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# Senior Ancient History for Queensland

Alan Barrie, Michael Cocks, Sarah Coleman,  
Simon Corvan, Glenn Davies, Ben Hegerty, Jenna Haywood,  
Rowan Hofmeister, Diana Platt, Rashna Taraporewalla

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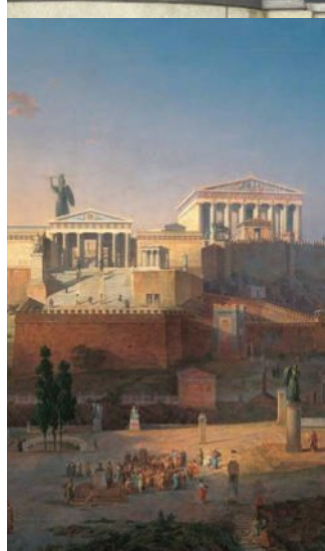
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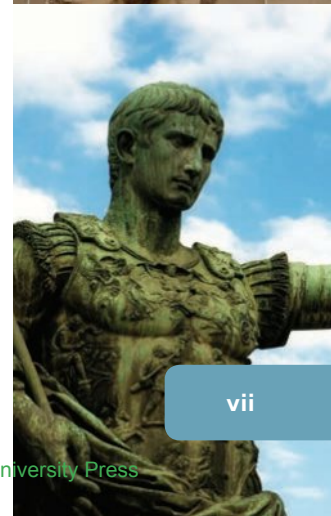
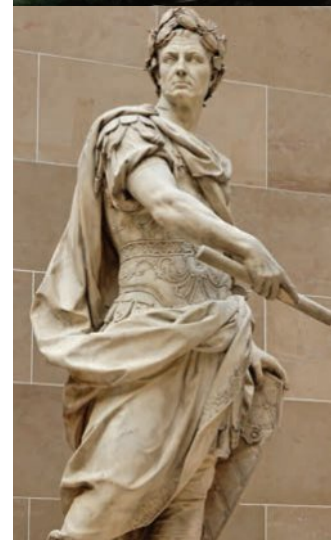
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### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES** (available for download from Cambridge GO)

- Historical Skills Toolkit
- Primary sources – general information summary
- Exemplar historiography exercise (Crusades)
- Greece – the Persian Wars (to be read in conjunction with Chapter 19)
- Greece – the Peloponnesian War (to be read in conjunction with Chapter 20)

For a list of links to all the websites referred to in this book, go to [www.cambridge.edu.au/snranctqld](http://www.cambridge.edu.au/snranctqld)





# About the authors



## Alan Barrie

Alan has been a teacher of history and ancient history at Brisbane Grammar School for 19 years. He has also worked with QCAA for 13 years as a Panel Member and as chief examiner of the Queensland External Ancient History Examination. Alan has presented at numerous conferences, was a member of the expert panel writing team for the new Queensland Ancient History Syllabus, and has developed further resources for QCAA with regard to the new syllabus.

## Michael Cocks

Michael began teaching in 2011 and is a senior history teacher at Toowoomba Grammar School in Queensland. Michael also runs the educational history website, [www.HistorySkills.com](http://www.HistorySkills.com). Furthermore, he is a fact-checker for *BBC History Magazine*, was a 2015 finalist in the QCT Teaching Excellence Awards and is a Microsoft Innovative Education Expert.



## Sarah Coleman

Sarah is currently employed at Trinity Anglican School in Cairns, where she is Head of Faculty – English. With 13 years of teaching experience in the independent and Catholic sectors in Queensland, Sarah is a passionate history educator, and has presented at both the QHTA and HTAA conferences.

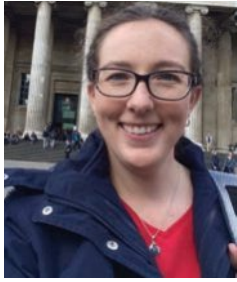
## Simon Corvan

Simon is currently employed at All Hallows' School as the Head of Teaching, Learning and Professional Practice where he is responsible for the continuous improvement of teaching and learning practices, and the further enhancement of the school's academic culture. Previously Simon was the Head of Social Sciences at All Hallows'.



## Glenn Davies

Glenn has been a secondary history teacher in Queensland schools since 1991. He has been a Head of Department since 1997, and is currently Head of Social Science at Craigslea State High School and lectures in history method at Australian Catholic University. He has been member of the State Executive, Queensland History Teachers' Association since 2003, presented at QHTA and HTAA National Conferences, participated in various QCAA committees and previously written five secondary history textbooks.



## Jenna Haywood

Jenna currently teaches English and History at Genesis Christian College in Brisbane. Along with holding positions such as Head of English (Senior) across her career, she specialises in ancient history and was part of the staff team who led a group of senior students on the college's first humanities European study tour to Italy, France and the United Kingdom.

## Ben Hegerty

Ben Hegerty is an ancient history teacher and the Leader of Learning – Humanities and Social Sciences at Stuartholme School in Brisbane. He has been the vice-president of the Queensland History Teachers' Association (QHTA), a Brisbane Central District panellist and acting panel chair for Ancient History and organiser of QHTA's ancient and modern history student seminars. Ben has also been a presenter at state and national education conferences and workshops.

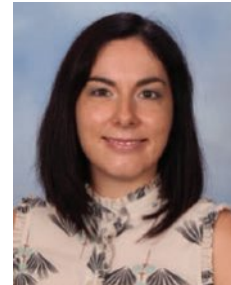


## Rowan Hofmeister

Rowan Hofmeister is currently employed with Education Queensland as an ancient history and social sciences teacher. Previously he was employed in the independent education sector for nine years teaching ancient history and serving in curriculum leadership. Since 2013, Rowan has served as a district review panellist for ancient history, involved in the moderation of student work.

## Diana Platt

Diana Platt is currently employed as an ancient history and study of religion teacher at Carmel College Thornlands, where she has taught for the last seven years. She has been a teacher of ancient history for over five years, in two different schools, and has been a district panel member for three years. She is excited to be involved in projects that create worthwhile resources for students and teachers.



## Rashna Taraporewalla

Rashna holds a master's degree in classical archaeology from the University of London and a doctorate in ancient history from the University of Queensland. She has lectured in ancient history within the School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics at the University of Queensland and has also lectured at Queensland University of Technology, teaching education students the content of the ancient history syllabus. Rashna is currently Head of Curriculum Development in Humanities (Years 7-8) at Brisbane Girls Grammar School.



# How to use this resource

## Unit openers

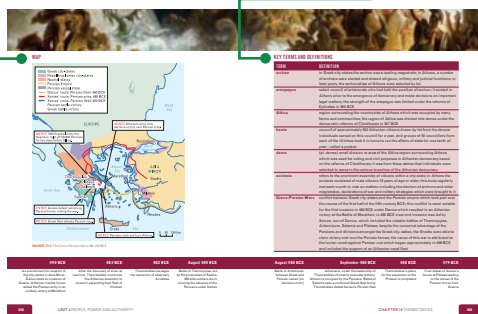
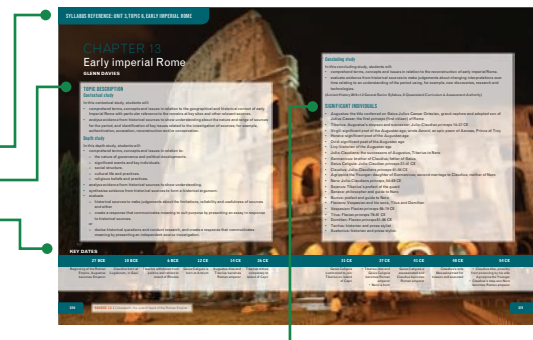
Each Unit of *Senior Ancient History for Queensland* begins with an opener that contains the unit description, unit objectives, key conceptual understandings and key inquiry questions from the Ancient History Senior Syllabus. It also shows a list of the chapters contained within the Unit.



## Chapter openers

Each chapter opens with several pages of relevant information, including:

- syllabus reference
- topic description from the syllabus
- list of key dates
- significant individuals in the topic
- map of the area relevant to the topic
- key terms and definitions



## Objective headings

Syllabus objectives are shown throughout the chapters, indicating how the content aligns to the outcomes.

## Sources

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



## Activities

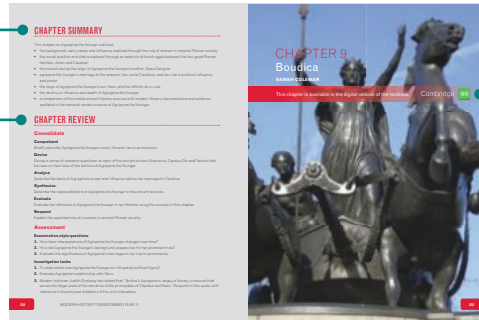
Activity questions help you engage with the sources, with questions that support you in developing skills across all the objectives.

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

## 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

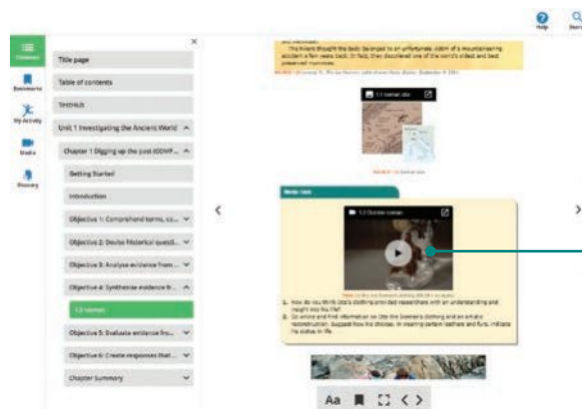
The book contains seven full digital-only chapters, available within the Interactive Textbook, or for offline use.

Other digital resources, available for download as PDFs from Cambridge GO, include a Historical Skills toolkit and materials to help you use sources in this book for study of some other topics in the syllabus.

## Interactive textbook

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

- **videos**, with related **media tasks**, to enrich the learning experience
- additional **sources** and **activities** to extend on material in the print version
- the ability to **zoom** in on maps, for a closer examination





# Foreword

I would like to thank Cambridge University Press for having the foresight to plan a textbook for the new Queensland Ancient History Syllabus through the collaboration and contributions of Queensland teachers themselves. Every contributor in this textbook has an underlying passion and love of ancient history and a professional desire to truly help both the teachers and students who read this work feel comfortable with understanding the new system; in providing relevant historical content knowledge and narrative; providing enriching source based analytical and evaluative exercises and experiences; and step by step guidance in explicit thinking skills and skills development.

Each chapter in this textbook is specifically structured around the syllabus objectives, and content is aligned with the skills requirements required for each objective. While many activities fulfill more than just one objective, nonetheless the appropriateness or ‘best fit’ for the activities has been considered about their placement within each chapter.

## **A blend of narrative and inquiry**

The chapters are constructed such that the investigation and inquiry into primary sources link consistently and specifically to the coherence of subject narrative. Narrative is the bedrock to understanding, framing, and organizing knowledge, using the discourse (story) to create meaning using chronology, causality, issues of change, and continuity. Narrative connects the reader to the story, creating historical empathy and giving to the reader, through contemporarization and relevance, an appreciation as to the importance of history in preparing students for the demands and challenges of the 21st century. Blending narrative to inquiry - the investigation and exploration of types of historical sources, differences in perspective, bias, audience, motives and patterns of evidence, to enhance historical thinking and use of appropriate terminology and language – helps construct meaning and understanding. Our textbook chapters are constructed in a way that the investigation and inquiry into primary sources link consistently and specifically to the coherence of subject narrative.

## **Additional resources**

In addition to the chapters in this print book, and the digital-only chapters, there are some important additional downloadable resources. One of these is the Historical Skills Toolkit.

- Generally, the explicit teaching of skills has sadly been lacking in previous textbooks, and there is demand by the teachers in Queensland to have this situation rectified. The Historical Skills Toolkit seeks to address this through step-by-step guidance in processes that lead a) to the attainment of specific aspects of skills and b) the utilization of those skills in measuring against (and helping students succeeding in) the syllabus Objectives. Through instruction and example, skills pedagogy becomes accessible to everyone.
- The Toolkit also contains a section on assessment advice, which seeks to give teachers and students direction and guidance into what all four assessment instruments, required under the new Syllabus to gain an ATAR, will look like.

### Selection of chapter topics

The textbook hopes to provide a range and balance of Ancient History topics, especially in the regions of Greece, Rome, Egypt, and the Middle Ages, and to avoid any overlap regarding topics. Many of the chapters on specific people to be used for the External Assessment are provided in digital format, to allow for potential updating when QCAA releases the topics for the External Exam in future years. Thus, the printed textbook uses several topics from Units 1 and 2 to help model the application of skills to objectives. Unit 3 topics have more historiographical elements suited to the Unit theme of Reconstructing the Ancient World, while the Unit 4 topics are enriched in detail to help develop further inquiry and investigation. There are also extra downloadable resources which support the study of some topics not explicitly covered by chapters.

All the chapters are designed in such a way that even if teachers wish to do a topic that is not covered in the textbook, they can still design a unit of work based on the example framework and skills focus of our textbook chapters.

Finally, it is our wish that this textbook is not only accessible and relevant to the students and teachers of Ancient History in Queensland, but can also be of value to and used by any teacher, and any student, in any educational institution that offers Ancient History, and that even the casual lay-reader might also find this publication of interest.

---

**Alan J Barrie**  
Lead writer

The authors and publisher would like to thank Kay Bishop for kindly reviewing the textbook and providing feedback, and Chris Price for assisting with the Assessment component of the *Historical Skills Toolkit*.



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# UNIT 1

## Investigating the Ancient World

### UNIT DESCRIPTION

In Unit 1, students investigate how the ancient past has been represented. Students explore the remaining sources and how they have been interpreted. Students focus on issues relevant to the investigation of the Ancient World in order to develop the skills of historiography. Students study issues related to evidence, including authentication, preservation, ownership and/or display of material from the Ancient World. Students also investigate how people lived in the Ancient World through an examination of the evidence of the social, political and economic institutions, and other significant features of society. (Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

### UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to archaeology and ancient societies.
2. Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to archaeology and the features of an ancient society.
3. Analyse evidence from historical sources to show an understanding about the Ancient World.
4. Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument in relation to archaeology and ancient societies.
5. Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the Ancient World.
6. Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to the Ancient World.

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## KEY CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- reliability and usefulness of sources
- custodianship of the past
- interpretations, representations and perspectives
- the nature of evidence
- continuity and change
- cause and effect
- significance
- empathy
- contestability.

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## KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What can archaeological evidence tell us about the lives of ancient peoples?
- How do ancient societies reflect the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of ancient peoples?

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## CHAPTERS IN THIS UNIT

CHAPTER	
<b>Chapter 1</b>	Digging up the past (COMPULSORY)
<b>Chapter 2</b>	Slavery in Roman society 753–133 BCE
<b>Chapter 3</b>	Weapons and warfare of the Vikings 700–1100 CE
<b>Chapter 4</b>	The family in Spartan society c. 700–371 BCE
<b>Chapter 5</b>	Beliefs, rituals and funerary practices in Egypt during the Ramesside period (19th and 20th Dynasties)



## CHAPTER 1

## Digging up the past (COMPULSORY)

DIANA PLATT

## TOPIC DESCRIPTION

## Contextual study

In this study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - differences between primary and secondary sources as well as literary and non-literary sources.
  - ways in which archaeological sites have been discovered.
  - various methods of excavation, including grid excavation.
  - roles and responsibilities of members of an archaeological team.
  - ways in which evidence from the Ancient World has been lost and rediscovered.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about:
  - problems of authenticity; for example, the identification and origin of ancient artefacts, human remains and documents.
  - the reliability of ancient writers who did not witness the events they describe.
  - the condition of artefacts and the impact on their use as evidence.
  - methods and results of scientific analysis (forensic techniques) and modern preservation of remains.

## Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - methods of authentication; for example, 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.
  - the role of museums in acquiring, collecting and storing artefacts and cultural materials.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about archaeological issues.
- devise historical questions and conduct research.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.

## KEY DATES

1748 CE

Discovery of the ruins of Pompeii. The destruction of the ancient Roman city by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE left the city trapped in time

1784 CE

First scientific excavation undertaken by Thomas Jefferson

1799 CE

Discovery of the Rosetta Stone by French soldiers during the Napoleonic Wars in the port city of el-Rashid in Egypt

1819 CE

Three-age system developed by Danish scholar Christian J. Thomsen

1822 CE

Egyptologist Jean-François Champollion deciphers the Rosetta Stone

- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about archaeological sites and issues. Some examples include:
  - ancient sources that have been deemed to be fakes or forgeries over time and the difficulties of authentication associated with these sources, the motivations of the perpetrators of fakes and forgeries, and the significance of the evidence they were intended to provide about the ancient past.
  - the nature and significance of cultural property for the society to which it belongs, and arguments for and against the return of cultural property to descendants or peoples who claim ownership.
  - the condition of human remains and how they were preserved, discovered and/or removed from where they were found; issues of conservation and preservation of the site(s), for example, factors that threaten the integrity or survival of the ancient site (environmental factors, war, terrorism, pillaging, poverty); the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods used to preserve, conserve and/or reconstruct the site(s); relevant national or international charters or conventions (such as UNESCO's charters) and international efforts to protect sites of world heritage significance.
  - the nature and impact on cultural heritage of looting, and the illegal trade of antiquities.
  - the significance of human remains for an understanding of the life and times in which they lived, such as the social status of individuals, the beliefs and practices of the society, the health of ancient populations, and the nature of the environment.
  - ethical issues relevant to the treatment, display and ownership of remains, such as the use of destructive methods of scientific analysis.
  - the reconstruction of ancient site(s), such as paintings, historical fiction, film, documentaries, museum displays and virtual worlds, and understanding their use for propaganda.
  - contributions of museums to an understanding of ancient ways of life, and the question of whose past is represented in museum displays and exhibitions.
- create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose.

### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

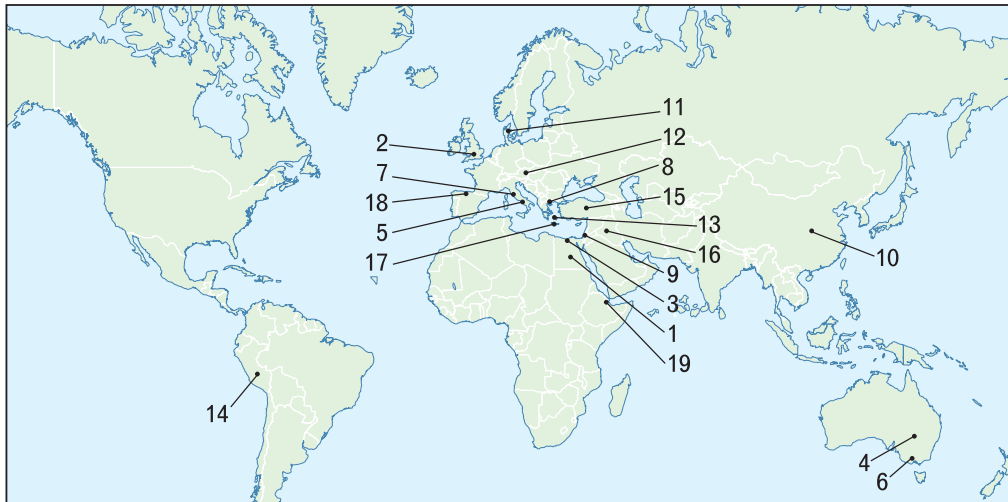
- comprehend terms, concepts and issues around the discovery, treatment and preservation of archaeological evidence.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about modern cultural depictions of archaeology and archaeologists; for example, in literature or films such as the Indiana Jones series and *The Mummy*.

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1827–1900 CE	1850s CE	1859 CE	1860–70 CE	1868 CE
General Pitt-Rivers develops organised excavations in southern England	Henry Rawlinson cracks Mesopotamian cuneiform script	Theory of evolution developed by Charles Darwin	Excavation at Pompeii by Giuseppe Fiorelli	The Paleolithic cave of Altamira was discovered by a hunter, in the modern town Santillana Del Mar of the Cantabria region in northern Spain



## MAP



Discovery	Location	
1	Tutankhamun's Tomb	The Valley of the Kings, Egypt
2	Grave of Richard III	Leicester, England
3	Rosetta Stone	El-Rashid, Egypt
4	Mungo Man and Mungo Woman	Lake Mungo, Australia
5	Pompeii	Near Naples, Italy
6	Lake Condah	Victoria, Australia
7	Herculaneum	Ercolano, Campania, Italy
8	Tomb II Vergina	Vergina, Imathia, Macedonia
9	Dead Sea Scrolls	Wadi Qumran, West Bank Israel
10	Terracotta Army	Xi'an, China
11	Tollund Man	Jutland peninsula, Denmark
12	Ötzi the Iceman	Ötztal Alps, Austria
13	Akrotiri, Thera	Santorini, Greece
14	Machu Picchu	Machu Picchu, Peru
15	Priam's Treasure	Hisarlik, Turkey
16	Royal Tombs of Ur	Desert, Iraq
17	Palace Of Knossos	Heraklion, Greece
18	Cave of Altamira	Santillana Del Mar, northern Spain
19	Lucy	Afar Triangle, Ethiopia

**SOURCE 1.2** Map of major archaeological discoveries

### 1873 CE

Heinrich Schliemann discovers Priam's Treasure of Troy in the Turkish town of Hisarlik

### 1878 CE

Rediscovery of the Palace of Knossos, Crete, by Minos Kalokairinos

### Nineteenth century CE

Stratification developed by geologists. 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



## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Heinrich Schliemann
- Howard Carter
- Sir Arthur Evans
- Louis Leakey
- Mary Leakey
- Sir Leonard Woolley
- Zahi Hawass
- Brian M. Fagan
- Tatiana Proskouriakoff
- Jean-Francois Champollion
- Henry Rawlinson
- Manolis Andronikos
- John Marshall
- Sarah Parcak
- Matthew Stirling
- General Augustus Henry Lane-Fox Pitt-Rivers
- Sir John Gardner Wilkinson
- Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie
- John Lubbock
- Dorothy Garrod
- Lewis Binford
- Sir Mortimer Wheeler
- Hiram Bingham
- Vere Gordon Childe
- Carlo Lerici.

## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>ancient sources</b>	any written or non-written materials created that can be used to investigate the past. Ancient sources include: written materials (such as extracts from historical narratives, literary works, biographies and letters), archaeological materials (such as archaeological sites, human remains, inscriptions – epigraphic sources, coins – numismatic sources, tombs, buildings, reliefs and artwork, statues, weapons, and tools and artefacts), and maps or diagrams. These sources are analysed by the historian to answer questions about the past. Sources created between 650–1500 CE may also be important to the study of some ancient societies
<b>archaeologist</b>	a person who studies the physical aspects of human history and prehistory across three categories: field, university or academic and museum. <i>Field archaeologists</i> often work in the field through excavating sites and recording the results <i>University or academic archaeologists</i> conduct their own research and often teach and train archaeology students <i>Museum archaeologists</i> work to preserve places and objects for the future

1892 CE	1900 CE	1911 CE	1922 CE
Sir William Flinders Petrie, considered the father of Egyptology, becomes the first Professor of Egyptology in England	The 35-year excavation of the Palace of Knossos by Arthur Evans begins	Discovery of the Incan citadel Machu Picchu by Hiram Bingham III in Peru	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb by Howard Carter</li> <li>• Sir Leonard Wooley excavates the Royal Tombs of Ur, an ancient Sumerian city</li> </ul>

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>archaeology</b>	the study of human history and prehistory through the excavation of sites and the analysis of physical remains
<b>artefact</b>	object made by a human, typically of cultural, social and historical importance
<b>authentication</b>	process of verifying the origins of an artefact or object and establishing it as genuine
<b>baulk</b>	the unexcavated ground between the trenches on an excavation site, often used as a section face
<b>botanist</b>	expert on plant life
<b>Bronze Age</b>	time period categorised by weapons and tools made from bronze, an alloy of copper and tin; followed by the Iron Age
<b>cartographer</b>	a person who creates maps
<b>conservation</b>	methods of preserving material, artefacts and sites
<b>context</b>	often includes the place of discovery or information regarding artefacts or authors, and assists in providing meaning about purpose to assist in interpretation
<b>cultural heritage</b>	protection of sites, places and artefacts that are of cultural significance
<b>culture</b>	the way a group of people lived their everyday lives
<b>datum point</b>	a fixed point at an excavation site used to make measurements when drawing a map, plan or stratigraphic diagram; often made permanent with the use of a brass marker or concrete
<b>dendrochronology</b>	dating method based on the cross section of trees using the tree rings, which are indicative of annual growth as well as environmental factors
<b>epigrapher</b>	expert on inscriptions
<b>ethnographer</b>	expert on peoples and cultures, focusing on customs, beliefs and political systems, kinship, material culture and mutual differences
<b>excavation</b>	the process of removing earth to discover what lies beneath

### 1930–1935 CE

Mortimer and Tessa Wheeler develop the grid excavation technique

### 1946 CE

Dead Sea Scrolls discovered by a shepherd in Wadi Qumran; the retrieval of the scrolls took 10 years

### 1949 CE

Willard F. Libby develops radiocarbon dating

### 1950 CE

The discovery of the remains of Tollund Man in the peat in the Jutland, a peninsula in Denmark

### 1952–58 CE

Kathleen Kenyon refines the method of excavation developed by Mortimer and Tessa Wheeler

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>evidence</b>	the information obtained from sources that is useful for a particular inquiry (for example the relative size of historical figures in an ancient painting may provide clues for an inquiry into the social structure of the society); evidence can be used to help construct a historical narrative, to support a hypothesis or to prove or disprove a conclusion
<b>frequency seriation</b>	the measurement of the frequency or abundance of design styles
<b>Gondwanaland</b>	a vast ancient continental area believed to have existed in the Southern Hemisphere and to have resulted from the break-up of Pangaea in Mesozoic times which comprised present-day Arabia, Africa, South America, Antarctica, Australia, New Zealand and the peninsula of India
<b>historiography</b>	the study of how history is constructed by exploring the way history has been written in the past (usefulness may include relevance, authenticity and accuracy depending on the source and the context in which it is used)
<b>Iron Age</b>	time period categorised by weapons and tools made from iron, although stone and bronze weapons were still used
<b>keyhole excavation</b>	excavation of small narrow trenches, carefully placed to check critical details of the site
<b>modern sources</b>	any written or non-written materials created after the end of the late Middle Ages (around 1500 CE) that can be used to investigate the ancient past. These sources are often accounts about the past, which use or refer to ancient sources and present a particular interpretation. Modern sources include written materials such as extracts from historical narratives, literary works, biographies, historiographical texts, reconstructions, documentaries, maps, diagrams and websites
<b>numismatist</b>	expert on coins and medals
<b>open area excavation</b>	an excavation method where the entire area is excavated, it has a horizontal layout which provides better understanding of the site

### 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

Discovery of Akrotiri, Thera, a Minoan Bronze Age settlement. Similar to Pompeii, the Thera eruption of 1627 BCE preserved the town

### 1969 CE

- Discovery of Mungo Man and Mungo Woman at Lake Mungo in New South Wales confirms the ancient origins of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia
- Discovery of settlement at Lake Condah in Victoria



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>palaeoanthropology</b>	the study of the members of the genus <i>Homo</i> (humans are <i>Homo sapiens</i> ), to investigate the origins and traits of the often extinct members over millions of years
<b>palynologist</b>	expert on pollen, grains and other spores
<b>Pleistocene</b>	a geological time that was important due to the human evolution of the hominid of which <i>Homo sapiens</i> are the only remaining species; it was characterised by extensive ice and glaciers in the Northern Hemisphere and was thought to be around 11 000 to 2 million years ago
<b>primary sources</b>	objects and documents created or written during the time being investigated (that is during an event or very soon after); examples of primary sources include official documents (such as laws and treaties), personal documents (such as diaries and letters), photographs, films and documentaries. These original, firsthand accounts are analysed by historians to answer questions about the past
<b>radiocarbon dating</b>	method used to determine the age of organic material by testing the residual level of carbon-14
<b>repatriation</b>	the return of objects or human remains to their original homeland
<b>secondary sources</b>	accounts about the past that were created after the time being investigated, and which often use or refer to primary sources and present a particular interpretation; examples include writings of historians, encyclopaedias, documentaries, history textbooks, and websites
<b>section face</b>	the edge of a trench and baulk which is exposed to show a vertical face that can be used to record stratigraphy
<b>seriation</b>	a dating method which establishes a timeline based on the types of sites or artefacts as a result of shape, feature or method of creation

### 1970s CE

Development of dendrochronology

### 1974 CE

- Farmers in Xi'an, in the province of Shaanxi, China, discover the Terracotta Warriors of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China
- The discovery of 'Lucy', the skeletal remains of a female *Australopithecus afarensis* by paleoanthropologists in the Afar Triangle, Ethiopia

### 1977 CE

Discovery of Tomb II at Vergina by Professor Manolis Andronikos. Believed to be the burial site of Phillip II of Macedon

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>significance</b>	the importance that is assigned to particular aspects of the past, for example events, developments, and historical sites. Significance includes an examination of the principles behind the selection of what should be investigated and remembered, and involves consideration of questions such as: How did people in the past view the significance of an event? How important were the consequences of an event? What was the duration of the event? How relevant is it to the contemporary world?
<b>step trench</b>	an excavation method that uses open area excavation. The deeper the excavation, the smaller the area being excavated, which leads to steps being formed at the site
<b>Stone Age</b>	time period categorised by human development, and weapons and tools made from stone; dates vary across the world from 2 million to 6000 years ago; followed by the Bronze Age and then the Iron Age
<b>stratigraphy</b>	usually the vertical section which shows the layers in the excavation; Greek for 'writing the layers'
<b>stratum</b>	layers of soil at an excavation site
<b>three-age system</b>	naming and categorising artefacts according to their material, which became the basis of the archaeological cultures of the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages
<b>trench</b>	(also known as squares) an excavation area of approximately 5 x 5m, bound on the sides by baulks
<b>trowel</b>	metal hand tool used for fine digging; it has a thin, flat triangular blade with a slightly rounded point
<b>Wheeler box-grid</b>	grid excavation method using squares of 2 x 2m surrounded by unexcavated baulks; developed by Sir Mortimer Wheeler
<b>Wheeler-Kenyon method</b>	grid excavation method of trenches (squares) usually 5 x 5m, bound by unexcavated sides, called baulks. The method was refined by Kathleen Kenyon, based on her mentor Sir Mortimer Wheeler's box-grid
<b>zoologist</b>	expert on animals and animal behaviour

### 1991 CE

Hikers in the Italian Alps discover the remains of 'Ötzi' or the Iceman

### 2009 CE

Discovery of the Staffordshire Hoard; Anglo-Saxon treasure containing approximately 3500 pieces – the largest Anglo-Saxon hoard discovered

### 2012 CE

The University of Leicester's archaeology team discover the grave of Richard III, last of the Plantagenet dynasty and House of York

## Introduction

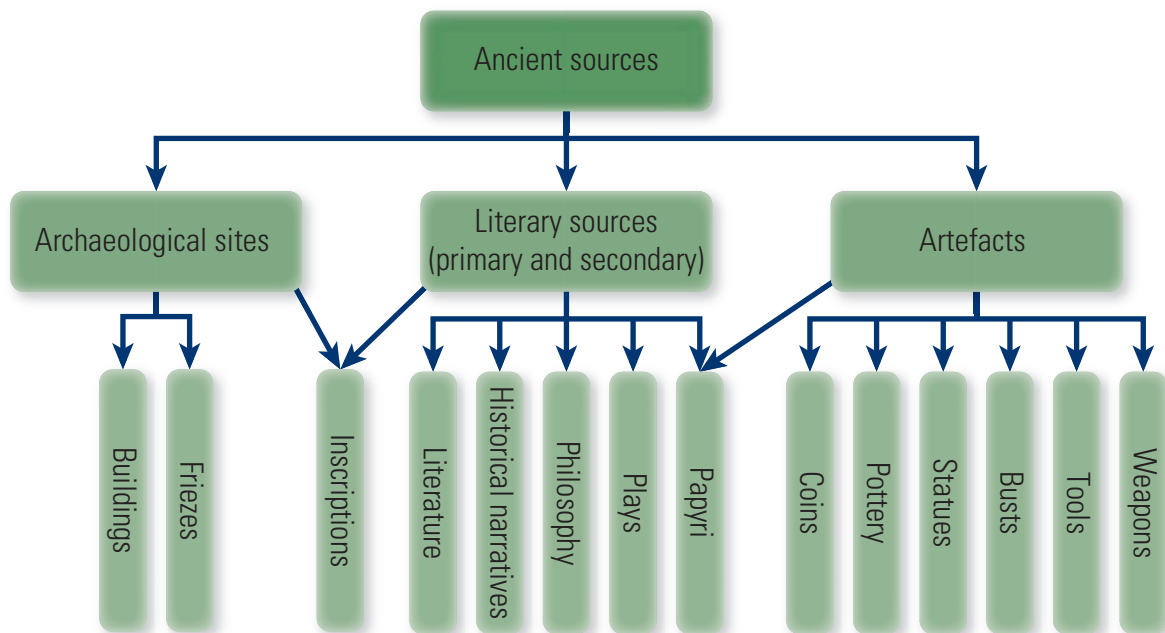
Establishing a distinction between the work of the archaeologist and the work of the historian is required when ‘digging up the past’. As the discovery of archaeological sites emerge, historians are able to use the artefacts, along with literary sources, to piece together the story of the Ancient World. An archaeologist may work in the field, excavating, documenting and dating artefacts, while historians use sources to deal with the narrative. Students of ancient history note that there are ancient sources, which can be primary or secondary sources, as well as modern sources. As such, the role of source analysis is of paramount importance to the study of ancient history for ensuring a reliable, balanced representation of the story. Furthermore, over time, archaeological methods, dating methods and archaeological discoveries have changed, evolved and developed. It has become obvious that, when digging up the past, there are issues which must be considered by anyone attempting to reconstruct the past, including the nature and condition of sources, the authentication of sources, human remains, cultural property and heritage, the role of museums, ethics of archaeology, and the interpretations and perceptions of archaeology.

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to archaeology and ancient societies

Syllabus objective 1 focuses on comprehending. When you examine a period of history, it is important to understand key terms, issues and concepts as they relate to a particular historical context. Once those are grasped, you will establish links between pieces of information to understand their nature and significance. This section of Chapter 1 will focus on terms, issues and concepts relating to archaeology.

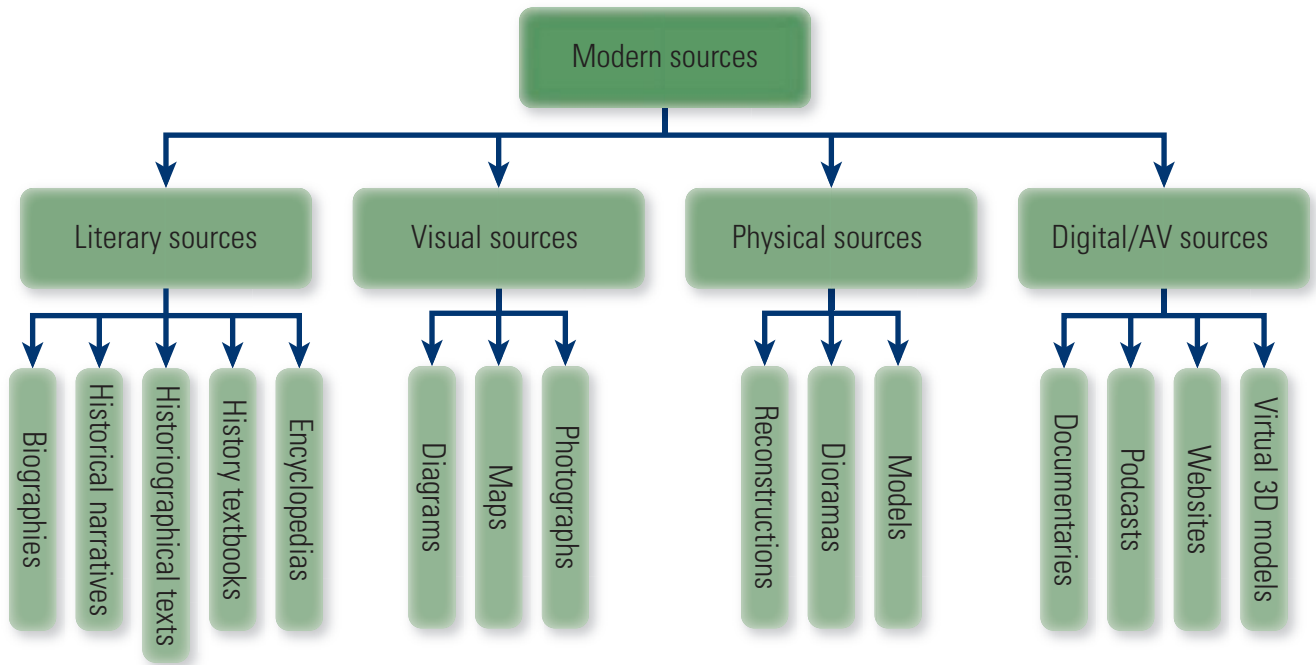
### 1.1 Archaeology

The study of history relies on distinguishing the types of sources used, which can be ancient or modern. Sources 1.3 and 1.4 describe different source types.



**SOURCE 1.3** Ancient sources for studying the Ancient World





**SOURCE 1.4** Modern sources for studying the Ancient World

## ACTIVITY 1.1

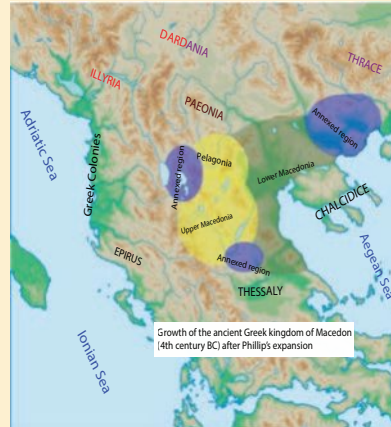
1. For each of the following sources, identify it as ancient or modern, and name its source type.

a.



**SOURCE 1.5**

b.



**SOURCE 1.6**

c.

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.

**SOURCE 1.7** Herodotus, *Histories*, 1:1:0

(continued)

d.



**SOURCE 1.8** Terracotta Army

### Archaeologists

Archaeological evidence gives historians a window into the past. Excavating an archaeological site requires many people to take on a variety of different roles. In addition to this, there are various methods of excavation and ways of dating artefacts and sites, as well as issues of authentication and the role of museums.

**TABLE 1.1** An archaeological team



Team member	Roles and responsibilities
<b>Director</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supervises dig</li> <li>• maintains site records</li> </ul>
<b>Assistant director</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assigns and cares for equipment</li> <li>• financial administrator</li> </ul>
<b>Site supervisor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responsible for specific section of a site</li> <li>• responsible for supervision of site notebook</li> <li>• labels artefacts excavated</li> <li>• records relevant information</li> </ul>
<b>Digger</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• uses tools to remove soil without damaging artefacts</li> <li>• records and measures finds (if team does not include recorders and measurers)</li> <li>• removes artefacts from ground</li> </ul>
<b>Recorder</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• logs artefacts with a serial number</li> <li>• records positions of artefacts in pit</li> <li>• records levels of discovery</li> <li>• records specifics</li> <li>• sends artefacts to washers once measurers have finished</li> </ul>

**TABLE 1.1** (continued)

Team member	Roles and responsibilities
<b>Measurer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>records pit number</li> <li>measures horizontal distances</li> <li>measures depth of artefacts</li> </ul>
<b>Washer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>washes objects removed from pits</li> </ul>
<b>Sifter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sifts soil to locate small items</li> </ul>
<b>Photographer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>documents strata profiles</li> <li>documents finds</li> </ul>
<b>Surveyor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>inspects the site</li> <li>assists in plan and position of pits</li> </ul>
<b>Laboratory specialist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>repairs artefacts</li> <li>preserves artefacts</li> </ul>
<b>Illustrator (draughtsperson)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>draws scaled record of artefact and features</li> </ul>
<b>Specialist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assists in providing information on finds</li> </ul>

## ACTIVITY 1.2

- Copy and complete the table below, providing brief description of each of the following archaeological excavation methods.

Excavation method	Description
 <p><b>SOURCE 1.9</b> Keyhole excavations</p>	
 <p><b>SOURCE 1.10</b> Step trench excavation</p>	

(continued)



**ACTIVITY 1.2 continued**



**SOURCE 1.11** Open area excavation



**SOURCE 1.12** Wheeler box-grid

T0103	T0203	T0303	T0403	
T0102	T0202	T0302	T0402	
T0101	T0201	T0301	T0401	

**SOURCE 1.13** Kenyon Wheeler method

2. Label each part of the dig site in Source 1.14.
3. Why would there be a need for diverse roles in an archaeological team?
4. Explain the importance of the role of museums in archaeology.
5. What are some issues that may arise with the authentication of artefacts and sites?



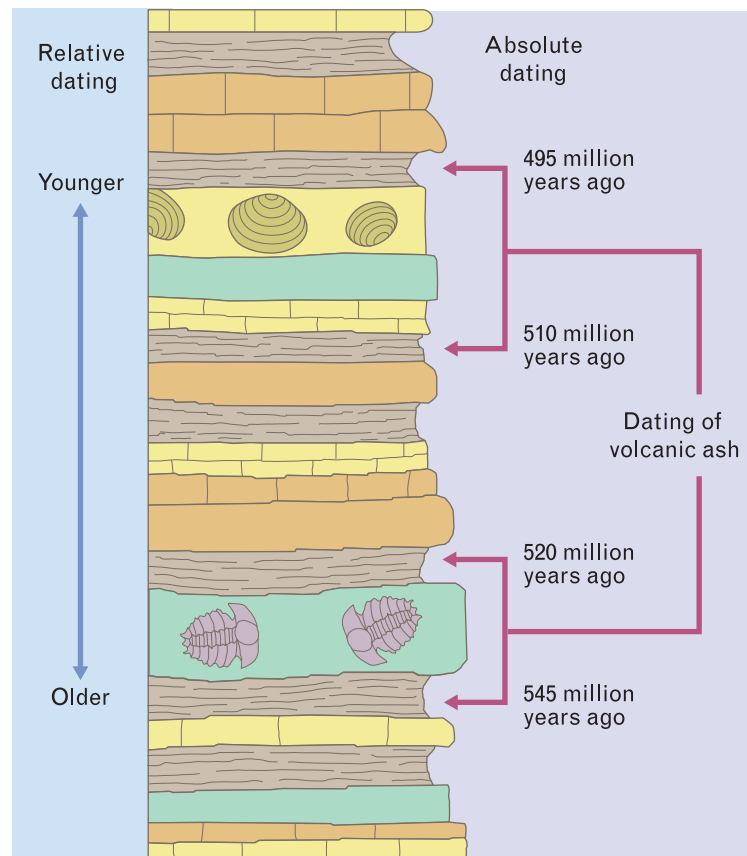
**SOURCE 1.14** Dig site

## Scientific dating

Absolute dating is the method used to give rocks an actual date or date range in number of years. Relative dating involves comparing how old something is in relation to something else, which is then used to put rocks and geological events in correct chronological order.

The following data can be used in scientific dating:

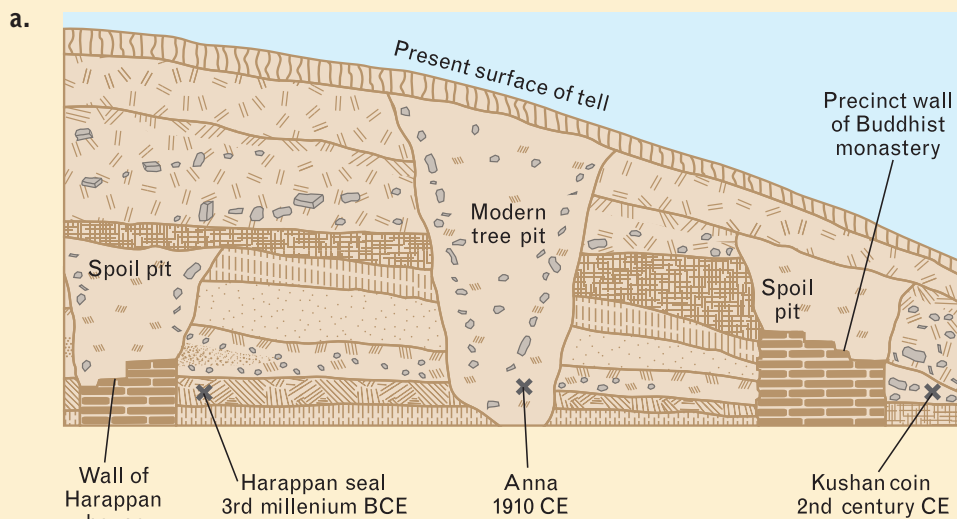
- sedimentary rocks
- fossils
- soil strata.



**SOURCE 1.15** Authentication methods of relative and absolute dating

## ACTIVITY 1.3

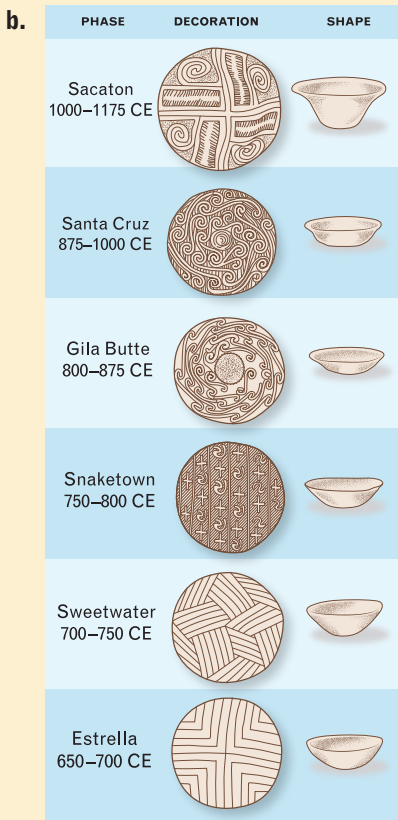
1. For each of the following diagrams, label and define the dating method by using the key terms and definitions outlined in this chapter.



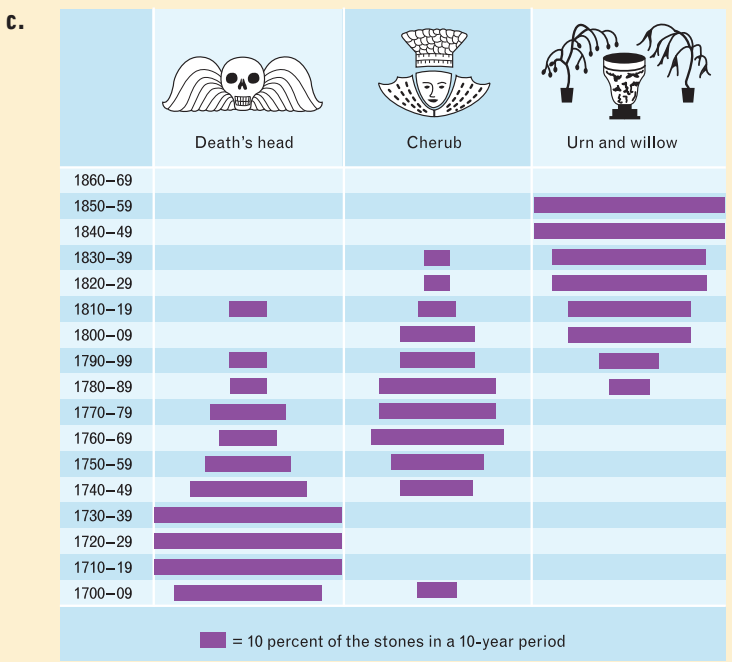
**SOURCE 1.16**

(continued)

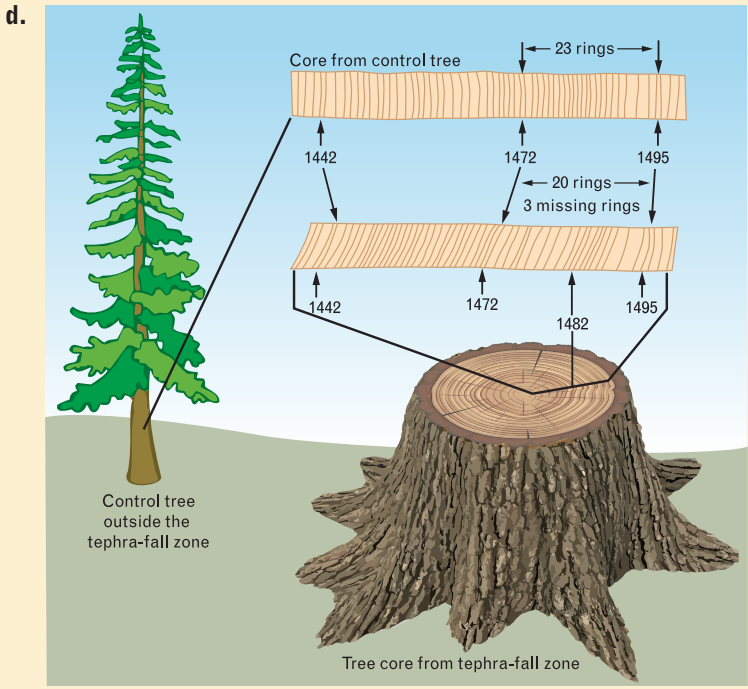
**ACTIVITY 1.3 continued**



**SOURCE 1.17**

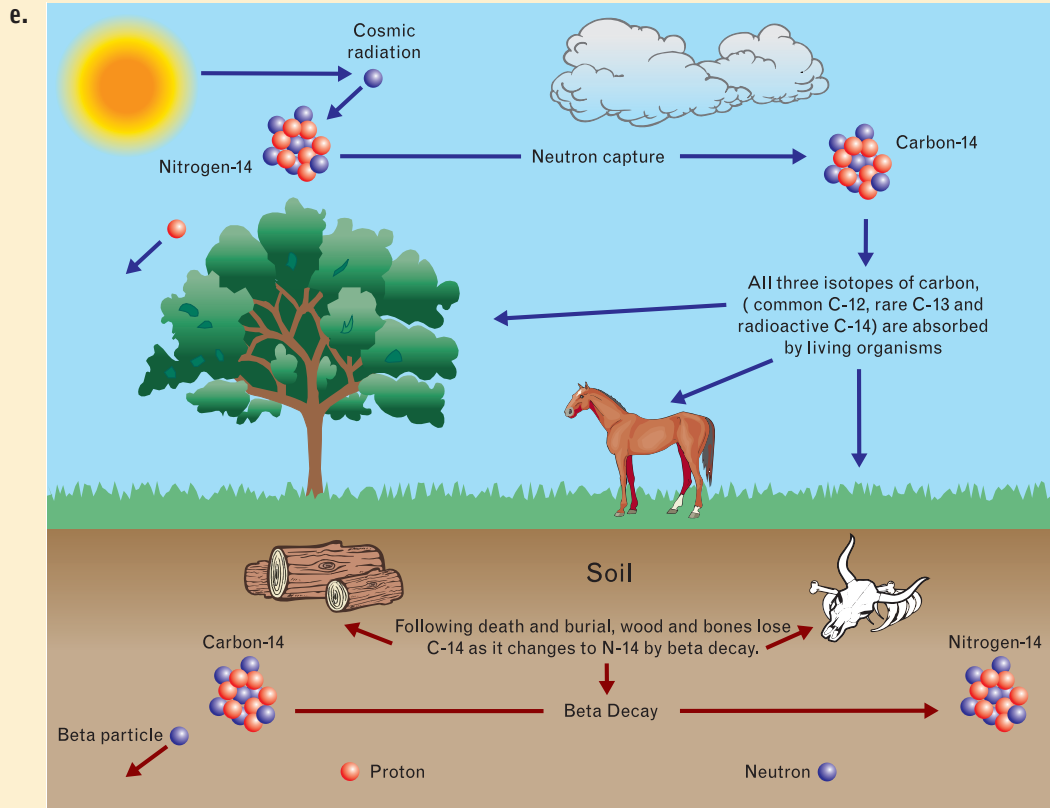


**SOURCE 1.18**

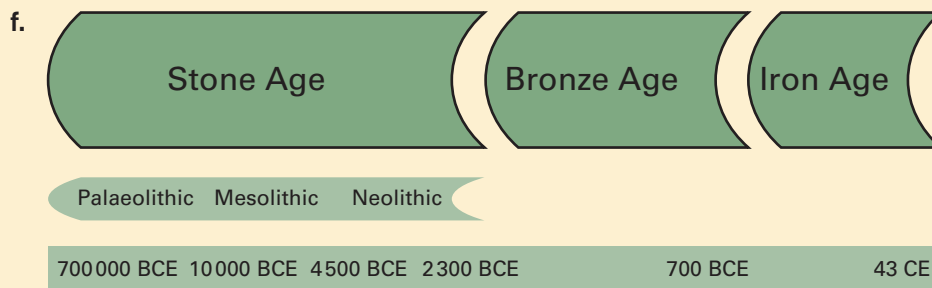


**SOURCE 1.19**





SOURCE 1.20



SOURCE 1.21



## Objective 2: Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to archaeology and the features of an ancient society

A key skill for ancient historians is to devise historical questions and conduct research. This is the focus of syllabus objective 2, and you can achieve it by framing a key inquiry question and sub-questions, as well as developing a plan to guide the investigation. You should use a variety of primary and secondary sources to ensure a wide mixture of perspectives and opinions are present. Through this process, you will develop an understanding of the issues and complexities of research, and the ability to locate and organise primary and secondary sources while practising ethical scholarship.

### 1.2 Researching people and sites

The following activities will help introduce you to the approach of developing key inquiry questions and relevant sub-questions to guide your research.

## ACTIVITY 1.4

1. Select one of these significant people or archaeological discoveries:
  - Heinrich Schliemann
  - Louis Leakey
  - Tatiana Proskouriakoff
  - Manolis Andronikos
  - Sarah Parcak
  - General Augustus Henry Lane-Fox Pitt-Rivers
  - Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie
  - Lewis Binford
  - Sir Mortimer Wheeler
  - 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 the person or 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 person or discovery to respond to the questions you have devised.
6. What issues did you face in the investigation process? How did or could you overcome these?

## ACTIVITY 1.5

1. Go to the UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization) 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.

### Objective 5: Evaluate

4. Evaluate the cultural significance of the site to its people.
5. Evaluate any archaeological issues surrounding the site.

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the Ancient World

Objective 3 requires you to analyse evidence from historical sources. When doing this, identify any distinguishing features before forming a response. These features may include origin, motive, audience, perspective and context. Identifying distinguishing features is essential because once you get inside the mind of the writer or creator you can reach an informed, critical conclusion about history.

Digging up the past can highlight problems of authenticity, such as the identification and origin of ancient artefacts, human remains and documents. The process also calls into question the reliability of ancient writers who did not witness the events they describe, as well as the condition of artefacts and the impact of this on their use as evidence. Furthermore, issues surround methods and results of scientific analysis (forensic techniques) and modern preservation of remains.

### 1.3 Analysis of historical evidence

Here are five written sources dealing with different historical events. In the activity that follows, you will be asked to complete a Source Analysis Table for some of them.

The first source is by Livy, who was a Roman historian (59 BCE–17 CE) from Patavium, a rich city known for its strict morals. He did not study in Greece, although he was widely read in Greek literature. Despite this, Livy is known to have made errors in his translations.

After the expulsion of that citizen whose presence, if there is anything certain in human affairs, would have made the capture of Rome impossible, the doom of the fated city swiftly approached. Ambassadors came from Clusium begging for assistance against the Gauls. The tradition is that this nation, attracted by the report of the delicious fruits and especially of the wine – a novel pleasure to them – crossed the Alps and occupied the lands formerly cultivated by the Etruscans, and that Arruns of Clusium imported wine into Gaul in order to allure them into Italy. His wife had been seduced by a Lucumo, to whom he was guardian, and from whom, being a young man of considerable influence, it was impossible to get redress without getting help from abroad. In revenge, Arruns led the Gauls across the Alps and prompted them to attack Clusium.

I would not deny that the Gauls were conducted to Clusium by Arruns or some-one else living there, but it is quite clear that those who attacked that city were not the first who crossed the Alps. As a matter of fact, Gauls crossed into Italy two centuries before they attacked Clusium and took Rome. Nor were the Clusines the first Etruscans with whom the Gaulish armies came into conflict; long before that they had fought many battles with the Etruscans who dwelt between the Apennines and the Alps. Before the Roman supremacy, the power of the Tuscans was widely extended both by sea and land. How far it extended over the two seas by which Italy is surrounded like an island is proved by the names, for the nations of Italy call the one the 'Tuscan Sea', from the general designation of the people, and the other the 'Atriotic', from Atria, a Tuscan colony. The Greeks also call them the 'Tyrrhene' and the 'Adriatic'. The districts stretching towards either sea were inhabited by them. They first settled on this side [of] the Apennines by the western sea in twelve cities, afterwards they founded twelve colonies beyond the Apennines, corresponding to the number of the mother cities. These colonies held the whole of the country beyond the Po as far as the Alps, with the exception of the corner inhabited by the Veneti, who dwelt round an arm of the sea. The Alpine tribes are undoubtedly of the same stock, especially the Raetii, who had through the nature of their country become so uncivilised that they retained no trace of their original condition except their language, and even this was not free from corruption.

**SOURCE 1.22** Livy, *History of Rome*, Book 5:33



The next source is from Appian of Alexandria (95–165 CE), a Greek historian. He held public office in Alexandria, Egypt before becoming a Roman citizen and moving to Rome, where he practised as a lawyer and held the office of procurator during the reign of Emperor Antonius Pius.

Pompey, while lying sick in Italy, wrote an artful letter to the Senate, praising Caesar's exploits and also recounting his own from the beginning, saying that he had been invested with a third consulship, and with provinces and an army afterward, which he had not solicited, but had been called to serve the public weal. He added that the powers which he had accepted unwillingly he would gladly yield to those who wished to take them back, and would not wait the time fixed for their expiration. The artfulness of this communication consisted in showing the fairness of Pompey and in exciting prejudice against Caesar, as though the latter was not willing to give up his command even at the appointed time. When Pompey came back to the city, he spoke to the senators in the same way and then, also, promised to lay down his command. As a friend and marriage connection of Caesar he said that the latter would very cheerfully do the same, for his had been a long and laborious contest against very warlike peoples; he had added much to the Roman power and now he would come back to his honors and his sacrificings and take his rest. He said these things in order that successors to Caesar might be sent at once, while he (Pompey) should merely stand on his promise. Curio exposed his artifice, saying that promises were not sufficient, and insisting that Pompey should lay down his command now and that Caesar should not be disarmed until Pompey himself had returned to private life. On account of private enmity, he said, it would not be advisable either for Caesar or for the Romans that such great authority should be held by one man. Rather should each of them have power against the other in case one should attempt violence against the commonwealth. Throwing off all disguise, he denounced Pompey unsparingly as one aiming at supreme power, and said that unless he would lay down his command now, when he had the fear of Caesar before his eyes, he would never lay it down at all. He moved that, unless they both obeyed, both should be voted public enemies and military forces be levied against them. In this way he concealed the fact that he had been bought by Caesar.

**SOURCE 1.23** Appian, *The Civil Wars*, 2.4.28

Herodotus (c. 484–425 BCE) was a Greek historian from Halicarnassus, a Greek city under Persian rule.

I cannot say exactly how each of the other barbarians or Hellenes fought, but this is what happened to Artemisia, and it gave her still higher esteem with the king: when the king's side was all in commotion, at that time Artemisia's ship was pursued by a ship of Attica. She could not escape, for other allied ships were in front of her and hers was the nearest to the enemy. So she resolved to do something which did in fact benefit her: as she was pursued by the Attic ship, she charged and rammed an allied ship, with a Calyndian crew and Damasithymus himself, king of the Calyndians, aboard. I cannot say if she had some quarrel with him while they were still at the Hellespont, or whether she did this intentionally or if the ship of the Calyndians fell in her path by chance. But when she rammed and sank it, she had the luck of gaining two advantages. When the captain of the Attic ship saw her ram a ship with a barbarian crew, he decided that Artemisia's ship was either Hellenic or a deserter from the barbarians fighting for them, so he turned away to deal with others.

Thus she happened to escape and not be destroyed, and it also turned out that the harmful thing which she had done won her exceptional esteem from Xerxes. It is said that the king, as he watched the battle, saw her ship ram the other, and one of the bystanders said, 'Master, do you see how well Artemisia contends in the contest and how she has sunk an enemy ship?' When he asked if the deed was truly Artemisia's, they affirmed it, knowing reliably the marking of her ship,

(continued)

and they supposed that the ruined ship was an enemy. As I have said, all this happened to bring her luck, and also that no one from the Calyndian ship survived to accuse her. It is said that Xerxes replied to what was told him, 'My men have become women, and my women men.' They say this is what Xerxes said.

**SOURCE 1.24** Herodotus, *The Histories*, 8.87-88

Flavius Josephus was a Jewish priest, scholar and historian born 37 CE into an aristocratic priestly family in Jerusalem. He joined the Pharisees and died in Rome in 100 CE.

Now at the time when this great concussion of affairs happened, the affairs of the Romans were themselves in great disorder. Those Jews also who were for innovations, then arose when the times were disturbed; they were also in a flourishing condition for strength and riches, insomuch that the affairs of the East were then exceeding tumultuous, while some hoped for gain, and others were afraid of loss in such troubles; for the Jews hoped that all of their nation which were beyond Euphrates would have raised an insurrection together with them. The Gauls also, in the neighborhood of the Romans, were in motion, and the Geltin were not quiet; but all was in disorder after the death of Nero. And the opportunity now offered induced many to aim at the royal power; and the soldiery affected change, out of the hopes of getting money. I thought it therefore an absurd thing to see the truth falsified in affairs of such great consequence, and to take no notice of it; but to suffer those Greeks and Romans that were not in the wars to be ignorant of these things, and to read either flatteries or fictions, while the Parthians, and the Babylonians, and the remotest Arabians, and those of our nation beyond Euphrates, with the Adiabeni, by my means, knew accurately both whence the war begun, what miseries it brought upon us, and after what manner it ended.

**SOURCE 1.25** Flavius Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 1.2

An ancient Greek philosopher and scientist, Aristotle (384–322 BCE) studied in Athens under Plato and was there at the time of Phillip II's conquest of Athens.

Two years later, in the archonship of Nicomedes, in consequence of the discovery of the mines at Maronea, the working of which had given the state a profit of a hundred talents, the advice was given by some persons that the money should be distributed among the people; but Themistokles prevented this, not saying what use he would make of the money, but recommending that it should be lent to the hundred richest Athenians, each receiving a talent, so that if they should spend it in a satisfactory manner, the state would have the advantage, but if they did not, the state should call in the money from the borrowers. On these terms the money was put at his disposal, and he used it to get a fleet of a hundred triremes built, each of the hundred borrowers having one ship built, and with these they fought the naval battle at Salamis against the barbarians. And it was during this period that [Aristides] son of Lysimachus was ostracised. Three years later in the archonship of Hypsechides they allowed all the persons ostracised to return, because of the expedition of Xerxes; and they fixed a boundary thenceforward for persons ostracised, prohibiting them from living within a line drawn from Geraestus to Scyllaeum under penalty of absolute loss of citizenship.

**SOURCE 1.26** Aristotle, *Athenian Constitution*, 22.7–8



## ACTIVITY 1.6

1. For at least two of the above sources, complete a Source Analysis Table: a template is available in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 3*. As you continue with your studies, you will find this a very useful tool when analysing sources.
2. Why might it be important to critically examine sources?

## 1.4 Schliemann's discoveries

Heinrich Schliemann was a German archaeologist who was fascinated by the existence of Troy as discussed by Homer in his *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Although the historic accuracy of Homer's poems have often been questioned, Schliemann made some deductions from them. He used this as the basis for his excavations, and found what he believed to be Troy. You can read an overview of Schliemann's approach to archaeology at <http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/8214>.

One of Schliemann's artefacts is the Mask of Agamemnon.



**SOURCE 1.27** Mask of Agamemnon. Is this truly the face of Agamemnon or an elaborate forgery?

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.

Excavated by Heinrich Schliemann (1876) who believed it belonged to Agamemnon. However, it was dated to an earlier time. The authenticity of the mask has been questioned several times given Schliemann's reputation.

**SOURCE 1.28** Mycenaean Funerary Gold Mask, text from the website of the National Archaeological Museum, 2008–2014, Athens, Greece

## ACTIVITY 1.7

Refer to Source 1.28 and answer the following questions.

1. What issues arise for the authentication of the Mask of Agamemnon?
2. Why do these issues exist?



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. Here he writes about Schliemann.

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.

**SOURCE 1.30** Seymour, Thomas D, 1891, *Commentary on Homer's Iliad, Books I-III*, Ginn and Company, 2.229

Wolfgang Schindler (1929–1991), a German art historian and classical archaeologist, wrote a paper on the ‘Schliemann controversy’.

and, as the excavator of Troy and Mycenae, he became the founder of a new scholarly discipline, modern archaeology, that is field-archaeology.

As far as the identification of Hisarlik with Troy goes, we know now that he owes this entirely to Frank Calvert, an Englishman who served as American Consul in the Dardanelles and had purchased part of Hisarlik with the intention of excavating it. But at the end it was Schliemann who dug through the various levels and began the excavation on a scale which Calvert simply could not have managed.

For him [Schliemann] Homer was poetry with a kernel of real history which he believed one could discover archaeologically.

Schliemann's intention to have an exact copy of his Trojan treasures made in Paris (this is attested by his letter to Beaurain in Paris) fit easily into such a context, but they are not proof that an object such as the so-called Mask of Agamemnon is a forgery buried by Schliemann at Mycenae.

With the exposure of this fiction in Schliemann, the treasure itself fell under suspicion, Sophia had been inserted as an eyewitness for what she never saw. Comparison of the report of the find in the Trojan diary with the letter to his publisher Brockhaus and the published version of the excavations revealed that first only in Athens after the completion of the campaign did he write up the description of the whole treasure. Traill hastened to present Schliemann in the light of a forger. The excavator of Troy had possibly purchased new pieces or even had them made. The ‘warfare’ against Schliemann had been carried so far that his scholarly reputation was now in jeopardy.

Traill had accused Schliemann of unscrupulously planting together pieces from the 1872 and 1878 excavations. This seemed to him to be a further example of Schliemann's deceit. Easton put his finger again on this passage and could show that Schliemann had put together objects from different excavations in Troy without maintaining that he had excavated them at the same time.

The authenticity of the Mask of Agamemnon is still in question. Stylistic considerations prove that the mask is not like the others found at Mycenae but are not sufficient to deny authenticity. Schliemann's letter to his Parisian colleague Beaurain with the request to ask a discreet goldsmith to make exact copies of the Treasure of Priam is not an argument of sufficient cogency to question the authenticity of the mask.

**SOURCE 1.31** Schindler, W. 1992, An Archaeologist on the Schliemann Controversy, *Illinois Classical Studies*, 17(1)



**SOURCE 1.29** 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?

Only part of Priam's Treasure discovered in Turkey on the hill of Hisarlik (site of Troy) in 1873 by Heinrich Schliemann was restored by Russia to Germany at the end of World War II. The jewels rendered are exhibited in the Neues Museum. These jewels are dated from an earlier period of nearly 1000 years prior to the Trojan War, probably from the Mycenaean period.



**SOURCE 1.32** Priam's Treasure, Neues Museum, Berlin

## ACTIVITY 1.8

Refer to Sources 1.29–1.32 to complete this activity.



### Objective 3: Analyse

1. Use the Source Analysis Table available in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 3* to analyse each of these three sources.
2. What issues arise with the archaeological discovery by Schliemann?

### Objective 4: Synthesise

3. Write a hypothesis in response to the question: To what extent could Schliemann be considered a fake and forger?

### Objective 5: Evaluate

4. How useful are these sources to determine if Schliemann was a fake?
5. How reliable are these sources for making this determination?

### Objective 6: Create responses

6. Refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 6* for guidelines on writing a PEEEL paragraph. Write a PEEEL response that proves the hypothesis you wrote in question 3.

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument in relation to archaeology and ancient societies

Objective 4 in the syllabus deals with synthesising. When information is synthesised, different elements and pieces are taken and formed into a new whole. In the case of history, you will take evidence from a variety of sources to come to a new understanding or interpretation. By combining different features, ideas and characteristics of sources (such as the significance, cause and effect, perspectives and interpretations) into a coherent whole, you can develop a new historical argument.

### 1.5 Iceman

In 1991, two hikers in the Alps discovered the naturally preserved body of a man who had lived between 3400 and 3100 BCE. This body became known as the Iceman.

Konrad Spindler (1939–2005) was a professor of pre- and early history at Innsbruck University, Austria. He was the head of the Iceman investigation team at the university and, in 1995, he wrote a book about the discovery.



The body's position when it was found was more or less in line with a natural dying posture. But there were a few anomalies. For one there is the unnatural position of the left arm which is extended to the right and appears to have been pressed flat against the neck directly under the chin. Likewise the left outer ear is folded over ... obliquely toward the front ... [The] nose and upper lip are shifted upwards to the right ... [which] suggests that after the Iceman's death there must have been small dislocations of the body due to ice pressure and ice movement.

...

He lay down on his left side. Given an unhealed serial rib fracture on his right side, this is the least painful position. The head was resting on a boulder. Both arms were extended forward, their muscles relaxed. The feet were lying on top of the other. The left ear was folded forward. In this position the man probably froze to death within a few hours. There are no indications of distress

...

Wind action produces even deeper snow cover through drifts and cornices ... such snow remains air-permeable for several years. It was during this phase that combined freeze-drying resulted in the body's mummification ... Snow takes about ten to twenty years to turn to ice. As soon as the ice above that spot reached a certain thickness the glacier began to flow downhill. This releases enormous forces ... [but at] the bottom of the gully the ice movement is unlikely to have exceeded 30 to 50 centimetres ... [so] compared to the position in which he died minor changes have taken place. As a result of ice pressure and a slight sliding movement of the ice mass in the lower part of the gully the body was rotated about 90 degrees, from a position on its side to one on its stomach. This caused the soft tissue displacements in the face, which was then lying directly on the rock. The nose and upper lips were displaced towards the right and upwards.

**SOURCE 1.33** Spindler, K., 2013, *The Man in the Ice*, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 31 January 2013

The following description was written by Rossella Lorenzi, an Italian archaeology correspondent for *Discovery News*.

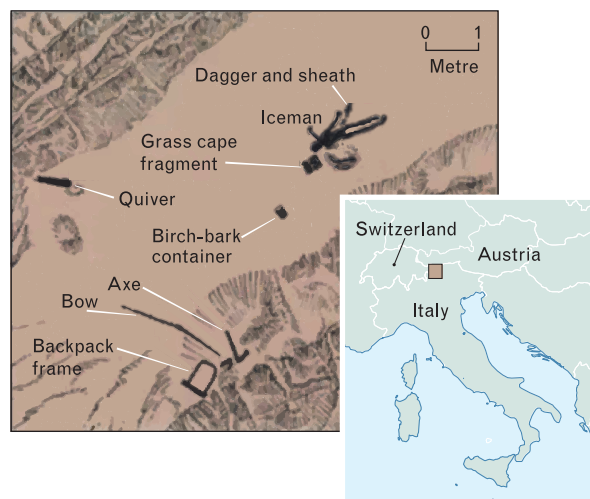
Exactly 20 years ago, on Sept. 19, 1991, German hikers Erika and Helmut Simon spotted something brown while walking near a melting glacier in the Ötztal Alps in South Tyrol.

As they got closer, they realized with horror that it wasn't just some sort of rubbish: a human corpse was lying with the chest against a flat rock.

Only the back of the head, the bare shoulders and part of the back emerged from the ice and meltwater.

The hikers thought the body belonged to an unfortunate victim of a mountaineering accident a few years back. In fact, they discovered one of the world's oldest and best preserved mummies.

**SOURCE 1.34** Lorenzi, R., 'The Ice Mummy: Little-Known Facts', *seeker.com* September 19, 2011



**SOURCE 1.35** Iceman site



Source 1.36 shows Reinhold Messner (right) and Hans Kammerlander (left) at the site on 21 September 1991. The Iceman's leggings can be faintly made out through the meltwater. In the background, top right, the bow leans diagonally against the rock, its lower end firmly held in the ice. To the right of the oblong stone, beneath the ski-pole held by Messner, lies the crushed birch-bark container with its contents scattered about. Kammerlander supports himself with his right hand on a section of the Iceman's pannier.

In an article for *National Geographic*, David Roberts discusses how the body of Iceman was mishandled.



**SOURCE 1.36** Messner and Kammerlander at the Iceman site

Four days almost undid 5 000 years of preservation as rescuers manhandled an archaeological treasure. Assuming they had found an accident victim, climbers trampled the depression where the Iceman lay. Trying to free the body, a policeman summoned to the 10 530-foot site on the Austrian-Italian border tore into the left hip with a jackhammer. Finally a forensic team from Innsbruck, Austria, arrived. Workers digging with ski poles scattered the Iceman's garments ... Not until archaeologists viewed the body and belongings in a lab was the Iceman's antiquity revealed.

**SOURCE 1.37** David Roberts, 'The Ice Man: Lone Voyager from the Copper Age', *National Geographic*, June: 36-6, 1993

## ACTIVITY 1.9

Refer to Sources 1.33 to 1.37 to complete this activity.

### Objective 3: Analyse

1. What do these sources tell us about the condition of the Iceman and the issues surrounding his discovery?

### Objective 4: Synthesise

2. Write a PEEEL response (see the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 6*) to the hypothesis: Given the condition of the Iceman's remains, it could be argued the preservation of the remains resulted in the ill-treatment of the site upon discovery.

### Objective 5: Evaluate

3. How did the circumstances of the discovery of the Iceman affect the preservation of the site, artefacts and his remains?

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the Ancient World

Syllabus objective 5 requires you to evaluate evidence from historical sources. You will need to consider the reliability and usefulness of sources to develop a judgement. You should also take into account the changing interpretations of sources over time and their influence on understanding the period, particularly the meaning that is constructed from historical evidence.

## 1.6 Ethics

Ethics in archaeology is significant, as archaeologists have to make serious decisions regarding how they interpret the past, present and future, as well as how they present those findings. Ethics in archaeology includes issues such as custodianship, management of cultural heritage, conservation and interpretation of the past.

### Schliemann and management of cultural heritage

Heinrich Schliemann took Priam's Treasure back to Germany with him. This challenged the concept of who owns history.

Adolf Furtwangler (1853–1907), a German archaeologist, teacher, art historian and museum director, wrote about Schliemann's visit to the Archaeological Society in Berlin in 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.

In spite of his passion for Homer, Schliemann is fundamentally a speculator and businessman. He can never get rid of that.

**SOURCE 1.38** Adolf Furtwangler, letter to his mother on 13 July 1881

### ACTIVITY 1.10

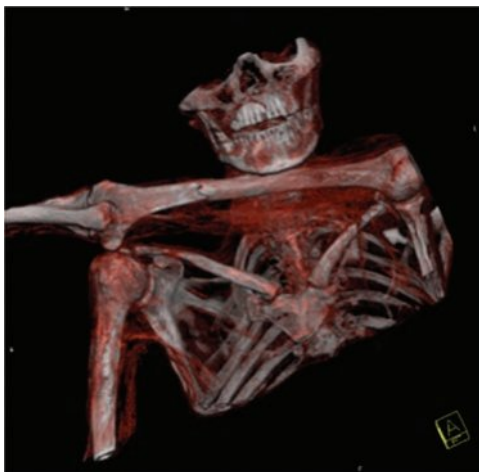
Refer to Source 1.38 and answer the questions below.

1. What issues arise with the use of this source as evidence for Schliemann's ethics?
2. Analyse the source using the source analysis table from the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 3*.
3. Using the example evaluation in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 5* as a guide, complete the evaluation of the source.
4. How could the use of these sources like this affect the way the Ancient World is understood?

GO

### Iceman and science

Scientists have an important role to play in the examination and management of ancient remains, such as those of Iceman.



**SOURCE 1.39** CT scan shows the arrow still imbedded in the Iceman's shoulder – what does this CT scan suggest happened to the Iceman?



**SOURCE 1.40** The use of an endoscope to examine the arrow – how has the advancement in science assisted investigating the past?

In 2011, *National Geographic* published an article about the examination of the Iceman.

After Austrian authorities first recovered the mummy in 1991, scientists in Innsbruck cut a large gash across his lower torso as part of their initial investigation, along with other incisions in his back, at the top of the skull and on his legs. ... Over the years, numerous less invasive explorations of the remains were conducted there, including x-ray and CT scan imaging studies and an analysis of the mummy's mitochondrial DNA. ...

Analysis of chemical traces in his bones and teeth indicated that Ötzi ... grew up northeast of Bolzano ...

A head-to-toe investigation involving seven separate teams of surgeons, pathologists, microbiologists, and technicians. ... [meant that] intervention would be accomplished without making any new incisions in the Iceman's body.

**SOURCE 1.41** Stephen Hall, Unfrozen, *National Geographic*, November: 118–133, 2011

## ACTIVITY 1.11

### Objective 1: Comprehend

- Investigate issues in the ethics of archaeology. Issues include:
  - who owns the past
  - repatriation
  - custodianship
  - cultural heritage management.
- What scientific techniques have been used to investigate the Iceman?

### Objective 5: Evaluate

- What ethical issues arise with the treatment of the Iceman's remains?
- Explain how archaeological techniques have evolved over time and the significance of this on reconstructing the past.
- Explain the continuity that exists within the field of archaeology.

## The bust of Nefertiti and custodianship

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 following is from a story on 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 1.42** 'Greece Nazi Occupation: Athens asks Germany for €279bn', *BBC News*, April 7, 2015



**SOURCE 1.43** Bust of Nefertiti at the Egyptian Museum in Berlin



German archaeologist Ludwig Borchardt discovered the bust of Nefertiti while digging at Amarna in 1912. He did not declare the discovery to the Antiquities Services in Tell el-Amarna. Upon his return to Germany, the bust was put on display in Berlin, which angered Egypt. In 1933, Egypt offered an exchange with another sculpture but the offer was overruled by Hitler.

### ACTIVITY 1.12

1. Outline the arguments for and against the reparation for damage caused by the Nazi looting.
2. Outline the arguments for and against the return of the Nefertiti bust to Egypt.

## 1.7 Pompeii

Despite the devastation of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, it has frozen the ancient Roman way of life for modern interpretation and scholarship.



**SOURCE 1.44** An ornate strigil (used to scrape sweat and dirt from the skin), found at Pompeii



**SOURCE 1.45** Cast of a guard dog from the House of Orpheus, Pompeii



**SOURCE 1.46** A glass cremation urn found at the Necropolis of Nuceria Gate, Pompeii

The 'Pompeii Archaeological Research Project: Port Stabia' has been undertaking archaeological excavations in Pompeii. The project co-directors Stephen Ellis and Gary Devore have been interviewed about their work.

Ellis's team is particularly interested in a corner of the city near the Porta Stabia gate that is a bit off the beaten archaeological path.

'It's kind of a lost neighborhood of the city. When they first cleared it of debris in the 1870s, they left this block for ruin (because it had no large villas) and it was covered over with a terrible jungle of vegetation', he says.

Much research has centered on public buildings and breathtaking villas that portray the artistic and opulent lifestyle enjoyed by the city's wealthy elite.

'We're trying to see how the other 98 per cent of people lived in Pompeii', Ellis says. 'It's a humble town block with houses, shops, and all the bits and pieces that make up the life of an ancient city.'

But while his quest is knowledge of the living Pompeii, Stanford University's Gary Devore, the project's co-director, notes that the eruption still resonates because of the intimate connection it created between past and present.

'We're digging in an area where a lot of Pompeians died during the eruption', he says. 'I remind myself all the time that I can investigate in such detail this ancient Roman culture as a direct result of a great human disaster.'

'At the end of a day of intense mental processing and physical labor, when the tools are being packed up and put away for the night, I often take a moment to remind myself of that connection with the individuals whose homes and workshops we're digging up', he says.

**SOURCE 1.47** Owens, J., 'Pompeii', *nationalgeographic.com*

## ACTIVITY 1.13

1. From the sources, what can you interpret about life in Pompeii c. 79 CE?

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to the Ancient World

For syllabus objective 6 you need to create a response that communicates meaning. This communication should suit your intended purpose. All of your responses should integrate evidence from historical sources that explain the past and develop the intended argument. You should also use correct language and referencing conventions.

In this section, you will be creating responses in connection with archaeological discoveries at Australia's Lake Mungo.

### 1.8 Lake Mungo

Lake Mungo is one of Australia's significant cultural and historical archaeological sites. Through the exploration of this site, you will gain an understanding of issues like archaeological ethics, cultural heritage, and the significance and preservation of human remains.



**SOURCE 1.48** Tanya Charles of the Mutthi Mutthi and Junette Mitchell of the Paakantji examine the footprints left by their ancestors more than 20 000 years ago. What significance do the footprints have for Aboriginal peoples today?

In 1969, the cremated remains of a woman were found at Lake Mungo; known as Mungo Woman, the remains are over 19 000 years old. In 1974, Mungo Man was discovered.

Professor Jim Bowler, a geomorphologist and Honorary Professorial Fellow in Earth Sciences at the University of Melbourne, writes about this discovery.

... metres from the site of her cremation, erosion of the dunes by the wind revealed yet another human burial. This was Mungo Man, who had been buried lying on his side, his body ritually prepared with ochre. Analysis of his bones showed that Mungo Man was around 50 years old when he died, and that he suffered from osteoarthritis in his right elbow – probably the result of the constant use of a spear-thrower or woomera. The care with which Mungo Man had been buried and the fact that the ochre must have been brought from over 100 km away suggested to archaeologists that he may have been an important person in his tribe. It also suggested that his people believed in an afterlife, and that they may have travelled over substantial distances and engaged in trade with other tribes.

**SOURCE 1.49** Jim Bowler, 2010, 'Heir of all the Ages: The Secrets of Lake Mungo', *Heritage Australia*



**SOURCE 1.50** The remains of Mungo Man, discovered in 1974, estimated to be older than 40 000 years. What does this suggest about Aboriginal culture?



In 1992, the remains of Mungo Woman were unconditionally returned to the traditional owners. Mungo Man's remains were held at the Australian National University until 2017. The following article from ABC News talks about his return.

### **Mungo Man returned to ancestral home where he died 40 000 years ago**

Traditional owners say the return of the remains of the historic Mungo Man, who was removed by scientists from his resting place more than 40 years ago, will provide closure and is a step toward reconciliation. More than four decades ago anthropologists removed the ancient skeleton of an Aboriginal man – the discovery of which rewrote Australian history. Now he has been returned home to his descendants, travelling for days in a hearse from Canberra.

Traditional owners hosted a welcome home ceremony attended by hundreds to celebrate the historic return of the 42 000-year-old remains of Mungo Man to his original resting place.

'Today is one of those catalytic moments that we need to enhance Australian society, and bring empathy into, understanding the Aboriginal culture,' said Paakantyi man Michael Young, who is also a member of the Aboriginal Advisory Group for Mungo Man's return.

'The delays and everything are now forgotten because today is the time to move on [so] I thank everybody who was involved in this momentous occasion.'

Ngiyampaa elder Aunty Joan Slade added: '[It is] so good to have him back after all those years he has been taken away, and we've been waiting all those years to get him back and I'm so glad he is back, to put him in his resting place.'

In the spirit of unity, all those gathered at the ceremony, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, were invited to take part in a traditional dance to welcome home Mungo Man.

**SOURCE 1.51** Higgins, I., 'Mungo Man returned to ancestral home where he died 40 000 years ago', *ABC News*, 17 November 2017



**SOURCE 1.52** Lake Mungo from what would have been the shore

## ACTIVITY 1.14

As you become more experienced with research tasks, you will learn to adapt the following step-by-step approach to your own needs.

### Objective 1: Comprehend

1. For each of the sources, complete the following table:

Source	What is the source?	Is the source ancient or modern?	Is the source literary or non-literary?
1.48			
1.49			
1.50			
1.51			
1.52			

### Objective 2: Devise

2. Frame a key inquiry question which focuses on the issues of cultural significance, ethics or ownership of remains for the Lake Mungo site.
3. Identify the sub-questions necessary to collect the type of information needed to answer the key inquiry question.

### Objective 3: Analyse

4. Locate, identify and organise information relating to the questions, and ensure you use correct references.
5. Use the Source Analysis Table available in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 3* to analyse each of the sources listed above.
6. What does this tell us about the nature and significance of cultural property?

### Objective 4: Synthesise

7. Develop a hypothesis in response to the key inquiry question you posed in question 2.
8. Develop three main arguments to support the hypothesis.
9. Categorise information and evidence for these using the graphic organiser in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 6*:

### Objective 5: Evaluate

10. Using the example evaluation in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 4* as a guide, evaluate each of the sources used.
11. What are the contested views on this issue?

### Objective 6: Create

12. Write an essay in response to the key inquiry question you created earlier in this activity. Refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 6* for guidelines on structuring an essay.



# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- There are ancient and modern sources that can be literary and non-literary.
- There are two major dating methods: relative and absolute dating.
- When analysing sources of evidence, it is important to consider origin, content and context, motive, audience, perspectives as well as usefulness and reliability.
- Ethics in archaeology includes issues of custodianship, repatriation, conservation, interpretation and management of cultural heritage.
- There have been developments in technology and science to assist in the analysis of archaeological evidence such as use of CT scans, satellite imaging, x-ray and chemical analysis.
- Evidence can assist people in understanding life in the past through analysis and evaluation.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

Identify key concepts around the discovery, treatment and preservation of archaeological evidence.

### Devise

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

- Nazi Germany in Greece
- the Elgin Marbles, Greece
- the imperial treasures, China.
- the Ishtar Gate
- the Koh-i-Noor diamond, India

### Analyse

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).

### Synthesise

Discuss whether Mungo Man and Mungo Woman should have a permanent memorial built at national expense.

### Evaluate

What are the ethical issues to consider with the Lake Mungo case?

## Assessment

### Examination-style questions

1. Assess the usefulness of Sources 1.30 and 1.38 to a historian investigating Schliemann's discoveries. In your answer, consider the perspectives provided and the reliability of each one.
2. Assess the usefulness of Sources 1.33 and 1.41 to a historian investigating the issues of human remains as evidence. In your answer, consider the reliability of each one.
3. Assess the point of view of Source 1.49 and 1.51 and the implications when considering issues of the custodianship of Mungo Man and Mungo Woman.

### Investigation tasks

1. To what extent did the lack of archaeological techniques used by Schliemann affect his credibility?
2. How might the discoveries at Lake Mungo be significant to Aboriginal peoples?
3. To what extent could science continue to use the remains of Iceman?







## CHAPTER 2

Slavery in Roman society  
753–133 BCE

GLENN DAVIES

## TOPIC DESCRIPTION

## Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - a broad chronological overview, from the origins of the society to the period that is the focus for investigation.
  - the geographical location, the nature of the environment and its influence on the society.

## Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the social structure; for example, the main social hierarchies (elites, workers, slaves, ethnic groups and foreigners), role and status of women and children, and the attitudes towards women, children and education.
  - political institutions; for example, an institution's organisation (monarchy, kingship, tyranny, republic or democracy), the role and function of key political institutions, and political positions, and key legal structures.
  - economic activities; for example, the nature and importance of economic activity (agriculture, commerce, industry, trade and building programs), the organisation of free and indentured labour, and economic exchange (tribute, taxation and coinage).
- devise historical questions and conduct research.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.

