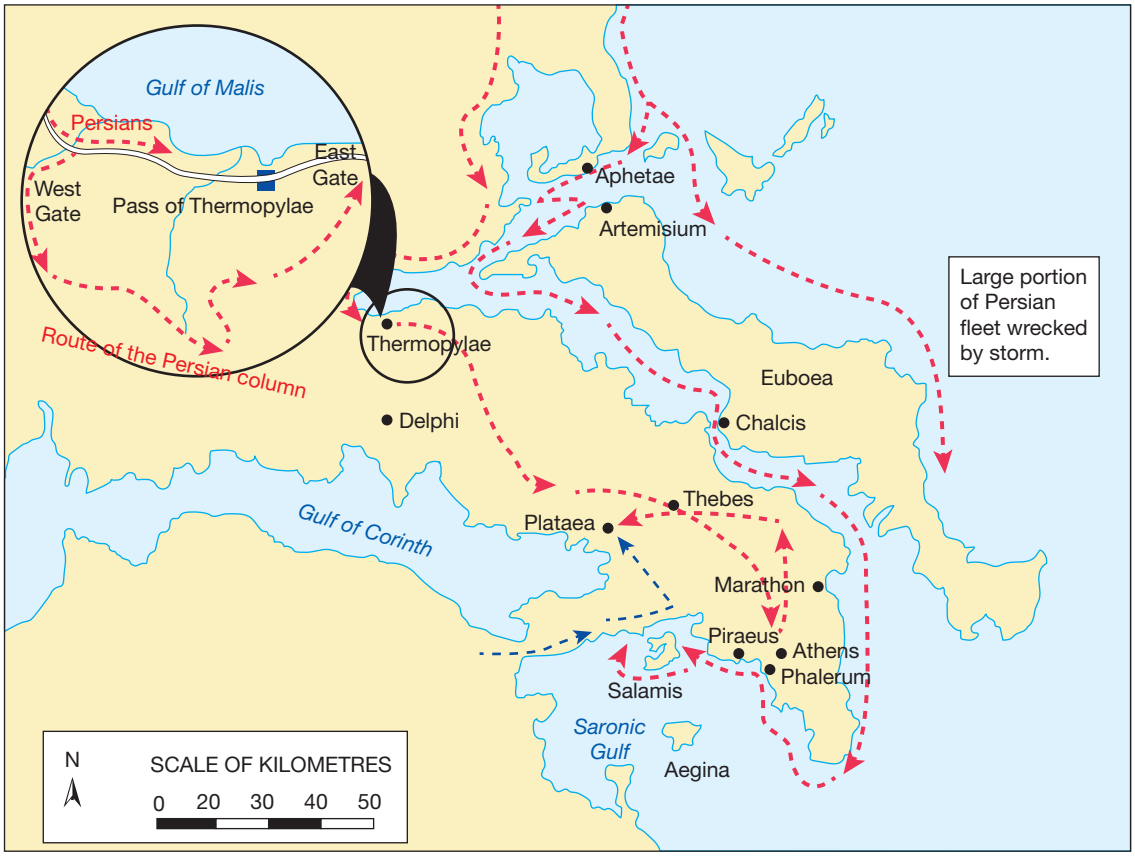
SOURCE 18.26 Map of Xerxes's route for the second Persian invasion

The Persian forces arrived in August 480 BCE. Seeing that he could not use his cavalry because of the narrowness of the pass, Xerxes ordered an initial force of Medes and Cissians to attack. Easily dispatched by the Greeks, Xerxes then sent in two more assault waves, including his 'Immortals' – his bodyguard – an elite heavy infantry unit of 10 000 soldiers.

According to Herodotus, a local called Ephialtes betrayed the Greek forces by showing the Persians a path through the mountains, which bypassed the Greek position. When news of this reached Leonidas, he ordered the majority of the Greek force to withdraw. His 300 Spartiates, 900 helots and 700 Thespians fought to the last man. Some 400 Thebans who were made to stay behind quickly surrendered to the Persians. Leonidas's corpse was supposedly beheaded and taken to Xerxes as a trophy. The Persian advance had been delayed, giving time for Athens to be evacuated.



SOURCE 18.27 Bas-relief in Persepolis depicting Persian and Median Immortals in ceremonial dress



SOURCE 18.28 The Battles of Thermopylae and Artemisium, and movements to Athens

Artemisium

The naval battle at Artemisium was fought simultaneously with Thermopylae. Just prior to this engagement, possibly one-third of the Persian fleet had been destroyed in a storm. Despite this, the Persian fleet was still numerically superior, but unable to take the advantage of this. The battle was a stalemate but, with news of Leonidas's defeat, the Greek navy withdrew to Athens, while the Persian fleet made repairs.