## 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

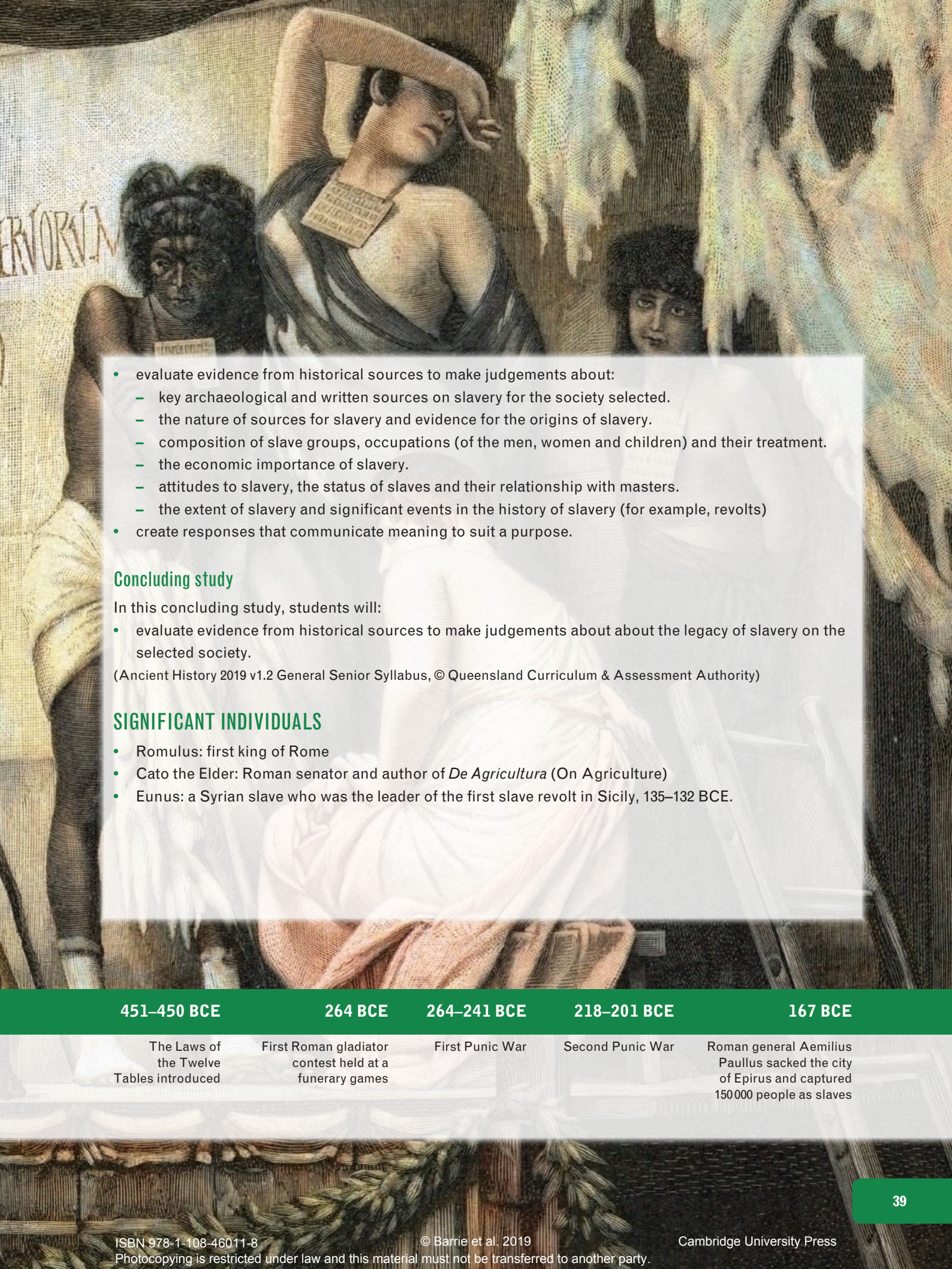
509 BCE

The establishment of the Roman Republic

496–275 BCE

Through its military expansion within Italy, the social and political structure of the republic gradually evolved and slavery became more common





- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - key archaeological and written sources on slavery for the society selected.
  - the nature of sources for slavery and evidence for the origins of slavery.
  - composition of slave groups, occupations (of the men, women and children) and their treatment.
  - the economic importance of slavery.
  - attitudes to slavery, the status of slaves and their relationship with masters.
  - the extent of slavery and significant events in the history of slavery (for example, revolts)
- create responses that communicate meaning to suit a purpose.

### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about about the legacy of slavery on the selected society.

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### SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Romulus: first king of Rome
- Cato the Elder: Roman senator and author of *De Agricultura* (On Agriculture)
- Eunus: a Syrian slave who was the leader of the first slave revolt in Sicily, 135–132 BCE.

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

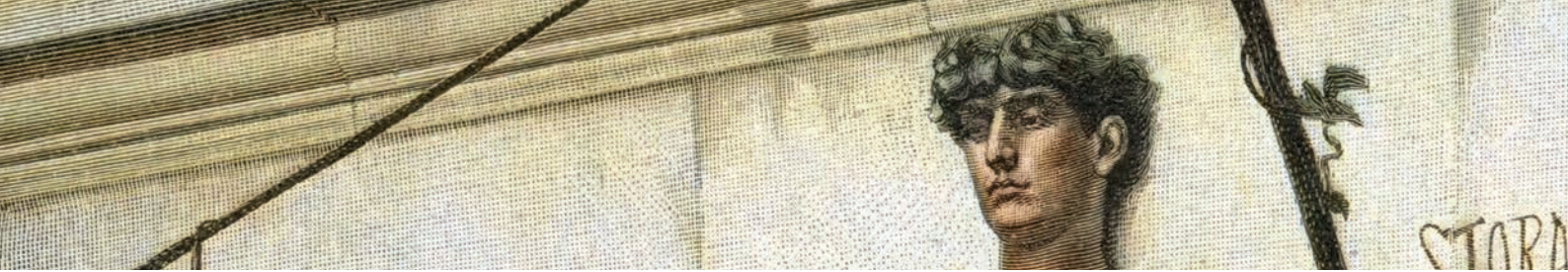
218–201 BCE

Second Punic War

167 BCE

Roman general Aemilius Paullus sacked the city of Epirus and captured 150 000 people as slaves





## MAP



**SOURCE 2.2** Extent of Roman Republic in the early second century BCE

### c. 160 BCE

Cato the Elder writes *De Agricultura* (On Agriculture)

### 146 BCE

- Rome totally destroyed the ancient trading cities of Corinth and Carthage. End of Third Punic War.

### 135–132 BCE

First slave revolt, Sicily

### 133 BCE

Tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus



## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

WORD	DEFINITION
<i>damnati in metallum</i>	those condemned to work in the mines
<i>delenda est Carthago</i>	'Carthage must be destroyed'; the phrase used by Cato the Elder whenever he spoke in the Roman senate
<i>familia</i>	family, or household
<i>fugitivarii</i>	professional slave catchers
<i>gladiatora munera</i>	a commemorative duty owed by the person's descendants where gladiators fought during funeral games
<b>Hellenisation</b>	the adoption of Greek culture by Roman society
<i>latifundia</i>	extensive Roman rural estates
<i>liberti</i>	freedmen and women
<b>manumission</b>	the process of freeing a slave
<i>nexum</i>	a contract in the early Roman Republic where a free man pledged himself as a bond slave
<i>pater familias</i>	head of the Roman household
<i>servi</i>	slaves in the Roman Republic and empire
<i>servus</i>	slaves born into a household, family farm or agricultural estate
<i>servus publicus</i>	public slaves

## Introduction

Most modern nations banned slavery about 150 years ago. Slavery is prohibited under the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which states: 'No one shall be held in slavery or servitude: slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all forms.' However, slavery today still exists 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 saw 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 since slaves were exempt from military service. Cato the Elder was one of the many 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.

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.

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to archaeology and ancient societies

### 2.1 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 becomes 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 2.1** The written sources historians have used to gain information about the institution of slavery in Roman history

Author	Title and description
Plutarch c. 46–120CE	<i>Lives of Cato</i> : a brief account of how Cato treated his slaves
Polybius c. 200–118 BCE	<i>Histories</i> : details of Rome's conquests in the third–second centuries BCE
Diodorus Siculus c. 60–30 BCE	<i>Bibliotheca Historica</i> : 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	<i>From the Foundation of the City</i> : the Carthaginian and Macedonian Wars
Cato the Elder 234–149 BCE	<i>De Agri Cultura (On Agriculture)</i> : outlines how to manage farm slaves
Columella 4–70 CE	<i>Res rustica (On Rural Affairs)</i> : 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 indeed 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 written records and material remains on the institution of Roman slavery occur 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.



## ACTIVITY 2.1

1. According to Table 2.1, 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?

## 2.2 The nature of Roman slavery

Slavery in ancient Rome played an important role in society and the economy. As the Romans became more aware of their complete dependence on the services of slaves, the government made more laws regarding their treatment.

All human beings are born free, *liberti*, under natural law, but slavery was held to be a practice common to all nations, which might then have specific civil laws pertaining to slaves. 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. In ancient warfare, the victor had the right under the *ius gentium* to enslave a defeated population; however, if a settlement had been reached through diplomatic negotiations or formal surrender, the people were, by custom, 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. 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. The slaves born within a household, *familia*, on a family farm, agricultural estate or villa were called *servus*.

The origins of slavery changed over time from conquests producing massive numbers of captives and the kidnapping activities associated with widespread piracy to those domestically bred in the Roman household. There was also the practice of enslaving foundlings, based on the large number of child exposures and abandonments throughout the Mediterranean. Roman society legally considered slaves as chattels or property, but masters were not required to mark their slaves in any way to distinguish them from free people, unless they had run away.

Slaves were seen as their master's shadows, their doubles, 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.



**SOURCE 2.3** Relief from Smyrna (present-day Izmir, Turkey) depicting a Roman soldier leading captives in chains. Using the text on this page, describe three different possible outcomes for the 'captive in chain'.

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 his master's lifetime, slaves were frequently able to purchase their own freedom with the savings they were allowed to accumulate, and many were granted manumission as a free gift.

After manumission, a male slave who had belonged to a Roman citizen not only enjoyed passive freedom from ownership, but also active political freedom, or *libertas*, including 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

The living conditions and expectations of slaves in ancient Rome were versatile, and strongly linked to their occupations. Slaves involved in exhausting activities such as agriculture and mining did not enjoy promising prospects. Mining, in particular, had a reputation of being a brutal activity, whereas household slaves could expect more humane treatment.

Slaves were used in all areas of Roman life except in positions of elected public office. There were roughly five major categories of slaves depending on their occupations.

1. *Household slaves* were under the power of the master and at his constant disposal. Some households had just a few slaves while very wealthy Romans kept hundreds as a means to display power and wealth.
2. *Urban crafts and services slaves* could be skilled or unskilled.
3. *Agricultural slaves* usually worked on very large estates, generally owned by absentee landowners who lived and worked in Rome, such as Cato the Elder. The workforce on large agricultural properties – producing grain, cattle, wine and olives – were mostly slaves and managed by an overseer who was often a slave himself. For many, their lot was miserable as they were usually housed in barrack buildings in poor, prison-like conditions and some worked in chain-gangs. Their lives were usually short.
4. *Mining and quarrying slaves* were public slaves known as *damnati in metallum* ('those condemned to work in the mines'). They numbered in the tens of thousands, and were forced to work in the gold and silver mines and marble quarries. They suffered notoriously brutal conditions and treatment, and their status under the law was different from that of other slaves: they could not buy their freedom, be sold, or be set free. They were expected to live and die in the mines.
5. *Public slaves* or a *servus publicus* was a slave owned by the state rather than a private individual. Some of these slaves worked:
  - in temples doing basic tasks as servants of the various priesthoods.
  - in public buildings in Rome and municipalities as accountants and secretaries for magistrates and other officials.
  - on government building programs.
  - on maintaining the aqueduct system.
  - for a time, protecting the city from fire.

### ACTIVITY 2.2

GO

1. Create a Visual Organiser to summarise the above information on types of slaves. Refer to the information about nonlinear note-taking in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 1*.

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

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 infrequently 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!

**SOURCE 2.4** No daylight for months: Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*, Chapter 21.4 – How Gold is Found

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



**SOURCE 2.5** Mosaic showing living conditions of household slaves, National Museum of Carthage



**SOURCE 2.6** Mosaic of slaves pouring wine, Bardo National Museum, Tunisia



**SOURCE 2.7** 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.

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.

**SOURCE 2.8** Livy, *The History of Rome*. Book 45.34.4–7

### ACTIVITY 2.3

1. Create a table from the previous sources summarising the different types of slaves in ancient Rome.
2. Write one or two sentences comparing the lives of slaves in Sources 2.4 and 2.5.
3. The slaves in Source 2.6 appear larger than their masters. Consider the likely creator of this source and what emotion is underlying this mosaic.
4. Why do you think the slave master is watching the slaves in Source 2.7?
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 means would be required to ensure the masters stayed in control as slave numbers swelled.

## 2.3 Rights and responsibilities of slaves

The treatment of slaves varied according to the attitude of their owners, and to the particular slave's status within society. There was certainly much abuse, but there were also masters who treated their slaves reasonably well. The written sources present a range of attitudes towards slaves.

The Roman playwright Plautus, writing his comedies following the end of the Second Punic War in 201 BCE, gives a picture of an inconsiderate master, Ballio, and the kind of treatment his slaves were likely to get.

*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 color, 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.

**SOURCE 2.9** Plautus, *Pseudolus* or *The Cheat*, Act 1, Scene 2

Another curious method to combat fugitive slaves was the use of slave collars with instructions on where to return them. A surviving example reads:

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.

**SOURCE 2.10** Slave collars: 'Select Latin Inscriptions 8727' in J.C. McKeown, *A Cabinet of Roman Curiosities. Strange Tales and Surprising Facts from the World's Greatest Empire*, Oxford University Press, 2010

## Branded as a FUG

Slaves running away from their masters was a common problem among slave owners. A way to deal with this was to hire professional slave catchers known as *fugitivarii*, who would track down, capture, and return the slave to the owner in exchange for a fee. Some of the punishments for more serious slave crimes included:

- flogging
- putting the slave in chains
- torturing
- imprisoning
- fitted the slave with an inscribed metal collar, which described the misdemeanor
- the slave being branded on the forehead with the letters FUG, for *fugitivus*.



**SOURCE 2.11** Slaves were shackled to prevent them running away. Why do you think it would be important to ensure slaves did not run away?

If someone wants to inflict punishment on a male or female slave privately, he will get the punishment inflicted according to his wishes. If he wants to affix the slave to a cross or gibbet, the contractor should provide planks, chains and ropes for the whipmen and provide the whipmen ... Whenever the magistrates inflict punishment publicly and give the order, the contractor must be ready to inflict the punishment, to set up the crosses, and he must offer for free nails, pitch, wax and tapers ... If he is ordered to drag off the body with a hook, a workman dressed in red will drag off the body, or several bodies, to the ringing of bells

**SOURCE 2.12** 'Inscription from Puteoli, On the Public Funeral Service' in Tim Parkin and Arthur Pomeroy, *Roman Social History: A Sourcebook*, Routledge, London, 2007

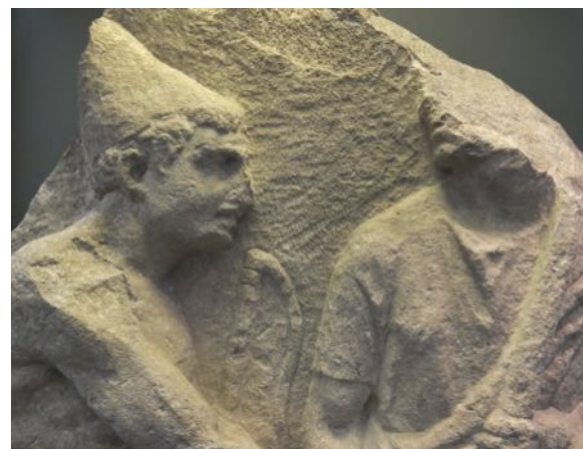




**SOURCE 2.13** Roman relief of a scene showing a slave rebuked by his master



**SOURCE 2.14** Different view of slavery, relief of a Roman woman at her morning toilette being assisted by four female slaves



**SOURCE 2.15** Relief depicting the manumission of slaves, marble, first century BCE

Professor Keith Bradley, University of Notre Dame, Indiana, is a modern authority on the history of Roman slavery and in the excerpt below describes slavery as a contest fought in the arena of the mind:

Running away was less dangerous than rebellion, but it was still a hazardous enterprise. Slave-catchers apart, Roman law forbade the harbouring of fugitives, so slaves on the run were always in danger and if caught could be savagely punished. To many therefore it must have made sense not to risk life and limb by running away, but to carry out acts of wilful obstruction or sabotage that harmed slave-owners' interests at minimal risk to themselves. Slaves, for example, might steal food or other supplies from the household. Those in positions of responsibility might falsify record books, and embezzle money from their owners, or arrange for their own manumission (setting free). Ordinary farm labourers might deliberately go slow on the job, or injure the animals they worked with to avoid work – or they might pretend to be ill, destroy equipment, or damage buildings. If your job was to make wine and you had to produce a certain quota, why not add in some sea-water to help things along? Almost any slave could play truant or simply waste time. All these petty forms of day-to-day resistance appealed to Roman slaves. They allowed slaves to frustrate and annoy their owners, and offered the satisfaction of knowing that their owners' powers were not absolute – that even the most humble of human beings could take action to empower themselves. Owners complained that their slaves were lazy and troublesome – instead of working they were always pilfering food or clothing or valuables (even the silverware), setting fire to property (villas included), or wandering around the city's art galleries and public entertainments. But it was in the decisions they made to cause vexation that slaves most forcefully expressed their humanity, and their opposition to the institution that oppressed them. Their sporadic acts of defiance created a permanent undercurrent of low-level resistance to slavery that was deeply embedded in Roman society. The slaves were motivated not by a sense of class solidarity – Rome's slave population was far too heterogeneous for that – but by the desire to find ways in which, as individuals, they could find relief from their subject status, if only temporarily. The relationship between slaves and masters at Rome was a contest fought in the arena of the mind. Masters could draw on all the weapons of law, status and established authority – there was never in Roman history any movement to abolish slavery – whereas slaves had little more to fight with than their wits.

**SOURCE 2.16** Keith Bradley, 'Resisting Slavery in Ancient Rome', *BBC History*



## ACTIVITY 2.4

1. How were runaway slaves tracked down? How does the writer of Source 2.12 make sure he gets his slave back?
2. What could happen to a first-time runaway slave?
3. What other fate could await a slave accused of a more serious crime?
4. Source 2.14 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?
5. In what way do Sources 2.13 to 2.15 show different aspects of Roman slavery?
6. Are plays valid sources about society? What might be the strengths or weaknesses of this kind of source?

## Objective 2: Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to archaeology and the features of an ancient society

### 2.4 Source investigation on ancient Roman slavery until 133 BCE

## ACTIVITY 2.5

### 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 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. Therefore, Wikipedia and random websites are not deemed '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

We tend to see slavery as an immoral and inhumane institution today. 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: 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?

*(continued)*

## ACTIVITY 2.5 continued

### Step 3: Creating sub-questions

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

*Sub-questions*

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

### Step 4: Source research

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: Critical summary of your research

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.)

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the Ancient World

### 2.5 Slavery as a Roman institution

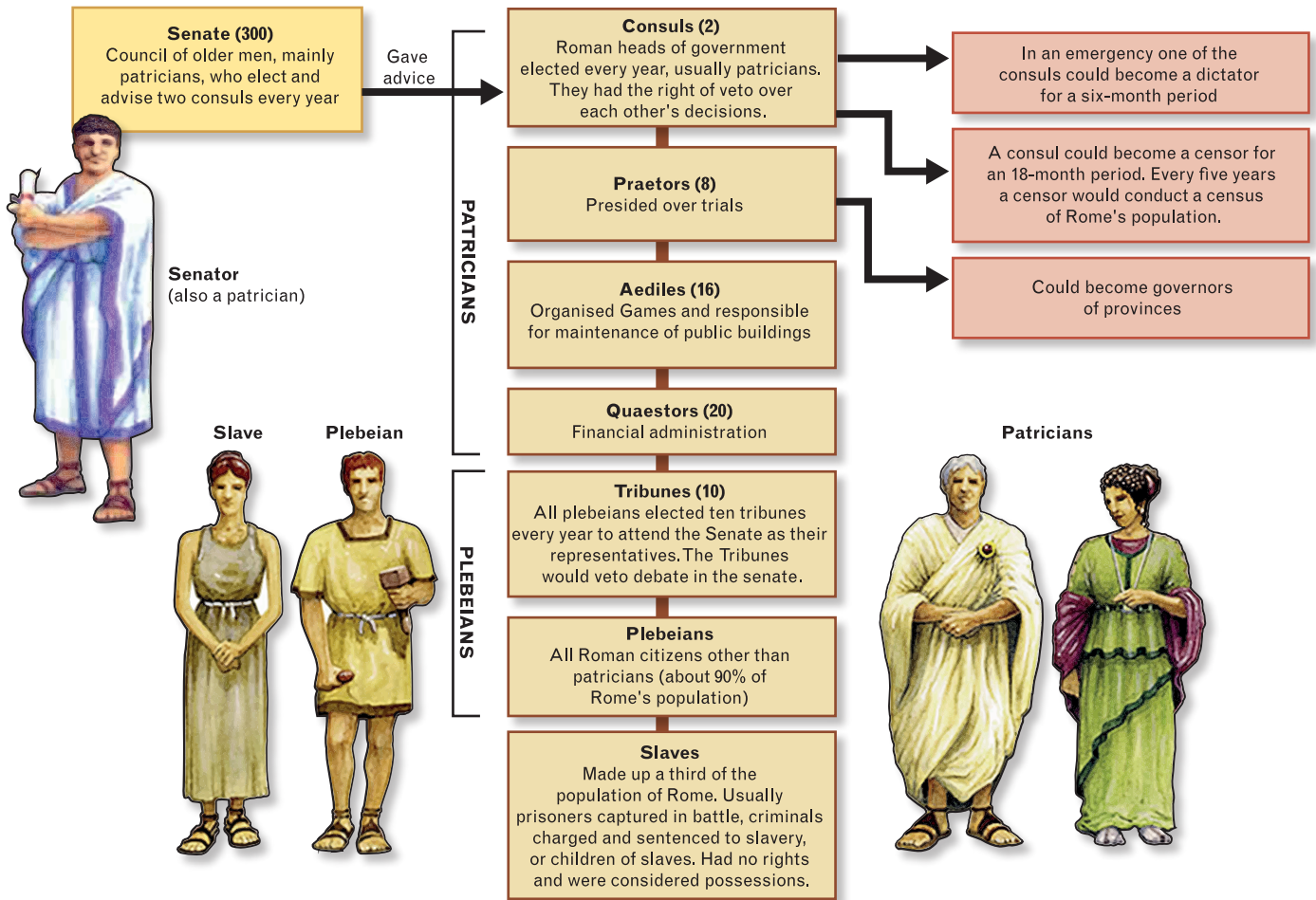
Family life was the central element of Roman society. The father was called *pater familias*, father of the house, and was firmly in control of the family. A Roman family consisted of the father, his wife, his sons and unmarried daughters. If his sons were married their wives and children were also part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

The Roman word for household was *familia*. In early Rome, the *pater familias* could legally execute any member of his household if they went against his authority. The earliest power that the father could exercise over a family member was that of exposure. At birth, in a highly symbolic ritual, male and female newborns were deposited at the feet of the father. Then, without explanation or justification, he either recognised the child as his by picking it up, or withheld his recognition by leaving it where it was. The recognised child became a member of the *familia* whereas the unrecognised child was abandoned to the river or left to die by starvation. These abandoned children often became slaves.

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 Romans did not have a written constitution, but rather one that evolved over time. 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.

The first century BCE Greek historian Dionysius of Halicarnassus wrote in the first two volumes of his *Roman Antiquities* that the Roman institution of slavery began with the legendary founder Romulus giving Roman fathers the right to sell their own children into slavery, and kept growing with the expansion of the Roman state.

The structure of the Roman Republic, c.80 BCE



**SOURCE 2.17** Ancient Roman hierarchy. Identify in the Roman republican system examples of 'checks and balances'. Why do you think this would be beneficial to Rome?

The elements of Roman society and the slave's place in it were bound to change over time, although there were some features that remained the same. These are as follows.

1. The importance of the *familiae* and its patriarchal nature (control by a leading male, the *pater familias*). The Roman family included:
  - many generations, such as the oldest couple, their married sons with their wives and children, and their unmarried sons and daughters.
  - slaves, who were generally prisoners of war taken by the Romans in their conflicts with the Italian tribes around them. A slave could be freed by the *paterfamilias*. Freedman, or *liberti*, became clients.
2. The significance of being freeborn and having Roman citizenship; freedmen and women were people who had been slaves but who had gained their freedom by manumission. Any children born of freedmen were classified as freeborn. A freed slave was the *libertus* of his former master, who became his patron.
3. The patron–client relationship was one of the most long-lasting features of Roman society and was of considerable influence in politics. Clients were considered dependents and enjoyed some of the privileges of the family. They were granted land and protection by their patron in return for economic and political services.

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 below:

[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.

**SOURCE 2.18** Naphtali Lewis and Meyer Reinhold (eds), *Roman Civilization, Selected Readings, Volume 1: The Republic and the Augustan Age* (Third Edition), Columbia University Press, New York, 1990, pp. 66–67

The Twelve Tables, Rome's oldest legal code, has brief references to slavery, indicating that the institution was of long standing.

**Table V**

A father can lawfully leave his estate and slaves to anybody he likes. If somebody dies without making his will, and has no son, the next of kin will receive the whole of the inheritance.

If there is no next of kin, the inheritance will go to the members of the 'gens'.

A madman cannot look after his own property, and it must be taken away from him and given to his next of kin or the members of his 'gens'.

**Table XII**

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

**SOURCE 2.19** The Law of the Twelve Tables

The Twelve Tables were drawn up by a commission at the request of the plebeians, 451–40 BCE.

*Nexum* was a contract in the early Roman republic where a free man pledged himself as a bond slave, a *nexus*, as surety for a loan. He might also hand over his son as collateral. Although the bondsman could expect to face humiliation and some abuse, 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*.

Livy recalls the story of the patriotic soldier:

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 2.20** Livy, *The History of Rome*, Book 2. 23

## ACTIVITY 2.6

1. Define the term *pater familias*.
2. What does *libertus* mean?
3. Describe the system of clients–patrons and its importance within Roman society.
4. What power does Source 2.18 state a father had over his son? How could a son finally be free from the father?
5. Source 2.19 lists all the references to slavery in the Twelve Tables. In what way is the Twelve Tables different from the Royal Laws of Romulus?
6. Summarise the story in Source 2.20. Why would Livy have used this as a cautionary tale?
7. Hypothesise why two slaves had a funeral urn such as in Source 2.21 in the second century BCE.



**SOURCE 2.21** Funeral urn of two slaves, second century BCE

## 2.6 Gladiators

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.

The Etruscan lifestyle was quite sophisticated and luxurious. They hunted, made war, banqueted, 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 2.23, 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:

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

**SOURCE 2.22** Nicolaus of Damascus, *Athletics* 4.153

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.



**SOURCE 2.23** Two young Etruscan athletes box, while a judge interferes with a rod.



**SOURCE 2.24** Etruscan gladiators, base of Etruscan grave marker with reliefs about funerary games, early fifth century BCE



**SOURCE 2.25** First Roman gladiator contest, nineteenth century engraving



**SOURCE 2.26** Etruscan tomb painting of slave being attacked by dogs at funeral games



## ACTIVITY 2.7

1. Where does Nicolaus of Damascus state the concept of gladiators originated in Source 2.22?
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 2.23 to 2.26. What do they show about the purpose of funerary games?
4. When does Livy state 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 2.25. Why do you think only wealthy Romans would hold a *gladiator munera*?

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument in relation to archaeology and ancient societies

### 2.7 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. Through its military expansion within Italy, the social and political structure of the republic gradually evolved and slavery became more common.

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 slave supply, 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 Roman world were the destruction of Carthage and Corinth in 146 BCE in the Third Punic War. These were the events that played a transformative role in the future of Rome and changed the nature of slavery and numbers of slaves in Roman society.

The city of Carthage had dominated the western Mediterranean both politically and economically, while Corinth was the powerhouse commercial city in the eastern Mediterranean. Carthage had already been stripped of its Sicilian and Spanish territories, but by 146 BCE, Rome's attitudes had hardened. When Rome totally destroyed the ancient trading cities of Carthage in northern Africa and Corinth in Greece in 146 BCE, Rome gained access to untold wealth and hordes of slaves.

After the destruction of Carthage, it is believed around 30 000 men and 25 000 women were enslaved. It has been estimated that there were approximately 250 000 prisoners of war taken by the Romans in the first half of the second century BCE.

Few records have survived from Roman slaves to enable modern historians to deduce a slave's perception of life. Instead, the evidence available comes overwhelmingly from people such as Plutarch and Cato, who represented the slave-owning classes. However, the evidence does show that Roman slaves managed to demonstrate their opposition to slavery in a number of ways.

There were only three serious slave revolts in Roman history, and all occurred in the sixty-five years between 135 and 70 BCE. In 135 BCE, a slave war broke out in Sicily, which involved 70 000 slaves and which took several years to be put down by the Roman army.

When Rome defeated Carthage in the First Punic War in 241 BCE, it annexed the Carthaginian-controlled island of Sicily. This was to be Rome's first overseas province and its principal supplier of grain; it was the beginning of a transformation in the traditional Roman way of life. In Sicily, wealthy Romans took the land previously owned by the Carthaginians, and according to Diodorus Siculus, 'after sixty years of good fortune in all respects', during which they 'shot up in all prosperity', they bought large numbers of slaves and began 'at once to apply marks and brands to their bodies'. The wealth that began to flow into Rome saw the growth of the rural estates, or *latifundia*, owned by the upper classes. Moreover, the lives of the upper classes became more luxurious as the number of slaves they employed increased.



**SOURCE 2.27** *The Slave Market*, painting by nineteenth century French artist Gustave Boulanger

### 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:

150 000 human beings were led away into slavery.

*Livy, History of Rome, XLV, xxxiii, 8-xxxiv, 6*

**SOURCE 2.28** *Livy, History of Rome, XLV, xxxiii, 8-xxxiv, 6*

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

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.

**SOURCE 2.29** Valerius Maximus, *Memorable Deeds and Sayings*, VII. Vi. i.



**SOURCE 2.30** The lettering SPQR refers to the government of the Roman republic: *Senatus Populusque Romanus*, or 'The Senate and People of Rome'

## ACTIVITY 2.8

1. Look at Source 2.27, 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 2.29, 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 2.27 to 2.30.
4. Write a paragraph response to the statement: 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.

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.

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

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



**SOURCE 2.32** Carthage and its harbour today





**SOURCE 2.33** The ruins of Carthage today



**SOURCE 2.34** The remains of Carthage

Pausanius describes the storming of Corinth, when the Greek city was taken in 146 BCE:

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 2.35** Pausanius, *Description of Greece*, Book 7. chs. xvi. 5.7–8



**SOURCE 2.36** Ruins of Corinth

A 20th-century historian comments on the death penalty on Corinth and Carthage:

It is hard to find rational grounds for the death penalty on Corinth and Carthage, two great civilized cities. The Romans applied their old Samnite policy of annihilating opposition where it hindered their will – a brutal method, since they need not fear any threat to themselves.

**SOURCE 2.37** J.P.V.D. Balsdon (ed.) 1965, *Roman Civilization*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, p. 36

## ACTIVITY 2.9

1. How would Cato the Elder's repetitive statement *Delenda est Cathago* every time he rose to speak in the Senate, correlate with Polybius's comment in Source 2.31?
2. Use the images in Sources 2.32 to 2.36 to create a brief graphic story.
3. Polybius (author of Source 2.31) 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.
4. What four things does Pausanias attribute to the Roman general Mummius in his treatment of Corinth in 146 BCE?
5. Why do you think Rome adopted a new brutal foreign policy of mass slavery?

## 2.8 Slave revolts

The first serious slave uprising against the Romans occurred in Enna, on the island of Sicily from 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 was necessary for the potential to be realised.

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

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.

**SOURCE 2.38** Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, Book 34. 2–2 and 4



**SOURCE 2.39** 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.

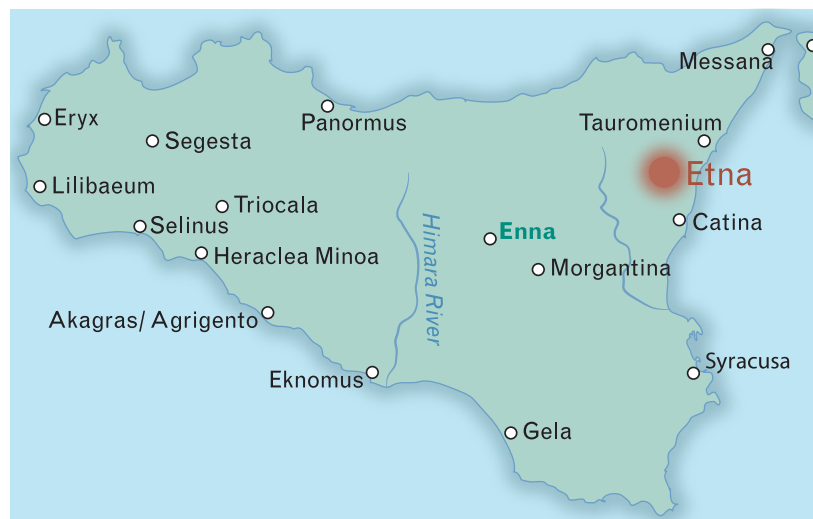
## ACTIVITY 2.10

1. What does servile mean?
2. What does Didorus of Sicily identify in Source 2.38 as the reasons for the first slave 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 135–132 BCE. Find answers to the following questions.
  - What was the specific cause of the uprising?
  - Who led the revolt?
  - What actions did he and his supporters take?
  - How did the Romans react?
  - How was the revolt finally quelled?

Include in your answers reference to Sources 2.38 and 2.40, and reflection on why Eunus may be represented in this way.



**SOURCE 2.40** Statue of Eunus breaking his chains, Enna, Sicily



**SOURCE 2.41** A map of Sicily, showing the town of Enna, where the first slave revolt occurred in 135–132 BCE.

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the Ancient World

### 2.9 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 would become critical during the tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus in 133 BCE.



Up until the Second Punic War, the plebeians were farmers, craftsmen or labourers. They would farm their own land which, even though modest, was their own property. As labourers or craftsmen, they worked for decent wages. By the early third century BCE the Roman wealthy patrician class had moved away from trade as a means to create wealth, and concentrated their energies in improving and enlarging their holdings of land. This change was as a result of Hannibal's ravaging of the Italian peninsula during the Second Punic War. When Hannibal had destroyed Roman farms and killed their owners, thousands of acres had been declared public land. With no land, the Roman plebeians had no work and so began to flood the cities. The wealthy, who had grown wealthier because of the spoils of war, bought up the farmlands so that by the middle of the second century BCE, Roman agriculture was dominated by large plantations owned by wealthy landowners. The small farmers could not compete with the huge plantations, known as *latifundia*, which were worked on by slave gangs. This, in turn, created other social problems. Unemployed farmers drifted to Rome, but could not find proper work there either. Soon they became the core of the Roman mob, which played a disastrous role in later 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 already large landholders of the Senatorial class. The wealthy landowners purchased great numbers of slaves to labour 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 which 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 of 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.

Unlike Greek slaves, the slaves from the barbarian lands, on the other hand, 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.

Slavery is an economic device to keep the payment of labour at or slightly below subsistence level. This meant that the poor who were not slaves either could not work or had to work at below subsistence wages. This caused massive migrations of the unemployed into cities. The result was not necessarily employment in a new place, but the concentration of a large population of poor, disaffected and angry free Romans. As vast amounts of wealth flowed into the hands of the upper classes, the displaced Romans now lived with overpopulation, food and housing shortages, and violence.

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. In *On Farming*, Varro recommended that free labour be used in unhealthy places. The logic behind this tip was that, unlike the death of free farmers, the death of slaves had a negative financial impact.

The sole surviving work by Cato the Elder is his *De Agricultura* (On Agriculture), a manual on farm management for absentee landowners written c. 160 BCE. Cato wrote this guide to serve the needs of the increasingly numerous owners of *latifundia*. The *latifundia* were not yet experienced in the operation of these large estates, which were developing in the transformation of Italian agriculture from subsistence farming and be one of the most important sources of income for the Roman ruling class. *De Agricultura* is especially important for its evidence on the beginnings of plantation slavery in Italy. In the text, Cato described slaves as if they were 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 freeman.

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.

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!

**SOURCE 2.42** Pliny, *Natural History*, XVIII.iv

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

The rich got hold of the great part of this undistributed land [land which lay uncultivated because of all the warfare in past years] and, encouraged with the passage of time to believe that nobody would ever now take it away from them, they went on to acquire neighbouring lands and the smallholdings of the poor, partly by purchase and persuasion and partly by force, cultivating wide estates in place of single farms and using slaves as field-workers and herdsmen to avoid having free labourers dragged off from their farm-work to serve in the army. At the same time this slave-ownership brought them a lot of profit from the high birth-rate among their slaves, whose numbers increased since they were not exposed to the risks of military service. In consequence the powerful men became extremely rich and the slave population multiplied throughout the land, while the Italians diminished in numbers and quality, worn down by poverty and taxes and conscription. Even if they chanced to have any respite from these burdens, they spent their time in idleness, since the land was held by the rich, and the rich used slaves to work the land in place of free men.

**SOURCE 2.43** Appian, *Civil Wars*, 1.7–8

Diodorus Siculus is known for his accounts of the first two slave revolts that occurred in Sicily at the end of the second century BCE. In the following source, he gives some information of the treatment of slaves employed in the mines.

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

**SOURCE 2.44** Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, Bk 5, 38

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

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.

**SOURCE 2.45** Livy, *History of Rome*, XXXIX. Vi 3–9

## ACTIVITY 2.11

1. What action during the second century BCE had 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 2.43 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 2.42 and 2.43 did the *latifundia* create?
5. Apart from the reason stated by Appian in Source 2.43, what other factors probably made slave labour more attractive to landowners than free labour?
6. Why does Diodorus Siculus suggest in Source 2.44 that those who worked in the mines preferred death to life?
7. Why would Livy suggest in Source 2.45 that slaves who could prepare food would be rising in value?
8. Use Sources 2.42 to 2.45 to respond in a well-structured paragraph to the statement: Ancient Rome was no longer an economy with slaves but a slave economy.

## 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.

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.

**SOURCE 2.46** Cato, *De Agricultura*, 1–19

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.

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

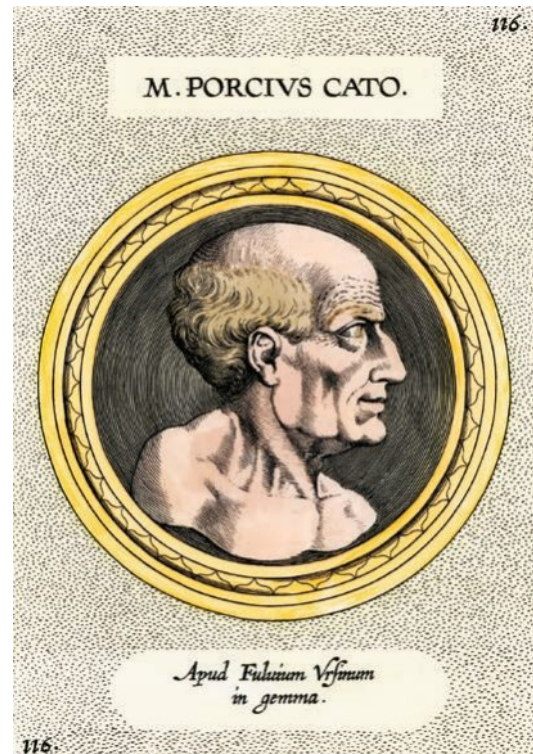
That Tuscany grew to greatness. Rome became queen of all the world,  
Ringing her seven citadels with a single wall.

**SOURCE 2.47** Virgil, *Georgics*, Book II, 513–535

Plutarch discusses the attitude of Cato towards slaves.

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.

**SOURCE 2.48** Plutarch, *Life of Cato the Elder*, xxi



**SOURCE 2.49** The severe Cato. What impression of Cato do you have when you view Source 2.49? Is your view corroborated or not by Source 2.48?

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

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

**SOURCE 2.50** Cato, *De Agricultura*

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.

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 2.52** Agriculture workers

**SOURCE 2.51** Columella, *Res Rustica*, Book 1, 15–16

## ACTIVITY 2.12

1. What is hypocritical about the views held by Cato and Virgil in Sources 2.46 and 2.47.
2. How does Plutarch describe the ways Cato treated his rural and domestic slaves in Source 2.48? Why did Cato prefer the 'sleepy' slaves? Does this source corroborate Source 2.50 and Source 2.51?
3. In your own words, describe how Columella treats his rural slaves in Source 2.51.
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.



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 below 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 (name of Greece in Ancient Greek) that the captives began to have a profound effect on their new masters.

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

**SOURCE 2.53** Horace, *Epistles*

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

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.

**SOURCE 2.54** Plutarch, *Life of Cato the Elder*

Cicero wrote in his *De Re Publica*:

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

**SOURCE 2.55** Cicero, *De Re Publica*, Book 93, XIX

Shown in Source 2.56 is 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 2.56** Runaway slaves

### ACTIVITY 2.13

1. Define the phrase ‘the Hellenisation of Rome’.
2. Explain in your own words the paradox in Horace’s poem in Source 2.53.
3. Plutarch appears to mock Cato in Source 2.54. How is Plutarch’s position supported by Cicero’s comment in Source 2.55?
4. Source 2.56 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?



# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- 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 from 135–132 BCE.
- Cato's *De Agricultura* is evidence of the beginnings of plantation slavery in Italy.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

Define manumission

### Devise

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

### Analyse

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

### Synthesise

Modern historians have to rely on evidence from the 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?

### Evaluate

Ancient Rome was an agrarian and slave-based economy, and its main concern was feeding the vast number of citizens and legionaries of the Mediterranean region. What effect may this have had on its foreign policy?

### Respond

Explain why the Romans always feared slave revolts.

## Assessment

### Examination-style 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 towards slavery?
3. What can the material remains tell us about the treatment and punishment meted out to runaway slaves?

### Investigation tasks

1. How did Rome establish itself as a mass slave economy in the second century BCE? Respond with reference to primary sources.



# CHAPTER 3

## Weapons and warfare of the Vikings 700–1100 CE

SIMON CORVAN

### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - a broad chronological overview, from the origins of the society to the period that is the focus for investigation.
  - the geographical location, the nature of the environment and its influence on the society.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the social structure; for example, the main social hierarchies (elites, workers, slaves, ethnic groups and foreigners), role and status of women and children, and attitudes towards women, children and education
  - political institutions for example organisation (monarchy, kingship, tyranny, republic or democracy), the role and function of key political institutions, and political positions, and key legal structures.
  - economic activities; for example, the nature and importance of economic activity (agriculture, commerce, industry, trade and building programs), the organisation of free and indentured labour, and economic exchange (tribute, taxation and coinage).
- devise historical questions and conduct research.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - key archaeological and written sources on weapons and warfare for the society selected.

### KEY DATES

793 CE

Vikings begin their attacks on Lindisfarne, England

840 CE

Viking settlers found the city of Dublin, Ireland

845 CE

Vikings sack France

844 CE

Vikings raid Seville, Spain but are repulsed

859 CE

Vikings raid Morocco

860 CE

- Rus Vikings attack Constantinople (Istanbul)
- The Vikings raid along the Mediterranean coast



- the nature of sources for weapons and warfare, and early evidence of military encounters in the Ancient World.
- the composition and role of armies and navies, and changes in forms of weapons and military tactics.
- the significance of the military.
- the political, economic and social impact of warfare and conquest.
- create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose.

### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the legacy of weapons and warfare for the selected society and modern times.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

### SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Alfred the Great
- Rollo
- Ahmad ibn Fadlan
- Erik the Red
- Olaf I
- Leif Eriksson
- Thorfinn Karlsefni
- Cnut (Canute)
- Harold Godwinson
- Harald Hardrada
- William, Duke of Normandy
- Snorri Sturluson
- Ragnar Lodbro.

**862 CE**

Novgorod in Russia founded by the Rus Vikings

**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





## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>berserker</b>	a Viking warrior who fought with uncontrollable anger
<b>chronicles</b>	annual accounts of significant events
<b>Dane</b>	Danish Vikings
<b>Danelaw</b>	the area of England ruled by the Danish
<b>hoard</b>	a large collection of valuables
<b>jarl</b>	upper class Vikings
<b>karl</b>	farmer and craftsmen Vikings
<b>longship</b>	Viking ships, also known as <i>drakkars</i> (dragon) for the shape of the prow
<b>norse</b>	loosely translates as 'north' and refers to Scandinavians
<b>Odin</b>	the Allfather, king of the Viking gods
<b>runestone</b>	a large carved stone, often funerary
<b>Rus</b>	Swedish Vikings who invaded and settled in Eastern Europe
<b>saga</b>	semi-historical and mythical tales
<b>Scandinavia</b>	the countries of Norway, Denmark and Sweden
<b>thrall</b>	Viking slaves
<b>Valkyrie</b>	a powerful warrior woman who took souls to the afterlife
<b>Viking</b>	Scandinavian sea-faring raiders and conquerors

**911 CE**

The Viking chief Rollo 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

## Introduction

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.

The Vikings were highly successful raiders who used longships and advanced sailing skills to engage lightning fast attacks on coastal and riverside communities. Over time the patterns of raiding shifted and many Vikings engaged in 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 as well as introducing new cultural influences, such as Christianity to Scandinavia.

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. An example runestone at Hagby, Sweden is above and 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.’

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.



**SOURCE 3.2** Hagby Runestone

1010 CE	1016 CE	1028 CE	1066 CE	1066 CE	1200 CE
Viking explorer Thorfinn Karlsefni attempts to found a settlement in North America	The Danes under Cnut (Canute) conquer England	Cnut, king of England and Denmark, conquers Norway	Harold Godwinson, king of England, defeats Harald Hardrada, king of Norway, at the Battle of Stamford Bridge	William, Duke of Normandy, defeats the Saxon king Harold at the Battle of Hastings	The Icelandic sagas start with the Orkneyinga saga written by an unknown author

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to archaeology and ancient societies

To understand the Vikings, it is important to gain an overall picture of their social structure and some of the motivations for their raids by asking some important questions:

- Who were the Vikings?
- How was their society structured?
- Why did the Vikings go raiding?
- How did the Vikings come to expand beyond Scandinavia?

### 3.1 The origins of Vikings

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.4** Ahmad ibn Fadlan in Jones, G., 2001, *A History of the Vikings*, Oxford University Press, p. 164

### 3.2 How was Viking society organised?

Viking society was broadly divided into the three classes: thralls, karls and jarls. The Eddic poem *Rigsthula* explains that it was the god Rig who created the three classes.

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.5** The first thrall, described by Somerville, A. and McDonald, R., 2010, *The Viking Age: A Reader*, 2nd edn, University of Toronto Press, pp. 22–23

While slavery is abhorrent by modern standards, it was critical to Viking society. Thralls were construction workers or farmhands and were considered to be like 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.



**SOURCE 3.3** Modern day Scandinavians dressed as Vikings



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:

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.

**SOURCE 3.6** The first karl, described by Somerville, A. and McDonald, R., 2010, *The Viking Age: A Reader*, 2nd edn, University of Toronto Press, pp. 22–23

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:

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.

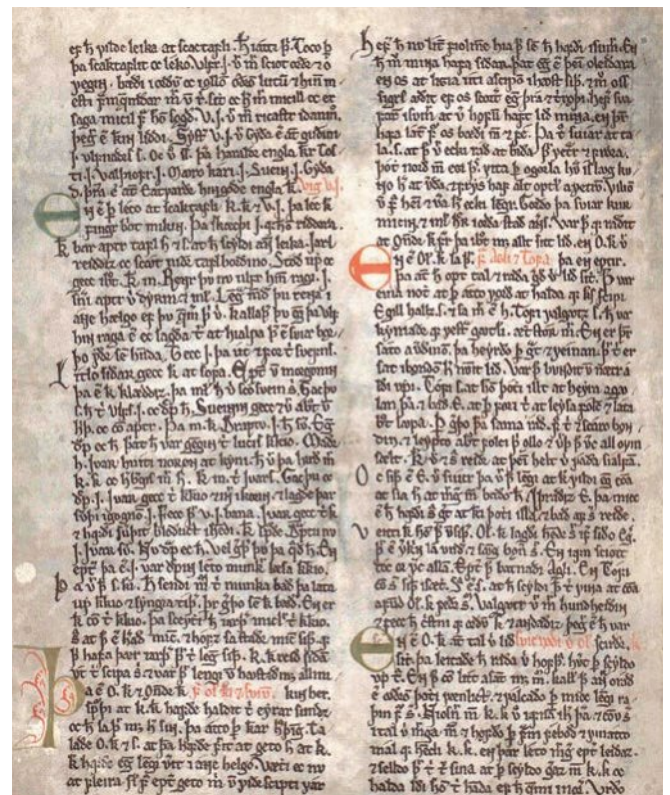
**SOURCE 3.7** The first jarl, described by Somerville, A. and McDonald, R., 2010, *The Viking Age: A Reader*, 2nd edn, University of Toronto Press, p. 25

## Sagas

As you have already seen in the *Rigsthula* poem, one of the best sources for understanding Viking society comes from the poems and sagas. Most are Old Norse works of literature written in Iceland in the early thirteenth century. The work is often assumed to have been written, or at least 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.

### ACTIVITY 3.1

1. Draw a diagram that shows the social structure of the Vikings.
2. Conduct some further research on other aspects of Viking society:
  - women
  - traders
  - craftsmen
  - children.
3. Explain why Icelandic poems and sagas such as the *Rigsthula* are both an excellent source of information and a highly problematic one.



**SOURCE 3.8** 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.

### 3.3 Raiding and being 'Vikings'

The map below shows areas of Scandinavian settlement in the eighth (dark red), ninth (red), and tenth (orange) centuries. Yellow denotes areas conquered by the Normans in the eleventh century, partly descendants of the Vikings. Teal denotes areas subjected to Viking raids.



**SOURCE 3.9** Viking expansion from the eighth to eleventh centuries

#### ACTIVITY 3.2

1. What do you think the main motive for the Viking expansion was? Discuss in groups and then as a class, particularly if there are differences of opinion.

British historian Jonathon Clements argues that raiding was essential to the Vikings' sense of community:

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.

**SOURCE 3.10** Clements, J., 2005, *A Brief History of the Vikings*, Robinson Publishing, p. 52

The sagas also express this concept of raiding and returning home with wealth and honour. Egil's saga describes the cycle clearly:

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.

**SOURCE 3.11** Egil's saga, Chapter 1, quoted in Green, W. C., 1893, 'Egils saga Skallagrímssonar'

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.12** Christian priest Dudo, 1020 CE, quoted in Roesdahl, E. (1998), *The Vikings*, Penguin, London p. 187

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.13** Anglo-Saxon Chronicle on the arrival of the Viking raiders, quoted in Roesdahl, E. (1998), *The Vikings*, Penguin, London p. 193

### ACTIVITY 3.3

1. Explain the significance of raiding to Viking society.
2. In what ways does Egil's saga suggest that raiding was an honourable activity?
3. Consider the nature of the Christian primary sources.
  - a. What claims do the Christians make about the Vikings?
  - b. How are the Vikings depicted in these sources?
  - c. Suggest why these sources were hostile to the Vikings.



## Objective 2: Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to archaeology and the features of an ancient society

### 3.4 The Viking expansion

#### How did the Vikings explore, raid and conquer?

Ships were the Vikings' most significant technological advantage. The only reason there is a period known as a 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 cm 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 and could hold 50–60 seamen, who powered the ship by rowing. The ships were built from strong oak and split with axes so that the grain in between the ship's planks meshed together and added durability. There was a relatively short mast used for gathering speed rather than steering, and steering was accomplished with a single rudder in the stern. Most Viking warships were very sturdy and able to handle either open ocean or small rivers. Some of the larger ships had the capacity to hold an extra set of rowers, which meant that the Vikings did not need to rest at night and could continue sailing or rowing. 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 favorable, 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.



**SOURCE 3.14** Gokstad ship on display at the Viking Ship Museum in Oslo, Norway



**SOURCE 3.15** Gokstad ship on display at the Viking Ship Museum in Oslo, Norway

### ACTIVITY 3.4

1. Research the Gokstad ship. Below are several questions to get your research started.
  - Where was it discovered?
  - Why was it completely buried?
  - How was it constructed?
  - How does it compare to other ship burials such as the Oseberg ship?
  - 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.



**SOURCE 3.16** Modern replica of a Viking vessel, *Sea Stallion* from *Glendalough*

*Sea Stallion from Glendalough* is the largest reconstruction of a Viking Age warship. The original ship on which the reconstruction is based was built at 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.

### ACTIVITY 3.5

1. Refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 2* for guidelines on structuring an essay or assignment to create an argument. You will be advised to define your research by using sub-questions. Imagine that the set research question is 'What effect did technology have in the role and success of Viking expansion in the eighth–eleventh centuries?'
  - a. What option in the Skills Toolkit do you think best suits this type of question? How would you structure your investigation and response to this question?
  - b. Create three to four sub-questions to help you frame your investigation and response.



## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the Ancient World

### 3.5 Viking weapons

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 leathers 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.

## ACTIVITY 3.6

1. After reading the information below and conducting some additional research, create a list of the common equipment, weapons and armour that a Viking would have carried into battle.
2. Explain why the archaeological records for armour and weapons is limited.
3. Construct a list of advantages and disadvantages of the different armour types worn by Vikings.
4. Compare and contrast the major types of Viking weapons.

The image of the Viking warrior depicts a reasonably common set of equipment and weaponry. The vast majority of Vikings would have been armoured with 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 kg and contain 30 000 individual rings of iron.



**SOURCE 3.17** Modern day re-enactment of a Viking warrior



**SOURCE 3.18** Close-up of Viking warrior re-enactment



**SOURCE 3.19** Detail of reconstruction of chainmail

### 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. In a similar manner to swords, 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.

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.





**SOURCE 3.20** Gjermundbu helmet (Norway)



**SOURCE 3.21** Modern reconstructions of Viking helmets

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.

## 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. 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. Spear heads measured around forty centimetres with a tendency towards slightly longer and narrower heads in the later Viking Age. Spear heads with winged edges are called *krókspjót* (hooked spear) and could be used to catch the edge of shields and pull enemies off balance. Some larger-headed spears were called *höggspjót* (chopping spear) and could also be used for cutting like a sword as well as stabbing. 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 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 3.22** Danish axe as depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry, c. 1066 CE

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:

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 3.23** Brief at National Museum of Denmark



**SOURCE 3.24** Mammen axe

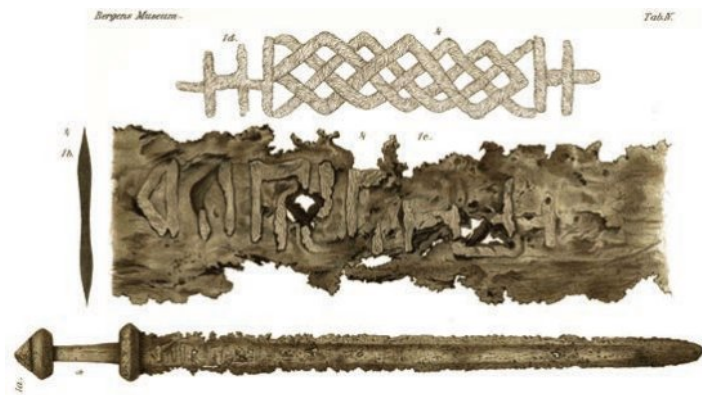
## Swords

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 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 sixteen 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 sixteen 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 *Fótbitr* (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 as Geirmundr has treated her dishonourably.

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 cm in length and only became longer much later in the Viking era, when they were up to 100 cm. Blades were typically 4–6 cm wide and usually sharp on both sides. Combined with the hilt and pommel (needed for balance) the swords weighed between 1–2 kilograms and balanced closer to the hilt due to the tapering of the blade.



**SOURCE 3.25** Viking swords, originals and replicas



**SOURCE 3.26** A detailed drawing of a Viking Age sword from the early ninth century found at Sæbø in the west of Norway with runes still visible

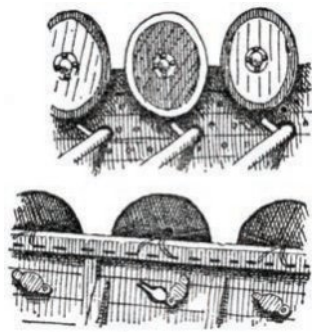


## Shields

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 fairly 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 3.27** Replica shield



**SOURCE 3.28** Drawing of shields that fit onto a Drakkar ship from *Nouveau Larousse Illustré* (Larousse XIXs. 1866–1877)



**SOURCE 3.29** Trelleborg 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.

According to Rolf Warming, an archaeologist and researcher at the University of Copenhagen, the Vikings did not use shield walls in combat, and Warming discusses this in the article below:

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.

**SOURCE 3.30** Lanesskog, T., 'Research: Vikings Did Not Hide Behind Shield Walls', *thornews.com*, August 30, 2017

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

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 mail-shirted men, where arrows lodged in shields; the volley of spears from the dragon [longship] increased.

**SOURCE 3.31** *Sexstefja* poem

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 Híttdalakappa*, 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 berserk'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.'

### ACTIVITY 3.7

1. Explain why Vikings used light wooden shields.
2. How did the Vikings use their shields both defensively and offensively?
3. Although the sources disagree, make a decision as to 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 and re-enact artefacts using only the technology and materials available to people in the past to test a hypothesis. This can involve drawing inferences from sketches and partial archaeological remains. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this approach?

## 3.6 Viking 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 Thórbjörn Hornklofi in the late ninth century. The poem was composed in honour of King Harald Fairhair, and the berserker were referred to as *ulfbædnar* (men clad in wolf skins). This translation from the *Haraldskvædi* saga describes Harald's berserkers:

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 3.32** Thórbjörn Hornklofi, *Haraldskvædi*

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.33** Snorri Sturluson, *Ynglinga* saga, Chapter 6

The twelfth century Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus described a berserk rage in which a warrior killed his own men:

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.

**SOURCE 3.34** Saxo Grammaticus, *The Danish History*, Book VII

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' work.



**SOURCE 3.35** Lewis Chessmen



**SOURCE 3.36** 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.

### ACTIVITY 3.8

1. Consider the evidence for berserker warriors.
  - a. What claims are made about berserkers?
  - b. How valid do you think the evidence is?
  - c. Assuming the evidence is accurate, what impact would a berserker have on the morale of the enemy?

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument in relation to archaeology and ancient societies

Lightning-fast raids were the most common way that Vikings attacked for around the first sixty years of the Viking Age. Then, in 851 CE, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles state that '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.

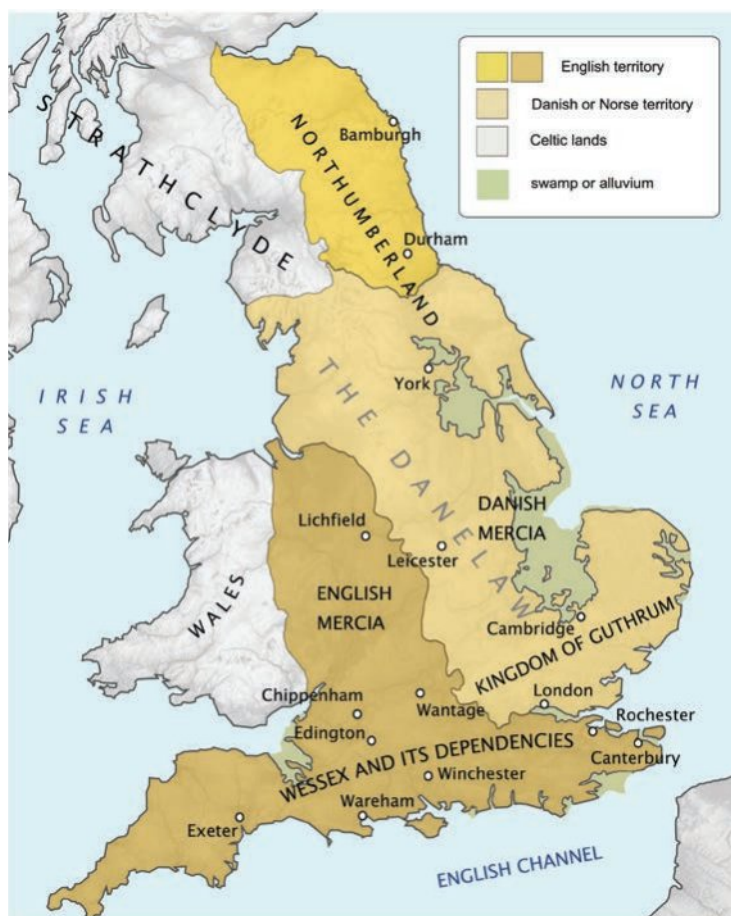
### 3.7 Viking raids

Else Roesdahl, a Danish historian, describes the ways in which the raids changed over time:

The first recorded attack was in 820 CE on France. The Frankish Annals claim 13 Viking ships tried to attack but were defeated by the French navy. The same Vikings tried to raid further south at Seine but also failed. Finally, in Aquitaine they were able to seize good booty. Later on, another form of coastal defence was developed: Viking chieftains were given regions around the mouths of rivers in return for providing protection against other Vikings and becoming Christians (or at least pretending to). This control of rivers became control of trade and Vikings who ruled these rivers became very rich. Beyond this, these river mouths became Viking settlements which were used as bases from which to attack places even further south. In 843 CE the Annals of St Bertin described how the Vikings were buying houses and had settled in. In 845 CE the Viking settlers on the coastline struck inland, looting Paris on Easter Sunday. The King Charles the Bald paid them 2600kg of silver to stop attacking, the first of many such payments. During this time several Viking armies were active, in 861 King Charles promised a large sum of money to an army of Vikings to drive out another army of Vikings.

**SOURCE 3.37** Roesdahl, E. 1998, *The Vikings*, Penguin, pp. 196–199

The British Isles experienced multiple Viking invasions and conquests. In 865 CE the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles describe the Great Heathen Army composed of thousands of Vikings who 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. The Vikings did not give up their dreams of ruling England and, in 1016 CE, King Cnut the Great successfully conquered England. Viking claims over England lasted until 1066 CE when William of Normandy won the Battle of Hastings and ended the Viking Age.



**SOURCE 3.38** Invasion of England in the ninth century



The *Encomium Emmae Reginae* describes King Cnut's invading force:

here were ... so many kinds of shields, that you could have believed that troops of all nations were present ... Gold shone on the prows, silver also flashed on the variously shaped ships ... For who could look upon the lions of the foe, terrible with the brightness of gold, who upon the men of metal, menacing with golden face ... who upon the bulls on the ships threatening death, their horns shining with gold, without feeling any fear for the king of such a force?

**SOURCE 3.39** *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, a Latin manuscript devoted to Queen Emma of Normandy c.1041 CE

### ACTIVITY 3.9

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?

One measure of Viking settlement is the archaeological remains, and historian Anna Ritchie's modern analysis of the spread of Viking culture focuses in part on the significance of Viking brooches:

One of these everyday objects and something that is found wherever the Vikings settled is the oval brooch. This was a favourite item of jewellery in Scandinavia, and it is so standardised in design that it is instantly recognisable. This makes it very useful to the archaeologist as an indicator of Viking activities. It turns up in Norway, Denmark, Sweden, England, Scotland, Ireland and even as far away as Iceland and Russia. About 10–12 cm long, the oval brooch was mass-produced in hundreds in workshops throughout Scandinavia during the ninth and tenth centuries.

**SOURCE 3.40** Anna Ritchie, 'Viking Colonists', *BBC History*, 17 February, 2011



**SOURCE 3.41** Viking brooch, c. 900 CE

### ACTIVITY 3.10

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.

## ACTIVITY 3.11

1. Synthesis, like summary, is reducing information from a range of material or a long source extract to its most important features or points. Create five main points that you believe are most important in the understanding of this section. Rank those points (1–5) in order of importance. Give reasons for your prioritisation. Discuss with others in your group or class. Do they agree? Why or why not?

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the Ancient World

### 3.8 Representations of Vikings over time

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. While it may be easy to dismiss the Vikings purely as evil raiders sent by God to punish the Christians, there is a lot more to the story.

Many of the enemies of ancient Rome had no written language, or none that is decipherable and known to us today. This tends to lead to a general conclusion (not necessarily true) that the ‘civilised’ Romans were better than the ‘barbarian’ opposition to Roman expansion. 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 then 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:

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.

**SOURCE 3.42** Lonnroth, L., 1997, ‘The Vikings in History and Legend’, in Sawyer, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*, Oxford University Press, p. 225

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.43** Sawyer, P., 1997, *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*, Oxford University Press, p. 250

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.44** Symeon of Durham, *History of the Church of Durham*

Regino, the Abbot of Prüm Monastery wrote in 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.

**SOURCE 3.45** Regino's Chronicle, 892 CE

Ermentarius of Noirmoutier in 860 CE recorded that:

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.

**SOURCE 3.46** Ermentarius, 860 CE

The annals of Xanten, a French monastery, records that in the year 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.

**SOURCE 3.47** *Annals of Xanten*, 837 CE

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.48** Adam of Bremen

The *Encomium Emmae Reginae* is a political tract that praises Queen Emma, wife of the Danish conqueror King Cnut. It clearly outlines the bravery of the Viking warriors who went with King Cnut to invade England in 1016:



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.

**SOURCE 3.49** *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, c. 1041

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:

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.

**SOURCE 3.50** *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.51** Winroth, A., 2014, *The Age of the Vikings*, Princeton University Press, p. 126

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

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 890s, 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 profit-makers and those who robbed them of profit, the explorers and colonisers, the shapers of verse-forms and makers of legend.

**SOURCE 3.52** Jones, G., 2001, *A History of the Vikings*, Oxford University Press, p. 348

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. Traces of wear on skeletal teeth show that tooth-picks 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:

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 3.53** *The Chronicle of John of Wallingford* (c. 1225–1250)



**SOURCE 3.54** Tenth-century Viking comb



**SOURCE 3.55** The Jelling beaker, 800–1050 CE

### ACTIVITY 3.12

1. Create a table of the sources that show 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. Make a decision – how should the Vikings be remembered? Engage in a class discussion in which you justify your decision with evidence.

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to the Ancient World

### 3.9 Female Viking warriors

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 that 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 orthodox understanding?

#### ACTIVITY 3.13

GO

1. When completing your response below, refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 6*, particularly the information on integration and incorporation of evidence into a paragraph, using appropriate text forms and language conventions.
  - a. Consider the evidence presented below and decide if Viking women could be warriors.
  - b. Create and sustain a response that clearly argues your decision and draws on three to four sources of evidence.

The sagas contain many examples of shield maidens such as Brynhildr in the *Volsunga* saga, Hervor in the *Hervarar* saga, the Swedish princess Thornbjörg in *Hrólfs* saga, and Visna and Veborg in *Gesta Danorum*. While much of the primary source evidence comes from the sagas, there are occasionally some more reliable historical sources that mention female Viking warriors. The Greek historian John Skylitzes wrote *A Synopsis of Histories* on the Byzantine Empire and states that women fought against the Byzantines in Bulgaria in 971 CE.

The Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus (c. 1160–c.1220) claimed:

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 ...

**SOURCE 3.56** Saxo Grammaticus, *The Danish History*, Bk 5

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.57** Saxo Grammaticus, *The Danish History*, Bk 8

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.58** Jesch, J., 2014, 'Viking women, warriors, and Valkyries', *The British Museum blog*, 9 April 2014

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.59** Andersen, J., 2008, 'Shield of Nordic Myth', *Motpol*

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

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.

**SOURCE 3.60** Moen, M., 22 August, 2016, 'Women in the Viking Age Then and Now', *DangerousWomenProject.org*

Archaeological remains are highly contested also. There are some female graves that contain weapons, but it is not possible to automatically assume the women buried were warriors. The Norwegian anthropologist Terje Birkedal analysed the evidence:

In the late 19th century a high-status Viking-era grave was excavated at Birka, Sweden. The grave goods included a sword, an axe, a spear, a battle knife, several armor-piercing arrows, and the remains of two shields. Two horses were also buried with the grave's inhabitant. Until 2014 the grave was thought to belong to a man, but a forensic study of the skeleton in 2014 suggested that the buried person was a woman. This hypothesis was confirmed by a DNA study in 2017... As it turns out, this find is not all that unusual. Very similar Viking-era graves of women have been excavated in Nordre Kjølén, Aunvoll, and Solør, Norway. Like the Swedish woman at Birka, these Norwegian women were buried with a sword, an axe, a spear, arrows, and a shield ... Another grave

(continued)

from Kaupang, Norway, contained a woman seated in a small boat with an axe and a shield boss. Still another high-status grave in Rogaland, Norway, turned up a woman with a sword at her side.

**SOURCE 3.61** Birkedal, T., October 9, 2017, 'Who were the Vikings?', *norwegianamerican.com*

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



**SOURCE 3.62** Tjängvide stone, Sweden – a Valkyrie and Odin welcome a warrior into Valhalla

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- 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 ship building 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.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

Explain the function of raids for Viking society.

### Devise

Devise a series of questions that will enable you to effectively research the impact of the Vikings on England.

### Analyse

Analyse the impact of the Christian primary sources on modern understandings of the Vikings.

### Synthesise

There are many different types of sources for the Vikings (sagas, Christian, Muslim and archaeological). Create a chart that outlines the major strengths and weaknesses of each type.

### Evaluate

Evaluate the evidence of the roles of women in Viking society.

### Respond

How should the Vikings be remembered by history?

## Assessment

### Examination-style 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. Investigate the connections between the Vikings and Christianity. What role did Christianity play in ending the Viking Age?



## CHAPTER 4

The family in Spartan society  
c. 700–371 BCE

RASHNA TARAPOREWALLA

## TOPIC DESCRIPTION

## Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - a broad chronological overview, from the origins of the society to the period that is the focus for investigation.
  - the geographical location, the nature of the environment and its influence on the society.

## Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the social structure, for example, main social hierarchies (elites, workers, slaves, ethnic groups and foreigners), role and status of women and children, and attitudes towards women, children and education.
  - political institutions, for example, organisation (monarchy, kingship, tyranny, republic or democracy), the role and function of key political institutions, and political positions and key legal structures.
  - economic activities, for example, the nature and importance of economic activity (agriculture, commerce, industry, trade and building programs), the organisation of free and indentured labour, and economic exchange (tribute, taxation and coinage).
- devise historical questions and conduct research.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.

## KEY DATES

756 BCE

*Ephor* list begins

743–724 BCE

First Messenian War

669 BCE

Defeat by  
Argos at the  
Battle of Hysiae

550 BCE

Beginning of the  
Peloponnesian League

480–79 BCE

Spartan involvement  
in Persian Wars

478 BCE

Recall of Pausanias

- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the key archaeological and written sources on the family for the society selected.
  - the nature of sources on the family and early depictions of the family (men, women and children) in the historical record.
  - beliefs and practices that influenced family life, for example, the purpose of marriage and betrothal, marriage rituals, divorce, concubines, infanticide, concepts of gender, and the role and status of women, leisure activities.
  - different concepts of the family, family structures and family ties, and the roles and relationships within the family.
  - concepts of childhood and childhood experiences, for example, education, rites of passage, age of adulthood.
- create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose.

### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the significance of the family in social and political life.

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### SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Lycurgus
- Alcman
- Tyrtaeus
- Herodotus
- Thucydides
- Xenophon
- Aristotle
- Plutarch

464 BCE

Earthquake and  
helot revolt

457 BCE

Battle of Tanagra

457–45 BCE

War with Athens

431–404 BCE

The Peloponnesian  
War

425 BCE

Surrender at Sphacteria

424–22 BCE

Brasidas in Thrace



## MAP



**SOURCE 4.2** The city of Sparta and surrounding territory

**421 BCE**

Peace of Nicias

**413 BCE**

Occupation of Decelea

**412 BCE**

Alliance with Persia

**404 BCE**

Sparta defeats Athens

**371 BCE**

Battle of Leuctra





## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>agoge</b>	raising or upbringing in Spartan education
<b>asty</b>	city centre
<b>democracy</b>	government by the people; a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free electoral system
<b>ephor</b>	one of five officials elected each year
<b>hoplite</b>	heavily-armed foot soldier
<b>helot</b>	a class of people making up the main population of Laconia and Messenia, mainly working in agriculture for Spartan citizens
<b>kleros</b>	(pl. <i>kleroi</i> ) an allotment of land
<b>krypteia</b>	secret police
<b>Lacedaemonians</b>	Spartan and <i>perioikoi</i>
<b>Laconia</b>	the territory around the <i>asty</i> of Sparta
<b>Laconian</b>	term used by other Greeks to refer to both the Spartans themselves and the inhabitants of the surrounding area
<b>Messenia</b>	the fertile territory over the mountains to the west of Sparta
<b>monarchy</b>	supreme power or sovereignty held by a single person
<b>oikos</b>	(pl. <i>oikoi</i> ) house, household
<b>oligarchy</b>	a form of government in which all power is vested in a few persons or in a dominant class or clique; government by the few
<b>paidonomis</b>	an Spartan official appointed to supervise the military training of children and adolescents boys
<b>perioikoi</b>	free, non-citizen Spartans
<b>polis (pl. poleis)</b>	(pl. <i>poleis</i> ) city-state
<b>rheta</b>	oracle or law
<b>xenelasia</b>	the practice of expelling unwanted foreigners from Sparta

## Introduction

The difficulties faced by ancient historians in reconstructing family life in antiquity are nowhere more confounding than in the case of ancient Sparta. The picture which emerges from ancient sources is of a *polis* where the family was marginalised, and marriage and parenthood were subverted by an invasive state to reproduce formidable warriors for the benefit of the community as a whole. These same sources are deeply problematic and we are heavily reliant upon historically remote writers prone to mythologise, idealise or criticise the city as a model to be either avoided or emulated. Modern interpretations which accept ancient traditions concerning Sparta in an uncritical way must be reassessed.

There are important lessons in historical methodology to be gained from revising mistaken notions about Sparta and its society. The modern enquirer must be wary of the problems inherent in the extant evidence. The case of Sparta highlights that while a principal task of ancient historians is to reconstruct the past, their role equally involves admitting when adequate evidence for plausible reconstruction is lacking, and thus also involves dispelling myths about the past which can be dangerous when abused by those with their own contemporary agenda.

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to archaeology and ancient societies

### 4.1 Sparta and its influence on society

#### The consequences of geography

The Spartans called themselves Lacedaemonians and their city Lacedaemon. It was located in the south-east of the Peloponnese, the southern part of mainland Greece. The territory around Sparta, known as Laconia, was fertile, alluvial and landlocked. Sparta possessed a port, Gytheion, situated 45 kilometres to the south. Two mountain ranges surrounded Sparta, the Taygetos range dividing it from Messenia in the west, and the Parnon range to the east, separating it from the eastern coastline of the Peloponnese. Sparta's nearest neighbour, Tegea, lay some 57 kilometres to the north over the Arcadian hills. The mountains provided Sparta with a natural defensive barrier. For most of its history, Sparta was not surrounded by a fortification wall.

Their city's position inland led the Spartans to seek a military answer to resolve the problems of overpopulation and land hunger which faced most early Greek *poleis*. By the end of the eighth century, the Spartans had subjugated the inhabitants of Laconia who became known as the *perioikoi* ('dwellers round about [Sparta]'). The *perioikoi* remained free and farmed the fertile plains to the south-east of Sparta, but were required to serve in their own units within the Spartan army and did not possess the full citizenship rights of the Spartiates. Eventually, the *perioikoi* assumed responsibility for trade and commerce in Sparta, freeing the Spartiates to focus upon military endeavours. The Spartans also conquered the territory of Messenia, reducing its people to the status of *helots*, who were hereditary subjects of the Spartan state. A resentful subject population, the helots were bound to their land and obligated to work it for their Spartan masters. It is estimated that helots outnumbered Spartiates by at least seven to one. The constant threat posed by helot revolt dramatically influenced the Spartan way of life, forcing the Spartans to preserve their supremacy through the creation of a unique, militaristic society.

#### ACTIVITY 4.1

1. Study the map in Source 4.2. Locate the following:
  - a. the site of Sparta
  - b. the Eurotas river
  - c. the port of Gytheion
  - d. the Taygetos range
  - e. the Parnon range
  - f. Messenia.
2. It was atypical for a Greek *polis* to be located inland, distant from the coast. How might this have led Sparta to develop differently to other *poleis*?

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the Ancient World

### 4.2 Reconstructing Spartan society

The modern inquirer 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 equally 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 BCE poets Alcman and Tyrtaeus, and a meagre epigraphic record, Spartan voices are silent on most issues.

Yet the problem is not one of a scarcity 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. Most of our information about the way of life of the Spartans derives from two key authors, the Athenian philosopher and Laconophile Xenophon (c. 430–354 BCE), and the moralising biographer Plutarch (c. 46–120 CE). Unfortunately, the interest in Sparta which 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 either renounced or reproduced.

In consequence, the modern inquirer should always draw upon evidence from the sources in a critical way. When attempting to reconstruct family life in ancient Sparta before the Battle of Leuctra, we must 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. They note that Spartans, in the authors' 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 had 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 which would have seemed regular, 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 versus Barbarian and male versus 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 other issues, such as ordinary family life and relationships, nothing was written.
- The types of sources which can be used to reconstruct the family in Athens are not available for Sparta: there are no vase paintings, tomb sculptures, epitaphs, laws and courtroom speeches delivered in cases of family disputes or 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.

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 ancient historian is to reconstruct the past, their role equally involves admitting when adequate



evidence for plausible reconstruction is lacking, and dispelling myths which can be dangerous in the wrong hands. The past can be, and has been, abused by those with their own agenda.

## ACTIVITY 4.2

GO

The Interactive Textbook contains historiographical information about some key ancient authors on Spartan society. Read this information and then complete the table below in relation to each author as a source on the social history of Sparta.

Author	Date	Key works relating to Sparta	Genre and purpose	Strengths	Limitations

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the Ancient World

### 4.3 The Spartan mirage and Lycurgan Sparta

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 which may never have existed in reality, a phenomenon which 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 which lay some 700 years in the past at 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 then 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 suggest that he was mythical figure; most modern scholars doubt the existence of such a historical individual. It is noteworthy that the seventh-century BCE poet Tyrtaeus refers to the Great Rhetra, but not to Lycurgus. It is nevertheless convenient to speak of the system as ‘Lycurgan’.

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

In the following extracts, Xenophon and Plutarch write about Lycurgus.

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.

**SOURCE 4.3** Xenophon, *Constitution of the Spartans*, 1.1–4

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.

**SOURCE 4.4** Xenophon, *Constitution of the Spartans*, 14

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.

**SOURCE 4.5** Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 1.1–3

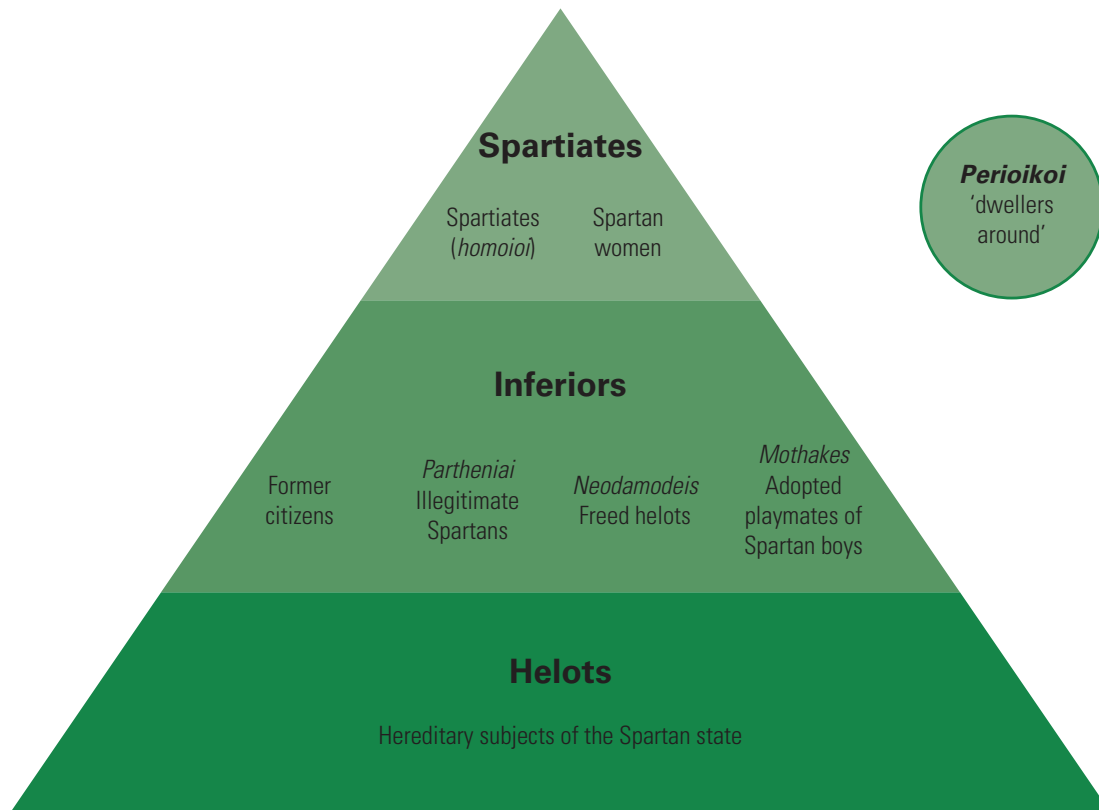
### ACTIVITY 4.3

Read Sources 4.3 to 4.5 and use them to answer the following questions.

1. What indications are there in Xenophon's writings that he considered the Spartan society established by Lycurgus as a model to be emulated? Select the best evidence from the sources to support your answer.
2. How might this point of view influence the reliability of Xenophon's writings on Spartan society?
3. 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 sources to support your answer.
4. Why might Xenophon's comments lead scholars to question whether the Spartans ever conformed to the Lycurgan laws?
5. What problems does Plutarch identify in writing his *Life of Lycurgus*?
6. What are the two principles that Plutarch states will guide his selection of material for the *Life of Lycurgus*?
7. 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?
8. 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?
9. Based upon these sources, what considerations must the ancient historian keep in mind when reading about social institutions or practices credited to Lycurgus?

## 4.4 The social structure of Sparta

The Spartan social hierarchy was structured with those who contributed to the warrior society at the top, and those who they had conquered at the bottom. The diagrams below set up the class structure.



**SOURCE 4.6** Spartan social hierarchy

**TABLE 4.1** Details of the Spartan social hierarchy

<p><b>Spartiates (<i>homoioi</i>)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• elite group of full citizens; males over 30 years</li> <li>• citizenship only achieved after successful completion of education and training in the <i>agoge</i>, and acceptance as a member of a military mess</li> <li>• warrior class supported by the state with an allotment of land (<i>kleros</i>) and state-owned helots to work it</li> <li>• forbidden to participate in farming, trade and industry</li> <li>• lived by strict code of honour; unacceptable conduct could lead to an individual's <i>atimia</i> ('loss of honour').</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inferiors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spartans who were neither <i>perioikoi</i> nor helots</li> <li>• <i>mothakes</i>: playmates of Spartan boys; participated in the <i>agoge</i> but did not become citizens</li> <li>• <i>partheniai</i>: perhaps the offspring of illegitimate unions between Spartan women and helots</li> <li>• <i>tresantes</i>: those who had shown cowardice in battle</li> <li>• <i>neodamodeis</i>: 'new people'; former helots whose military service had been rewarded with freedom, but not citizenship.</li> </ul>



### Perioikoi

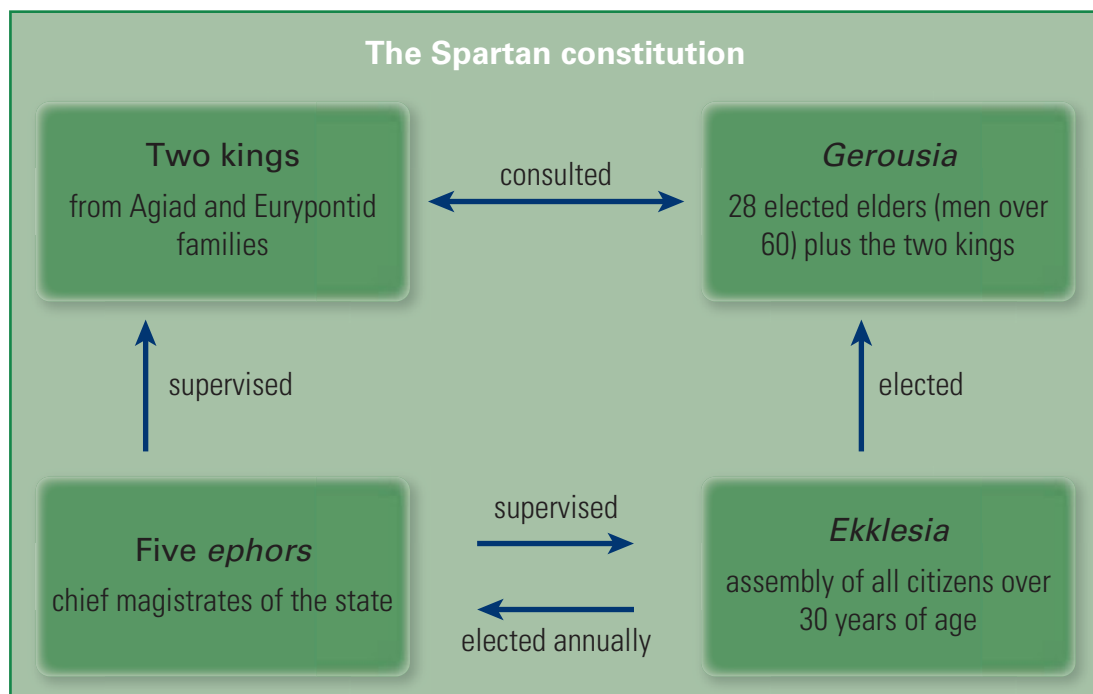
- non-helot inhabitants of Laconia, occupying the area surrounding the city of Sparta
- little written about this group in antiquity
- autonomous and free, but without full citizen rights in Spartan society
- obligated to fight within the Spartan army under a Spartan commander
- permitted to handle money and precious metals
- essential part of the Spartan economic system: traders, fishermen, sailors, manufacturers and craftsmen
- could not make alliances with others in the Peloponnese
- paid taxes to the Spartan state; could be convicted by a Spartan magistrate for crimes committed.

### Helots

- original pre-Dorian inhabitants of Laconia and Messenia
- hereditary subjects of the Spartan state
- state-owned agricultural serfs
- could only be freed or disposed of by the state
- allocated by the state to work the land of their Spartan masters
- expected to pay a large portion of their agricultural produce to their masters
- no political or legal rights, unable to marry without master's permission, or travel without government's permission
- served in army as servants to Spartan soldiers during war
- lived in fear of being beaten or killed by the *krypteia* (secret police).

## 4.5 Political institutions of Sparta

According to tradition, the Spartans changed their constitution in the seventh century BCE in accordance with an oracle from the god Apollo at Delphi received by the law-giver 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 a mixed constitution that combined elements of a monarchy, oligarchy and democracy.



**SOURCE 4.7** The Spartan constitution

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument in relation to archaeology and ancient societies

### 4.6 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*, 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.

Ancient Greek society was monogamous, and the nuclear family at the centre of the *oikos* was constituted 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 they had belonged to the husband’s *oikos*.

#### The Spartan *oikos*

Ancient and modern writers present an account of Spartan society which suggests 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. Others have come to question this view, suggesting that while the Spartan ideal prioritised the *polis* over the *oikos*, in reality the family was just as important in Sparta as elsewhere.