Destruction of Athens

Xerxes then marched his army, unopposed, to Athens. Finding the city deserted, except for a small force barricaded on the **Acropolis**, which was quickly stormed and massacred, the army sacked Athens. The Athenian population had been evacuated to the nearby island of Salamis, where the Greek navy had assembled. Meanwhile, the remaining Greek army retreated to the Isthmus of Corinth where Cleombrotus (Leonidas's brother) was building a defensive wall. The Athenians, with the rest of the Greek navy (which they successfully prevented from dispersing), quietly awaited the approaching Persian navy. There, in the narrow strait between Salamis and the mainland, the Greeks readied themselves.

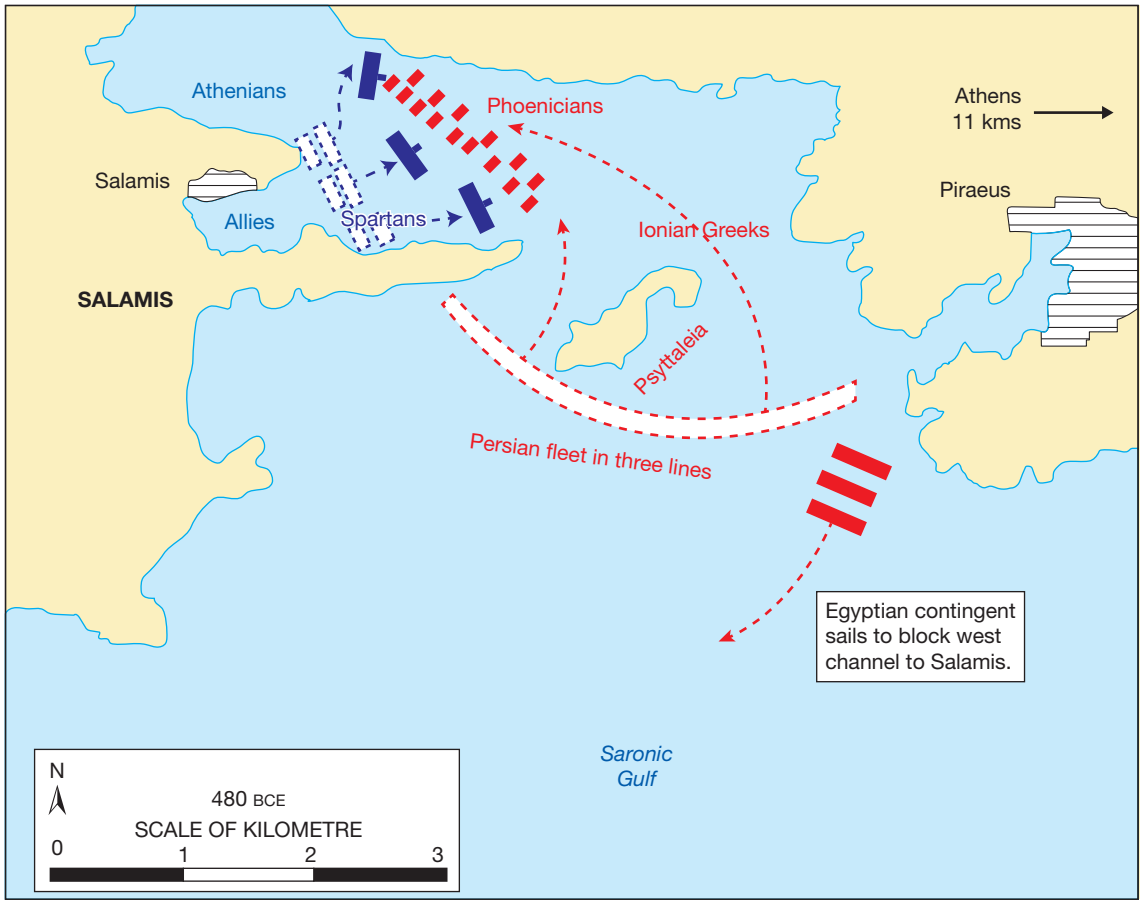
acropolis a Greek city's strong vantage point, citadel



SOURCE 18.29 Wilhelm von Kaulbach, *Battle of Salamis*, 1868

Salamis

Themistocles's plan was to lure the Persians into the narrowest part of the straits at Salamis, where the numbers of Persian ships would act against them through overcrowding, meaning the swifter Greek triremes would have more room to move. On the island of Psyttaleia at the eastern entrance of the straits, hoplites under Aristides were ordered to slaughter any Persian sailor who washed up on its shores. The result of the battle was emphatic – 200 ships of the Persian navy were destroyed. The Greeks lost 40.

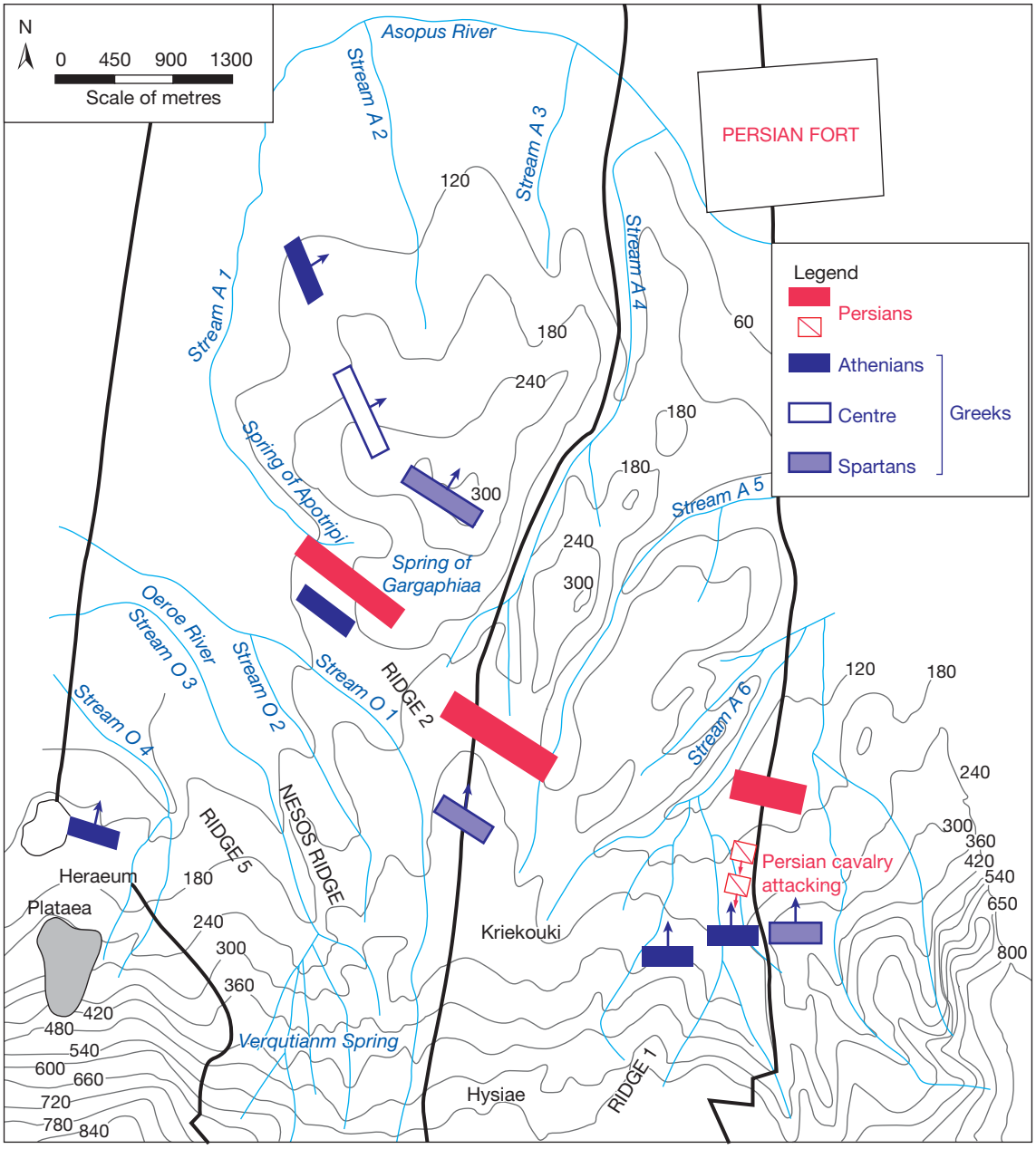


SOURCE 18.30 The Battle of Salamis

Xerxes, fearing that the Greek navy might sail to the Hellespont and smash his bridge of boats (which would leave him stranded in Asia minor), returned to Persia after withdrawing the fleet to the Hellespont and Ionia. Mardonius, his main army general, volunteered to remain in Greece and complete the conquest with an elite group of troops, while Xerxes retreated to Asia with the rest of the army. Mardonius spent the winter in Boeotia and Thessaly, and was hosted with generosity and warmth by the Thebans.

Plataea

The next year (479 BCE) Mardonius offered terms to the Athenians, who refused them. Athens was sacked for a second time. The Greek army stayed behind its wall on the Isthmus. Refusing to send help to Athens, Themistocles deliberately hinted that Athens might be willing to enter into negotiations with the Persians, with or without Sparta! Because they needed the Athenian fleet to protect them at the Isthmus, 30 000 Peloponnesian hoplites, led by the Spartan King Pausanius, joined 8000 Athenians and their allies to fight against Mardonius's army, which consisted of about 100 000. Mardonius planned well, choosing an advantageous ground where he could utilise his cavalry. This was the plain of Plataea in Boetia. Because of this, the Greeks stayed on nearby high ground. The popular and highly skilled commander of the Persian cavalry, Masistius, was killed early in the battle when they unsuccessfully attacked the Greeks. Despite some minor interactions, things settled into a stalemate.