In the following sources, a range of twentieth and twenty-first century historians comment on the Spartan family.

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 emphasised communal responsibilities, and usurped family terminology and imagery with the purpose of strengthening bonds among members of the larger group ... Lycurgus organised 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 4.8** Pomeroy, S.B., 1997, *Families in Classical and Hellenistic Greece: Representations and Realities*, Clarendon Press, p. 48

A comment on Lycurgan Sparta:

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 mythologising perspective of historically remote sources, for whom Sparta was more of a cause célèbre or a philosophical paradigm than a historical community.

**SOURCE 4.9** Patterson, C.B., 1998, *The Family in Greek History*, Harvard University Press, p. 74

A comment on the lack of importance of the family:

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

A comment on the love of family or state:

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

**SOURCE 4.11** Powell, A., 1988, *Athens and Sparta: Constructing Greek Political and Social History from 478 BC*, Routledge, p. 228

A comment on the *oikos*:

The basic unit of society, at Sparta as elsewhere, was the *oikos*, centering on a married couple and owning land.

**SOURCE 4.12** Redfield, J., 1978, 'The Women of Sparta', *The Classical Journal*, 73(2), p. 158

A comment on the problems with the scholar's view of the Spartan family:

According to many scholars in Sparta the family was marginalised ... 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.

**SOURCE 4.13** Kulesza, R., 2013, 'The Spartan Family', *EOS C 2013*, fasc. 2, p. 207

## ACTIVITY 4.4

Read through Sources 4.8 to 4.13.

1. Which viewpoint does each of the sources support? Complete the table below, providing a synthesis of the key arguments of each source.
  - a. The *oikos* was not as important as the state within Spartan society.
  - b. It is a mistake to view the *oikos* as less important in Spartan society than it was elsewhere.

Author	Viewpoint (a or b)	Synthesis of key points
Pomeroy		
Patterson		
Oliva		
Powell		
Redfield		
Kulesza		



## Forming an *oikos*: Spartan marriage

An *oikos* was created when a man and woman joined together in marriage. Marriage was taken very seriously in Sparta, and many ancient commentators noted the absence of adultery. According to Plutarch (*Lycurgus*, 15.1), men who chose to remain bachelors were dishonoured through exclusion from the *Gymnopedias*, a festival where nude youth paraded before the rest of the community and potential spouses (Plutarch *Lycurgus*, 15.1).

By Greek standards, Spartan women married relatively late. While in Athens it was common for a fourteen-year-old girl to marry a thirty-year-old man, Spartan women were about eighteen when they married, and men were probably at least twenty. As elsewhere in ancient Greece, marriage was not necessarily founded upon an emotional attachment. Herodotus (6.57, 71) refers to a number of instances when a Spartan woman's father selected her husband. 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 (*Pol.* 1270b 1–4), men who produced three or four sons were granted exemptions from military service and taxation by the state.

Xenophon comments on sexual intercourse within marriage:

[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 4.15** Xenophon, *Spartan Constitution*, 1.5–6, 7–10

Plutarch describes the secret visits between brides and grooms:

[Lycurgus] decreed that those who did not marry would lose a civic right, for they were excluded from the spectacle of the *Gymnopedias* [parade of 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



**SOURCE 4.14** Stone pyramid stele with relief scene showing Menelaus embracing his young bride Helen, from an open-air sanctuary in Magoula, Sparta, c. 600–570 BCE, Sparta Archaeological Museum

time with her, he would depart discreetly so as to sleep wherever he usually did with the other young men. And he continued to do this thereafter. While spending the days with his contemporaries, and going to sleep with them, he would cautiously visit his bride in secret, embarrassed and fearful in case someone in the house might notice him. His bride at the same time was scheming and helping to plan how they might meet each other unobserved at a suitable time. They did this not just for a short period, but for long enough that some might even have children before they saw their own wives in the day. Such intercourse was not only an exercise in self-control and moderation, but also meant that partners were fertile physically, always fresh for love, and ready for intercourse rather than being satiated and impotent from unlimited sexual activity. Moreover some lingering spark of desire and affection always remained in both.

**SOURCE 4.16** Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 15. 1, 3–7

Historian Sarah Pomeroy comments on the capture of the bride:

The ‘capture’ of the bride was a ritual enactment of a prearranged betrothal. The bridesmaid was ready and waiting with the bride’s costume ... An abduction rather than a joyous spectacular wedding ceremony may serve to ward off the jealous evil eye. The shaving of the head and dressing of the bride as a man (Plutarch, *Lyc.* 15.8) may have been part of a rite of passage that signalled her entrance into a new life. As a maiden she wore her hair long and uncovered, as a wife she wore it short, and covered by a veil. In some sense, she was transformed into a youth in the *agoge*. Since participation in the *agoge* was a prerequisite to becoming a full-fledged citizen, the transvestism may have been symbolic of the bride’s inclusion in the citizen body. It may also have been an attempt to ward off the evil eye or the supernatural spirits who were deemed to be jealous of the bride’s fortune.

**SOURCE 4.17** Pomeroy, S.B., 2002, *Spartan Women*, Oxford University Press, p. 42

Sue Blundell talks about the Spartan marriage ceremony, pointing out a similarity with that of the Athenians:

As in the Athenian marriage ceremony, the motif of abduction may have had a purely symbolic significance, suggesting the violence of the transition which the bride was undergoing. The cutting of the bride’s hair would similarly have denoted the new status which she was about to acquire. However, her masculinisation is more difficult to explain. It was not entirely unique, and can perhaps best be seen as a remnant of a full cross-dressing ritual in which the donning by each partner of the clothing of the opposite sex was intended either to confuse evil spirits, or to underline sexual complementarity by introducing a temporary reversal of the roles which each would play in their subsequent relationship. In the surviving form of the rite, however, the sexual ambiguity was all on the female side, and ... this may have had the effect of easing the emotional threat which marriage represented to a man whose loyalty had hitherto belonged solely to all-male groups.

**SOURCE 4.18** Blundell, S., 1995, *Women in Ancient Greece*, Harvard University Press, p. 153

## ACTIVITY 4.5

Study Sources 4.14 to 4.18 to answer the following questions.

1. Both Xenophon and Plutarch emphasise that the production of healthy children was the main goal of marriage in Sparta. Why might it have been important to the state for Spartiates to reproduce?
2. In what ways does Plutarch’s account agree with that of Xenophon?

(continued)

## ACTIVITY 4.5 continued

3. What indications are there that Xenophon is presenting the Spartan system of marriage as a praiseworthy alternative to that of other *poleis*? How might this lead to distortions of the evidence? Is his account reliable?
4. Some of the more unusual customs described by Plutarch, such as the cutting of the bride's hair and the secret marriage, are not mentioned by Xenophon. How might you account for this? Consider the purpose of each author, the plausibility of Plutarch's account, and the time separating the two authors.
5. The relief shown in Source 4.14 depicts the legendary king of Mycenaean Sparta, Menelaus, embracing his young bride, Helen, who offers him a wreath. It is dated to the sixth century BCE. Could this scene be used to corroborate Plutarch's account of the practice of bride capture?
6. Why might it be problematic to consider this relief as an illustration of Spartan marriage customs?
7. Do Pomeroy and Blundell agree in their interpretation of the symbolism of Spartan marriage customs?
8. What might we glean from these passages about Spartan marriage customs? What might we glean from these passages about the nature of Spartan marriage?

## 4.7 Spartan fathers

The image of Sparta presented in the sources is that of a totalitarian state in which familial life was heavily regulated by the government in order to achieve the martial goals of the community as a whole. If the Lycurgan constitution was ever implemented to the extent later writers claim, the obligations of a Spartiate and the intervention of the state would have radically impinged upon the customary role and privileges of a father as *kyrios*.

### Absent fathers

Plutarch suggests that Spartiates did not live with their wives and children at the beginning of their marriage. This would represent a significant disruption of the traditional *oikos*. Based upon this evidence, some scholars have argued that the Spartan family spent limited time together within the *oikos*. Others, however, have challenged this assumption, suggesting a greater degree of contact between a Spartiate and his family unit.

In the following source, Plutarch talks about the cohabitation of men and women.

[It] can be observed in Plutarch's statement that the ordinary men and women allegedly did not cohabit until much later in life, probably not until the time that their first male offspring would have entered the *agoge*. While the mother presumably lived with the offspring of the marriage, the male lived with his fellow Spartiates while his first children were still young.

**SOURCE 4.19** Scott, A.G. 2011, 'Plural Marriage and the Spartan State', *Historia LX*, p. 418

Modern historian Ryszard Kulesza comments on the uncertainty about the living arrangements of married Spartiates:

Yet where does this certainty come from ... that men of twenty to thirty years of age lived permanently in the barracks? This is one of the fundamental elements of the image of Sparta, but the issue is not as clear as it might seem. Strangely, the word for those Spartan 'barracks' is not known, nor are there any material traces of them. We are here, as in many other issues, hostages to Plutarch ... The location of the family home is another puzzle, as is where the furtively visited wife



was living. It seems bizarre ... that the young man would abduct the girl to *her* home, and that she was transferred to *his* home only after having given birth to a child. I consider it much more probable that the young bride (even, or perhaps especially, an 'abducted' one) did change her place of abode.

**SOURCE 4.20** Kulesza, R. 2013, 'The Spartan Family', *EOS C 2013*, fasc. 2, pp. 211–12

## ACTIVITY 4.6

1. Read Sources 4.19 and 4.20, and refer to previous sources. Does Xenophon provide any corroborating evidence for Plutarch's suggestion that Spartans did not cohabit in their first years of marriage?
2. What questions do you have about Spartan cohabitation which remain unanswered by Plutarch?
3. What objections might Kulesza raise concerning Scott's acceptance of the idea that Spartan brides and grooms lived apart in their first years of marriage?
4. Based upon your own reading of the sources, which argument do you find more convincing, that of Scott or of Kulesza?

## 4.8 Infants in Sparta

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 Spartan 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 were to be subjected to tests of strength from the start: washed in wine to test whether they were epileptic, denied swaddling clothes and forbidden from being fussy eaters or showing any fear of the dark. 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 Mount Taygetos. It is important to note that infanticide and exposure are practices which 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 of the practice has as yet been uncovered. While archaeologists have found a large deposit of skeletal remains at Kaiadas, the chasm of Mount Taygetos, they did not find the 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.

Plutarch describes the examination of infants and the outcome:

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.

**SOURCE 4.21** Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 16.1–2

## ACTIVITY 4.7

1. Why might the Spartan state have removed the power from the father to decide whether to rear a newborn baby?
2. Why should the ancient historian be cautious about using Plutarch's account as testimony for the practice of infanticide in Sparta?

## 4.9 Spartan mothers

When investigating the social role of Spartan women, a degree of caution must be exercised by the ancient historian. It is a topic which attracted a great deal of attention from non-Spartan writers who commented upon what was deemed extraordinary in comparison with the role of women elsewhere. As a result, motherhood is approached primarily from the point of view of the requirements of the state. Nothing is recorded of the emotional life or relationships within a Spartan family. Such accounts must be carefully evaluated. It must also be acknowledged that Spartan women are likely to have shared much in common with non-Spartan women, but similarities were considered unworthy of comment.

### Creating mothers

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.

Xenophon describes the diet and exercise ideals of Spartan girls:

First, to begin at the beginning, I will start with the begetting of children. Elsewhere those girls who are going to have children and are considered to have been well brought up are nourished with the plainest diet which is practicable and the smallest amount of luxury food possible; wine is certainly not allowed them at all, or only if well diluted. Just as the majority of craftsmen are sedentary, the other Greeks expect their girls to sit quietly and work wool. But how can one expect girls brought up like this to give birth to healthy babies? Lycurgus considered slave-girls quite adequate to produce clothing, and thought that for free women the most important job was to bear children. In the first place, therefore, he prescribed physical training for the female sex no less than for the male; and next, just as for men, he arranged competitions of racing and strength for women also, thinking that if both parents were strong their children would be more robust.

**SOURCE 4.22** Xenophon, *Constitution of the Spartans*, 1.3–8

Female exercises are outlined by Plutarch:

[Lycurgus] made the girls exercise their bodies by running and wrestling and throwing the discus and javelin so that their children in embryo would have a strong start in strong bodies and would become stronger, and the women themselves would also have the strength to bear their pregnancies and to experience childbirth more easily. He did away with prudishness, sitting indoors, and all kinds of effeminacy. He made it customary for young girls no less than boys to be nude when they walked in processions, and when they danced and sang at certain festivals with the young men present and

looking on. Sometimes the girls would make fun of individual young men, helpfully criticising their mistakes. On other occasions they would sing the praises which they had composed about those deserving them, so that they inspired them with great enthusiasm and love of glory

**SOURCE 4.23** Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 14.2–4

Spartan womanhood on modesty and sexuality, according to Euripides:

Not even if she wanted to could a Spartan woman be chaste [modest]. They leave their houses in the company of young men, thighs showing bare through their revealing garments, and in a manner I cannot endure they share the same running-tracks and wrestling-places. After that should we be surprised if you do not train up women who are chaste?

**SOURCE 4.24** Euripides, *Andromache*, 595–601 BCE

### ACTIVITY 4.8

Study Sources 4.22 to 4.25 to answer the questions below.

1. Xenophon's testimony comes at the beginning of his account of Lycurgus's reforms. What might this suggest about the way Xenophon viewed the importance of these reforms?
2. What do we learn from Xenophon about Lycurgus's regulations relating to Spartan women as potential mothers?
3. Did Xenophon approve of the measures introduced by Lycurgus relating to women? Quote from the text to support your answer.
4. Did Plutarch approve of the measures introduced by Lycurgus relating to women? Quote from the text to support your answer.
5. Both Xenophon and Plutarch are careful to draw comparisons between Spartan women and non-Spartan women. Fill in the table below, selecting the best evidence from both sources to illustrate the differences they observed.

	Sparta	Elsewhere
Diet		
Domestic work		
Exercise		



**SOURCE 4.25** Small bronze statue from Prizren or Dodona, 520–500 BCE, British Museum

6. There is no certain evidence of whether the bronze statue in Source 4.25 was discovered in Prizren or Dodona. It is associated with Sparta due to its style, which art historians identify as Laconian. How might this association affect the way that this statue is interpreted?
7. Scholars disagree as to whether the figure in Source 4.25 is running or dancing. What features might suggest an answer? Does this affect the information this artefact can provide about Spartan women?
8. The fifth century BCE Athenian playwright Euripides presents one view of Spartan women in his play *Andromache*. Using the internet, research the play's attitude to Spartan women. What does this suggest about the difference between the ideal Athenian woman and the ideal Spartan woman?



## Managing the *oikos*

Aristotle noted that the perpetual absence of Spartan men gave Spartan women great freedom and licence. Certainly, the absence of the *kyrios* would have accorded women with autonomy in running the *oikos*, and suggests that the mother was the primary caregiver for all children residing within the home. It is important, however, to question whether women's dominance of the domestic sphere was truly unique to Sparta, and whether there is foundation for the assumption that Spartan men were as continually absent as Aristotle suggests.

The licence of the Lacedaemonian women existed from the earliest times, and was only what might be expected. For, during the wars of the Lacedaemonians, first against the Argives, and afterwards against the Arcadians and Messenians, the men were long away from home.

**SOURCE 4.26** Aristotle, *Politics*, section 1269b [40] section–1270a [4]

The following two sources are from modern historians. First, Blundell comments on the position of Spartan women in the home:

by the time her husband moved into the family home [a Spartan mother] would have established her pre-eminence there, and would subsequently have had little difficulty in maintaining her position in view of her partner's frequent and sometimes prolonged absence. In Classical Athenian society, the degree of largely unacknowledged power which women exercised within the home is a matter for speculation; but the recognition of the interconnection of public and private interests did at the very least foster an ideal of male dominance in the household. In Sparta, no such ideal appears to have existed. There, the more radical separation of the public and private spheres, on both an ideological and on a material level, would have ensured that female domestic power was accepted and possibly even officially encouraged. Until his departure for barracks at the age of seven, a boy would probably have spent most of his time at home with his mother ... If a boy's emotional ties with his parents were not completely obliterated by the state education system, then it is likely that the strongest of these would have been with the mother.

**SOURCE 4.27** Blundell, S. 1995, *Women in Ancient Greece*, Harvard University Press, p. 151

Ryszard Kulesza comments on the effect of war upon our idea of the Spartans:

the majority of us almost unwittingly assume that in the life of a Spartiate there was only space for the gym, food, war and preparations for it. Plutarch's image of fun-loving Spartans: 'Choral dances and feasts and festivals and hunting and bodily exercise and social converse occupied their whole time, when they were not on a military expedition' (*Lyc.* 24.4) is at odds with their celebrated severity and discipline, but there is no space for contact with the family there anywhere ... Apart from the ... absence of husbands in day-to-day life, scholars have frequently pointed out that the wars must have been the reason for the chronic absence of men from Sparta ... One might wonder whether war truly had this influence in the sixth to fourth century. Additionally, it must be remembered that the periods of separation did not involve all couples at the same time. Yet scholars have built quite an edifice on the daily and periodical absence of husbands, especially when it comes to the woman's position in the family: they are supposed to have taken over control over the house

**SOURCE 4.28** Kulesza, R. 2013, 'The Spartan Family', *EOS C 2013*, fasc. 2, pp. 211–12

## ACTIVITY 4.9

Read Sources 4.26 to 4.28 to answer the questions below.

1. Why does Aristotle suggest that Spartan women enjoyed more autonomy than other Greek women? Does he approve or disapprove of this greater autonomy?
2. According to Blundell, did Spartan women enjoy more autonomy in running the household than Athenian women? Quote from the text to support your answer.
3. Do Kulesza and Blundell agree in their interpretation of the role of Spartan women within the *oikos*?
4. What assumptions does Kulesza accuse scholars of making when assessing the roles of men and women within the Spartan family?

### 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 which 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.

Plutarch in particular was active in recording and transmitting such anecdotes. Included in his *Moralia* was a collection of 'Sayings of Spartan Women', twenty-four of which were attributed to mothers. These take the form of a direct reply or reaction to someone's words with the purpose of providing a general declaration of a universal truth or moral principle. Many involve a mother talking to her son as a warrior and are relevant to the education of future soldiers. Scholars have noted that these sayings create a misleading impression of the real sentiments of Spartan mothers, enhancing their contribution to the *polis* in order to present an exemplum for women to emulate. Below are excerpts from these sayings.

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.'

**SOURCE 4.29** Plutarch, 'Sayings of Spartan Women', *Moralia*, 241b–c 7

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 4.30** Plutarch, 'Sayings of Spartan Women', *Moralia*, 241.1

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 4.31** Plutarch, 'Sayings of Spartan Women', *Moralia*, 241.5

Another woman handed her son his shield and exhorted him: 'Son, either with this, or on this.'

**SOURCE 4.32** Plutarch, 'Sayings of Spartan Women', *Moralia*, 241.16

## ACTIVITY 4.10

Read through Sources 4.29 to 4.32, excerpts from Plutarch's 'Sayings of Spartan Women', then answer the questions below.

1. Are these sayings attributed to historical individuals or anonymous women? How might this difference affect their reliability as sources for the true sentiments of Spartan mothers?
2. Plutarch does not provide precise dates for any of these sayings, rendering it impossible for the modern inquirer to determine a socio-political context for any of them. How might this affect their reliability as sources for the true sentiments of Spartan mothers?
3. Many of these sayings are presented as direct speech. How might this contribute to the appearance of accuracy of these texts?
4. Overall, do you regard these sayings as historically authentic? What information can be gleaned from them? What conclusions cannot be supported by them?

## 4.10 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*, relegating 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 a 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 programme which lasted the next thirteen 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 twenty with their education complete, they became a man.

There is some disagreement among scholars about the exact age structure of the classical *agoge* as the version presented by Plutarch (some 450 years later) is at odds with that presented by Xenophon and the evidence presented by epigraphy. It is also difficult to ascertain the degree to which these authors mythologised or idealised the Spartan system, exaggerating differences with other states.



Xenophon comments on the training of the boys:

Other Greeks who claim to be educating their sons in the best possible way, as soon as the boys understand what is said to them, straightaway send over servants as their escorts [*paidagogoi*], and send them to masters to learn letters and music and the exercises of the wrestling-school. In addition they soften their sons' feet with sandals, and coddle their bodies with changes of clothes; and they allow them as much food as their stomachs can take. But Lycurgus, instead of each man privately appointing slaves as *paidagogoi*, gave the responsibility of the boys' charge to one of those from whom the most important offices are appointed, who is called the supervisor of education [*paidonomos*]. He gave him the authority to muster the boys and oversee them, correcting them severely if any of them were lazy. He also gave him some of the older youths as scourge-bearers, so that they could punish them, when need be, and the result is that great self-respect and obedience are present in Sparta hand-in-hand. And instead of softening their feet with sandals he ordered them to strengthen them by going barefoot, thinking that if they practised this they would go much more easily uphill, and descend more safely and run more quickly than one in sandals. And instead of being coddled with clothing, he thought that they should become accustomed to one cloak a year, considering that in this way they would be better prepared to face cold and heat. He ordered the prefect [*eiren*] to provide just so much food that they would neither be weighed down from repletion nor lack experience of going hungry, thinking that those trained in this way would be better able, if they should have to, to toil without food, and last a longer time on the same food and stay more healthy. He also considered that a regimen which made their bodies slim would do more to increase their height than one which dilated them with food. On the other hand, so that they were not too distressed by hunger, though he did not allow them to take what they desired without trouble, he permitted them to relieve their hunger by occasionally stealing. It was not because he was at a loss what to give them that he permitted them to contrive to provide their own food – no one, I think, could fail to see that. It is clear that anyone who is going to steal must both stay awake at night, and be deceitful and wait in ambush during the day, and have spies prepared if he is going to steal something. So all this shows that he trained the boys like this because he wanted them to be more devious in procuring supplies and more warlike. Someone might say, 'Why, then, if he thought stealing a good thing, did he impose many strokes on one who was caught?' 'Because', I reply, 'whatever men teach, they punish whoever does not do it well. So, the Spartans punish those who are caught for stealing badly'.

**SOURCE 4.33** Xenophon, *Constitution of the Spartans*, 2.1–8

### ACTIVITY 4.11

Read through Source 4.33, Xenophon's description of the Spartan education system, then answer the questions below.

1. What might we glean from this passage about the level of intervention of the Spartan state upon the upbringing of children?
2. What does this passage suggest were the key values that the Spartan education system was designed to cultivate?
3. Which sections of Xenophon's account of the *agoge* suggest that the author greatly esteemed the Spartan education system? Quote from the text.
4. Are there any indications in this passage that Xenophon idealised the Spartan system?

Plutarch describes the transition from childhood:

it was not lawful, indeed, for the father himself to breed up the children after his own fancy; but as soon as they were seven years old they were to be enrolled in certain companies and classes, where they all lived under the same order and discipline, doing their exercises and taking their play together. Of these, he who showed the most conduct and courage was made captain; they had their eyes always upon him, obeyed his orders, and underwent patiently whatsoever punishment he inflicted; so that the whole course of their education was one continued exercise of a ready and perfect obedience. The old men, too, were spectators of their performances, and often raised quarrels and disputes among them, to have a good opportunity of finding out their different characters, and of seeing which would be valiant, which a coward, when they should come to more dangerous encounters. Reading and writing they gave them, just enough to serve their turn: chief care was to make them good subjects, and to teach them to endure pain and conquer in battle. To this end, as they grew in years, their discipline was proportionately increased; their heads were close-clipped, they were accustomed to go barefoot, and for the most part to play naked.

**SOURCE 4.34** Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 16.1–6

### ACTIVITY 4.12

Read through Source 4.34, Plutarch's description of the *agoge*, then answer the questions below.

1. What are the main differences between Xenophon's account and Plutarch's account?
2. How might you explain these differences?
3. Which account would you argue is more reliable?
4. In what ways might this form of education marginalise the role of the family?

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- There are significant problems involved in reconstructing any aspect of Spartan society based upon the available evidence.
- Ancient sources suggest that the Lycurgan reforms created a state which diminished the role of the *oikos* within the *polis* of Sparta.
- Modern inquirers must carefully and critically evaluate the evidence relating to the formation of the *oikos*, the role of the Spartan father, the role of the Spartan mother, education and child rearing to determine whether the sources present an idealised version of the way of life of the Spartans.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

Outline the ways in which needs of the Spartan state impacted upon:

- cohabitation of the Spartan family
- the role of the Spartan father
- the role of the Spartan mother
- education and child rearing.

### Synthesise

Review the sources presented in this chapter. According to these sources, to what extent was the family truly marginalised and replaced by the state in ancient Sparta?

### Devise

Create a mind map that charts what you have understood about the Spartan family and the connections between key areas. Make sure that your map includes the following areas:

- sources on Sparta
- the Spartan *polis*
- marriage
- Spartan fathers
- Spartan mothers
- education and child-rearing.

### Analyse

To what extent are sources on the family distorted by the Spartan mirage?

### Evaluate

How useful and reliable are the following on the topic of the Spartan family:

- Plutarch
- Xenophon?

### Respond

Can historians reconstruct aspects of ancient societies, such as Sparta, from the material available to them?



## Assessment

### Examination-style questions

1. The modern inquirer who seeks to reconstruct any aspect of Spartan society is faced with a formidable challenge. Assess the validity of this statement in reference to the Spartan family.
2. The Lycurgan reforms created a state which diminished the role of the *oikos* within the *polis* of Sparta. Assess the validity of this statement.

### Investigation task

Imagine that you are a museum curator who has been assigned the task of creating a display which provides the general public with an understanding of the role and position of the Spartan family within society. The display must bring together a group of four to six key sources, including both texts and artefacts. One of your responsibilities is to prepare the catalogue which will help museum visitors to navigate your display.

1. Devise a key inquiry question relating to the Spartan family which your exhibit seeks to address.
2. Review the sources presented throughout this chapter, and select a group of four to six sources which are relevant to answering your key inquiry question, and which demonstrate a range of views. For each source, complete a source profile using the template provided in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 3*.
3. Create a catalogue which will help museum visitors to navigate your display. Your catalogue must include:
  - a note from the curator which consists of a rationale (200–300 words) that explains the thinking behind the focus of your collection and your selection of sources.
  - catalogue entries that include an analysis of each source within your display (total 800–1200 words). These should provide a brief description of the historical evidence, and analyse its origins, purpose and context. The entries must also evaluate the historical sources with due consideration to points of view and interpretations. You may draw on the information within your source profile to help you complete these.
  - a critical summary (300–500 words) which reflects on the decisions, judgements and conclusion which might be drawn from your display.

GO





## CHAPTER 5

## Beliefs, rituals and funerary practices in Egypt during the Ramesside period (19th and 20th Dynasties)

JENNA HAYWOOD

## TOPIC DESCRIPTION

## Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - a broad chronological overview, from the origins of the society to the period that is the focus for investigation.
  - the geographical location, the nature of the environment and its influence on the society.

## Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the social structure, for example, main social hierarchies (elites, workers, slaves, ethnic groups and foreigners), role and status of women and children and attitudes towards women, children and education.
  - political institutions, for example, organisation (monarchy, kingship, tyranny, republic, democracy), the role and function of key political institutions, and political positions and key legal structures.
  - economic activities, for example, the nature and importance of economic activity (agriculture, commerce, industry, trade and building programs), the organisation of free and indentured labour and economic exchange (tribute, taxation and coinage).

## KEY DATES

c.3150–c.2613 BCE

Early Dynastic Period (1st to 2nd Dynasties)

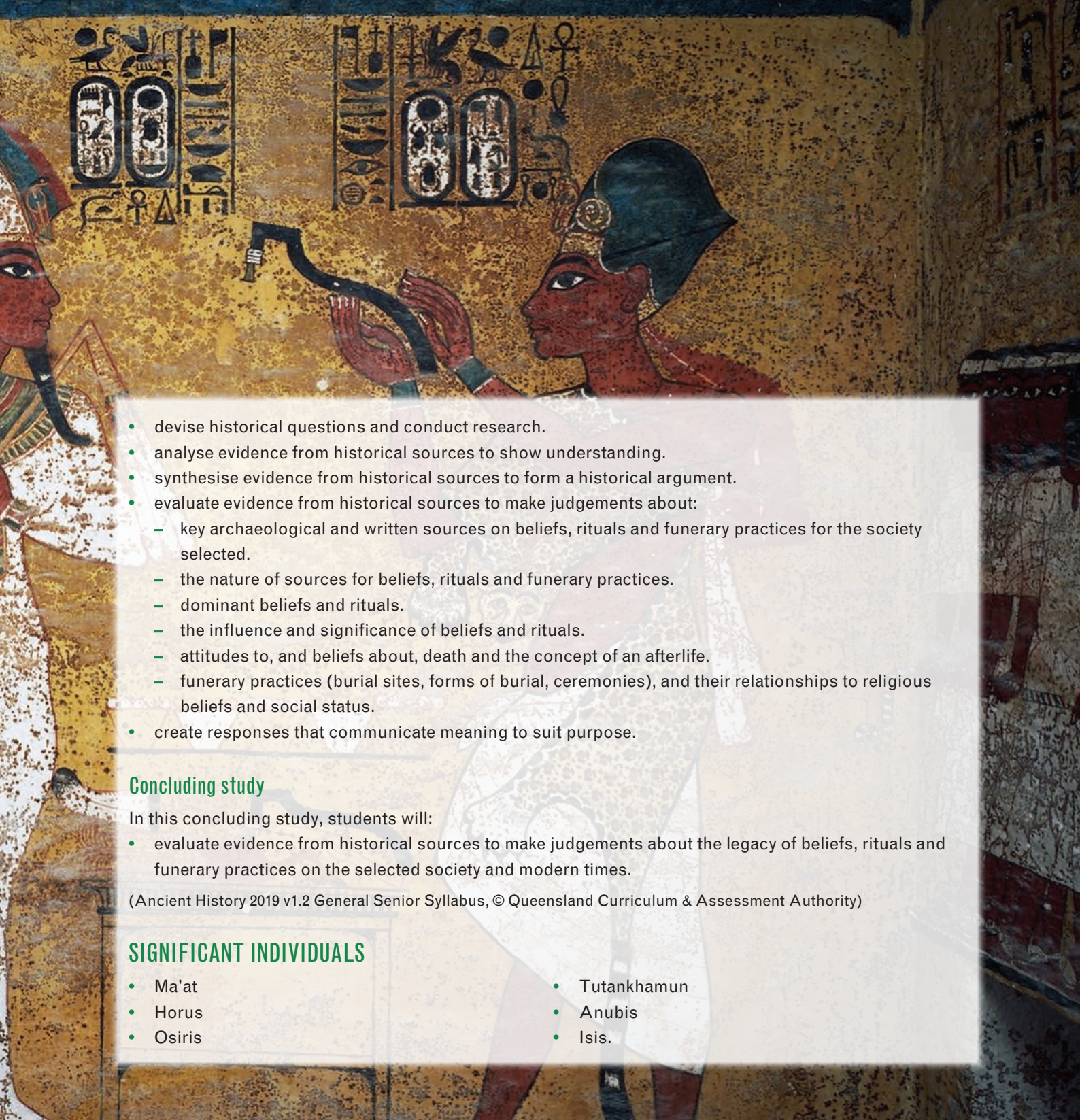
c.2613–c.2181 BCE

- Old Kingdom (3rd to 8th Dynasties)
- Use of pyramid texts began with the use of pyramids for the burial of pharaohs

c.2160–2055 BCE

First Intermediate Period (9th and 10th Dynasties)





- devise historical questions and conduct research.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - key archaeological and written sources on beliefs, rituals and funerary practices for the society selected.
  - the nature of sources for beliefs, rituals and funerary practices.
  - dominant beliefs and rituals.
  - the influence and significance of beliefs and rituals.
  - attitudes to, and beliefs about, death and the concept of an afterlife.
  - funerary practices (burial sites, forms of burial, ceremonies), and their relationships to religious beliefs and social status.
- create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose.

### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the legacy of beliefs, rituals and funerary practices on the selected society and modern times.

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### SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Ma'at
- Horus
- Osiris
- Tutankhamun
- Anubis
- Isis.

#### c.2055–1650 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)





MAP



SOURCE 5.2 Map of ancient Egypt



## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>akh</b>	fully resurrected form of the deceased person in the afterlife, similar to the modern concept of ghosts
<b>Amduat</b>	New Kingdom funerary text, translates to <i>Book of What is in the Underworld</i>
<b>ankh</b>	Egyptian symbol meaning life, illustrated as a T shape with a loop at the top
<b>ba</b>	part of the soul that holds personal characteristics of an individual, represented as a human-headed bird
<b>Book of the Dead</b>	a collection of spells, prayers and hymns that emerged at the start of the New Kingdom
<b>canopic jar</b>	jars used to store mummified lungs, stomach, liver and intestines of the deceased
<b>Duat</b>	realm of the dead in Egyptian mythology
<b>Fields of Reeds</b>	Egyptian heavenly paradise that individuals hoped to reach in the afterlife, it was a mirror image of one's life on Earth
<b>ka</b>	essentially a person's double, this was their life force – death occurred when the <i>ka</i> left the body
<b>Ma'at</b>	Egyptian goddess of truth, law, order, harmony and balance. She is usually depicted in anthropomorphic form as a winged woman with a white ostrich feather (or simply a white feather). Over time, <i>ma'at</i> evolved into a concept. For the pharaoh it meant keeping law and order, and for the people <i>ma'at</i> was the ethical and moral principle they lived by.
<b>maat kheru</b>	translates to true of voice, used to denote someone whose soul had been judged to be morally righteous
<b>mortuary temple</b>	funerary chapel that was separate from the actual tomb, where family and others could come to make offerings for the deceased
<b>mummification</b>	process of preserving a human body to ensure it remains as lifelike as possible
<b>natron</b>	a naturally occurring mineral that is often found in saline lake beds, used by the Egyptians to remove moisture from bodies during mummification
<b>Opening of the Mouth</b>	ceremony performed on the mummy immediately before burial by a priest to allow the deceased to eat and drink in the afterlife
<b>papyrus</b>	a plant common to the Nile River Valley that was most notably used to create a writing material, similar to paper
<b>shabti</b>	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
<b>Valley of the Kings</b>	main location for pharaonic burials during the New Kingdom. It is on the western bank of the Nile, opposite Thebes
<b>Weighing of the Heart</b>	a judgement test that the deceased faced before they were granted a place in the afterlife. Their heart (symbolic of their Earthly life) was weighed against the feather of Ma'at



## 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. However, 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 the ancient Egyptians.

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 themselves. 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 since they were usually the only members of society who were able to read and write proficiently. Examination of the beliefs, rituals and funerary practices of Egyptians during the Ramesside period sheds light on a complex and highly religious society.

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to archaeology and ancient societies

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.

### 5.1 The consequences of geography

#### 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 throughout the New Kingdom.

#### Nature of the environment

The most prominent geographical feature of Egypt is of course the Nile, which originates in the highlands of Ethiopia and makes its way northwards towards the Mediterranean. 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 Egyptian's 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).

## ACTIVITY 5.1

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 the development 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)?

## 5.2 Society



\* although at the bottom of the social hierarchy, slaves were not common in ancient Egypt

**SOURCE 5.3** The social structure of ancient Egypt. How does Egyptian social structure compare to that of other ancient and modern societies? Why?

### Social structure

#### The pharaoh

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.

## ACTIVITY 5.2

Conduct some further research:

1. What symbols were associated with the pharaoh and the power they had?
2. How do these symbols of power held by the pharaoh represent the complexities of the role?
3. What duality can be seen between the crook and the flail?

While pharaohs were seen as divines being 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 their own complex bureaucracies, but all of them were answerable to the pharaoh.

### Women

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.

## ACTIVITY 5.3

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?

### Political institutions

One of the prominent features of political structure in ancient Egypt, next to the monarchy, was the *nome* or 'local district'. 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.

## 5.3 Economic activities

### 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 in various families. Carpenters were responsible for building anything from boats and building framework to



**SOURCE 5.4** Administrative centres in ancient 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?



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.

### 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.

While taxation was administered by the pharaoh and viziers (second highest official to the pharaoh who supervised the day-to-day running of the country), 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 5.5** Breastplate with solar and lunar emblems, and inlaid with semi-precious stones, from the tomb of Tutankhamun. What symbols and features can you identify? Can you recognise any of the materials?



**SOURCE 5.6** Fishing scene, Saqqara (Old Kingdom – 6th Dynasty). What features can you identify in the scene?

## ACTIVITY 5.4

1. 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?

## Objective 2: Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to archaeology and the features of an ancient society

In this section, you will conduct research that aims to identify the key beliefs of the ancient Egyptian people.

### 5.4 Religion

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, which was a failure to reach the afterlife. They believed a heaven was in the realms of the sun and was a perfect version of their current life. Texts buried with the dead were there to provide directions and guidelines for their journey to the afterlife.



**SOURCE 5.7** Relief of Osiris, Horus and Isis at the Temple of Hibis, Egypt. How can you tell which figure is Osiris, Isis and Horus?



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 who dictated their lives as he controlled the movement of the sun. Most ancient Egyptian gods were depicted with a human body, but their head could be either human or animal. Many gods were worshipped on a national level, while others were predominantly the focus of local settlements. Major gods were those that had vast temple complexes dedicated to them and were served by an organised priesthood. Unlike 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.

## ACTIVITY 5.5

Complete the table below, featuring the main ancient Egyptian gods. Note that not every column is relevant to each god. 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 <i>shuti</i> 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				

## Mythology

### 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 also required mummification if the *ka* was to ensure its survival in the afterlife. Food and drink left as offerings at a mortuary temple were hoped to sustain the *ka*.





**SOURCE 5.8** *Ka and ba of Tentpessumedju*, (c. 1070–341 BCE). Which deities can you identify in this scene?

In Source 5.8, 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.

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 reanimation 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.

## ACTIVITY 5.6

1. 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 (in the form of a historical paragraph):
  - 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.

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the Ancient World

This section will focus on attitudes to, and beliefs about death and the afterlife, through guided analysis of historical sources.

### 5.5 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 (for 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.

### ACTIVITY 5.7

1. Do further research about the *Duat*. What dangers could the pharaoh encounter on his journey? How could he overcome them?

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) essentially guaranteed them safe passage.



**SOURCE 5.9** Weighing the Heart, papyrus from the Book of the Dead of Ani, Thebes, Egypt, 19th Dynasty, c.1295 BCE. British Museum, London, UK



## ACTIVITY 5.8

Using Source 5.9 and self-directed research, complete the questions below.

1. Identify the following in the image: Ani (the deceased), Anubis, Osiris, Thoth, Horus, Isis, Nephthys, 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, Nephthys, Selket, Neith.
3. What was the purpose of producing the Book of the Dead?

The Negative Confession is addressed to the gods of the 42 *nomes* of Egypt, who act as judges.

1. Hail, Usekh-nemmt, who comest forth from Anu, I have not committed sin.
2. Hail, Hept-khet, who comest forth from Kher-aha, I have not committed robbery with violence.
3. Hail, Fenti, who comest forth from Khemenu, I have not stolen.
4. Hail, Am-khaibit, who comest forth from Qernet, I have not slain men and women.
5. Hail, Neha-her, who comest forth from Rasta, I have not stolen grain.
6. Hail, Ruruti, who comest forth from Heaven, I have not purloined offerings.
7. Hail, Arfi-em-khet, who comest forth from Suat, I have not stolen the property of God.
8. Hail, Neba, who comest and goest, I have not uttered lies.
9. Hail, Set-gesu, who comest forth from Hensu, I have not carried away food.
10. Hail, Utu-nesert, who comest forth from Het-ka-Ptah, I have not uttered curses.
11. Hail, Qerrti, who comest forth from Amentet, I have not committed adultery.
12. Hail, Hraf-haf, who comest forth from thy cavern, I have made none to weep.
13. Hail, Basti, who comest forth from Bast, I have not eaten the heart.
14. Hail, Ta-retiu, who comest forth from the night, I have not attacked any man.
15. Hail, Unem-snef, who comest forth from the execution chamber, I am not a man of deceit.
16. Hail, Unem-besek, who comest forth from Mabit, I have not stolen cultivated land.
17. Hail, Neb-Ma'at, who comest forth from Maati, I have not been an eavesdropper.
18. Hail, Tenemiu, who comest forth from Bast, I have not slandered anyone.
19. Hail, Sertiu, who comest forth from Anu, I have not been angry without just cause.
20. Hail, Tutu, who comest forth from Ati, I have not debauched the wife of any man.
21. Hail, Uamenti, who comest forth from the Khebt chamber, I have not debauched the wives of other men.
22. Hail, Maa-antuf, who comest forth from Per-Menu, I have not polluted myself.
23. Hail, Her-uru, who comest forth from Nehatu, I have terrorised none.
24. Hail, Khemiu, who comest forth from Kau, I have not transgressed the law.
25. Hail, Shet-kheru, who comest forth from Urit, I have not been angry.
26. Hail, Nekhenu, who comest forth from Heqat, I have not shut my ears to the words of truth.
27. Hail, Kenemti, who comest forth from Kenmet, I have not blasphemed.



28. Hail, An-hetep-f, who comest forth from Sau, I am not a man of violence.
29. Hail, Sera-kheru, who comest forth from Unaset, I have not been a stirrer up of strife.
30. Hail, Neb-heru, who comest forth from Netchfet, I have not acted with undue haste.
31. Hail, Sekhriu, who comest forth from Uten, I have not pried into other's matters.
32. Hail, Neb-abui, who comest forth from Sauti, I have not multiplied my words in speaking.
33. Hail, Nefer-Tem, who comest forth from Het-ka-Ptah, I have wronged none, I have done no evil.
34. Hail, Tem-Sepu, who comest forth from Tetu, I have not worked witchcraft against the king.
35. Hail, Ari-em-ab-f, who comest forth from Tebu, I have never stopped the flow of water of a neighbour.
36. Hail, Ahi, who comest forth from Nu, I have never raised my voice.
37. Hail, Uatch-rekhit, who comest forth from Sau, I have not cursed God.
38. Hail, Neheb-ka, who comest forth from thy cavern, I have not acted with arrogance.
39. Hail, Neheb-nefert, who comest forth from thy cavern, I have not stolen the bread of the gods.
40. Hail, Tcheser-tep, who comest forth from the shrine, I have not carried away the khenfu cakes from the spirits of the dead.
41. Hail, An-af, who comest forth from Maati, I have not snatched away the bread of the child, nor treated with contempt the god of my city.
42. Hail, Hetch-abhu, who comest forth from Ta-she, I have not slain the cattle belonging to the god.

**SOURCE 5.10** The Negative Confession

### ACTIVITY 5.9

Answer the following questions in reference to Source 5.10, the Negative Confession.

1. What is the context for the production of Source 5.10?
2. What view does Source 5.10 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 one to three.)
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?

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument in relation to archaeology and ancient societies

In this section, you will learn about funeral ceremonies, tombs and ceremonies, and grave goods used by the ancient Egyptians during burial. You will then use archaeological evidence to synthesise and make conclusions about people of the time.

## 5.6 Funeral ceremonies and grave goods

### 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.

Before the procession proper began, the mummy had to be placed inside its coffin. As the visual sources here suggest, 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 simply be more elaborate paintwork, or costly and embellished materials, such as in the case of Tutankhamun and his 110 kg coffin of pure gold. A burial mask was sometimes also used and it was placed directly over the mummification wrappings. These masks were meant to replicate the face of the deceased. Tutankhamun's gold mask is inlaid with lapis lazuli, carnelian, quartz, obsidian, turquoise, glass and faience. This 11 kg mask, along with the pyramids, is perhaps the image most synonymous with ancient Egypt.



**SOURCE 5.11** The second mummiform coffin made from gold-plated wood inlaid with glass-paste, from the tomb of the pharaoh, Tutankhamun, discovered in the Valley of the Kings, Thebes, Egypt. Why would craftsmen put such effort into coffins?



**SOURCE 5.12** Tutankhamun's funeral mask (18th Dynasty, Thebes). Why is this mask such an iconic image of ancient Egypt?



**SOURCE 5.13** 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?

A priest organised the procession and could also call in 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.

### 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 simply 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.

### 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. 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 was an indicator of the wealth of the person who resided in the tomb.

### 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.



**SOURCE 5.14** Limestone *shabti* figures and painted wooden box (19th Dynasty, Louvre, Paris). Why build a little case for the *shabti* figures?



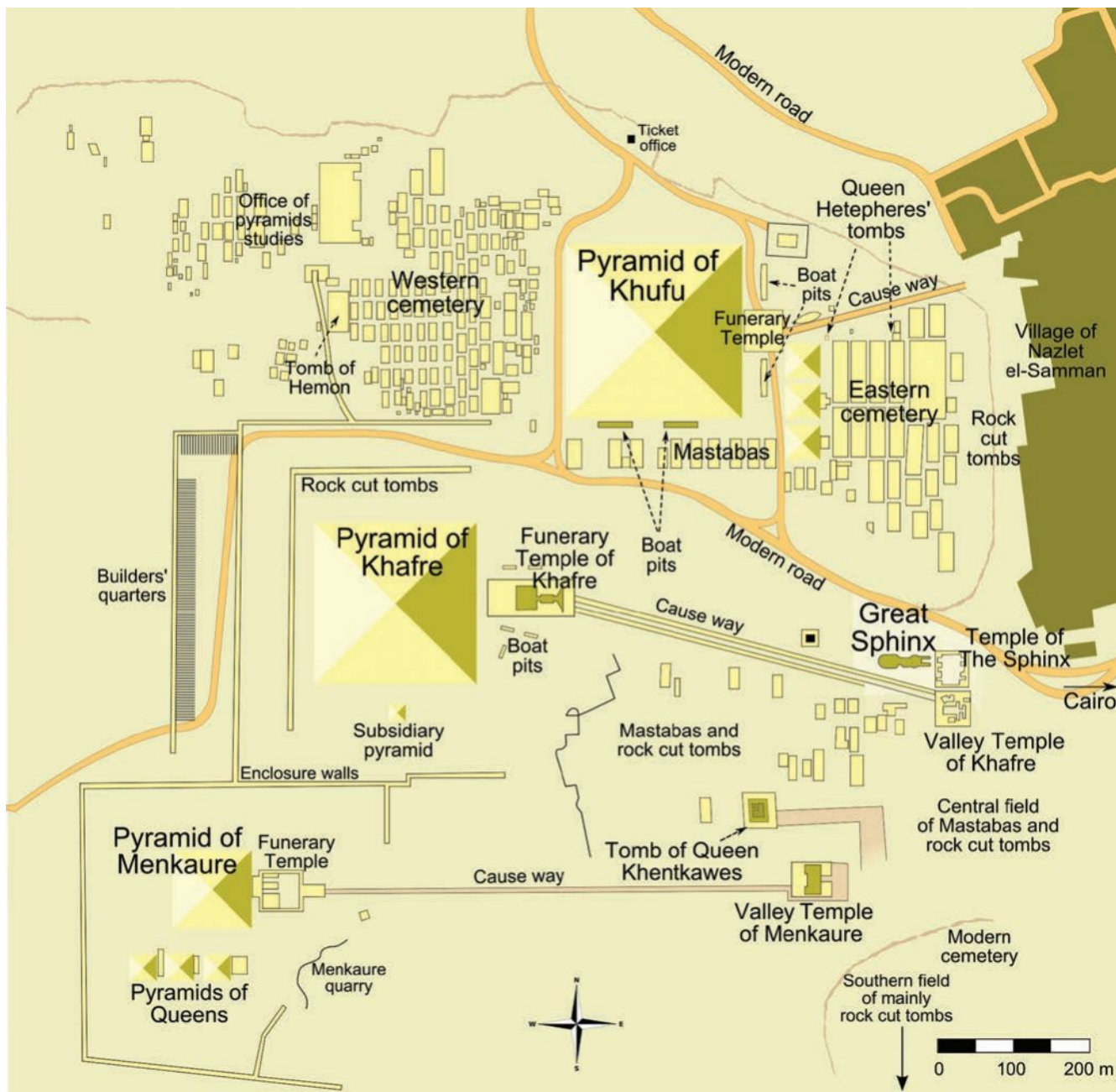
**SOURCE 5.15** Troop of *shabti* figures from the tomb of Neferibreheb. Why would a tomb have so many *shabti* figures?



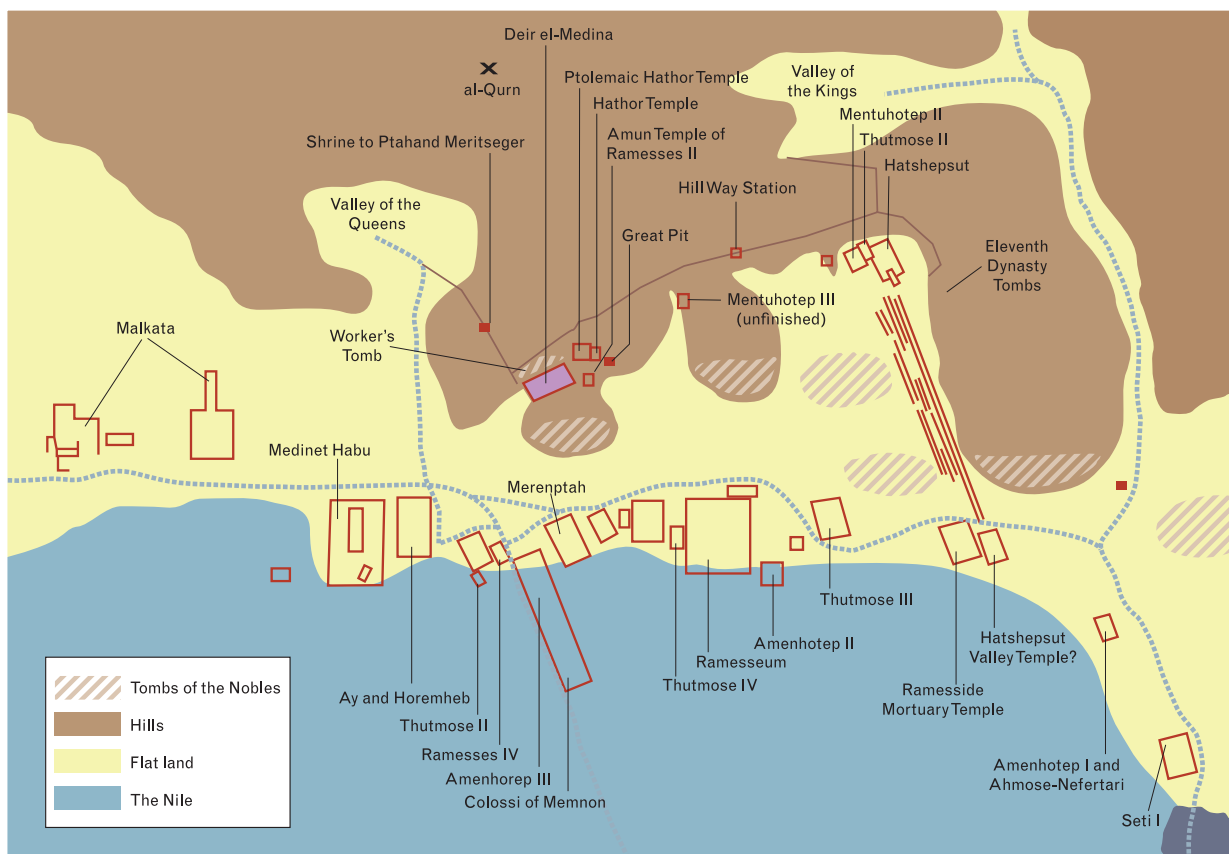
**SOURCE 5.16** The unbroken seal from the third shrine surrounding the sarcophagus of Tutankhamun. What thoughts might have run through Howard Carter's head when he saw this seal?



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 as 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 5.17, 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). As these Old Dynasty pyramids were all robbed, tomb builders in the New Kingdom were careful to ensure that the tombs themselves were as hidden as possible.



**SOURCE 5.17** Pyramid complex at Giza. Have a look at modern satellite images – what features in this map can you see in the modern landscape?



**SOURCE 5.18** Thebes, West Bank. Have a look at modern satellite images – what features in this map can you see in the modern landscape?



**SOURCE 5.19** Fowling scene, from the tomb of Nebamon, Thebes (18th Dynasty). How does this scene compare to other tomb scenes in quality and subject?

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.

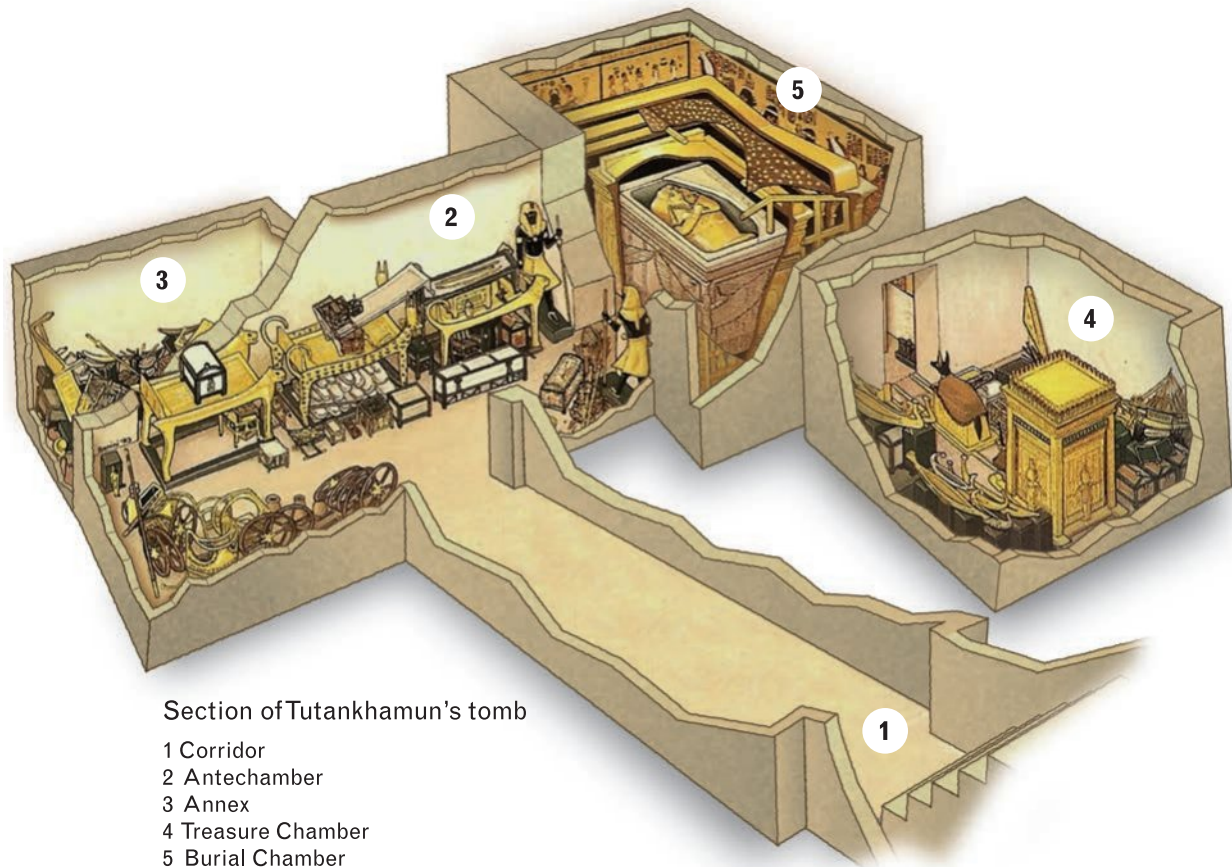
Tombs of pharaohs and queens from the New Kingdom were built in the Valley of the Kings and Valley of the Queens respectively. So far 63 tombs have been uncovered in the Valley of the Kings. Despite the Egyptian's best intentions to hide the tombs, most were still opened and robbed in antiquity.



The discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922 by Howard Carter caused such a sensation because it was unopened – all of the seals were still intact and the treasure remained inside. Tombs in the valley vary greatly in their scale and design. The tombs twist and turn, weaving in between each other, and some descend as deep as 200 metres. The straightforward and relative simplicity of Tutankhamun's tomb lends credibility to the theory that he died suddenly and had to be buried before his tomb was complete. Others, like the one, belonging to Rameses II and his sons, is a complex maze of pillared chambers and hallways.

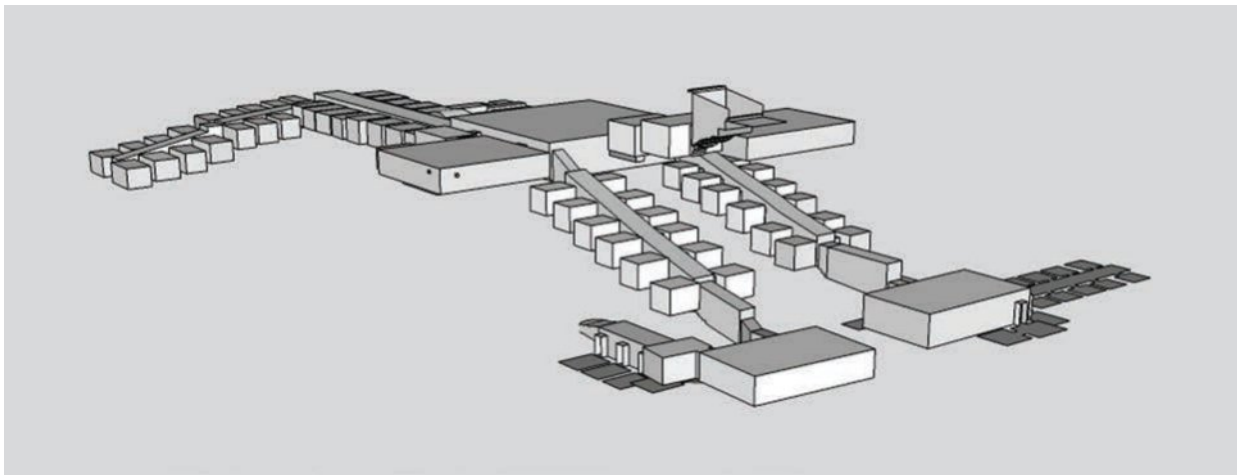


**SOURCE 5.20** Panorama of the Valley of the Kings, looking northwards. How would this desert landscape impact the Egyptian's ability to build tombs here?



**SOURCE 5.21** Diagram of Tutankhamun's tomb, KV62





**SOURCE 5.22** Tomb of Rameses II. How does this tomb and that of Tutankhamun compare in their layout?

### ACTIVITY 5.10

To synthesise is to combine different parts of elements into a whole to create a new understanding. Step 1: Complete the following table, by using a selection of eight sources taken from Sources 5.11 to 5.22.

Source number	What can we learn from the source about the funerary goods, graves, funerals or tombs of Egyptians during the 19th Dynasty?

Step 2: What are the main conclusions you can reach after examining the sources? You should be able to support each point using multiple sources.

Points	Supported by which sources?

Add extra rows if/when necessary.

Step 3: Turn your main points into a cohesive paragraph, using correct referencing techniques.

## ACTIVITY 5.11

Compare the tombs of royalty and non-royalty by investigating the architectural and decorative features of at least one royal and one non-royal 19th Dynasty tomb from the list below. Use the table to structure the recording of your findings.

- Royal tombs: Rameses I, Seti I, Merenptah
- Non-royal tombs: Sennefer (Mayor of Thebes), Rekhmire, Kheruef, Nakht, Khaemhat, Menna

Feature	Royal tomb Name:	Non-royal tomb Name: (list here the name, titles, occupation, name of pharaoh served)
Brief details of tomb owner		
Tomb shape and structure		
Other architectural features		
Funerary texts		
Subjects of wall paintings		
SUMMARY: List below the main similarities and differences you have identified between the two types of tombs		
Similarities		Differences

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the Ancient World

This section will focus on funerary practices, including burial sites, forms of burial and associated ceremonies of the ancient Egyptians. You will reflect on the relationship of ancient Egyptians to religious beliefs and social status.

### 5.7 Mummification

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



**SOURCE 5.23** 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?

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.

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.



**SOURCE 5.24** Gebelein Man or EA 32751 (c. 3400 BCE), British Museum, London. The body of this man was naturally preserved by the desert heat, so well that hair can still clearly be seen on his skull.



**SOURCE 5.25** Mummy of Rameses II (c. 1279–1213 BCE). This mummy and 'Gebelein Man' differ significantly in date, yet what do you notice about the level of preservation?

## ACTIVITY 5.12

Using information in this chapter and other resources such as the internet, 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 Egyptian's attitude towards cremation?
4. What roles did the following deities play in mummification:
  - a. Anubis
  - b. Hapi
  - c. Nephthys
  - d. Duamutef
  - e. Imseti
  - f. Selket (Serket)
  - g. Qebesenuf
  - h. Isis
  - i. Neith.



**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 5.26** Mummification process

Diodorus Siculus, a Greek historian, writing around the first century BCE describes his understanding of the mummification process:

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.

**SOURCE 5.27** Diodorus Siculus, c. 36–30BCE, *Bibliotheca Historica*, Book 1.91

Herodotus, a Greek historian born in modern-day Turkey who wrote during the fifth century BCE outlines how bodies are embalmed:

The mode of embalming, according to the most perfect process, is the following: they take first a crooked piece of iron, and with it draw out the brain through the nostrils, thus getting rid of a portion, while the skull is cleared of the rest by rinsing with drugs; next they make a cut along the flank with a sharp Ethiopian stone, and take out the whole contents of the abdomen, which they then cleanse, washing it thoroughly with palm wine, and again frequently with an infusion of pounded aromatics. After this they fill the cavity with the purest bruised myrrh, with cassia, and every other sort of 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.

(continued)

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.

**SOURCE 5.28** Herodotus, c. 440 BCE, *Histories*, Book 1.86–88

### ACTIVITY 5.13

Refer to Sources 5.27 and 5.28 from Diodorus Siculus and Herodotus.

1. On which points do Herodotus and Diodorus agree regarding the forms of mummification used by the Egyptians?
2. Where 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?

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to the Ancient World

This section will focus on interpretations about the legacy of beliefs of ancient Egyptian society in modern times.

### 5.8 Preserving the Ancient World in modern times

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. We are fortunate that Egypt's climate has preserved so much of the physical fabric of ancient Egyptian society for us to see. The development of modern satellite technology has particularly enabled scholars to explore more of the landscape, and new discoveries are being made on a regular basis.

However, like other ancient archaeological sites, Egypt's pyramids and tombs are not immune to the pressures of modern life.

### ACTIVITY 5.14

Go online and look for articles about funerary practices in other ancient societies.

1. With further reading, what evidence can you find that ancient Egyptian culture influenced other ancient civilisations?



**SOURCE 5.29** Archaeologist Howard Carter opening the sarcophagus of Tutankhamun. How significant is Howard Carter's discovery to Egyptology?



**SOURCE 5.30** Tourists walk past the giant statues of Rameses II and his daughter Bintanath in the Temple of Karnak in Luxor. What opportunities exist currently for tourists to visit archaeological sites in Egypt?

### ACTIVITY 5.15

1. What problems are currently being faced by the Egyptian people in regards to preserving their history? Go online to conduct 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: <http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/8272>
  - Egyptians rally to defend cultural heritage: <http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/8273>
  - Egyptian Museum: Cairo's looted treasure: <http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/8274>
  - Egypt turns to technology in effort to protect ancient treasures from looters: <http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/8275>
  - Egypt welcomes back tourists after seven years of political instability despite security concerns: <http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/8276>
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 (for example, a site covered in Chapter 1). Ensure your response makes use of correct language and referencing conventions.
3. What similarities are shared by your site and Egyptian ones?

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- 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.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

- Create a revision game that tests your knowledge of the key terms, concepts and issues.
- 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 [name of 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

Historically, there has been a lot of debate over Tutankhamun's cause of death, and also why he was buried in a tomb so small compared to other pharaohs. Conduct research to identify the different points of view and interpretations of the historical evidence on this topic.

### Synthesise

Form a judgement using the evidence gathered in the previous question. What does the evidence suggest about how Tutankhamun died? Why was he buried in a tomb so small? Be sure to incorporate historical evidence that is corroborated, reliable, and represents different perspectives.

### Evaluate

- Using a primary and secondary source gathered in the Devise question, evaluate the sources' usefulness and reliability.
- Identify the author or creator's perspective in the sources, and explain how that influenced the work they produced.

### Respond

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

### Examination-style questions

1. Examine the validity of one of these statements:
  - Funerary practices and rituals were an integral part of the ancient Egyptian's beliefs about the afterlife.
  - Archaeological records of death and burial are the most valuable source of information historians have for the lives of everyday people.

### Investigation tasks

1. Using one of the ancient societies listed below, develop your own key research question that investigates what archaeological evidence of death and burial can tell modern historians about the lives of the people in that society.
  - archaic Greece (800–500 BCE)
  - ancient Rome (753–133 BCE)
  - Achaemenid Empire (Persia) (559–330 BCE)
  - Mauryan Empire (India) (321–185 BCE)
  - ancient China in the Qin and Han Dynasties (221 BCE–220 CE)
  - the Early Christians (to 337 CE)
  - the Celts (1200 BCE–60 CE)
  - the Vikings (700–1100 CE).
2. Develop appropriate sub-questions and gather your research.





# 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. Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the ancient personalities and their times being studied.
2. Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to an ancient personality.
3. Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding of ancient personalities and their historical context.
4. Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument in relation to ancient personalities and their historical context.
5. Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about ancient personalities.
6. Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to ancient personalities.

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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

- What were the motivations, attributes and achievements of significant ancient personalities?
- Are great leaders born, not made? Do people make history or are they a product of history?

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## CHAPTERS IN THIS UNIT

### CHAPTER

**Chapter 6** Hatshepsut

**Chapter 7** Akhenaten

**Chapter 8** Agrippina the Younger

**Chapter 9** Boudica (DIGITAL CHAPTER)

# CHAPTER 6

## Hatshepsut

SIMON CORVAN

### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the historical and geographical background of Hatshepsut and the time in which she lived.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about:
  - key archaeological and written sources for the period.
  - issues involved with the nature of evidence from the reign of Hatshepsut.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to Hatshepsut's personality and achievements.
- devise historical questions and conduct research.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the various interpretations and representations of Hatshepsut in primary sources.
  - the various interpretations and representations of Hatshepsut presented in secondary sources and how these have differed over time.
  - changing ancient and modern perceptions of the achievements and legacy of Hatshepsut.
- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose.

#### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the aftermath of Hatshepsut's reign

### KEY DATES

**1507 BCE**

Hatshepsut 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 crowned pharaoh; Hatshepsut appointed regent as Thutmose III was only two years old



- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the impact of significant personalities on their times.

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## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Hatshepsut
- Thutmose I
- Thutmose II
- Thutmose III
- Senenmut
- Neferure
- Amenhotep II
- Hapuseneb.

## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>18th Dynasty</b>	the 18th Dynasty of Egypt is classified as the first Dynasty of the ancient Egyptian New Kingdom period
<b>Amun-Re</b>	one of the most worshipped gods of the New Kingdom era, composite of two gods, Amun and Re
<b>cartouche</b>	an oval or oblong enclosing a group of Egyptian hieroglyphs, typically representing the name and title of a monarch
<b>dynasty</b>	a time period ruled by one royal family
<b>pharaoh</b>	the ruler of ancient Egypt
<b>regent</b>	a temporary ruler who acts as a caretaker in the situation that the next pharaoh is too young to rule yet
<b>New Kingdom</b>	a period of Egyptian history from the sixteenth century BCE to the eleventh century BCE
<b>Ma'at</b>	the goddess of order, truth and balance. Over time, <i>ma'at</i> also evolved into a concept meaning justice, harmony and balance
<b>Thebes</b>	the most powerful city in Egypt during the New Kingdom era
<b>Deir el-Bahri</b>	a complex of mortuary temples and tombs located near the city of Luxor
<b>Punt</b>	a semi-mythical land that is likely to be present-day Ethiopia
<b>obelisk</b>	a tapering stone pillar, typically having a square or rectangular cross-section, set up as a monument or landmark
<b>stele</b>	(pl. <i>stelae</i> ) an upright stone slab or column typically bearing a commemorative inscription or relief design, often serving as a gravestone
<b>Heb-Sed</b>	a religious festival in which a pharaoh symbolically renewed their power
<b>God's Wife</b>	a powerful royal title
<b>Hathor</b>	the goddess of motherhood, often depicted as a cow

**c. 1477 BCE**

Hatshepsut crowned pharaoh sometime during her second and seventh year as regent. After this she is considered a co-regent and shared the rule with Thutmose III

**1472 BCE**

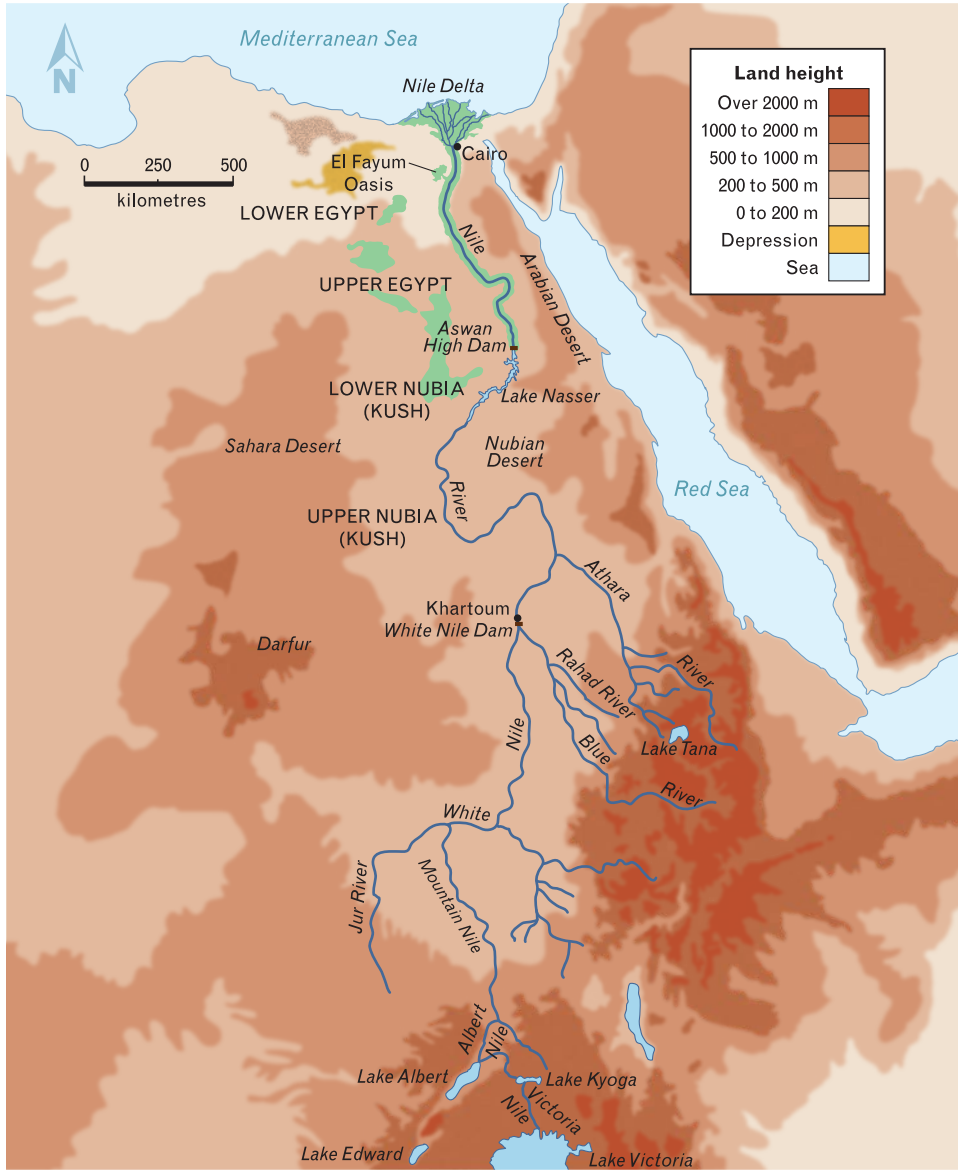
Hatshepsut sends an expedition to Punt, considered extraordinary as no Egyptians had been there in five hundred years

**1466 BCE**

Hatshepsut sends an expedition to the turquoise mines in the Sinai region where Egyptians had not been in over one hundred years



**MAP**



**SOURCE 6.2** Map of ancient Egypt

**1463 BCE** **1458 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 began on the Red Chapel, a sacred building to *Amun-Re*

Hatshepsut's death, possibly from bone cancer



## Introduction

Hatshepsut is one of the most interesting leaders of ancient Egypt. 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.' This Pharaoh, 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.

Winlock's team had discovered statues and carvings of Hatshepsut, the sixth pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty, an incredibly successful and powerful female ruler of Egypt. While female rulership was not unique, it was rare, which complicates the motivations of those who sought to erase Hatshepsut as being more than simply misogynistic in nature. Historians have radically changed the narrative of Hatshepsut's life over the years since the uncovering of the relics at Deir el-Bahri. The orthodox 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 excellent modern analysis of the Hatshepsut debate centres on how much of the story has been shaped by gender.

Had Hatshepsut been born a man, her lengthy rule would almost certainly be remembered for its achievements: its stable government, successful trade missions and the impressive architectural advances ... Instead, Hatshepsut's gender has become her most important characteristic and almost all references to her reign have concentrated not on her policies but on the personal relationships and power struggles.

**SOURCE 6.3** Tyldesley, J.A., 1996, *Hatchepsut, The Female Pharaoh*, Penguin, London, p.1

Elizabeth B. Wilson, discussing historiographical issues in an interview with *Smithsonian* 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.



**SOURCE 6.4** Mortuary temple of Hatshepsut



## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the ancient personalities and their times being studied

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.

### 6.1 Hatshepsut's rise to power and position

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.

During the reign of her husband, Thutmose II, Hatshepsut performed the traditional duties of the great royal wife. Tyldesley argues that:

all that we know of her previous life, first as queen consort and then as queen regent, shows Hatshepsut to have been an unexceptional and indeed almost boringly conformist wife and mother paying due honour to both her husband and her stepson, loving her young daughter and contenting herself with the traditional role allotted to royal women.

**SOURCE 6.5** Tyldesley J., 2009, *Hatshepsut: The Female Pharaoh*, Penguin

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 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 woman 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:

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.

**SOURCE 6.6** Edwards, I., Gadd, C., Hammond, N., & Sollberger, E. (Eds.), 1973, *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Cambridge University Press, Volume II, Part 1, p. 306

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 twenty years later and well beyond the point at which Thutmose was old enough to assume outright control of 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 skillfully. To modern audiences this is perhaps an odd image, but to the Nile-worshipping ancient Egyptians this would have been clear and reassuring.

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):

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.

**SOURCE 6.7** Ineni describes the king of two lands

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 of them 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. 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. The shrines at Gebel Silsilah belonging to nobles Minnakhte and Ahmose show both cartouches above the entrances. A statue of Ineni records that it was:

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.

**SOURCE 6.8** Inscription from a statue of Ineni

## ACTIVITY 6.1

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 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.

## 6.2 The nature of pharaonic power in ancient Egypt

A brief history of pharaohs and what they meant to the ancient Egyptians is described in the extract below by the modern historian, Joshua J. Mark. Mark is a freelance writer and former part-time Professor of Philosophy at Marist College, New York.

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. The honorific title of pharaoh for a ruler did not appear until the period known as the New Kingdom [1550–1069 BCE]. Monarchs of the dynasties before the New Kingdom were addressed as ‘your majesty’ by foreign dignitaries and members of the court and as ‘brother’ by foreign rulers; both practices would continue after the king of Egypt came to be known as a pharaoh.

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. Additionally, the pharaoh would officiate at religious ceremonies, choose the sites of temples and decree what work would be done (although he could not choose priests and very rarely took part in the design of a temple). 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 rulers of Egypt were usually the sons or declared heirs of the preceding pharaoh, born of the Great Wife (pharaoh’s chief consort) or sometimes a lesser-ranked wife whom the pharaoh favored. Early on, the rulers married female aristocrats in an effort to establish the legitimacy of their dynasty by linking it to the upper classes of Memphis, which was then Egypt’s capital. This practice may have begun with the first king, Narmer, who established Memphis as his capital and married the princess Neithhotep of the older city of Naqada to consolidate his rule, and link his new city to Naqada and his home city of Thinis. To keep the blood line pure, many pharaohs married their sisters or half-sisters and Pharaoh Akhenaten married his own daughters.

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-eh-t*) 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.



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, 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.

The prestige of the pharaoh waned considerably after the defeat of the Egyptians by the Persians at the Battle of Pelusium in 525 BCE and, still further, after the conquests of Alexander the Great. By the time of the last pharaoh, the well-known Cleopatra VII Philopator of the Ptolemaic Dynasty, the title no longer held the power it once did, fewer monuments were erected and, with her death in 30 BCE, Egypt became a Roman province, and the glory and might of the pharaohs of old faded into memory.

**SOURCE 6.9** Mark, J.J., 2 September, 2009, 'Pharaoh', *Ancient History Encyclopedia online*

## ACTIVITY 6.2

1. Read the text extract in Source 6.9. 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:
  - warrior
  - builder
  - administrator
  - religious leader.

(continued)

## ACTIVITY 6.2 continued

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 following four areas as a guide for comparison:
- warrior
  - administrator
  - builder
  - religious leader.

## ACTIVITY 6.3

1. Consider the Source 6.10.
- 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.
  - Suggest initial reasons for Hatshepsut not taking sole control over Egypt.



SOURCE 6.10 Dual stela of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III

## Objective 2: Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to an ancient personality

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 are:

- 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?

### 6.3 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 was 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.

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: 'Khnemmet-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.'

**SOURCE 6.11** Breasted, J., 1962, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, Vol. 2. New York, Russell & Russell, pp. 80–81

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 6.12** Breasted, J., 1962, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, Vol. 2., Russell & Russell, pp. 81–82

## 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:

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.

**SOURCE 6.13** Inscription at the coronation scene, Temple of Deir el Bahar



## ACTIVITY 6.4

1. After reading through Sources 6.11–6.13 above, what answers can you suggest to the following questions:
  - a. Suggest reasons for Hatshepsut claiming to be the child of Amun-Re rather than Thutmose I.
  - b. Analyse the messages implied in Source 6.12.
  - c. In the coronation scene, Hatshepsut erases her husband Thutmose II from history; suggest reasons for this.
  - d. Why does Hatshepsut represent herself as a male in many of these inscriptions?
  - e. Consider the image of Hatshepsut as Osiris (god of the afterlife). Why would Hatshepsut be depicted as this god?
  - f. Consider the statue of Hatshepsut as a Sphinx. What are the political and religious messages associated with this representation?

## 6.4 Representation as male

Hatshepsut's statuary showed her in all her royal grandeur in the forefront with Thutmose III rendered on a smaller scale behind or below her to indicate his lower status. She still referred to her stepson as the king, but he was so in name only. Hatshepsut clearly felt she had as much right to rule Egypt as any man and her depiction in art stressed this.

Present-day historians Bob Brier and Hoyt Hobbs discuss Hatshepsut's male garb:

Her male garb was not intended to fool the citizens into believing their pharaoh was male. Statues unequivocally portray a female, whose sex, in any case, would have been obvious to any Egyptian from her name, 'She is First among Noble Women'. Rather than denying her femininity, she was proclaiming that she was also a pharaoh, an office that traditionally had been held by a man.

**SOURCE 6.14** Brier, B. & Hobbs, H., 2013, *Ancient Egypt: Everyday Life in the Land of the Nile*, Sterling, p. 21

Historian Van de Mieroop argues:

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.

**SOURCE 6.15** Van de Mieroop, M., 2011, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell, p. 172



**SOURCE 6.16** and **SOURCE 6.17** Two representations of Hatshepsut as the male god Osiris



**SOURCE 6.18** Hatshepsut depicted as a powerful female sphinx yet still wearing the royal beard

### ACTIVITY 6.5

1. Read and compare the arguments presented by Van de Mierop and Brier and Hobbs below.
  - a. Suggest why Hatshepsut was represented as the male god Osiris at her mortuary temple.
  - b. Suggest why Hatshepsut was represented as a female Sphinx.
2. Find additional images and statues of Hatshepsut online. Arrange them chronologically and analyse the ways in which representation of Hatshepsut changed over time.

## 6.5 Relationship with 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:

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.

**SOURCE 6.19** Inscription in the Temple of Karnak

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 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.

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 Nefuerure. Scenes from the Red Chapel at Karnak show that the role of God's Wife of Amun was significant in that 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'.



**SOURCE 6.20** Obelisk scene – the god Amun-Re crowning Hatshepsut

### ACTIVITY 6.6

Read the above 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 benefitted and why?
3. How did Hatshepsut demonstrate her connection to Amun-Re to the people of Egypt?
4. Consider Source 6.20 and answer the following:
  - a. What is the power relationship between Hatshepsut and Amun-Re?
  - b. This image is carved into an obelisk (a solar symbol) which is the second largest of all Egyptian obelisks. What messages was Hatshepsut sending the people of Egypt?



## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding of ancient personalities and their historical context

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.

### 6.6 The administration of Egypt and building projects

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.

On Hatshepsut's building projects, Egyptologist Ian Shaw writes:

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.

**SOURCE 6.21** Shaw, I., 2016, *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, p. 229

### 6.7 Economy and trade

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:

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

(continued)

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 titular serpent goddess a frightened 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 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.

**SOURCE 6.22** Inscription at Speos Artemidos

Edouard Naville's commentary and summary below of the inscriptions in Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari relate details about the expedition to the land of Punt.

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.

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.

**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.

Here Nehasi, Hatshepsut's messenger, has landed, escorted by an officer and eight soldiers. On a small table [he has] placed presents. The landing of the royal messenger of the Divine Land, with the soldier accompany[ing] him, in [the] presence of [the] chiefs of Punt, to bring all good from the sovereign ... to Hathor, Lady of Punt, in order that she grant life, strength and health to [her] Majesty.



### **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. Some damaged scenes [show] Egyptians cutting down ebony and carrying them to the ship.

The Egyptian boats are there, at Punt. Already on board are incense and gold, ebony, elephant tusks, panther skins, monkeys, and, several frankincense trees.

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]. The king himself, king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Ramaka (Hatshepsut) takes the good things of Punt, and the valuables of the Divine Land, presenting the gifts of the southern countries, the tributes of the vile Kush, the boxes (of gold and precious stones) of the land of the negroes to [Amun- Re], the lord of the throne of the two lands.

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.

The produce of the southern countries is brought to [Amun] by the god Tetun of Nubia. Horus supervises the weighing of precious metals, using weights in the shape of bulls.

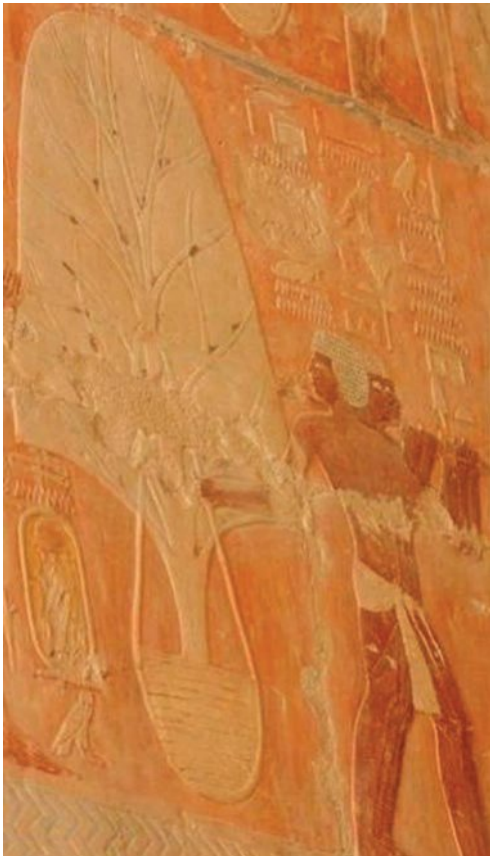
Thutmose III offers incense to the boat of [Amun]. [Amun] speaks to Hatshepsut:

(continued)

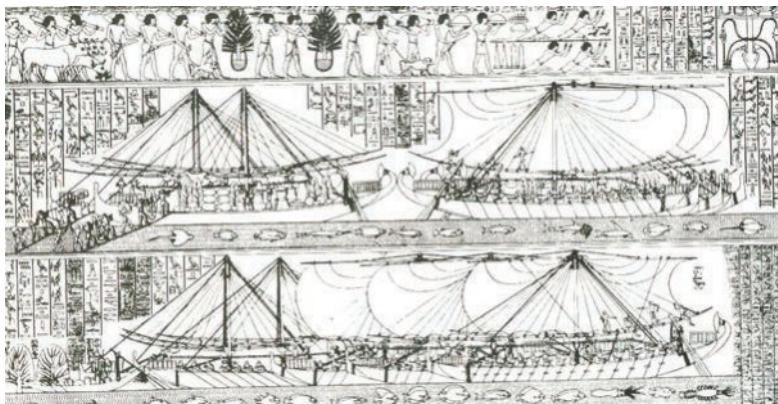
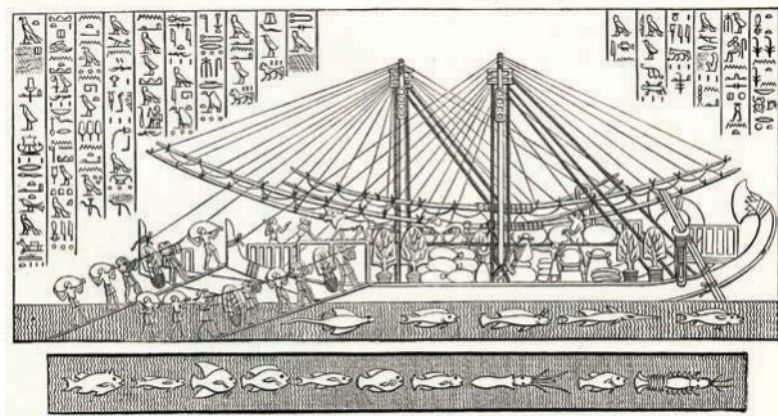


She [Hatshepsut] has no enemies among the Southerners, and no opponents among the Northerners ... they come to her with a heart full of fear; their chiefs are bowing down, their presents are on their backs, they carry to her their children ... I will give thee Punt, the whole of it, as far as the Divine Lands. The Divine Land had never been explored; the harbours of incense had never been seen by the men of Egypt.

**SOURCE 6.23** Naville, E., 1898, *The Temple at Deir el Bahari*, vol. 3, Egypt Exploration Society, pp. 5,15–18 quoted in



**SOURCE 6.24** Workers returning with trees from the expedition to Punt



**SOURCE 6.25** and **SOURCE 6.26** Inscriptions of Egyptian shipping

## ACTIVITY 6.7

1. Analyse the above sources associated with Hatshepsut's expedition to Punt.
  - a. Why did Hatshepsut send an expedition to Punt?
  - b. What kinds of goods did the expedition acquire there?
  - c. Which groups and organisations benefitted most from the expedition?
  - d. In what ways did Hatshepsut benefit from the expedition?

## 6.8 Warfare

This inscription on a relief of Hatshepsut and Tetun at Deir el-Bahari describes an attack against peoples of Upper Egypt:

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'.

**SOURCE 6.27** Inscription on relief of Hatshepsut and Tetun

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:

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.

**SOURCE 6.28** Inscription on the mortuary statue of 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:

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.

**SOURCE 6.29** Inscription at Sehel

A stele by the nobleman Djehuty at Dra' Abu el-Naga says that he saw the queen on the battlefield collecting booty (valuables):

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.

**SOURCE 6.30** Inscription on the stele by the nobleman Djehuty at Dra abu el-Naga

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:

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.

**SOURCE 6.31** Speech of Pakhet

This inscription, observing Hatshepsut's governmental and military excellence, is from two broken limestone blocks at Karnak which had been re-used in the third pylon:

[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.