SOURCE 18.31 Positions of the Greek and Persian forces at Plataea

Finally, Pausanias ordered a night-time retreat back to the Greeks' original positions, but this broke up the Greek line, with the Athenians, Spartans and Tegeans all isolated on separate hills, while other contingents were scattered further away near Plataea. Mardonius, taking advantage of the situation, moved his whole army forward. In a closely contested battle, the Spartans broke through Mardonius's bodyguard and killed him, after which the rest of the Persian forces fled back to their camp, but then became trapped and were slaughtered. The Athenians, on the other flank, were locked in a tough battle against the Thebans. Seeing the Persians retreat, the Thebans dispersed and made their way back to their city.

Mycale and Sestos

Now on the offensive, the Greek fleet, under the command of the Spartan King Leotychidas, attacked and destroyed the Persian defences at Mycale, on the coast of Persian-controlled Ionia and opposite the island of Samos. The region once again erupted into revolt. With the addition and support of Ionian ships, the fleet sailed to the Hellespont to destroy the boat bridges, but Xerxes had ordered them to be dismantled earlier, after he and his army had crossed. The Spartans then sailed home with their Peloponnesian allies, but Athens remained and, together with Ionian ships, laid siege to Sestos, which surrendered in early 478 BCE.



ACTIVITY **18.6**

Objective 2: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues

Review your table from Activity 18.5 and assess who was better suited to win the second invasion of Greece: the Greeks (G) or the Persians (P).

Reasons for the Greek victory

In this source, Herodotus writes about Thermopylae:

SOURCE 18.32 Herodotus, *Histories*, 7.225

> The Greeks under Leonidas, knowing that they were going to their deaths, went out into the wider part of the pass much further than they had done before. Many of the invaders fell; behind them the company commanders plied their whips indiscriminately, driving the men on. Many fell into the sea and were drowned, and still more were trampled to death by their friends. The Greeks put forth all their strengths and fought with fury and desperation. By this time most of their spears were broken, and they were killing Persians with their swords. In the course of that fight Leonidas fell, having fought most gallantly, and many distinguished Spartans with him. The rest 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 over the ruins of the wall and closing in from behind, finally overwhelmed them with missile weapons.

In this source, Herodotus writes about Salamis:

SOURCE 18.33 Herodotus, *Histories*, 8.39

> Amongst the killed in this struggle was Ariabignes, the son of Darius and Xerxes' brother and many other well-known men from Persia, Media and the confederate nations. Most of the enemy, being unable to swim, were drowned. ... Mardonius could see that Xerxes took the defeat at Salamis very hard, and guessed that he had determined to get out of Athens.

In this source, Herodotus writes about Plataea:

SOURCE 18.34 Herodotus, *Histories*, 9.16

While the Persian troops were working on the palisade, a Theban named Attaginus, the son of Phrynon, invited Mardonius and fifty other distinguished Persians to a banquet, for which he had made elaborate preparations. At table, the two nationalities, Greek and Persian, were not kept separate, but on each couch there sat a Persian and a Theban, side by side. ... On the right of the Persians were the Medes. And on their right were posted the contingents from Boeotia, Locris, Malis and Thessaly, together with the Phocians, 1,000 strong. Mardonius also posted on his right wing, facing the troops from Athens, the Macedonians and certain contingents from Thessaly ... Most of the Greek troops on the king's side made little or no attempt to distinguish themselves. This, however, was not true of the Boeotians, who had a long struggle with the Athenians; for the Thebans who had gone over to the enemy, far from deliberately shirking duty, fought so hard that three hundred of their best and bravest men were killed.

SOURCE 18.35 R. Winkler, 'The long walk from 'civilised' and 'barbaric' to a new world view', *The Conversation*, 28 July 207

The 'civilised man' versus the 'barbarian'

On the one hand, there is something to be said about the idea of mankind as a group defined, beyond gender, race, or class, by a characteristic shared by all humans. On the other, I am not convinced that reason or speech is a characteristic free of prejudice.

The Greco-Roman idea of humanity is unthinkable without its opposite. Since to be human is to be civilised, those who behave inhumanly are the uncivilised or barbarians.

Who is the barbarian? He is the stranger or foreigner, the one who speaks in a strange tongue. More precisely, he is someone whose speech is unintelligible or who makes incomprehensible sounds like an animal.

The barbarian is someone who is thought to be more of an animal than a human being, yet without being either the one or the other. He is something in between a human and an animal. He is bestial or beastlike.

The word 'barbarian' was used to refer to the native or savage, the wild (untamed) man, the cruel man who lacks grace.

The Greeks used this opposition between the human and the barbarian in the 5th century BC during the Greco-Persian wars.

In their ideological warfare against the Persians, the Greeks constructed an image of themselves as the only free people living in a democratic state. In their eyes, they were fighting 'slaves', which to them also meant a group of people subject to the rule of a monarch.