**SOURCE 6.32** Broken blocks at Karnak

In this coronation text is a prophecy supposedly made when Hatshepsut was a child:

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.

**SOURCE 6.33** The coronation text at Deir el-Bahari

This text at Deir el-Bahari underscores Hatshepsut as protector of Egypt against any foreign rebels:

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.

**SOURCE 6.34** Punt relief at Deir el Bahari

Nineteenth-century archaeologist Naville wrote during his excavation of Deir el-Bahari:

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 6.35** Naville, E., 1898, *The Temple at Deir el Bahari*, vol. 3, Egypt Exploration Society, pp.15–18

## ACTIVITY 6.8

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. After analysing the primary source (Source 6.27–6.35) complete these exercises and questions.

1. Make a list of the places Hatshepsut claims to have engaged in wars with.
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.





**SOURCE 6.36** Inscription at Luxor

Redford argues that there could have been four more campaigns waged during Hatshepsut and Thutmose III's reign that we lack direct evidence for. Many 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 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.

## **Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument in relation to ancient personalities and their historical context**

### **6.9 The destruction of Hatshepsut's images**

After Hatshepsut's death someone decided to remove much of the evidence of her life. Many of the temples and inscriptions were painstakingly chiseled 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 twenty 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.

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, as a military leader and one who is deeply connected to the gods. The modern arguments 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 was trying to take his place.

### ACTIVITY 6.9

There are many competing theories as to the nature of the destruction of Hatshepsut's images.

1. Consider the following sources 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. After completing the table, which of the arguments do you think is most likely to be correct? Why?
3. Refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 5* and use the table you have created to help you structure an answer on the following question: Why was there an attempt to erase the memory of Hatshepsut from history?

Refer to all the sources in your response, aim for a 400-word response. (Note: this activity is also an exercise in achieving the objectives of evaluation and synthesis.)

The present-day historian Dorman argues:

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.

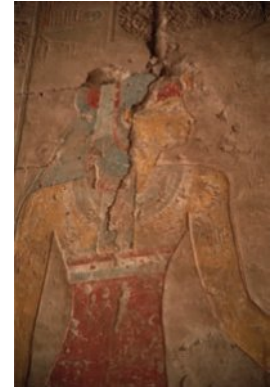
**SOURCE 6.37** Dorman, Peter F., 2006 'The Early Reign of Thutmose III: An Unorthodox Mantle of Coregency' in Eric H. Cline and David O'Connor (eds) *Thutmose III: A New Biography*



**SOURCE 6.38** Hatshepsut and Thutmose III as co-rulers at the Red Chapel



**SOURCE 6.39** Chiseled out image of Hatshepsut as Pharaoh between the gods Horus and Thoth



**SOURCE 6.40** A bas-relief of Hatshepsut as God's Wife in her mortuary temple, untouched

According to Redford:

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.

**SOURCE 6.41** Redford, D.B., 1967, *History and Chronology of the 18th Dynasty of Egypt*, University of Toronto Press, p. 65

The art historian Gae Robins has suggested that:

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.

**SOURCE 6.42** Robins, G., 1993, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, Harvard University Press, p.52

Another art historian, Ann Macy Roth also argued that the line of succession for Thutmose III's son Amenhotep II might have been clouded and problematic:

The earlier kings of eighteenth dynasty had many daughters and their progeny were closely related to the founders of the dynasty than were Tuthmosis [Thutmose] III and his son. Kingship derived its religious authority from the direct succession of rulers from one generation to the next, from Osiris to Horus. By attacking images of Hatshepsut as king and thus magically denying her kingship, Tuthmosis III disposed of a legitimate alternative to the Tuthmoside line and facilitated his son's succession to the throne of Egypt. The fact the erasures seem to have suddenly stopped, perhaps on coronation of Amenhotep II, suggests that the motive for the erasure disappeared once his kingship was assured.

**SOURCE 6.43** Macy Roth, A., cited in *Hatshepsut, from Queen to Pharaoh*, 2005, Roehrig, C.H., Dreyfus, R., Keller, C.A. (eds.), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yale University Press



Dr Tyldesley suggests a royal feud may have been the cause of the destruction:

It is undeniable that someone attacked Hatshepsut's monuments after her death. Archaeology indicates that the bulk of the vandalism occurred during Tuthmosis's reign. Why would he do this? At first it was imagined that this was the new king's immediate revenge against his stepmother; he was indeed cursing her with permanent death. The image of the young Tuthmosis seething with impotent rage as Hatshepsut ruled in his place is one which has attracted amateur psychologists for many years. However, it does not entirely fit with the known facts. Tuthmosis was to prove himself a calm and prudent general, a brave man not given to hasty or irrational actions. He did not start his solo reign with an assault on Hatshepsut's memory; indeed, he allowed her a traditional funeral, and waited until it was convenient to fit the desecration into his schedule. Some of the destruction was even carried out by his son, after his death, when most of those who remembered Hatshepsut had also died. It is a remote, rather than an immediate, attack. Furthermore the attack is not a thorough one. Enough remained of Hatshepsut to allow us to recreate her reign in some detail. Her tomb, the most obvious place to start the attack, still housed her name. Hatshepsut may have been erased from Egypt's official record, but she was never hated as Akhenaten 'The Great Criminal' would later be.

What can we conclude from this tangled tale? We should perhaps rethink our assumptions. Hatshepsut did not fear Tuthmosis; instead of killing him, she raised him as her successor. Tuthmosis may not have hated Hatshepsut. Initially he may even have been grateful to her, as she had protected his land while training him for greatness. But, as he grew older and looked back over his life, his perspective would shift. Would Egypt's most successful general, a stickler for tradition, have wished to be associated with a woman co-regent, even a woman as strong as Hatshepsut? By removing all obvious references to his co-ruler, Tuthmosis could incorporate her reign into his own. He would then become Egypt's greatest pharaoh; the only successor to Tuthmosis II. Hatshepsut would become the unfortunate victim, not of a personal attack, but of an impersonal attempt at retrospective political correctness. Tuthmosis set his masons to rewrite history. Their labours would last well into the reign of his successor, Amenhotep II, a king who could not remember Hatshepsut, and who had no reason to respect her memory. Meanwhile, hidden in the Valley of the Kings, Hatshepsut still rested in her coffin. Tuthmosis I had been taken from their joint tomb and re-buried, but she had been left alone. Tuthmosis knew that as long as her body survived, Hatshepsut was ensured eternal life.

**SOURCE 6.44** Tyldesley, J., 17 February, 2011, 'Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis: a royal feud?', *BBC History*

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about ancient personalities

### 6.10 Representations of Hatshepsut

Perhaps the most significant issue for contemporary historians studying Hatshepsut are 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 step-mother 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 through completing the Activities at the end of this section.

The historians Steindorff and Seele assumed that Hatshepsut's rise would have deeply frustrated and angered Thutmose III. They quite passionately argue that Thutmose III:

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.

**SOURCE 6.45** George Steindorff and Keith Seele, 1942, *When Egypt Ruled the East*, University of Chicago Press, p. 46

Egyptologist and mystery author Barbara Mertz believed that:

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.

**SOURCE 6.46** Mertz, B., 2007, *Temples, Tombs and Hieroglyphs*, William Morrow Paperbacks, pp. 166–7

Alan Gardiner, a leading Egyptologist of the mid-twentieth century, wrote:

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.

**SOURCE 6.47** Alan Gardiner, 1961, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, pp. 183–4





**SOURCE 6.48** One of Hatshepsut's Obelisks at Karnak showing her receiving Amun-Re's blessing

Peter Dorman, an Egyptologist particularly known for his work on the reign of Hatshepsut, pondered her motives.

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 meddling coterie of supporters. Both Ineni's biography and Senenmut's graffiti 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.

**SOURCE 6.49** Dorman, Peter F., 2001, 'Hatshepsut: Wicked stepmother or Joan of Arc?', *The Oriental Institute News and Notes*, 168 (Winter)

Nicholas Grimal, Professor of Egyptology at the Sorbonne also builds a case against Hatshepsut.

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.

**SOURCE 6.50** Grimal, N., 1992, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell pp. 207–213

Egyptologist and archaeologist Donald Redford on Hatshepsut's 20-year reign:

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 6.51** Redford, D.B., 1967, *History and Chronology of the 18th Dynasty of Egypt*, University of Toronto Press, p. 59



**SOURCE 6.52** Hatshepsut with the god Hathor – Hatshepsut is partially chiseled out while Hathor remains untouched



**SOURCE 6.53** Senenmut, Hatshepsut's advisor with Neferure, Hatshepsut's daughter

## ACTIVITY 6.10

1. Use the sources to complete the following table showing perspectives of the type of ruler Hatshepsut was.

Source	Perspective	Key quotes/evidence/features	Comments
Source 6.45			
Source 6.46			
Source 6.47			
Source 6.48			
Source 6.49			
Source 6.50			
Source 6.51			
Source 6.52			
Source 6.53			

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?

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to ancient personalities

It should be clear that Hatshepsut's rule was complex in ancient times and became more complex as modern historians viewed her actions through their own contemporary lenses. Gaining a clear understanding of Hatshepsut's actions and motives is challenging but essential to studying her life.

### 6.11 Creating responses about Hatshepsut's actions and motives

Using the evidence provided in this chapter, in addition to your own knowledge, complete the following.

## ACTIVITY 6.11

GO

As extension work, complete one or more of the following tasks. Refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit*, especially the information on Objectives 2 and 6, to assist you.

1. Building upon the themes, concepts and issues explored in this chapter, respond to the following statement in a paragraph (of approximately 300 words):

## ACTIVITY 6.11 continued

Egyptologists, normally the most dry and cautious of observers, have been only too happy to allow their own feelings to intervene in their telling of Hatshepsut's tale and, more particularly, in their interpretation of the motives underlying her deeds. These feelings have tended to coincide with the beliefs common to a generation.'

**SOURCE 6.54** Tyldesley J., 2009, *Hatchepsut: The Female Pharaoh*, Penguin

2. Create an inquiry question with three historical sub-questions on the reign of Hatshepsut.
3. Conduct research on five modern historians who are experts on Hatshepsut and evaluate their points of view.
4. Organise your findings in an appropriate manner (table, chart, infographic, or video).
5. Write a detailed historical paragraph on Hatshepsut's motivations for ruling Egypt.



# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- 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.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## 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.

### 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.

### Evaluate

Evaluate the legitimacy of Hatshepsut's claim to the throne.

### Respond

Create a response to the argument that analysis of Hatshepsut's rule should only focus on how effective she was as a ruler.

## Assessment

### Examination-style 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.

# CHAPTER 7

## Akhenaten

MICHAEL COCKS

### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the historical and geographical background of Akhenaten and the time in which he lived.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about:
  - key archaeological and written sources for the period.
  - issues involved with the nature of evidence from the reign of Akhenaten.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to Akhenaten's personality and achievements.
- devise historical questions and conduct research.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the various interpretations and representations of Akhenaten in primary sources.
  - the various interpretations and representations of Akhenaten presented in secondary sources and how these have differed over time.
  - changing ancient and modern perceptions of the achievements and legacy of Akhenaten.
- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose.

#### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the aftermath of Akhenaten's reign.

### KEY DATES

c. 1352 BCE	c. 1349 BCE	c. 1347 BCE	c. 1346 BCE	c. 1343 BCE
Amenhotep III dies and Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) becomes pharaoh	Amenhotep IV celebrates a Heb-Sed festival at Thebes, which was usually held in a pharaoh's 30th regnal year	Amenhotep IV adopts his new name, Akhenaten	Founds a new capital city at Akhetaten (Amarna)	The attempt to erase the Amun-Re cult occurs

**SOURCE 7.1** A carved face representing the 'heretic pharaoh', Akhenaten



- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the impact of significant personalities on their times.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

## 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.

**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



## MAPS



**SOURCE 7.2** 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.



## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

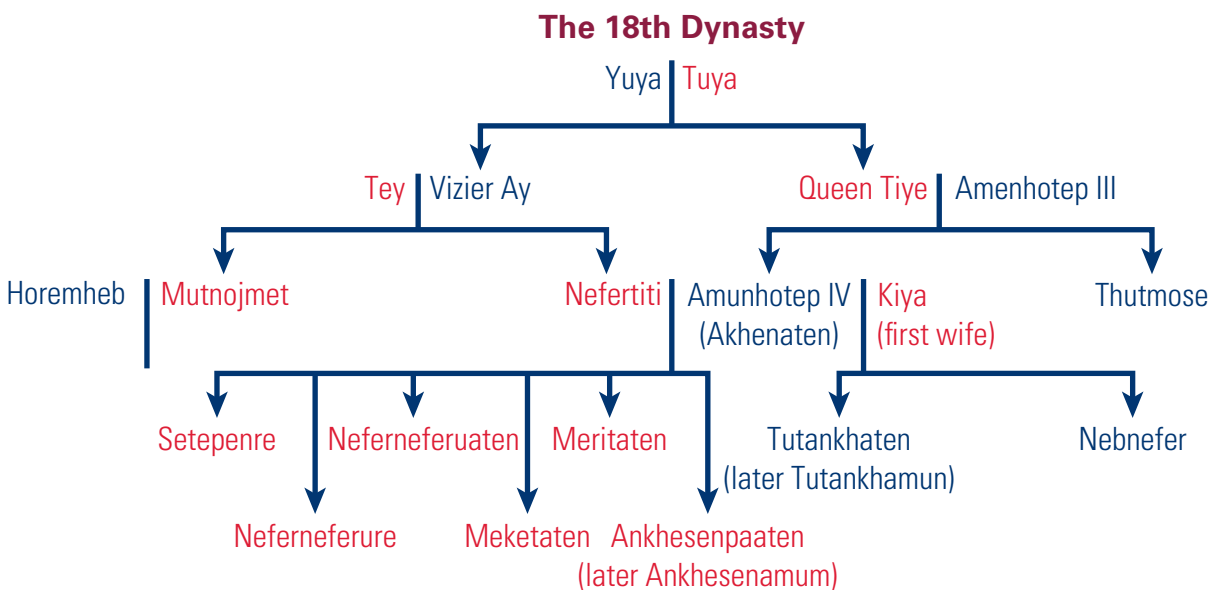
WORD	DEFINITION
<b>Amarna</b>	Akhenaten's new capital city, which was also called Akhetaten (meaning 'horizon of the Aten')
<b>Amarna Letters</b>	small clay tablets covered in cuneiform writing which were discovered in the ruins of Amarna. These tablets were official letters that were sent by rulers in Canaan and Syria to the Amarna period pharaohs.
<b>Amun-Re</b>	(also spelled Amun-Ra) the major god of Thebes who was designated as the king of the gods of the Egyptian pantheon during the New Kingdom era
<b>Amarna period</b>	the period of time when Akhenaten and his successors moved the capital city of Egypt to the new location of Amarna, roughly dated from c. 1350–1330 BCE
<b>ankh</b>	the Egyptian hieroglyph which symbolises life
<b>Aten</b>	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 <i>ankh</i> symbols
<b>Atenism</b>	a modern name to describe Akhenaten's religious system which replaced the traditional Egyptian gods with one single divinity known as the 'Aten'
<b>cult</b>	a religious group focused on the worship of a particular god
<b>heretic</b>	a person holding a religious belief which is in direct conflict with the majority-held religious belief of the culture
<b>hymn</b>	a religious song that was addressed to a particular god or gods
<b>monotheism</b>	the religious belief that only one god exists and that other gods are either false or are manifestations of the one 'true' god
<b>stele</b>	(pl. stelae) an upright stone slab containing an inscription



## Introduction

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.

At the start of Akhenaten's rule as pharaoh, there was no clear indication that he was any different from the rulers that had proceeded 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 7.3** 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?

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 below:

Virtually nothing is known about the young prince Amenhotep who was destined to rule as Akhenaten. His elder brother, Thutmose, was the heir apparent; so, for the early years of his life, Amenhotep could have had no expectation of succeeding to the throne. Thutmose's premature death changed all that. Not only was Amenhotep the new crown prince, he was subsequently crowned at Karnak as his father's co-regent, Amenhotep IV, to smooth the succession when the old [pharaoh] died. The younger Amenhotep would have witnessed, perhaps even taken a formal part in, his father's dazzling jubilee celebrations at Thebes, involving boats covered in gold and electrum sailing in a specially constructed artificial harbour. The effect must have been mesmerising, and when Amenhotep IV became sole ruler, he seems to have resolved to outshine even his father.

**SOURCE 7.4** Wilkinson, T., 2007, *Lives of the Ancient Egyptians*, Thames & Hudson, p. 192

## ACTIVITY 7.1

1. According to Source 7.4, why would the young Akhenaten have 'no expectation of succeeding to the throne' of Egypt?
2. What event meant that he became co-regent with his father, Amenhotep III?
3. According to this source, what effect did observing his father's jubilee celebrations have on Akhenaten?
4. 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?)

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the ancient personalities and their times being studied

### 7.1 Akhenaten's personality and achievements

After the death of his father, Akhenaten became pharaoh at about the age of 17. 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 of 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 peoples' everyday lives. Egypt's religion, with its traditional gods, is summed up by mid-twentieth century Egyptologist Alan Gardiner:



**SOURCE 7.5** 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?

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 Wepwaw (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

**SOURCE 7.6** Gardiner, A.H., 1961, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, p. 214

## ACTIVITY 7.2

1. By the time of Akhenaten, how old was the Egyptian religion?
2. According to the Source 7.6, how had the concept of the traditional Egyptian gods developed?
3. Due to the nature of how they developed, what features did the Egyptian gods have?

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 disk 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.

The following extract describes Akhenaten's early reign in relation to his religious changes:

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 7.7** Spencer, A.J., 2007, *The British Museum Book of Ancient Egypt*, British Museum Press, p. 99



**SOURCE 7.8** Pre-heretical Akhenaten relief: temple relief with a depiction of the hawk-headed Aten with the sun-disc and the pharaoh Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten). Amenhotep IV Karnak temple relief. (c. 1350 BCE). Egyptian Museum of Berlin, Artefact No. AM 2072

### ACTIVITY 7.3

1. According to Source 7.7, how did Akhenaten's artwork at the 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?



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.

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 7.9** Shaw, I., 2004, *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, p. 268

#### ACTIVITY 7.4

1. How do Sources 7.7 to 7.9 corroborate one another regarding the early depictions of the Aten?
2. According to Shaw in Source 7.9, how had Amenhotep III used the concept of the Aten during his time in power?
3. When Akhenaten took over as pharaoh, how did he change the portrayal of the Aten?



**SOURCE 7.10** 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?

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding of ancient personalities and their historical context

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 and 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.

### 7.2 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:

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 7.11** Shaw, I., 2004, *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, p. 270

#### ACTIVITY 7.5

1. According to Source 7.11, 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?

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.



**SOURCE 7.12** 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?

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.

**SOURCE 7.13** *Great Hymn to the Aten* (fourteenth century BCE) which was apparently written by Akhenaten

## ACTIVITY 7.6

1. According to Source 7.13, what was the Aten responsible for creating?
2. Also according to the hymn, what special relationship did Akhenaten have to the Aten?
3. 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?
4. If this hymn was indeed written by Akhenaten himself, what message do you think he wanted to convey to the Egyptian people?



In addition to replacing the many traditional Egyptian gods with the Aten, Akhenaten also 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 below.

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.

**SOURCE 7.14** Shaw, I., 2004, *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, pp. 275–6

### ACTIVITY 7.7

1. What was new about the design of Akhenaten's Aten temple compared to the old temples?
2. Why was light such an important aspect of the new religion?
3. Why do you think Akhenaten would want statues of himself and his family in the temple of the Aten?



**SOURCE 7.15** Sunrise over the ruins of the Aten Temple at Amarna. The columns in the distance are modern reconstructions

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. Gardiner discusses this change:

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.

**SOURCE 7.16** Gardiner, A.H., 1961, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, pp. 228–9

## ACTIVITY 7.8

1. According to Source 7.16, in what ways did Akhenaten try to equate himself with the god Aten itself?
2. What did Akhenaten want his subjects to think when they 'prayed to him'?
3. What evidence does the source provide to show that Atenism never successfully changed the religious practice of the commoners?

## 7.3 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 describes the new location:

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 7.17** Spencer, A.J., 2007, *The British Museum Book of Ancient Egypt*, British Museum Press, p. 101

## ACTIVITY 7.9

1. According to Source 7.17, 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?



**SOURCE 7.18** 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?



Some of the stelae which 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.

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 7.19** Boundary stela of Akhenaten, c. 1349 BCE



**SOURCE 7.20** Amarna boundary stela A. Each of the surviving stelae is designated a letter, this one is 'A'

### ACTIVITY 7.10

1. According to the inscription, why was the city of Akhetaten (Amarna) built?
2. What kinds of religious offerings were made to the Aten?
3. According to Source 7.19, who told Akhenaten where his new city should be built?
4. Why might Akhenaten have wanted this information carved into the cliffs surrounding his new city?



## 7.4 Changes to art

The changes introduced by Akhenaten also 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’, as Akhenaten came to be known, 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:

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 7.21** Gardiner, A.H., 1961, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, p. 214

### ACTIVITY 7.11

1. According to Source 7.21, how did Akhenaten portray himself in his earliest monuments?
2. Why does Gardiner say that Akhenaten’s later images of himself were ‘frankly hideous’?



**SOURCE 7.22** Granodiorite seated statue of Amenhotep III, British Museum, item number EA4



**SOURCE 7.23** Colossus of Akhenaten, fourteenth century BCE, Cairo Museum

### ACTIVITY 7.12

1. Compare the two statues in Sources 7.22 and 7.23. What is visually different between the two artistic styles? (Hint: Compare the different body shapes.)
2. In what ways does Source 7.23 corroborate the descriptions offered in Source 7.21?

Historians have offered different theories about the changes in Akhenaten's art forms.

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.

**SOURCE 7.24** Van De Mieroop, M., 2011, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell, p. 206

### ACTIVITY 7.13

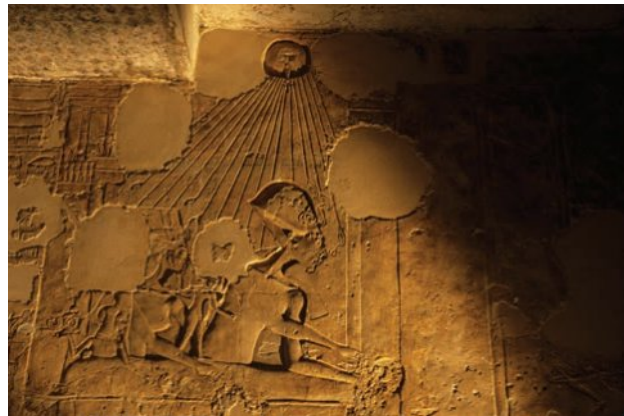
1. According to Source 7.24, what are some of the potential reasons for Akhenaten's peculiar art forms?
2. What was evident in the new style that was seen in 'no other period'?
3. What artefacts have been discovered that show that the Amarna artists were experimenting with the new art style?

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 of lesser importance. 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 7.5 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 exactly the same royal actions. These portrayals seem to show that she was considered equal to her husband in many ways.



**SOURCE 7.25** Bust of Nefertiti, c. 1345 BCE, Egyptian Museum of Berlin, artefact number AM 21300. Why do you think pharaohs made busts such as this?



**SOURCE 7.26** Akhenaten, Queen Nefertiti and daughters in the Tomb of Mafnefhotep, Amarna, Egypt

## ACTIVITY 7.14

Study Source 7.26 and answer the questions that follow.

1. Based upon 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?
2. 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?

## ACTIVITY 7.15

Study Source 7.27 and answer the questions below.

1. 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?
2. Look carefully at how the children in this image are carved. What are each of the children doing?
3. What do you think the artist was trying to say about the relationship between Akhenaten and his family by portraying them in this way?
4. This source is an engraving from a small shrine which was found in a house at Amarna. Why would a shrine to the Aten have his image on it?
5. What might this carving indicate about the role that the royal family played in the private religious worship of the Egyptian people?



**SOURCE 7.27** House altar showing Akhenaten, Nefertiti and three of their daughters, c. 1340 BCE, Egyptian Museum of Berlin, artefact number 14145

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 is in contrast to 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.

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

*(continued)*



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.

**SOURCE 7.28** Shaw, I., 2004, *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, p. 272

## ACTIVITY 7.16

1. According to Source 7.28, for how many years did Akhenaten rule Egypt before he died?
2. What evidence suggests that pharaoh Smenkhkare might actually have been Nefertiti?
3. Who became pharaoh after the death of Smenkhkare?

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about ancient personalities

### 7.5 Akhenaten's reign

Opinions about Akhenaten and his attempted reforms of Egyptian society have differed widely over time. 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'), which 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 which complained about the limited concern the pharaoh seemed to demonstrate for the region:

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.

**SOURCE 7.29** Amarna Letter EA 59

After Akhenaten's death, signs of discontent among the Egyptians becomes 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 which stood in the Karnak temple of Amun-Re in Thebes that boasted of the fact that he was responsible for overturning Akhenaten's religious changes.

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.



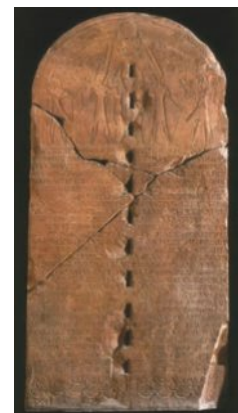
**SOURCE 7.30** The Amarna Letters on clay tablets with cuneiform script, written in Akkadian

**SOURCE 7.31** Restoration stele of Tutankhamun, c. 1330 BCE

## ACTIVITY 7.17

Source 7.31 is the translation of Source 7.32. Study Source 7.31 and answer the questions below.

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?



**SOURCE 7.32** The restoration stele of Tutankhamun

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, the 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.

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.

**SOURCE 7.33** Kemp, B., 1991, *Ancient Egypt, An Anatomy of a Civilisation*, Routledge, p. 264

### ACTIVITY 7.18

1. In Source 7.33, 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 learned about Akhenaten so far, which description best fits his character in your opinion: dreamer or madman?

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 very similar ancient sources. A selection of the conflicting views is outlined in the sources below.

Early twentieth-century archaeologist Sir Flinders Petrie describes Akhenaten as a devotee of truth:

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.

**SOURCE 7.34** Flinders Petrie, W.M., 1894, *Tell El Amarna*, Methuen & Co., p. 41

### ACTIVITY 7.19

Study Source 7.34 and answer the questions below.

1. According to Flinders Petrie, what was Akhenaten's main aim as pharaoh?
2. What evidence does Flinders Petrie provide to prove this?
3. What evidence is there that Flinders Petrie provides a biased view of Akhenaten? Provide a direct quote to show this bias.



Modern Egyptologist Donald Redford is of the opinion that Akhenaten was an insecure dictator:

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.

**SOURCE 7.35** Redford, D.B., 1984, *Akhenaten, the Heretic King*, Princeton University Press, p. 233–5

## ACTIVITY 7.20

Study Source 7.35 and answer the questions below.

1. What does Redford believe was Akhenaten's only real skill?
2. In what ways does Redford believe that Akhenaten was a totalitarian ruler?

Cyril Aldred, a twentieth-century Egyptologist and art historian depicts Akhenaten as a devoted family man:

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.

**SOURCE 7.36** Aldred, C., 1988, *Akhenaten: King of Egypt*, Thames & Hudson, p. 305

## ACTIVITY 7.21

Study Source 7.36 and answer the questions below.

1. What descriptions does Aldred provide which makes him believe that Akhenaten is a 'the good ruler who loves mankind'?
2. In what ways do Sources 7.35 and 7.36 disagree about the character of Akhenaten?

Angela P. Thomas argues that Akhenaten was a strong political strategist:

The king's plan differed from the norm in his steady elimination of all deities except Re, Aten and himself, denying the existence of other gods by not mentioning them and, in some cases, by deliberately acting against them. These hardly seem to be the actions of a monotheist, visionary or messiah born out of his time, but more those of a political opportunist, dogmatically and rationally imposing his will. A king who was high priest, sole mediator and synonymous with one god would hold truly absolute power.

**SOURCE 7.37** Thomas, A.P., 1988, *Akhenaten's Egypt*, Shire Egyptology, p. 46

### ACTIVITY 7.22

Study Source 7.37 and answer the questions below.

1. According to Thomas, in what ways did Akhenaten seek the 'elimination of all deities except Re, Aten and himself'?
2. Thomas understands Akhenaten's revolution not as religiously motivated, but as politically motivated. What direct quote from Source 7.37 clearly shows Thomas's argument?
3. In what ways could Thomas (Source 7.37) and Redford (Source 7.35) agree on their understanding of Akhenaten? Provide a quote from each source to show this.

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument in relation to ancient personalities and their historical context

The following activities are an exercise of the key skill and syllabus objective – synthesis. The exercise draws together all the analytical and evaluative components contained within this chapter.

### ACTIVITY 7.23

1. Do some background research on the four scholars who wrote Sources 7.34 to 7.37. 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 four experts are you more likely to trust? Make sure you use the information you found in your research to justify your answer. Sources 7.34 to 7.36 provide different interpretations about the character and achievements of Akhenaten. Choose one interpretation which 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 following questions:
  - a. How does this source support your chosen interpretation of Akhenaten?
  - b. For what purpose was this source made?

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- 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.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

What were the main differences between Atenism and the traditional 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?

### Respond

From the four alternatives provided for Akhenaten's true motives (refer to Sources 7.34 to 7.37), which do you think is the most convincing? Ensure you provide an analysis and evaluation of your sources as part of your answer.

## Assessment

### Examination-style 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 7A

## Perikles

ALAN BARRIE

This chapter is available as the last chapter in the digital version of the textbook.

Cambridge

GO

CHAPTER 8  
Agrippina the Younger

GLENN DAVIES

## TOPIC DESCRIPTION

## Contextual study

In this study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the historical and geographical background of Agrippina the Younger and the time in which she lived.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about:
  - key archaeological and written sources for the period.
  - issues involved with the nature of evidence from the time of Agrippina the Younger.

## Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues associated with Agrippina the Younger, her personality and achievements.
- devise historical questions and conduct research.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the various interpretations and representations of Agrippina the Younger in primary sources.

## KEY DATES

15 CE	19 CE	28 CE	29 CE	30 CE	31 CE
Agrippina born in Germany	Her father Germanicus dies at Antioch	Married at age of 13 to Domitius Ahenobarbus	Both her mother and eldest brother, Nero, arrested by Sejanus and banished	Agrippina's brother Drusus arrested	Her brother Nero dies in prison

- the various interpretations and representations of Agrippina the Younger presented in secondary sources and how these have differed over time.
- changing ancient and modern perceptions of the achievements and legacy of Agrippina the Younger.
- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose.

### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the aftermath of Agrippina the Younger's influence.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the impact of significant personalities on their times.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

### SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Augustus: first Roman emperor, creator of the Julio-Claudian dynasty
- Livia: Augustus' wife, mother of Tiberius, grandmother of Germanicus and Claudius
- Emperor Tiberius: Augustus' 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.

**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





## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

WORD	DEFINITION
<b>Augusta</b>	empress of Rome
<b>casus suorum</b>	refers to the memoirs written by Agrippina the Younger that recorded the misfortunes of her family
<b>client-king</b>	a leader who accepts Rome's sovereignty over his kingdom, as a compromise between military conquest and independence, but continues to rule his kingdom
<b>cornucopia</b>	a horn that was a symbol of fortune and plenty
<b>dignitas</b>	Roman sense of honour
<b>incest</b>	sexual activity between family members or close relatives
<b>Julio–Claudian imperial family</b>	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)
<b>matrona</b>	Roman mother
<b>princeps</b>	'first man among equals'; the Roman emperor
<b>principate</b>	the rule of the early Roman emperors
<b>Vestal virgins</b>	priestesses of Vesta, goddess of the hearth. They cultivated the sacred fire and took a vow of chastity. Their wellbeing was regarded as fundamental to the continuance and security of Rome
<b>univira</b>	a woman married only once; the ideal Roman <i>matrona</i>

## Introduction

Julia Agrippina, or better known as Agrippina the Younger, was one of the most influential women of the Julio–Claudian Roman imperial family during the first century CE. Agrippina the Younger is most generally known as the mother of the Emperor Nero. She was born in 15 CE into the Julian family, one of the 'first families' of Rome, and attained a level of power in first-century CE Rome that was unique for a woman. In time she earned the renowned title of Augusta, and claimed a powerful political position within Rome that was almost unprecedented for women during her time.

Agrippina the Younger 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 utilisations 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. According to the ancient sources,

39 CE	40 CE	41 CE	42 CE	46 CE	48 CE
Caligula accuses Agrippina and her sister Livilla of adultery and treason, both are exiled	Ahenobarbus dies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caligula assassinated</li> <li>Agrippina's uncle Claudius becomes Emperor</li> </ul>	Agrippina marries Gaius Sallustius Crispus Passienus	Husband dies, leaving inheritance to Agrippina and Nero	Claudius's wife Messalina executed



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 historians tend to accept this verdict. The actual record, however, suggests very strongly that both ancient and modern writers offer a portrait that is biased at best. More recent historians suggest she may have been misjudged. Certainly, Agrippina the Younger was ambitious but a closer look at the sources show that 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.

The last of the really great Julio-Claudian matrons, Agrippina the Younger deserves admiration for her tenacity towards the only two things she believed in: her son's claim to the throne 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, she 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.

The study of ancient women, especially those who held power, is inherently fraught with the opinions and influence of men. In particular, it is the ancient sources who tend to vilify powerful women. The majority of ancient Roman written sources were critical of Agrippina the Younger because she was seen by them as stepping outside the conservative Roman ideals regarding the roles of women. From the period of the early Roman Empire to the present, Agrippina the Younger's forceful personality and extensive influence has 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; the writers criticised:

- 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 the acquirement 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 did not match the Roman ideal of what a woman should be and do. The hostile tradition of the literary sources continues to be reflected in much 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

49 CE	50 CE	54 CE	55 CE	56–59 CE	59 CE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agrippina marries Claudius</li> <li>• Nero engaged to Claudius's daughter Octavia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nero formally adopted by Claudius</li> <li>• Title Augusta conferred on Agrippina</li> </ul>	In October, Claudius dies; Nero becomes emperor	Britannicus, son of Claudius, is poisoned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Period of declining influence of Agrippina</li> <li>• Nero removes titles and guards</li> </ul>	Agrippina is murdered on the orders of her son, Nero

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 material record of Agrippina the Younger is conspicuously different from those in the literary narrative sources. 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.

One of the great tragedies for historians is the loss of the *Memoirs of Agrippina the Younger* as it may have balanced the unremittingly negative view of the male writers. 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.

## ACTIVITY 8.1

1. Who were the main ancient writers on Agrippina the Younger?
2. Which primary and secondary sources might be most valuable for this topic?
3. What problems do you think there might be with the availability and sufficiency of material record sources?

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the ancient personalities and their times being studied

### 8.1 Agrippina the Younger, her personality and achievements

Ancient Roman women had set roles they were expected to play within society: child bearer, 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, child bearing, 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



SOURCE 8.2 The sisters of Caligula

*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 succeeded Caligula and was followed by Nero.

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 amongst the upper classes. This so concerned Augustus that he introduced laws to encourage larger families. 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 presenting 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.

## Agrippina the Elder

Agrippina the Younger's mother, Agrippina the Elder, and her stepfather, Emperor Tiberius, 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.

The other side of the imperial family, those descended from Agrippina the Younger's great-grandmother Livia, were considered just Claudians: distinguished but not divine. Without Julian blood or Julian approval, no Claudian could hold true power. Agrippina the Elder knew – just like her mother, Julia, did – that, after the early death of her brothers, her hand in marriage was the key for a future Roman emperor. Agrippina the Elder's husband would be emperor, her sons would be emperors and she would be the next Livia.

Agrippina the Elder was married at about the age of 15 to her second cousin Germanicus, the son of Antonia and Nero Claudius Drusus, brother of Tiberius. Antonia was the daughter of Augustus's sister and Mark Antony, and Drusus was Livia's son from her first marriage. After Tiberius had been marked as Augustus's heir, Germanicus was marked as Tiberius's. Germanicus's marriage to Agrippina the Elder, alongside his adoption by Tiberius, was a clear public sign that Germanicus would be the next Roman emperor, and that Agrippina the Elder would be the next empress.

Agrippina the Elder was a spectacularly good wife to Germanicus, and their love was admirable and impressive. The people of Rome loved them too, and would line the streets to see them and fling flowers at them. They had nine children in 14 years, six of which survived infancy. Germanicus went on to have a glorious career with the German troops, avenging the tragedy of the loss of three Roman legions in the Battle of Teutoburg Forest, and proving enormously popular, especially with Agrippina the Elder at his side. These were the best days of Agrippina the Elder and Germanicus's careers and lives. They were the beloved, semi-divine children of Augustus, heirs to the Roman Empire and glorious conquering generals. They had, at this time, five living children and three were sons, and so were the golden couple of Rome.



Eventually the Emperor Tiberius retired from Rome altogether to the island of Capri, near Naples, where he indulged in food and drink and, among other improper recreations, amused himself by watching men suspected of plotting against him being tortured and thrown over a cliff into the sea. At this time, Tiberius sent Germanicus to Syria to begin his political career with some complex negotiations surrounding who would be the next client king of Armenia. His wife, Agrippina the Elder, followed him and gave birth to her youngest daughter and last child in Athens on the way. Having completed his mission successfully, Germanicus took a solo sightseeing tour to Egypt and returned to Syria to discover that the governor of the province, Piso, had begun interfering with his affairs. A quarrel began which ended only when Germanicus fell suddenly and drastically ill. Both Germanicus and Agrippina believed that he had been poisoned and that Tiberius was to blame.

When Germanicus died, the people of Rome lined the streets as Agrippina the Elder proceeded through the city on foot, still holding the urn with her husband's ashes clutched to her chest. The day on which the remains of Germanicus were carried into the Mausoleum of Augustus was characterised either by a deep silence or loud cries of grief. Tiberius was annoyed by the public's enthusiasm for Agrippina the Elder. They adored her and called her the honour of the country, the only blood-relative of Augustus, the one surviving model of the old values. In jealousy of her overwhelming support from the Roman people, Tiberius 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. As a small child she 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. Agrippina the Younger 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:

- 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 who was the first Roman emperor, Agrippina the Younger represents a political paradox of the early Roman empire. She managed to exercise great power and influence in a society that offered no constitutional role to powerful and influential women. It was this achievement, to be empress in an empire that allowed only emperors, that makes her accomplishments interesting and noteworthy.

## 8.2 Background, early career and influence

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 because she was seen by them as stepping outside the conservative Roman ideals regarding the roles of women – particularly the way in which she achieved her goals through the apparent manipulation of Claudius and Nero. A case study of this vilification of Agrippina is evident at the time of Nero’s ascension to the *princeps*.

### Traditional Roman matron

Octavia, sister of the Emperor Augustus, was one of the most prominent women in Roman history, and was respected and admired by contemporaries for her loyalty, nobility and humanity, and for maintaining traditional Roman feminine virtues.

Suetonius describes the way he believed Agrippina the Younger achieved success, by using her feminine wiles:

but it was Agrippina ... who ensnared him.

**SOURCE 8.4** Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, Claudius

A common accusation against noble Roman women with political influence was that of adultery or incest, with such accusations being fueled by unproven gossip.

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.

**SOURCE 8.5** Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 61.8.5

Suetonius was renowned as a writer who relied on gossip and innuendo rather than facts.

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.

**SOURCE 8.6** Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, Nero

Tacitus’s treatment of Agrippina is withering because he portrays her as filled with ambitious purpose, austere and arrogant.

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.

**SOURCE 8.7** Tacitus, *Annals*, Book XII. 7



**SOURCE 8.3** Modern cast of a bust of Octavia held in Ara Pacis Museum, Rome

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.

### Did Nero commit incest with this 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



**SOURCE 8.8** Bust of Agrippina the Younger, statue held in Stuttgart



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.

**SOURCE 8.9** Davenport, C. and Malik, S., 'Mythbusting Ancient Rome – the Emperor Nero', *The Conversation*, 28 September 2016

## ACTIVITY 8.2

1. Compare Sources 8.4 and 8.6. 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 8.5 to 8.7 are critical of his mother's motivations. Identify in these sources, Tacitus, Suetonius and Cassius Dio's words that indicate what they write may not be completely accurate.
3. Look at Sources 8.2, 8.3 and 8.8. 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 8.9 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.

## 8.3 Social position and status

Agrippina the Younger was born in 15 CE at Oppidum Ubiorum on the Rhine, now modern Cologne, Germany. She was the daughter of great general Germanicus, grandson of Livia, and Agrippina the Elder, granddaughter of Augustus. 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.

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.

**SOURCE 8.10** Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, Gaius, 3

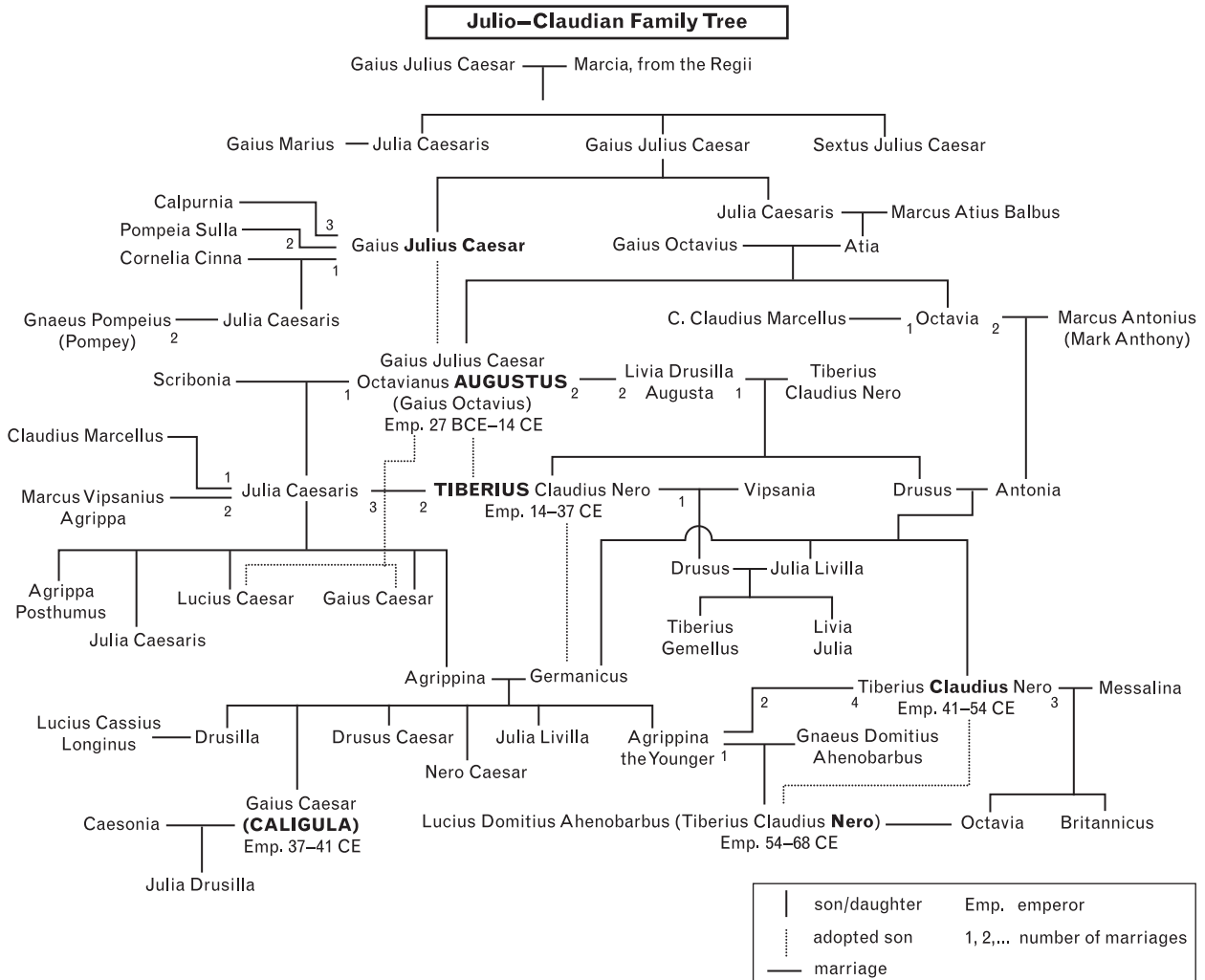
Tacitus describes Agrippina the Elder's deep grief, and how the Roman people showed their love for Germanicus, after his death.

[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.

(continued)

As soon as the fleet was seen on the horizon, not only the harbour and the adjacent shores, but the city walls to and the roofs, and every place which commanded the most distant prospect were filled with crowds of mourners

SOURCE 8.11 Tacitus, *Annals*, 3.1



SOURCE 8.12 The Julio-Claudian family tree



SOURCE 8.13 *The Death of Germanicus*, Nicholas Poussin, 1627, Minneapolis Institute of Arts



SOURCE 8.14 *Agrippina Landing at Brundisium with the Ashes of Germanicus*, Benjamin West, c. 1768, Yale University Art Gallery

### ACTIVITY 8.3

1. Study Source 8.12. Explain how Agrippina the Younger was related to both Augustus and Livia.
2. Using Source 8.12, 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. Use Source 8.10 to write a character summary of Germanicus.
5. How did the Romans react to Germanicus's death according to Source 8.13?
6. Using Source 8.13 and Source 8.14, what conclusion can you reach about the position Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder held from the point of view of the Roman people?
7. Evaluate the reliability of Sources 8.13 and 8.14.
8. Can you suggest any other female in ancient Rome who could have claimed as important a position as Agrippina the Younger? Explain your answer.

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show an understanding of ancient personalities and their historical context

### 8.4 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 an significant connection for Agrippina the Younger as he was intensely popular with the Roman people and the army. As a direct descendent of Augustus, Agrippina the Younger was acutely aware of her lineage. Her family background gave birth to the goals that would continue to mark her life: gaining imperial prestige and elevating her son to *princeps*.

#### 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.

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

(continued)



**SOURCE 8.15** Bust of Domitius Ahenobarbus, Vatican Museum. Domitius was a close relative of the five Roman Emperors of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.



but a dense crowd greeted him uproariously with altars, sacrifices, torches, and such endearments as ‘star’, ‘chicken’, ‘baby’, ‘pet’.

**SOURCE 8.16** Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, Gaius, 13

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 a female 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.

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 the victim to the imperial power plays which 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.

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.

**SOURCE 8.18** Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, Caligula, 24

While still married to her first husband, it was generally agreed by the ancient writers that Agrippina the Younger, as well as 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. Here, Cassius Dio accuses Caligula and his sisters of incest.



**SOURCE 8.17** Gaius Caligula, Emperor of Rome. Describe the state of mind of Caligula you think this bust is portraying.



**SOURCE 8.19** Roman coinage showing Gaius Caligula and his three sisters: Agrippina, Drusilla and Livilla

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 ...

**SOURCE 8.20** Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Book 59, 22.6

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.

#### ACTIVITY 8.4

1. What memory, identified by Suetonius in Source 8.16, 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 8.19 tells us about their position and status?
3. In Source 8.19, 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 8.18 and 8.20 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 8.21** The modern-day island of Ventotene, the location of Agrippina's exile.

## 8.5 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.

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, and 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.

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.

**SOURCE 8.22** Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, Claudius, 26

Cassius Dio suggests Claudius was swept away by Agrippina the Younger, even though he had known her since she was a child.

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.

**SOURCE 8.23** Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Book 61, 31.5–6

Suetonius discusses the efforts undertaken by Pallas, a freedman who was a trusted advisor of Claudius, to help change the law to allow uncles to marry nieces.

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.

**SOURCE 8.24** Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, Claudius, 26

Tacitus points out that a change of law to allow uncles and nieces to marry was not being actively requested by Romans.

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.

**SOURCE 8.25** Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 12.7

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.

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 8.26** Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 10.2

The physical features in the Agrippina the Younger bust are very similar to the older bust of her father, Germanicus.

On the left side of the Gemma Claudia brooch in Source 8.29 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.

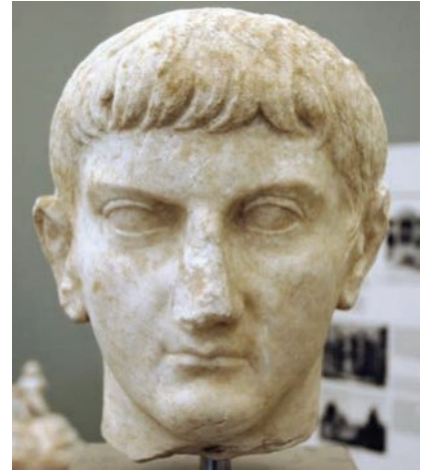
Cassius Dio claims Agrippina the Younger dominated Claudius from the beginning of their marriage.

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 8.30** Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Book 8.61



**SOURCE 8.27** Bust of Agrippina the Younger



**SOURCE 8.28** Bust of Germanicus the Younger



**SOURCE 8.29** Balancing of Julian and Claudian couples, Gemma Claudia brooch, Museum of Art History, Vienna

Agrippina'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.

Tacitus states Agrippina'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 8.31** A coin from 41–54 CE showing Claudius on the left and Agrippina the Younger on the right.

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.

**SOURCE 8.32** Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 7.26

Modern historian Anthony Barrett states in *Agrippina: Sex, Power, and Politics in the Early Empire* that she saw herself as an equal to Claudius due to her imperial lineage.

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.

**SOURCE 8.33** Barret, A., 1998, *Agrippina: Sex, Power, and Politics in the Early Empire*, Yale University Press, p. 124

The relief in Source 8.34 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 8.34** Statue of Claudius and Agrippina at Aphrodisias, Turkey



## ACTIVITY 8.5

1. Use Sources 8.22 to 8.26 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 8.27 and 8.28. 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 8.29 was a private piece of jewelry 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 8.31. What can you infer about the relationship between the Emperor Claudius and Agrippina Augusta from the portraits on the coin?
5. Source 8.33 is corroborated by *The Sebasteion Relief* in Source 8.34 that shows Agrippina the Younger in a stance of *concordia* with Claudius. Identify the phrase in Source 8.33 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 and figures above that corroborate the view that Claudius was controlled by his wife.



**SOURCE 8.35** Bust of Claudius at the Naples National Archaeological Museum.

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument in relation to ancient personalities and their historical context

### 8.6 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 had convinced Claudius to approve Nero marrying his daughter, Claudia Octavia. Nero was 16, they were first cousins, and representatives of each of their families. 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.

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.

**SOURCE 8.36** Suetonius, *Life of Claudius*, xliii–xliv

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.

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 8.37** Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 61.34 1–2

In the relief in Source 8.38, 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 shoulder. 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.



**SOURCE 8.38** Nero and Agrippina, as depicted on the Sebasteion Relief, Archaeological Museum Aphrodisias, Turkey

## 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.

Tacitus argued that from the moment of Nero's succession the Roman Empire was transformed. Complete obedience was now given to a woman.

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 ...

**SOURCE 8.39** Tacitus, *Annals*, 13.2

Suetonius wrote that Agrippina now managed the Roman empire.

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 Domitian, 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.

**SOURCE 8.40** Suetonius, *Nero*, 9

### ACTIVITY 8.6

1. Who were the possible murderers of the Emperor Claudius identified in Sources 8.36 and 8.37? Which of these sources acknowledge that there is doubt that Agrippina murdered Claudius? 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 8.38 demonstrates about Agrippina's influence at the beginning of Nero's principate? In your response consider the quote from Source 8.40 that on the day of his succession the password Nero gave to the colonel on duty was 'the best of mothers'.

## 8.7 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 presented 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 8.42 and 8.43 show coins from 54 CE and 55 CE of Nero and his mother.



**SOURCE 8.41** Roman coin from 54 CE



**SOURCE 8.42** Roman coin from 55 CE

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.

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.

**SOURCE 8.43** Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 61.3.2

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.

[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 8.44** Tacitus, *Annals*, 13.11





**SOURCE 8.45** Nero appears on later coins alone



**SOURCE 8.46** Bust of Nero

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. Nero became more and more offended by her strict surveillance, and her criticism of his words and acts. At first he confined his resentment to frequent endeavours to bring upon her a burden of unpopularity by pretending that he would abdicate the throne and go off to Rhodes. He then deprived her of all her honours as well as her guard of Roman and German soldiers. He even forbade her to live with him and drove her from the palace. Eventually Nero passed all bounds in harassment, bribing men to annoy her with lawsuits while she remained in the city, and after she had retired to the country, to pass her house by land and sea and break her rest with abuse and mockery.

Hostilities between mother and son escalated; Suetonius's description of Nero's treatment of his mother would today be called bullying and harassment.

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.

**SOURCE 8.47** Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, Nero, 34,

### 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 did not drown at sea but instead, to Nero's disgust and fury, swam to shore and was rescued

by locals. Finally, in 59 CE, Nero sent his soldiers to beat her to death. She is said to have pointed to her abdomen and told her killers to harm her there, where Nero had been conceived. So perished 'the best of mothers'. Nero was obviously afraid of the public reaction 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.

Cassius Dio appears to be make the argument that Agrippina being murdered by her son was a richly deserved misfortune.

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.

**SOURCE 8.48** Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 8.62

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.

[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.

**SOURCE 8.49** Tacitus, *Annals*, 14.11

Perhaps, after all, Agrippina had her revenge as Suetonius describes the ghost of Agrippina the Younger haunting her son.

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.

**SOURCE 8.50** Suetonius, *Nero*, 34

## ACTIVITY 8.7

1. Look at the coins in Sources 8.41 and 8.42. What do you think the coin from 54 CE suggests about the power relationship at that time between Nero and his mother? Describe how the power relationship has changed in the coin in 55 CE.
2. Use Sources 8.43 to 8.46 to identify the evidence that Agrippina the Younger's influence over Nero was declining.
3. Study Sources 8.47 to 8.50 and answer the questions below.
  - 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?

Agrippina the Younger was murdered outside of Rome, cremated and buried in an unmarked grave with no ceremony. She never received a funeral or any state honours and Nero did his best to pretend that she had never existed during the remaining years of his reign. The ignominy of her slow fall from power and the silence surrounding her death made it easier for some to sweep her out of history.

Contemporary and predominantly male historians of Rome were content in pretending that a woman had never ruled them. But for almost ten years, Agrippina the Younger had unofficially ruled the Roman Empire as partner to her husband and son. She was hailed as Augusta and was empress in all but name. She fought against and transgressed the limits of her sex more than any other woman of the Roman imperial world. Her fascinating example deserves to be remembered as more than simply the woman who poisoned Claudius or the mother of Nero.

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about ancient personalities

### 8.8 Ancient and modern perceptions of Agrippina's achievements

#### Ancient literary sources

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 due 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 her 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 first-century CE power struggle within the imperial Roman household.

#### Modern views

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 usually 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 and appear to be disinclined to question patriarchal perspectives from early imperial Rome.



Ambitious and unscrupulous, Agrippina struck down a series of victims; no man or woman was safe if she suspected rivalry or desired their wealth.

**SOURCE 8.51** Scullard, H.H., 1976, *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome from 133 BC to AD 68*, Methuen & Co., p.314

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.

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.

**SOURCE 8.52** Ferrero, G., 1911, *The Women of the Caesars*, The Century Co., pp. 215–216

Richard Bauman states that modern historians are split regarding Agrippina's guilt over her husband's death:

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.

**SOURCE 8.53** Bauman, R.A., 1994, *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome*, Routledge, p. 187

## ACTIVITY 8.8

1. Which of the three main ancient writers do you think Scullard reflects the most closely in Source 8.51?
2. Identify the quote where Ferrero criticises Tacitus in Source 8.52. What is the damning phrase he uses to dismiss the authenticity of Tacitus?
3. Read Source 8.53. 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.

## The differences between the ancient literary and visual sources

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 was misjudged:

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.

**SOURCE 8.54** Publisher's synopsis of Anthony Barrett's, *Agrippina: Sex, Power, and Politics in the Early Empire* (published by Routledge, 1996)

The following images of Agrippina show the variety of ways she was represented by contemporary artisans.



**SOURCE 8.55** Statue representing Agrippina the Younger



**SOURCE 8.56** Bust of Agrippina the Younger



**SOURCE 8.57** Statue of Agrippina the Younger in a reclining pose

*The Great Cameo of France*, shown in Source 8.59, is a five-layered sardonyx imperial Roman cameo made c. 50–54 CE. In the upper level are the deceased or deified members including Divus Augustus. The surrounding figures may be Drusus the Younger (son of Tiberius), and Drusus the Elder (brother of Tiberius) flying on Pegasus.

In the middle level appear the Emperor Tiberius flanked by his mother Livia; standing in front of them are Germanicus and his wife Agrippina the Elder, behind them the future emperor Nero and the figure of Providentia (Foresight); behind Livia and Tiberius are Claudius and his wife Agrippina the Younger.

In the lowest level are captive barbarians.



**SOURCE 8.58** Plaster cast of a statue of Agrippina the Younger found in the surroundings of Rome



**SOURCE 8.59** *The Great Cameo of France*, depicting a Julio-Claudian family reunion, Cabinet des Medailles, Paris



## ACTIVITY 8.9

- 1.** In Source 8.54, Anthony Barrett argues that Agrippina the Younger has been misjudged for nearly 2000 years.
  - a.** According to the review of his book, what does Barrett 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.
- 2.** Look at Sources 8.55 to 8.58. Consider how these visual representations of Agrippina the Younger depict a positively demure, matronly and indeed 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 8.59 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.

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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This chapter on Agrippina the Younger outlined:

- the background, early career and influence explored through the role of women in imperial Roman society
- the social position and status explored through an analysis of the struggle between the two great Roman families: Julian and Claudian
- the turmoil during the reign of Agrippina the Younger's brother, Gaius Caligula
- Agrippina the Younger's marriage to the emperor (her uncle Claudius), and her rise in political influence and power
- the reign of Agrippina the Younger's son, Nero, and her efforts at co-rule
- the decline in influence and death of Agrippina the Younger
- a comparison of the hostile ancient literary sources with modern literary interpretations and evidence available in the material remain sources of Agrippina the Younger.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## 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

Describe the basis of Agrippina's power and influence before her marriage to Claudius.

### Synthesise

Describe the representations of Agrippina the Younger in the ancient sources.

### Evaluate

Evaluate the influence of Agrippina the Younger in her lifetime using the sources in this chapter.

### Respond

Explain the expected role of a woman in ancient Roman society.

## Assessment

### Examination-style 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.



# CHAPTER 9

## Boudica

SARAH COLEMAN

This chapter is available in the digital version of the textbook.

Cambridge





# 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 for greater 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. Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of a historical period in the Ancient World.
2. Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to a historical period in the Ancient World.
3. Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding in relation to specific historical periods in the Ancient World.
4. Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a historical period in the Ancient World.
5. Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgments about a historical period in the Ancient World.
6. Create responses that communicate meaning to suit a purpose in relation to a historical period in the Ancient World.

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## KEY CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- usefulness and reliability of sources
- perspectives
- interpretations and contestability
- evidence
- continuity and change
- cause and effect
- significance
- empathy.

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## KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How is meaning concerning certain periods of history constructed from historical evidence?
- What features, achievements and issues distinguish significant historical periods of antiquity?

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## CHAPTERS IN THIS UNIT

### CHAPTER

**Chapter 10** Thebes East and West: Unearthing the city of the living and the dead (DIGITAL CHAPTER)

**Chapter 11** Fifth century Athens (BCE)

**Chapter 12** Philip II and Alexander III of Macedon

**Chapter 13** Early imperial Rome

**Chapter 14** Pompeii and Herculaneum

**Chapter 15** The 'fall' of the Western Roman Empire (DIGITAL CHAPTER)



# CHAPTER 10

## Thebes East and West: Unearthing the city of the living and the dead

MICHAEL COCKS

This chapter is available in the digital version of the textbook.

Cambridge









# CHAPTER 11

## Fifth-century Athens (BCE)

JENNA HAYWOOD

### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

#### Contextual study

In this study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the geographical and historical context of Athens during the fifth century BCE, with particular reference to the remains at key sites and other relevant sources.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period, and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources; for example, authentication, excavation, reconstruction and/or conservation.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the nature of governance and political developments.
  - significant events and key individuals.
  - social structure.
  - cultural life and practices.
  - religious beliefs and practices.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the limitations, reliability and usefulness of sources

and either:

- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose by presenting an essay in response to historical sources

or

- devise historical questions and conduct research, and create a response that communicates meaning by presenting an independent source investigation.

### KEY DATES

#### 800–500 BCE

The Archaic Age sees the emergence of Greece from the Dark Ages, and the growth of individual *poleis* and Greek culture through colonisation

#### 490 BCE

Greek victory over the Persians at the Battle of Marathon

#### 487 BCE

- First victim of ostracism expelled
- Archons are appointed by lot for the first time

#### 484 BCE

Aeschylus wins the prize for tragedy at the City Dionysia in Athens

#### 480 BCE

Greek victories over Xerxes I at Salamis, after losing at Thermopylae earlier in the year

## Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of Athens during the fifth century BCE.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about changing interpretations over time relating to an understanding of the period using, for example, new discoveries, research and technologies.

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## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Pericles: a prominent and influential Greek statesman, orator and general of Athens during the Golden Age, specifically the time between the Persian and Peloponnesian wars
- Phidias: a Greek sculptor, painter, and architect
- Plato: a philosopher in Classical Greece and the founder of the Academy in Athens
- Socrates: a philosopher credited as one of the founders of Western philosophy, and as being the first moral philosopher of the Western ethical tradition of thought

## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>archon</b>	chief magistrate in a <i>polis</i>
<b>Areopagus</b>	the earliest aristocratic council in Athens; its power was mostly removed during the fifth century BCE
<b>arête</b>	meaning 'excellence of any kind'
<b>chorus</b>	in Greek theatre, a group of actors who described and commented 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
<b>didactic</b>	intended to teach; moral instruction is the motive of the text
<b>dokimasia</b>	process of determining whether citizens were suitable to hold political office
<b>eisangelia</b>	the power to supervise the conduct of officials during their year in office
<b>entablature</b>	the upper part of a classical building supported by columns, comprising the architrave, frieze and cornice

**478 BCE**

The Delian League is formed

**468 BCE**

Sophocles wins the prize for tragedy in Athens

**462 BCE**

Ephialtes deprives the aristocratic Areopagus of most of their traditional functions and makes them answerable to the Assembly

**461 BCE**

Pericles instructs that construction begins on the two Long Walls, connecting Athens and the harbour at Piraeus

**458–457 BCE**

The archonship (highest political office) is opened to most social classes





TERM	DEFINITION
<b><i>euthynai</i></b>	the investigation at the end of an individual's term in office to establish whether they acted according to the law
<b>frieze</b>	a horizontal band of sculpted or painted decoration
<b>golden ratio</b>	a special rule of proportion occurring in nature that was discovered by the ancient Greeks (1:1.618)
<b>libation</b>	a drink poured out as an offering to a religious deity
<b>metope</b>	a rectangular, decorated element that fills the space between two triglyphs in a Doric frieze
<b>oral tradition</b>	a form of communication where knowledge, art and ideas are passed down through the generations by word of mouth
<b>ostracism</b>	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
<b>pediment</b>	triangular upper part of the front of a classical building, often filled with sculptures
<b><i>polis</i></b>	(pl. <i>poleis</i> ) city-state, a fortified town and its surrounding land that governed itself (e.g. Athens, Sparta)
<b>polytheistic</b>	the belief in multiple deities simultaneously
<b>protagonist</b>	the leading character in a play
<b>satyr</b>	in mythology a man with horse-like ears and tail; companions of Dionysus
<b><i>strategos</i></b>	(pl. <i>strategoí</i> ) military general
<b>stylobate</b>	a continuous base supporting a row of columns; acts as the foundation for a building
<b>votive offering</b>	an object that is displayed or deposited in a sacred place without the intention of recovery to gain favour with the gods

#### 454 BCE

Treasury of Delian League moves from Delos to Athens

#### 451 BCE

Jurors now receive payment for their service

#### 448 BCE

Work begins to restore the Acropolis after Persian destruction, and the Parthenon is built

#### 443 BCE

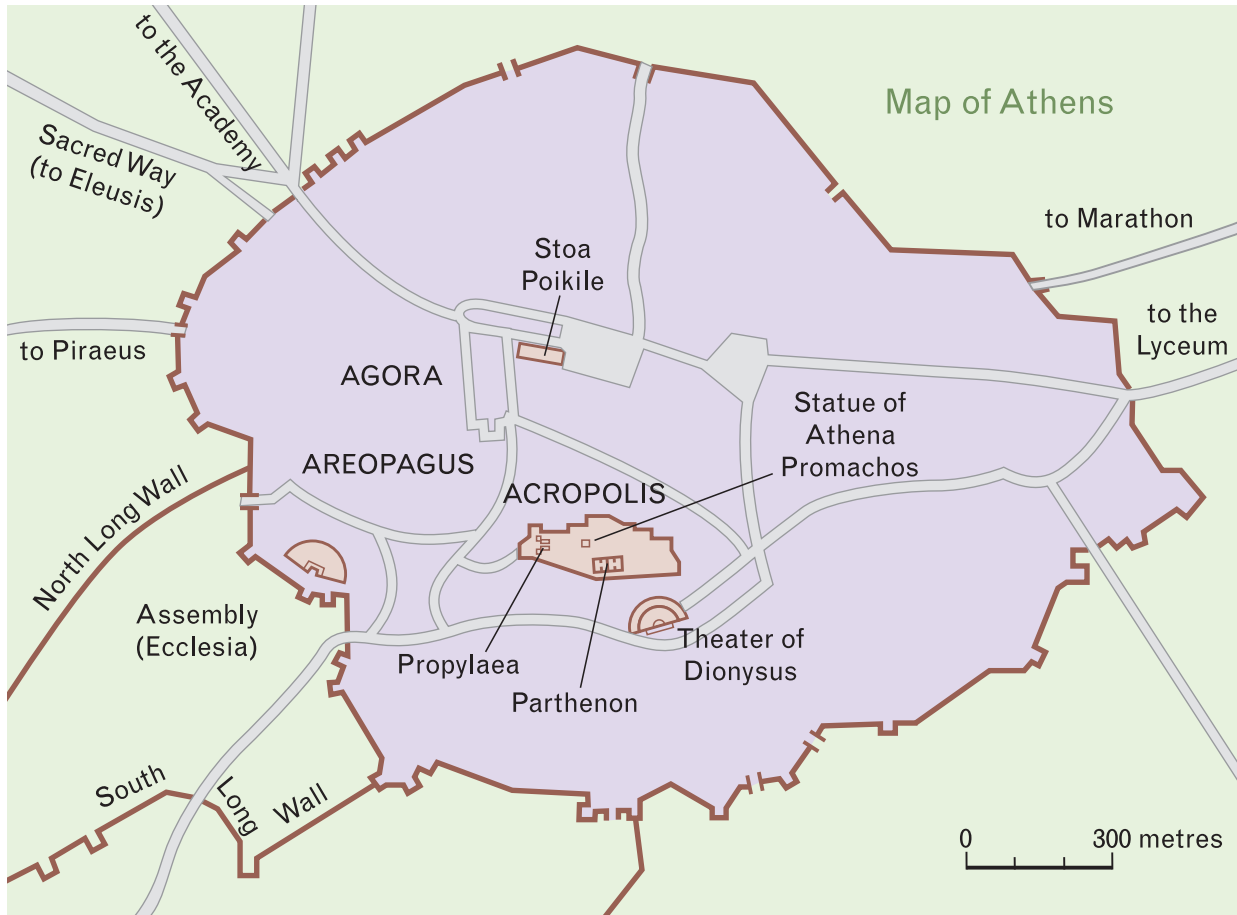
Pericles is first appointed as *strategos*

#### 438 BCE

Statue of Athena Parthenos in the Parthenon is dedicated



## MAP



**SOURCE 11.2** Map of Athens in the fifth century BCE

## Introduction

In the Interactive Textbook, you will find extracts from a number of articles that explore the differing opinions on the legacy of Athens from the fifth century BCE. You can read all or a selection of these by way of introduction to this time period.



**431 BCE**

First Peloponnesian War begins

**429 BCE**

Pericles dies in the Athenian Plague

**421 BCE**

Peace of Nicias brings an end to First Peloponnesian War

**404 BCE**

Athens surrenders to combined forces of Peloponnesian League

# Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of a historical period in the Ancient World

## 11.1 Geographical and historical context

### Geography

Located within the Mediterranean like her neighbour Italy, Greece was placed 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*.



**SOURCE 11.3** Vikos Gorge, in the Pindus Mountains of northern Greece. How does the geography of Greece vary around the country?

### 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 soil and climate around mainland Greece was 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.

Along the coastline, in regions similar to Athens, people benefitted from a pleasant climate. Poor weather offshore during winter prevented overseas trading, however. The poet Hesiod, in *Works and Days*, gives advice to the reader 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. The Interactive Textbook contains an extract from this text, and an activity to help you analyse it.



**SOURCE 11.4** Olive gathering, attributed to the Antimenes Painter, c. 520 BCE, Attic amphora, British Museum. What other agricultural themes can be found on pottery?



## ACTIVITY 11.1

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?

## 11.2 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. Below is an outline of key events during the Persian Wars as it relates to the increasing power of Athens in the following years.

### Key events during the Persian Wars

- The Persian Empire had expanded into Asia Minor, taking control of numerous cities that considered themselves Greek and began to monopolise trade, restricting Greek prosperity.
- Athens intervened in a revolt by the Ionians against Sardis and their Persian governors, likely provoking the Persian King Darius.
- Darius's force landed at the plain of Marathon in 490 BCE to face a much smaller Greek force, but ultimately lost and returned home.
- In 483 BCE, the archon Themistokles convinced Athens to build a large fleet of triremes which became the key to their eventual victory.
- In 480 BCE, Darius's son Xerxes returned to Greece by making his way around the Aegean and through Macedonia. A combined Greek force tried to block them at Thermopylae but ultimately failed.
- The Persians moved south and burned Athens but were defeated by a superior Athenian navy at Salamis.

At the conclusion of the Second Persian War, it was clear to *poleis* around the Aegean that Athens was the key to keeping the Persian threat at bay. To ensure this, Athens took on the leadership of the Hellenic League. The organisation became known as the Delian League because its treasury was situated on the island of Delos. Each *polis* would pay a contribution to the league, which would then be used by Athens to protect cities who had just won their freedom from the Persians. In 454 BCE, the treasury was moved from Delos to Athens. This change made Athens the focus of life in the Aegean and enabled it to gradually build an empire in the following decades. This centralisation of finance, economic and cultural life was key to Athens achieving the cultural heights that it did during the fifth century BCE.

However, during the latter half of the fifth century BCE, Athens's 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. Unfortunately, in 429 BCE, Pericles (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).

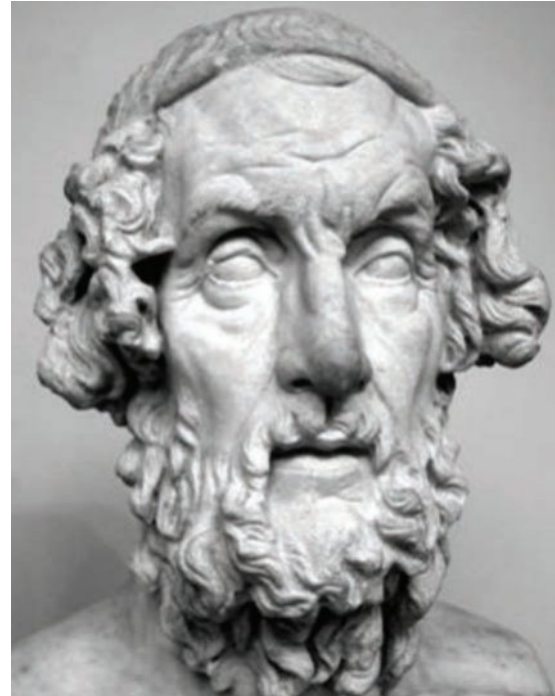
What becomes apparent as you examine the cultural and political achievements of Athens during the fifth century BCE is that its most significant success and growth occurred during times of peace. While authors still wrote plays and philosophers still questioned the mysteries of the universe during

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.

## 11.3 Government and political developments

### 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 their 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 an often-used 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. The Interactive Textbook includes Aristotle’s account of Peisistratus’s tyranny in Athens, and an activity to help you analyse it. Peisistratus had control of Athens several times between 561 and 527 BCE, and is credited with reducing the privileges of the aristocracy, granting land to the poor and funding artistic programs.



**SOURCE 11.5** A bust of Herodotus. How do we know this is what Herodotus looked like?

### 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 – her democratic institutions and practices suited her society and people. The decades after the Persian Wars particularly saw the rising influence of the lower classes. These 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 ten 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.

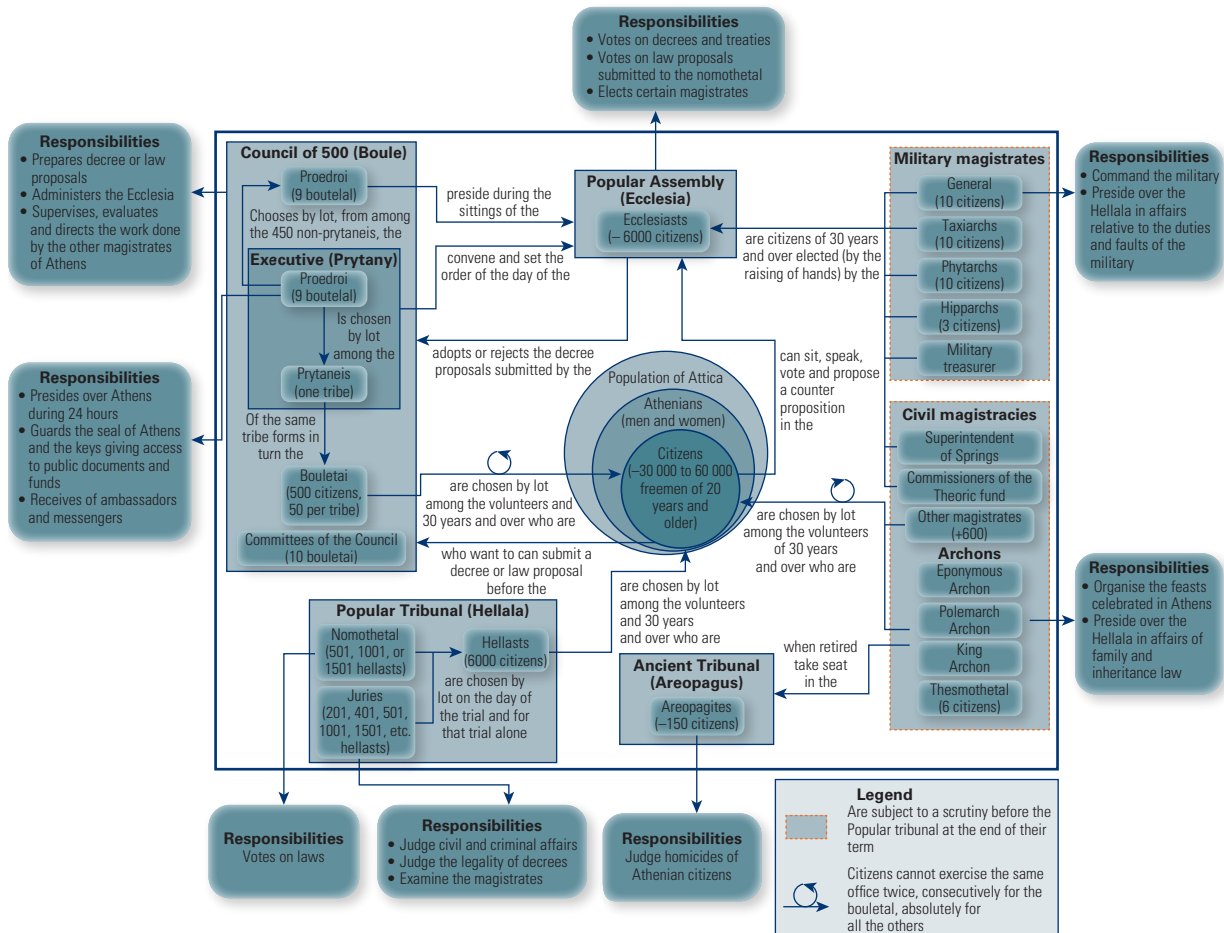


**SOURCE 11.6** How ancient Greece became a democracy



During the fifth century BCE, there were four main political institutions in Athens:

1. the Popular Assembly (Ecclesia)
2. the Council of 500 (Boule)
3. the Magistracy
4. the Heliia and *dikasteria* (other law courts)



**SOURCE 11.7** Athenian political institutions in the fifth century BCE

## 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 Pericles, most of the political decision-making power had been transferred to institutions made up of ordinary citizens.

The radical features included:

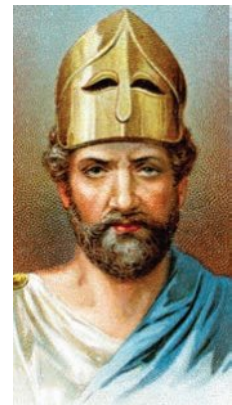
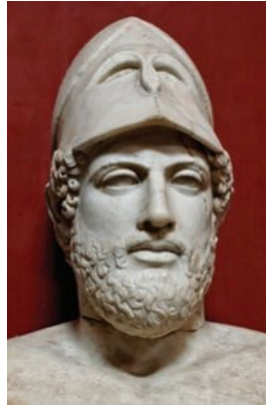
- selection by lot: for every magistrate except the *strategos*
- collegiality: all magistrates were members of boards or groups (no one served alone)
- direct participation: everyone was expected to attend and serve
- payment for service: first for jurors, then later magistrates
- rotation of offices: no magistrate could serve in an office more than once (except members of the Boule and the *strategia*).

## Who was Pericles?

When examining the rise of Athens and her cultural achievements during the fifth century BCE, Pericles's contributions cannot be overlooked. The most substantial primary source on Pericles is Plutarch's biography of the politician; however, Plutarch was not critical of the material he used in writing. Thucydides also wrote about Pericles though he was cursory in recounting personal details about him. Aristophanes as well made mention of Pericles, though his poetic work featured caricature and ridicule.

Key biographic details for Pericles:

- born in 495 BCE to a distinguished family
- grew up during the Persian Wars, in which his father participated
- sought the company of intellectuals such as Anaxagoras and Protagoras, hence why his political views were considered radical and progressive
- elected *strategos* 15 successive times – evidence of the trust the people had in his capabilities and integrity
- made significant reforms which saw the rise of a direct citizen democracy
- under Pericles, the Athenian Empire continued to grow by taking control of the other Greek states
- carried out an ambitious building program including the Parthenon and several buildings around the agora
- leader of Athens during the first years of the Peloponnesian War with Sparta
- died in 429 BCE from the plague.



**SOURCE 11.8** Bust of Pericles, c. 430 BCE, and a later artistic representation of the Athenian politician. To what degree do you think these portraits have been idealised and given a more 'youthful' appearance? Why?

### ACTIVITY 11.2

Search online for the following sources regarding Pericles and answer the questions that follow using evidence to support your response.

- Thucydides's *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book 2, Chapter 65.
- Plutarch's *Pericles*, chapters 9, 11–13, 19–20, 39.

1. What abilities does Pericles have?
2. How do the sources describe his character?
3. What was his position within society?
4. What was he like as a leader?
5. How did he contribute in developing democracy within Athens?
6. How did he contribute to the cultural growth and development of Athens?
7. Overall, how do Thucydides and Plutarch differ in their opinions of Pericles? What may account for these differences?

## Social structure

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.

To be considered a citizen, a person had to be male and over the age of 18 (from 451 BCE onwards, both parents also had to be Athenian-born). Some of the benefits of citizenship were:

- only ones permitted to own land
- had political rights and the protection of the law
- free from direct taxation.

Citizens in ancient Athens belonged to four distinct classes:

**TABLE 11.1** Social hierarchy of men in ancient Athens

Greek name	Qualification	Rights
<b>Pentacosiomedimni</b> (men of 500 bushels)	Land owned produced 500 measures of produce	Eligible for archonship and every institution
<b>Hippeis</b> (horsemen)	Land owned produced 300 measures of produce (enough to provide for a horse)	Both classes eligible for lower magistracies, the Council of 500 and Assembly
<b>Zeugitae</b> (yoked men)	Land owned produced 200 measures of produce (enough for a yoke of oxen to plough their field)	
<b>Thetes</b> (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. While women were not permitted to participate in politics, sports or military service, 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. Because of the frequency of this age difference, it was common for women to be widowed in their twenties. Dissolution of the marriage or divorce was possible, as long as there were no male children. Infertility could be grounds for divorce. In these cases, the dowry would be returned to the woman's family.



**SOURCE 11.9** 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 11.10** Terracotta funerary plaque, showing women participating in a funeral, Metropolitan Museum of Art. What roles did women take in funerals?

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 for the sake of shelter and protection (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. Two other groups present in ancient Athens were the metics and the slaves.

Metics:

- foreigners who lived permanently in Athens
- could own property
- had no political rights
- required to pay taxes and perform military service.

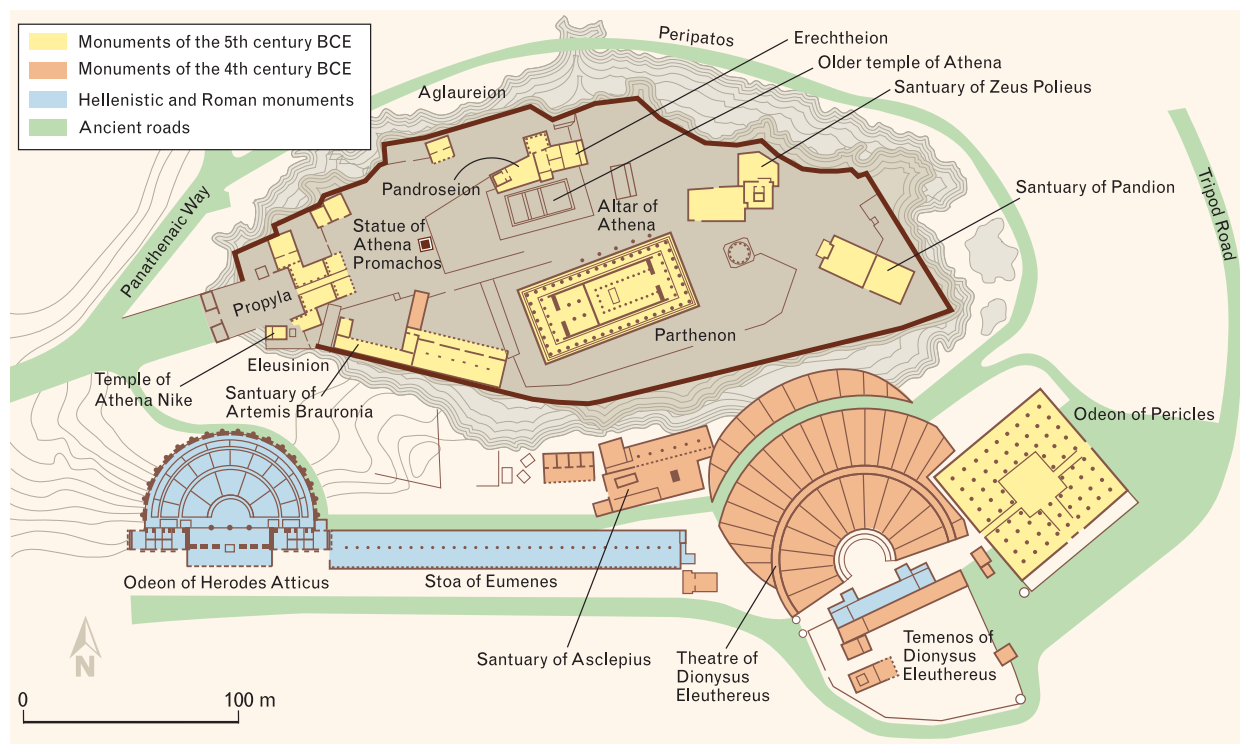
Slaves:

- could be owned by private citizens or the state.

## 11.4 Cultural life and practices: architecture and visual art

### 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* Pericles who championed public pride in the city. Pericles'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



**SOURCE 11.11** Periods of major construction of the Acropolis. How has the use of the Acropolis changed over time?



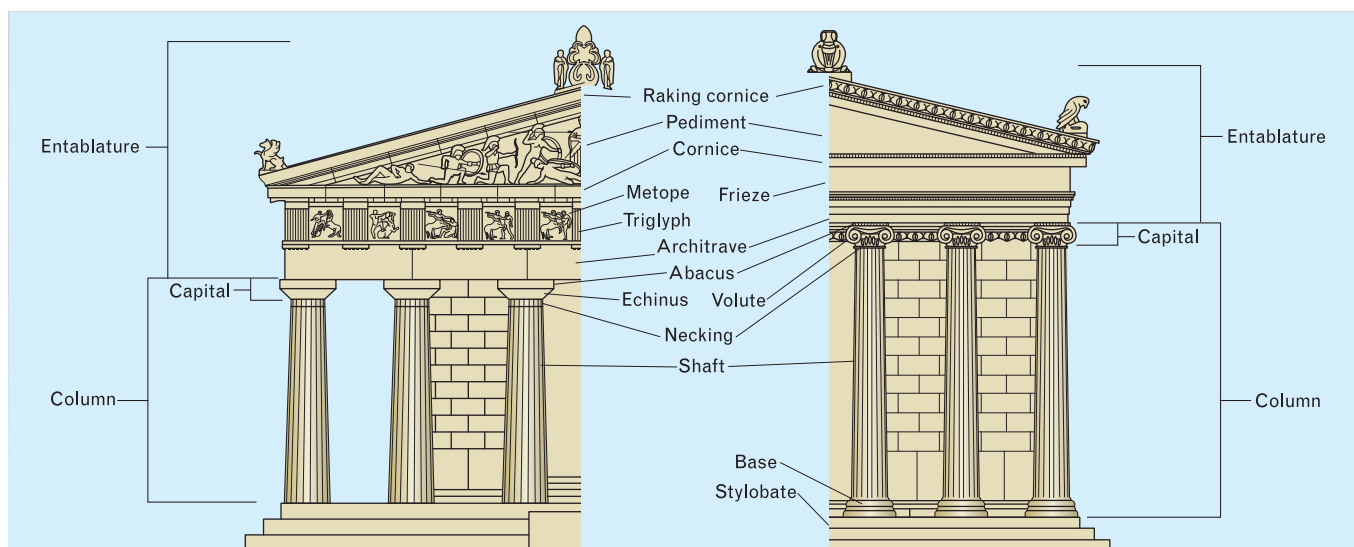
**SOURCE 11.12** Artistic depiction of the Acropolis. How does this map compare with the current archaeological site? Can you recognise any features in satellite imagery?

success of the Delian League and the influx of metics to the city made the scale of projects possible to complete. The rebuilding undertaken on the Acropolis and the construction of the Parthenon were projects that Pericles personally started. This rocky fortress, rising 120 metres above the city, would become Athens's crowning glory.

No building better symbolises the success of Athens in the fifth century BCE more than the Parthenon. This great temple to Athena, started in 447 BCE and designed by Callicrates, was the



**SOURCE 11.13** The Parthenon as it stands on the Acropolis today



**SOURCE 11.14** 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 above photograph of the Parthenon, and see what features you can identify. Are the Parthenon's columns in the Doric or the Ionic style?

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 11.12, 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.

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 onsite. 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 in particular became slimmer and finer, and there was a greater distance between them.