These are the final lines of the play by Aeschylus about the Battle of Salamis.

SOURCE 18.36 Aeschylus, *The Persians*, lines 1065–1076

CHORUS

Yes, once more at thy bidding shall the strain
Pour the deep sorrows of my soul;
The suff'rings of my bleeding untry plain,
And bid the Mysian measures roll.
Again the voice of wild despair
With thrilling shrieks shall pierce the air;
For high the god of war his flaming crest
Raised, with the fleet of Greece surrounded,
The haughty arms of Greece with conquest bless'd,
And Persia's withered force confounded,
Dash'd on the dreary beach her heroes slain.,
Or whelm'd them in the darken'd main.

SOURCE 18.37 Herodotus, *Histories*, 7.163

The envoys of the Hellenes, having thus had conference with Gelon, sailed away; and Gelon upon this, fearing on the one hand about the Hellenes, lest they should not be able to overcome the Barbarian, and on the other hand considering it monstrous and not to be endured that he should come to Peloponnesus and be under the command of the Lacedemonians, seeing that he was despot of Sicily, gave up the thought of this way and followed another: for so soon as he was informed that the Persian had crossed over the Hellespont, he sent Cadmos the son of Skythes, a man of Cos, with three fifty-oared galleys to Delphi, bearing large sums of money and friendly proposals, to wait there and see how the battle would fall out: and if the Barbarian should be victorious, he was to give him the money and also to offer him earth and water from those over whom Gelon had rule; but if the Hellenes should be victorious, he was bidden to bring it back.

ACTIVITY **18.7**

Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

Write a source-based essay to answer the following question: To what extent could it be argued that the Greeks did not win the Persian Wars, but that Persia threw victory away? Think about how you might structure your essay and paragraphs. Try to refer to Sources 18.32–18.37, and quote from at least five of them.

Greek city-states who fought against the Persians

The Serpent Column was built to commemorate the Greeks who fought and defeated the Persian Empire at the Battle of Plataea (479 BCE). Among those absent include the Greeks of southern Italy and Sicily, Argos, Crete, Croton, Pale, Seriphos, Mantinea, Locris, Thebes, and the Thessalians.

SOURCE 18.38 Text from the Serpent Column

These the war fought: Spartans, Athenians, Corinthians, Tegeates, Sicyonians, Aeginetans, Megarians, Epidaurians, Orchomenians, Phleiasians, Troizenians, Hermionians, Tirynthians, Plataeans, Thespiaians, Mycenaeans, Keians, Melians, Tenians, Naxians, Eretrians, Chalkidians, Styrians, Eleians, Potidaeans, Leukadians, Anaktorians, Kythnians, Siphnians, Ambracioys, Lepreates.

SOURCE 18.39 Herodotus, *Histories*, 7.145

These oracles had been given before to the Athenians: and when those Hellenes who had the better mind about Hellas came together to one place, and considered their affairs and interchanged assurances with one another, then deliberating together they thought it well first of all things to reconcile the enmities and bring to an end the wars which they had with one another. Now there were wars engaged between others also, and especially between the Athenians and the Eginetans. After this, being informed that Xerxes was with his army at Sardis, they determined to send spies to Asia to make observation of the power of the king; and moreover they resolved to send envoys to Argos to form an alliance against the Persian, and to send others to Sicily to Gelon the son of Deinomenes and also to Corcyra, to urge them to come to the assistance of Hellas, and others again to Crete; for they made it their aim that if possible the Hellenic race might unite in one, and that they might join all together and act towards the same end, since dangers were threatening all the Hellenes equally. Now the power of Gelon was said to be great, far greater than any other Hellenic power.

The response of Argos, as recorded by Herodotus:

SOURCE 18.40 Herodotus, *Histories*, 7.149

But as to the leadership they had themselves been commissioned to make reply, and did in fact say this, namely that they had two kings, while the Argives had one; and it was not possible to remove either of the two who were of Sparta from the leadership, but there was nothing to prevent the Argive king from having an equal vote with each of their two. Then, say the Argives, they could not endure the grasping selfishness of the Spartans, but chose to be ruled by the Barbarians rather than to yield at all to the Lacedemonians; and they gave notice to the envoys to depart out of the territory of the Argives before sunset, or, if not, they would be dealt with as enemies.

Gelon of Syracuse, who possesses the largest navy among the Greeks, replies to the Athenian/Spartan call for help:

SOURCE 18.41 Herodotus, *Histories*, 7.158

But I am prepared to come to your assistance, supplying two hundred triremes and twenty thousand hoplites, with two thousand horsemen, two thousand bowmen, two thousand slingers and two thousand light-armed men to run beside the horsemen; and moreover I will undertake to supply corn for the whole army of the Hellenes, until we have finished the war. These things I engage to supply on this condition, namely that I shall be commander and leader of the Hellenes against the Barbarian.