**TABLE 11.2** Description of the Greek columns

Doric	Ionic	Corinthian
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simplest, most widespread</li> <li>• used from 600 BCE</li> <li>• height between 5 and 6 times its diameter</li> <li>• no base</li> <li>• capital is undecorated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• style came from Asia Minor and developed around the same time as the Doric order</li> <li>• slimmer than Doric</li> <li>• Height 8 or 9 times its diameter</li> <li>• shafts were deeply fluted</li> <li>• capital had volutes (spiral scroll) facing in and out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• came into use after the other two orders (predominantly on Roman and late-Hellenistic buildings)</li> <li>• height similar to ionic</li> <li>• main feature was the capital</li> <li>• capital was ornate with volutes at the corner and acanthus leaves</li> </ul>

## 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.





**SOURCE 11.15** Decorative work on the exterior of the Parthenon. Why were these subjects chosen to be featured as decorative works?



**SOURCE 11.16** Athena Parthenos. What would it be like walking into the Parthenon and seeing this statue?

The ancient geographer Pausanias, writing in the second century CE, gave a description of this statue:

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.

**SOURCE 11.17** Pausanias, c. second century CE, *Description of Greece*, Book 1.24.5



**SOURCE 11.18** Heracles subduing the Cretan Bull, c. 500–480 BCE, British Museum: 1864, 1007.239



**SOURCE 11.19** Oedipus and the Sphinx, c. 440–430 BCE, Munich: Staatliche Antikensammlungen (SL474). What other subjects are featured on black and red figure pottery?

Phidias was also responsible for work on the Acropolis itself – he acted as superintendent, appointed by Pericles.

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 as they now had to paint the background to the figures, not the figures themselves. Sadly, archaeological evidence of the Greeks painting on other surfaces (such as frescoes in homes) is very limited.

## 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 the opinions about political and social changes at that time. The earliest form of drama were 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.

### Playwrights and their works

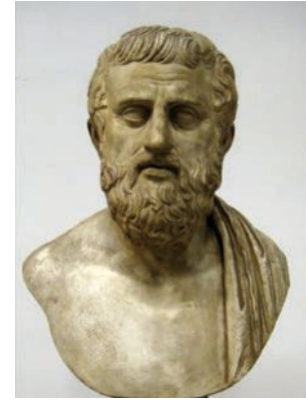
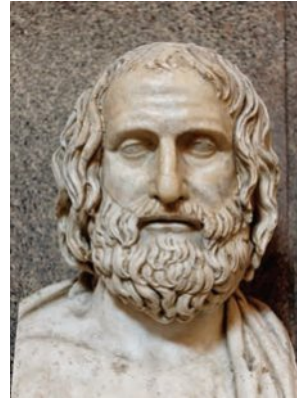
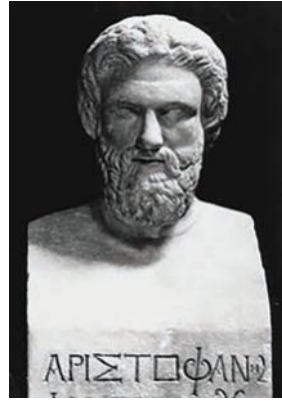
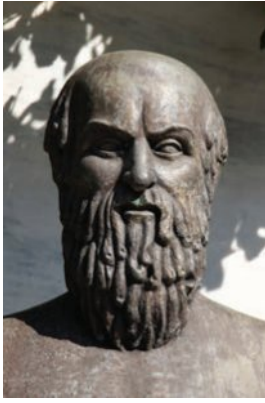
Some of the most prolific playwrights from the fifth century BCE include Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Euripides and Sophocles. These playwrights responded to the increasingly complex Athenian society by including social and political issues in their work. A common theme was also the glory and prominence of Athens in comparison to the rest of Greece.

Greek plays generally fit into four genres:

**TABLE 11.3** Descriptions of the genres of Greek plays

Comedies	Tragedies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eighteen still exist</li> <li>• comes from Greek <i>komos</i> (revel)</li> <li>• began around 486 BCE (comedy performed in Athens during the fifth century BCE was categorised as 'old comedy')</li> <li>• subject matter included contemporary issues (individuals, politicians, tragedians, philosophers and the gods were subject to parody)</li> <li>• a forum where social norms could be turned upside down</li> <li>• plot structure was episodic</li> <li>• used a large number of characters and large chorus (24 members)</li> <li>• costume design added to the humour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• thirty-three still exist</li> <li>• comes from Greek <i>tragos</i> (goat) and <i>oide</i> (song) as they were originally performed during ritualistic goat sacrifices</li> <li>• their purpose was didactic, to teach the audience</li> <li>• all-male cast (3 leads and a chorus of 15)</li> <li>• formal narrative structure that usually had mythological subject matter and followed the 'tragic cycle'</li> <li>• most prestigious of the genres</li> </ul>
Dithyrambs	Satyr plays
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None survive in full</li> <li>• Little is known about them</li> <li>• Used as a 'show opener' for festivals</li> <li>• Large-scale choral performances of song and dance in honour of Dionysus.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Euripides's <i>Cyclops</i> and parts of Sophocles's <i>Trackers</i></li> <li>• Farce or comedy in which the main character was half-human and half-animal</li> <li>• Grotesque in tone but light-hearted</li> <li>• Chorus dressed as satyrs</li> <li>• Sometimes performed after tragedies so they could pick up on similar themes</li> <li>• They took the heroic world of tragedy and subverted it through parody.</li> </ul>





**SOURCE 11.20** Left to right: Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Euripides, Sophocles. Why are men usually depicted in a similar way throughout Greek sources?

In the following source, British classicist Oliver Taplin writes about Greek tragedy.

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.

**SOURCE 11.21** Taplin, O., 1990, *Greek Fire*, Atheneum Books, pp. 36–39

One famous Greek tragedy is *Medea*, by Euripides, in which the title character is abandoned by her husband Jason, and takes revenge on him by killing their children.

MEDEA:

My children, my children, you have a city and a home, in which, leaving your poor mother behind, you will live henceforth, bereft of me ... It was all in vain, I see, that I brought you up, all in vain that I laboured and was wracked with toils, enduring harsh pains in childbirth. Truly, many were the hopes that I, poor fool, once had in you, that you would tend me in my old age and when I died dress me for burial with your own hands, an enviable fate for mortals. But now this sweet imagining has perished. For bereft of you I shall live out my life in pain and grief. And you will no longer see your mother with loving eyes but pass into another manner of life.



Oh! What is the meaning of your glance at me, children? Why do you smile at me this last smile of yours? Alas, what am I to do? My courage is gone, women, ever since I saw the bright faces of the children. I cannot do it. Farewell, my former designs! I shall take my children out of the land. Why should I wound their father with their pain and win for myself pain twice as great? I shall not: farewell, my designs!

But what is coming over me? Do I wish to suffer mockery, letting my enemies go unpunished? Must I put up with that? No, it is mere weakness in me even to admit such tender words into my heart. Children, go into the house. Whoever is not permitted to attend my sacrifice shall feel concern for them: I shall not weaken my hand. Oh! Do not, my angry heart, do not do these things. Let them go, hard-hearted wretch, spare the children. If they live with me in that other place, they will gladden you. By Hell's avenging furies, I shall never leave my children for my enemies to outrage. They must die in any case. And since they must, the one who gave them birth shall kill them. These things are settled in any case and cannot be undone ...

Give me your right hands to kiss, my children, give them to me. O hands and lips so dear to me, o noble face and bearing of my children, I wish you happiness – but in that other place. What is here your father has taken away. Oh, how sweet is the touch, how tender the skin, how fragrant the breath of these children! Go in, go in. I can no longer look at you but am overwhelmed with my pain. And I know well what pain I am about to undergo, but my wrath overbears my calculation, wrath that brings mortal men their gravest hurt.

*The children exit into the house followed by Medea.*

JASON:

You women who stand near the house, is Medea inside, she who has done these dreadful deeds, or has she fled? She will have to hide herself beneath the earth or soar aloft to heaven if she is not going to give satisfaction to the royal house. Does she think that having killed this land's ruling family she will escape from this house unscathed?

But it is not so much about her that I am concerned as about the children. She will be punished by those she has wronged, but I have come to save my children's life, that no harm may come to them from the next of kin, avenging on them their mother's impious crime.

CHORUS:

Poor Jason, you have no idea how far gone you are in misfortune. Else you would not have spoken these words.

JASON:

What is it? Surely she does not mean to kill me as well?

CHORUS:

Your children are dead, killed by their mother's hand.

JASON:

What can you mean? You have destroyed me, woman.

CHORUS:

You must realize that your children are no more.

JASON:

Where did she kill them? In the house or outside?

CHORUS:

Open the gates and you will see your slaughtered sons.

JASON:

Servants, remove the bar at once so that I may see a double disaster, these children's corpses and her who did the deed, so that for these children's murder I may exact punishment.

**SOURCE 11.22** Euripides, 431 BCE, *Medea*, lines 1028–1080, 1293–1315

### ACTIVITY 11.3

Using Sources 11.21 and 11.22, answer the following.

1. Why does Medea find it difficult to kill her children?
2. How does the role of the chorus help to drive and direct the plot?
3. What aspects of Medea's tragic situation have parallels in modern society?
4. Using Taplin's source and considering your own emotions after reading the extract from *Medea*, how does tragedy help audiences to understand how to cope with life?



**SOURCE 11.23** Medea kills one of her children, c. 330 BCE, The Louvre. Is Medea a popular choice of subject in art? Why?

### Philosophy

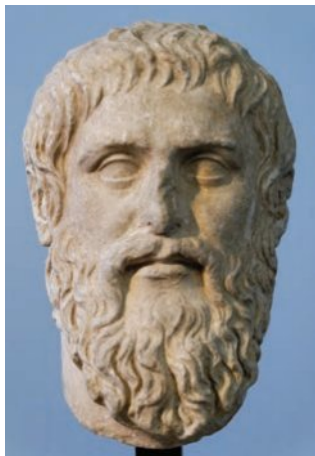
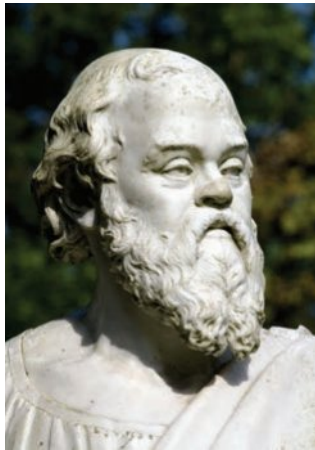
Philosophy developed from the curiosity the ancient Greeks had about the world around them, and their unwavering desire to find the truths and principles underlying all knowledge. They sought to understand the world through universal explanations that covered all phenomena. This was because they lived 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 11.24** Raphael, *School of Athens* fresco by Raphael in the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican. Which other famous figures can you identify in this painting?



Socrates and Plato were two of the most influential and respected philosophers to emerge from this period.



**SOURCE 11.25** The two most significant philosophers to live and practise in Athens during the fifth century BCE were Socrates (top) and Plato (bottom). Are these depictions of Socrates and Plato consistent with others?

**TABLE 11.4** The lives of Socrates and Plato

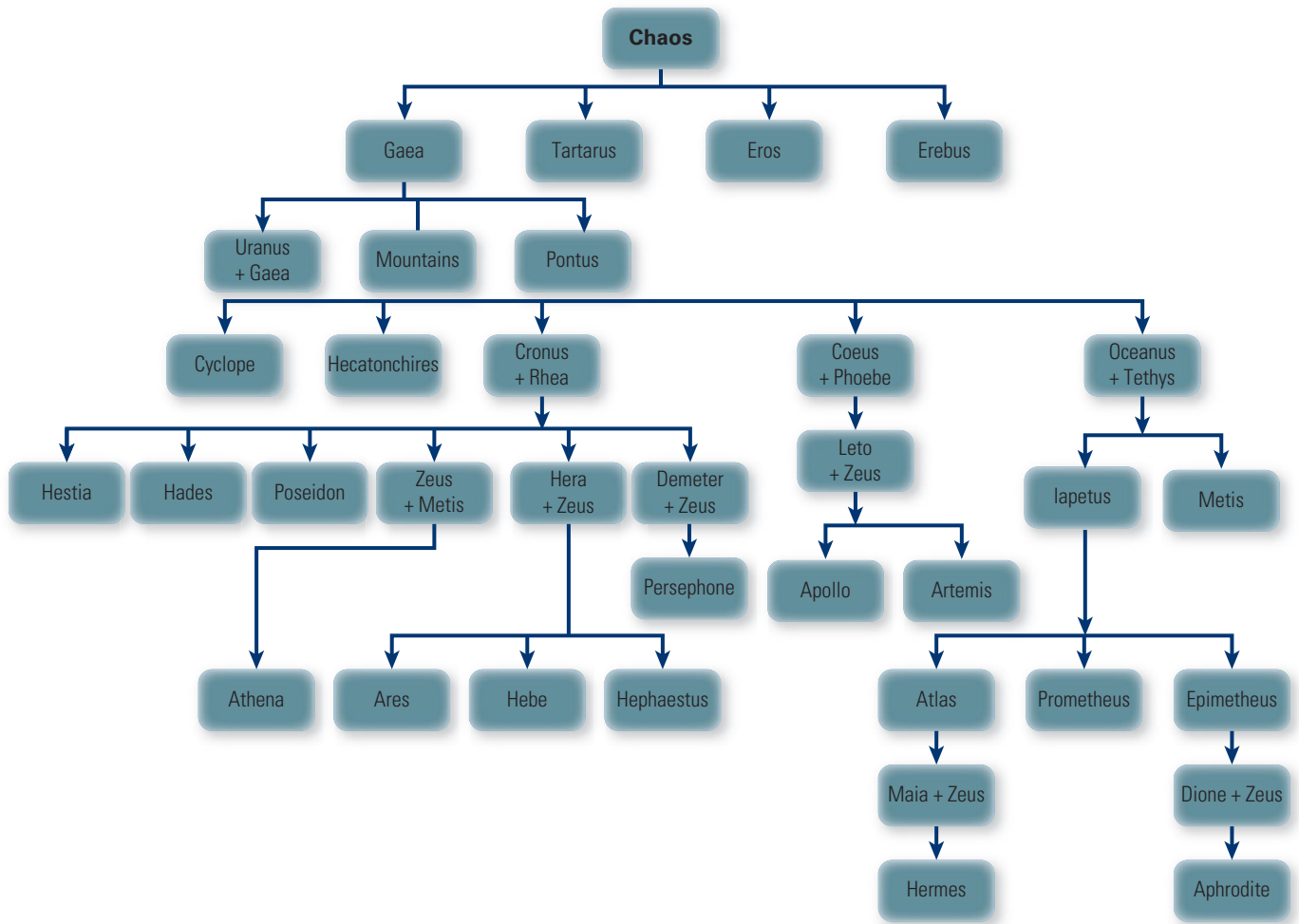
Socrates	Plato
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• born 470 BCE, Athens</li> <li>• considered one of the founding fathers of philosophy and very influential on Western thought</li> <li>• simple childhood; initially trained as a stonemason and sculptor</li> <li>• served during the Peloponnesian War</li> <li>• known for posing challenging questions – this became known as the Socratic method</li> <li>• in asking questions, he aimed to bring out the confusions and absurdities of other's points of view</li> <li>• rather than teaching others the truth, he aimed to help people discover it for themselves as a result of his questions</li> <li>• left no written work – his work was recorded by Plato and Xenophon</li> <li>• in 399 BCE, he was charged with corrupting the youth of Athens and neglecting the gods</li> <li>• he was sentenced to death by drinking hemlock</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• born 428 BCE, Athens</li> <li>• aristocratic family</li> <li>• student of Socrates until his death (Plato was around 30 years old when his mentor died)</li> <li>• left Athens, after Socrates's death, in disgust and travelled around the Mediterranean</li> <li>• in c. 387 BCE he returned to Athens and founded a school called the Academia (it became known as the Academy)</li> <li>• the subjects taught were diverse, arguably one could call it the first European university</li> <li>• main works: <i>The Dialogues</i></li> <li>• socrates was the central character in his 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</li> <li>• developed the concept of virtue ethics – what is moral is determined by an individual person, not a set of rules</li> <li>• died 348 BCE, Athens</li> </ul>

## 11.5 Religious belief and practices

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. Source 11.26 shows a diagram of the gods and goddesses, and the Interactive Textbook includes a research activity.







**SOURCE 11.26** The Greek gods

### Abstract concepts

Since many gods personified abstract moral concepts, for example like 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.

### Myths and legends

The Greeks used myths and legends to try and explain natural phenomena (particularly origins or creation), cultural variations, traditional enmities and friendships, and the daily lives of various



**SOURCE 11.27** *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 11.28** *The Three Fates* – Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, Giorgio Ghisi, sixteenth century, Italy, Metropolitan Museum of Art. How have the Three Fates been represented across different periods of history?

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.

### 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 11.29** Attic votive relief depicting a man accompanied by his sons making an offering of a bull to a God (c. fifth century BCE) Venice, Museo Archeologico Nazionale (Archaeological Museum). What might the man and his sons been asking of the gods?



**SOURCE 11.30** 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?

Rituals permeated almost every part of 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.

## Objective 2: Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to a historical period in the Ancient World



For Unit 3, you must complete internal assessment tasks IA1 and IA2. IA2 is an independent source investigation and as such, is the application of Objective 2. You can find further guidance about preparing for this IA2 task can in the downloadable *Historical Skills Toolkit – Assessment*.

To assist in preparation, below are some sample key questions and sub-questions that would suit an IA2 task connected to this topic. For your assessment, you will need to pose your own key question.

### SAMPLE KEY QUESTIONS

**Key question:** Is it fair to say that while Athenian society was democratic, democratic rights were not distributed equally?

- In what ways was the Athenian government democratic?
- Who had democratic rights?
- Who did not have democratic rights? Why?
- Is it fair to call Athens in the fifth century BCE a democracy or not?

**Key question:** Why is the Classical Age of Athens also called the Age of Pericles?

- How did Pericles come to power?
- What do historical sources record as his main achievements?
- How much influence did he personally have on Athenian success during the fifth century BCE?

**Key question:** How was theatre used by ancient Greek playwrights as a form of social commentary?

- What is social commentary?
- What issues or topics did plays cover?
- What were the authors trying to teach and tell audiences through their characters and narratives?
- How did audiences respond to them?

**Key question:** What motives did Greek people have to interact with their gods?

- Who were the Greek gods commonly worshipped?
- How did Greeks worship and interact with their gods?
- What did they hope to achieve through prayers and offerings?
- What do historical sources suggest about the nature of their relationship – did people fear or love the gods?

**Key question:** How did new philosophical and scientific ideas spread from Athens?

- What were the most significant new theories in philosophy and science during Athens in the fifth century BCE?
- Why were they so significant?
- How did Greek people learn about these new ideas?
- How did they change and shape wider Greek culture?



## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding in relation to specific historical periods in the Ancient World

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 its surrender to the old enemy, Sparta. Thus, 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. In this section, you will analyse text and visual sources relating to a number of different aspects of Athens, which you learned about earlier in this chapter.

### 11.6 Analysing sources about Pericles's funerary oration

Pericles' famous funerary oration is covered in more depth during Unit 4 as it relates to the Peloponnesian War, but it is relevant to consider in this chapter also. Pericles used the oration in 431 BCE (end of the first year of the Peloponnesian War) as a eulogy for those who had died thus far. While not recorded verbatim by the historian Thucydides, and also likely edited by him, the main ideas and focus of Pericles's oration are still expressed. It forms a valuable source when considering society in Athens during the fifth century BCE, because it gives voice to the mindset of the people and particularly what they believed about themselves.

37: For our government is not copied from those of our neighbours: we are an example to them rather than they to us. Our constitution is named a democracy, because it is in the hands not of the few but of the many. But our laws secure equal justice for all in their private disputes and our public opinion welcomes and honours talent in every branch of achievement ...

38: Yet ours is no work-a-day city only. No other provides so many recreations for the spirit – contests and sacrifices all the year round, and beauty in our public buildings to cheer the heart and delight the eye day by day. Moreover the city is so large and powerful that all the wealth of all the world flows into her, so that our own Attic products seem no more homelike than the fruits of the labours of other nations ...

39: Our military training too is different from our opponents' ... They toil from early boyhood in a laborious pursuit after courage, while we, free to live and wander as we please, march out none the less to face the self-same dangers ... Indeed, if we choose to face danger with an easy mind rather than after a rigorous training, and to trust rather in native manliness than in state-made courage, the advantage lies with us; for we are spared all the weariness of practising for future hardships; and when we find ourselves amongst them we are as brave as our plodding rivals.

40: ... Our citizens attend to both public and private duties and do not allow absorption in their own various affairs to interfere with their knowledge of the city's. We differ from other states in regarding the man who holds aloof from public life not as 'quiet' but as 'useless'; we decide or debate, carefully and in person, all matters of policy, holding, not that words and deeds go ill together, but that acts are foredoomed to failure when undertaken undiscussed.

**SOURCE 11.31** Pericles' funerary oration, Thucydides, 431 BCE, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book 2.37–2.40

#### ACTIVITY 11.4

1. What perspective does Pericles bring to this situation?
2. Why does Pericles claim Athens is a democracy? What values and characteristics does he mention that fit with the Athenian concept of democracy?

(continued)

## ACTIVITY 11.4 continued

3. In section 38, what other claims is Pericles making for Athens? Do you think he was justified in this?
4. Explain in your own words what Pericles means in his claim '[we] trust rather in native manliness than in state-made courage'. What interpretation is he making about Athenian strengths compared to the enemies of Athens?
5. In section 40, what does Pericles see as an essential part of a democratic citizen's duties?
6. Are there any parts of this extract of which you are sceptical? Justify your answer.
7. We know that this speech was given as a eulogy for the Athenian war dead. However, Pericles seems to have another motive or aim to his speech – what is it?
8. What do you imagine the effect of this speech would have been on the Athenians who were listening?
9. What conclusions can be made about the opinions Athenians had of themselves and their enemies?



**SOURCE 11.32** *Pericles's Funeral Oration*, Philipp Foltz, 1852. In what way do you think this nineteenth-century representation has idealised the ancient event? Why?

## 11.7 Analysing sources about women in Athens

Around 700 BCE, Hesiod describes both pleasing and annoying wives:

In the prime of life bring a wife to your home,  
When you are not much short of thirty,  
Nor yet much above: this is the right age for marriage;  
Your wife should be four years past puberty, and be married in the fifth.



You should marry a maiden, so you can teach her diligent habits,  
And marry especially one who lives near you  
Looking well about you, so your marriage is not a source of malignant joy to your neighbours.  
For a man acquires nothing better than a wife –  
A good one, but there is nothing more miserable than a bad one,  
A parasite, who even if her husband is strong  
Singes him without a torch and brings him to a raw old age.

**SOURCE 11.33** Hesiod, c.700 BCE, *Works and Days*, lines 695–705

In this satirical poem written in about 650 BCE, Semonides compares wives to different animals.

God made the female mind separately  
In the beginning. One he made from a bristly sow,  
And everything in her house mixed with mud  
Lies in disorder and rolls around the floor;  
While she unclean in unwashed garments  
Sits on the dunghills and grows fat.  
Another he made from a bitch, a quick runner, daughter of her own mother,  
Who wants to hear and know everything,  
And peers and wanders everywhere  
Barking, even if she sees no human being ...  
Even when she is sitting amongst her guests,  
She continuously keeps up her incurable yapping.  
Another is the child of a dainty long-maned mare,  
Who diverts menial tasks and toil to others.  
She will neither touch a mill or pick up a sieve,  
Nor throw the dung out of the house,  
Nor sit at the oven avoiding the soot.  
She makes her husband acquainted with necessity;  
Every day she washes the dirt off herself  
Twice, sometimes thrice, and anoints herself with perfumes,  
And always has her thick hair  
Well-combed and garlanded with flowers.  
Such a wife is a fine sight  
For other men, but proves an evil to the one she belongs to ...  
Another is from a bee; the man who gets her is fortunate;  
For on her alone no blame settles,  
And his livelihood flourishes and increases because of her,  
And she grows old with a husband whom she loves and loves her  
Bearing him a fine and well-reputed family.

**SOURCE 11.34** Semonides of Amorgos, c. 650 BCE, *Types of Women* or *Semonides 7*, lines 1–87



In this work, the main character, Isomachus, is telling Socrates some instructions he gave his wife about how to be efficient and respectable.

'It will be your job', I said, 'to remain indoors and to send out those members of the household who must work outdoors, and to supervise those who must work indoors, and to receive what is brought in and to allocate what each must spend, and you must decide what surplus needs to remain, and watch that the expenditure set aside for a year is not used up in a month. When fleeces are brought to you, you must take care that they become cloaks for those who need them. And you must take care that the grain that is stored remains edible. One of your duties, however,' I said, 'you may find unwelcome, which is, if one of the household slaves is ill, you must see to it that he is looked after'.

**SOURCE 11.35** Xenophon, 362 BCE, *Oeconomicus*, Chapter 7.35–7.37

Aristotle was a philosopher who joined Plato's Academy in the early fourth century BCE. His writings cover a very wide range of subjects. Here he comments on the natural dichotomy that should exist within the home, for it to be functional and happy.

So, as we say, one may see the authority of a master and that of a statesman first of all in a living being. For the soul exercises the authority of a master over the body, and the intellect exercises the role of a statesman and king over the appetites. In these cases it is evident that it is in accord with the nature and expediency for the body to be ruled by the soul and for the emotional element to be ruled by the intellect, which is the element possessing rationality; a relationship of equality or subservience between them would be harmful for all concerned. The same is true once more in the case of the man and the other animals. Domesticated animals are, by nature, superior to wild animals; but it is better for them all to be ruled by men, since they gain security in this way. Likewise in the relationship between male and female: the former is ascendant and the latter inferior, the former the ruler and the latter the ruled. In the whole of humanity this pattern must be the same.

**SOURCE 11.36** Aristotle, c. 335–323 BCE, *Politics*, 1254b3–1254b16

In this tragic play, Medea is lamenting her lot as a wife because she believes 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. 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.

**SOURCE 11.37** Euripides, 431 BCE, *Medea*, lines 230–250

## ACTIVITY 11.5

Choose one source from Source 11.33 to 11.37 and complete 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. Considering all of the sources, what conclusions can be made about the following:
  - The place of women within the home
  - The qualities and attributes women were expected to have
  - The rights and freedoms of women
  - The nature of marriage
  - The differing opinions of men and women on these issues.

## 11.8 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's 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.

## ACTIVITY 11.6

1. 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			

(continued)



**SOURCE 11.38** A centaur tramples a crouching Lapith (south metope 30)



**SOURCE 11.39** A section of frieze showing the Panathenaic Procession

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a historical period in the Ancient World

In this section, you will synthesise information from text and visual sources relating to a number of different aspects of Athens which you learned about earlier in this chapter. By taking historical evidence from a variety of sources, you can come to a new understanding or interpretation.

### 11.9 Synthesising from sources about Athenian democracy

#### Praise of democracy

The following source, praising democracy, are from different works by fourth century BCE philosopher Aristotle.

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.

**SOURCE 11.40** Aristotle, c. 335–323 BCE, *Politics*, 1317a40–1317b4



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.

**SOURCE 11.41** Aristotle, c. 330 BCE, *The Athenian Constitution*, Chapter 2

The following speech was delivered by Pericles in around 431 BCE after the first Athenians fell in the Peloponnesian War. Pericles stresses the ideals of democracy and praises the Athenian way of life in what has become known as the ‘funeral oration’. The essential nature of Athenian democracy is made clear: the majority of the citizens run the state, all are equal before the law and any citizen can stand for political office. There is a deliberate implicit comparison with Sparta: the Athenians ‘love wisdom without cowardice’. The essential participatory nature of the democracy is made clear in the reference to the ‘totally useless’ citizen. Citizens are to ‘love’ their city.

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.

**SOURCE 11.42** Thucydides, 431 BCE, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book 2.37–2.43

Modern historians Nels M. Bailkey and Richard Lim provide an analysis of the funeral oration.

No finer expression of the ideals of democracy exists than the famous funeral oration delivered by Pericles 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 Pericles, however,

*(continued)*

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 Pericles does at the end of his oration, the inferior nature of women and their seclusion.) Pericles 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 Pericles as the recognised superior individual voted into power by the people to 'lead them,' as Thucydides noted, 'instead of being led by them'.

Pericles 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, Pericles 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. Pericles'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 Pericles'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 ...'

**SOURCE 11.43** 13 Bailkey, N. M. & Lim, R., 2002, *Readings in Ancient History*, 6th edition, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, p. 167

### Criticisms of democracy

Below are four sources, both ancient and modern, pointing out that a large amount of power was in the hands of a small number of people.

In 406 BCE the Athenians sent every available man (including slaves) to aid the Athenian fleet blockaded at Mytilene by the Spartans. They were victorious at Arginusae, but a storm prevented the Athenian generals from rescuing those cast into the sea. Six of the eight generals involved returned to Athens, and were brought before the assembly. Kallixenos secured passage in the Council of a resolution that the assembly should simply vote to acquit or condemn, by ballot, all six defendants together without further discussion. The Athenians soon regretted what they had done ... Socrates, who was a member of the Council at the time, was the only one to object. The Eleven were the jailers and executioners at Athens.

**SOURCE 11.44** Dillon, M. & Garland L., 2010, *Ancient Greece: Social and Historical Documents from Archaic Times to the Death of Alexander the Great*, 3rd edition, Routledge, p. 17



And if it is decided that they are guilty, they shall be punished with death and handed over to the Eleven and their property confiscated, and a tithe to belong to the goddess ... Eurypolemos and Peisianaktos and some others brought a charge against Kallixenos of having made an unconstitutional proposal. And some of the people commended this, but the majority shouted that it would be dreadful if the people were not allowed to do what they wanted. In addition, when Lykiskos proposed the motion that these men should be judged by the same vote as the generals unless they withdrew their charge, the mob again created an uproar, and they were forced to withdraw their charges. Some of the prytaneis declared that they would not put the question to the vote contrary to law, but Kallixenos again mounted the speakers' platform and made the same accusations against them. And the crowd shouted that all who refused should be taken to court. The prytaneis, terrified, all agreed to put the question to the vote except for Socrates, son of Sophroniskos; he declared that he would not do anything against the law.

**SOURCE 11.45** Xenophon, c. 362 BCE, *Hellenika*, Book 1.7.9–1.7.15

Although Plato uses the number four for his stages of governance or forms of government in the *Republic*, he actually talks about five particular forms. He starts with the best and shows us how one stage transforms into another stage of governance because of deterioration. The first stage of political governance is the best form of government according to Plato. It is called aristocracy or government of the best. The ruler has to be the best of philosophers and the best at war as mentioned earlier. Excellence and education is a priority and equality is observed under the rule of an aristocrat. An aristocracy changes mildly into a timocracy or government of honour. This form of government is one in which the ruler is more involved in warfare, hence, a government of honour comes to being. The ruler is honoured by public and this makes it similar to an aristocracy but the state is involved more in warfare. Plato, also, explains how timocracy comes to being in the first place. According to Plato, there are particular periods in which people should have babies and when babies are born otherwise it leads to deterioration and inequality. Metals are mixed when they shouldn't; hence, bronze and iron combine to fight for money, while silver and gold come together and fight to bring back aristocracy. This brings chaos and inequality which causes a state involved in warfare. Similarly, timocracy degrades into an oligarchy. Oligarchy is a government of few and the rich are the few that rule the majority of the poor. Oligarchy just naturally evolves from timocracy because a nation indulged in war will accumulate a lot of wealth and it will lose its respect for excellence. The few rich people will begin to rule and suppress the poor. The rich will be scared of arming the poor majority, fearing they will turn on them and the state will be a weak one. Extreme poverty will bring crime rate and illiteracy to their peaks. The poor majority will soon come together to form an even worse form of government, democracy. This is the form of government in which everyone wants to be rich, Plato believed. Democracy takes birth when rich have made the poor loathe them and love of revolution begins to spring amongst poor. Therefore some revolutionists rise and either kill or exile the rich rulers, forming a new, just government with freedom as their priority. In a rule like this one there is no compulsion for anything. You can choose to not join the army even if you are competent. The insatiable desire of freedom forms a nation where teachers fear students and children fight parents. Hence, people start disregarding all laws and nobody wants to be ruled. Although, someone obviously does rule and they are slightly richer than all the other population. The common people start taking their rulers as oligarchs. This is when someone stands up as the defender of democracy. This is where another form of government and the worst of all, comes to existence. The defender of democracy makes all sorts of promises and pretends to be very kind in the beginning. He overthrows the rulers and when he has defended democracy and is no

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longer required, he keeps bringing fake problems to make the people feel that they need him. When the people discover he is not needed and they stand for that, the true face unleashes and we find that the defender of the democracy is a tyrant. This is how the fifth, most repulsive stage of governance, tyranny, comes to being. Now one way to put down Plato's five stages of governance were to simply name and describe them. But, I believe, this is not how Plato wants us to know them. He wants us to know them in the form he writes, as to show which form deteriorates to which and which one is the best. Aristocracy is the best and it keeps deteriorating from timocracy to oligarchy to democracy and then to the worst, tyranny.

**SOURCE 11.46** Naem, H., 2011, 'Plato's Forms of Political Governance and the Best Form', *Ramble. Focus. Ramble* blog

So, in what was nominally a democracy, power was really in the hands of the first citizen. But his [Pericles] successors, who were more on a level with each other and each of whom aimed at occupying the first place, adopted methods of demagoguery which resulted in their losing control over the actual conduct of affairs. Such a policy, in a great city with an empire to govern, naturally led to a number of mistakes, amongst which was the Sicilian expedition ... And in the end it was only because they had destroyed themselves by their own internal strife that finally they were forced to surrender.

**SOURCE 11.47** Thucydides, 431 BCE, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book 2.65

The next three sources are from a short work about the Athenian government and society. It was found amongst the works of historian Xenophon of Athens, although there is a strong view that he did not write it – hence the attribution to 'Pseudo-Xenophon'. The author of the work is apparently annoyed that the people can enjoy benefits which the rich have to pay for themselves. The author complains that it is the wealthy who pay for liturgies, and sees a popular motive behind it, so that the poorer citizens become wealthy and the rich poorer, which of course did not happen.

And as for the fact that the Athenians have chosen the kind of constitution that they have, I do not think well of their doing this inasmuch as in making their choice they have chosen to let the worst people be better off than the good. Therefore, on this account I do not think well of their constitution.

**SOURCE 11.48** Pseudo-Xenophon (Old Oligarch), c. 424 BCE, *Constitution of the Athenians*, Chapter 1

The people, realising that it is impossible for each of the poor to offer sacrifices, hold banquets, set up shrines and govern a great and beautiful city, have discovered a way of having sacrifices, shrines, festivals and sanctuaries. So the city sacrifices numerous victims at public expense, but it is the people who banquet and who are allocated the victims. And while some of the wealthy have their own private gymnasia, baths and dressing-rooms, the people have built for their own use many wrestling-schools (*palaistrai*), dressing-rooms and bath-houses; and the ordinary people enjoy far more of these than the aristocrats and the wealthy.

**SOURCE 11.49** Pseudo-Xenophon (Old Oligarch), c. 424 BCE, *Constitution of the Athenians*, Chapter 2.9–2.10

As for the constitution of the Athenians, their choice of this type of Constitution I do not approve, for in choosing thus they chose that rascals should fare better than good citizens. This then is why I do not approve. However, this being strength and the liberty of the commons itself. If on the other hand you investigate good order, first of all you will see that the most capable make laws for them; then the good citizens will keep the rascals in check and will deliberate on matters of state, refusing to allow madmen to sit on the Council or make speeches or attend the general assemblies. Such advantages indeed would very soon throw the commons into complete subjection.

**SOURCE 11.50** Pseudo-Xenophon (Old Oligarch), c. 424 BCE, *Constitution of the Athenians*, Chapter 1.1 & 1.9

In the next two sources, Bailkey and Lim consider some of the criticisms of Athenian democracy.

Some years after the death of Pericles (429 BCE), an unknown Athenian oligarch delivered a political speech (we have what appears to be a stenographic copy) to an audience of like-minded oligarchs in some unknown Greek city. Despite its sarcastic tone, it balances the idealised picture of Athenian democracy and its empire contained in Pericles's funeral oration with a realistic and penetrating description of the shortcomings of that democracy and the self-interested economic basis of its imperialism. The Old Oligarch's views are in some part valid for the Periclean age, but are especially pertinent to the decade or two following the death of Pericles when, due largely to the crisis of the war, passion triumphed over wisdom in the making of policy and demagogues, who played on the emotions and cupidity of the masses, replaced the courageous and far-sighted statesmen of the stamp of Pericles as leaders of the democracy. ... Although he spoke with the bitterness and exaggeration of a narrow partisan, much of the Old Oligarch's criticism of the character of the Athenian masses and the motives of their imperialism seems justified.

More than twenty centuries later, another aristocrat, the Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville, visited the United States to observe its new democracy in action. Some of the conclusions in his *Democracy in America* (1835), though expressed with far more reserve, are similar to those of the Old Oligarch:

Are you concerned with refining mores, elevating manners, and causing the arts to bloom? Do you desire poetry, renown and glory? ... If in your view that should be the main object of men in society, do not support democratic government; it surely will not lead you to that goal. But if ... in your view the main object of government is ... to provide for every individual therein the utmost well-being, protecting him as far as possible from all afflictions, then it is good to make conditions equal and to establish a democratic government.

**SOURCE 11.51** Bailkey, N. M. & Lim, R., 2002, *Readings in Ancient History*, 6th edition, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, p. 171

Again oligarchical states must abide by their alliances and their oaths. If they do not keep to the agreement, penalties can be extracted from the few who made it. But whenever the commons makes an agreement it can lay the blame on the individual speaker or proposer, and say to the other party that it was not present and does not approve what they know was agreed upon in full assembly; and should it be decided that this is not so, the commons has discovered a hundred excuses for not doing what they may not wish to do. If any ill results from a decision of the commons it lays the blame on a minority for opposing and working its ruin, whereas if any good results they take the credit to themselves.

They do not allow caricature and abuse of the commons, lest they should hear themselves evilly spoken of, but they do allow you to caricature any individual you wish to. They know that generally the man who is caricatured is not of the commons or of the crowd, but someone rich or well-bred or

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influential, and that few of the poor and democrats are caricatured, and they only because they are busy-bodies and try to overreach the commons; so they are not angry when such men are caricatured either.

**SOURCE 11.52** Bailkey, N. M. & Lim, R., 2002, *Readings in Ancient History*, 6th edition, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, pp. 171–2

## ACTIVITY 11.7

Read through Sources 11.44 to 11.52.

1. Make notes about the points of view held by each author and the interpretation they make of Athenian democracy.
2. Do any of the sources hold more historical weight or significance? Why?
3. What are the benefits of a 'radical democracy' as noted by the authors?
4. What problems with the Athenian system of democracy are highlighted by the authors?
5. Using your notes and evidence from the sources, respond to the following question: Do the problems with democracy outweigh the benefits for the Athenian people?

## 11.10 Synthesising from sources about ostracism in Athens

This sentence of ostracism was not in itself a punishment for wrongdoing. It was described for the sake of appearances as a measure to curtail and humble a man's power and prestige in cases where these had grown oppressive; but in reality it was a humane device for appeasing the people's jealousy, which could thus vent its desire to do harm, not by inflicting some irreparable injury, but by a sentence of ten year's banishment ...

Each voter took an ostrakon, or piece of earthenware, wrote on it the name of the citizen he wished to be banished and carried it to a part of the market-place which was fenced off with a circular paling. Then the archons first counted the total number of votes cast, for if there were less than 6000, the ostracism was void. After this they sorted the votes and the man who had the most recorded against his name was proclaimed to be exiled for ten years, with the right however, to receive the income from his estate.

The story goes that on this occasion, while the votes were being written down, an illiterate and uncouth rustic handed his piece of earthenware to Aristides and asked him to write the name Aristides on it. The latter was astonished and asked the man what harm Aristides had ever done him. 'None whatever', was the reply. 'I do not even know the fellow, but am sick of hearing him called "The Just" everywhere!' When he heard this Aristides said nothing, but wrote his name on the ostrakon and handed it back.

**SOURCE 11.53** Plutarch, *Aristides*, Chapter 7

## ACTIVITY 11.8

Read Source 11.53 from Plutarch and answer the questions that follow.

1. From what perspective is Plutarch recording these events?
2. What interpretation does Plutarch give of the ostracism system – positive or negative? Why?
3. Why is ostracism a key feature of Athens's 'radical democracy'?
4. What conclusions can be made about Aristides's character from the anecdote recorded by Plutarch?
5. What are some positive and negative effects of giving men of all classes a vote in decision making?



## 11.11 Synthesising from sources about sculpture and *arête*

### ACTIVITY 11.9

Choose one of the sculptures listed below and complete the table using your own research. Once you have finished your research, respond to the following question: How does the work fulfil the Greek concept of *arête*?

Choose from:

- *Artemision Bronze*
- *Statue of Zeus* at Olympia
- *Parthenon Metopes*
- *Athena Parthenos*
- *Hermes and the Infant Dionysus*
- *Discobolus*
- *Charioteer of Delphi*
- The Parthenon pediments

<b>i</b> Artist and date	
<b>ii</b> Physical description (materials, size, elements missing and so on)	
<b>iii</b> Subject (including any relevant historical background of the subject)	
<b>iv</b> Significance of the work at the time of production	
<b>v</b> Interpretations made about purpose of the work	
<b>vi</b> Influences on future art	

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about a historical period in the Ancient World

### 11.12 Evaluating sources about Greek theatre and religion

#### The didactic nature of Greek theatre

Greek theatre, tragedies in particular, were didactic in nature – they were written with a purpose to teach their audience. Those lessons often had their roots in current social and political issues of concern to Athenians at the time.

### ACTIVITY 11.10

Choose one of the plays listed below and either read the play in its entirety (some are not long) or a read detailed synopsis. Then, answer the questions that follow.

- Aeschylus, *The Persians*
- Sophocles, *Antigone*
- Euripides, *Medea*
- Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*
- Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*
- Aristophanes, *The Frogs*

(continued)

## ACTIVITY 11.10 continued

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 their disadvantages or limitations as historical sources?

### Temple archaeological sites

Modern historians are fortunate that there are numerous religious archaeological sites available that can help construct a picture of religious life in ancient Greece.

## ACTIVITY 11.11

1. Choose one of the archaeological sites listed below and answer the questions that follow:
  - The Acropolis, Athens
  - The Agora, Athens
  - Sanctuary of Athena and Poseidon, Sounion
  - The Temples of Zeus and Hera, Olympia
  - Temple of Apollo, Delphi
- a. What facilities were available for worshippers at the site?
- b. What archaeological evidence has been uncovered of their activities?
- c. How useful is the evidence available in constructing a picture of religious practice?
- d. What limitations are present in the archaeological site? If it is difficult to interpret? Why or why not?

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to a historical period in the Ancient World

For Unit 3, you must complete internal assessment tasks IA1 and IA2. IA1 is an essay in response to historical sources and as such, is the application of Objective 6. You can find further guidance about preparing for this IA1 task in the downloadable *Historical Skills Toolkit – Assessment*.

**GO** To assist in preparation, below are some sample key questions that would suit an IA1 task connected to this topic. Sources within this chapter can serve as supporting historical evidence.

### SAMPLE KEY QUESTIONS

1. Was it a good idea to make it possible for all citizens to be involved in political decision making? Why or why not?
2. How were the social and citizenship structures of ancient Athens contrary to modern understandings of equality and democracy?
3. How can ancient Greek plays be considered a form of social commentary, designed to influence and challenge their audience?
4. How and why did the ancient Greeks use religious practices to secure their future?

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

## CHAPTER REVIEW

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### 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 Athens's 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?

#### Respond

How would Western civilisation be different today, without the Athenians achievements of the fifth century BCE?

### Assessment

#### Examination-style questions

1. How significant was Pericles to the achievements and success of Athens in the fifth century BCE?
2. Considering the democratic institutions and how the political system functioned. To what extent was ancient Greek democracy successful in Athens?

#### 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?



# CHAPTER 12

## Philip II and Alexander III of Macedon

DIANA PLATT

### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

#### Contextual study

In this study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the geographical and historical context of ancient Macedon during the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III with particular reference to the remains at key sites and other relevant sources.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period, and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources; for example, authentication, excavation, reconstruction and/or conservation.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the nature of governance and political developments.
  - significant events and key individuals.
  - social structure.
  - cultural life and practices.
  - religious beliefs and practices.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the limitations, reliability and usefulness of sources

and either:

- create a response that communicates meaning to suit a purpose by presenting an essay in response to historical sources.

### KEY DATES

	399 BCE	c. 393 BCE	382 BCE	375 BCE	359 BCE
King Archelaus (illegitimate son of Perdiccas II) is assassinated. Archelaus lays the foundation for Macedonian military greatness; he strengthens and improves the country through the construction of forts and highways, and is instrumental in encouraging Greek literature during his 14-year reign.	Reign of King Amyntas III begins (sons were Alexander II, Perdiccas III and Philip II)	Birth of Philip II	Birth of Olympias, mother of Alexander III, to Neoptolemus I of Epirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Philip II of Macedon comes to power</li> <li>• Philip II marries Ilyrian Princess Audata</li> </ul>	

or

- devise historical questions and conduct research and create a response that communicates meaning by presenting an independent source investigation.

### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of ancient Macedon in the time of Philip II and Alexander III.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about changing interpretations over time relating to an understanding of the period using, for example, new discoveries, research and technologies.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

### SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

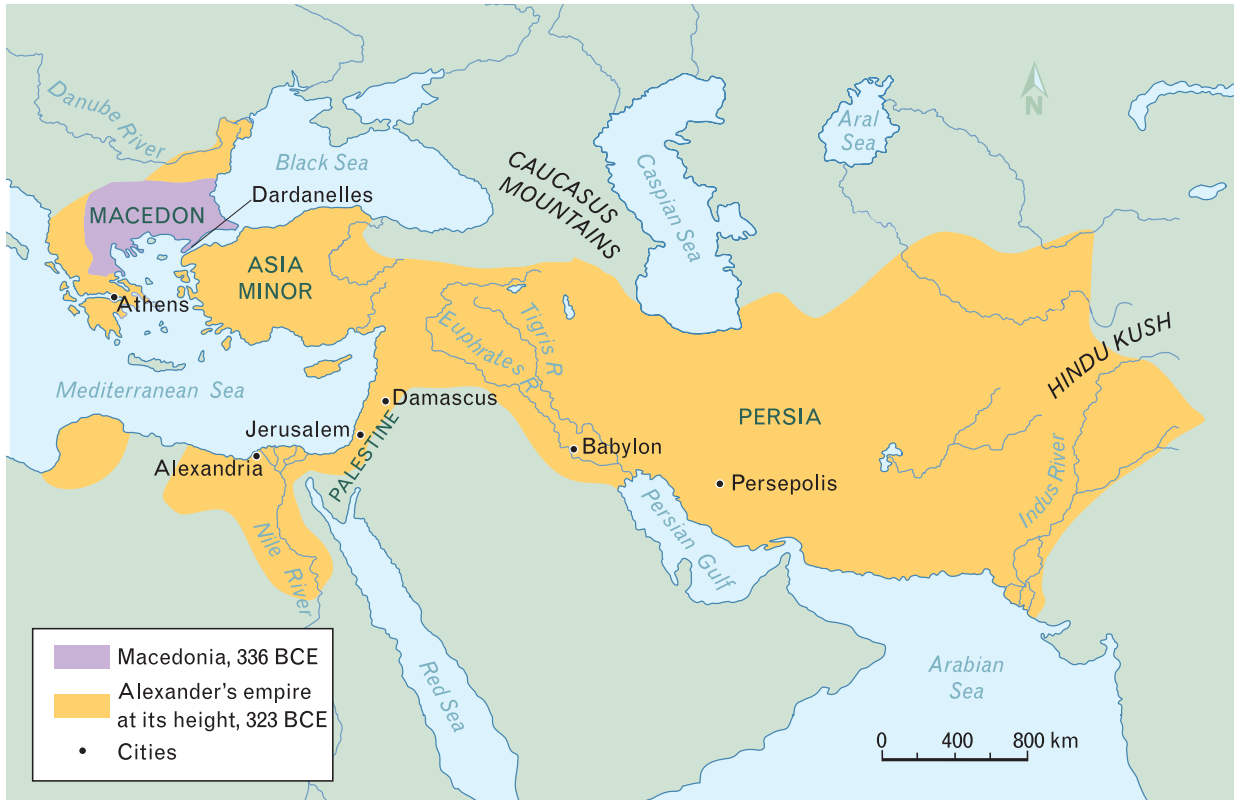
- Olympias (375–316 BCE): Princess of Epirus, daughter of King Neoptolemus I, fourth wife of Philip II, mother of Alexander III
- Aristotle (384–322 BCE): Greek philosopher and tutor to Alexander III
- Darius III (381–330 BCE): Persian king
- Parmenion (400–330 BCE): general under Philip II; when his 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
- Perdikkas (365–321 BCE): general in Alexander's army and supreme commander of the imperial army after Alexander's death; regent for Philip Arrideus (Philip III)
- Pausanias 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 with two brothers (Heromenes and Arrhabaeus); conspired against Alexander and was executed.

358 BCE	357 BCE	356 BCE	353 BCE	351 BCE	344 BCE
Athens in the midst of the Social War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Philip II marries Olympias of Epirus</li><li>• Philip II takes Crenides and changes its name to Philippi</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alexander III born July 20</li><li>• 3rd Social War</li><li>• c. Pydna and Potidae captured by Philip II</li></ul>	Methone and Olynthus captured by Philip II	Demosthenes delivers Philippics I	Demosthenes delivers Philippics II





## MAP



**SOURCE 12.2** Expansion of Macedon

343 BCE	342 BCE	341 BCE	340 BCE	339 BCE
Aristotle becomes Alexander III's tutor	Expedition against Scythians	Demosthenes delivers Philipics III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philip II invades Thrace</li> <li>Alexander III left as regent of Macedon at age 16</li> <li>Alexander III defeats Maedians and settles Alexandropolis</li> <li>Phocion (a successful Athenian statesman and <i>strategos</i>) defeats Philip II at Byzantium</li> </ul>	Philip II battles the Scythians





## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Achaemenid Empire</b>	empire and lands ruled by the Persian dynasty of kings from Cyrus the Great to Darius III (550–331 BCE)
<b>amphictiony (also amphictyony)</b>	an association of neighbouring states in ancient Greece with a shared interest in defending the common religious centre at Delphi
<b>Aphrodite</b>	Greek goddess of love, pleasure, beauty and procreation
<b>Apollo</b>	Greek god of knowledge, music, art, poetry, oracles, sun, light, plague, archery and medicine
<b>Argead Dynasty</b>	ancient Macedonian royal house whose origins trace back to Argos in the Peloponnese, 700–310 BCE
<b>Artemis</b>	Greek goddess of hunting, archery, hills, forest and moon
<b>Asclepius</b>	Greek demi-god of medicine
<b>Athena</b>	Greek goddess of military victory and wisdom
<b>Attic</b>	relating to the culture and people of Attica, a province of Athens
<b>Audata</b>	Ilyrian princess, married Philip II, mother of Cynane; grandmother of Eurydice II of Macedon who married Philip III
<b>autocrat</b>	a ruler who has absolute power
<b>Bactria</b>	region of ancient Central Asia north of the Hindu Kush and south of the Amu Darya river; modern day Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan
<b>basileus</b>	king
<b>basilikoi paides</b>	royal pages
<b>cabiri</b>	group of Greek enigmatic underground (chthonic) deities
<b>Cleopatra (Eurydice)</b>	Macedonian noblewoman, last wife of Philip II, niece of Attalus; mother of Europa and Caranus, Olympias murdered her children after Philip's assassination; killed herself
<b>constitutionalist</b>	a government according to a constitution
<b>Cybele</b>	Oriental goddess; the great mother of the gods, personification of fertility, creation, motherhood, nature, destruction

338 BCE	338/7 BCE	337 BCE	336 BCE	336–323 BCE
Battle of Chaeronea; Alexander III has a commanding post	Development of the League of Corinth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philip II marries seventh wife, Cleopatra (Eurydice), a Macedonian - considered a love match rather than political</li> <li>Greek assembly supports Philip's claim for Persian War; leads to tens of thousands of Greeks joining the Persian army to fight against the Macedonians</li> </ul>	Assassination of Philip II by Pausanias	Age of Alexander



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Demeter</b>	goddess of the harvest, the sacred law, and the cycle of life and death; mother of Persephone
<b>Dionysus</b>	Greek god of wine, wine making, grape harvest, theatre, fertility, ritual madness and religious ecstasy
<b>Dioscuri</b>	in Greek mythology, the twin brothers Castor and Pollux, who are the gemini twins
<b>Draco</b>	snake god
<b>egalitarian</b>	supporting/following the idea that all people have the same rights and opportunities and are equal
<b>Eucleia</b>	Greek female spirit of good repute and glory
<b>Gordian Knot</b>	a legend regarding the chariot in the capital of Phrygia, Gordium; the legend suggested that anyone who could untie the intricate knots tied by the founder (Gordius) would rule Asia
<b>hegemony</b>	the leadership and dominance by one state or social group over another, as was the case with the dominance of Phillip II and the Macedonians over the Greeks
<b>Helios</b>	in Greek mythology, the personification of the sun
<b>Hellene</b>	an ancient Greek
<b>Hellenistic Age</b>	period of Mediterranean history from the death of Alexander until the establishment of the Roman Empire as seen through the Battle of Actium (323–31 BCE)
<b>Heracles</b>	divine hero in Greek mythology; gatekeeper of Mount Olympus; god of strength, heroes, health, athletes, sport, fertility, agriculture, trade, oracles and divine protector of humans
<b>hetairoi</b>	companions of the king or elite cavalry
<b>hipparchies</b>	cavalry unit (approximately 1000) with the intention to flank
<b>hypaspists</b>	stood between the phalanx and cavalry in battle formation
<b>ile</b>	cavalry unit of approximately 200

### 335 BCE

Destruction of Thebes

### 334 BCE

- Beginning of Alexander III Asiatic campaign
  - Battle at Granicus River
  - Capture of Sardis
- Siege at Miletos and Halicarnassus

### 333 BCE

- Alexander III accomplishes Gordian Knot
- Battle of Issus

### 332 BCE 332/1 BCE

- Capture of Darius III's family by Alexander III
  - Parmenion takes Damascus
- Alexander III takes Sidon and Tyre
  - Siege of Gaza
- Alexander III enters Egypt
  - Journey to Siwah



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Isis</b>	Egyptian goddess of magic, healing, motherhood, fertility, death and rebirth
<b>kurioi</b>	guardians of women
<b>League of Corinth</b>	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
<b>Maedians</b>	Thracian tribe
<b>Meda</b>	wife of Philip II, married after Olympias; Thracian princess from Odessos; father was King Cothelas, a Getae
<b>Muses</b>	Greek goddesses of inspiration: literature, science and the arts
<b>Nicesipolis</b>	Thessalian from Pherae, wife of Philip II and mother of Thessalonica, who died after giving birth to her daughter c. 345 BCE
<b>nymphs</b>	Greek mythology, minor nature deities of landforms or locations
<b>Paeonian</b>	people of Paeonia, a kingdom bordered by Thrace, and Illyria
<b>Pan</b>	Greek god of shepherds and flocks, nature and the wild, rustic music, and companion of the nymphs
<b>panhellenism</b>	modern name given to the unity of Greeks as Greek <i>poleis</i> were independent
<b>Persephone</b>	Greek queen of underworld
<b>phalangite</b>	a member of the Macedonian phalanx; armed with a sarissa, metal helmet, leather jacket, shield and <i>xiphos</i>
<b>phalanx</b>	heavily-armed infantry formation that was refined by Philip II and known as the Macedonian phalanx whereby soldiers stood shoulder to shoulder in ranks 16 men deep
<b>Phila</b>	first or second wife of Philip II; from Elimeia
<b>philia</b>	members of the friends class ( <i>philoï</i> )
<b>Philinna</b>	female dancer of Larissa in Thessaly, wife of Philip II, mother of Philip III
<b>Philip Arridaeus</b>	also known as Philip III; half brother of Alexander III; intellectually disabled; mother was Philinna
<b>philoï</b>	friends

### 331 BCE

- Battle of Gaugamela
  - The surrender of Babylon, Susa
  - The capture of Persian Gates, Persepolis
- Alexandria, Egypt founded

### 330 BCE

- Destruction of Persepolis
- Alexander III moves through Ecbatana and Afghanistan
- Death of Darius III (last king of the Archaemenid Empire in Persia)
- Deaths of Philotas, Alexander the Lyncestian and Parmenion (accused of conspiring to assassinate Alexander III)

### 330/29 BCE

- Alexander III crosses Hindu Kush
- Punishment of Bessus (Darius III's murderer)

### 329/8 BCE

- Campaigns at Bactria and Sogdiana
- Macedonian defeat at Potytimetus River
  - Death of Spitamenes (Sogdian warlord who led the Sogdiana uprising against Alexander III in 329 BCE)

## CHAPTER 12 PHILIP II AND ALEXANDER III OF MACEDON





TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Philotas</b>	Son of Parmenion; rose to command of companion cavalry; accused of conspiring against Alexander; was executed
<b>Phocians</b>	People of the region Phocis, in the central part of Greece, which included Delphi
<b><i>poleis</i></b>	cities with their surrounding countryside
<b>polytheism</b>	the belief in multiple gods and deities
<b>Sarapis</b>	Graeco-Egyptian god of the sun
<b>sarissa</b>	long spear or pike (5–6 metres) introduced by Philip II in Macedonian phalanxes
<b>satrapies</b>	Macedonian provinces
<b>Scythians</b>	group of Iranian people and Eurasian nomads who inhabited the central and west Eurasia's steppes
<b>Selene</b>	Greek goddess of the moon
<b>Sogdiana</b>	a region in ancient Central Asia between the Oxus and Jaxartes rivers located in territories of modern day Tajikistan and Uzbekistan
<b><i>somatophylakes</i></b>	the king's bodyguard; a select group of seven
<b><i>symposia</i></b>	drinking practices which also included intellectual debates, entertainment and discussion of strategy
<b><i>syntrophoi</i></b>	served the king, protected him as he slept and went on hunts; they learnt how to rule and be ruled and were often hostages to ensure the good behaviour and cooperation of their fathers or family; considered foster brothers of the king's sons as they were close companions
<b>Thessalian League</b>	a loose confederacy of feudal-like city-states and tribes of the Thessalian plain in Northern Greece
<b><i>tutelary</i></b>	guardian or protector
<b><i>xiphos</i></b>	a one-handed, double-edged straight sword
<b>Zeus</b>	Greek god of sky and thunder who ruled as king of gods on Mount Olympus
<b>Zeus-Ammon</b>	Egyptian god Ammon (god of sun and air and king of the gods) associated with the Greek counterpart, Zeus

### 328 BCE

Death of Cleitus (an officer in the Macedonian army who saved Alexander III at the Battle of the Granicus; later killed by Alexander III in a drunken fight)

### 328/7 BCE

Alexander III marries Roxane, daughter of Oxyartes

### 327 BCE

- Conspiracy of Hermolaus (Alexander III's page who was executed for planning to kill the king)
- Alexander III reaches India

### 326 BCE

- Battle of the Hydaspes against King Porus of the Paurava kingdom
- Death of Callisthenes (Greek historian who accompanied Alexander III on his Asiatic expedition; he was the great nephew of Aristotle and was implicated by Hermolaus in the conspiracy to kill the king)



**SOURCE 12.3** *Battle of the Granicus*, Charles Le Brun, 1665, Louvre, Paris. How has the idea of Alexander's conquests been romanticised?

### 325 BCE

Gedrosian Campaign

- Alexander III returns to Susa
  - Mutiny at Opis
  - Death of Hephaestian, Alexander's closest friend, in Ecbatana

### 324 BCE

### 323 BCE

Death of Alexander III

### 321/0 BCE

- Alexander III's funerary carriage is taken to Egypt
  - Perdikkas, one of Alexander's generals, is defeated in Egypt

### 321–301 BCE

Continual warfare



## Introduction

Philip II (382–336 BCE) ruled the ancient kingdom of Macedon from 359 BC. 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, with the exception of Sparta. When Philip was assassinated, he was succeeded by his twenty-year-old son Alexander III (356–323 BCE). Alexander continued his father's military tradition; he campaigned through Asia and northeast 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.

Reconstructing the period of history during the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III of Macedon poses challenges.

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 of ethnicity of Philip II and Alexander III continues to influence the national identity of modern Macedonians and Greeks.

Second, there is an issue concerning evidence. The primary sources, such as Demosthenes, contain 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 no longer exist. 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.



**SOURCE 12.4** *Demosthenes Practising Oratory*, Jean-Jules-Antoine Lecomte du Nouy (1842–1923). Demosthenes used to study in an underground room he constructed himself. He would talk with pebbles in his mouth and recited verses while running. To strengthen his voice, he spoke on the seashore over the roar of the waves.



# Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of a historical period in the Ancient World

## 12.1 Geography of ancient Macedon



SOURCE 12.5 Macedon and surrounding regions

George Rawlinson a Canon of Canterbury and Camden Professor of Ancient History at the University of Oxford, discusses Philip's accession:

The situation of Philip at his accession was one of extreme embarrassment and difficulty. Besides Amyntas, his nephew, for whom he at first professed to be regent, there were at least five pretenders to the throne, two of whom, Pausanias and Argaus, were supported by the arms of foreigners. The Illyrians, moreover, had recently gained a great victory over Perdiccas, and, flushed with success, had advanced into Macedonia and occupied most of the western provinces. Paeonia on the north, and Thrace upon the east, were unquiet neighbors, whose hostility might be counted on whenever other perils threatened. Within two years, however, Philip had repressed or overthrown all these enemies, and found himself free to commence those wars of aggression by which he converted the monarchy of Macedon into an empire.

Hitherto it had been the policy of Philip to profess himself a friend of the Athenians. Now, however, that his hands were free, it was his first object to disembarass himself of these near neighbors, who blocked up his coast-line, watched his movements, and might seriously interfere with the execution of his projects. Accordingly, towards the close of BCE 358, when Athens was already engaged in the 'The Social War', he suddenly laid siege to Amphipolis. Having taken the town, while he amused Athens with promises, he proceeded to attack and capture Pydna and Potidaea,

(continued)

actual Athenian possessions, making over the latter to Olynthus, to foment jealousy between [its] and Athens. He then conquered the entire coast district between the Strymon and the Nestus, thus becoming master of the important Thracian goldmines, from which he shortly derived an annual revenue of a thousand talents!

The year after these conquests we find Philip in Thessaly, where he interferes to protect the Aleuadae of Larissa against the tyrants of Pherae. The tyrants call in the aid of the Phocians, then at the zenith of their power, and Philip suffers certain reverses; but a few years later he is completely victorious, defeats and kills Onomarchus, and brings under his dominion the whole of Thessaly, together with Magnesia and Achaia Phthiotis. At the same time, he conquers Methone, the last Athenian possession on the coast of Macedon, attacks Maroneia, and threatens the Chersonese. Athens, the sole power which could effectually have checked these successes, made only slight and feeble efforts to prevent them. Already Philip had found the advantage of having friends among the Attic orators; and their labors, backed by the selfish indolence which now characterised the Athenians, produced an inaction, which had the most fatal consequences.

The victory of Philip over Onomarchus roused Athens to exertion. Advancing to Thermopylae, Philip found the pass already occupied by an Athenian army, and did not venture to attack it. Greece was saved for the time; but six years later the folly of the Thebans, and the fears of the Athenians, who were driven to despair by the ill success of the Olynthian and Euboic wars, admitted the Macedonian conqueror within the barrier. Accepted as head of the league against the impious Phocians, Philip in a few weeks brought the 'Sacred War' to an end, obtaining as his reward the seat in the Amphictyonic Council of which the Phocians were deprived, and thus acquiring a sort of right to intermediate as much as he liked in the affairs of Central and even Southern Hellas.

The main causes of Philip's wonderful success were twofold: bettering the lessons taught him by his model in the art of war, Epaminondas, he had armed, equipped, and trained the Macedonian forces till they were decidedly superior to the troops of any state in Greece. The Macedonian phalanx, invincible until it came to be opposed by the Romans, was his conception and his work. Nor was he content with excellence in one arm of the service. On every branch he bestowed equal care and thought. Each was brought into a state nearly approaching perfection. His cavalry, heavy and light, his peltasts, archers, slingers, darters, were all the best of their kind; his artillery was numerous and effective; his commissariat service was well arranged. At the same time, he was a master of finesse. Taking advantage of the divided condition of Greece, and of the general prevalence of corruption among the citizens of almost every community, he played off state against state and politician against politician. Masking his purposes up to the last moment, promising, cajoling, bribing, intimidating, protesting, he advanced his interests even more by diplomacy than by force, having an infinite fund of artifice from which to draw, and scarcely ever recurring to means which he had used previously.

**SOURCE 12.6** Rawlinson, G., 1899, *Ancient History of Chaldaea, Assyria, Media, Babylonia, Lydia, Phoenicia, Syria, Judaea, Egypt, Carthage, Persia, Greece, Macedonia, Parthia, and Rome*, The Colonial Press, pp. 167–9

## ACTIVITY 12.1

1. Using the map in Source 12.5 as well as Source 12.6, identify Philip II's expansion.
2. Identify possible motives for Philip II's actions.



## 12.2 Nature of governance and political development

The nature of governance in Macedon evolved during the reigns of Philip II (359–336 BCE) and Alexander III (336–323 BCE). However, there is difficulty in attesting to the overall structure of government due to either a lack of evidence, perspectives or the non-contemporary nature of sources. Despite this, it is known that Macedon'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 Macedon 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 Macedon 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 Greek League (338/7 BCE). However, Alexander III was considered increasingly an autocratic king.

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, Macedon'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).

Aristotle (Greek philosopher and tutor to Alexander III) wrote about two types of monarchy.

and the things that happen about royal governments and tyrannies are almost similar to those that have been narrated about constitutional governments. For royal government corresponds with aristocracy, while tyranny is a combination of the last form of oligarchy and of democracy; and for that very reason it is most harmful to its subjects, inasmuch as it is a combination of two bad things, and is liable to the deviations and errors that spring from both forms of constitution. And these two different sorts of monarchy have their origins from directly opposite sources; royalty has come into existence for the assistance of the distinguished against the people, and a king is appointed from those distinguished by superiority in virtue or the actions that spring from virtue, or by superiority in coming from a family of that character, while a tyrant is set up from among the people and the multitude to oppose the notables, in order that the people may suffer no injustice from them. And this is manifest from the facts of history. For almost the greatest number of tyrants have risen, it may be said, from being demagogues, having won the people's confidence by slandering the notables. For some tyrannies were set up in this manner when the states had already grown great, but others that came before them arose from kings departing from the ancestral customs and aiming at a more despotic rule, and others from the men elected to fill the supreme magistracies (for in old times the peoples used to appoint the popular officials and the sacred embassies for long terms of office), and others from oligarchies electing some one supreme official for the greatest magistracies. For in all these methods they had it in their power to effect their purpose easily, if only they wished, because they already possessed the power of royal rule in the one set of cases and of their honorable office in the other, for example Phidon in Argos and others became tyrants when they possessed royal power already, while the Ionian tyrants and Phalaris arose from offices of honor, and Panaetius at Leontini and Cypselus at Corinth and Pisistratus at Athens and Dionysius at Syracuse and others in the same manner from the position of demagogue. Therefore, as we said, royalty is ranged in correspondence with aristocracy, for it goes by merit, either by private virtue or by family or by services or by a combination of these things and ability. For in every instance this honor fell to men after they had conferred benefit or because they had the ability to confer benefit on their cities or their nations, some having prevented their enslavement in war, for instance Codrus, others having set them free, for instance Cyrus, or having settled or acquired territory, for instance the kings of Sparta and Macedon and the Molossians. And a king wishes to be a guardian

**SOURCE 12.7** Aristotle, *Politics*, 5.1310b

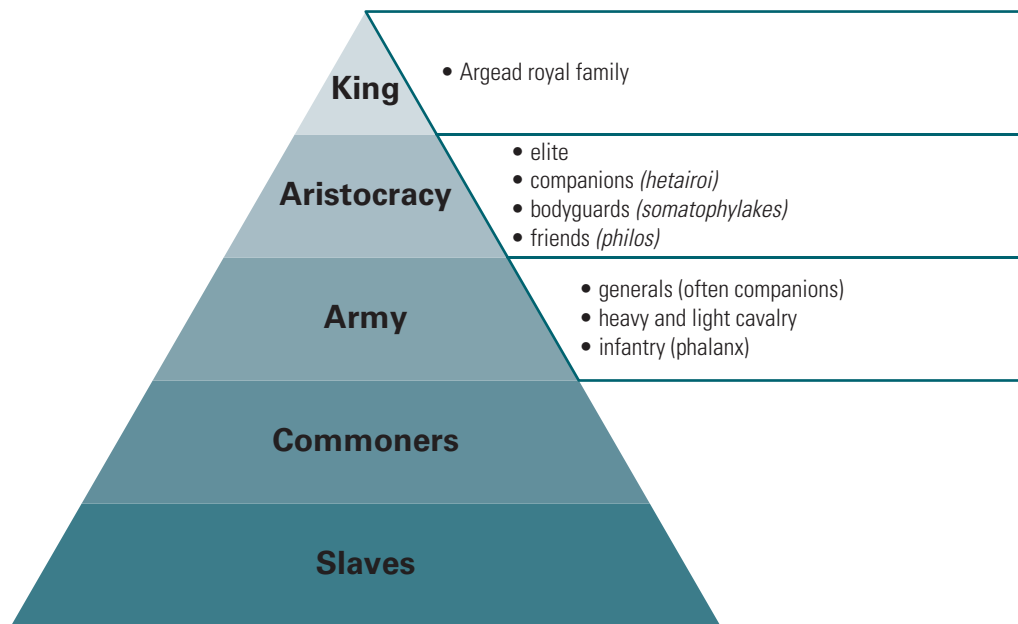


## ACTIVITY 12.2

1. Identify the two types of monarchy suggested by Aristotle.
2. Propose which of the two types of monarchy you think are demonstrated by:
  - a. Philip II
  - b. Alexander III.(You may wish to revisit this proposal later, after you have conducted further investigation.)

## 12.3 Social structure

Macedon was 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 12.8** Macedonian social hierarchy. What does this structure suggest about Macedonian society?

### Royal family

The royalty of Macedon were of the Argead Dynasty whose origins traced back to Argos (Peloponnese). The Argead 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 further 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, the state and 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* (royal pages).



**SOURCE 12.9** Gold Medallion of Philip II of Macedon, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris



**SOURCE 12.10** Gold Medallion of Olympias, Walters Art Museum, Baltimore. What do these medallions suggest about the importance of the royal family?

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* (military unit of special forces numbered in the hundreds) and a smaller group of *somatophylakes* (highborn men of similar age) 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.

Thomas R. Martin is an American historian specialising in the Greco-Roman world. Here he describes the relationship between the aristocracy and the monarchy.

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.

**SOURCE 12.11** Martin, T.R., 2013, *Ancient Greece: From Prehistoric to Hellenistic Times*, Yale University Press, p. 239

## Women

The family and the home were the centre of women's life in Macedon, 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. *Hetairoi* women were knowledgeable and involved in the political struggles of their clans.

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 was considered the primary source of 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.

## 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 which allowed for cohesion and unity. Additionally, the army had uniforms and an oath, which demonstrated loyalty to the king rather than 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 introducing archers on horseback, which was an adaptation from his campaigns in Sogdiana and Bactria.



**SOURCE 12.12** An artistic representation of a Macedonian phalanx

## 12.4 Cultural life and practice

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.



**SOURCE 12.13** Lion hunt, mosaic from Pella (ancient Macedon)

## Religious beliefs and practice

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, Heracles, Dionysus and Isis were of importance in Macedon. Additionally, there were cults worshipping Aphrodite, Cybele, and nymphs. Zeus was the most important deity and was considered the father of Macedon, who was a mythical individual that all Macedonians are descended from. Furthermore, the Macedonian kings traced their lineage to Heracles. Both Artemis and Heracles-Cynagidas (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 engrained belief in the afterlife that sets the Macedonians apart from the Greeks. Furthermore, magic was practised among everyday Macedonians.



**SOURCE 12.14** Statue of goddess Cybele c. second to first century BCE, found in Marvinci, Valandovo, Macedon



The Macedonians were open to foreign influence in religion as seen in their worship of Isis, Sarapis and later Zeus-Ammon 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 gradually submerged into the worship of Isis. The worship of Ammon by Alexander III is referred to 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 expression 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. Male burials of the Argead period contain weapons and armour as grave goods which supported the warrior nature of the society. Furthermore, male burials of the 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 burials 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 the living rulers as gods, although Alexander is thought to be the prime mover in royal deification.



**SOURCE 12.15** Temple of Isis at ancient Dion

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding in relation to specific historical periods in the Ancient World

### 12.5 Governance

In the next three sources, Roman historian Curtius from around the first century CE, and first-century BCE Greek historian Diodorus, discuss Macedonian kings.

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 12.16** Curtius, *The History of Alexander*, 6.8.25

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 12.17** Diodorus, *Library*, 16.2.4

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.

**SOURCE 12.18** Diodorus, *Library*, 16.89.1

## Philip II

After his victory at the battle of Chaeronea in 338 BCE, Philip of Macedon 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 which established the League. It is from the oaths to be sworn by the ambassadors from each state.

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

**SOURCE 12.19** Treaty with Philip II, IG II3 1 318 Date: 338–7 BCE, Fragment A

Justin, a Roman historian from around the second century CE, wrote about the Lacedaemonian response to Philip's peace terms.

War being at an end in Greece, Philip 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.

**SOURCE 12.20** Justin, *Epitome*, 9.5



Diodorus considers Philip's wealth and how he used it.

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 12.21** Diodorus, *Library*, 16.8

The orator Demosthenes was Philip's contemporary and frequently spoke out against him.

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.

**SOURCE 12.22** Demosthenes, *On the Crown*, 18: 235

Here, Diodorus talks about Philip as a military commander.

In Europe Philip, the Macedonian king, marched against the cities of Chalcidice, took the fortress of Zereia by siege and razed it. He then intimidated some of the other towns and compelled them to submit. Then coming against Pherae in Thessaly he expelled Peitholaus, who was in control of the city.

**SOURCE 12.23** Diodorus, *Library*, 16.52.9

A.B. Bosworth, Professor of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Western Australia, outlines governance under Alexander III:

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.

**SOURCE 12.24** Bosworth, A. B., 1993, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge University Press, p. 7

## ACTIVITY 12.3

1. For each of Sources 12.16 to 12.24, complete an analysis table, using the template contained in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 3*.
2. What issues arise with these sources?

### Objective 5: Evaluate

3. What limitations exist with the evidence?
4. How useful are these sources to determine the governance of Philip II?
5. How reliable are these sources for the reconstruction of the past?
6. To what extent do these issues affect the use of the sources as evidence?

### Objective 4: Synthesise

7. Based on the evidence, draw conclusions about what type of governance existed under Philip II.

The Interactive Textbook contains an activity on a longer passage by Diodorus about Philip and the Battle of Chaeronea.

## Alexander III

Justin discusses the Macedonian reaction to Alexander's succession.

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 12.25** Justin, *Epitome*, 11.1

Diodorus considers Alexander's method of establishing his authority.

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 12.26** Diodorus, *Library*, 17.2. 1-2

Bosworth describes governance post-Philip II's death:

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

(continued)

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 12.27** Bosworth, A. B., 1993, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge University Press, p. 7

Philotas, one Alexander's generals, was accused of conspiring against him. In the next four sources, Curtius, Arrian (a first-century CE Greek historian), Justin and Curtius outline Alexander's response.

Even so, Alexander called a meeting of his friends, without inviting Philotas, and ordered Nicomachus be brought before it. So the decision was unanimous that Philotas should be interrogated under torture to force him to name his accomplices in the crime. Then Alexander dismissed them, telling them to remain silent about their decision and, in order not to betray any hint of the course of action they had recently adopted, he had marching orders issued for the following day.

**SOURCE 12.28** Curtius, *The History of Alexander*, 6.8.25

Alexander called a meeting of his friends to discuss the situation [regarding Alexander the Lyncestian], and the members of the Companions most closely in his confidence expressed the opinion that it was a mistake in the first place to have put an untrustworthy officer in command of the best cavalry regiments, and that he should now be summarily disposed of, before he became hand in glove with the Thessalians and plotted rebellion.

**SOURCE 12.29** Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander*, 1:25

What most incensed him was, that reflections were cast upon him in the common talk of the soldiers, for having cast off the customs of his father Philip and of his country. For this offence, Parmenio, an old man, next to the king in rank, and his son Philotas, were put to death; an examination by torture having been previously held on both of them.

**SOURCE 12.30** Justin, *Epitome* 12.5

Who would have believed that a gathering fiercely hostile moments before could be paralysed with sudden panic at the sight of men being dragged off for punishment whose actions had been no worse than the others? They were terror-stricken, whether from respect for the title of king, for which people living in a monarchy have a divine reverence, or from respect for Alexander personally; or perhaps it was because of the confidence with which he so forcefully exerted his authority. At all events they were the very model of submissiveness: when, towards evening, they learned of their comrades' execution, so far from being infuriated at the punishment, they did everything to express individually their increased loyalty and devotion.

**SOURCE 12.31** Curtius, *The History of Alexander*, 10.3.1-4



Here, Martin describes Alexander's governance after Philip II's death.

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.

**SOURCE 12.32** Martin, T. R., 2013, *Ancient Greece: From Prehistoric to Hellenistic Times*, Yale University Press

In the following excerpt from a speech, Callisthenes, a Greek historian who accompanied Alexander the Great, criticises Alexander's actions.

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.

**SOURCE 12.33** Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander*, 4.11.5, speech by Callisthenes

Plutarch was a first-century CE Greek biographer and essayist who wrote about the life of Alexander. Here, he talks about some of the challenges Alexander faced upon receiving the kingdom.

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.

**SOURCE 12.34** Plutarch, *Alexander*, 11.1

Justin draws out contrasts between Philip and Alexander:

To Philip succeeded his son Alexander, a prince greater than his father, both in his virtues and his vices. Each of the two had a different mode of conquering; the one prosecuted his wars with open force, the other with subtlety; the one delighted in deceiving his enemies, the other in boldly repulsing them. The one was more prudent in council, the other more noble in feeling. The father would dissemble his resentment, and often subdue it; when the son was provoked, there was neither delay nor bounds to his vengeance. They were both too fond of wine, but the ill effects of their intoxication were totally different; the father would rush from a banquet to face the enemy, cope with him, and rashly expose himself to dangers; the son vented his rage, not upon his enemies, but his friends. A battle often sent away Philip wounded; Alexander often left a banquet stained with the blood of his companions. The one wished to reign with his friends, the other to reign over them. The one preferred to be loved, the other to be feared. To literature both gave equal attention. The father had more cunning, the son more honour. Philip was more staid in his words, Alexander in his actions. The son felt readier and nobler impulses to spare the conquered; the father showed no mercy even to his allies. The father was more inclined to frugality, the son to luxury. By the same course by which the father laid the foundations of the empire of the world, the son consummated the glory of conquering the whole world.

**SOURCE 12.35** Justin, *Epitome*, 9:8

## ACTIVITY 12.4

GO

1. Analyse the above sources, using the source analysis table contained in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 3*.
2. What issues arise with these sources?

### Objective 4: Synthesise

3. Based on the evidence, draw conclusions about the type of governance that existed under Alexander III.
4. How did Alexander III's governance differ from that of Philip II?

### Objective 5: Evaluate

5. What limitations exist with the evidence?
6. How useful and reliable are these sources to determine the governance of Alexander III?
7. To what extent do these issues affect the use of the sources as evidence?



**SOURCE 12.36** Alexander routs Persians on one of the long sides of the Alexander Sarcophagus. What does this suggest about the way in which Alexander III ruled?

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a historical period in the Ancient World

### 12.6 Society and culture

GO

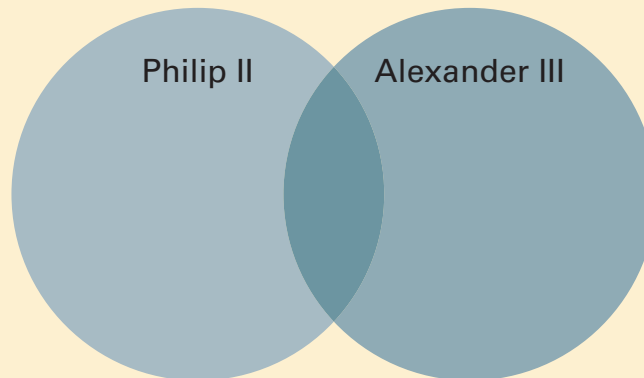
In the Interactive Textbook, you will find a number of sources that demonstrate aspects of society and culture in the time of Philip and Alexander. Review this material and then complete the following activity.

## ACTIVITY 12.5

Use the additional sources from the Interactive Textbook to answer the following questions.

### Objective 1: Comprehend

1. Identify the roles of the classes in society at the time of Philip II and Alexander III.
2. Compare and contrast the culture and society of Macedon during the period of Philip II and Alexander III using the Venn diagram below.



### Objective 2: Devise

3. Devise a key inquiry question regarding the impact of social structures and culture upon the governance of Philip II and Alexander III.

### Objective 3: Analyse

4. Use the source analysis table available in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 3* to analyse the sources.
5. Explain the connection between society and culture at this time.
6. Identify issues relating to the authentication, excavation, reconstruction and conservation of evidence. (You may wish to refer back to the Chapter 1 discussion of these matters.)

### Objective 4: Synthesise

7. Develop a hypothesis in response to your key inquiry question.

### Objective 5: Evaluate

8. How useful and reliable are these sources to determine society and culture during the period of Philip II and Alexander III?
9. How do the perspectives of these sources affect the interpretation of the past?

## 12.7 Religion

Religious rituals were very important at the time of Philip and Alexander. Here are two extracts in which Plutarch discusses religious rites, and Alexander's claimed descent from the gods and heroes of myth.

All the women of these parts were addicted to the Orphic rites and the orgies of Dionysus from very ancient times (being called Klodones and Mimallones), and imitated in many ways the practices of the Edonian women and the Thracian women about Mount Haemus, from whom, as it would seem, the word 'theskeuein' came to be applied to the celebration of extravagant and superstitious ceremonies.

**SOURCE 12.37** Plutarch, *Alexander*, 2.5



As for the lineage of Alexander, on his father's side he was a descendant of Heracles through Caranus, and on his mother's side a descendant of Aeacus through Neoptolemus; this is accepted without any question. And we are told that Philip, after being initiated into the mysteries of Samothrace at the same time as Olympias, he himself being still a youth and she an orphan child, fell in love with her and betrothed himself to her at once with the consent of her brother, Arymbas.

**SOURCE 12.38** Plutarch, *Alexander*, 2.1



**SOURCE 12.39** A piece of lead inscription with a text of Doric dialect and magical content, Amisos of the fourth century BCE



**SOURCE 12.40** Obverse: Head of Herakles wearing lion skin headdress. Reverse: the word 'FILIPPO', trident head, lion's head. AV One-eighth stater. Mint: Pella (359–336 BCE), Philip II.



**SOURCE 12.41** 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. AR Tetradrachm. Mint: Amphipolis (c. 323–315 BCE).



**SOURCE 12.42** Early Philip II stater. Obverse: god Apollo Reverse: a charioteer, with Philip's name appearing in the exergue. Standard Philip II gold type design.



**SOURCE 12.43** Obverse: typical depiction of Zeus. Reverse: the king on horseback, with the bow symbol in front of the horse's forelegs. Mint: Amphipolis (355–348 BCE).



**SOURCE 12.44** The Hero and the Grave I: Mural (royal tomb of Philip II at Vergina) of Hades kidnapping Persephone



**SOURCE 12.45** Bronze lantern decorated with two heads of Pan (ancient Hellenic god) c. late fourth century BCE. Discovered in Royal Tomb II, Vergina.



**SOURCE 12.46** Tetradrachm of Alexander III. Obverse: Alexander wearing a lion scalp (guise of Heracles). Reverse: the seated figure of Zeus.



**SOURCE 12.47** Obverse: Head of Athena facing right, wearing a crested Corinthian helmet ornamented with a coiled serpent. Reverse: word 'ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ' for Alexander, Nike standing facing left, holding a wreath and a stylis, a trident-head on left. Gold stater mint: Amphipolis (336–323 BCE) lifetime issue.



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. As was often the case, they gave an ambiguous response, but Philip took it as positive.

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, whose mother was Olympias; he had given her in marriage to Alexander king of Epirus, Olympias's own brother.

**SOURCE 12.48** Diodorus, *Library*, 16.91.4

Alexander also took counsel from the oracles, as described by modern historian Thomas R. Martin, as well as Diodorus and Justin.

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 12.49** Martin, T. R., 2013, *Ancient Greece: From Prehistoric to Hellenistic Times*, Yale University Press, p. 247

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 12.50** Diodorus, *Library*, 17.51.1

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'.

**SOURCE 12.51** Justin, *Epitome*, 11.11



Here is a speech by Callisthenes to Alexander II.

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?

**SOURCE 12.52** Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander*, 4.11.6

## ACTIVITY 12.6

Study Sources 12.37 to 12.52 and use them to respond to the questions below.

### Objective 1: Comprehend

1. Why might the archaeological site at Vergina (Aigai) be significant?

### Objective 4: Synthesise

2. To what extent did religion affect the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III?
3. How did religion evolve over time from Philip II to Alexander III?
4. To what extent could religion be seen as central to Macedonian society, culture and politics?

### Objective 5: Evaluate

5. What limitations regarding the access to and the use of evidence to reconstruct the past exist with the evidence?
6. How useful and reliable are these sources to determine the impact of religion during the period of Philip II and Alexander III?
7. How do the perspectives of these sources affect the interpretation of the past?

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about a historical period in the Ancient World

### 12.8 Philip II and Demosthenes

The work of Demosthenes is among the key primary sources of the period. Here, Mark Cartwright (contributor to the *Ancient History Encyclopedia*) describes Demosthenes.

Demosthenes (c. 384–322 BCE) was an Athenian statesman who famously stood against Macedonian king Philip II and whose surviving speeches have established him as one of the greatest patriots and powerful orators from ancient Greece. He is not to be confused with the fifth century BCE Athenian general of the same name.

**SOURCE 12.53** Cartwright, M., 14 March, 2016, 'Demosthenes', *Ancient History Encyclopedia*

The following sources are all from speeches by Demosthenes discussing Philip.

But if we leave these men too in the lurch, Athenians, and then Olynthus is crushed by Philip, tell me what is to prevent him from marching henceforward just where he pleases. I wonder if any one of you in this audience watches and notes the steps by which Philip, weak at first, has grown so powerful. First he seized Amphipolis, next Pydna, then Potidaea, after that Methone, lastly he invaded Thessaly.

**SOURCE 12.54** Demosthenes, *Olynthiac 1*, 1:12

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.

**SOURCE 12.55** Demosthenes, *Philippic 1*, 4: 4

In the first place, Athenians, if anyone views with confidence the present power of Philip and the extent of his dominions, if anyone imagines that all this imports no danger to our city and that you are not the object of his preparations, I must express my astonishment, and beg you all alike to listen to a brief statement of the considerations that have led me to form the opposite conclusion and to regard Philip as our enemy. Then, if you think me the better prophet, adopt my advice; if you prefer those who have so confidently trusted him, give them your allegiance.

**SOURCE 12.56** Demosthenes, *Philippic 2*, 6: 6

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 12.57** Demosthenes, *Olynthiac 2*, 2:18

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.

**SOURCE 12.58** Demosthenes, *Philippic 3*, 9:31

Does he not dictate to the Thessalians their form of government? Does he not send mercenaries, some to Porthmus to expel the Eretrian democracy, others to Oreus to set up the tyranny of Philistides? Yet the Greeks see all this and suffer it. They seem to watch him just as they would watch a hailstorm, each praying that it may not come their way, but none making any effort to stay its course.