Crete responds to the call for help:

SOURCE 18.42 Herodotus, *Histories*, 7.169

These then evaded the request of the Hellenes thus: but the Cretans, when those of the Hellenes who had been appointed to deal with these endeavoured to obtain their help, did thus, that is to say, they joined together and sent men to inquire of the god at Delphi whether it would be better for them if they gave assistance to Hellas: and the Pythian prophetess answered: 'Ye fools, do ye think those woes too few, which Minos sent upon you in his wrath, because of the assistance that ye gave to Menelaos? seeing that, whereas they did not join with you in taking vengeance for his death in Camicos, ye nevertheless joined with them in taking vengeance for the woman who by a Barbarian was carried off from Sparta.' When the Cretans heard this answer reported, they abstained from the giving of assistance.

In this source, Herodotus writes about Plataea:

SOURCE 18.43 Herodotus, *Histories*, 9.28–30

In addition to the Greek troops who had first arrived in the neighbourhood of Plataea, other reinforcements had subsequently joined; and after the incident mentioned above the various contingents moved into line. The order was as follows: on the right wing were 10,000 Lacedaemonians, of whom the 5,000 from Sparta were extended by 35,000 light armed helots – seven to a man. Next to themselves the Spartans stationed the Tegeans – 1500 heavy infantry – as a tribute of respect to the worth. Next came the 5,000 Corinthians – who had obtained leave from Pausanias to have the 300 men from Potidaea in Pallene at their side. Then there were 600 from Orchomenus in Arcadia, 3,000 from Sicyon, and 800 from Epidaurus; after these, 1,000 from Troezen, 200 from Lepreum, 400 from Mycenae and Tiryns, 1,000 from Philius, and 300 from Hennion; next 600 from Eretria and Styra, 400 from Chalcis, 500 from Ambracia, 800 from Leucas and Anactorium, and 200 Paleans from Cephallenia; then 500 from Aegina, 3,000 from Megara, and 600 from Plataea. Last or first came the Athenians, 8,000 strong, on the left wing of the army, with Aristides, the son of Lysimachus, in command. All these troops, except the seven helots who attended each of the Spartans, were heavy-armed infantry. There were also light-armed auxiliaries: the 35,000 helots in attendance, as already mentioned, upon the Spartans, all of them fighting men, and 34,500 others, belonging to the other towns both in Lacedaemon and elsewhere – at the rate, that is, of one auxiliary to every men-at-arms. The total number of auxiliaries was thus 69,500 making the aggregate strength of the Greek army at Plataea 110,000 – all but 1,800, a deficiency which was made up by the Thespians, whose surviving men (1,800 precisely) had joined the Greek force. They were not, however, fully armed.

ACTIVITY **18.8**

Objective 4: Analyse evidence from historical sources
Objective 5: Synthesise evidence from historical sources

One of the attributes that has been given for Greek victory over Persia is that the Greeks were able to put aside their differences and unite against a common foe.

In what way do Sources 18.38–18.43 confirm or negate this idea?

Depth study: Summing up



SOURCE 18.44 Persepolis today

The Graeco-Persian conflict still continued after Plataea/Mycale. Table 18.2 shows a series of key events in their relationship.

TABLE 18.2 A list of key events

478 BCE	Delian League forms: a Greek alliance to continue the war against Persia.
476–475 BCE	Eion, an important Persian stronghold and supply base, is taken by the League under the command of the Athenian General Cimon.
456 BCE	An Egyptian rebellion takes place in the Nile River Delta at Prosopitis, which is joined by Greek forces. The Greek loss leads to the end of the Delian League.
449 BCE	Athens and Persia sign peace treaty.
431–404 BCE	The Peloponnesian War. A civil war between Athens and Sparta, with Persia playing them off against each other. Sparta finally defeats Athens in 404 BCE.
401–399 BCE	The Persian Expedition. Cyrus the Younger leads an expedition to Susa to beat his brother, Artaxerxes II. After Cyrus perishes in the Battle of Cunaxa, the Greeks are stranded deep in enemy territory. In an epic campaign, this small force battles for nearly 5000 kilometres to reach home.
336–326 BCE	Macedonian and Greek forces conquer Persia. The capital city, Persepolis, is supposedly burnt to the ground as revenge for the burning of Athens by King Xerxes in 480 BCE.

CONCLUDING STUDY

18.4 Interpretations and debates about the nature of power in the Persian Wars

For centuries, the Persian Wars have been seen as one of the most significant turning points in world history – a 'clash of civilisations', East vs West – whereby a Greek loss at Salamis would have meant the death of democracy and the strangulation of the infant classical (and future 'Western' civilisation). Historians and thinkers alike have heaped praise on these Greek triumphs and the gifts of their victories to Western civilisation.

This idea was supported by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), one of the most influential figures of German idealism and nineteenth-century philosophy.