**SOURCE 12.59** Demosthenes, *Philippic 3*, 9:33

## ACTIVITY 12.7

1. What limitations exist with the evidence provided by Demosthenes's speeches about Philip II?
2. How useful and reliable is Demosthenes to determine Macedonian society, culture and governance at the time of Philip II and Alexander III?
3. How do the perspectives of Demosthenes effect the interpretation of the past?

In 338 BCE the liberty of the old Greek city-states was destroyed at Chaeronea in Boeotia by the victory of Philip of Macedon. This battle signalled the passing of the Greek system of city-states and the substitution of large military monarchies. However, was conflict avoidable? Who was to blame? Here are the thoughts of Diodorus on the matter.

In the year Charondas was first archon in Athens, 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.

**SOURCE 12.60** Diodorus Siculus, *The Battle of Chaeronea*, k. XVI, Chapter 14



## ACTIVITY 12.8

Read Source 12.60 and respond to the following:

1. Who was more to blame for bringing conflict between Macedon and Greece to a head, Demosthenes of Athens or King Philip of Macedon?
  - Write your answer in a paragraph. Provide a clear topic sentence that directly answers the question, incorporating key words from the question. The body of your responses should contain at least three direct quotes from the source. Be careful about your selections and elaborate on the significance of your choices (quote and comment). Consider combining quotations to strengthen your response (one example does not prove a point).
  - Finish with a clincher that summarises the key aspect or aspects of your response. In your response, consider the actions of both individuals, and give clear reasons why one is more to blame than the other.

GO

## Objective 2: Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to a historical period in the Ancient World

There are a variety of issues relating to Philip and Alexander. In order to gain a clear understanding of this period, it is important to understand what these issues are and how they can affect the reconstruction of the past.

### 12.9 Devising historical questions about the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III

Based on your knowledge and the evidence in this chapter, complete the following activities.

## ACTIVITY 12.9

Consider the issues concerning reconstructing the past for the period of the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III.

1. Identify possible questions to effectively investigate the issues relating to reconstructing the past of Philip II and Alexander III.
2. Write a key inquiry question to focus this investigation. (See *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 2.*)
3. Write sub-questions to support the key inquiry question. (See *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 2.*)

Example investigation questions:

4. To what extent did Macedonian society
  - a. undergo changes
  - b. maintain continuity during the reign of Alexander III as opposed to Philip II?
5. What are the most controversial, difficult and topical aspects concerning the reconstruction of the reigns of Philip and Alexander? (Prioritise these in terms of importance.)
6. How might changing interpretations of sources affect our understanding the reigns of Philip and Alexander?
7. Why has the historiography of both Philip and Alexander changed so much throughout the course of history?
8. Why has it been so difficult to discover the 'real' Philip and Alexander?

GO

# Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to a historical period in the Ancient World

## 12.10 Creating responses about the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III

Using the evidence provided in this chapter, in addition to your own knowledge, complete the following.

### ACTIVITY 12.10

#### Objective 4: Synthesise

1. Develop a hypothesis in response to the key inquiry question posed in Activity 12.9.
2. Develop three main arguments to support the hypothesis.
3. Categorise information and evidence for these using the essay planning template in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 6*.

#### Objective 5: Evaluate

4. What limitations exist with the evidence?
5. How useful and reliable is the evidence for the investigation?
6. What are the contested views on this issue?

#### Objective 6: Create a response

7. Write an essay in response to the key inquiry question. The essay should use formal essay structure. Your essay should include referencing, language conventions, reference to evidence and appropriate vocabulary and terminology. Refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 6* for guidelines on structuring an essay.



# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- 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 to Alexander III due to an expanding empire and foreign influences.
- Society was hierarchical and aristocratic.
- Greece increasingly influenced culture and religion from Philip II to Alexander III.
- Religion was constantly evolving due to the the empire's expanse, foreign influences and the nature of polytheism.

## CHAPTER REVIEW

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### 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 questions, devise three to five sub-questions for each. Categorise evidence into sub-questions.



#### Analyse

Analyse the sources that will be used by completing the source analysis table from the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 3*.

#### Synthesise

Using the evidence, formulate a hypothesis in relation to the questions posed in the sample investigation questions.

#### Evaluate

For the evidence used, outline the limitations, usefulness, reliability and contestability.

#### Respond

1. Read the following source and describe the image of Philip that emerges from it.

After settling affairs in Greece, Philip ordered delegates of all the states to be summoned to Corinth to settle the state of the present situation. There he determined the terms of the peace for all Greece in accordance with the deserts of the individual states; and he enrolled a council of all, like a single senate, from all. Only the Lacedaemonians held both the king and his laws in contempt, considering that it was slavery, not peace, that was not agreed to by the states themselves, but was imposed by the victor. Next the military contingents of the individual states were prescribed, in case the king had to be helped by that force [of troops], should somebody attack him, or in case war had to be waged [against another] under his leadership. For there was no doubt that the Persian empire was the object of these arrangements. The total of the military contingents was 200 000 infantry and 15 000 cavalry.

**SOURCE 12.61** Philip's League of Corinth, Justin, *Epitome*, 9.5-1-6



2. Read Source 12.62 below. Does Demosthenes confirm or negate the image of Philip as seen in Source 12.61? Justify your view with explicit reference to both sources and give reasons for your view.

On the contrary, his present course plainly proves that his former action also was the result of deliberate policy; and to any sound observation, it is plain that the whole of his plans are being organized for one end—the destruction of Athens. Indeed, this has now come to be, in a sense, a matter of necessity for him. Only consider. It is empire that he desires, and you, as he believes, are his only possible rivals in this. He has been acting wrongfully towards you for a long time, as he himself best knows; for it is the occupation of your possessions that enables him to hold all his other conquests securely, convinced, as he is, that if he had let Amphipolis and Poteidaea go, he could not dwell in safety even at home. These two facts, then, he well knows—first, that his designs are aimed at you, and secondly, that you are aware of it: and as he conceives you to be men of sense, he considers that you hold him in righteous detestation: and, in consequence, his energies are roused: for he expects to suffer disaster, if you get your opportunity, unless he can anticipate you by inflicting it upon you.

**SOURCE 12.62** Demosthenes, 344 BCE, *The Second Philippic*, 15–18.

## Assessment

### Examination-style questions

...With such an appalling lack of money and with the government skills in confusion a young man just barely beyond boyhood had the audacity to entertain thoughts of Babylon and Susa, and even of an empire embracing all mankind - and this, mind you, with 30 000 foot and 4000 horse. Those at least are the figures given by Aristobulus; according to King Ptolemy there were 30 000 foot and 5000 horse, while Anaximenes gives 43 500 foot and 5500 horse. The great and magnificent sum which Fortune has provided for his travelling chest was 70 talents, as Aristobulus tells if, but Durus says he had only supplies for thirty days.

Then Alexander must have been an unthinking hothead to challenge such a formidable power with his meagre resources? Not at all. Did anyone ever start out for war with greater or better preparation for succeeding than nobility of character, intelligence, self-mastery and courage - with which philosophy had equipped him for his journey? He crossed over against the Persians with greater resources furnished by his teacher Aristotle than his father Philip. In fact there are writers who allege that Alexander once said that he had brought the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* along as provision for the army; and we believe them, honoring Homer and though at other times his society was delightful and his manner full of charm beyond that of any prince of his age, yet when he was drinking he would sometimes become offensively arrogant and descent to the level of a common soldier, and on these occasions he would allow himself not only to give away to boasting but also be led on by his flatterers.

**SOURCE 12.63** Plutarch, *Life of Alexander*.

[Alexander] had great personal beauty, invincible power of endurance, and a keen intellect; he was brave and adventurous, strict in the observance of his religious duties and hungry for fame. Most temperate in the pleasures of the body, his passion was for glory only... He had an uncanny instinct for the right course in a difficult and complex situation... In arming and equipping troops and his military dispositions he was always masterly. Noble indeed was his power of inspiring his men, of filling them with confidence, and, in the moment of danger, of sweeping away their fears by the spectacle of his own fearlessness... never in all the world was there another like him.

**SOURCE 12.64** Arrian, *Anabasis Alexandri*, 7.28–29

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. Consider the issues with sources for the reconstruction of Macedon at the time of Philip II. Discuss this in regard to politics, society and empire.

### **Investigation tasks**

1. Explain the extent to which religion developed from the reign of Philip II to Alexander III.
2. How was social class affected the governance of Philip II?
3. In what ways did Alexander III enhanced Philip II's empire?





# CHAPTER 13

## Early imperial Rome

GLENN DAVIES

### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the geographical and historical context of early Imperial Rome with particular reference to the remains at key sites and other relevant sources.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period, and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources; for example, authentication, excavation, reconstruction and/or conservation.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the nature of governance and political developments.
  - significant events and key individuals.
  - social structure.
  - cultural life and practices.
  - religious beliefs and practices.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.
- evaluate
  - historical sources to make judgements about the limitations, reliability and usefulness of sources
 and either:
  - create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose by presenting an essay in response to historical sources.
 or
  - devise historical questions and conduct research, and create a response that communicates meaning by presenting an independent source investigation.

### KEY DATES

27 BCE	10 BCE	6 BCE	12 CE	14 CE	26 CE
Beginning of the Roman Empire, Augustus becomes Emperor	Claudius born at Lugdunum, in Gaul	Tiberius withdraws from politics and retires to island of Rhodes	Gaius Caligula is born at Antium	Augustus dies and Tiberius becomes Roman emperor	Tiberius retires completely to island of Capri



## Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of early imperial Rome.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about changing interpretations over time relating to an understanding of the period using, for example, new discoveries, research and technologies.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- 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 *Aeneid*, 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, 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; second marriage 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.

### 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 step-son Nero becomes Roman emperor



## MAP



**SOURCE 13.2** The Roman Empire at its greatest in 117 CE

**59 CE**

Nero has his mother, Agrippina the Younger, murdered

**64 CE**

Nero allegedly watches as Rome burns

**68 CE**

Nero commits 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



## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

WORD	DEFINITION
<b>arson</b>	burning property on purpose
<b>auctoritas</b>	bringing honour to the family by working hard to reach a position of authority
<b>autocrat</b>	a person who has unlimited power or authority
<b>cena</b>	evening meal
<b>dynasty</b>	a sequence of rulers from the same family
<b>enigmatic</b>	a puzzling or contradictory personality
<b>Forum Romanum</b>	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
<b>Julio-Claudian imperial family</b>	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)
<b>ludi</b>	gladiator training schools
<b>noxius</b>	condemned criminals who were used as opponents of gladiators
<b>pax Romana</b>	the Roman peace
<b>Praetorian Guard</b>	responsible for the defence of the city of Rome, and the emperor's personal bodyguards
<b>princeps</b>	the first citizen, or sometimes considered the first man in Rome; the <i>princeps</i> supposedly had no more say than any other Senator initially, but this was the official title for the Roman emperors
<b>principate</b>	rule of a <i>princeps</i> , name given to the early Roman Empire period
<b>proclamation</b>	a public and official announcement
<b>promiscuous</b>	casual sexual relations with a number of partners
<b>retarius</b>	gladiators who fought with a net, three-pronged spear, dagger and a shoulder-guard
<b>succession</b>	the order of those entitled to become Roman emperor
<b>treason</b>	the offence of attempting to overthrow the government or kill the head of the government
<b>triclinium</b>	dining room

79 CE	80 CE	81 CE	96 CE	117 CE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vespasian dies and his son, Titus, becomes Roman emperor</li> <li>Mount Vesuvius erupts and destroys Pompeii and Herculaneum</li> </ul>	The Colosseum in Rome is completed	Titus dies, and his younger brother Domitian becomes Roman emperor	Domitian is assassinated and brings to an end the early Roman Empire	The Roman Empire reaches its greatest extent

## Introduction

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. In that time, as he said himself, he found Rome a city of clay but left it a city of marble. Augustus reformed the laws of the city and, by extension, the empire's, secured Rome's borders, initiated vast building projects, and secured the empire a lasting name as one of the greatest political and cultural powers in history. He introduced the *pax Romana* (Roman Peace), a time of peace and prosperity that would last over 200 years.

Following Emperor Augustus's death, power passed to his heir, Tiberius, who continued many of the emperor's policies but lacked the strength of character and vision which so defined Augustus. This trend would continue, more or less steadily, with the Julio-Claudian emperors who followed: Gaius Caligula, Claudius, and Nero. These first five emperors, who ruled the Roman Empire from 27 BCE to 68 CE, 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 massive building projects, economic prosperity and an expansion of the Roman empire.

Vespasian ruled from 69 to 79 CE, and in that time, initiated the building of the Flavian Amphitheatre (the famous Colosseum of Rome) which his son Titus (79–81 CE) would complete. Titus's early reign saw the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE which buried the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Emperor Vespasian's reign and those of his two sons, Titus followed by Domitian, ended in 96 CE and saw the early Roman Empire through to virtually the end of the first century CE in relative peace and prosperity.

## Early Roman Empire sources

### 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 ten 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 senator's views of the emperor. This resulted in biases, both conscious and unconscious.

By most accounts, the 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, but 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, the 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 behavior as Roman Emperor. However, in Roman politics, sexual perversity was often presented hand in hand with poor government. The ancient sources are practically unanimous as to the cause of Gaius Caligula's downfall: he was insane.

Cassius Dio and Suetonius presented the 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 had 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 used in Graves's novels that were published in the 1930s, and widely accepted, was polio. More recent scholars have suggested it was cerebral palsy.

The majority of what was known of the 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 including the death of Claudius, the death of Agrippina and the Roman fire of 64 CE, but they are 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 the emperor 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 rumors held Nero responsible. To shift the blame, Nero targeted a 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 site 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 the 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.

Many a sick man dies here from want of sleep, the sickness itself having been produced by undigested food and 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].

**SOURCE 13.3** Juvenal, *Satires III*, 35

## Architecture

Emperor Augustus carried on the traditional practice of prominent citizens under the Republic who had public works constructed at their own expense.

Aware that the city was architecturally unworthy of her position as capital of the Roman Empire, besides being vulnerable to fire and river floods, Augustus so improved her appearance that he could justifiably boast: 'I found Rome built of bricks; I leave her clothed in marble.' He also used as much foresight as could have possibly been provided in guarding against future disasters.

**SOURCE 13.4** Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*



## ACTIVITY 13.1

1. Juvenal was a satirist, as opposed to a historian. How reliable is he likely to be?
2. Compare the views of Juvenal and Suetonius on the city of Rome in Sources 13.3 and 13.4. Do the ideas in these sources and Source 13.5 appear to agree with or contradict each other? Support your answer with direct quotes.



**SOURCE 13.5** *The Consummation from The Course of the Empire*, Thomas Cole, 1836

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of a historical period in the Ancient World

### 13.1 Early Roman Empire

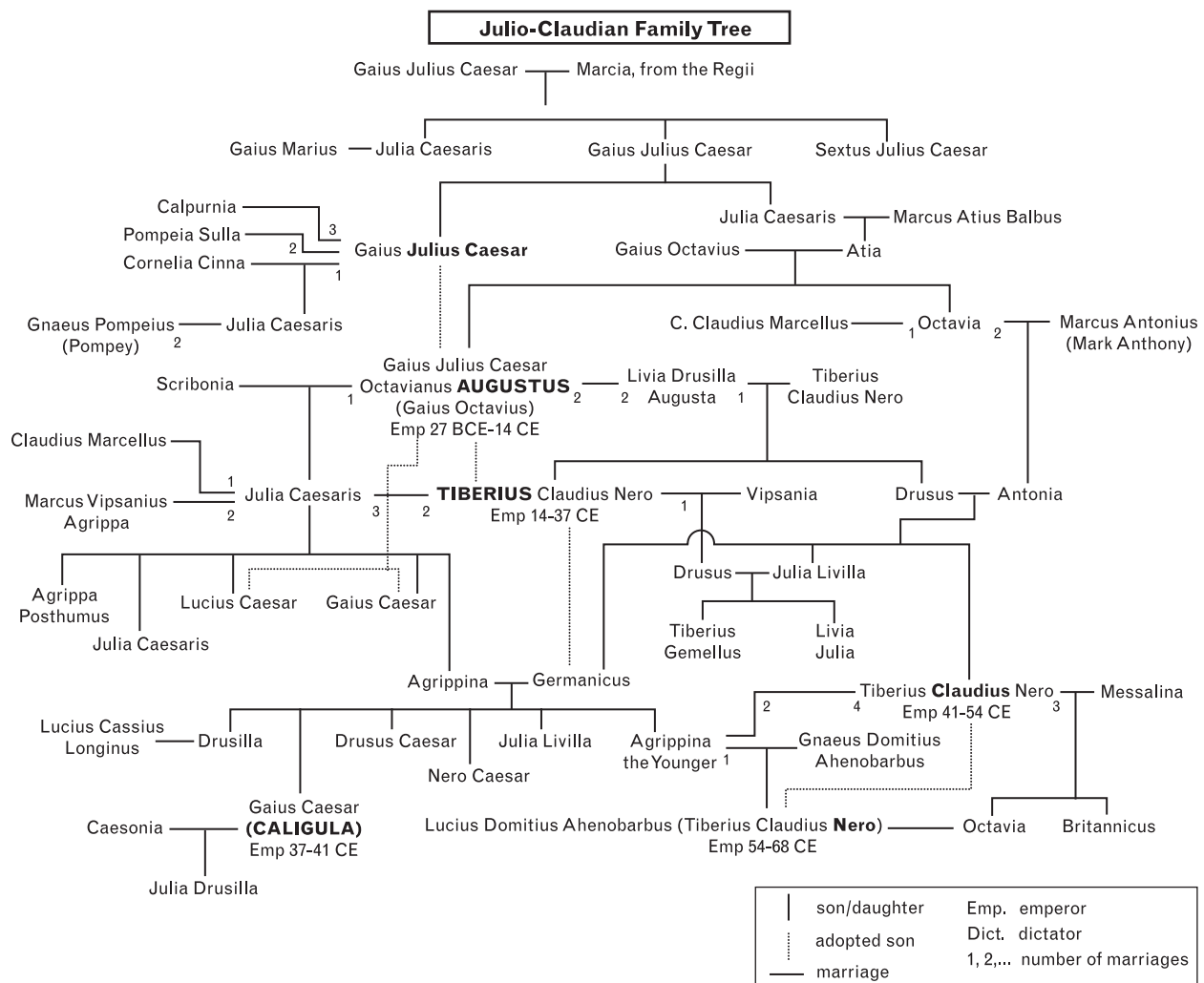
The five Julio-Claudian emperors had very different personalities from each other. Augustus was the more influential of the first emperors. His enormous achievements were also possible due to his long service to Rome. Tiberius was clearly the only possible successor when Augustus died in 14 CE but, upon the death of Tiberius twenty-three years later, the next three emperors were a peculiar mix of viciousness, arrogance, and inexperience. Gaius Caligula, better known as Caligula, was generally styled a monster, whose brief reign did Rome no service. His successor Claudius, his uncle, was a capable man who served Rome well, but was ridiculed for being controlled by his wives and freedmen. Nero was the last of the dynasty. He reigned more than three times as long as Caligula, and was responsible for a proportional amount of damage. Nero was an emperor remembered for crimes against his mother and the Christians. This was a sad decline from the heights of the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius.

#### 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.

The five Julio-Claudian emperors were linked through marriage and adoption into the Julian and Claudian patrician families. Julius Caesar was sometimes seen as the dynasty founder. This was not accurate as he was not an emperor and had no Claudian connections. Augustus was the correct 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 descendent of the emperor before him. The fact that ordinary father-son succession did not occur has contributed to the image of the Roman imperial court as a dangerous world where scheming family members were all too ready to murder the obvious direct heirs to bring themselves, their own immediate families or their lovers closer to the succession.



**SOURCE 13.6** Julio-Claudian family tree

## ACTIVITY 13.2

1. Look at Source 13.6. 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?

## 13.2 The purpose of festivals and feasts

While members of the Julio–Claudian imperial household were scheming over the succession, ordinary Romans enjoyed life through festivals and feasts.

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. This 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. 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 ten hours.

In Petronius's *Satyricon* he 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.

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.

**SOURCE 13.7** Petronius Arbiter, *The Satyricon*, Vol.2: The Dinner of Trimalchio, 31

Juvenal describes his dinner menu below.

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.

**SOURCE 13.8** Juvenal, *Satires*, XI



Pliny the Younger did not enjoy expensive food. The menu he describes below suggests that treats were uncommon.

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.

**SOURCE 13.9** Pliny the *Younger*, Letters, I.15

The poet Horace describes a simple *cena*.

Off home I go to prepare my meal: fritters, leeks and peas. Three boys serve the food; two cups and a ladle stand on a white stone slab. There is a cheap salt-cellar and an earthenware jug and saucer.

**SOURCE 13.10** Horace, *Satires*, I.6

### ACTIVITY 13.3

1. Compare Source 13.7 to 13.10 and Source 13.11 and suggest why there were different points of view on the purpose of meals in ancient Rome.

### 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:

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 13.12** Inscription on monument to Diocles, 146 CE



**SOURCE 13.11** A wall painting from Pompeii showing a Roman feast, Pompeii Exhibition, British Museum, London



**SOURCE 13.13** 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:

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.

**SOURCE 13.14** Pliny the Younger, *Letters*, IX. 6

The poet Ovid treated the circus more lightly. He saw it as an ideal opportunity to ensnare a girl.

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 you cause may not be unknown to you. You are looking at the race, I *am looking* at you.

**SOURCE 13.15** Ovid, *Love Poems*, III.2.1.1–5

### ACTIVITY 13.4

1. Compare Sources 13.12 and 13.15 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.

## 13.3 Why did the Romans consider the emperor divine?

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, Juno. In fact, the whole Greek pantheon, with twelve 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.

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 up sacrifices.

The imperial cult began in the eastern Roman provinces during the time of the 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 the 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 which 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.

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.

**SOURCE 13.16** Tacitus, *Annals*, XV. 36

Religion in first century CE Rome was a hodgepodge of cults and rituals: *cultus deorum Romanorum* means cults of the Roman gods.



**SOURCE 13.17** Capitoline Triad, held in National Archaeological Museum of Palestrina





**SOURCE 13.18** The cult of the Roman gods

### ACTIVITY 13.5

1. What information is implicit in the Source 13.16 and 13.17?
2. Do Sources 13.16 and 13.17 corroborate the active role religion played at all levels in Roman society shown in Source 13.18? In response, write a short paragraph using quotes and in-text references.

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding in relation to specific historical periods in the Ancient World

### 13.4 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.

#### Why was Tiberius so unpopular?

Tiberius was the second Roman Emperor of the Julio-Claudian dynasty and ruled for twenty-three years, from 14 to 37 CE. He was the emperor at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Tiberius was by birth a member of the noble Claudian family, and was the son of Tiberius Claudius Nero and Livia. His mother divorced his father and married Augustus in 39 BCE. Tiberius, on Augustus's order, was forced to divorce his loved first wife, Vipsania, and marry Julia, Augustus's daughter. This event seemed to have been the breaking point for Tiberius. The marriage between Tiberius and Julia was never a happy one. Reportedly, Tiberius once ran into Vipsania again, and proceeded to follow her home crying and begging forgiveness. Soon afterwards, Tiberius met with Augustus, and steps were taken to ensure that the two would never meet again.

In 6 BCE, Tiberius suddenly announced his withdrawal from politics and retired to the island of Rhodes. The motives for Tiberius's withdrawal are unclear. Historians have speculated a connection with Augustus's grandchildren, Gaius and Lucius, whom Augustus had recently adopted. These two brothers were encouraged and supported in the same manner as Tiberius and his brother Drusus had been years earlier. Tiberius was informed by Augustus that he would hold power only until Lucius and Gaius came of age. In addition, the very public promiscuous behavior of his unhappily married wife, Julia, may have played a part. Tiberius found himself married to a woman he loathed and who publicly humiliated him,

and forbidden to see the woman he loved. This may have been the innermost reason for Tiberius departing for Rhodes.

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 barracks outside the city walls into the city of Rome itself. This gave Sejanus access to 9000 troops. The death of Tiberius's son, Drusus, elevated Sejanus, at least in Tiberius's eyes, who thereafter referred to him as 'my partner'. Tiberius had statues of Sejanus erected throughout the city, and Sejanus became more and more visible as Tiberius began to withdraw from Rome altogether.

Finally, in 26 CE, Tiberius retired from Rome to the island of Capri, near Naples. While Tiberius was on Capri, Sejanus was left in charge of the entire Roman state and the city of Rome. Sejanus behaved badly and was used by Tiberius to inspire fear. However, in time, Sejanus tried to take too much power for himself. Tiberius had him strangled and a mob of Romans tore his body to pieces. The problems with Sejanus and the final years of treason trials that Tiberius held permanently damaged Tiberius's image and reputation. 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.

Tacitus appeared to write with a moral purpose about Tiberius and his personality.

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.

**SOURCE 13.19** Tacitus, *Annals*, 6.50

Suetonius's view of Tiberius was not much better than Tacitus's, and apparently reflected the people's view as well.

The first news of his death caused such joy at Rome that people ran about yelling: 'To the Tiber with Tiberius!' and others offered prayers to Mother Earth and the Infernal Gods to give him no home below except among the damned.

**SOURCE 13.20** Suetonius, *Tiberius*, 75

Cassius Dio, who wrote about two hundred years after Tiberius's death, followed a similar pattern to other ancient historians.

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.

**SOURCE 13.21** Cassius Dio, *History of Rome*, Book 57, 13

Velleius Paterculus published his brief history in 30 CE when Tiberius was still in power, and provides a different ancient view.

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.

**SOURCE 13.22** Velleius Paterculus, *Roman History*, 2.126.2

The modern historian John Balsdon commented on Tiberius's ability and personality.

Tiberius was an able and experienced general and a conscientious administrator, but he lacked Augustus's vast prestige, and he was a sour and unsociable character, utterly deficient in his predecessor's political tact. He was soon at odds with the Senate and died hated by the aristocracy.

**SOURCE 13.23** Balsdon J.P.V.D., (ed.), 1965, *Roman Civilization*, Penguin Books, p. 65

### ACTIVITY 13.6

Use Sources 13.19 to 13.23 to answer the questions below.

1. How does Velleius Paterculus's view of Tiberius compare with that of Tacitus, Suetonius and Cassius Dio?
2. 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.

### What brought about the change in Caligula's personality?

Caligula was the third Roman Emperor of the Julio-Claudian dynasty and ruled from 37 to 41 CE. Caligula was born as Gaius Julius Caesar Germanicus on 31 August 12 CE, at the resort of Antium. He was the third of six surviving children born to Augustus's adopted grandson, the much-loved general Germanicus, and Augustus's granddaughter, Agrippina the Elder. Although Caligula ruled the Roman Empire for only four years, he was one of the most famous, or infamous, emperors in history.

As a boy of just two or three, the young Gaius became the mascot of his father's army. 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. His childhood was not a happy one, spent in an atmosphere of paranoia and suspicion after a number of familial murders. Instability within the Julio-Claudian family, created by uncertainty over the succession, led to a series of personal tragedies. When his father died



**SOURCE 13.24** Tiberius was 79 at the time of his death in 37 CE. This statue was made shortly after this. Held in Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican Museum. This statue does not appear realistic. What do you think was the intention of this statue?



under suspicious circumstances in 19 CE, relations between his mother 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 in 37 CE. When the great-grandson of both Augustus and Mark Antony succeeded Tiberius as emperor in March 37 CE, Rome was jubilant. Aged twenty-four and son of the famous general Germanicus, Caligula promised to end the terror of Tiberius's later years. Caligula's popularity soared. It was 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 the Senate's support for himself, convinced the Senate to set aside Tiberius's will and declare him emperor. This strategy worked, and at the age of twenty-five, Caligula was declared emperor of the Roman Empire. 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.



**SOURCE 13.25** Portrait of Caligula, Palazzo Massimo, Rome. Why do you think the portrait is designed with Caligula's head tilting downwards?

In October 37 CE, Caligula had fallen seriously ill. 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.

The modern historian Howard Scullard theorised that a physical illness contributed to Caligula's later mental illness.

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.

**SOURCE 13.26** Scullard, H.H., 1976, *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome from 133 BC to AD 68*, Methuen & Co., p. 293

Robert Graves, author of the historical novel *I, Claudius*, suggested that Caligula emerged from his sickbed claiming to have been transformed into a god.

Caligula fell ill and for a whole month his life was despaired of. The doctors called it brain-fever ... One evening Drusilla [his sister] knocked at my door and said, 'Uncle Claudius! The Emperor wants to see you urgently ...'

'What does he want me for?'

'I don't know. But for Heaven's sake humour him. He's got a sword there. He'll kill you if you don't say what he wants you to say.' ...

I said, saluting him, 'Oh, how I hurried! ... Can I dare to hope that you're better?'

'I have never really been ill. Only resting. And undergoing a metamorphosis. It's the most important religious event in history ...'

'But may I humbly enquire precisely what is the character of this glorious change that has come over you?'

'Isn't it immediately apparent?' he asked angrily ... I fell on my face and adored him as a God.

**SOURCE 13.27** Graves, R., 1934, *I, Claudius*, Penguin Books, pp. 332–333

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, as was the fact that he committed incest with his three 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 and attempted to appoint it to the position of consul. He even built a temple to himself as co-equal with the Roman god, Jupiter. Caligula appeared to neither think nor care about what the people of Rome thought about all the murders and his other actions.

Suetonius referred to Caligula as a 'monster', and the surviving sources were universal in their agreement.

Caligula made parents attend their sons' executions, and when one father excused himself on the grounds of ill-health, provided a litter for him. Having invited another father to dinner just after his son's execution, he over-flowed with good fellowship in an attempt to make him laugh and joke. He once asked a returned exile how he had spent his time. To flatter him the man replied that he had been praying for Tiberius's death and the ascension of Caligula. Caligula therefore concluded that the new batch of exiles were praying for his death, so he sent agents from island to island and then had them killed.

**SOURCE 13.28** Suetonius, *Gaius Caligula*, 55.3

On 24 January 41 CE, Caligula was caught alone in a secluded palace corridor and murdered by Cassius Chaerea and several other officers of the Praetorian Guard. He was twenty-eight years old and had ruled Rome for three years and ten 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 spirited Caligula's uncle, Claudius, out of the city to a nearby Praetorian camp. Claudius became emperor after gaining the support of the Praetorian Guard.

### ACTIVITY 13.7

1. What impact does the universal hostility of the ancient sources have on the reliability of these sources?
2. Is a historical novel a primary or secondary source? Explain your answer.

### Why was Claudius considered an enigma?

Claudius was the fourth Roman Emperor of the Julio-Claudian dynasty and ruled from 24 January 41 CE to his death in 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 son of Augustus's wife Livia, and his mother was Antonia, the daughter of Mark Antony. His uncle, Tiberius, went on to become emperor in 14 CE and his brother Germanicus was identified for succession when, in 4 CE, he was adopted by Tiberius. It might be expected that Claudius would have enjoyed the active public life customary for young men of his background but this was not the case. Claudius was considered a rather unlikely man to become emperor. In an age that despised weakness, Claudius was unfortunate enough to have been born with defects; he limped, he drooled, he stuttered and was constantly ill. As a young man, Claudius spent much of his free time reading

extensively. He became a scholar of considerable ability and composed works on many subjects, especially history. In fact, Claudius was the last person known who could read the ancient Etruscan language. He also acquired knowledge of how governments worked from studying history. These skills were to help him when he became emperor. Claudius had a generous personality, he 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.

Claudius's family members mistook his physical disabilities as a mental disability and kept him out of the public eye, considering him to be an embarrassment. Claudius's mother, Antonia, referred to him as a monster, and used him as a standard for stupidity. She sent him to live with his grandmother, Livia, for a number of years. Livia was not much kinder than his mother and often sent him short, angry letters. The result was 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 time of Tiberius's and Caligula's reigns. Through all the violent turmoil of the Julio-Claudian family Claudius survived primarily through being ignored as an embarrassment and a supposed idiot. His very survival as the last adult male of his family led to him being declared emperor after Caligula's assassination.

Claudius was also considered to be a fool by his wives but, despite his lack of political experience, he proved to be an able administrator and a great builder of public works. His reign saw an expansion of the empire, including the conquest of Britain. As a result, he was forced to increase the role of freedmen in the imperial administration as the powers of the *princeps* became more centralised and the administrative workload increased. Claudius took a personal interest in the law, presided at public trials and issued up to twenty verdicts a day. In 48 CE, Claudius's promiscuous wife, Messalina, was tried for treason and executed. Claudius then married his niece, Agrippina the Younger. Agrippina was the daughter of Claudius's brother, Germanicus, and a sister of Caligula, by whom she had been exiled for involvement in a conspiracy against him. 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 a deadly mushroom dish. Many ancient writers record Agrippina as responsible for his death, and suggest that she acted to ensure her son Nero's succession.

Source 13.29 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.

Seneca described Claudius arriving at Mount Olympus (the home of the Greek gods).

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.

**SOURCE 13.30** Seneca, *Apocolocyntosis*, 5



**SOURCE 13.29** Claudius: an implausible god, Vatican Museum



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 fourteen-year old Caligula and Claudius as the guests.

Listen Caligula. Your Uncle Claudius is a phenomenon. He's so old-fashioned that because he's sworn an oath to love and protect his brother's children you can always impose on him – as long as you live.

**SOURCE 13.31** Graves, R., 1934, *I, Claudius*, Penguin Books, p. 286

### ACTIVITY 13.8

1. List the qualities Livia attributes to Claudius in *I, Claudius*.
2. Compare the image of the statue of Claudius (Source 13.29) with Seneca's satirical story (Source 13.30). 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.

### Why was Nero one of the worst Roman emperors?

Nero was the fifth and last of the Julio-Claudian emperors, and was only seventeen when he succeeded his stepfather, Claudius, in 54 CE. Nero was born in 37 CE, the only son of Agrippina the Younger, who was 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. The latter two were allies in their education of the emperor. They often combined their influence against Agrippina who, having helped make her son the emperor, never let Nero forget the debt he owed his mother. However, by 55 CE, with her influence over her son diminishing, Agrippina turned to the nearly fifteen-year old Britannicus, son of Claudius, and began to groom him as another candidate for emperor. Britannicus died suddenly and suspiciously in 55 CE, the very day before his proclamation as an adult. It was claimed Nero poisoned him. In 59 CE, Nero had his mother murdered. This action proved a turning point in Nero's life and the *principate*. It now appeared any action was possible for this emperor.

Nero was an unusual youth who 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. Nero had artistic interests if not talents, and made a public performance as a singer in 64 CE. By then, with his mother Agrippina murdered, Burrus dead, and Seneca forced to commit suicide, Nero had become a monster to rival Caligula. He spent many nights roaming the city of Rome in disguise, with numerous companions, who terrorised the streets and attacked individuals. Those who dared to defend themselves often faced death afterward, because they had shown disrespect for the emperor. The scene was being set for the last phase of Nero's reign.

In 64 CE, a fire began in the south-eastern end of the Circus Maximus, spread through the shops which clustered there, and raged for the better part of a week, destroying half of Rome. Many people claimed the fires were deliberately set by Nero himself and that he sang in stage costume while the city burned. However, upon hearing news of the fire, Nero had 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 though could not remove the suspicion that the emperor had fiddled while Rome burned. Nero lost favour even among the plebeians who had been his enthusiastic supporters, particularly when his plans for the rebuilding of the

city revealed a large part of the centre of the city was to become his new home, the Golden House, grandest of all the imperial palaces.

As his popularity waned, Nero realised that individuals were needed who could be charged with the disaster. The Christians, who had made themselves unpopular because of their refusal to worship the emperor, their way of life and their secret meetings, were ideal scapegoats. They were unpopular with Romans because they constantly talked of the coming end of the world. But Nero's attempt, and hope, to shift all suspicion of arson away from him failed. Fatally, Nero neglected the Roman army, and it was the army rebellions that ended his rule in 68 CE. The Senate removed Nero and declared him an enemy of the state. Abandoned even by his slaves, Nero committed suicide on 9 June 68 CE.

Tacitus described how Nero deflected the blame for the Great Fire of 64 CE.

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.

**SOURCE 13.32** Tacitus, *Annals*, XV.44

The historian Josephus (37–100 CE), while calling Nero a tyrant, was also the first to mention bias against Nero by other historians.

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.

**SOURCE 13.33** Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XX.8

The modern historian Howard Scullard argued that Tacitus's description of Nero's guilt in starting the fire was inaccurate.

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.

**SOURCE 13.34** Scullard, H.H., 1976, *From the Gracchi to Nero. A History of Rome from 133 BC to AD 68*, Methuen & Co., p. 320

## ACTIVITY 13.9

1. The ancient historians Tacitus and Josephus wrote their accounts of Nero and the Great Fire at about the same time. Compare the different accounts of each historian to the same event. Do Sources 13.32 to 13.34 corroborate the evidence in the secondary source? To what extent do you think an observer's personal feelings affect their version of history?



**SOURCE 13.35** *The Remorse of the Emperor Nero after the Murder of his Mother*, John William Waterhouse, 1878.

Based upon your reading of the sources on Nero, do you think he held remorse for the murder of his mother?

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a historical period in the Ancient World

In the previous section, you analysed historical sources to develop an understanding of the reigns of the Julio-Claudian emperors. Now you will consider some more sources that illustrate the personalities of the emperors, and use these to synthesise responses.

### 13.5 Julio-Claudian emperors: mad or bad?

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 were equal 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.

#### Emperor Tiberius

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, did away with the cabinet of advisers and tended to be indecisive in Senate meetings. After he retired to Capri, the subservience of the Senate became obvious; misunderstandings multiplied and the suspicion of intrigue completely soured the Emperor-Senate relationship. The last few years of Tiberius's reign were reported by Tacitus and Suetonius to have constituted a reign of terror.

Mistrust and fear developed, between the senate and Tiberius and while some sources are positive, others are less so.



**SOURCE 13.36** Tiberius statue, Romisch-Germanisches Museum, Cologne



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

**SOURCE 13.37** Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, Book 57, 10

Suetonius accuses Emperor Tiberius of going beyond being merely frugal.

Tiberius was close-fisted to the point of miserliness, never paying his staff a salary when on a foreign mission, but merely providing their keep.

**SOURCE 13.38** Suetonius, *Tiberius*, 46

The execution of Sejanus and his followers for treachery towards Tiberius completed Suetonius's embitterment towards Tiberius.

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.

**SOURCE 13.39** Tacitus, *Annals*, Book VI. 19

Suetonius describes how Emperor Tiberius maintained peace in Rome through strength.

Tiberius safeguarded the country against banditry and brigandage by decreasing the distance between police posts, and at Rome provided the Praetorian Guards ... with a regular camp. He also discountenanced city riots, and if any broke out, crushed them without mercy.

**SOURCE 13.40** Suetonius, *Tiberius*, 37

## Emperor Caligula

Caligula's evil reputation was well-earned and deserved. By modern standards his behaviour was clearly monstrous, bordering on the insane. Caligula's reign highlighted a weakness in the *principate* – only the self-discipline of the emperor could act as a restraint on his behaviour. From then on emperors who showed a lack of self-discipline could be removed through murder. It became established that emperors could not relinquish their powers without simultaneously relinquishing their lives.

At the beginning of his reign, Caligula's actions demonstrated a positive change from the terror of Tiberius's later years. He was 24 when he became emperor and remembered by the people of Rome as the son of the popular general, Germanicus. However, the changes he exhibited after his illness of October 37 CE dramatically change the tenor of his *principate*.

According to Suetonius, Caligula planned to make his horse, Incitatus, a consul and that the horse would 'invite' dignitaries to dine with him in a house outfitted with servants there to entertain such events. Cassius Dio indicated that the horse was attended to by servants and was fed oats mixed with gold flake.

## Emperor Claudius

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. Despite Claudius's reputation as a fool, his relationship with the Senate was generally good.

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.

**SOURCE 13.42** Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 60.11

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 amongst the senators.



**SOURCE 13.41** Senator Incitatus

Claudius fell so deeply under the influence of these freedmen [Narcissus and Pallas] and wives [Plautia Urgulanilla, Aelia Paetina and Valeria Messalina] that he seemed to be their servant rather than their emperor, and distributed honours, army commands, indulgences or punishments according to their wishes, however capricious, seldom even aware of what he was about.

**SOURCE 13.43** Tacitus, *Annals*, 29

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.

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 kindness, I on my side will exercise a solicitude of very long standing for the city, as one bound to us by ancestral friendship.

**SOURCE 13.44** Letter from Claudius to the citizens of Alexandria



**SOURCE 13.45** I, Claudius, held in Vatican Museum. This statue of Emperor Claudius does not display any obvious disabilities described by the ancient writers.

## Emperor Nero

The line of the Julio-Claudian dynasty died with Nero and civil war flared once again across the Roman world. Nero was one of the worst of Rome's emperors. Whatever talents he had, whatever good he may have done, all was overwhelmed by three events: the murder of his mother, the fire of Rome and his savage treatment of the Christians.



**SOURCE 13.46** *The Fire of Rome*, Hubert Robert, 1785

Just 17 years old when he succeeded the elderly Claudius in 54 CE, Nero was initially guided by Seneca, Burrus and Agrippina the Younger, and seemed to rule well for the first five years.

Nero 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'. Often he and she rode out together through the streets in her litter.

**SOURCE 13.47** Suetonius, *Nero*, 9

Nero changed and began to live a dissipated life at the imperial court. When a great fire burnt down much of Rome, Nero used the now available land to build his long dreamed of palace, the Golden House. Rome was suspicious and began to turn against him.



The entrance hall [of Nero's Golden House] was large enough to contain a huge statue of himself, 120 feet high [38 metres]; and the pillared arcade ran for a whole mile [3 kilometres]. An enormous pool, like a sea, was surrounded by buildings made to resemble cities, and by a landscape garden consisting of ploughed fields, vineyards, pastures, and woodlands – where every variety of domestic and wild animal roamed about. Parts of the house were overlaid with gold and studded with precious stones and mother-of-pearl. All the dining-rooms had ceilings of fretted ivory, the panels of which could slide back and let a rain of flowers, or of perfume from hidden sprinklers, shower upon the guests ... When the palace had been decorated throughout in this lavish style, Nero dedicated it, and condescended to remark: 'Good, now I can at last begin to live like a human being!'

**SOURCE 13.48** Suetonius, *Nero*, 31



**SOURCE 13.49** *Nero's Torches*, Henry Siemiradzki, 1882 (also known as *Candlesticks of Christianity*)

## ACTIVITY 13.10

Use Sources 13.36 to 13.49 to answer the following questions:

1. Each Julio-Claudian emperor 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 13.45.

## ACTIVITY 13.10 continued

- d. Nero was known by the ancient writers for his debauchery, cruelty and the viciousness of his nature. 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 that 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.

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about a historical period in the Ancient World

### 13.6 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 deathbed, '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 his 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 Roman's 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.

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. Most Romans loved spectacle sports, especially violent ones, and usually 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 was 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.

## Gladiators

Gladiators were professional fighters sometimes forced to fight to the death. By the first century AD, 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.

Suetonius wrote positively about Vespasian and saw him as a reformer.

He also started work on several new buildings: a temple of Peace near the Forum, a temple to Claudius the God on the Caelian Hill, begun by Agrippina but almost completely destroyed by Nero; and the Colosseum, or Flavian Ampitheatre, in the centre of the city, on discovering that this had been a favourite project of Augustus ... He reformed the Senatorial and Equestrian Orders, weakened by frequent murders and longstanding neglect; replacing undesirable members with the most eligible Italian and provincial candidates available; and, to define clearly the difference between these Orders as one of status rather than of privilege, he pronounced the following judgement in a dispute between a senator and a knight: ‘No abuse must be offered a senator; it may only be returned when given.’

**SOURCE 13.50** Suetonius, *Vespasian*, 9

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.

Ancient sources are universal in their praise for Titus’s handling of the Mount Vesuvius disaster as well as the Great Fire of Rome in 80 CE. Suetonius describes the different views people held of Emperor Titus in Source 13.53.



**SOURCE 13.51** The Divine Emperor: relief depicting an animal sacrifice from an altar in the Temple of Vespasian, at Pompeii





**SOURCE 13.52** The Colosseum today

He was believed to be profligate as well as cruel, because of the riotous parties which he kept going with his more extravagant friends far into the night; and immoral, too, because he owned a troop of invertes and eunuchs, and nursed a notorious passion for Queen Berenice, to whom he had allegedly promised marriage. He also had a reputation for greed, since it was well known that he was not averse to using influence to settle his father's cases in favour of the highest bidder. It was even thought and prophesied quite openly that he would prove to be a second Nero. However, this pessimistic view stood him in good stead: so soon as everyone realised that here was no monster of vice but an exceptionally noble character, public opinion had no fault to find with him.

**SOURCE 13.53** Suetonius, *Titus*, 7

Titus died of a fever in 81 CE and was succeeded by his brother Domitian from 81–96 CE. Domitian expanded and secured the boundaries of Rome, repaired the damage to the city caused by the Great Fire, continued the building projects initiated by his brother, and improved the economy of the empire. Even so, his autocratic methods and policies made him unpopular with the Roman Senate, and he was assassinated in 96 CE.

Domitian made a number of social innovations: cancelled the public grain issue, restored the custom of holding formal dinners, added two new teams of chariot drivers, the Golds and the Purples, to the existing four in the Circus and forbade actors to appear on the public stage, though still allowing them to perform in private. Castration was now strictly prohibited, and the price of eunuchs remaining in slave-dealers' hands officially controlled.

**SOURCE 13.54** Suetonius, *Domitian*, 6–7

The marble relief in Source 13.55 shows Emperor Domitian setting off on a military campaign. He is being farewelled by Minerva, Courage and the Senate.



**SOURCE 13.55** Farewell Domitian, Vatican Museum, Rome



**SOURCE 13.56** Domitian, the grim, sometimes paranoid, emperor

The spread of the gladiatorial combats was largely due to the emperor's sponsorship, starting with Augustus.

Augustus gave gladiatorial shows in the forum and amphitheatre ... Sometimes the shows consisted of animal-hunts ... there was even a sea-battle in the region of the Tiber.

**SOURCE 13.57** Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*, 43

Martial wrote poems designed to flatter Emperor Domitian, the less popular brother of Emperor Titus.

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.

**SOURCE 13.58** Martial, *On the Public Shows of Domitian*, XXVIII

The Roman philosopher Seneca disapproved of the gladiatorial combats, decrying them as murder.

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

**SOURCE 13.59** Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius*, VII



Juvenal attacked women who chose to take part in the games.

What modesty can you expect of a woman with a helmet who denies her sex and likes manly strength.

**SOURCE 13.60** Juvenal, *Satires*, VI



**SOURCE 13.61** *Ave Caesar Morituri te Salutant*, Jean-Leon Gerome, 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 13.11

1. Vespasian was responsible for re-establishing the *principate*. Use the text in Sources 13.50, 13.53 and 13.54 and the images in Sources 13.51, 13.52, 13.55 and 13.56 to justify this statement.
2. 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.
3. Identify the similarities between the Emperors Nero and Domitian.
4. 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?
5. Compare Source 13.58 and Sources 13.59 to 13.60 and identify points of agreement and disagreement.
6. Describe in a paragraph what is happening in Source 13.61.
7. Investigate the meaning of the phrase 'bread and circuses' in ancient Rome. Why do you think the Roman emperors implemented this policy?



# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- 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 or gods.
- Chariot races and gladiator battles were staged partly in an effort to subdue and distract the plebians.
- The emperors were eager to link themselves to the Roman gods in order to inspire the loyalty and worship of the people.
- 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 a tyrant.
- Despite the madness and the badness of the Julio-Claudian emperors, the empire continued to prosper.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## 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?

### 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 action 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

1. Tacitus wrote from a moral perspective. Is there a place for morality in government? Explain your answer.

### Respond

1. 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

### Examination-style questions

1. Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius and Nero almost certainly deserve the black 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. Outline the events which brought about the establishment of the Flavian Dynasty in 69 CE. What problems confronted the Flavians and how successful were Vespasian and his sons were in dealing with them? Justify your view with reference to the sources.
3. The Romans were a cruel, mean-spirited and bloodthirsty people at heart. Validate 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 14

## Pompeii and Herculaneum

SARAH COLEMAN

## TOPIC DESCRIPTION

## Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the geographical and historical context of Pompeii and Herculaneum from their foundations to the period leading up to the eruption of Vesuvius with particular reference to the remains at these sites and other relevant sources.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period, and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources; for example, authentication, excavation, reconstruction and/or conservation.

## Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the nature of governance and political developments.
  - significant events and key individuals.
  - social structure.
  - cultural life and practices.
  - religious beliefs and practices.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show an understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the limitations, reliability and usefulness of sources

and either:

- create a response that communicates meaning to suit a purpose by presenting an essay in response to historical sources.

or

- devise historical questions, and conduct research and create a response that communicates meaning by presenting an independent source investigation.

## KEY DATES

## Seventh century BCE

The area around the Bay of Naples is believed to date to this time. In the very early days it was under Etruscan influence

## Fifth century BCE

By the end of the fifth century BCE, Samnite tribes from the Apennines had taken control of much of Campania including Capua, Cumae, Pompeii and Herculaneum. The Etruscans were expelled from the area

## c. 290 BCE

Samnites defeated by the Romans

## 202 BCE

Pompeii became a *socii* or ally of Rome



## Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgments about changing interpretations over time relating to an understanding of the period using, for example, new discoveries, research and technologies.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Giuseppe Fiorelli: director of archaeology at Pompeii and Herculaneum
- Vittorio Spinazzola: director of archaeology at Pompeii and Herculaneum
- Amedeo Maiuri: director of archaeology at Pompeii and Herculaneum
- Andrew Wallace-Hadrill: British archaeologist
- Penelope Allison: Australian archaeologist
- Lawrence Richardson: architectural historian
- Haraldur Sigurdsson: volcanologist
- Eva Cantarella and Luciana Jacobelli: archaeologists
- Sara Bisel: American archaeologist studying bones and bodies
- Estelle Lazer: Australian archaeologist studying bones and bodies.

### 91 BCE

Social wars began, where Rome's allies fought for citizenship. Pompeii was besieged by Sulla, and ballista marks are still visible on the city walls

### 89 BCE

Pompeians successful, along with other allies, in gaining Roman citizenship

### 80 BCE

- Pompeii becomes a Roman colony, settled with a large number of veterans (numbers vary) in confiscated property
  - Latin became the town's official language

### 80–20 BCE

- Temple of Jupiter in the Forum was rededicated as a Capitolium, sacred to the Capitoline trio of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, Juno and Minerva
- The Temple of Venus was built (Venus was Sulla's protectress) and other significant works included the Forum Baths and the Amphitheatre (c. 70 BCE)





## MAPS



**SOURCE 14.2** The areas affected by the Mount Vesuvius eruption in 79 CE. What areas, other than Pompeii and Herculaneum, were affected by the volcanic eruption?

### 20 BCE–79 CE

- The Large Palaestra next to the Amphitheatre was built, as was the Building of Eumachia
- New temples were constructed (the Sanctuary of the Lares and Temple of Fortuna Augusta) and other Temples were restored
- The major development in this period was the provision of running water via an aqueduct built to service the Misenum naval base. This allowed water to be piped directly into some wealthy people's houses and into the public fountains which were placed along the main streets

### 59 CE

A riot occurred in the amphitheatre between the spectators from Pompeii and Nuceria in which many were killed or wounded. This is documented by Tacitus, as well as in artwork

### 69 CE

A major earthquake struck Campania and caused extensive damage to Pompeii and other towns in the area. The earthquake is recorded in the works of Seneca



**SOURCE 14.3** The streets of Pompeii. How would you describe the layout of Pompeii?

## 79 CE

The eruption of Vesuvius that resulted in the town's destruction. There were five phases of the eruption:

- Explosion thrust a great cloud of ash, pumice and gases 20 kilometres into the air
  - Pumice fall-out over Pompeii began with pebbles called *lapilli*
- Hours later there was a ground surge, which is a turbulent cloud of volcanic ash and hot gases, which hugged the ground and raced towards Pompeii at an estimated speed of 100/km per hour
- It was immediately followed by a pyroclastic flow, a hot dry avalanche of pumice, ash and gases flowing at incredibly high speeds down the slopes of the volcano towards Pompeii to a depth of about four metres
- Pyroclastic flow and surges are identified in the geologic strata as thin black layers. Vesuvius is unique as there were six layers in the strata which means there were six pyroclastic flows

### CHAPTER 14 POMPEII AND HERCULANEUM





**SOURCE 14.4** Herculaneum map. How would you describe the layout of Herculaneum? How is it similar or different to Pompeii?

**1594 CE**

A workman discovered two Latin inscriptions when digging a canal. Discovery recorded by the architect Domenico Fontana

**1689 CE**

Ruined buildings and a Latin inscription were found by workmen building an aqueduct. The site was named Civitas – Latin for ‘city’

**1711 CE**

First excavation of Herculaneum – workmen of Prince d’Elbeuf discover an ancient theatre under an old well, thought to be a temple at first. A series of tunnels were dug and artefacts were taken

**1738 CE**

King Charles appoints Rocco Gioacchino de Alcubierre to dig, but he used very destructive methods. Vertical tunnels were dug down to recover artefacts; no records were kept



## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>aediles</b>	magistrates responsible for maintaining public buildings and spaces
<b>amphitheatre</b>	an oval shaped building providing seating; entertainment venue
<b>atrium</b>	open, central, public space of Roman house and centre of religious and social activity
<b>basilica</b>	justice building
<b>Capitolium</b>	temple of Jupiter, dedicated to Jupiter, Minerva and Juno; state religion
<b>castellum</b>	main water tank
<b>caupona</b>	a bar, tavern or inn
<b>client</b>	the subservient in a relationship who has a patron for protection and guidance
<b>compluvium</b>	square cut hole in the roof of a private house within the atrium to provide light, air and water
<b>cubiculum</b>	small room with various functions, but most commonly a bedroom
<b>dolia</b>	terracotta pots in thermopolia containing drinks
<b>dominus</b>	master, the head of the <i>domus</i>
<b>domus</b>	Roman household
<b>familia</b>	Roman family that lived in the household including the slaves
<b>forum</b>	a public Roman space with buildings used for town gathering, official religion and trade
<b>fullonica</b>	cleaning and production of cloth for clothing and laundry
<b>garum</b>	fish sauce
<b>genius</b>	god of the male line of descent; the family spirits
<b>impluvium</b>	the shallow pool which collected rain water under the <i>compluvium</i>
<b>insula</b>	(pl. <i>insulae</i> ) a block of buildings with roads surrounding
<b>lararium</b>	private shrine of household gods
<b>libertus</b>	a former slave who has gained freedom

### 1748 CE

Charles III (King of Naples 1734–1759) instructed Roque Joaquín de Alcubierre to begin excavations, believing the site was Stabiae. Some artefacts and the first skeleton were found. Excavation followed no pattern and was conducted merely where it was believed something interesting might be found. The Amphitheatre and the Herculaneum Gate necropolis were uncovered

### 1750 CE

Karl Weber was appointed to assist Alcubierre in Herculaneum. He developed a more systematic method, excavating slowly and keeping logbooks, drawing plans and recording all finds. Villa of the Papyri was discovered

### 1763 CE

An inscription was found identifying the site as Pompeii. Street of the Tombs, Temple of Isis and a theatre unearthed. Moveable objects taken from site



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>macellum</b>	large, covered meat and fish market in the Forum
<b>neocropolis</b>	cemetery
<b>nymphaeum</b>	a room or grotto dedicated to the nymphs, usually with a fountain
<b>odeon</b>	small theatre
<b>officina</b>	workshop
<b>otium</b>	any leisure activity
<b>palaestra</b>	public exercise ground for military and youth
<b>pars rustica</b>	quarters for slaves and workers on a country estate
<b>patera</b>	a flat dish for offerings
<b>pater familias</b>	highest ranking male in a family; Roman household patriarchal
<b>peristyle</b>	a colonnade around an outside private garden
<b>pila</b>	bladder ball
<b>pistrina</b>	bakery
<b>pistrinum</b>	a shop that produces and sells bread; a bakery
<b>plebs</b>	common people; abbreviation of plebeian
<b>Plinian phase</b>	first phase of the volcanic eruption as described by Pliny
<b>pontarii</b>	gladiators who fought on an elevated platform
<b>Priapus</b>	rustic god of fertility
<b>programmata</b>	epigraphic sources – election slogans
<b>pumice</b>	volcanic rock; due to the air content very light in weight
<b>pyroclastic flow</b>	volcanic debris and gas flowing at a fast pace, similar to a snow avalanche
<b>quinquennials</b>	magistrate elected every five years to carry out the census and control public morality
<b>retiarus</b>	gladiator who fought with a net
<b>salutatio</b>	morning ceremony where clients attended to their patrons

### 1765 CE

Excavation of Herculaneum was very difficult because of the depth (20 metres) and hardness of the volcanic deposits and the site's location under the modern town of Resina. Excavations were suspended to focus on Pompeii, which was more accessible

### 1778 CE

First plan of Pompeii drawn by Francesco La Vega. Excavations continued throughout the rest of the century

### 1828 CE

Excavations of Herculaneum recommenced when Francis I became king. The system of using tunnels was abandoned in favour of open digging

### 1829 CE

House of the Faun discovered





TERM	DEFINITION
<b>senator</b>	Roman who has public office within the senate of Rome
<b>socii</b>	allies
<b>sparsiones</b>	perfumed showers to cool the spectators at the theatre or amphitheatre
<b>spectaculares</b>	the spectacles that were held in Rome for popular entertainment most readily associated with gladiatorial games
<b>strata</b>	(sing. stratum) layers of material built up or deposited at a site
<b>stratigraphic</b>	study of arrangement of layers of volcanic ash deposited
<b>taberna</b>	small workshops opening onto the street
<b>tablinum</b>	public reception area of the atrium where household records are kept
<b>thermae</b>	hot baths in a communal bath complex
<b>thermopolium</b>	a shop that produces and serves hot food and drinks
<b>tocula</b>	wine press
<b>triclinium</b>	formal dining room in private homes containing three couches
<b>tufa</b>	a volcanic stone that is produced from the volcano
<b>velarium</b>	a canopy suspended over the seats in the amphitheatre or theatre
<b>vestibulum</b>	entrance area to a private house
<b>villa otium</b>	villa built only for leisure
<b>villa rustica</b>	a working farmhouse and property, often also a vineyard
<b>volcanology</b>	scientific study of the eruption of volcanoes

### 1832 CE

House of the Painted Capitals discovered

### 1805–1835 CE

The French King of Naples sponsored excavation of Pompeii under Francois Mazois with 1500 men. Excavation of the site was haphazard: buildings judged of no interest were abandoned, some even reburied. Both sites were looted and the location of most objects was not recorded – their context was lost

### 1860 CE

Giuseppe Fiorelli became director of excavations and began a systematic approach. He excavated from the top rather than the side, and realised that cavities in the ash were from decomposed organic matter – he used plaster to recreate humans, animals, furniture, food and other matter. He also introduced a numbering system, by dividing the town into nine regions, each with up to 22 blocks (*insulae*) and each house was given a number

## 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. 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. These cities of Vesuvius have captured the public imagination, and have become a feature of music, art and literature ever since. Additionally, the deterioration and decay of the towns, especially the collapse of the House of the Gladiators in 2010, has seen the excavation and preservation of the site become the subject of popular debate.

### The rediscovery of Pompeii

The rediscovery of Pompeii was a happy coincidence for the intellectuals of the age who were throwing themselves into the Romantic movement with gusto; a significant characteristic of this artistic, philosophical and literary movement was a fascination with antiquity (as is attested to by the number of poems focusing on the ancient world, such as *Ozymandias*, *On Looking into Chapman's Homer*, and *Ode to a Grecian Urn*). The discovery of the subterranean Roman town saw the site become a 'must do' on the seemingly compulsory traverse of the continent by young aristocrats. Percy Byssche Shelley was one such traveler and antiquarian, who wrote a poem about Pompeii, and others were no doubt inspired by what the young poet saw when he visited the sites with his wife, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, in December 1818.

In a letter to Thomas Peacock the following January, Shelley details what he saw:

Since you last heard from me, we have been to see Pompeii ... I was astonished at the remains of this city; I had no conception of anything so perfect yet remaining ... We entered the town from the side towards the sea, and first saw two theatres; one more magnificent than the other, strewn with the ruins of the white marble which formed their seats and cornices, wrought with deep, bold sculpture ... You then pass through the ancient streets; they are very narrow, and the houses rather small, but all constructed on an admirable plan, especially for this climate. The rooms are built round a court, or sometimes two, according to the extent of the house. In the midst is a fountain, sometimes surrounded with a portico, supported on fluted columns of white stucco; the floor is paved with mosaics, sometimes wrought in imitation of vine leaves, sometimes in quaint figures, and more or less beautiful, according to the rank of the inhabitant. There were paintings on all, but most of them had been removed to decorate the royal museum. Little winged figures, and small ornaments of exquisite elegance, yet remain ... We next saw the temples. Of the temple of Aesculapius little remains but an altar of black stone, adorned with a cornice imitating the scales of a serpent. His statue, in terra cotta, was found in the cell. The temple of Isis is more perfect. It is surrounded by a portico of fluted columns, and in the area around it are two altars, and many ceppi for statues; and a little chapel of white stucco, as hard as stone, of the most exquisite proportion; its panels are adorned with figures in bas-relief, slightly indicated, but of a workmanship the most delicate and perfect that can be conceived ... Thence through other porticos and labyrinths of walls and columns (for I cannot hope to detail

#### 1865 CE

Herculaneum came under the control of Fiorelli

#### 1882 CE

German archaeologist, August Mau, studied the artworks in Pompeii and divided them into four distinct styles

#### 1910–1923 CE

Vittorio Spinazzola cleared Via dell'Abbondanza and excavated important buildings in the street such as House of the Cryptoporticus. Many facades were reconstructed and he made photographic record of his excavations

#### 1923–1961 CE

Amadeo Maiuri director of excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum. He was the first to dig below the 79 CE level to uncover the earlier history of Pompeii

everything to you), we came to the Forum ... The temple of Jupiter, of Venus, and another temple, the Tribunal, and the Hall of Public Justice, with their forests of lofty columns, surround the Forum.

**SOURCE 14.5** Shelley, P.B., 1840, *Essays, letters from abroad, translations and fragments*, Edward Moxon, London, pp. 122–3

Following his visit, Shelley wrote *At Pompeii*, which clearly reflects the romanticism and awe associated with the sites at the time of their discovery and initial excavations.

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.

**SOURCE 14.6** Shelley, P.B., 1847, 'Ode to Naples', *The Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, Edward Moxon, pp. 274–6

Shelley endorses the view of those at the time: the awe and splendour of a town frozen in time. He also, however, provides interesting details of the early stages of excavations, and the ad hoc treasure hunting approach that was taken in the very early days. He refers to works removed to adorn palaces, as well as the items that had been left, due usually to their inferior quality and thus their value. This is what has undermined so much of the 300-odd years of scholarship that focuses on the cities of Vesuvius, and while it is by no means the only ancient site to suffer such indignities (Thera and Knossos also spring to mind), they are the ones that have garnered the most consistent public and political attention.

1927 CE	1939–45 CE	1943 CE	1944 CE	1977 CE	1980 CE
Excavations recommenced under Amadeo Maiuri	Work stops during World War II	Pompeii bombed by the Allies	Vesuvius erupts	Fausto Zevi becomes director of excavations. Stops any new excavations to focus on conservation of what had already been excavated	Earthquake causes damage



In the three centuries since its initial rediscovery, Pompeii and its sister town Herculaneum, have had 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 has emerged from the evidence. This series of misconceptions, as a consequence 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 to other sites around the world also. 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.

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of a historical period in the Ancient World

### 14.1 Geographical and historical context

The studies of the cities of Vesuvius is complex, and requires 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 reexamination.

#### ACTIVITY 14.1

To establish some context, it is important to consider the geography and placement of Pompeii and Herculaneum in their ancient Roman context. Read Sources 14.7 to 14.15 and as you read, make notes of key ideas, terms, concepts and events.

Strabo (64–63 BCE – c.24 CE), a Greek geographer, describes Herculaneum:

The next town is Herculaneum, which occupies a cape jutting out into the sea, where it feels the southwest wind to such an amazing extent that the settlement is a healthy one.

**SOURCE 14.7** Strabo, *Geography* 5.4.8

Pliny the Elder, a first-century CE Roman naturalist, writes favourably about the Campanian region.

How [to describe] the Campanian coast and its happy, indeed blessed delightfulness, plainly the handiwork of Nature in her favourite spot!

**SOURCE 14.8** Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, Bk III 40

In the second century CE, another Roman, Florus, is similarly positive about the area.

Campania's coastal area is the finest, not only in Italy but in the entire world. Nowhere is the climate gentler. Spring comes with its flowers twice a year there.

**SOURCE 14.9** Florus, *Brief History*, 1.11.36

Didorus Seculus, a first-century BCE Greek historian, mentions Vesuvius in connection with the myth of Heracles.

Heracles then moved on from the Tiber, and as he passed down the coast of what now bears the name of Italy he came to the Cumaean Plain. Here, the myths relate, there were men of outstanding strength, the fame of whom had gone abroad for lawlessness and they were called [Giants]. This plain was called Phlegraean ('Fiery') from the mountain which of old spouted forth a huge fire as Aetolia did in Sicily; at this time, however, the mountain is called Vesuvius and shows many signs of the fire which once raged in those ancient times.

**SOURCE 14.10** Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, IV, 21

Here, Strabo talks about Mount Vesuvius.

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.

**SOURCE 14.11** Strabo, *Geography*, V, 4

Seneca the Younger (c. 4 BCE to 65 CE), a Roman philosopher and naturalist, writes about an earthquake that struck Pompeii in 62 CE, seventeen years before the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

The extent of the disaster may be gathered from a few details. Part of the town of Herculaneum fell; the buildings left standing are very insecure. The colony of Nuceria had painful experience of the shock, but sustained no damage. Naples was just touched by what might have proved a great disaster to it; many private houses suffered, but no public building was destroyed. The villas built on the

(continued)

cliffs everywhere shook, but without damage being done. In addition, they say, a flock of six hundred sheep was destroyed, and statues were split open; some people were driven out of their minds, and wandered about in helpless idiocy.

**SOURCE 14.12** Seneca, *Natural Questions*, Book 6

Here is another extract from Pliny the Elder, describing the region.

Next comes Campania, a region blessed by fortune. From this bay onwards you find vine-growing hills and a noble tippole of wine famed throughout the world. Over this area the gods of wine and grain fought their hardest, or so tradition tells us ... These shores are watered by warm springs; they are famed beyond any other for their shellfish and their fine fish. Nowhere do olives produce more oil – the production strives to match the demands of human pleasure.

**SOURCE 14.13** Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, III, 60

Here is a further extract from Seneca the Younger's description of the 62 CE earthquake.

On the 5th of February, in the consulship of Regulus and Virginius, this shock occurred, involving widespread destruction over the whole province of Campania; the district had never been without risk of such a calamity, but had been hitherto exempt from it, having escaped time after time from groundless alarm.

**SOURCE 14.14** Seneca, *Natural Questions*



**SOURCE 14.15** Mosaic of aquatic life from the House of the Faun

## ACTIVITY 14.2

Having read the sources, and with reference to the maps at the beginning of this chapter, answer the following questions.

1. Explain the geographical context of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
2. List the notable features and resources of the region as identified in the evidence.
3. Explain the significance of Vesuvius for the inhabitants of the Campanian plains.
4. Based on your current understanding of Pompeii and Herculaneum, what do you expect to see in the evidence from the town, regarding trade, commerce, diet, industry and the like?

## The eruption of Mount Vesuvius

While the Vesuvian region was not unused 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. 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 eye-witness 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. The Interactive Textbook contains two of Pliny's letters, and an activity to help you analyse them.

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding in relation to specific historical periods in the Ancient World

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 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.

### 14.2 The nature of the evidence

#### Ancient writers

**TABLE 14.1** A list of ancient writers

Writer	Date	Context	Content
Pliny the Younger	61–113 CE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>main source on the eruption in 79 CE</li> <li>in about 112 CE, Pliny the Younger wrote a letter to the historian Tacitus describing the eruption and recounting his uncle's rescue attempt</li> <li>although he glorifies his uncle's role in the rescue, the facts he presents are supported by archaeological evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>his uncle (Pliny the Elder) was a naval commander based at Misenum, across the bay from Herculaneum</li> <li>he and his uncle both witnessed the eruption</li> <li>Pliny the Elder then set out by boat to rescue his friend Pomponianus who was trapped in Herculaneum</li> <li>he reached the city but died, apparently from asphyxiation (he was asthmatic)</li> </ul>

(continued)

Writer	Date	Context	Content
Pliny the Elder	23–79 CE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a prefect in the Roman navy, was also a noted naturalist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wrote about the geography and economy of Campania</li> </ul>
Strabo	64/63 BCE– c.24 CE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greek geographer whose work is largely based on his own travels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wrote about Campania</li> </ul>
Cassius Dio	155–235 CE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roman politician who wrote an 80 volume history of Rome</li> <li>the volumes covering the period between 63 BCE and 54 CE are almost complete; however the other volumes exist only in fragments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in one of the volumes he mentions the destruction of Pompeii, but his account is not entirely credible</li> </ul>
Seneca the Younger	c. 4 BCE – 65 CE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roman philosopher and naturalist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wrote about the earthquake that damaged Pompeii and Herculaneum in 62 CE</li> </ul>
Tacitus	c. 56–after 117 CE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roman senator who wrote two histories of the Roman Empire, covering the period from 14–69 CE</li> <li>not all of his works survive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>he mentions a fight between rival spectators at the gladiatorial games in Pompeii in 59 CE, which caused the emperor Nero to ban all such games in the city for ten years</li> </ul>
Vitruvius	c. 80–70 BCE, died after c. 15 BCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>architect and engineer, wrote <i>De Architectura</i>, a manual on architecture and building methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>for a time was the authority on Pompeian building usage, but this does not always correspond with the archaeology</li> </ul>

## 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.

### 14.3 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 merely 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 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 of the sites to the elements has seen oxidisation and thus deterioration. Open to the elements, 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 whilst inflicting 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 as they were looted or put in museums without the recording of their locations they were found in houses. This has made it difficult to ascertain ownership, function 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 Pompeians is not known, and rather are based on the terminology in Vitruvius's *De Architectura* (On Architecture); basic Pompeian house structure, however, dates to the Samnite period and thus pre-dates 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 lumped together in storage; 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.

The following sources reflect the range of evidence available in the study of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

I beg you to elect Cn. Helvius Sabinus *aedile*, worthy of public office. Maria asks this.

**SOURCE 14.16** A graffito from the Street of Abundance, Pompeii

28 July, Florus won at Nuceria; 15 August, won at Herculaneum.

**SOURCE 14.17** A graffito from the House of the Gladiators, Pompeii

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 14.18** Rental advertisement from the House of Julia Felix

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 14.19** Dedicatory inscription on the woolstore from Eumachia, CIL X 810





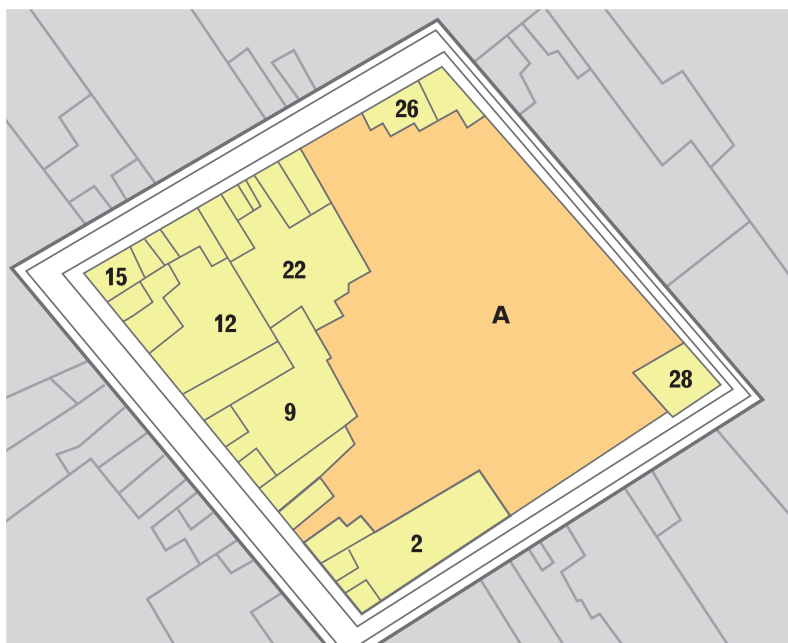
**SOURCE 14.20** Cave Canem from the House of the Tragic Poet

Umbricia Januaria declares that she has received from Lucius Caecilius Jucundus 11 039 sesterces, which sum came into the hands of Lucius Caecilius Jucundus by agreement as the proceeds of an auction sale for Umbricia Januaria, the commission due him having been deducted. Done at Pompeii, on the 12th of December, in the consulship of Lucius Duuius and Publius Clodius [AD 54].

**SOURCE 14.21** Banking transactions, CIL IV 3340 tab 25



**SOURCE 14.22** Remains of a bakery in Pompeii



**SOURCE 14.23** Insula 4, Regio I - Reg I, Ins 4 lies at the junction of the Via dell'Abbondanza and the Via Stabiana. The *insula* has sustained considerable damage in the past and most of the properties are in a semi-ruinous or ruinous condition.

## Full list of properties at the junction of the Via dell'Abbondanza and the Via Stabiana

The Via dell'Abbondanza is one of the main east – west streets in Pompeii, cleared in the early twentieth century. The Via Stabiana is one of the main north – south streets crossing it.

**TABLE 14.2** Buildings at the junction of the Via dell'Abbondanza and the Via Stabiana (see Source 14.23)

Door number	Property name or description	Area (square metres)	Number of rooms	Description, decoration and comments
1–3	Unnamed house	230	8	Fairly standard atrium or garden plan. Atrium. Tablinum. Peristyle. Nos. 1 and 3 are shops linked with the atrium. Stairs up. Little surviving decoration. Semi-ruinous.
4	Shop	38	2	Undecorated shop with back room. Window in south wall overlooking No. 3. Semi-ruinous state.
5, 25	House of the Citharist	2318	50+	Two atria. Three <i>peristyles</i> . 50+ rooms. Private baths suite. One of the largest houses in Pompeii. Little surviving decoration. Bronze statue of Apollo Citharoedus.
6	Shop	22	2	Undecorated shop with back room. Linked to atrium of No. 5. Ruinous state.
7	Fullonica of Passaratus and Maenianus	66	3	Three undecorated rooms. Ruinous state.
8	Shop	16	1	Undecorated single room with stairs up. Ruinous state.
9	Unnamed house	231	11	Atrium. Tablinum. Stairs up. Little decoration. Ruinous state.
10	Shop	22	1	Undecorated single room. Ruinous state.
11	Caupona of Copiosus	66	4	Four undecorated rooms. Ruinous state.
12	Shop/bakery	218	6	Six rooms. Millstones. Oven. Stairs up. No decoration. Linked to No. 17. Ruinous state.
13	Shop	52	2	Undecorated shop with back room (left rear). Oven. Linked to No. 14. Ruinous state.
14	Taberna	18	1	Undecorated single room with stairs up. Plaster remnants. Linked to No. 13. Ruinous state.
15	Taberna D. Junius Proculus	35	1	Undecorated single room. Plaster remnants. Linked to No. 16. Ruinous state.
16	Shop	13	1	Undecorated single room. Plaster remnants. Two niches on south wall. Linked to No. 15. Ruinous state.
17	Shop	32	2	Undecorated shop with back room. Plaster remnants. Linked to No. 16 and No. 12. Ruinous state.
18	Taberna of Sabinus	37	2	Undecorated shop with stairs up. Back room. Plaster remnants. Ruinous state.

(continued)

Door number	Property name or description	Area (square metres)	Number of rooms	Description, decoration and comments
19	Shop	36	2	Undecorated shop with back room. Plaster remnants. Ruinous state.
20–21	Shop	18	1	Shop at No. 20. Undecorated single room. Stairs up at No. 21.
22	Casa del Pressorio di Terracotta	152	11	Long entrance passage ( <i>fauces</i> ). Central atrium. Tablinum. Eleven rooms. Plaster remnants. Marble puteal. Marble table. Ruinous state.
23–24	Shops	66	4	Undecorated shops. Two back rooms. Linked to <i>fauces</i> of No.22. Ruinous state.
26	Shop with apartment	45	4	Undecorated shop with living quarters. Plaster remnants.
27	Thermopolium	41	3	Undecorated thermopolium. Counter with hearth. Back room. Latrine. Plaster remnants.
28	House of Q. Octavius Romulus	113	6	Atrium. Stables. Plaster remnants. Blocked up link to No. 25.



**SOURCE 14.24** Decoration from the House of the Golden Bracelet



## ACTIVITY 14.3

Each of the previous sources reflects a source type. Using the evidence provided and your understanding of the limitations of evidence, complete the following questions.

1. Categorise the evidence using the table below. Make a judgement about the type of evidence, what it depicts (the content), what conclusions can be drawn about life in Pompeii and Herculaneum, and how reliable the evidence is.

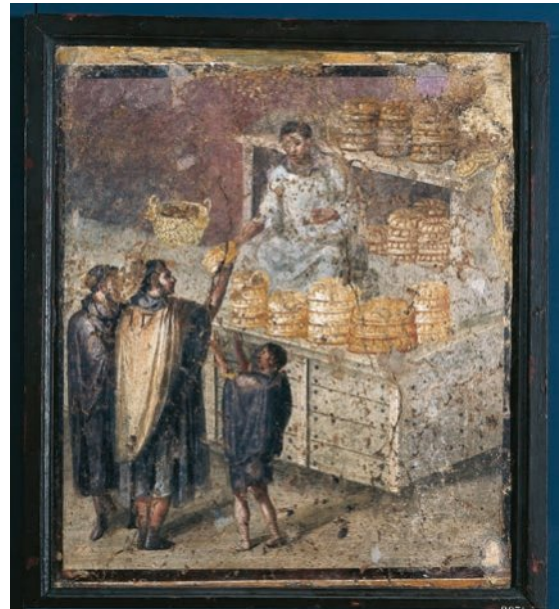
Source	Evidence type	Content	Conclusions	Reliability
Source 14.16				
Source 14.17				
Source 14.18				
Source 14.19				
Source 14.20				
Source 14.21				
Source 14.22				
Source 14.23				
Source 14.24				

2. Describe what these sources reveal about the inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

The following sources reflect the characteristics of life in a Campanian town.



**SOURCE 14.25** A bust thought to be of the banker Lucius Caecilius Jucundus. Credit: Pompeii, Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale (Archaeological Museum)



**SOURCE 14.26** Fresco from the *tablinum* at VII.iii.30 at Pompeii depicting the sale of bread from a temporary sales stand



**SOURCE 14.27** Statue of the priestess Eumachia from the Pompeian Forum



**SOURCE 14.28** Remains of a Roman theatre in Pompeii overlooking Mount Vesuvius



**SOURCE 14.29** Gladiator parade helmet made of bronze from Pompeii, Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale (Archaeological Museum), Roman Civilisation

## ACTIVITY 14.4

Having considered the evidence, answer the following questions.

1. Identify the sources that can be used to corroborate:
  - a. the presence of gladiators in Pompeii and Herculaneum
  - b. the existence of a banker named Jucundus
  - c. the existence of a woman named Eumachia
  - d. the role of women in Pompeii
  - e. bakeries as a key commercial entity in Pompeii and Herculaneum
  - f. the presence of skilled artists in Pompeii and Herculaneum
  - g. the presence of organised religion in Pompeii and Herculaneum
  - h. the existence of shops and stalls in Herculaneum.
2. Organise the evidence into categories of commerce, trade, leisure, social structure, housing and architecture.
3. With reference to two of the topics above, write a short analysis of the historical record of Pompeii.
4. What questions do the selection of evidence provided raise about life in Pompeii and Herculaneum?
5. What strategies might you employ to help answer these questions?

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about a historical period in the Ancient World

### 14.4 Everyday life

The sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum have provided modern historians with evidence of the occupations (and thereby the economy and commerce of the cities) and the pastimes of their inhabitants. Although there are some significant limitations around the evidence we are still able to make guided and educated judgements about life in Campanian Italy, and perhaps more broadly provincial Roman towns. It is important, however, to consider the evidence in light of our knowledge of these limitations, and thus make insightful and justified evaluations of the usefulness, value, and significance of the historical record for these sites.



**SOURCE 14.30** Sunset view of Via dell'Abbondanza (Street of Abundance), lower decuman (gate) of Pompeii (UNESCO World Heritage Site, 1997). What physical features of Pompeii can you identify in this image?

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, the growth of grapes and olives, and 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 an excess of 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 on 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 also suggested that only one brothel can be confirmed, whereas earlier estimates had this number much higher. This is not to suggest, however, that amatory activities in exchange for payment 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 also.

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.

### Commercial activities in Pompeii

The following sources illustrate three different commercial activities in Pompeii: Sources 14.31 and 14.35 relate to the sale of *garum* (fish sauce), Sources 14.32 and 14.33 to the clothing industry, and Sources 14.34, 14.36 and 14.37 to baking.



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

**SOURCE 14.31** Inscriptions on *garum* jars

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.

One important trade in Pompeii 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.

**SOURCE 14.32** Parco Archeologico di Pompei, Fullery of Stephanus

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.

**SOURCE 14.33** Clements, P. and Clements, M., 'Fullonica of Stephanus', *AD 79 Destruction and Rediscovery* website

This extract from the *AD 79 Destruction and Rediscovery* website describes a bakery in Pompeii.

The Pistrinum, or bakery, occupies a central location on the east side of Cardo V. 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 14.34** Clements, P. and Clements, M., 'Pistrinum', *AD 79 Destruction and Rediscovery* website



**SOURCE 14.35** 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*)



**SOURCE 14.36** A charred loaf of bread from Modestus's bakery in Pompeii

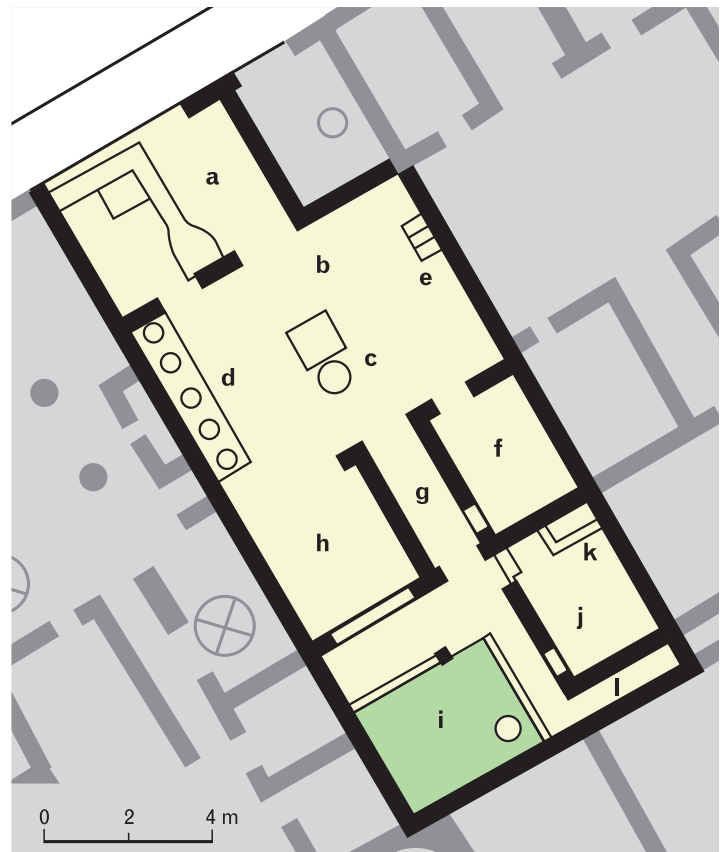


**SOURCE 14.37** Pistrinum millstones used for flour

### The Caupona of Sotericus

The Caupona of Sotericus lies on the south side of the Via dell'Abbondanza immediately east of the bakery owned by the same proprietor. The *caupona* was excavated in 1914. On the facade was a sign, now no longer visible, painted with the helmeted head of Minerva. Also lost to the elements are some obscene graffiti left by the *caupona's* regular clients referring to the amatory services provided by the waitresses and hostess. Below is the key for Source 14.38.

- a. entry with bar
- b. rectangular atrium
- c. a substantial table consisting of a circular marble top on a stuccoed and painted masonry base.
- d. masonry counter with five inset jars for hot food
- e. flight of stairs leading to the upper floor
- f. small *cubiculum* or bedroom decorated with mythological scenes
- g. corridor
- h. *tablinum*
- i. backyard
- j. kitchen
- k. basin
- l. small room – use unknown



**SOURCE 14.38** *Caupona* or Tavern of Sotericus and its usage

It has been observed that Pompeian wines are rather dangerous as they may cause a headache which lasts till noon on the following day.

**SOURCE 14.39** Pliny the Elder on Pompeian wine, *Natural History* XIV 70



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.'

**SOURCE 14.40** Graffiti from the tavern of Valeria Hedone

## 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.

The website *AD 79 Destruction and Rediscovery* has the following description of a thermopolium.

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 14.41** Clements, P. and Clements, M., 'Thermopolium of Vetutius Placidus (Reg I, Ins 8, 8-9)', *AD 79 Destruction and Rediscovery* website



**SOURCE 14.42** Thermopolium marble counter

## ACTIVITY 14.5

Having examined the previous image and text sources, and in combination with your existing historical knowledge, answer the following questions.

1. Describe the primary industries of Pompeii and Herculaneum as reflected in the evidence.
2. To what extent are the industries a reflection of the geographical context of Pompeii and Herculaneum as evidenced in Activity 14.2?



## ACTIVITY 14.5 continued

3. Examine Sources 14.32 and 14.33 in regards to fullones (or fullers) and use the evidence to answer the following.
  - a. Describe the activities that took place in a fullery.
  - b. Explain the role archaeology played in the naming of the fullery of Stephanus in Reg I, Ins 6 (Source 14.33). How reliable is this evidence?
  - c. Explain the particular significance of this site. What conclusions might be drawn from it?
4. Examine Source 14.38 – the Caupona of Sotericus – and use the evidence to answer the following.
  - a. Describe the activities that took place in the Caupona of Sotericus.
  - b. What conclusions can be drawn from the plan of the tavern about land usage in Pompeii?
  - c. Explain the limitations of this evidence and how it might influence our understanding of these types of establishments.
  - d. What other sources can be used to corroborate the importance of taverns in Pompeian society?
5. Source 14.34 refers to a bakery – *pistrinum* – in Herculaneum.
  - a. Explain how useful this source is in understanding the milling and bread-making process in Herculaneum.
  - b. Explain how useful this source is in understanding commercial activities taking place in Herculaneum.
  - c. Identify other evidence that would be helpful in drawing conclusions and making judgements about bakeries in the region.
6. Assess 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.
7. Evaluate the significance of physical evidence in contributing to our understanding of the economies of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
8. Identify what evidence is available for the economic activity in and around Pompeii and Herculaneum.

## 14.5 Leisure and entertainment

### Gladiators and games

Roger Dunkle describes the basis for gladiatorial games.

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.

**SOURCE 14.43** Dunkle, R., 2008, *Gladiators: Violence and Spectacle in Ancient Rome*, Routledge, p. 19

The following is a piece of graffiti from a Pompeii wall:

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.

**SOURCE 14.44** Graffito: games under the aedileship of Suettius Certus

Seneca was a stoic philosopher, and the Emperor Nero's tutor and advisor. The following is a description of gladiatorial combat (not necessarily in Pompeii) in a letter to Lucilius.

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 14.45** Seneca, *Epistles*



**SOURCE 14.46** The Neronian – graffiti from a tomb in the Pompeian necropolis outside the Nuceria 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.

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).

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.