SOURCE 18.45 G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, 1837

> **[The Greek-Persian Wars] live immortal not in the historical records of Nations only, but also of Science and of Art – of the Noble and the Moral generally. For these are World-Historical Victories; they were the salvation of culture and spiritual vigour and they rendered the Asiatic principle powerless.**

However, recent scholarship has breathed new life into the importance and significance of the conflict.

SOURCE 18.46 L Llewellyn-Jones, *Persians: The Age of the Great Kings,* Basic Books, 2022

> **The Persians were never out to destroy 'democracy' (whatever 'democracy' means in its ancient context). In fact, many Ionian Greek city states continued to practice 'democracy' under Persian rule – after all, the Persians recognized the Ionian Greeks' dislike of autocratic tyrants and they happily replaced them with democracies. Had the Achaemenids brought the mainland Greeks into their empire, they doubtless would have tolerated democracy there as well. They might even have encouraged it. A Persian victory over Sparta – the most oppressive freedom-denying slave state of antiquity – would have been a win for liberty. It would have put an end to Sparta's terrorist-like hold over the rest of Greece. The idea that the Persians inhibited and held back Europe's cultural development is absurd.**

Similar revisionism can be seen with Oliver Stoneman and Pierre Briant.

SOURCE 18.47 R. Stoneman, *Xerxes: A Persian Life*, Yale University Press, 2015, pp. 16–17

> The aim of this book is to recreate something of what it was to be the ruler of the largest empire the world had yet seen, in the fifth century BC – and also to investigate how the dominant picture of Xerxes, which the modern world has inherited, came into being. The conflict with 'plucky little Greece' has come to be a defining image of European civilisation against the oriental 'Other'.
>
> When President Reagan coined the phrase 'the evil empire' to describe the world beyond the Iron Curtain, it was an echo of that immemorial conflict of east and west, a conflict that defined itself even more sharply as America's enemy became again a power based in the same geographical location as the ancient Persian Empire ... It will be to the good of us all to get beyond this dichotomy, to slip behind the curtain and see what it was really like to live – and to be a king – in Persia. More Greeks lived under Persian rule at the beginning of the fifth century BC than in Greece itself. How did they accommodate themselves to imperial rule? Herodotus, Aeschylus and Ferdowsi are among the greatest writers in the world, but that does not mean the picture they paint of Persia is unvarnished truth.

Pierre Briant, a French Iranologist and Professor of History at the University of Chicago, addressed the glaringly obvious problem that the conflict has a one-sided slant, in terms of written source material.

SOURCE 18.48 P. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, trans. Peter Daniels, Eisenbrauns, 2002, pp. 5–8

> The Great Kings and the Persians ... left the control of their historical memory to others. Here is an extraordinary situation: one must reconstruct the narrative thread of Achaemenid history from the writings of their subjects and their enemies – hence the power and authority long ascribed to the Greek authors. It is readily understandable that most of them wrote books devoted to memorializing the Greeks; and in the Athens of the fifth and fourth centuries, this memorial was constructed to a great extent on the carefully laid foundation of remembrances of confrontations with the Persians and victories won over the 'barbarians of Asia.' ... It is necessary, then, at each step, to distinguish the kernel of Achaemenid facts from the Greek interpretation – not always an easy task. It comes as no surprise that, generally speaking, the Greek authors transmitted a very Hellenocentric vision of Persian history and customs, just as certain books of the Bible, namely Nehemiah, Ezra, Esther, and Judith, provide a uniformly Judeocentric approach. But historians cannot choose their sources: given the available evidence, we have no choice but overwhelming reliance on Greek historiography to reconstruct a narrative thread. However much one may rail, not to say become frustrated, at the nature of their works, the situation becomes even more awkward when one must do without them! ...

Consider these different perspectives when reviewing/consulting the following list of further reading.

Further reading

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Burn, A. R., 'Persia and the Greeks', in Ilya Gershevitch (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Volume 2: The Median and Achaemenid Periods, Cambridge University Press, 1985.

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CHAPTER SUMMARY

- The Persian Wars have been seen as one of the most significant turning points in world history.
- The Persian Empire covered a huge geographical area and incorporated a wide range of peoples.
- Based on its borders and the growth of the Empire, an easy conclusion would be that Greece would be the next area targeted for conquest.
- The Ionian Revolt was a key early conflict between Greece and the Persian Empire.
- Herodotus is the main primary source on the Persian Wars.
- Athens and Sparta denied the demands of Persian King Darius, which led to the Battle of Marathon in 491 BCE – a Persian defeat.
- The Peloponnesian War took place between 431 and 404 BCE. This was a civil war between Athens and Sparta, with Persia playing them off against each other. Sparta finally defeated Athens in 404 BCE.
- Recent scholarship into this period has breathed new life into the understanding of the significance of this conflict.



SOURCE 18.49 Relief found at Pergamon featuring Persian Achaemenid warriors

CHAPTER REVIEW

Consolidate

COMPREHEND
What were the main events in the Persian Wars? Who were the key people involved? Compare the differences between the Greeks and the Persians.

DEVISE
To understand the causation and consequences of the first and second invasion attempts, create and investigate three research questions relating to these aspects of the Persian Wars.

ANALYSE
To what extent were the results of the conflict more to do with Persian mistakes rather than Greek superiority?

EVALUATE
How do the various biases of the sources affect the level of accuracy that can be achieved in understanding the reasons and outcomes of the conflict?

SYNTHESISE
By integrating a variety of evidence from this chapter, provide a justification as to why this statement should be considered a correct or incorrect interpretation of the conflict: The Persian Wars were won by Athens, not Greece!

COMMUNICATE
To what extent can a study of this conflict inform our understanding of clashes between varied cultures and different ideologies today?



SOURCE 18.50 On this jar from 490–480 BCE, a Greek hoplite uses his spear against a Persian, who carries a bow and arrow. Two more Persians are fleeing, shooting a last arrow at the enemy.

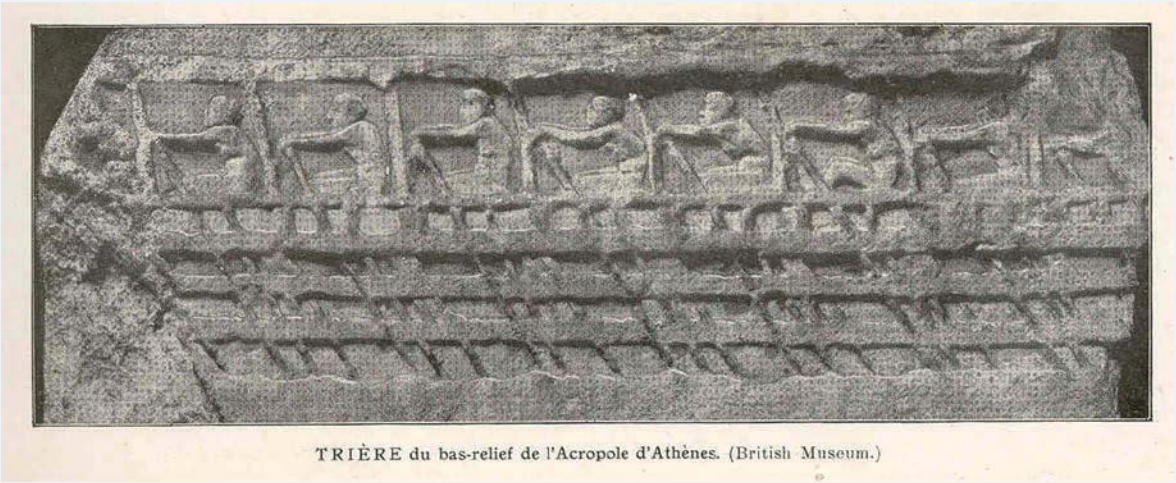
ASSESSMENT

Extended-response questions

1. Who was primarily to blame for causing the first Persian War?
2. Why did the Athenians win the first Persian War?
3. Without the role and leadership of Athens, is it possible or likely that the rest of Greece could have withstood either of the Persian invasions in 490 and 480 BCE?
4. Was the unity of the Greeks the most decisive factor in Greek victory over the Persians?
5. Without Themistocles, there would have been no Greek victory. Discuss.
6. Did the Greeks win primarily because of their superior technology in weapons and armour?
7. How, and to what extent, were the different political and power systems of Athens, Sparta and Persia either weakened or strengthened through the conflict?

Investigation tasks

1. To what extent is it correct to frame and understand an inquiry into 'the Persian Wars' as a 'clash' of civilisations?
2. To what extent could the conflict be seen as 'inevitable'?
3. To what extent can the result of the conflict be framed by the notion of Greek motive, volunteerism and unity, as opposed to Persian motive and reliance on a conscript army and navy?
4. How true is the statement that 'Persian autocracy could never prevail against Greek independence and spirit of "freedom"'?
5. Was Persian kingship and autocracy no match for the more complex Greek political structures of democracy and oligarchy?
6. Were Persian mistakes more important than perceived Greek 'strengths' in determining the outcome of the Persian Wars?
7. Justify the statement that the Greeks won the wars because of Athens – the first because of Miltiades, the second because of Themistocles.
8. The theme of Persian 'hubris' (arrogance) is a common feature from Greek authors when ascribing the key reasons for the outcomes of the conflict (such as Aeschylus's play *The Persians*. To what extent were they correct?
9. Sparta provided the leadership for resistance; Athens inspired the victories. To what extent is this statement true?



TRIÈRE du bas-relief de l'Acropole d'Athènes. (British Museum.)

SOURCE 18.51 This bas-relief is known as 'the Lenormant Relief' and is from the Acropolis in Athens, late fifth century BCE.

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