**SOURCE 14.47** Games of Aulus Flaccus, funerary inscription, CIL X 1074d

Tacitus was a Roman historian of the late first and early second centuries CE. He was a supporter of the Flavian dynasty, under which he lived, and a vehement opponent of the gratuitous excess of the Julio-Claudian era. Here, he describes a riot that took place in Pompeii.

About this time [59 CE] there was a serious fight between the inhabitants of two Roman settlements, Nuceria and Pompeii. It arose out of a trifling incident at a gladiatorial show ... During an exchange of taunts – characteristic of these disorderly country towns – abuse led to stone-throwing, and then swords were drawn. The people of Pompeii, where the show was held, came off best. Many wounded and mutilated Nucerians were taken to the capital ... The emperor instructed the senate to investigate the affair. The senate passed it to the consuls. When they reported back, the senate debarred Pompeii from holding any similar gathering for ten years. Illegal associations in the town were dissolved; and the sponsor of the show and his fellow-instigators of the disorders were exiled.

**SOURCE 14.48** Tacitus, *Annals*, 14.71

The inscription pictured in Source 14.50 is found near the southern entrance to the arena. It states that Quintius 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 14.49** Cockfight mosaic from the Casa del Fauno



**SOURCE 14.50** Dedicatory inscription from the Pompeian Amphitheatre

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 ones actions.

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.

(continued)



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.

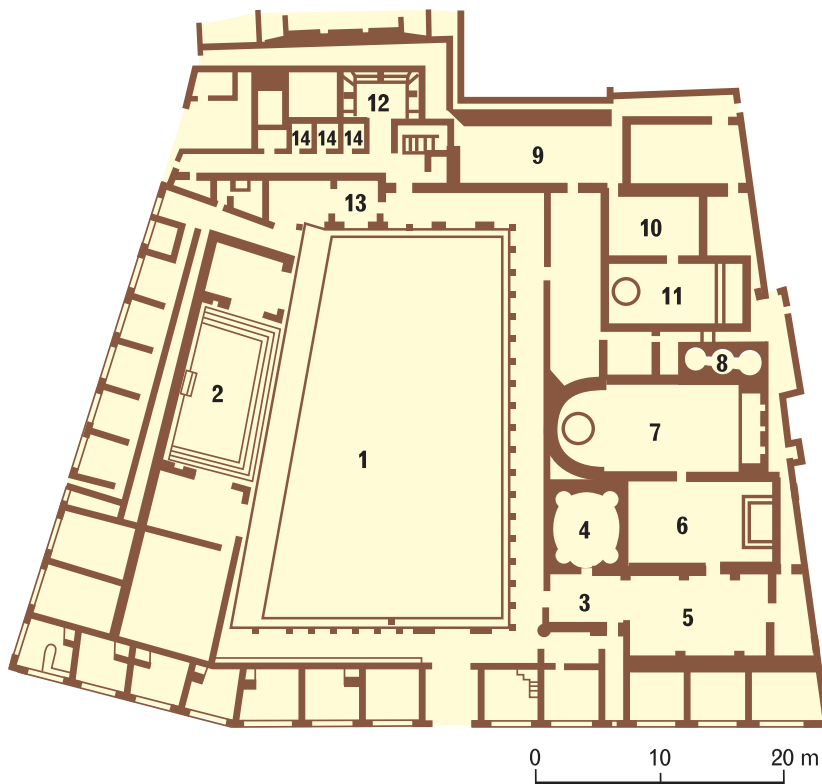
**SOURCE 14.51** Gladiatorial combat for political favour, Marcus Tullius Cicero

## Bathhouses

Seneca describes activities at the baths.

If you want to study, quiet is not nearly as necessary as you might think. Here I am, surrounded by all kinds of noise (my lodgings overlook a bath-house). Conjure up in your imagination all the sounds that make one hate one's ears. I hear the grunts of musclemen exercising and jerking those heavy weights around; they are working hard, or pretending to. I hear their sharp hissing when they release their pent breath. If there happens to be a lazy fellow content with a simple massage I hear the slap of hand on shoulder; you can tell whether it's hitting a flat or a hollow. If a ball-player comes up and starts calling out his score, I'm done for. Add to this the racket of a cocky bastard, a thief caught in the act, and a fellow who likes the sound of his own voice in the bath, plus those who plunge into the pool with a huge splash of water. Besides those who just have loud voices, imagine the skinny armpit-hair plucker whose cries are shrill so as to draw people's attention and never stop except when he's doing his job and making someone else shriek for him. Now add the mingled cries of the drink peddler and the sellers of sausages, pastries, and hot fare, each hawking his own wares with his own particular peal.

**SOURCE 14.52** Seneca, *Epistles*



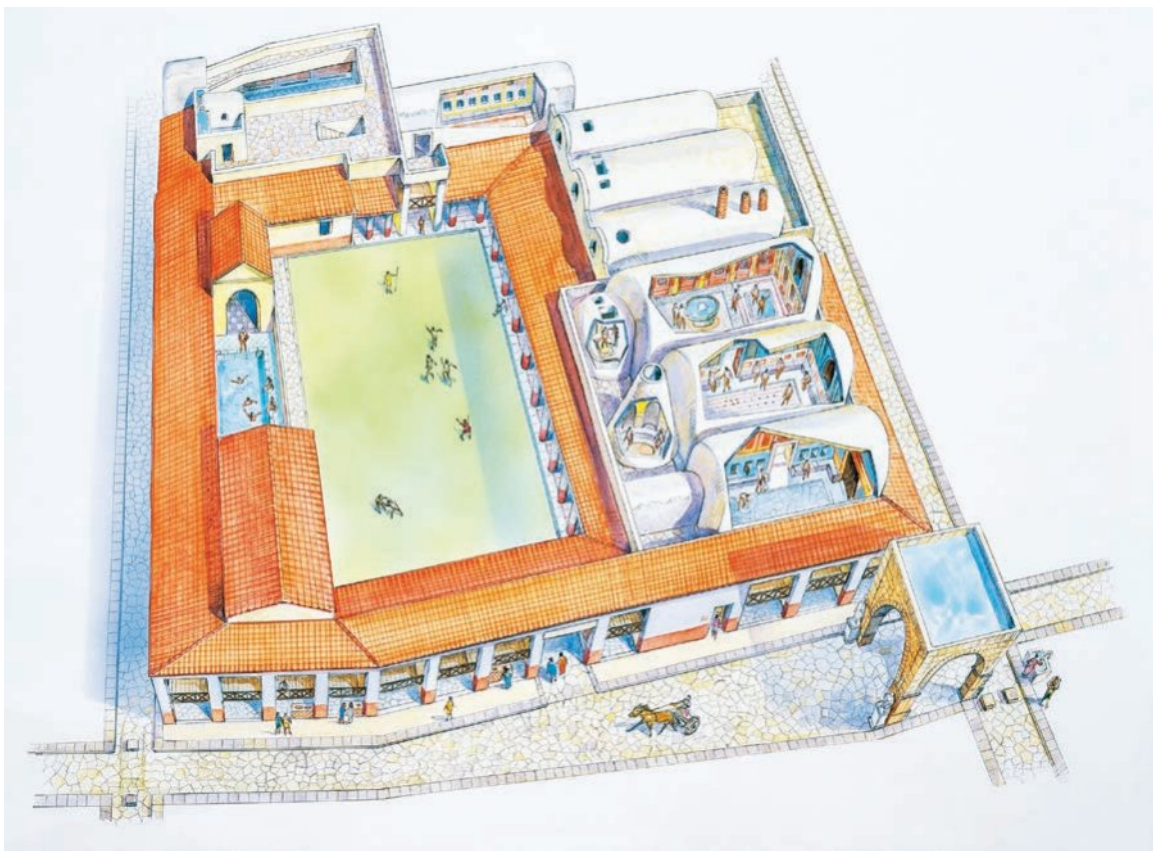
**Plan of the Stabian Baths**

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 14.53** Plan of the Stabian Baths



**SOURCE 14.54** The apodyterium at the Stabian Baths



**SOURCE 14.55** Modern interpretation of a bath house

## ACTIVITY 14.6

Having examined the previous images and text 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. Describe Seneca's tone in Source 14.45. What does this suggest about his view of the people who attend the games?
  - c. What do we learn about the *spectaculares* in Pompeii from Seneca's account? Consider the statements below, and select the most accurate – justify your response.
    - i. We do not know whether Seneca's account refers to Pompeii. However we can draw conclusions about *spectaculares* generally, and this can be applied to towns in the empire, including Pompeii.
    - ii. Nothing. It is not known whether Seneca is in Pompeii and thus it is not relevant. Other sources specific to Pompeii would be a far more valuable source of information.
    - iii. That they were well supported by the masses of Rome, and comprised a variety of types of combat.
    - iv. Although it is unknown whether this letter was referring to Pompeii specifically, we know that the games were brutal.
  - d. Evaluate the value of Seneca's account of the *spectaculares* as a resistant or alternative view of the games.
  - e. Examine the account of Tacitus in Source 14.48. What is the significance of this excerpt for the study of Pompeii?
4. Assess the extent to which the evidence suggests a connection between entertainment and politics. Explain your response using examples.
5. Evaluate what the prevalence of leisure and health-based activities suggests about the inhabitants of Pompeii.
6. Describe the features of bath houses and the activities that could be undertaken in them.
7. To what extent does the evidence provided by Seneca provide an accurate and reliable picture of events in Pompeii and Herculaneum?
8. Identify the different types of evidence that contribute to our knowledge about leisure and entertainment in Pompeii and Herculaneum.
9. Which source do you find the most interesting in building your understanding of life in Pompeii and Herculaneum? Explain your answer.



## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a historical period in the Ancient World

### 14.6 Social structure

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 a Roman town in the first century BCE, the origins of many of the inhabitants were a mix of Greek, Samnite and Oscan influences (some graffiti suggests Oscan was still spoken at the time of the eruption), and the large number of inhabitants, who 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 women, slaves, patron-client relationships and the role of women.

The sources below are extracts from modern Pompeiian scholars. Read them carefully, identifying any key concepts, themes, issues and ideas, before answering the activity that follows.

#### The impact of commerce on social structure

Historian Marcel Brion considers the social history of Pompeii.

It is not easy to determine at what moment began the democratisation of Pompeii, a democratisation which Herculaneum never attained thus explaining the very great difference in aspect of the two cities. But the evolution was far advanced if not completed in 79, and not the least surprising fact which strikes today's visitor is the contrast between the aristocratic elegance of certain dwellings and the vulgarity of the trades or businesses established in them. This social phenomenon arose from the increasing wealth of the business class as a result of the thriving trade, operating through the medium of the port of Pompeii, between northern Italy, Greece and the countries of the East ... This commercial prosperity had raised men of the lower-middle class, often freedmen who through their ability and intelligence had made fortunes, to administrative position and the status of eminent citizens ... The social history of Pompeii reveals, simultaneous with the rise of these new-rich proletarians, the decline of the aristocracy, which did not enter into trade or business. Thus there came about, at the moment when these freedmen were greatly expanding their trading activities, an exodus of the upper class, who left a city which had become noisy, vulgar and over-run by nouveaux-riches, and retired to the country, where they devoted themselves to the cultivation of their lands, in which they achieved considerable progress. Before quitting Pompeii, they made over their elegant mansions to merchants and artisans, who set themselves up without ceremony. Hence, the wonder of today's visitors at the sight of fullers' vats set out in atria or gardens created once for the delight of some gentleman of leisure.

**SOURCE 14.56** Brion, M., 1960, *Pompeii and Herculaneum: The Glory and the Grief*, Elek Books Ltd., p. 62

#### Men and women in society

In the following extract from a book written to accompany a BBC TV dramatisation of the destruction of Pompeii, Paul Wilkinson discusses the role of women.

In her Campanian household a Roman woman held the respected position of mistress. Whilst servants and slaves handled most of the chores, they, in turn, were managed by the mistress of the house. Roman women usually married between the ages of 13 and 17. Until the late republic most

(continued)

marriages were of the so-called *manus* type. This entailed the woman leaving the *patria potestas* of her own family and transferring herself and her property to her husband's *patria potestas*. There were serious disadvantages in this system, both to herself and to her family. She would no longer have access to her own wealth, and if she died, her own family would be excluded from any inheritance. The more typical marriage at Pompeii and Herculaneum excluded *manus* and was a marriage by contract before witnesses. This allowed the woman to retain her property and, more importantly, allowed her, by a declaration of will, to divorce her husband. This new type of marriage destroyed the old concept of Roman patriarchal wedlock.

As well as legal marriage, there also existed in Pompeii and Herculaneum a form of living together without legal bonds, the *concubinatus*, which gained in popularity from the time of Augustus. Yet Tacitus and other Roman writers still extolled the Roman ideal of womanhood, the chaste and obedient wife and mother who would bring up the children and be a loyal companion in good times and bad.

**SOURCE 14.57** Wilkinson, P., 2003, *Pompeii: the Last Day*, BBC Books, pp. 28–30

## Slaves in Pompeian society

Historians Alex Butterworth and Ray Laurence talk about Roman slaves being given their freedom.

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. 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.

**SOURCE 14.58** Butterworth, A & Laurence, R., 2005, *Pompeii: The Living City*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, pp. 20–1 & 65–6

## Patrons and clients

Brian Brennan and Estelle Lazer discuss how elite members of society offered patronage to certain poorer citizens

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.

**SOURCE 14.59** Brennan, B. & Lazer, E., 2004, 'Pompeii and Herculaneum: Interpreting the Evidence', NSW: Ancient History Seminars

## Freedmen and freedwomen

Historians Alison E. Cooley and M.G.L. Cooley outline the position of freedmen and freedwomen in society.

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.

**SOURCE 14.60** Cooley, A.E. & Cooley, M.G.L., 2013, *Pompeii and Herculaneum: A Sourcebook*, Routledge, pp. 146–7

### ACTIVITY 14.7

Having read the evidence, respond to the following questions.

1. Create a diagram to demonstrate the relationships between the classes in Pompeii and Herculaneum.
2. Describe the social structure in Pompeii.
3. Evaluate the reason for differences in class composition between Pompeii and Herculaneum.
4. To what extent are the commerce and the social economics of the broader Roman Empire reflected in societies of Pompeii and Herculaneum?
5. Complete the table below.

Source	Social element	Evidence	Comment
14.56	Upwardly mobile		
14.57	Men and women		
14.58	Slaves		
14.59	Patrons and clients		
14.60	Freedmen and women		

## 14.7 Representations of women in Pompeii and Herculaneum

The following six sources were all found in Pompeii.

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 14.61** The dedication of the Temple of the Lares by the priestess Mamia



- 1) I beg you to make Pupius duumvir. Appuleia with her neighbour Mustius (asks), and Narcissus asks you.
- 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 14.62** Election graffiti by women

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*.

**SOURCE 14.63** Women in the family, funeral inscriptions

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, Nuceria 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 14.64** Inscriptions pertaining to freedmen and women

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 14.65** Inscription on the tomb of a freedwoman outside the Herculaneum Gate

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 1 652 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.

**SOURCE 14.66** Receipt for rental payment from Pompeii

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. Source 14.67 is her report on the body of a 14-year-old girl found at Herculaneum.

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.

**SOURCE 14.67** Bisel, S.C. and Bisel, J.F., 2002, 'Health and nutrition at Herculaneum: An examination of human skeletal remains', in *The Natural History of Pompeii*, ed. Jashemski, W.F. and Meyer, F.G., Cambridge University Press, p. 46

## ACTIVITY 14.8

Having analysed the modern interpretations of social structure in Pompeii and Herculaneum, read the primary sources and identify any key concepts, themes, issues and ideas, before answering these questions.

1. What does the evidence reveal about the role and status of women in this period? Cite clear and specific examples to support your answer.
2. Assess the value of the epigraphic record for historians studying women in ancient Pompeii.
3. Complete the table below.

Source	Element of society	Evidence	Comments
14.61			
14.62			
14.63			
14.64			
14.65			
14.66			
14.67			

4. What do the sources suggest about the role of women in religion and politics?
5. Go back to Activity 14.3 and consider Sources 14.18 and 14.19 which refer to Eumachia and Julia Felix. How do these change your view of women in Pompeii?
6. Having analysed and evaluated all the evidence, draw together the different views and perspectives to craft a historical paragraph in response to the following: Joseph Deiss claimed that 'by the time of Vesuvius's eruption, the Roman upper-class structure had become rigidly stratified on the basis of wealth.' Assess the validity of this statement with reference to the sources provided.

## Objective 2: Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to a historical period in the Ancient World

### 14.8 Researching an archaeological project in Pompeii or 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 14.9

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:

- Who is running the project? (The person or organisation.)
- Where is the project?
- What is the purpose of the project?
- What has the project achieved?
- Other information; 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 Pompeian 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.

### Also examine the work of some individual archaeologists:

- Wilhelmina Jashemski
- Andrew Wallace-Hadrill
- Sarah Bisel
- Estelle Lazer
- Jaye McKenzie-Clark
- Penelope Allison.

## ACTIVITY 14.10

Having conducted some primary reading and selected a key project and archaeologist, respond to a question to create your own historical investigation.

You will need to:

- create an inquiry question that allows you sufficient scope to examine an aspect of the interpretation of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
- establish three historical questions and appropriate sub-questions.
- conduct research from a balance of ancient and modern historians.
- organise your findings in an appropriate manner (table, chart, infographic or video).



## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to a historical period in the Ancient World

### 14.9 Creating a response about an archaeological project in Pompeii or Herculaneum

Based on the research you conducted in Activity 14.9, complete the following activity.

#### ACTIVITY 14.11

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.



# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- The locations of Pompeii and Herculaneum were heavily influenced by the geography of the region, especially the fertile plains and proximity to the sea.
- 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, and amounted to not much more than treasure hunting.
- Pompeii and Herculaneum are recognised as problematic sites as a result – there is much source deterioration and 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 practises, entertainment and leisure, occupation and trade, social structure, and so on in a provincial Roman town.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

With reference to the information and ideas represented 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

What does the housing reveal about society in Pompeii and Herculaneum?

### 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?

### Respond

Read the source below and answer the question that follows.

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.

**SOURCE 14.68** Beard, M., 2013, 'Pompeii's not-so-ancient Roman Remains', *BBC News Magazine*

To what extent do the plaster casts of deceased Pompeian residents represent a master stroke of archaeological ingenuity?

## Assessment

### Examination-style 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 Pompeians?
7. Evaluate the following statement: Leisure and entertainment in Pompeii was a reflection of the 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 to those from Herculaneum?





# CHAPTER 15

## The 'fall' of the Western Roman Empire

ALAN BARRIE

This chapter is available in the digital version of the textbook.

Cambridge

GO









# UNIT 4

## People, power and authority

### UNIT DESCRIPTION

In Unit 4, students investigate an ancient society in an important historical period, with a particular emphasis on the nature and exercise of power and authority in that society, and how it was challenged in times of conflict. Students also study an individual who had a significant impact on that society. Students develop an understanding of the importance of human agency, as demonstrated by the possible motivations and actions of individuals. This unit requires a greater focus on a range of written source material and an evaluation of the significance of the selected individual. 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. Other key conceptual understandings include: usefulness and reliability of sources; perspectives, interpretations and contestability; evidence; significance; and empathy.

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### UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World.
2. Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to people, power and authority in a particular period in the Ancient World.
3. Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature of power and how it was exercised in the Ancient World.
4. Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a powerful individual, group or society in the Ancient World.
5. Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about people, power and authority in the Ancient World.
6. Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World.

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## KEY CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- usefulness and reliability of sources
- perspectives
- interpretations and contestability
- evidence
- continuity and change
- cause and effect
- significance
- empathy.

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## KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How was power and authority gained, maintained and challenged in the Ancient World?
- How does this understanding inform our modern perspectives on power?

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## CHAPTERS IN THIS UNIT

### CHAPTER

**Powers** *Material on the Persian Wars and the Peloponnesian War can be found in the downloadable resources. This can be used in conjunction with sources in Chapter 19 (Themistokles) and Chapter 20 (Alkibiades) for full study of these topics.*

**Chapter 16** Ancient Rome: civil war and the breakdown of the Republic

### Individuals

**Chapter 17** Thutmose III (DIGITAL CHAPTER)

**Chapter 18** Rameses II

**Chapter 19** Themistokles

**Chapter 20** Alkibiades (DIGITAL CHAPTER)

**Chapter 21** Scipio Africanus (DIGITAL CHAPTER)

**Chapter 22** Julius Caesar (DIGITAL CHAPTER)

**Chapter 23** Augustus



# CHAPTER 16

## Ancient Rome: civil war and the breakdown of the Republic

JENNA HAYWOOD

### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the nature of power and authority, what is meant by the term 'power', how power has been viewed over time, and the kinds of groups and individuals who have exercised power over time.
  - the historical and geographical context of the Roman Republic.
  - an overview of key developments.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about:
  - key archaeological and written sources for the period.
  - the nature and range of sources for the period and the identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources; for example, authentication, excavation, reconstruction and/or conservation, and incompleteness and/or fragmentary nature.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to how power was exercised, and the change and development that led to civil war and the breakdown of the Republic.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the limitations, reliability and usefulness of sources.
  - changing interpretations of sources over time and their influence on understanding of the period.
- devise historical questions and conduct research, and create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose by presenting a historical essay based on research.

### KEY DATES

753 BCE

According to legend, Rome founded by Latin prince Romulus

509 BCE

Last king of Rome, Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, is expelled

Fifth century BCE

Deep antagonism develops between patricians and plebeians – patricians had economic and social control of society while plebeians had virtually no rights. Beginning of Struggle of the Orders

Mid-fifth century BCE

The Twelve Tables are written. These were the first codified (written) laws and were publically displayed for all to read. The laws aimed to address class inequality

108 BCE

*Lex Villia Annalis* law establishes the *cursus honorum*



## Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - how historians and theorists have debated the nature of power and the way it is exercised.
  - the historical significance of the study of power during the civil war and breakdown of the Republic.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus
- Gaius Marius
- Sulla
- Pompey the Great
- Julius Caesar
- Crassus
- Cicero
- Catiline
- Lepidus
- Octavian
- Mark Antony
- Cleopatra.

**133 BCE**

Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus elected Tribune of the Plebs. He is assassinated as he attempts to stand for re-election (a second consecutive term was unprecedented and likely illegal)

**123 BCE**

Gaius Gracchus (younger brother of Tiberius, together they are known as the Gracchi) elected Tribune of the Plebs. Serves two consecutive terms, but dies in 121 BCE

**111–89 BCE**

Rome engages in successive wars against foreign powers, including Jugurtha, Germanic tribes in southern France and alpine Italy, and other allied cities in Italy

**88 BCE**

Civil war between Marius and Sulla

**86 BCE**

Marius dies





## MAPS



**SOURCE 16.2** Roman expansion. What facilitated the rapid expansion of territory under Roman control?

83–82 BCE	78 BCE	70 BCE	67–66 BCE	60 BCE
Continuation of civil war between Sulla and Marian supporters	Sulla dies	Pompey elected consul after successful military career and rise in popularity	Pompey wages successful wars against Mithridates (King of Pontus in Northern Turkey) and piracy in the Mediterranean	First Triumvirate between Caesar, Pompey and Marcus Crassus. Caesar elected consul the following year. Crassus dies in 53 BCE



**SOURCE 16.3** Map of Rome. What features on this map can you identify on modern satellite imagery?

60–51 BCE	50 BCE	49 BCE
<p>Caesar wages successive campaigns in Gaul (France) against the Germanic tribes. He is also the first to invade Britain. Gaul is firmly in Roman control by 51 BCE with the surrender of Vercingetorix at Alesia. Caesar's success sees his popularity with the people and his soldiers skyrocket. During Caesar's absence, Pompey emerges as the sole power in Rome</p>	<p>Pompey given command over all Italian forces to march against Caesar, who refused to disband his army at the conclusion of Gallic campaign</p>	<p>Caesar crosses the Rubicon River (the traditional border between Rome and her provinces where legions were disbanded and <i>imperium</i> held by generals ceased) with his army intact, effectively declaring war on Rome</p>



## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>assemblies</b>	various groups which held voting authority in the Republic; membership of assemblies varied; the Senate was the only one with authority to make laws
<b>client</b>	a freeman who made an agreement with a patron (man of wealth) for protection (financial and legal assistance); by the first century BCE, the system had become hereditary
<b>consul</b>	most powerful position of the <i>cursus honorum</i>
<b>cursus honorum</b>	structure of magistracies (positions) within the Republican political system; set out minimum standards of experience and age for each position
<b>dictator</b>	magistracy position enacted by the Senate in times of crisis, for a limited term; the dictator had <i>imperium</i> over all other magistracies
<b>equites</b>	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
<b>imperium</b>	Latin for power to command; applied to magistracy positions that had ultimate control and authority at their level
<b>legion</b>	largest unit of soldiers within the army; approximately 4500 men
<b>Lex Agraria</b>	land and property reforms introduced in 133 BCE by Tiberius Gracchus intended to address the economic and social gap between classes
<b>magister equitum</b>	Latin for master of the horse; lieutenant appointed to serve a dictator
<b>mos maiorum</b>	ancestral customs; Roman traditions that informed social behaviour and etiquette; separate but complementary to the legal law
<b>novus homo</b>	Latin for new man; applied to men who were the first in their family to serve as consul; the definition later widened to include the first man in a family to serve the Senate

### 48 BCE

Caesar defeats Pompey at Dyrrachium and Pharsalus. Pompey flees to Egypt but is murdered soon after his arrival

### 45 BCE

Caesar consolidates power, effectively taking sole control of the Roman world

### 44 BCE

Caesar declared dictator for life, along with multiple other honours. On the 15th (Ides) of March, he is assassinated by a conspiracy led by Brutus and Cassius (ex-supporters of Pompey who had been pardoned by Caesar)

### 44–42 BCE

Civil war between supporters of Caesar's and the conspirators ends with defeat of Brutus and Cassius at the Battle of Philippi





TERM	DEFINITION
<b>optimates</b>	Latin for best men; a political faction that included most of the aristocracy. They wanted to maintain traditional Roman values and the power of the Senate
<b>pater familias</b>	Latin for father of the family; the eldest male within a family group held absolute authority over their wife, children, certain other relatives, clients and slaves; his responsibilities were guided by <i>mos maiorum</i>
<b>pater patriae</b>	Latin for father of the country
<b>patria potestas</b>	Latin for power of a father; the power and authority held by the <i>pater familias</i>
<b>patrician</b>	wealthy social class; small group of privileged elite who came from old aristocratic families
<b>plebeian</b>	lower social class; the majority of Rome's population
<b>pontifex maximus</b>	chief priest of Rome
<b>populares</b>	political faction that believed success could be achieved by working with the people
<b>sacrosanctity</b>	the declaration that something is sacred or under religious protection; at this time, the position of tribune was sacrosanct
<b>Senate</b>	oldest and most powerful assembly in the Republic. It had the legislative power to make laws but its membership was dominated by the patricians
<b>Senatus Populusque Romanus (SPQR)</b>	The Senate and People of Rome; used in reference to the government of the people
<b>Struggle of the Orders</b>	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
<b>tribune</b>	magistracy position representing the plebeian class; an annual term
<b>tribunicia potestas</b>	tribune's power to veto decisions
<b>Triumvirate</b>	joint rule between three individuals; termed <i>triumvirs</i> . The first century BCE saw two Triumvirates: a) Julius Caesar, Pompey the Great, Crassus b) Octavian, Marc Antony, Lepidus.

#### 43 BCE

Second Triumvirate between Octavian, Mark Antony and Lepidus

#### 40 BCE

Treaty of Brundisium, dividing control of Roman territory between Antony and Octavian. Mark Antony begins relationship with Cleopatra, despite marriage to Octavian's sister

#### 32 BCE

Rumours spread that Mark Antony is going to make Cleopatra Queen of Rome. Senate declares war on Mark Antony and Cleopatra

#### 31 BCE

Octavian defeats Mark Antony and Cleopatra at the Battle of Actium. Both commit suicide on their return to Egypt. Octavian returns to Rome a hero

## Introduction

When Rome expelled her last king in 509 BCE, a republic was established with the intention that it should represent all of the people within Rome through a system of assemblies and magistracies. However, as Rome grew in power and controlled more of the regions around the Mediterranean, the system failed to adapt and change with this growth. Consequently, a large social, political and economic disparity emerged between the two main social classes – the patricians and plebeians. Beginning in the middle of the second century BCE, a succession of individuals began to expose the flaws in the system as they sought power for themselves, rather than using it for the public good. This resulted in 100 years of civil war between various powerful generals and the aristocratic Senate. Arguably, the Republic collapsed due to the combination of actions of key individuals and the socio-political climate at the time. Sources from the period form a valuable account of the vast difference in opinion held by those at the time.

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

When examining the breakdown of the Roman Republic, it is important to understand how the Roman political system was designed to work to see its weaknesses and later failures. This will enable you to identify causes and consequences, along with continuity and change over time.

### 16.1 Nature of power and authority

Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

**SOURCE 16.4** Dalberg Acton, J., 1st Baron Acton, April 5 1887, Letter to Bishop Creighton

Classical history features many stories of the strong and powerful. In a time when military prowess was a key means of getting further in life, having power and authority enabled individuals to achieve fame and glory.

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. He argued there were three types of authority: charismatic (deriving from strength of personality), bureaucratic (given to a person by the law) and traditional (from established customs, such as inherited positions).

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. The people of the Republic did not realise this lesson and it eventually led to the downfall of the Republic itself. The powerful individuals in this chapter all had some combination of authority and power.

#### ACTIVITY 16.1

Read Source 16.4. How does this understanding inform our modern views on power? You may like to consider current social and political conflicts in Australia and globally in your response.

## ACTIVITY 16.2

1. How would you explain the difference between power and authority?
2. Can you identify any personalities in history who you believe had power and authority? (Extension question: Was the combination of both essential to their success? Why or why not?)
3. Can you identify any personalities in history who had only power or authority?
4. How did the lack of one affect their leadership or position?

## 16.2 Historical and geographical context of the Roman Republic

### Historical context

The foundation of Rome is steeped in legend, and was a source of pride to the Roman people.

The most common story centres on the Trojan hero Aeneas. Ancient Greek historian Dionysius of Halicarnassus says:

Aeneas, coming from the land of the Molossians, founded Rome with Odysseus.

**SOURCE 16.5** Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 7 BCE, *Roman Antiquities*, Book 1, 72.182–3

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’s arrival in Italy is recorded in Livy’s poem *The Aeneid* (29–19 BCE). These people came to be known as the ‘Latins’.

Later, two descendants of Aeneas, the 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 as if 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. This is described by Livy in his *History of Rome*:



**SOURCE 16.6** The Capitoline Wolf (Lupa Capitolina): the wolf statue dates from the eleventh and twelfth centuries CE and is cast in bronze, the two twins were a fifteenth century addition. Why would the two twins have been added in the fifteenth century?

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

**SOURCE 16.7** Livy, 27 BCE, *History of Rome*, Book 1, 6.3–4

After much argument, Romulus killed Remus. The date of Remus’s death marks the foundation of Rome – generally acknowledged as 21 April 753 BCE.



### ACTIVITY 16.3

1. Why might the Romans be happy to accept these myths about the foundation of their city?
2. What parallels can you see between the legend of Romulus and Remus, and any other stories you know?

Archaeological evidence suggests that by the eighth century BCE, a series of small villages were scattered over the seven hills of modern Rome. These villages grew and blended into a distinct community, 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.

### 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 covers more than 25 countries.

### ACTIVITY 16.4

1. Using a copy of Source 16.9 (see the next page), 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 the first century BCE, Roman statesman Cicero wrote the following.

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

**SOURCE 16.8** Cicero, 54 BCE, *De re publica*, Book 2

- a. Why does Cicero believe Romulus made the right choice in placing Rome where he did?
- b. How far do Cicero's comments appear to agree with the geographical features indicated on the map?



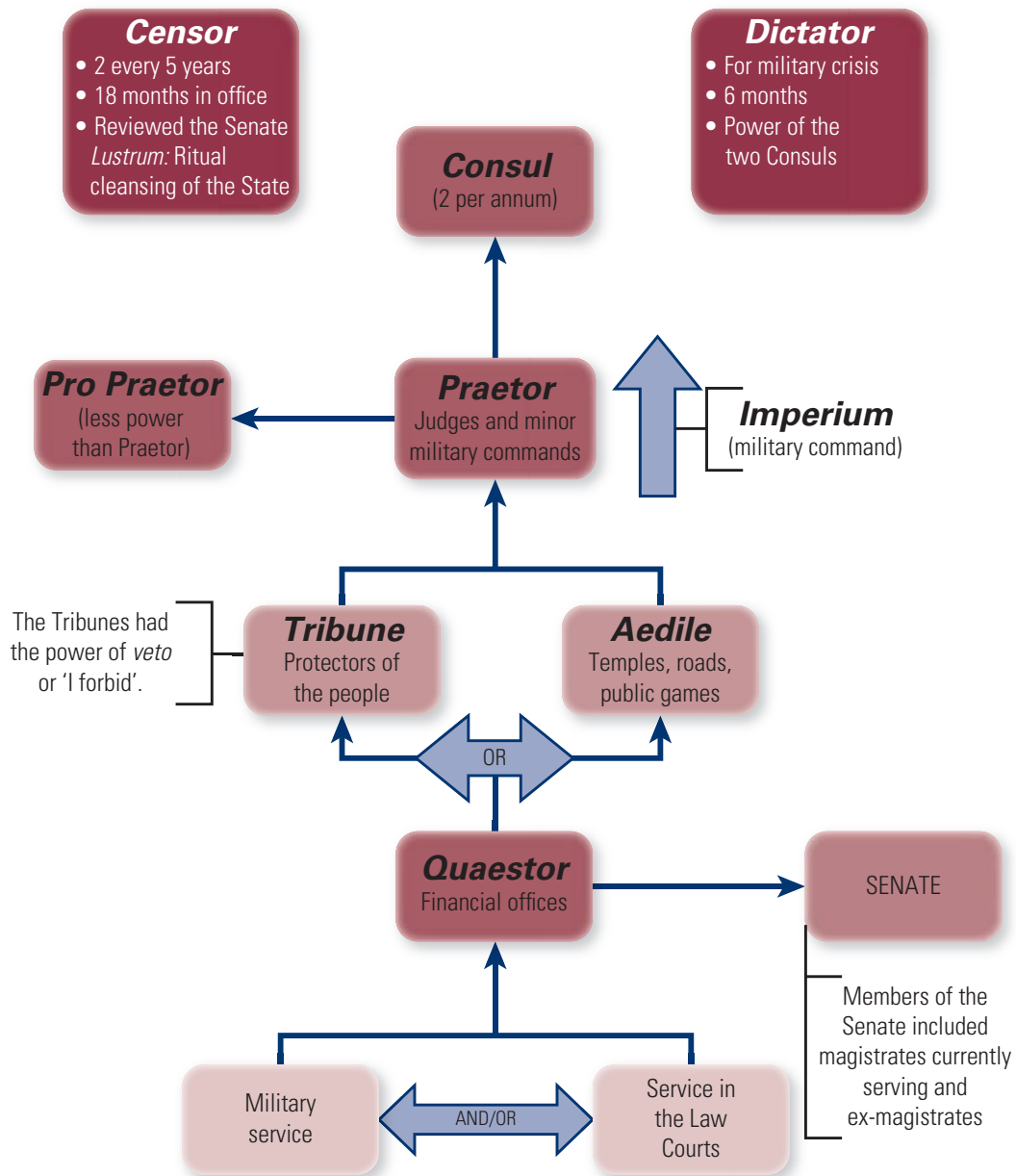
**SOURCE 16.9** A relief map of Italy

### 16.3 Political structures in the Republic

When the last king of Rome was expelled in 509 BCE, a constitution was developed that aimed to represent the unified and independent mindset of the new Republic. As the system developed in the centuries following 509 BCE, the constitution created new institutions so that the Republic would fulfill the driving concept of *Senatus Populusque Romanus* or ‘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 invested in the hands of many, not few or one. After their experiences of being ruled by a monarchy, Romans feared the threat that overwhelming power vested in one person, such as a king, presented.

#### 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 (a 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.



**SOURCE 16.10** The ladder of honours (*Cursus Honorum*)

**TABLE 16.1** The Roman magistrate

The Roman magistrates							
	Consuls	Praetors	Aediles	Quaestors	Tribunes	Censors	Dictator
<b>Number</b>	2	1 > 2 > 6 > 8 > 16	4	2 > 4 > 8 > 20 > 40	Originally 2 – later 10 by mid-fifth century BCE	2	1



TABLE 16.1 (continued)

The Roman magistrates							
	Consuls	Praetors	Aediles	Quaestors	Tribunes	Censors	Dictator
<b>Origin</b>	Replaced king in 509 BCE	366 BCE: created by patricians to offset opening of consulship to Plebeians	Plebeian in 494 BCE	One of the earliest officials – probably dated back to kings. Helped the consuls	494 BCE: after the First Secession of the Plebs	443 BCE: to cope with increasing business of magistrates	First dictator supposedly in 501 BCE
<b>Functions</b>	Chief officials. Commanded army, summoned the Senate, conducted elections and became governors of provinces upon retirement	Judicial officials. City praetor was the supreme civil judge. Usually went on to govern the provinces	Local government officials. Regulation of markets, care of streets and buildings, police duties, organisation of games and festivals	Financial officials. Managed taxes, treasury, army pay and all monetary matters	People's officials. Defended the interests of the plebeians	Registrars. In charge of census and public morals, superintended various public works	Emergency appointment only. Had complete power while in office

### ACTIVITY 16.5

Using Table 16.1, which details functions of various magistrate positions and the *cursus honorum* diagram, complete the following questions.

1. In small groups, develop a game to test your knowledge of the *cursus honorum*. You could use online resources (for example, Quizlet, Kahoot) or base your game on an existing one.
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 the responsibility of governing a province
  - f. selecting participants for the gladiatorial games

(continued)

## ACTIVITY 16.5 continued

- 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.

Those in the highest positions were vested with *imperium* and were recognised by the *auctoritas* (authority) that they held. This prestige filtered through to 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. This 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 social classes, contributed to the collapse of the Republic.

### The Assemblies

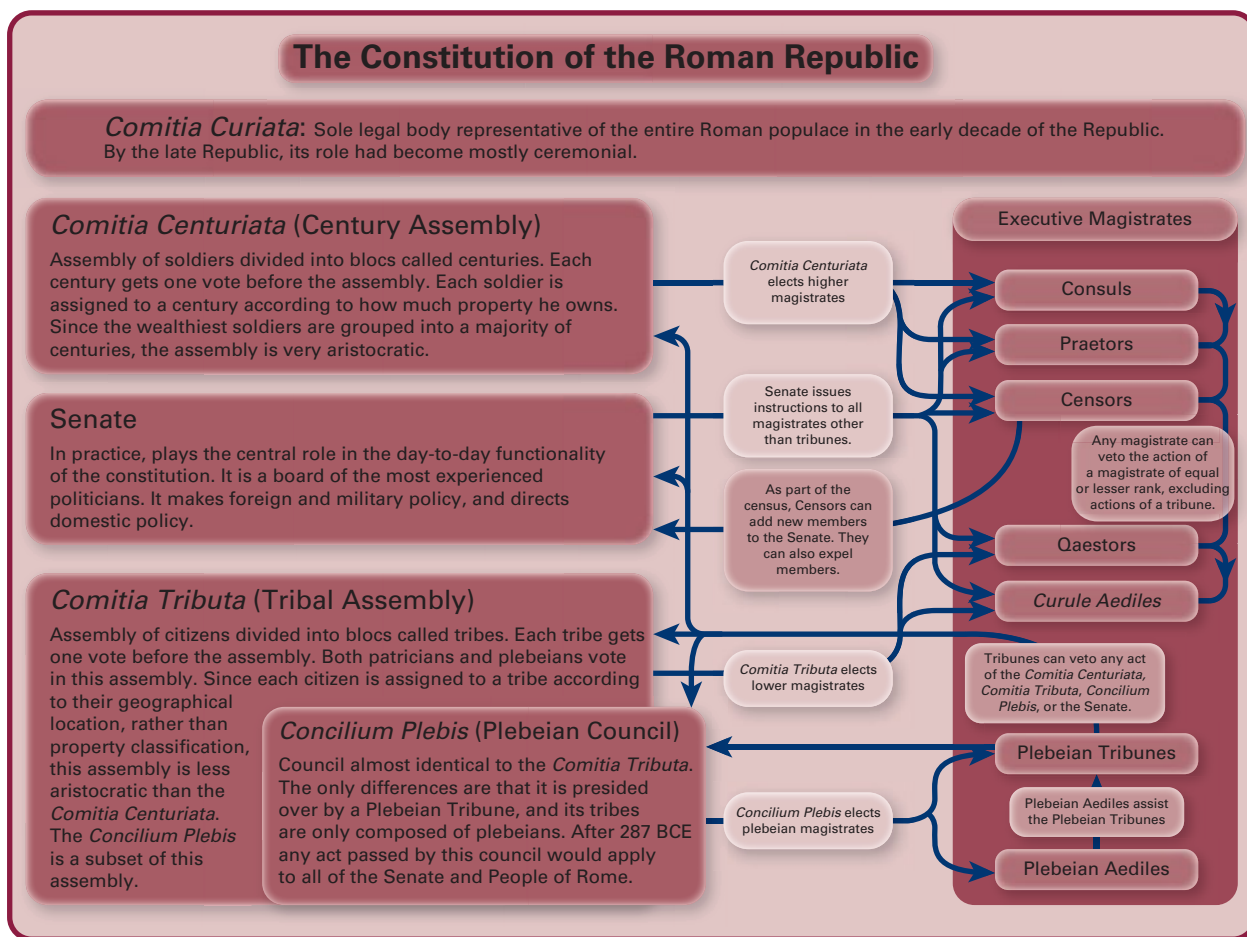
Four main assemblies were part of the Republic's political system. Every male citizen was eligible to vote on legislation and the election of magistrates, the assemblies met only to vote – not to discuss or initiate action. Legislation was initiated by an individual magistrate, developed in the Senate, and then taken to the respective assembly for voting. No amendments were permissible. The task of the assembly was simply to vote yes or no. For further details on the individual assemblies and how they interacted with the various magistracies, see Source 16.11.

### The Senate

Before the expulsion of the last king of Rome, the Senate was a body comprising 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 (218–201 BCE) thanks to its authority to grant military commands. When commanders were successful, it reflected positively on the Senate. The source 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, gave the Senate an informal 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.

### 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:



**SOURCE 16.11** The Constitution of the Roman Republic

1. In order 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.
2. Senators and patricians often used their influence to sway the voting, essentially monopolising political decisions.
3. Senators controlled what legislation came before the assemblies. In that sense, the Republic was arguably more oligarchic than truly democratic.

### 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 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.

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 (landowners were obliged to serve when called upon). They often returned home after years abroad to discover their lands and homes in ruin. The main grievances of the plebeians are outlined in the table below.



**TABLE 16.2** Grievances of the plebeians

Injustice	Description
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– patricians monopolised government</li> <li>– only active political role was to vote in <i>comitia centuriata</i></li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– no plebeian could marry a patrician, perpetuating social divisions</li> <li>– even if financially prosperous, they were regarded as inferior</li> <li>– patricians wore distinguishing clothes</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– many plebeians were poor and ran the risk of being enslaved for debt</li> <li>– excluded from sharing in public land</li> </ul>
Religious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– plebeians were excluded from (politically important) priestly offices</li> </ul>
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– laws were unwritten and plebeians subject to whim of patricians with no right of appeal</li> </ul>

One of the plebeians' first 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 they became applicable to the Senate and people. Patricians were excluded from participation in the plebeian assembly, and it had the right to veto any legislation passed by the Senate.

The next task the plebeians tackled was the codification 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. The first codification of Roman laws became known as the Twelve Tables. The twelve bronze tablets were displayed publicly in the Forum for all people to read and theoretically they 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 banning intermarriage between plebeians and patricians were changed. The execution of insolvent debtors was also outlawed. Wealthy plebeians benefitted the most from these changes. Many accrued more wealth than patricians thanks to their business acumen as merchants. These plebeians' wealth made them eligible for recruitment into the cavalry. Consequently, their involvement in the cavalry saw the emergence of a new middle-class in Rome – the *equite*.

The Struggle of the Orders did not eliminate the plebeians' main grievance: the privileged position of the patricians. The patricians retained control over most government institutions, and land ownership continued to be the key to political power and office. The wars of expansion made the rich wealthier as they gained control of more land, and the poor continued to be excluded from power.

## 16.4 Tiberius Gracchus

### The situation in 133 BCE

When Tiberius Gracchus was elected Tribune of the Plebs in 133 BCE, Rome was suffering from significant internal struggles. While the Republic had grown substantially, the internal governing structures had not been adapted to suit the new conditions.

**TABLE 16.4** The problems facing Roman society in 133 BCE

### The main problems

- Wars of expansion had changed Rome from a simple rural society into a complex imperial state (with all the accompanying problems).
- Wars of expansion had dramatically increased the numbers of slaves in Rome, damaging existing economic structures.
- 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 campaigns with the army to find their farms and homes ruined. The number of volunteers – the backbone of the Roman army – began to decline.
- Senatorial factions emerged and began to block each other's reforms.

## Who was Tiberius?

According to Roman historian Velleius Paterculus, Tiberius Gracchus 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

**SOURCE 16.12** Velleius Paterculus, c. 30 BCE, *Roman History*, Book 2, 2.2

### Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus

Born: c. 169–164 BCE

Died: 133 BCE

- Father: Tiberius Gracchus the Elder, one of the most powerful men in Rome during the second century BCE who had held positions of consul, censor and provincial governor. Many of his opponents considered him a political opportunist.
- Mother: Cornelia Africana (daughter of Scipio Africanus – general responsible for defeating Hannibal at the Battle of Zama in 202 BCE).
- Upbringing: Cornelia carefully supervised his education – a balance of traditional Roman values and the best of Greek learning. His Greek education meant that he often associated with liberal aristocrats and intellectuals.

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. 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 Plebs. He was successfully elected in 133 BCE.

## The *Lex Agraria*

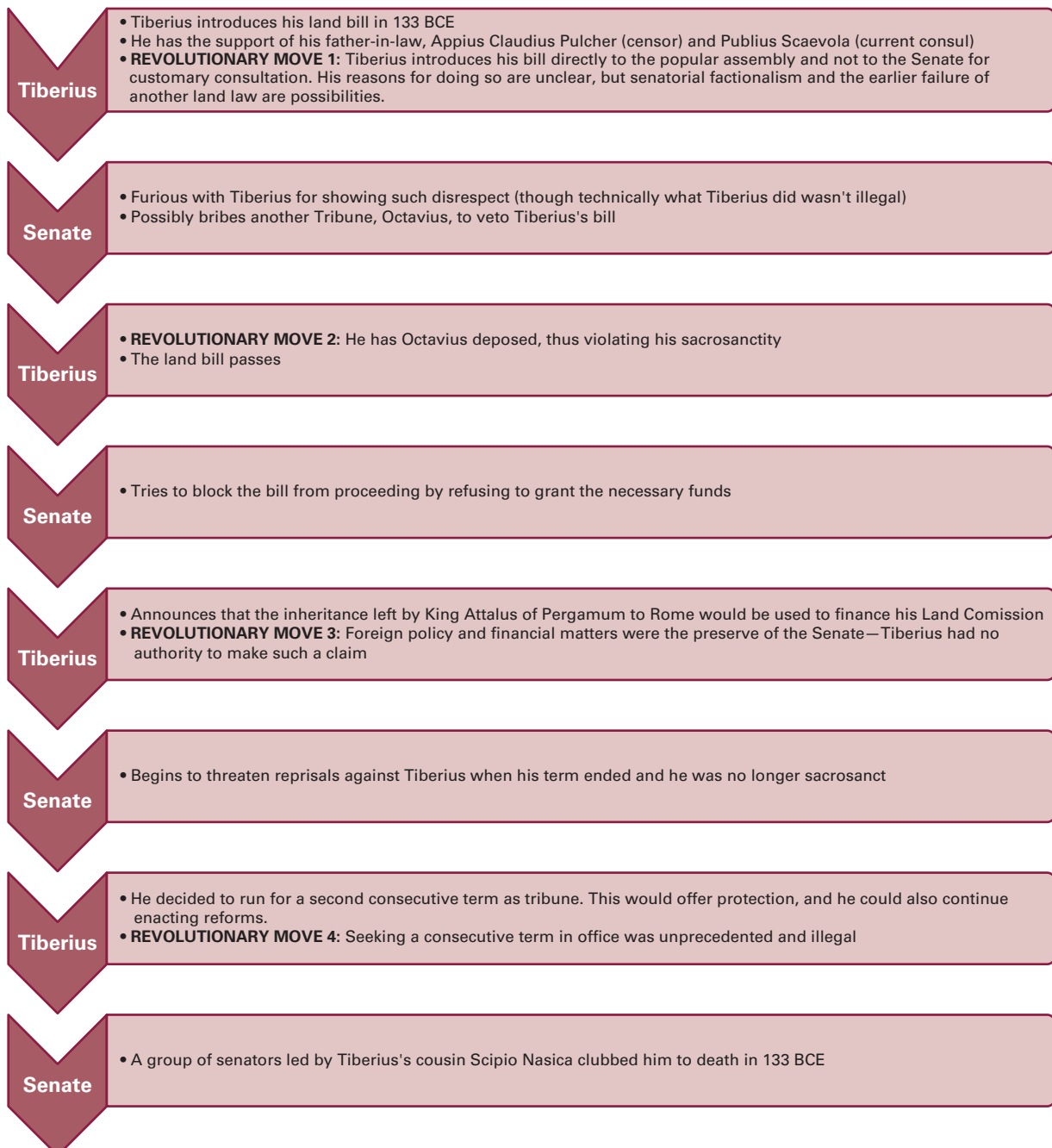
Using his position as Tribune, Tiberius wanted to pass reforms that would alleviate the suffering of the poor. The bill proposed that:

- 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 to sell their holdings.
- Present landowners could not keep more than 130 hectares.

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 – and it also provided more troops for the Roman army. Its provisions further aimed to stop aristocrats, who would have land taken from them, from seeking revenge.

## Tiberius vs the Senate

Tiberius's true intentions behind the *Lex Agraria* are widely debated. While they certainly speak of a desire to help the poor and recognition of their need, he was also 'obliged' to achieve something given the reputation of his father but the law would have also made him popular and thus securing support in future elections. 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.





## Aftermath

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, and the power it would give the Claudian faction in the Senate. 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* 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. Yet they failed to recognise that their arrogance, pride and condoning of violence also contributed to the crisis of 133–132 BCE, and the years that followed.



**SOURCE 16.13** 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?

## 16.5 Marius and Sulla

### *Populares* and *optimates*

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 this power.

**TABLE 16.5** Comparing approaches to maintaining power in Rome

<b>Populares</b>	<b>Optimates</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• chose to work through the tribunate and popular assemblies</li> <li>• believed power and authority was to be gained by working with the people (popularity would equal success)</li> <li>• the political successors of the Gracchi</li> <li>• their political agenda was designed to appeal to the Roman people as a whole</li> <li>• comprised forward-looking patricians (usually younger men who, like Tiberius, had enjoyed a Greek education)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• chose to work through the Senate and traditional avenues.</li> <li>• translates as 'best men'</li> <li>• represented the propertied classes and old aristocratic elite</li> <li>• saw themselves as the defenders of tradition – they wanted to maintain the status quo and senatorial power</li> <li>• most senators aligned themselves with the <i>optimates</i></li> </ul>

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BCE) was a Roman statesman and orator, who introduced elements of Greek philosophy to the Romans. He served as consul in 63 BCE during which time he suppressed an attempted overthrow of the government. He often argued for returning to a traditional republican government, and referred to the *populares* as 'dissident nobles'. However, 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:

- 100 BCE: a slave uprising involving 30 000 slaves in Italy
- 112–106 BCE: Jugurthine War in Numidia
- 113–101 BCE: Wars against the Cimbri and Teutones in Cisalpine Gaul and Gallia Narbonensis
- 91–88 BCE: the Social Wars.

These conflicts placed continual pressure on the Republic and made heavy demands on her resources (people and finances). However, the conflicts also resulted in the emergence of powerful generals who were responsible for building the strong army that was to become the backbone of the Roman Empire.

## Gaius Marius

### Gaius Marius

- Born: c. 157 BCE
- Died: 86 BCE
- He was from the *equite* class, so he was considered a *novus homo* or 'new man'.
- He made his name at the siege of Numantia in Spain under command of Scipio Aemilianus (Tiberius Gracchus's adoptive cousin) who recognised his capabilities.
- He married into the Julian family (his wife was the aunt of Gaius Julius Caesar).
- He was Described by Roman historians Plutarch and Sallust as follows:

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 16.14** Plutarch, 75 BCE, *Life of Marius*, Book 2.1

He was a hard worker, a man of integrity and an experienced soldier. Indomitable on the battlefield, he was frugal in his private life, proof against temptations of passion and riches, and covetous only of glory.

**SOURCE 16.15** Sallust, c. 41–40 BCE, *The Jugurthine War*, Chapter 63.6

### 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*) were only called up in a crisis (in which case the state paid for their armour). By 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.

**TABLE 16.6** Roman army reforms, second century BCE

#### Marius's army reforms

- Any man who volunteered was accepted regardless of property holdings or qualifications.
- New training methods were introduced; in 105 BCE, Rutulius Rufus used instructors who had previously worked at gladiator schools to train soldiers in the more skilled use of weapons.
- The *maniple* was replaced by the *cohort* as the fundamental tactical unit.
- The iconic Roman eagle became the standard carried into battle before the army.
- Soldiers were now required to carry all their equipment and were consequently nicknamed 'Marius's mules'. By carrying all their equipment, the army became more mobile and could move quickly.
- Various colonies were established as army bases.
- Veterans were promised land on retirement, making them more loyal to the general who could 'push' the Senate to award the land, rather than the State they fought for.



**SOURCE 16.16** Modern re-enactment of Roman soldiers. What activities are undertaken by re-enactment groups in your area?

### Marius's career

As a *novus homo*, the political ladder was a lot harder for Marius 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 Plebs and this was followed by the governorship of Hispania Ulterior. 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.

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 on 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 to starve to death.

In the following years Marius 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.

### Marius makes a mistake

Marius's career began to decline in 100 BCE when he allied himself with Glaucia (a praetor) and Saturninus (a 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. He went into exile in Asia in 98 BCE, but returned to Rome a few years later.



## Sulla

### Lucius Cornelius Sulla Felix

- Born: c. 138 BCE
- Died: 78 BCE
- His father was Lucius Cornelius Sulla.
- He came from the Cornelius clan (an old, leading family, but relatively poor).
- He had a good education, and developed a lifelong love of Greek and Roman literature.
- He possessed a driving political ambition.
- He was conservative at heart – an *optimatus*.
- He was described by Roman historians Plutarch and Sallust as follows:

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 16.17** Plutarch, 75 BCE, *Life of Sulla*, 6.7–6.8

He was eloquent, shrewd and an accommodating friend. His skill in pretense 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.

**SOURCE 16.18** Sallust, c. 41–40 BCE, *The Jugurthine War*, chapter 95

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 led the Republic against King Mithridates VI of Pontus (modern Turkey). Sulla experienced some success in Pontus, but his attention was soon recalled to Rome by Marius's return to politics and Marius's attempt to seize the command of the campaign against Mithridates. Motivations for Marius's return to politics may have included jealousy of Sulla's success. By this time, Marius and Sulla were considered the leaders of their respective factions.

### Civil war, round one: 88–86 BCE

- Marius uses support from the tribunes to seize the command against Mithridates from Sulla (88 BCE).
- Sulla rallies supporters and marches on Rome.
- Marius is driven out of Rome and flees to Africa.
- Sulla departs Rome again for Pontus.
- During Sulla's absence, the consul Cinna betrays him and helps Marius besiege Rome (87 BCE).
- Marius and Cinna slaughter *optimates* in Rome.
- Marius and Cinna 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

- 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 of Alexander, a second-century CE Greek historian with Roman citizenship, claims that no one dared speak out against Sulla's treatment of the *populares*.

- Plutarch recounted that sons and grandsons of those he executed have their civil and property rights taken away from them ‘(effectively eliminating their eligibility for office, and stripping families of their wealth and sources of income). (*Sulla*, 31)
- Sallust: ‘Sulla is the only man in history who has ever devised punishments for the unborn’ (*Histories*, 1.48.6).
- Sulla is declared dictator by the Senate, with no set time limit for his term in office (82 BCE). Appian wrote:

Thus Sulla became a king, or tyrant, de facto – not elected but holding power by force and violence ... There had been autocratic rule by 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.



**SOURCE 16.20** 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?

**SOURCE 16.19** Appian, c.162 CE, *The Civil Wars*, Book 1.99–1.100

### Sulla's dictatorship

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 to Rome by strengthening the Senate, reducing the power of the tribunes and reorganising the courts.

**TABLE 16.7** Sulla's changes to the magistracy

<p><b>The Senate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enlarged by 300 members, mainly <i>equites</i></li> <li>• automatic membership to ex-quaestors</li> <li>• senate approval required before legislation was presented to the assembly</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Tribune</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• right of veto was limited</li> <li>• tribunes became ineligible for further political office</li> <li>• tribunes lost the power of enacting legislation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Office holding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>lex Villia</i> of 180 BCE re-enacted – this meant the <i>cursus honorum</i> had to be strictly observed</li> <li>• increased number of magistrates to improve the efficiency of government</li> <li>• treason laws forbade governors from leaving their provinces or declare war without Senate permission</li> </ul>	<p><b>Judicial reforms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number of courts increased to seven</li> <li>• courts had the power to try serious crimes (a power previously in the hands of popular assemblies)</li> <li>• jurors were all senators</li> </ul>

### ACTIVITY 16.6

1. Appian wrote the following about Sulla:

He [Sulla] forbade anybody to hold the office of praetor, until after he had held that of quaestor, or to be consul before he had been praetor, and he prohibited any man from holding the office a second time till after the lapse of 10 years.

...

(continued)

## ACTIVITY 16.6 continued

He reduced the tribunician power to such an extent that it seemed to be destroyed. He curtailed it by a law which provided that one holding the office of tribune should never afterwards hold any other office.

**SOURCE 16.21** Appian, c. 162 CE, *The Civil Wars*, Book 1.100

- a. Based on what you have learnt so far in this chapter, how else had these rules been broken in recent years?
2. Velleius Paterculus commented on a change Sulla made to the court system:

The right to sit in judgement in the courts which C. Gracchus had taken from the Senate and given to the knights, Sulla gave back to the Senate.

**SOURCE 16.22** Velleius Paterculus, c. 30 BCE, *Roman History*, Book 2, 32

- a. What was the result of the changes in law described in Sources 16.21 and 16.22?
3. Appian writes about reforms to the Senate:

To the Senate itself, which had been much thinned by the seditions and wars, he added about 300 members from the best of the knights, taking the votes of the tribes on each one.

**SOURCE 16.23** Appian, c. 162 CE, *The Civil Wars*, Book 1.100

- a. What do you see as the objective behind the reforms in Sources 16.22 and 16.23?
4. Appian continues:

To the Plebeians he added more than 10 000 slaves of proscribed persons, choosing the youngest and strongest, to whom he gave freedom and Roman citizenship, and he called them Corneli, after himself. In this way he made sure of having 10 000 men among the plebeians always ready to obey his commands.

**SOURCE 16.24** Appian, c. 162 CE, *The Civil Wars*, Book 1.100

- a. What are your views on Appian's conclusion of why Sulla did this?
5. Aulus Gellus, a second-century CE author and grammarian, writes about a law introduced by Sulla:

A number of wealthy men were notorious *bons viveurs* [people devoted to refined sensuous enjoyment, particularly good food and drink] and squandered their wealth and property, pouring it away in banquets and parties. So the dictator L. Sulla passed a law in the people's Assembly to the following effect: on the Kalends [1st day of month], Ides [15th or 13th day of month] and Nones [9 days before Ides] of each month, on the days public games were held, and on certain regular festivals, people might legally spend up to 300 sesterces on a dinner, but on all other days, no more than 30 sesterces.

**SOURCE 16.25** Aulus Gellius, c. 2 CE, *Noctes Atticae*, Book 2.24.11

- a. What do you see as Sulla's motive behind this law? Was he being hypocritical?



## 16.6 Gaius Gracchus

Information about Gaius Gracchus is available in the Interactive Textbook

### 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 facilitated 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 by the people. Their actions went so 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.

## 16.7 Pompey and Caesar

### Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey)

- Born: 106 BCE
- Died: 48 BCE
- Father: Gnaeus Pompeius Strabo, who had served as consul but generally was disliked.
- His family were considered *novi homi* (plural of *novus homo*); they were wealthy, but not aristocrats.
- Pompey was a protégé of Sulla. At the age of 23 he raised an army for Sulla. He also married Sulla's stepdaughter.
- He was given the title Magnus ('great') after campaigns against Marius in Sicily and Africa.
- He demanded and was given a triumph. This was illegal on several fronts – he was not a praetor or consul, he was underage, and triumphs were given at the Senate's discretion.



**SOURCE 16.26** Bust of Pompey

### Pompey's early political career

In 70 BCE, Pompey was elected joint consul with Marcus Licinius Crassus. Crassus had fulfilled all of the requirements of the *cursus honorum*, but Pompey had not. While popularity with the people would have convinced the Senate to pass decrees of exemption for Pompey, it was primarily his alliance with Crassus that ensured his smooth ascent. In accepting Pompey and making exemptions for him, a crucial lesson was given to others who held such aspirations – it showed the Senate was not immune (as they would have people believe) from external control.

### Military success

As consul, Pompey had numerous successes leading military campaigns. In 73 BCE, he defeated the remaining anti-Sullan forces, who were holding out in Spain. He gave amnesty to many of them and in doing so, won their loyalty and allegiance. Their allegiance would be crucial in his later war against Julius Caesar. Next, he turned his attention to the slave revolt led by the gladiator Spartacus in Sicily. While the command against the slaves was given to his co-consul Crassus, it was Pompey who arrived at the end and eliminated the remaining rebels. This seeming 'theft' of Crassus's glory created bad feeling between the two colleagues, which gave Pompey a very convenient reason not to disband his army.

## The impact of Spartacus

Despite his popularisation in modern literature and media, very little is known about the historical Spartacus. Many of the surviving accounts are contradictory, leaving historians with a difficult task in determining the truth. The conflict between Spartacus and the Republic (known as the Third Servile War) had several repercussions. First, it showcased the Roman practice of slavery in all its barbarity. Second, Pompey's 'theft' of Crassus's glory permanently damaged their relationship and the two were never at ease with one another thereafter. Third, it demonstrated to the Republic that it had enemies both within and outside its borders. Although the Romans would not like to admit it, the rebellion of slaves led by Spartacus was a serious threat to the Republic.

## What other weaknesses of the Republic did Spartacus's rebellion expose?

In 67 BCE, Pompey was given the responsibility for addressing the issue of piracy in the Mediterranean. Years earlier, Rome had destroyed the main naval power in the Mediterranean – the Greek island of Rhodes. Now, without Rhodes to keep them in check, pirates had managed to cut off Rome's supply of corn and other significant imports. Pompey's response showed 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.

His 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 backward for Roman rule. These were ruled locally and they paid a tribute to Rome.

## The emergence of Caesar

### Gaius Julius Caesar

- Born: 100 BCE
- Died: 44 BCE
- Father: Gaius Julius Caesar; the Julian family was old and illustrious, but also had numerous connections with the *populares* faction through marriages.
- His mother was Aurelia Cotta.
- He became head of the family at age 16, on his father's death.
- Plutarch alleges that he was subject to epileptic fits – warfare became the treatment for his health. While he spent money recklessly, his ability to secure the affection of his soldiers and get the best out of them was remarkable.
- Suetonius describes him as a brilliant orator, one who was not naturally vindictive, but who could be arrogant.
- He was a skilled swordsman and horseman who balanced caution in battle with daring.

## The First Triumvirate

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



**SOURCE 16.27** The First Triumvirate: (left to right) Caesar, Crassus and Pompey. How would you describe these men based on their physical appearance?

the consulship in 59 BCE. While Pompey and Crassus still did not get along, Caesar reconciled the two as they all recognised they would gain personal advantages from the alliance. Unbeknownst to them, the First Triumvirate was a catalyst for the civil war that would erupt a decade later. However, at the conception of the First Triumvirate, the three individuals had the support of the army, the Roman people and the *equites*. The ‘Senate and People of Rome’ had begun to crumble.

### Publius Clodius Pulcher and Titus Annius Milo

Clodius and Milo were supporters of Caesar and Pompey respectively. Both acted as political agitators during Caesar’s campaigns in Gaul. Clodius used his position as tribune to push through pro-*populares* legislation on Caesar’s behalf. In addition, he successfully exiled Cicero (on the grounds that when Cicero put down a conspiracy initiated by senator Lucius Sergius Catilina, he summarily executed the conspirators rather than giving them a trial) and sent Cato (an enemy of Caesar) to Cyprus. Once he began his personal attack on Pompey, he became a target for *optimates* like Milo. Milo facilitated Cicero’s recall from exile, but Clodius’s gangs attacked him. Milo was unsuccessful in prosecuting Clodius in 57 BCE for this violence. In 52 BCE, the respective gangs met on the Appian Way (the sources are conflicted as to whether Clodius was lying in wait for Milo, or if the meeting was by chance). Fighting ensued and Clodius was killed. Cicero later spoke in defence of Milo at his trial but lost his composure and was intimidated by the Clodian supporters. Milo was exiled to Gaul and died in 48 BCE as part of a rebellion against Caesar.

#### ACTIVITY 16.7

1. How do you think the violent actions by Caesar and Pompey’s supporters influenced their reputations?
2. How did the actions of Caesar and Pompey influence the breakdown of the Republic?

### Caesar’s campaigns in Gaul

The main weakness of the Germanic tribes was a lack of political unity – they were constantly engaged in tribal warfare. This gave Caesar the advantage in the following military actions:

- 58 BCE: campaign against the Helvetii
- 58 BCE: defeated Ariovistus, King of the Suebi
- 57 BCE: campaign against the Belgae; Caesar was given a 15-day thanksgiving in Rome by the Senate to celebrate this victory
- 56 BCE: defeated the Veneti
- 55–54 BCE: further victories against Germanic tribes; Caesar crosses the Rhine (a Roman first)
- 55 BCE: invaded Britain to cut off reinforcements from rebellious Gauls
- 52 BCE: Gauls rose again under leadership of Vercingetorix (Caesar was delayed in leaving Rome); Caesar laid siege to Vercingetorix at his fortress of Alesia until he surrendered
- 51 BCE: Gaul firmly under Roman control.

Caesar’s campaigns against the Gauls showed his statesman-like qualities. He allowed local tribal governments to continue and encouraged their loyalty by giving gifts. Latin language was also gradually adopted by the people. Caesar’s campaigns in Gaul transformed the growing Republic from a purely Mediterranean empire to a continental European one.

## 16.8 The civil war

During Caesar’s absence in Gaul for almost a decade, Pompey gained significant popularity with the people. So much so, that he was the only consul appointed in 52 BCE. His wife Julia (Caesar’s daughter) had died in 54 BCE and Crassus died fighting the Parthians in 53 BCE, so there were few factors keeping Caesar and Pompey’s alliance together.





**SOURCE 16.28** *Caesar*, 1875, by Adolphe Yvon. Why is Caesar such a popular subject in art throughout history?

Caesar and Pompey, along with their respective allies, moved against each other in 50 BCE. Both refused to dismiss their soldiers unless the other did so. To break the stalemate, the *optimates* in the Senate granted Pompey the right, as commander of all Italian forces, to march against Caesar. Caesar attempted to negotiate a compromise through tribune Mark Antony, but the offer was rejected. He then marched into Italy with his legions in 49 BCE. By crossing the Rubicon River with his army still intact, he was essentially declaring war on Rome and forfeiting his *imperium*.

Panicked by Caesar's imminent invasion, the Senate, Pompey and his army fled Rome, and moved across the Adriatic Sea to Greece, leaving Caesar to capture Rome with ease. Caesar then moved to

defeat Pompey's allies in Spain, because he wasn't yet strong enough to take on Pompey directly. The first encounter between the two was at Dyrrachium (in modern Albania) in 48 BCE. Later, at the Battle of Pharsalus, Caesar's clever tactics won him the battle, despite being heavily outnumbered.

After fleeing the Battle of Pharsalus, Pompey went to Egypt but was murdered on the orders of Egyptian King Ptolemy XIII. Caesar arrived in Egypt soon after, and was presented with Pompey's head and signet ring on his arrival. He reportedly wept at the sight.

### Summary of Pompey's political career and character

- Pompey did not fit easily into any accepted category of Roman politics – he never wholly belonged to any specific group and so was never completely trusted.
- He sought power and broke constitutional rules to achieve it, but not via direct force (though he threatened to use his army on more than one occasion).
- Pompey has been described as vain, hypocritical and devious. The sources say that he liked to think his services were indispensable to the State.
- Plutarch captures the essence of Pompey's desires by describing his actions as a 'pursuit of glory'.
- Pompey was remembered as a legend in his time.

### ACTIVITY 16.8

Study all the sources in this section relating to Pompey before answering the questions below.

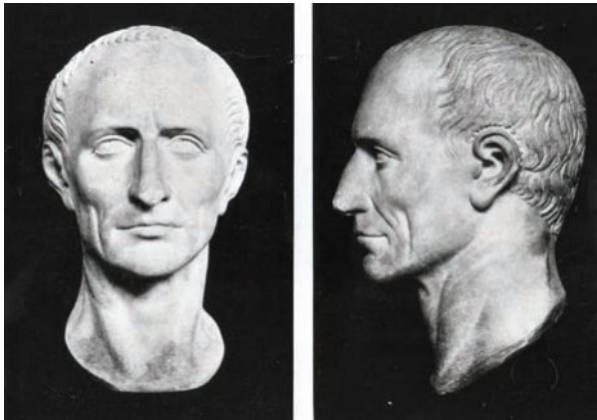
1. Was Pompey a destroyer or defender of the Republic?
2. Why did Pompey acquire the power he did? How do his actions help us understand his motivations?

### The dictatorship of Caesar

Caesar had been accumulating titles and positions of responsibility for a number of years before his defeat of Pompey. He was appointed dictator for 12 months in 48 BCE and was reappointed for a 10-year period in 46 BCE. Finally, in 44 BCE, he was named dictator for life and the Senate ordered that an oath of allegiance should be taken in his name. He also served as consul, *pontifex maximus*, augur and *praefectura morum* (giving him the powers of a censor). The most telling illustration of the power Caesar had accumulated was the Senate granting him the sacrosanctity of a tribune, without actually holding the office.

## Caesar's honours

- He was named *parens patriae* (father of the country).
- The month Quinctilus was renamed Julius (July).
- His statue was placed in the temple of Quirinus and in other temples.
- In 44 BCE his head appeared on Roman coins.
- His birthday was celebrated by public sacrifice.
- He was given the title *imperator*.
- He was granted a gold chair and garment once used by kings.



**SOURCE 16.29** Caesar. Does this representation of Caesar support your understanding of his character?

After Pompey's death, Caesar, captivated by its Queen Cleopatra, stayed on in Egypt. Eventually he left Egypt to her and her younger brother (Ptolemy XIII had been killed). Caesar made his way back to Rome via Pontus to confront Pharnaces I, the son of Mithridates. He defeated him at the Battle of Zela and commemorated the victory with his famous words, 'Veni, vidi, vici' ('I came, I saw, I conquered'). The suicide of Cato in 46 BCE marked the acknowledgement by the *optimates* faction that they had lost. Caesar was now master of the Roman world.

Given he was only in sole power for a short period of time, Caesar achieved a vast amount. He showed his skill as a statesman and a soldier.

He pardoned Pompey's soldiers, hoping the act of clemency would bring him universal gratitude and support.

**TABLE 16.8** Caesar's reforms

Areas of reform under Caesar	Description
Colonies	mostly for veterans, included Hispalis, Corduba, Urso, Carthage, Apameia and Corinth
Senate	enlarged Senate from 600 to 900 members, widening its base
Citizenship	extended citizenship to Transalpine Gaul, a legion raised in Narbonese Gaul, and future doctors and teachers in Rome
Debt	cancelled all interest due since start of civil war – effectively 25% of current debts owed
Agriculture	required at least 1/3 of cattlemen employed by landowners to be free men
Corn dole	reduced number on corn dole from 320 000 to 150 000
Abolition of collegia	abolished all collegia (political, social and trade unions), except for genuine guilds and Jewish religious gatherings
Public buildings and works	new roads and harbour at Ostia; plan to drain Pontine Marshes; new building projects – Basilica Julia and another forum (named after himself)
Calendar	reformed inaccurate Roman calendar, replaced it with one, slightly modified, which still influences the Gregorian Calendar in use today

## Caesar's downfall

Caesar's downfall was a very sudden change in his fortune. Sixty to eighty conspirators were led by Marcus Junius Brutus and Gaius Cassius Longinus, both of whom had been supporters of Pompey previously pardoned by Caesar. They cornered him on the portico of the Theatre of Pompey where the Senate was meeting on the Ides of March (15th) in 44 BCE, stabbing him to death with daggers they had concealed in their togas. He fell mortally wounded at the base of Pompey's statue.

The conspirators probably acted from a variety of motives from private grudges to a genuine fear that he was destroying the Republic. Despite his positive reforms, Caesar could not hide his contempt for Republican institutions and it is likely this negative attitude was his undoing. At the time of his death, the power and authority he held as dictator were as great as those of any king. Given Rome's traditional abhorrence of kingship, it is a wonder that in elevating Caesar to such heights, they did not realise the consequences of their actions. It is testament to Caesar's political acumen that he was able to rise so high and hold what was effectively absolute power in a nation that prided itself on representing the interests of both the Senate and the people of Rome.



**SOURCE 16.30** *Death of Julius Caesar*, Vincenzo Camuccini, 1771. How does Camuccini's painting compare with historical accounts of Caesar's assassination?

## 16.9 Mark Antony and Octavian

The conspirators who assassinated Julius Caesar believed his death would solve their problems and that the Roman people would welcome it joyfully. Instead, it created a power vacuum that resulted in 13 years of civil war between Caesar's supporters and their opponents. Caesar's two main supporters, his adopted son Octavian and Mark Antony, joined forces to avenge Caesar's death. Once the assassins were dealt with, they still had each other to contend with.

### Mark Antony (Marcus Antonius)

- Born: 83 BCE
- Died: 30 BCE
- Father: Marcus Antonius Creticus, who was considered incompetent and corrupt.
- Stepfather: Publius Cornelius Lentulus Sura, who was executed for his involvement in the Catiline Conspiracy.
- Mother: Julia Antonia, who was a distant cousin of Julius Caesar.
- His upbringing was characterised by a lack of proper parental guidance and support. By age 20, he had amassed significant debts and was a known member of street gangs.



## Gaius Octavian

- Born: 63 BCE
- Died: 14 CE
- Father: Gaius Octavius
- Adoptive father: Julius Caesar
- Mother: Atia Balba Caesonia, niece of Julius Caesar
- His upbringing was characterised by inconsistent parental figures. His father died when he was four, and his maternal grandmother who raised him also died when he was quite young. During his teenage years his mother, stepfather and uncle (Julius Caesar) began to take a more active role in his education.

### Stage 1: 44–42 BCE (Antony and Octavian vs the conspirators)

Immediately after Caesar's death, the Roman people were terrified. As consul, Antony took advantage of the situation and stirred up the people against the assassins through a famous eulogy he gave at Caesar's funeral. Fearing for their lives, Brutus, Cassius and other key conspirators fled Rome.

#### The rise of Octavian

After Caesar's funeral, it emerged that his grand-nephew and adopted son Octavian was his heir. This was a significant disappointment to Antony, who had expected to be named as such. Octavian was only 18 when Caesar died, and he returned to Rome when he heard the news. Given his relatively young age and lack of experience, Octavian had difficulty in forcing Antony to recognise him as the legitimate heir. The name 'Caesar' was his greatest asset in the beginning and he was able to use it to win over two of Antony's legions. This was a significant demonstration of the change that had begun to occur within the Roman army – while officially they took their instructions from the Senate, their true loyalty lay with their general.

While Antony was in Modena pursuing Brutus, Octavian saw an opportunity to make himself the champion of the Roman state. By raising troops to help Brutus, Octavian ensured Antony was defeated. While such actions seem somewhat contradictory (why defend the man who killed your adoptive father?), Brutus and Cassius had arguably done the right thing – they acted in order to protect the Republic. As both consuls at the time had died during the conflict, Octavian demanded the right for himself. The Senate refused since Octavian met none of the criteria for holding the office. In response, Octavian marched on Rome and the Senate acquiesced.

#### The Second Triumvirate: 43 BCE

Although Octavian had control of Rome, Antony and Lepidus (Caesar's *magister equitum*) both still had armies, and Brutus and Cassius were on the run in the East. Despite their mistrust of each other, they agreed that they alone had the ability to bring peace and stability to Rome. The three united in a joint dictatorship, with the Senate granting them unlimited power for five years. Once this Second Triumvirate was formed, Octavian, Antony and Lepidus set about removing their opponents. Some 300 senators and 2000 *equites* perished as a result of proscriptions, including the famous pro-Republican orator Cicero.

### Stage 2: 42–30 BCE (Antony vs Octavian)

The Triumvirate managed to defeat Brutus, Cassius and their supporters at the Battle of Philippi in 42 BCE. In despair at their failure, Brutus and Cassius committed suicide within days of each other. In 40 BCE through the Treaty of Brundisium, Octavian, Antony and Lepidus divided Roman territory between them. Lepidus was granted Africa (the least wealthy region), Antony took the east, and Octavian took Italy and the west. To seal their alliance further, Antony was married to Octavian's sister Octavia. Unfortunately, it was only a few years after their alliance was sealed that Lepidus became disgruntled with his position within the

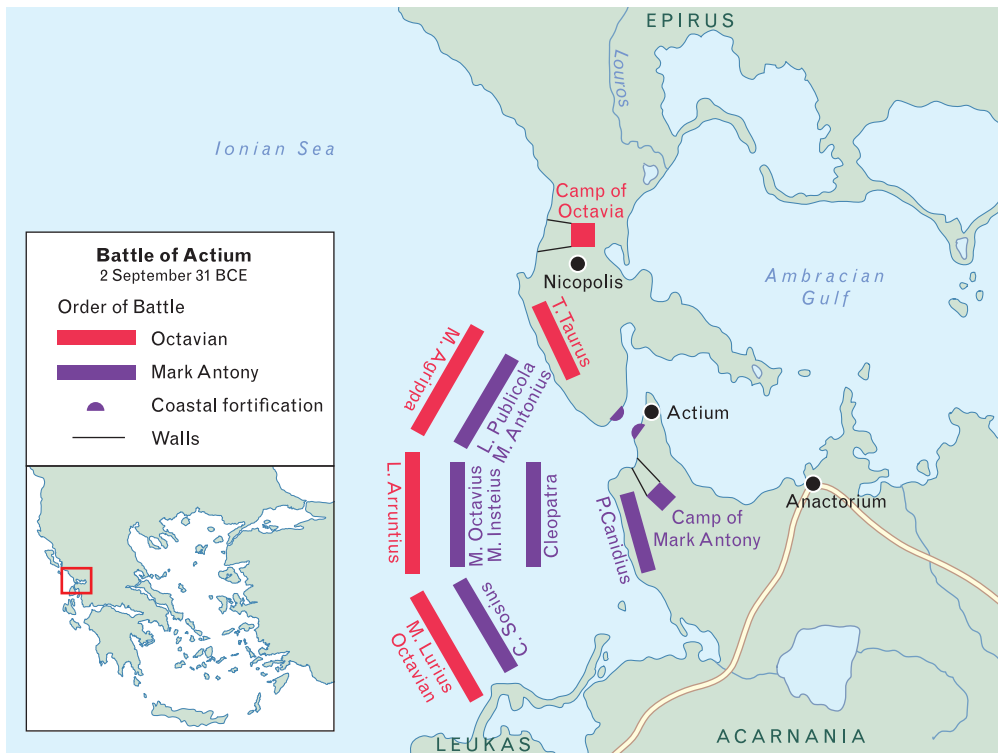


**SOURCE 16.31** (left to right) Octavian, Lepidus and Marc Antony. What was the age difference between them?

Triumvirate and began to move against Octavian, who he felt was treating him like a subordinate, rather than an equal. Embarrassingly, when confronting Octavian's legions in Sicily, Lepidus's troops defected, leaving him little choice but to concede defeat. In 36 BCE, Lepidus was stripped of all his offices except for *pontifex maximus* and sent into exile. Despite his wife and son being caught up in a later conspiracy against Octavian, Lepidus was able to live out the rest of his life in relative obscurity, dying in 13–12 BCE.

The alliance between Antony and Octavian did not last long. Antony was not successful in bringing stability to the east, and his relationship with Cleopatra sealed his doom. For Octavian, Antony's divorce from his sister was unforgivable, while Antony's growing infatuation with and promotion of Cleopatra led many Romans to see him as an 'oriental monarch'. This was aggravated further by his granting Roman provinces to his children by Cleopatra in his will.

In 32 BCE, Octavian and the Senate declared war on Antony and Cleopatra. Octavian used the rumour that Antony was going to make Cleopatra Queen of Rome and transfer the seat of government to Egypt to gain support for his cause. In 31 BCE, Octavian set sail for Epirus in Greece where he defeated Antony and Cleopatra at the Battle of Actium. During the battle, a large portion of Antony's army defected. Realising the scale of their loss, both Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide. Octavian returned to Rome a hero, albeit a hero with a mighty task in front of him. Rome had endured 100 years of civil war. The people craved peace and prosperity. It was his task to deliver that security.



**SOURCE 16.32** Map showing the Battle of Actium. What advantages did each party have going into the battle?



**SOURCE 16.33** *Battle of Actium*, Lorenzo A. Castro, 1672. Did Roman ships actually look like this?'

## Objective 2: Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to people, power and authority in a particular period in the Ancient World

### 16.10 Reforms

#### ACTIVITY 16.9

Research the following laws that aimed to address the divide between plebeians and patricians and match them to the descriptions of reforms listed in the first column of the table. Note that some laws will address multiple issues. Describe the effectiveness that the resulting change would have had on each particular issue.

- *Lex Valeria de Provocatione* or First Valerian Law (509 BCE)
- First Secession of the Plebs (494 BCE)
- *Lex Publilia* (471 BCE)
- The Twelve Tables (451–450 BCE)
- *Leges Valeriae Horatiae* (449 BCE)
- *Lex Canuleia* (445 BCE)
- Licinian-Sextian Laws (367 BCE)
- *Lex Publilia* (339 BCE)
- *Lex Ogulnia* (300 BCE)
- *Lex Hortensia* (287 BCE)

(continued)



## ACTIVITY 16.9 continued

Injustice	Description	Reform	Effectiveness
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>patricians monopolised positions in government</li> <li>plebeians only voted in the <i>Comitia Centuriata</i> in the early Republic</li> </ul>		
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no intermarriage</li> <li>wealthy plebeians were regarded as inferior</li> <li>patricians wore distinguishing clothes</li> </ul>		
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>debt laws were very harsh on plebeians</li> <li>plebeians were excluded from leasing public land</li> </ul>		
Religious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>plebeians were excluded from all priestly offices</li> </ul>		
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>plebeians could not access laws as they were unwritten</li> <li>plebeians had no right of appeal</li> </ul>		

## 16.11 The contribution of individuals towards the breakdown of the Republic

### ACTIVITY 16.10

GO

For each of the seven key individuals discussed in this chapter, construct a key inquiry question and suitable sub-questions that assess the contribution each individual made towards the breakdown of the Roman Republic. Refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 2* for guidelines on how to frame questions.

- a. Tiberius Gracchus
- b. Gaius Marius
- c. Sulla
- d. Pompey
- e. Julius Caesar
- f. Mark Antony
- g. Octavian.

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature of power and how it was exercised in the Ancient World

### 16.12 Literary sources about the breakdown of the Republic

Modern historians looking at the time of the Republic's collapse have an advantage in the numerous literary sources available. However, because of the volatile nature of society and politics at the time, and even in later years under the emperors, these sources are clouded by emotion and propaganda.

#### Key sources

TABLE 16.9 Ancient literary sources on Rome's decline

Greek authors	Roman authors
Appian	Cicero
Dio Cassius	Julius Caesar
Diodorus	Livy
Dionysius	Polybius
Plutarch	Sallust
	Suetonius

#### ACTIVITY 16.11

For each of the key sources listed, make notes about the distinguishing features of the author. Use these prompt questions to guide you.

- 1. Origin:** Where was the author born? What was their childhood like? What was their role and place in society? Did they have any privileges? Why or why not?
- 2. Motive:** Why did they write? How did their motive result in the editing of history and did they intentionally leave things out? Why did they present certain people or events in particular ways (i.e. what was their purpose)?
- 3. Audience:** Were their texts addressed to any particular audiences? What type of texts did they write? Did the intended audience have an impact on what they wrote?
- 4. Perspective:** What is their perspective on particular issues? Who do they support? Who do they speak against? Does their point of view represent the views of a social or political group? How?
- 5. Context:** When were they writing? What else was going on at the time that may have influenced them?

#### ACTIVITY 16.12

1. Compare your notes for Activity 16.11 with other students. Did you come to the same conclusions or were there discrepancies? Why do you think this is?
2. Using your notes from the last activity, determine which historians would provide a reliable account for the actions of the following people. Why? Which historians would be unreliable? Why?
  - a. Tiberius Gracchus
  - b. Gaius Marius
  - c. Sulla
  - d. Pompey
  - e. Julius Caesar
  - f. Mark Antony
  - g. Octavian.



**SOURCE 16.34** *Cicero Denounces Catiline*, Cesare Maccari, 1889. What did the Senate house really look like?

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a powerful individual, group or society in the Ancient World

### 16.13 Roman consuls



Full content on this objective is available in the Interactive Textbook.



**SOURCE 16.35** *Cornelia With Her Sons Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus*, painting by Jose Garnelo y Alda (1866–1944) this woodcut by P. Fruehauf from *Moderne Kunst (Modern Art)*, illustrated magazine published by Richard Bong, 1891–1892, Year VI, No 4, Berlin. Is Cornelia's clothing historically accurate?



## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about people, power and authority in the Ancient World

When evaluating evidence from historical sources on the breakdown of the Roman Republic, it is important for you to consider the way theorists and historians have debated the nature of power, and the way it is exercised. You should also reflect on the historical significance of the study of power during this time.

### 16.14 Tiberius

Full content on this objective is available in the Interactive Textbook.



## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### 16.15 Creating responses to key inquiry questions

#### ACTIVITY 16.13

1. Use your own research to create a succinct response to one of the key inquiry questions listed at the start of this chapter.
2. Your response should include the following.
  - a. A succinct answer to the key question in your introduction.
  - b. A series of paragraphs where you examine the key issues and provide historical evidence to support your argument.
  - c. Diversity in primary and secondary sources.
  - d. Correct referencing of historical sources.

Further information on the construction of extended written responses can be found in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 6*.



# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- Rome abandoned her system of kings in 509 BCE and instituted a system that aimed to fairly represent the interests of the people through a combination of assemblies and magistracies.
- As the Republic grew, its political system failed to adapt to the new social context. The patricians became increasingly wealthy and monopolised political control; the plebeians had no way of improving their station in life.
- By acting against established tradition and procedure to try and address the disparity between social classes, Tiberius Gracchus opened cracks in the Republican system.
- Through his military reforms, Gaius Marius enabled later generals to capitalise on the loyalty their legions had for them personally, rather than to the Republic.
- Despite positive reforms, Sulla's dictatorship was characterised by violence, making the people fearful of individuals with too much personal power.
- Pompey recognised that he could gain more position and power by entering the First Triumvirate. He became more popular while Caesar was in Gaul and the two clashed in a civil war.
- Julius Caesar used the First Triumvirate to achieve his personal ambitions, and by using his legions as a threat he was able to see himself vested in unprecedented personal authority and power. He was later assassinated by a group of *optimates* who feared that he was beginning to model himself as a king.
- Mark Antony and Octavian banded together to avenge Caesar's death, but eventually turned on each other when Antony began to style himself as an oriental 'king' with Cleopatra by his side.
- Octavian emerged from 100 years of civil war as the hero of Rome.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

1. How were the plebeians disadvantaged in comparison to the patricians?
2. How did the Republican political system fulfil the concept of SPQR – The Senate and People of Rome?
3. How did the Republic aim to ensure it had capable leaders?

### Devise

Construct a research question for each of the seven key personalities discussed in this chapter (Tiberius Gracchus, Marius, Sulla, Pompey, Caesar, Antony and Octavian).

### Analyse and synthesise

Choose one of the topics listed below. Using Sources 16.37 to 16.42, provided on pages 425–6, and your own knowledge, respond to the topic in an extended response of 300 words. Ensure you: include a brief introduction where you clearly respond to the question, comment on the reliability of the sources and give a short conclusion.

- Topic 1: How did the career of Marius weaken the hold of the senatorial aristocracy on Roman politics even more than the careers of the Gracchi did?
- Topic 2: To what extent was the violence enacted by Sulla justified, given the significance of the reforms he made once in power?

Marius attempted his sixth consulship ... The need that state had of his services in war gave him power and dignity; but in civil matters ... he was forced to curry favour of the crowd. He was not content to be a good man; he would settle for nothing less than great ... Marius entered the city with his bodyguard ... These men killed many citizens ... even his personal friends ... at his direct orders ... Marius's rage and the thirst for blood increased ... he kept on killing all against whom he had even the remotest grudge ... So Marius was elected consul for the seventh time.

**SOURCE 16.36** Plutarch, 75 BCE, *Life of Marius*, Book 28

Marius was welcomed back by a united populace [in 101 BCE]. Offered two triumphs, he was satisfied with but one. The leading men of Rome, who had once detested him as an upstart [*novus homo*] raised to such great honours, maintained that he was the Saviour of Rome.

**SOURCE 16.37** Livy, c. 27–9 BCE, *History of Rome: Epitomes*, Chapter 68

Meanwhile, he [Marius] continued to sign on soldiers, not, in accordance with traditional custom, from the propertied classes, but accepting any man who volunteered – members of the proletariat for the most part. Some said he did this because he could not get enough of a better kind; others he wanted to curry favour with men of low condition, since he owed to them his fame and advancement ... The result of this new method of enlistment was that Marius set sail with a force considerably larger than that authorised by decree.

**SOURCE 16.38** Sallust, c. 41–40 BCE, *The Jugurthine War*, Chapter 86

Sulla achieved little besides adding to the sum of human misery. His system aggrieved the *equites*, the urban populace, the disposed peasants and the new citizens made no provision for veterans in the future. Social discontents continued, as the senate remained indifferent to the distress of the poor. It was the memory of Sulla's example and methods that proved most enduring.

**SOURCE 16.39** Brunt, P.A., 1971, *Social Conflicts in the Roman Republic*, Norton, p. 111

He [Sulla] forthwith proscribed about forty senators and 1600 knights. He seems to have been the first to make a formal list of those whom he punished, to offer prizes to assassins and rewards to informers, and to threaten with punishment those who should conceal the proscribed [i.e. those named on the list]. Some of these, taken unawares, were killed where they were caught, in their houses, on the streets or in the temples. Others were hurled through mid-air and thrown at Sulla's feet. Others were dragged through the city and trampled on, none of the spectators daring to utter a word of remonstrance against him.

**SOURCE 16.40** Appian, c. 162 CE, *The Civil Wars*, Book 1.95

He [Sulla] forbade anybody to hold the office of praetor, until after he had held that of quaestor, or to be consul before he had been praetor, and he prohibited any man from holding the office a second time till after the lapse of 10 years ... He reduced the tribunician power to such an extent that it seemed to be destroyed. He curtailed it by a law which provided that the one holding the office of tribune should never afterwards hold any other office ... The right to sit in judgement in the courts which G. Gracchus had taken from the Senate and given to the knights, Sulla gave back to the Senate.

**SOURCE 16.41** Appian, c. 162 CE, *The Civil Wars*, Book 1.100



## Evaluate

What are the common strengths and weaknesses found in primary sources for this time period? Make mention of specific authors where relevant and explain why such issues are present where possible.

## Respond

1. What can be learned from the breakdown of the Republic by modern scholars about power, authority and leadership?
2. How responsible was the Senate for its own decline in power and prestige during the late Republic? (Think about the Senate's traditional attitudes towards the plebeians, how they underestimated individuals and dealt with the problems they created, and why powerful individuals came to power in the first place.)

## Assessment

### Examination-style questions

Respond to the validity of one of the following statements:

1. The fall of the Republic was a result of the continual and repetitive abuse of power by those in key political positions.
2. The motives of Tiberius Gracchus were honourable in their desire to restore the balance of land ownership. However, the methods he employed to achieve his aims irreparably damaged the political system, paving the way for others to abuse their power and position.
3. Because the Roman political system failed to adapt to suit the changing social and economic context of the first century BCE, the collapse of the Republic was inevitable.
4. The success of powerful leaders during the breakdown of the Republic would not have been possible without the personal loyalty of the legions they commanded.

### Investigation tasks

1. Of the seven individuals examined in depth during this chapter (Tiberius Gracchus, Marius, Sulla, Pompey, Caesar, Antony and Octavian), whose actions contributed the most towards ensuring the breakdown of the Republic?
2. What historical evidence supports the conclusion by some historians that Julius Caesar wanted to be a king?
3. How did Marius's military reforms contribute to the success of later generals and political leaders like Pompey and Caesar?
4. In what ways can Tiberius Gracchus's actions in 133–132 BCE be considered the beginning of, or the first stage in the breakdown of the Republic?



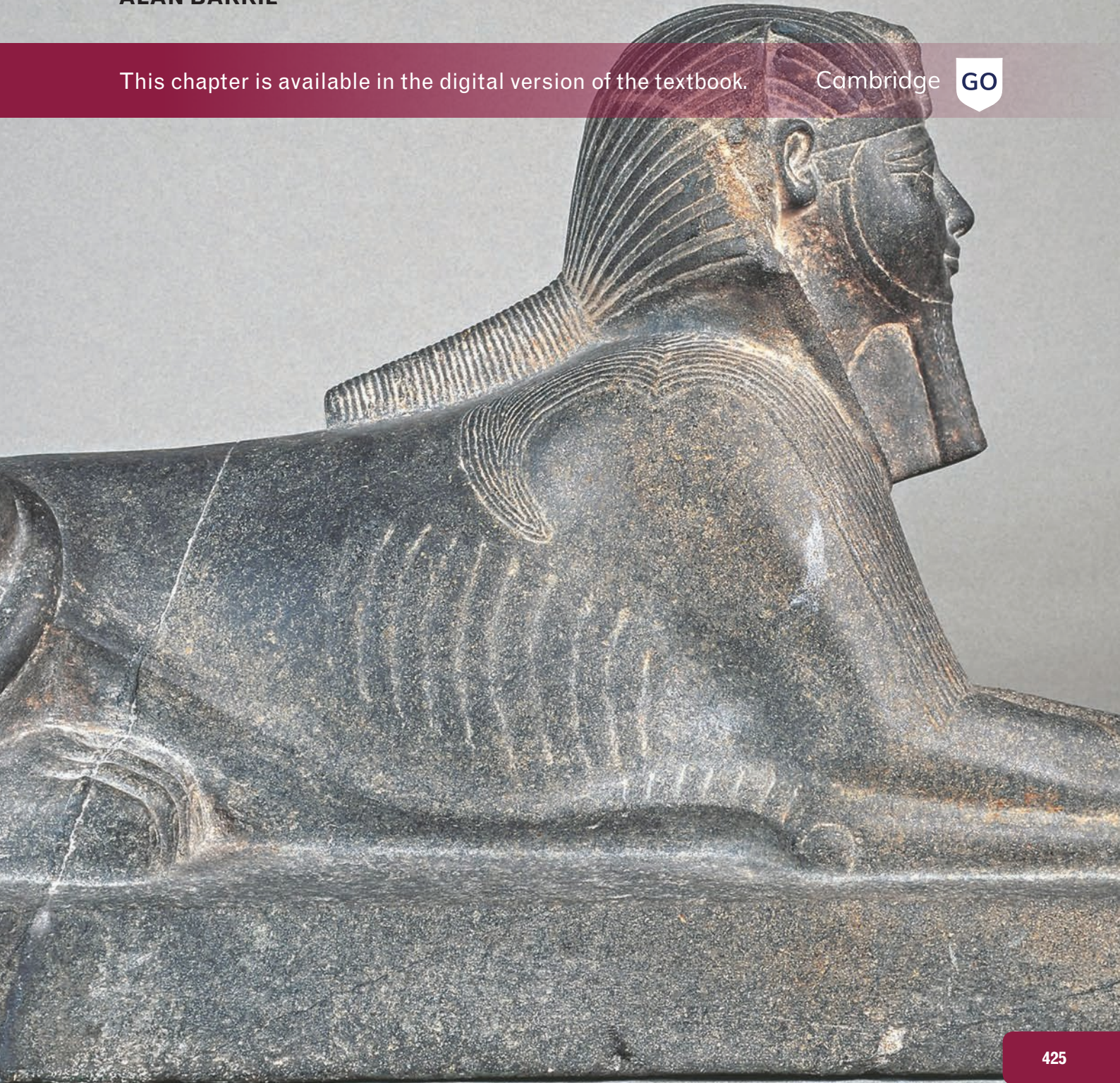
# CHAPTER 17

## Thutmose III

ALAN BARRIE

This chapter is available in the digital version of the textbook.

Cambridge





# CHAPTER 18

## Rameses II

BEN HEGERTY

### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to Rameses II:
  - the geographical and historical context of his life.
  - his family background and status.
  - the key events in his rise to prominence.
  - the significant influences on early development.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show an understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period, and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the career of Rameses II.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources and evidence to form a historical argument.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - Rameses II's change of role, position and status over time.
  - depictions of Rameses II during his lifetime.
  - the possible motivations for his actions.
  - the methods used to achieve his aims.
  - his relationships with groups and other individuals.
  - the significant events in the career of Rameses II.
  - the manner and impact of his death.
  - judgements of Rameses II by other individuals in his lifetime and after his death; for example, in writings, images and film.
- Create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose by completing short responses to historical sources.

### KEY DATES

	1279 BCE	1278 BCE	1276 BCE	1275 BCE	c. 1264– c. 1244 BCE
<b>Rameses II's regnal year</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	
	Rameses II becomes pharaoh; completes construction of his father's mortuary temple	Repels a minor invasion of the Sea People (Sherden), orders sinking of a well in Nubia	Initial short-lived conquests in Syria-Palestine	Battle of Kadesh	Probable dates for the construction of Abu Simbel



## Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the impact and legacy of Rameses II.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the assessments of the life and career of Rameses II.
  - the influence of Rameses II on his time.
  - the long-term impact and legacy of Rameses II.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

## 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.

**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

**1250 BCE**

**30**

Celebrates first Sed Festival

**1246 BCE**

**34**

Diplomatic marriage to daughter of Hattusili III

**1213 BCE**

**66**

Death of Rameses II



## MAP



**SOURCE 18.2** Map of Egyptian Empire in the reign of Rameses II (1279–1213 BCE)



## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITIONS
<b>Abu Simbel</b>	area in Nubia where Rameses II completed a temple in Year 34 to commemorate victory at the Battle of Kadesh
<b>Amun-Re</b>	the chief god in the New Kingdom, cult centre was Thebes
<b>Amurru</b>	the region around Kadesh
<b>Canaan</b>	southern region of the Levant roughly where Israel and Palestine are located today
<b>Hatti</b>	the kingdom of the Hittites
<b>Hattusa</b>	the name of the Hittite capital city
<b>Hattusili III</b>	the king of the Hittites in the middle years of Rameses II's reign
<b>Hittite Empire</b>	Egypt's main antagonist and a rival superpower in the New Kingdom
<b>Karnak</b>	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
<b>Muwatalli II</b>	king of the Hittites in Rameses II's early years Rameses II's opponent at the Battle of Kadesh
<b>Pi-Rameses</b>	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
<b>Ramesseum</b>	a temple in Thebes constructed by Rameses II for future worship after death
<b>Sherden</b>	name given to 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

## Introduction

In this chapter you will learn about the career and achievements of Rameses II. He was known as Rameses the Great and is considered by many to be one of the greatest pharaohs in the history of ancient Egypt. Rameses II is also one of the best-known pharaohs due to the production of a significant number of temples, monuments, statues and other forms of propaganda during his reign, which was made possible by his lengthy career that spanned over sixty years. Rameses II is a controversial figure, however, as it is unclear if the achievements he recorded during his long reign, such as his apparent single-handed victory over the Hittite forces in the Battle of Kadesh, were quite as impressive as official propaganda suggests. By analysing the evidence for his reign, with particular focus on key achievements in building, administration and warfare, as well as the legacy he left for future kings, you will be challenged to draw conclusions about the extent to which Rameses's reputation is deserved.



# Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

## 18.1 The nature of divine rule in Rameses II's reign

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; he 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.

The close relationship between the pharaoh and the gods is apparent from the very beginning of Rameses II's 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 lifetime.

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. 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 avoid 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 18.1

Answer the following questions based on your reading of the text above.

1. Explain what the relationship between the pharaoh and the gods was 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. What actions by Akhenaten would have seemed quite controversial to Egyptians of the New Kingdom?
4. Explain how Rameses II used religion to his advantage during his reign.

## 18.2 What kind of kingdom did Rameses II inherit?

For much of the New Kingdom, Egypt had competed with a rival superpower, the Hittite Empire, for control over southern Syria, Palestine and Israel, which together form the region historians call the Levant. In ancient times, these areas were referred to as the land of Canaan (modern-day Israel-Palestine) and Amurru (modern-day southern Syria). In addition to the gold mines that Egypt controlled in Nubia, the Levant was an important source of wealth for the Egyptian empire, generating income through trade and from tribute. Retaining control over the lands to the east was a high priority for most pharaohs; the city of Kadesh, a fortified city located on the Orontes River in southern Syria was of particular strategic importance for control over this region.

Through a series of successful military campaigns, Thutmose III (18th Dynasty) expanded Egypt's control over this region, as well as 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 a number of times. Much of Egypt's influence over the lands to the east, including the fortress-city of Kadesh, was lost during the turbulent reign of Akhenaten, who appears to have shown little regard for foreign affairs while implementing his religious reforms. Understanding its importance to Egypt, Akhenaten's successors Tutankhamun and Horemheb (the last pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty) tried and failed to recapture the city of Kadesh.

Little is known of Horemheb's successor, Rameses I, the first king of the 19th Dynasty, 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. Of the second pharaoh of the 19th Dynasty, however, we know more. Rameses I's son Seti I subdued rebellious peoples in Palestine and Southern Syria, and waged war on the Hittites to recover provinces that had been lost by Egypt. Seti I managed to temporarily conquer the city of Kadesh, but on his return to Egypt it was lost to the Hittites, where it became a stronghold for Hittite defences in Syria.

Rameses II (1279–1213 BCE) became pharaoh in 1279 BCE 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 participating in some minor military skirmishes in Nubia. For the early period of his career (regnal Years 1–4) there is not a great deal of evidence, and what does exist is often fragmentary or riddled with gaps.

In comparison to the kings of the Old and Middle Kingdoms, the role of the pharaoh in the New Kingdom needed to evolve. As a result of Egypt's foreign conquests, each pharaoh was now challenged with defending Egypt's empire through military campaigns and maintaining diplomatic relations with foreign kingdoms. This was on top of the traditional duties of acting as intermediary between their subjects and the gods, maintaining *ma'at* (order and harmony), dispensing justice and overseeing matters of domestic administration.

Bernadette Menu describes the operation of Egypt's empire at the start of Rameses II's reign:

The Near East empire formed by the four pharaohs named Thutmose and the four Amenhoteps comprised a cluster of more or less autonomous cities and states under Egyptian supervision. The coloniser sent army garrisons and a governor who collected tribute. The pharaohs built temples to the national Egyptian divinities: to Amun at Gaza and to Amun or Ptah at Jerusalem. The semi-autonomous princes of Syria-Palestine sent their children to Egypt to be educated. Nubia, on the other hand, was administered directly, as an Egyptian province.

**SOURCE 18.3** Menu, B., (trans. Hirsch, L.), 1999, *Rameses the Great: Warrior and Builder*, Thames & Hudson, p. 20

## ACTIVITY 18.2

Answer the following questions based on your reading of the text and sources.

1. Under which pharaohs had Egypt reached the height of its empire?
2. Using the map provided in Source 18.2, describe the extent of Egypt's empire by the conclusion of Thutmose III's reign.
3. Which lands were part of Egypt's empire? How did Egypt maintain control over these areas?
4. What challenges faced the pharaohs who succeeded Akhenaten?
5. Why was the city of Kadesh of particular strategic importance to Egypt's pharaohs?
6. What were the roles, duties and expectations of pharaohs in the New Kingdom?



**SOURCE 18.4** Image of Rameses II in battle against Nubians, from the wall of a temple built by Rameses at Beit el-Wali in Lower Nubia. What messages did this image convey to the local population?

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature of power and how it was exercised in the Ancient World

### 18.3 What sources are available for the reign of Rameses II?

Most of our knowledge of Rameses II's reign comes from the non-literary evidence he himself 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 enhance our understanding of his life.

Some types of evidence available for Rameses II are below.

#### Literary sources

- Written inscriptions on walls of buildings, stelae, statue bases
- Diplomatic correspondence – clay tablets, scarabs
- Papyri – generally copies of inscriptions

#### Non-literary sources

- Visual representations of the pharaoh, gods and others inscribed on walls of buildings and stelae
- Physical structures: buildings, monuments, obelisks – religious and secular
- Statuary

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 in order to understand the explicit (immediately apparent or obvious) meanings, as well as the implicit (not outwardly stated or obvious) meanings.



Abu Simbel temple is located in Nubia, south of Egypt. The temple was completed in Year 34 of Rameses's reign.



**SOURCE 18.5** Depiction of Nubian prisoners of war on wall of Abu Simbel Temple, Nubia



**SOURCE 18.6** Four colossal statues of Rameses II in front of Abu Simbel temple, Nubia

The following inscription describes the enemy chief who Rameses II fought at the Battle of Kadesh (Year five 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.

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'.

**SOURCE 18.7** A description of a Hittite chief

### ACTIVITY 18.3

1. For Sources 18.5 to 18.7 complete the source analysis table available in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 3*.
2. What do these sources show about how Egypt regarded its enemies or foreigners?
3. How might these sources have helped reinforce Rameses's power over his people?
4. Which aspects of Egyptian life might these sources be useful for? Explain your answer in relation to the following:
  - daily life
  - warfare
  - religious beliefs
  - administration of the empire
  - diplomatic relations
  - art and architecture.

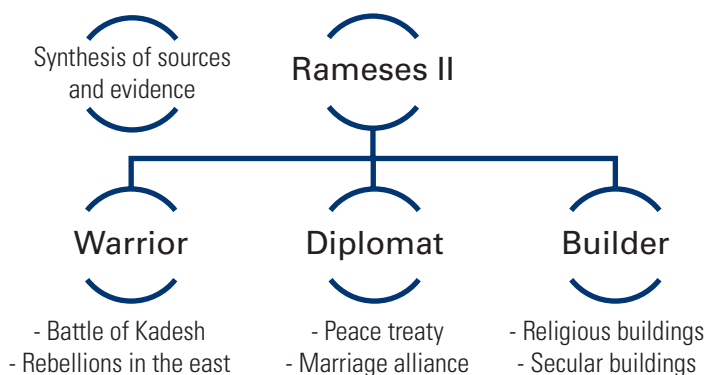




**SOURCE 18.8** The Ramessesum, Rameses II's memorial temple. What type of source is this? What might be the limitations of using a source like this for knowledge of Rameses's reign?

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a powerful individual, group or society in the Ancient World

In this section, you will assess Rameses II's reign by considering his reputation versus his actual achievements in three fields: as a warrior, a diplomat and a builder.



### 18.4 Was Rameses II really a great warrior?

In Year 4 of Rameses II's reign, 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, Amurru was recaptured by the Hittite King Muwatalli II. In Year 5 of his reign, Rameses II returned to the region with a large force of infantry and chariots that had been assembled at his new capital city of Pi-Rameses (House of Rameses). His sights were set on retaking the city of Kadesh.

Inscriptions and visual representations recounting 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's official account of the Battle of Kadesh, which occurred in Year 5 of his reign, were inscribed on temples at Karnak, Luxor, Abydos, Abu Simbel and the Ramessesum. These versions appear in three forms: the record, (the official narrative of the main events of the battle), the poem (another version of the battle, but with more artistic licence), and in visual representations of the battle. All of these versions glorify Rameses as a heroic warrior favoured by the gods.

## ACTIVITY 18.4

Answer the following questions based on your reading of the text above.

1. In what region of the world did the Battle of Kadesh take place?
2. What evidence is there that Rameses II considered this battle to be a highlight of his reign?

### The Battle of Kadesh (Years 4–5 of reign)

In Rameses's fifth year, his army departed Pi-Rameses his capital city in the Nile Delta, on a campaign against the Hittite stronghold of Kadesh on the Orontes River. Along the way, a force of recruits was detached to secure a nearby seaport at Simyra, on the coast of the region of Amurru. His main army was divided into four main forces (named after the gods Re, Amun, Ptah and Set), each consisting of around 5000 men, both infantry and chariots.

About thirteen kilometres south of Kadesh, Rameses crossed the Orontes River near the town of Shabtuna, and then passed through a wooded area to arrive at a plain just south of the city. Two Hittite spies (Shasu tribesmen) allowed themselves to be captured and gave false information about the whereabouts of the Hittite king, stating that he was still in the region of Aleppo, well north of Kadesh. Convinced by this information, Rameses approached the city of Kadesh with only one quarter of his army and set up camp.

The following official narrative of the Battle of Kadesh is 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.

(When) his majesty 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, 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.'

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."'

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 ...'

*(continued)*



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.

'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.'

**SOURCE 18.9** The record – Rameses's official account of the Battle of Kadesh

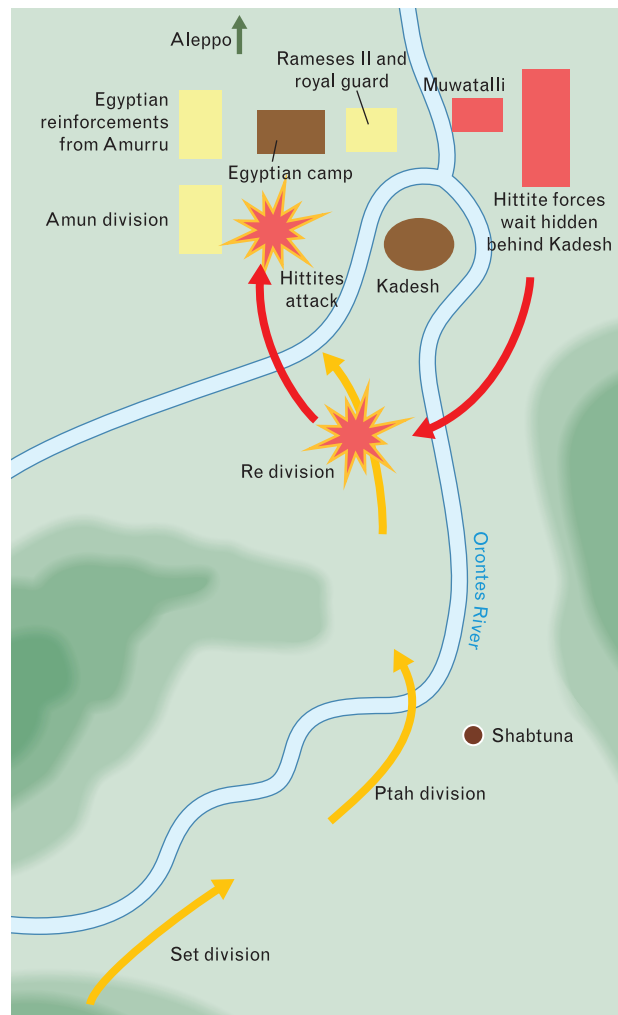


**SOURCE 18.10** A Hittite chariot carried three soldiers, Egyptian chariots carried only two. Research the roles of the crew of a Hittite chariot and suggest why the third charioteer provided an advantage over the Egyptian chariot in battle.

### ACTIVITY 18.5

Answer the following questions based on your reading of the record (Source 18.9).

1. Create a flowchart or sequence to explain the main events and turning points of the Battle.
2. How was Rameses II caught by surprise by the Hittite chief Muwatalli?
3. Based on Source 18.9, what impression did you get about Rameses as a warrior and military commander?
4. Suggest why Rameses II adds his own statement at the end of the inscription.



**SOURCE 18.11** The relative positions of the Egyptians and Hittites at the Battle of Kadesh

The following version of the Battle of the Kadesh is adapted from versions inscribed on Luxor and Karnak Temples, as well as from versions that exist on papyri. It does not mention Rameses being tricked by the Hittites. Consider how the following excerpts explain the reason for the final outcome of the battle.

[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 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!'

**SOURCE 18.12** The poem – another widely copied version of the Battle of Kadesh

## ACTIVITY 18.6

1. What information in Source 18.12 (the poem) corroborates the version in Source 18.9 (the record)?
2. What additional information about the battle did you learn from reading the poem? Add this to your flowchart or sequence from question 1 of Activity 18.5.
3. Create a simple T-chart to compare the personal qualities of Rameses and Muwatalli II. Include two quotes from the sources for each leader that illustrates how they are respectively presented.

Rameses II	Muwatalli II

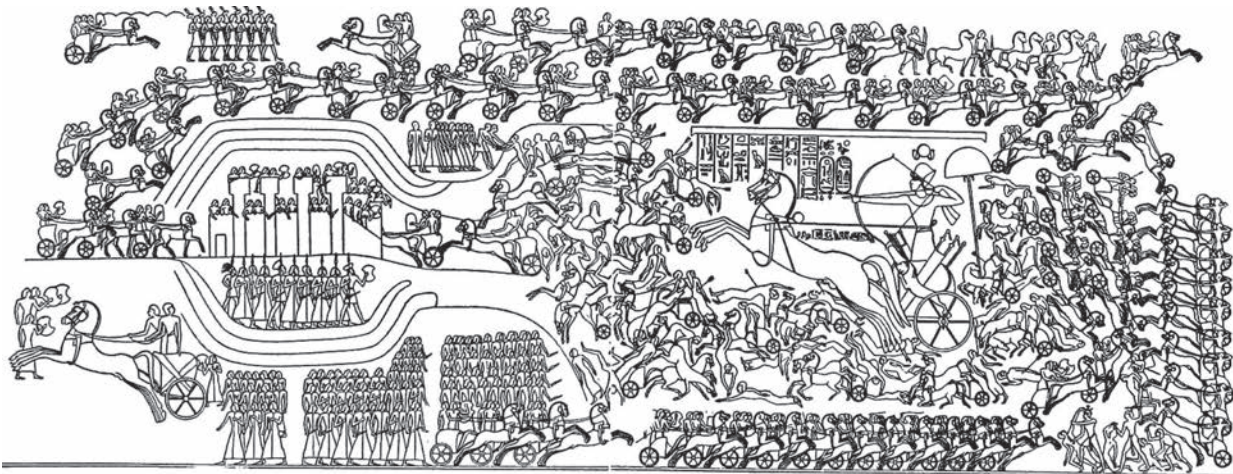
4. Why do you think Rameses continually emphasises that he was alone? To what extent do you think this could be historically accurate? Justify your answer.
5. According to the poem, how does the battle end?

The visual representation of Rameses in Source 18.13 (refer to the next page) is from Abu Simbel Temple in Nubia and the visual representation of the Battle of Kadesh in Source 18.14 comes from the Luxor Temple. Illustrations of inscriptions like these are commonly used where the original inscription has deteriorated or is unclear. At Luxor, Abu Simbel and the Ramesseum, the visual representations of the Battle of Kadesh are annotated with inscriptions describing what is happening in the various Muwatalli parts of the scene. The inscription in Source 18.15 is located next to some of Rameses's soldiers. Most historians believe this representation describes the recruits who had been diverted via Simyra arriving just in time to save Rameses.





**SOURCE 18.13** Image of Rameses II at Kadesh



**SOURCE 18.14** Visual representation of the Battle of Kadesh

The arrival of the recruits of Pharaoh from the land of Amurru (Simyra). They found that the force of the chief of the Hittites had surrounded the camp of his majesty on its western side. His majesty had been camping alone, no army with him, awaiting the arrival of his officers and his army 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 the chief of the Hittites, while the enemy were entering into the camp, and Pharaoh's officers slew them; they left not a single survivor among them. Their hearts were filled with the mighty valour of Pharaoh, their good lord.

**SOURCE 18.15** An additional inscription that accompanies the visual representations

The next highly important source (Source 18.16) was discovered on a clay tablet in the ruins of the Hittite capital city, Hattusa (modern-day Boğazkale in Turkey). It is from a letter written a number of years after the Battle of Kadesh by the later Hittite King Hattusili III, describing the Hittite point of view on his predecessor Muwatalli's war against Rameses II.



At the time that Muwatalli took the field against the king of the land of Egypt and the country of Amurru, and when he then had defeated the king of the land of Egypt and the country of Amurru, he returned to the country Upi (Damascus). When Muwatalli, my brother, had (also) defeated Upi, he [returned to] the Hatti land, but [left] me in the country of Upi.

**SOURCE 18.16** A Hittite perspective on Kadesh

## ACTIVITY 18.7

1. What qualities of Rameses II are emphasised in the way he is depicted in the visual representations of Sources 18.13 and 18.14? In what ways do these support the information about him from the record and poem?
2. Describe elements from the record or poem that you can see depicted in Source 18.14. In your description, include information about where they are found in the image (for example, top-left corner; bottom-right).
3. In Source 18.14, what geographical clue is there that the city depicted is Kadesh?
4. In Sources 18.13 and 18.14, why do you think Rameses II chose to represent the battle visually as well as through his written inscriptions?
5. What new information does Source 18.15 offer that is not in the other sources?
6. How does the Hittite version in Source 18.16 of the Battle of Kadesh compare to the Egyptian versions? Which do you think is more reliable?

## Viewpoints on the Battle of Kadesh

Popular historian Joyce Tyldesley comments on the outcome of the Battle of Kadesh:

What really happened? Muwatalli had not committed his full infantry to the ambush on Re division; had he done so, the result would have been a foregone conclusion and Rameses would have suffered the humiliation of becoming the first New Kingdom monarch to be captured by the enemy. The bulk of the Hittite army waited instead with Muwatalli on the east bank of the Orontes, relying on the surprise chariot attack to wipe out a quarter of Rameses's divided army. The timely and totally unexpected arrival of the Egyptian elite troops – who are not mentioned in the texts but who can be seen arriving on a relief scene – came as a complete shock to the Hittites.

The Hittite records, recovered from Boğazkale, tell of a very different battle ending with a humiliated Rameses forced to retreat from Kadesh in ignominious defeat. The known facts do tend to support this Hittite version. Rameses's departure, without a signed treaty, allowed the Hittites to reinforce their hold on Kadesh and regain control of Amurru, deposing the unfortunate Benteshina who was marched off to Hatti to explain himself. The Hittites then pushed further south through the Beqaa Valley to secure the Egyptian territory of Upi which was placed under the control of the king's brother Hattusili. Soon Egypt's sphere of influence was once again restricted to Canaan.

**SOURCE 18.17** Tyldesley, J., 2001, *Rameses: Egypt's Greatest Pharaoh*, Penguin Books, pp. 72–3

The English novelist (and first winner of the Booker Prize) Percy Howard Newby offers his evaluation of Rameses at Kadesh:

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.

**SOURCE 18.18** Newby, P.H., 1980, *Warrior Pharaohs: The Rise and Fall of the Egyptian Empire*, Book Club Associates, pp. 151–2

Cambridge historian Dr Toby Wilkinson evaluates the Egyptian tactics at Kadesh:

But then, as if in answer to Rameses's 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.

**SOURCE 18.19** Wilkinson, T., 2010, *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt*, Random House, pp. 305–306

## ACTIVITY 18.8

Answer the following questions based on your reading of Sources 18.17 to 18.19.

1. Complete the table below by identifying each author's point of view on Rameses's 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's military competence; rank each point of view from 1 to 3 to indicate which you found most and least convincing, and explain the reasoning for your decisions.

Source	Point of view on Rameses II	Quote from the author	Rank of how convincing
18.17 Tyldesley			
18.18 Newby			
18.19 Wilkinson			

2. Between the Egyptians and Hittites, which side do you think benefited most from the outcome of the battle? Who achieved their objectives?
3. Based on the secondary evidence provided, do you think the outcome of Kadesh for Rameses II was a win, loss or stalemate (draw)? Justify your answer.
4. What does the comparison of primary and secondary evidence show us about the nature of Rameses II's use of propaganda?
5. Do you think Rameses's subjects would know if the official version of events advertised on the walls of buildings around Egypt was not true? Justify your answer.
6. Using the primary and secondary evidence available, write a paragraph to argue whether you believe that Rameses deserves his reputation in history as a great warrior and military commander. Aim to include references to at least two primary and two secondary sources in your answer.

(continued)

## ACTIVITY 18.8 continued

7. Additional paragraph topics are below. Respond to one of the statements in a paragraph.
- Rameses II won the battle, but he lost the war.
  - While Kadesh was a military loss for Rameses II, it was a propaganda victory.
  - The result of Kadesh shows that Rameses II deserves his reputation as a master of spin.

### Rameses II responds to rebellions (Years 7–10 of reign)

Rameses's return to Egypt after failing to conquer the city of Kadesh had almost immediate consequences for Egyptian control over the Levant. A number of princes in the region must have sensed weakness as they revolted against Egyptian rule. Between Years 7–10 of Rameses II's reign, he conducted a series of campaigns in the Levant, capturing Jerusalem, Jericho and the land of Upi (Damascus), before proceeding as far north as the land of



**SOURCE 18.20** Rameses II besieges Dapur. What does an analysis of this source reveal about the nature of Egyptian and Hittite warfare?

Amurru (in southern Syria), where he marched against the cities of Dapur and Tunip to the north of Kadesh. As with the Battle of Kadesh, Rameses advertised his accomplishments in Dapur and Tunip on the walls of temples across Egypt. However, due to their distance from Egypt, Rameses was unable or unwilling to maintain control over these territories, which returned to Hittite control soon after the Egyptian forces returned home. After around 16 years of hostilities between Egypt and the Hittite empire, they agreed on a treaty of peace, which was honoured by both sides until Rameses's death.

Source 18.20 is a visual representation from Luxor Temple (the illustration is based on the original inscription) of Rameses II besieging the town of Dapur.

## 18.5 Was Rameses II really 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; and the Egyptian version was discovered



in the early 1900s on a cuneiform tablet in the archaeological site of Boğazkale, 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.

### ACTIVITY 18.9

Answer the following questions based on your reading of the text above and image of the Egyptian–Hittite peace treaty.

1. What was each side's motivation for agreeing to a peace treaty?
2. What does this source show about the problematic nature of using archaeological evidence from the Ancient World?

The following 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 18.21** The Egyptian version of the Egyptian-Hittite peace treaty

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.

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.

**SOURCE 18.22** The text of the Egyptian version of the treaty

In the next source, are side-by-side adapted versions of introductions to the Hittite copy of the treaty and the Egyptian copy of the treaty. Overall, the text of the bodies of the two treaties is similar, but the introductions have a distinct difference.

#### **Hittite version – in Hittite archives**

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.

#### **Egyptian version – inscribed on Egyptian temples**

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 18.23** Hittite and Egyptian copies of the treaty

### ACTIVITY 18.10

Answer the following questions based on your reading of Sources 18.22 to 18.23.

1. Summarise the main terms of the peace treaty. For how long was this treaty meant to last?
2. Describe how each peace treaty is introduced. What differences are there in the introductions?
3. Why might both sides have wished to portray the treaty as having initially been requested by the other king?

### Viewpoints on the peace treaty

Professor Stephen Langdon and Alan Gardiner offer an observation on the peace treaty:

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,

*(continued)*

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].

**SOURCE 18.24** Langdon, S. and Gardiner, A.H., 1920, The Treaty of Alliance between Hattusili, King of the Hittites, and the Pharaoh Ramesses II of Egypt, *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 6.3, p. 201

Egyptologist James. Breasted discusses the relations of Egypt and Hatti after the peace treaty:

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's reign, and we know it continued also into that of his successor.

**SOURCE 18.25** Breasted, J. H., 1988, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical documents from the earliest times to the Persian conquest*, Vol. 3, Histories & Mysteries of Man, p. 175

Joyce Tyldesley evaluates the outcome of the peace treaty:

The sealing of the treaty brought an end to eastern hostilities. Amurru and Kadesh were now irretrievably lost (by Egypt) to the Hittites but the Syrian territories would remain Egyptian and there would be free access to the important port of Ugarit. Rameses never relaxed firm control of his eastern vassals and his reign saw the start of a deliberate policy of remodelling which was to continue into the early 20th Dynasty. Canaanite cities deemed to be of little to no economic use were now abandoned, while others, considered to be of economic or strategic importance, were strengthened to serve as Egyptian outposts. The more important cities housed permanent garrisons containing large numbers of Egyptian soldiers and Nubian police.

The Hittite and Egyptian courts were suddenly on the most friendly of terms, with the two royal families exchanging a series of personal letters and gifts.

**SOURCE 18.26** Tyldesley, J., 2001, *Ramesses: Egypt's Greatest Pharaoh*, Penguin Books, p. 77

French Egyptologist Bernadette Menu evaluates the outcome of the peace treaty:

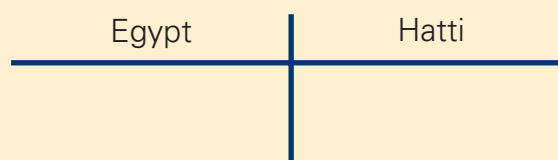
The pharaoh thus magnificently fulfilled his fundamental obligations as son and heir to the gods. An era of peace and prosperity, even of opulence, followed the war, and Egypt experienced decades of wellbeing, until the death of Rameses II.

**SOURCE 18.27** Menu, B., 1999, *Ramesses the Great: Warrior and Builder*, trans. Laurel Hirsch, Thames & Hudson, p. 97

## ACTIVITY 18.11

Answer the following questions based on your reading of Sources 18.24 to 18.27.

1. How did each side benefit from the peace treaty and alliance? Create a simple T-chart to compare the benefits for each side.





## ACTIVITY 18.11 continued

2. In your opinion, who benefited most from the peace treaty?
3. How successful was the peace treaty in the long-term?
4. Consider the following statement: The peace treaty between Egypt and Hatti should be seen as one of the great successes of Rameses II's reign. Write a paragraph agreeing or disagreeing with the statement. You should aim to include references to examples from at least two sources in your answer.

### 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's 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's commemoration of the event on a stele, known as the Marriage Stele, at his temple in Abu Simbel.

### 18.6 Was Rameses II really a great 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 was 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 a huge hypostyle hall), the construction of the Ramesseum at Thebes, and temples at Abu Simbel, Luxor and Abydos. Rameses's 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.

Egyptologist Alan Gardiner on Karnak, the Ramesseum, Abydos, Memphis and Abu Simbel:

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. 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.

**SOURCE 18.28** Gardiner, A., 1972, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, Oxford University Press, pp. 255–6

Egyptologist Jacobus Van Dijk on Pi-Rameses Memphis and building in general:

Many of Rameses's 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's monuments impress more by their size and quantity than by their delicacy and perfection.

**SOURCE 18.29** Van Dijk, J., 2003, The Amarna Period and the Later New Kingdom, in *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, ed. Shaw, I., Oxford University Press, pp. 292–3

Egyptologist Cyril Aldred on Pi-Rameses and other constructions:

[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.

**SOURCE 18.30** Aldred, C., 1998, *The Egyptians* (3rd ed.), Thames & Hudson, pp. 171–2

## ACTIVITY 18.12

1. Complete the table below for Sources 18.28 to 18.30. In the middle column, state whether you believe 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.

Source	View (supports or refutes)	Quotation from the source
18.28 Gardiner		
18.29 Van Dijk		
18.30 Aldred		

## ACTIVITY 18.12 continued

2. Where were some of Rameses's most famous buildings constructed?
3. What criticisms do the authors raise about his legacy as a great builder?
4. Luxor Temple (Source 18.31) is located at the site of the ancient city of Thebes. Research what alterations Rameses made to this temple and suggest whether they support the argument that Rameses was a great builder.



**SOURCE 18.31** Luxor Temple of Rameses II

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### 18.7 Power and authority in New Kingdom Egypt

In Year 30 of Rameses's reign, he celebrated his first Sed festival (also referred to as a jubilee). The origins of this festival went 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, it 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 thirteen or fourteen.

Compared with the first thirty years of Rameses's 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 thirteenth son, Merenptah.

### Contested views on Rameses II's legacy

James Breasted appraises the state of Egypt's borders left by Rameses II for his successor:

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

*(continued)*



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.

**SOURCE 18.32** Adapted from Breasted, J. H., 1988, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical documents from the earliest times to the Persian conquest*, Vol. 3, *Histories & Mysteries of Man*, p. 238

Marc Van de Mieroop assesses the state of Egypt at the end of Rameses II's reign:

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.

**SOURCE 18.33** Van de Mieroop, M., *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, p. 240

Zahi Hawass discusses Rameses II's reputation among later pharaohs:

The Egyptians kept the memory of their great King alive in their hearts, just as the earth preserved his monuments and statues. Rameses II remained a mythical hero to the ancient Egyptians, and was the highest example for all the kings who followed him. Most of the kings after him were named Rameses, from Rameses III through Rameses XI. Rameses III, who founded the Twentieth Dynasty, considered Rameses II to be his sacred hero. He named all of his children after the children of Rameses II, built a new quarter in the capital city of Pi-Rameses in the Delta, and built his own mortuary temple, Medinet Habu, along the lines of the Ramesseum, Rameses II's mortuary temple. In his own temple, he even added a special altar for the worship of Rameses II.

**SOURCE 18.34** Hawass, Z., 2000, *The Mysteries of Abu Simbel: Rameses II and the Temples of the Rising Sun*, The American University in Cairo, p. 61

Bernadette Menu gives an overall assessment of Rameses II:

It may truthfully be said that the reign of Rameses II marked a point of culmination in pharaonic history. Under his administration the imperial power of Egypt grew immensely, and the empire greatly extended its international political authority, and its cultural and religious influence. The efficiency of his government, the splendour of his court, and the number and importance of his monuments remain unequalled. In his time the land enjoyed a long period of general peace and prosperity ... Rameses II remained the exemplar, in deeds and in memory dazzling and incomparable, like the sun at its zenith.

**SOURCE 18.35** Menu, B., 1999, *Rameses the Great: Warrior and Builder*, Thames & Hudson, pp. 126–7

Nicolas Grimal comments on the consequences of the length of Rameses II's reign:

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.

**SOURCE 18.36** Grimal, N., 1992, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford, Blackwell, p. 267

Toby Wilkinson presents his views on the consequences of the length of Rameses II's reign:

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's 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.

**SOURCE 18.37** Wilkinson, T., 2010, *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt*, Random House, p. 323

Jacobus Van Dijk appraises the border defences left by Rameses II:

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.

**SOURCE 18.38** Van Dijk, J., 2003, The Amarna Period and the Later New Kingdom, in *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, ed. Shaw, I., Oxford University Press, p. 294

## ACTIVITY 18.13

Answer the following questions based on your reading of Sources 18.32 to 18.38.

1. Many histories of Rameses II begin by emphasising the remarkable length of his reign. To what extent would the historians above agree that the length of his reign was ultimately good for Egypt? Provide some examples from the sources to support your answer.
2. According to Zahi Hawass, how was Rameses II perceived by the later pharaohs of the 19th and 20th Dynasties?
3. What do the experiences of Rameses II's successor Merenptah suggest about the state of Egypt 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. Summarise the reasoning for their arguments in the table on the next page.

(continued)

## ACTIVITY 18.13 continued

Source	Summarise each historian's view on Rameses II's legacy for his successors
18.32 Breasted	
18.33 Van de Mieroop	
18.34 Hawass	
18.35 Menu	
18.36 Grimal	
18.37 Wilkinson	
18.38 Van Dijk	

## 18.8 Evaluating usefulness and reliability of evidence from the reign of Rameses II

### What is evaluation?

The skill of evaluating requires you to include assessments of the usefulness and reliability of a range 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 what the strengths and limitations of your sources of evidence are.

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. It is important that you acknowledge the limitations of the evidence you are using, but equally important is to highlight the strengths of the sources and where they can offer valuable insights into particular aspects of his reign.

### Some guidelines for evaluation

- You do not necessarily need to integrate some critical comment each time you refer to a source, but you should at least aim to do so the first time you refer to a particular source.
- While there are many frameworks available for source evaluation, one simple way to evaluate a source is just to consider strengths and limitations.
- Remember that you don't always need to be negative or critical of your evidence – comments about the strengths of a source are valid demonstrations of source criticism.

### What are some typical issues with sources relating to Rameses's reign?

- *Accuracy*: sometimes an event may not be presented accurately; also where specific numbers are given, such as the figure of 2500 enemy chariots at the Battle of Kadesh, these are invariably inaccurate and cannot really be proven. The opposite of this is where you can corroborate information to show that a source contains mostly accurate information.



- *Perspective*: sources from Rameses II's reign offer very narrow perspectives, which really only represent the official view of the royal court or Rameses II himself. We do not get much sense of how others 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, we get an alternative perspective, as in the case of the discovery of the Hittite view on the outcome of the Battle of Kadesh.
- *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 sources like 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 vs 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 factual records of specific event. Often these are stylised images, whose purpose is to reinforce the traditional ideals of the office of the pharaoh, rather than providing any particular information about a specific pharaoh. Virtually all pharaohs represented themselves in the same pose, based on the depictions of early kings such as Scorpion or Menes (Narmer) in the predynastic period. An example of this is a representation of Rameses II smiting foreigners (Nubians, Libyans and Asiatics); it is unclear if this represents a specific instance, for example, quashing a rebellion, or if it was just a conventional image unrelated to a specific event. However, in some cases, visual representations clearly do depict specific events, such as with images of 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.

## ACTIVITY 18.14

Answer the following questions based on your reading of the evidence in this chapter.

1. Summarise the common issues with evidence from the time of Rameses II. Each summary should be 25 words or less in length. 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	

2. *Identify strengths and limitations*. Below are some examples of how to incorporate evaluations of usefulness and reliability into your use of evidence. For each example, underline where the strengths

(continued)

## ACTIVITY 18.14 continued

of the source have been commented on. **Circle** where limitations of the source have been mentioned. In some statements, only one of these may be present.

- a. Battle of Kadesh (visual representation): While Rameses's depiction of the Battle of Kadesh on the walls of Luxor temple is clearly historically inaccurate, it provides a useful insight into the nature of Rameses's use of propaganda to maintain power over his subjects.
- b. Battle of Kadesh (inscription): Though Rameses's claim in the 'record' that he resisted 2500 Hittite chariots single-handedly is clearly exaggerated, it is clear that he demonstrated great personal heroism.
- c. Rameses II holds his enemies captive (visual representation): Good examples of how Rameses emphasised his defence of Egypt's borders can be found in frequent depictions of himself dominating Nubian, Libyan and Asiatic prisoners, though it is unclear if these represent specific events or a general ideal.
- d. Hittite diplomatic correspondence (inscription): The discovery of a letter from Hattusili, king of the Hittites, provides a rare insight into the outcome of the Battle of Kadesh from the Hittite perspective.
- e. Peace treaty (inscription): A comparison between the respective introductions to the Egyptian and Hittite versions of the peace treaty casts doubt on the accuracy of Rameses's version of events.
- f. Marriage Stele (visual representation): By inserting an image of the Hittite king into the scene, Rameses is clearly guilty of a deliberate historical fabrication in his representation of his wedding to the daughter of Hattusili in the Marriage Stele.
- g. Abu Simbel (monument): A typical example of how Rameses used monumental structures to remind subject peoples of the might of Egypt can be seen in the colossal statues that guard the entrance to the temple of Abu Simbel in Nubia.
- h. Diodorus Siculus (literary source): Though his writing was riddled with historical inaccuracies, and he never actually saw Rameses II's monuments with his own eyes, the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus's descriptions of the size and beauty of Rameses's buildings shows us how his legacy was perceived centuries later.

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit a purpose in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### 18.9 Creating responses about Rameses II

Based on your knowledge and the evidence in this chapter, complete the following activities.

## ACTIVITY 18.15

1. For each of the following statements below, write a well-structured paragraph in response. Your answer should:
  - clearly address whether the historical evidence supports or refutes the claims made
  - refer to at least three sources used in this chapter
  - include some evaluation of the usefulness and reliability of the evidence.

## ACTIVITY 18.15 continued

- a. Based on his achievements in the Battle of Kadesh and his subsequent suppression of rebellious subjects, Rameses II deserves to be considered a great warrior and military strategist.
- b. Rameses II's excellent diplomatic skills ensured Egypt's supremacy was maintained over its neighbours.
- c. 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.
- d. 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.
- e. Rameses II 'the Great' was only really great at propaganda – rather than accurate insights into his reign, his depictions of events from his rule are fabricated and false.
- f. 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'.

Barry Kemp, Professor of Egyptology at the University of Cambridge, compares Rameses II's world with modern times, and reflects on the relationship between the use of power in ancient Egypt and today:

I live in a paradoxical world. It claims to be an age of reason and progress. Technology streaks ahead. Yet in people's minds there still seem to loom the essence and trappings of antique hierarchical power. Those who actually seek power find aspects of the ancient stage-managed style irresistible. They build monuments, they elevate symbols, they identify enemies to smite. We can argue that early societies, lacking a rational philosophical basis for government, needed, for the maintenance of unity and stability, leaders whose position was defined by theology and whose person was treated with the reverence and ceremonial of a god. The theological underpinning and the presentational devices had a real point. The divine ruler's authority was unique, beyond question, the threat of subdivision or duplication arising only in times of civil war. But humankind has moved on since the last days of the Pharaohs. Between ourselves and ancient Egypt stretches a long and complex history of developing political thought and varieties of forms of government, in part based on philosophies that do not derive from religion. We know what some form of rational harmonious society might look like. Yet as the host society has changed, so the forms and trappings of rule by a divine leader have shown a remarkable capacity to adapt and to live on, often much loved. Rationality lures, atavism rules.

**SOURCE 18.39** Kemp, B.J., 2006, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization* (2nd ed.), Routledge, p. 247

## ACTIVITY 18.16

1. Consider this extract from the above quote from Barry Kemp, comparing power in antiquity to power in the world today.

Those who actually seek power find aspects of the ancient stage-managed style irresistible. They build monuments, they elevate symbols, they identify enemies to smite ... the forms and trappings of rule by a divine leader have shown a remarkable capacity to adapt and to live on, often much loved.

To what extent do you agree with Kemp's statement, despite the huge amount of progress the world has made since the time of the pharaohs? In other words, what parallels with Rameses II can you see in leaders of the world today?



# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- 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: overcoming challenge, warfare, diplomacy, buildings, 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's 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.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

What are some of the key controversies associated with Rameses II's reign?

### Analyse

Assess the nature of the evidence for Rameses II's reign; what types of sources and evidence are available?

### Synthesise

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?

### Evaluate

Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of inscriptions and visual representations in making judgements about Rameses II's reign.

### Respond

Based on your knowledge from the chapter, to what extent does Rameses II deserve the title 'the Great'?

## Assessment

### Examination-style questions

1. Should Rameses II, whose reputation ranks him amongst Egypt's greatest pharaohs, actually be remembered as a fraud and a spin doctor?
2. To what extent did Rameses II successfully overcome the threats and challenges posed during his reign?
3. Evaluate Rameses II's foreign policy, including military and diplomatic activities and construction of infrastructure; what strategies did Rameses use to maintain power over the Egyptian empire in times of struggle?

### 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?

# CHAPTER 19

## Themistokles

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### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the geographical and historical context of Themistokles.
  - his family background and status.
  - the key events in his rise to prominence.
  - the significant influences on early his development.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period, and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the career of Themistokles.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.
- evaluate evidence from evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the change of role, position and status over time.
  - the depictions of Themistokles during his lifetime.
  - the possible motivations for actions.
  - the methods used to achieve his aims.
  - his relationships with groups and other individuals.
  - the significant events in the career of Themistokles.
  - the manner and impact of his death.
  - judgements of Themistokles by other individuals in his lifetime and after his death, for example, in writings, images and film.
- create a response that communicates meaning to suit a purpose by completing short responses to historical sources.

### KEY DATES

527 BCE

- The death of Pisistratus
- Hippias and Hipparchus become tyrants of Athens

524 BCE

Birth of Themistokles

514 BCE

The assassination of Hipparchus

510 BCE

Hippias is exiled from Athens

508 BCE

Cleisthenes implements his democratic reforms



## Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the impact and legacy of Themistokles.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the assessments of Themistokles's life and career.
  - the influence of Themistokles on his time.
  - the long-term impact and legacy of Themistokles.

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## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

### Athenians:

- Aristides
- Xanthippus
- Cimon
- Miltiades

### Spartans:

- Leonidas
- Eurybiades
- Pausanias

### Persians:

- Xerxes
- Mardonius.

507 BCE

Exile of Cleisthenes from Athens

499 BCE

Ionian revolt against Persian rule in Asia Mionr. Aristagoras seeks support from Greece for revolt

498 BCE

The Persian city Sardis is razed by Ionians with the aid of Athens

494 BCE

Miletus, a significant Ionian city, is razed by the Persians, ending the Ionian revolt

493 BCE

Themistokles elected as archon in Athens. Phrynichus's *The Capture of Miletus* is performed in Athens causing great distress and banned from future performances





## MAP



**SOURCE 19.2** The Greco-Persian Wars 499–479 BCE

### 490 BCE

As punishment for support of the city-states in Asia Minor, Darius leads an invasion of Greece. Athenian hoplite forces defeat the Persian army in an unlikely victory at Marathon

### 483 BCE

After the discovery of silver at Laurium, Themistokles convinces the Athenian assembly to invest in expanding their fleet of triremes

### 482 BCE

Themistokles manages the ostracism of adversary Aristides

### August 480 BCE

Battle of Thermopylae, led by King Leonidas of Sparta, 300 elite soldiers die in slowing the advance of the Persians under Xerxes



## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>archon</b>	in Greek city-states the archon was a leading magistrate; in Athens, a number of archons were elected and shared religious, military and judicial functions; in later years, the archonships of Athens were selected by lot
<b>areopagus</b>	select council of aristocrats who had held the position of archon; it existed in Athens prior to the emergence of democracy and made decisions on important legal matters; the strength of the <i>areopagus</i> was limited under the reforms of Ephialtes in 462 BCE
<b>Attica</b>	region surrounding the countryside of Athens which was occupied by many farms and communities; the region of Attica was divided into <i>demos</i> under the democratic reforms of Cleisthenes in 507 BCE
<b>boule</b>	council of approximately 500 Athenian citizens drawn by lot from the <i>demosi</i> individuals served on this council for a year, and groups of 50 councillors from each of the 10 tribes took it in turns to run the affairs of state for one tenth of year – called a <i>prytane</i>
<b>deme</b>	small division or area of the Attica region surrounding Athens which was used for voting and civil purposes in Athenian democracy based on the reforms of Cleisthenes; it was from these <i>demos</i> that individuals were selected to serve in the various branches of the Athenian democracy
<b>ecclesia</b>	refers to the prominent assembly of citizens within a city-state; in Athens the ecclesia consisted of male citizens 18 years of age or older; this body regularly met each month to vote on matters including the election of archons and other magistrates, declarations of war and military strategies which were brought to it
<b>Greco-Persian Wars</b>	conflict between Greek city-states and the Persian empire which took part over the course of the first half of the fifth century BCE; this conflict is most notable for the first invasion in 490 BCE under Darius which resulted in an Athenian victory at the Battle of Marathon; in 480 BCE a second invasion was led by Xerxes, son of Darius, which included the notable battles of Thermopylae, Artemisium, Salamis and Plataea; despite the numerical advantage of the Persians and divisions amongst the Greek city-states, the Greeks were able to claim victory and rout the Persian forces; the cause of this war is attributed to the Ionian revolt against Persian rule which began approximately in 499 BCE and included the support of an Athenian naval fleet

### August 480 BCE

Battle of Artemisium between Greek and Persian navies (no decisive victor)

### September 480 BCE

Athenians, under the leadership of Themistokles choose to evacuate Athens. Athens is occupied by the Persians. Battle of Salamis sees a combined Greek fleet led by Themistokles defeat Xerxes's Persian fleet

### 480 BCE

Themistokles's plans for the expansion of the Piraeus is completed

### 479 BCE

Final defeat of Xerxes's forces at Plataea leading to the retreat of the Persian forces from Greece





TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Hellenes</b>	term used to refer to the ancient Greek population; Hellas referred to the region of ancient Greece
<b>isthmus</b>	narrow land bridge separating mainland Greece with the Peloponnese; this narrow pass was initially identified as a fall back position for the Greeks as the Persian forces moved south at the time of the Battle of Salamis
<b>medism</b>	a charge that was brought against Greeks who were sympathetic with or supported the Persians during the Greco-Persian wars; within Athens it was associated with treason; the term originates from <i>mede</i> which refers to people who lived within the region of Media, modern-day Iran
<b>novus homo</b>	Latin for new man; applied to men who were the first in their family to serve as consul
<b>ostracism</b>	a political feature of Athenian democracy in the fifth century BCE which allowed the ecclesia to exile a citizen for ten years based on a popular vote; this process took place once a year where the name of an individual was scribed onto shards of pottery known as <i>ostraka</i> ; in order to be valid an ostracism required that 6000 votes were cast
<b>Peloponnese</b>	geographic region of southern Greece that is separated from mainland Greece by the Isthmus of Corinth; this region contained the city-state of Sparta
<b>Periclean Age</b>	the second half of the fifth century BCE Athens was dominated by the political influence of Pericles; it was during this time that Athens, following significant victories in the Greco-Persian Wars, obtained leadership in the fight against Persia, demonstrated imperialistic actions and undertook large building projects to beautify Athens; many historians see the emergence of this era as a result of Themistokles's naval policies

#### 476 BCE

Themistokles is *Choregos* (sponsor) for Phrynichus's *The Phoenician Women* which focused on the Battle of Salamis

#### 472 BCE

Aeschylus stages *The Persians*

#### 471 BCE

Themistokles is exiled from Athens through a vote of ostracism

#### 459 BCE

Death of Themistokles in Magnesia due to sickness; reports conflict between poison or suicide



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Polis (pl. poleis)</b>	term referring to the individual cities which existed within ancient Greece; these cities had their own distinct identity with regards to political, legal and religious practices, but shared broader cultural customs with other <i>poleis</i> ; a <i>polis</i> is commonly translated as a city-state; it was common for a <i>polis</i> to engage in warfare with neighbouring <i>poleis</i>
<b>populism</b>	form of politics that is based on progressing the needs of commoners as opposed to those of the elite; populism is criticised for broad agendas which only appeal to the needs of the masses in order to attain political support; in these contexts an individual is often characterised as obtaining personal power for their own interests
<b>strategos</b>	a significant position within Athens where ten men were elected annually to make decisions on military matters; these individuals would often take on the function of a general for military campaigns
<b>trireme</b>	ancient naval vessel that was operated by up to 30 oarsmen and equipped with a ram on the prow. Athenian triremes were noted for their maneuverability and speed
<b>tyranny</b>	in ancient Greece a tyrant was identified as a ruler who suppressed the rights of the population; tyrants were often aristocratic and claimed to represent the needs of the wider population in contrast to that of a monarchy; it was against the rule of tyranny that the Athenian democratic revolution emerged

## Introduction

Themistokles (c. 524–459 BCE) was an Athenian general and politician with a great deal of popular support. He was a key figure in the defeat of Persian invading forces at the Battle of Salamis, but eventually fell out of favour and went into exile.

Within the traditions of history, Themistokles is often depicted as the saviour of Western democracy against the seemingly tyrannical threat of Persian imperialism under King Xerxes the Great. While Athens, during the time of Themistokles, was still a fledgling democracy, his career reveals much greater complexity than the traditionally held picture of him as democracy's defender. In all stages of Themistokles's career, valuable insight can be gleaned concerning the nature and usage of power in Athens. Of particular importance is the evaluation of how power could be achieved and used through populist agendas within Athens, and the extent to which the greater good justified such actions. Examining Themistokles encourages the consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of fifth century Athenian democracy, and its application in the twenty-first century. This understanding, however, is often clouded through a variety of historical traditions that have been passed down since the earliest recorders of Themistokles's career. Against the backdrop of the Greco-Persian wars and the imperialistic growth of Athens, it will be evident that in significant times of uncertainty, the attainment and usage of power is not an easily identifiable dichotomy of good and evil.



**SOURCE 19.3** *The Burial of Themistokles's Ashes*. What does this painting by Giuseppe Bossi from the early nineteenth century suggest about how Themistokles's life and death were remembered in the early modern era?

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### 19.1 The career of Themistokles

The power of Themistokles as an individual is firmly placed within the context of democratic Athens growing in influence as a *polis*, and the ongoing threat posed by the Persian Empire. As such, it is necessary to assess the political features of Athens as a newly-founded democracy within the broader geo-political relationship between Greece and Persia in the late sixth and early fifth century BCE. The power acquired by Themistokles is unlikely to have been possible in previous forms of government in Athens. So, it was due to internal and external influences that Themistokles was able to emerge as a defining figure of the period.

Historian Paul Cartledge, in an article for *The Guardian*, has the following to say about Greek democracy.

The mighty Persian empire, the fastest growing and largest oriental empire yet, had threatened to swallow up mainland Greece as well as those Greeks who lived within the bounds of what the Persians considered their own sphere – Asia. But on the battlefields of Marathon, Salamis, Plataea and Mycale, a relative handful of Greek communities managed to unite long enough to repulse that threat – for ever, as it turned out.

However, united though they were by religion and common social customs, and by at least partly fictional self-images, these Greeks were very much not united by one of their major contributions to the sum of human achievement – politics.

Much of our everyday political language is of ancient Greek derivation: monarchy, tyranny, oligarchy, aristocracy, plutocracy, democracy – not to mention the word 'politics' itself. Much of the rest is Latin-derived: constitution, republic, empire, among others. But the Latin for 'democracy'



was *democratia*, a loan-word, because actually the Romans didn't do democracy – at least not in the original ancient Greek sense of the term; and they recognised, as we all do or should, that in this sphere the Greeks had been the original pioneers. However, the ancient Greeks' *demokratia* was hugely different not just in scale but in kind from any modern political system that claims the title of 'democracy'. That was partly because the fundamental ancient Greek political unit, the *polis*, was a strong community in a very exclusive sense: only adult male citizens could consider themselves politically entitled. Even then, the ancient Greeks typically ruled themselves directly, in that they did not select rulers to rule over and for them. Theirs were direct, participatory self-governments, whereas ours are notionally 'representative'.

*Demokratia* was a compound of *demos* and *kratos*. But whereas *kratos* unambiguously meant 'grip' or 'power', *demos* could be interpreted to mean either 'people' (in a vague sense, as in Abraham Lincoln's famous words at Gettysburg: 'government of the people, by the people, for the people') or very specifically 'the masses': the poor majority of the enfranchised citizen body (which might range in size from as few as 500, as on the island-state of Melos in the Cyclades, to as many as the 50 000 citizens of democratic Athens).

So if you liked *demokratia*, it could mean People Power, but if you hated it – if, say, you were a member of the wealthy elite – then it could stand for the ancient Greek equivalent of Lenin's dictatorship of the proletariat. By and large the Romans took the second view, which is why they went to great lengths to stamp it out within their empire – the eastern half of which was basically Greek – in the end with total success. It therefore took a great deal of effort and ingenuity in the 19th century to rehabilitate 'democracy' as a viably positive term of political discourse – and even then only at the cost of draining it of the active, participatory, class-conscious dimension the Athenians had given it.

**SOURCE 19.4** Cartledge, P., 'Greece: Birthplace of the modern world?', *The Guardian*, 7 November 2010

Ancient Greek historians Xenophon and Herodotus also expressed their views on democracy.

Now, in discussing the Athenian constitution, I cannot commend their present method of running the state, because in choosing it they preferred that the masses should do better than the respectable citizens; this, then, is my reason for not commending it. Since, however, they have made this choice, I will demonstrate how well they preserve their constitution and handle the other affairs for which the rest of the Greeks criticize them.

My first point is that it is right that the poor and the ordinary people there should have more power than the noble and the rich, because it is the ordinary people who man the fleet and bring the city her power; they provide the helmsmen, the boatswains, the junior officers, the look-outs and the shipwrights; it is these people who make the city powerful much more than the hoplites and the noble and respectable citizens. This being so, it seems just that all should share in public office by lot and by election, and that any citizen who wishes should be able to speak in the Assembly.

**SOURCE 19.5** Xenophon, *Constitution of the Athenians*, 1.1-2

Thus Athens went from strength to strength and proved, if proof were needed, how noble a thing freedom is, not in one respect only, but in all; for while they were oppressed under a despotic government, they had no better success in war than any of their neighbours, yet once the yoke was flung off, they proved the finest fighters in the world.

**SOURCE 19.6** Herodotus, *Histories*, 5.78

## ACTIVITY 19.1

Complete the tables below to create a brief summary of each of these sources.

Source 19.4		
Paragraph	Key terms, issue and concepts	Key quotation or further comments and elaboration
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Source 19.5		
Paragraph	Key terms, issue and concepts	Key quotation or further comments and elaboration
1		
2		

Source 19.6		
Paragraph	Key terms, issue and concepts	Key quotation or further comments and elaboration
1		

## ACTIVITY 19.2

Refer to Source 19.4 to complete the following questions:

1. According to the article in Source 19.4, how would the ancient Greeks define democracy?
2. Why was the development of democracy within ancient Greece a significant development concerning the distribution of power within a society?
3. What fears did the Romans have of Greek democracy? Why would such fears be justified?
4. According to Cartledge, why were the Greco-Persian Wars an important time period in the history of Athenian democracy?
5. Why would it be inappropriate to refer to the Greeks as a unified political and social entity during the fifth century BCE?
6. How does the view of democracy in ancient Greece compare with and contrast to Western understandings of democracy in the twenty-first century?
7. To what extent has democracy within the twenty-first century created an imbalance of power within society? Where and how is this imbalance apparent?

Answer the following question by referring to Sources 19.5 and 19.6.

8. What do Herodotus and Xenophon imply about the benefits of the Athenian form of government in Sources 19.5 and 19.6?

The early CE Greek biographer Plutarch wrote the following about Themistokles's childhood:

In the case of Themistokles, his family was too obscure to further his reputation. His father was Neocles, no very conspicuous man at Athens, a Phrearrhian by *deme*, of the tribe Leontis; and on his mother's side he was an alien.

It was for the reason given, and because the aliens were wont to frequent Cynosarges, this is a place outside the gates, a gymnasium of Heracles; for he too was not a legitimate god, but had something alien about him, from the fact that his mother was a mortal, that Themistokles sought to induce certain well-born youths to go out to Cynosarges and exercise with him; and by his success in this bit of cunning he is thought to have removed the distinction between aliens and legitimates.

However lowly his birth, it is agreed on all hands that while yet a boy he was impetuous, by nature sagacious, and by election enterprising and prone to public life. In times of relaxation and leisure, when absolved from his lessons, he would not play or indulge his ease, as the rest of the boys did, but would be found composing and rehearsing to himself mock speeches. These speeches would be in accusation or defence of some boy or other. Wherefore his teacher was wont to say to him: 'My boy, thou wilt be nothing insignificant, but something great, of a surety, either for good or evil.'

**SOURCE 19.7** Plutarch, *Life of Themistokles*, 1–2

### ACTIVITY 19.3

Refer to Source 19.7 to answer the following questions:

1. What does Plutarch emphasise about the heritage of Themistokles's parents?
2. What notable characteristics does Plutarch highlight from the youth of Themistokles which may have influenced his later career? How do such stories assist in understanding the likely motives of Themistokles later in his career? Complete the table below to assist your response.

Anecdote	Notable characteristics	Connection to power





**SOURCE 19.8** An artist's impression of fifth-century BCE Acropolis in Athens, Leo von Klenze, 1846. To what extent does this painting provide a romanticised view of Athenian democracy when compared against the ancient evidence contained within this chapter?



**SOURCE 19.9** An artist's interpretation of the Athenian Agora

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature of power and how it was exercised in the Ancient World

A notable aspect of Themistokles's career was his rise to prominence in Athens in the first half of the fifth century BCE, and the changes that he implemented during that time. Themistokles is notable due to the seeming lack of nobility within his family background. Despite these apparent limitations, Themistokles is regularly portrayed as the 'new man' (*novus homo*) who was able to overcome the stigma of his humble roots, and seek fame and influence through his noted wit and skill within the new Athenian democracy. In achieving such a position, it is the supposed wisdom and foresight of Themistokles which is credited in some cases with saving Western civilisation.

### 19.2 Major ancient sources

#### Herodotus

Herodotus, writing in the mid-fifth century BCE, provides valuable evidence for understanding the career of Themistokles. Herodotus is often polarised as being pro-Athenian and anti-Persian in his writings, but despite this, Herodotus's home city of Halicarnassus in Asia Minor would have been familiar with the Persian form of rule, including systems of tyranny, which should be acknowledged. Some have suggested that Herodotus may have been a trader; this would explain the length of his travels. At the time of writing his *Histories*, Herodotus would thus have also experienced first hand the growing influence of Athens within the Aegean region in a post-Persian imperialistic world. Such influence reveals an understandably pro-Athenian agenda for his writings, especially given the belief or implied criticism from fellow Greek Thucydides, that such works were done to be heard. Politically, it has been suggested that Herodotus saw democracy more as freedom from the tyrant than power to the many. Throughout the narrative of Athenian supremacy in the face of the Persian threat, Themistokles is portrayed as a complex individual in guiding the defence of the Greeks. It has been alleged that Herodotus portrays Themistokles as the unifier of Greece, but not an inspiring military hero to represent the freedom of democracy.

#### Thucydides

Thucydides, a contemporary of Herodotus, presents an important accompanying understanding of Themistokles's role in Greek history. Whilst Thucydides's primary focus is to present an understanding of the Peloponnesian War, he takes time to address the growth of Athenian power in the fifth century and acknowledges the role that the Greco-Persian Wars played in this. As a victim of the machinations of Athenian democracy, and an elite himself, it would be justifiable to assume that Thucydides would portray the career of Themistokles as a populist. Yet this is not the purpose of Themistokles's inclusion in his *Histories*. Thucydides presents Themistokles as having great attributes including the foundations for the greatness of Athens through the strengthening of the Athenian navy that led to the Periclean Age. Of particular note is the omission by Thucydides of the anecdotal accounts that feature within Herodotus's account which implicitly condemned the character and morals of Themistokles.

#### Plutarch

Plutarch was a moralist and a philosopher, and his *Parallel Lives* are known for their emphasis on character evaluation and morality, particularly through a comparison between Roman and Greek figures of the distant past. Although writing in the late first and early second century CE, Plutarch's surviving works provide invaluable detail on notable figures from the Ancient World. With wealthy heritage, Plutarch was afforded the best education at Athens and held notable roles within the Roman imperial system of government. In a world dominated by the ever-present achievements of Roman conquest, scholars have suggested the

*Lives* of Plutarch presented an opportunity to highlight the former greatness of Greek statesmen, generals and philosophers. Given Plutarch's time of writing, it is undoubtable that the influences of Herodotus and Thucydides underlie his own personal assessments of Themistokles. Most notable is the assertion that the character of Themistokles was driven by a desire for greatness and power, which was attained through 'practical intelligence'.

The question against Plutarch is the extent to which his overarching assessment of Themistokles's character inhibits his ability to appropriately assess individual decisions.

## Diodorus Siculus

Diodorus of Sicily was a Greek historian, and author of the *Library of World History*. His activities can be dated between 60 and 30 BCE. He was born in Agyrium on Sicily – a poor town. He understood some Latin, although his limited understanding of the language caused him to make mistakes. He visited Egypt and Rome, and claims to have travelled extensively, but nowhere does he show an acquaintance with important cities like Athens, Miletus, Ephesus, or Antioch. Diodorus must have been a wealthy man because he mentions no literary patron, and could afford to spend thirty years reading and writing. He makes no reference to any occupation of public offices, so he seems to have also been a bookish man; he appears to be a historian who carefully studied, excerpted and reworked the works of earlier scholars. This method is not unlike that of his younger Roman contemporary Livy, who started to write more or less at the moment when Diodorus published the *Library of World History*.

Diodorus's *World History* was, in his own words, 'an immense work' that consisted of forty books, of which 1–5 and 11–20 survive completely. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars, such as Mommsen and Schwartz, have criticised Diodorus of being an uncritical maker of excerpts and a poor historian. Indeed, he does make strange mistakes. Yet, this criticism is ill-judged and the latest research offers something of a rehabilitation of his reputation, stressing that the Sicilian author did what he set out to do – write an easily accessible world history. The title itself proves that Diodorus did not pretend to offer more than a collection of summaries and as a historian, he is simply as good as his sources. He knows how to tell a story, although he lacks the speeches that make other ancient historians so entertaining and, he writes in a clear and unaffected style that is usually easy to understand.

### ACTIVITY 19.4

1. By referring to the background information provided and completing further research where necessary, complete the table below for the key ancient sources used in this chapter.

	Origin	Motive (purpose)	Audience	Perspective (point of view)
Herodotus				
Thucydides				
Plutarch				
Diodorus				

In the next two sources, Plutarch writes about Themistokles's ambition.

Speedily, however, as it seems, and while he was still in all the ardour of youth, public affairs laid their grasp upon Themistokles, and his impulse to win reputation got strong mastery over him. Wherefore, from the very beginning, in his desire to be first, he boldly encountered the enmity



of men who had power and were already first in the city, especially that of Aristides the son of Lysimachus, who was always his opponent.

It is said, indeed, that Themistokles was so carried away by his desire for reputation, and such an ambitious lover of great deeds, that though he was still a young man when the battle with the Barbarians at Marathon was fought and the generalship of Miltiades was in everybody's mouth, he was seen thereafter to be wrapped in his own thoughts for the most part, and was sleepless o' nights, and refused invitations to his customary drinking parties, and said to those who put wondering questions to him concerning his change of life that the trophy of Miltiades would not let him sleep.

And so, in the first place, whereas the Athenians were wont to divide up among themselves the revenue coming from the silver mines at Laureium, he, and he alone, dared to come before the people with a motion that this division be given up, and that with these moneys triremes be constructed for the war against Aegina. This was the fiercest war then troubling Hellas, and the islanders controlled the sea, owing to the number of their ships. Wherefore all the more easily did Themistokles carry his point, not by trying to terrify the citizens with dreadful pictures of Darius or the Persians – these were too far away and inspired no very serious fear of their coming, but by making opportune use of the bitter jealousy which they cherished toward Aegina in order to secure the armament he desired. The result was that with those moneys they built a hundred triremes, with which they actually fought at Salamis against Xerxes.

In his ambition he surpassed all men. For instance, while he was still young and obscure, he prevailed upon Epicles of Hermione, a harpist who was eagerly sought after by the Athenians, to practise at his house, because he was ambitious that many should seek out his dwelling and come often to see him. And still again, as *choregus*, or theatrical manager, he won a victory with tragedies, although even at that early time this contest was conducted with great eagerness and ambition, and set up a tablet commemorating his victory with the following inscription: 'Themistokles the Phrearrhian was *Choregus*; Phrynichus was Poet; Adeimantus was Archon.'

**SOURCE 19.10** Plutarch, *Life of Themistokles*, 3–5

Now, to resume, it befell Aristides to be loved at first because of this surname, but afterwards to be jealously hated, especially when Themistokles set the story going among the multitude that Aristides had done away with the public courts of justice by his determining and judging everything in private, and that, without any one perceiving it, he had established for himself a monarchy, saving only the armed body-guard. And besides, the people too must by this time have become greatly elated over their victory; they thought nothing too good for themselves, and were therefore vexed with those who towered above the multitude in name and reputation. So they assembled in the city from all the country round, and ostracised Aristides, giving to their envious dislike of his reputation the name of fear of tyranny.

**SOURCE 19.11** Plutarch, *Life of Aristides*, 7



**SOURCE 19.12** Ostrakon bearing the name of Aristides, 483–482 BCE

Herodotus writes about the early days of Themistokles's prominence.

Now there was at Athens a man who had lately made his way into the first rank of citizens: his true name was Themistokles; but he was known more generally as the son of Neocles. This man came forward and said that the interpreters had not explained the oracle altogether aright – ‘for if,’ he argued, ‘the clause in question had really respected the Athenians, it would not have been expressed so mildly; the phrase used would have been “Luckless Salamis,” rather than “Holy Salamis,” had those to whom the island belonged been about to perish in its neighbourhood. Rightly taken, the response of the god threatened the enemy, much more than the Athenians.’ He therefore counselled his countrymen to make ready to fight on board their ships, since they were the wooden wall in which the god told them to trust. When Themistokles had thus cleared the matter, the Athenians embraced his view, preferring it to that of the interpreters. The advice of these last had been against engaging in a sea-fight; ‘all the Athenians could do,’ they said, ‘was, without lifting a hand in their defence, to quit Attica, and make a settlement in some other country.’

Themistokles had before this given a counsel which prevailed very seasonably. The Athenians, having a large sum of money in their treasury, the produce of the mines at Laureium, were about to share it among the full-grown citizens, who would have received ten drachmas apiece, when Themistokles persuaded them to forbear the distribution, and build with the money two hundred ships, to help them in their war against the Eginetans.

**SOURCE 19.13** Herodotus, *Histories*, 7.143–145

Diodorus Siculus also writes of Themistokles's ambition and intelligence.

At the close of the year the archon in Athens was Adeimantus, and in Rome the consuls elected were Marcus Fabius Vibulanus and Lucius Valerius Publius. At this time Themistokles, because of his skill as a general and his sagacity, was held in esteem not only by his fellow citizens but by all Greeks. He was, therefore, elated over his fame and had recourse to many other far more ambitious undertakings which would serve to increase the dominant position of his native state. Thus the Piraeus, as it is called, was not at that time a harbour, but the Athenians were using as their ship-yard the bay called Phaleric, which was quite small; and so Themistokles conceived the plan of making the Piraeus into a harbour, since it would require only a small amount of construction and could be made into a harbour, the best and largest in Greece. He also hoped that when this improvement had been added to what the Athenians possessed, the city would be able to compete for the hegemony at sea; for the Athenians possessed at that time the largest number of triremes and through an unbroken succession of battles at sea which the city had waged had gained experience and renown in naval conflicts.

Yet he was simultaneously, in his intelligence, the very opposite of muscle-bound: the workings of his mind, infinitely mobile and serpentine, would ultimately become a thing of wonder to his fellow citizens – and of alarm. Not a dark art required of the politician under the Athenians' new form of government but Themistokles showed himself its master: he could infight, he could network, he could spin. Above all, and most crucially, he knew how to make himself visible. Rather than live out on the family estates, for instance, he chose to settle instead downwind of the Ceramicus, near the ‘Hangman's Gate,’ where the bodies of executed criminals and suicides were dumped: an insalubrious address, to be sure, but also – and here was the attraction for Themistokles – within walking distance of the Agora. Concerned not to have the great and the good put off visiting this ill-omened spot, he began inviting celebrated musicians to rehearse inside his home; keen to make friends and influence people, he set up as an attorney, the first candidate ever in a democracy to rehearse for public life by practicing the law. Above all, naturally affable and gregarious as he was, he wooed the poor; and



they, not used to being courted, duly loved him back. Touring the taverns, the markets, the docks, canvassing where no politician had ever thought to canvass before, making sure never to forget a single voter's name, Themistokles had set his eyes on a radically new constituency. Not that ambition was his only motivation. While nothing that Themistokles did was ever entirely divorced from self-interest, he had seen in the poor not merely voters but the future saving of his city.

**SOURCE 19.14** Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, 11.41–43

### ACTIVITY 19.5

For each of the literary sources listed in the table below, select a quote and explain what the evidence reveals about Themistokles's attainment of power within Athens.

Source	Quotes	Explicit and implicit meanings about Themistokles's attainment of power
19.10		
19.11		
19.13		
19.14		

### ACTIVITY 19.6

Refer to Sources 19.10 and 19.11 to answer the following questions:

1. According to Plutarch, what skills does Themistokles use to attain influence and power in Athens?
2. To what extent would the actions of Themistokles be deemed appropriate in Athens at the time?
3. How does Plutarch portray the motives of Themistokles in his rise to power?
4. Considering the background and nature of Plutarch's writings, why is the ostrakon in Source 19.12, featuring the name of Aristides, a significant source of evidence?
5. What do the language choices of Plutarch suggest about his reliability as a historical source? Consider the usage of positive or negative descriptions associated with Themistokles.

Refer to Sources 19.10 to 19.14 to answer the following questions:

6. Why would the decision to invest revenue from the mine at Laurium be considered controversial in Athens at the time?
7. How was Themistokles able to overcome objections to his proposed naval policy?
8. By comparing the accounts of the ancient authors provided, to what extent do they agree or disagree in their portrayal of Themistokles's role in preparing Athens for future conflict? Use the table below to record notable actions, decisions and assessments of Themistokles.

Herodotus	Plutarch	Diodorus Siculus

(continued)



## ACTIVITY 19.6 continued

9. To what extent do the ancient authors depict the changes of Themistokles in a positive or negative light? How might the background of the authors explain such views?
10. Based on your own assessment of the sources used in the above questions, to what extent does Themistokles's rise to influence and the policies he enacted reflect that of a *populares*? Refer to specific evidence from the sources to support your position.

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a powerful individual, group or society in the Ancient World

### 19.3 The Battle of Salamis

The Battle of Salamis, where a combined Greek fleet led by Themistokles defeated Xerxes's Persian fleet, can be identified as the high point of Themistokles's career. It was at this point, during the second Persian invasion of Greece under Xerxes, that Themistokles's naval foresight was justified with an unlikely victory which was pivotal in turning the course of the war. Subsequently, the fame of Themistokles was known throughout all of Greece. In 479 BCE there are no records of his involvement in the ongoing fight against the Persians, yet it is likely that he participated. Throughout the remainder of the 470s Themistokles continued to hold influence within Athens's post-war program, however, contradictory motives of the general become more evident.

## ACTIVITY 19.7

Read the source sections carefully and answer the questions at the end of each section.

1. This first source was written by Herodotus.

When the Athenians saw that they [the Persians] had ascended to the Acropolis, some of them cast themselves down from the wall and so perished, and others fled into the inner chamber. Those Persians who had come up first betook themselves to the gates, which they opened, and slew the suppliants; and when they had laid all the Athenians low, they plundered the temple and burnt the whole of the Acropolis ... When it was told to the Greeks at Salamis what had befallen the Athenian Acropolis, they were so panic-struck that some of their captains would not wait till the matter whereon they debated should be resolved, but threw themselves aboard their ships and hoisted their sails for flight. Those that were left behind resolved that the fleet should fight to guard the Isthmus; and at nightfall they broke up from the assembly and embarked. Themistokles then being returned to his ship, Mnesiphilus, an Athenian, asked him what was the issue of their counsels. Learning from him that their plan was to sail to the Isthmus and fight in defence of the Peloponnese, 'Then,' said Mnesiphilus, 'if they put out to sea from Salamis, your ships will have no country left wherfor to fight; for everyone will betake himself to his own city, and neither Eurybiades, nor any other man, will be able to hold them, but the armament will be scattered abroad; and Hellas will perish, by unwisdom. Nay, if there be any means thereto, go now and strive to undo this plan, if haply you may be able to persuade Eurybiades to change his purpose and so abide here.' This advice pleased Themistokles well; making no answer to Mnesiphilus, he went to Eurybiades's ship, and said that he would confer

## ACTIVITY 19.7 continued

with him on a matter of their common interest. Eurybiades bidding him come aboard and say what he would, Themistokles sat by him and told him all that he had heard from Mnesiphilus, as it were of his own devising, and added much thereto, till he prevailed with the Spartan by entreaty to come out of his ship and assemble the admirals in their place of meeting.

**SOURCE 19.15** Herodotus, *Histories*, 8

According to Herodotus, whose idea was it to keep the entire Greek navy at Salamis to fight?

2. Herodotus continues:

They being assembled (so it is said), before Eurybiades had laid before them the matter wherefor the generals were brought together, Themistokles spoke long and vehemently in the earnestness of his entreaty; and while he yet spoke, Adimantus son of Ocytus, the Corinthian admiral, said, 'At the games, Themistokles, they that come forward before their time are beaten with rods'. 'Ay,' said Themistokles, justifying himself, 'but they that wait too long win no crown'. Thus ... he made the Corinthian a soft answer; then turning to Eurybiades, he said now nought of what he had said before, how that if they set sail from Salamis they would scatter and flee; for it would have ill become him to bring railing accusations against the allies in their presence; he trusted to another plea instead. 'It lies in your hand', said he, 'to save Hellas, if you will be guided by me and fight here at sea, and not be won by the words of these others to remove your ships over to the Isthmus. Hear me now, and judge between two plans. If you engage off the Isthmus you will fight in open waters, where it is least for our advantage, our ships being the heavier and the fewer in number; and moreover you will lose Salamis and Megara and Aegina, even if victory attend us otherwise; and their land army will follow with their fleet, and so you will lead them to the Peloponnese, and imperil all Hellas. But if you do as I counsel you, you will thereby profit as I shall show: firstly, by engaging their many ships with our few in narrow seas, we shall win a great victory, if the war have its rightful issue; for it is for our advantage to fight in a strait as it is theirs to have wide sea-room. Secondly, we save Salamis, whither we have conveyed away our children and our women. Moreover, there is this, too, in my plan, and it is your chiefest desire: you will be defending the Peloponnese as well by abiding here as you would by fighting off the Isthmus, and you will not lead our enemies (if you be wise) to the Isthmus. And if that happen which I expect, you will never have the foreigners upon you at the Isthmus; they will advance no further than Attica, but depart in disorderly fashion; and we shall gain by the saving of Megara and Aegina and Salamis, where it is told us by an oracle that we shall have the upper hand of our enemies. Success comes oftenest to men when they make reasonable designs; but if they do not so, neither will heaven for its part side with human devices'. Thus said Themistokles.

**SOURCE 19.16** Herodotus, *Histories*, 8

- a. How did Themistokles convince the admirals of the Greek allies to stay and fight the Persians at Salamis (to make the best use of the navy)?
- b. What evidence is there of tension between the Corinthian and the Athenians (Themistokles)?
- c. Why would such tension exist between these two cities?



## ACTIVITY 19.7 continued

### 3. Herodotus continues:

For a while there was but murmuring between man and man, and wonder at Eurybiades's unwisdom, but at the last came an open outbreak; and an assembly was held, where there was much speaking of the same matters as before, some saying that they must sail away to the Peloponnese and face danger for that country, rather than abide and fight for a land won from them by the spear; but the Athenians and Aeginetans and Megarians pleading that they should remain and defend themselves where they were. Then Themistokles, when the Peloponnesians were outvoting him, went privily out of the assembly, and sent to the Median fleet a man in a boat, charged with a message that he must deliver. 'I am sent by the admiral of the Athenians without the knowledge of the other Greeks (he being a friend to the king's cause and desiring that you rather than the Greeks should have the mastery) to tell you that the Greeks have lost heart and are planning flight, and that now is the hour for you to achieve an incomparable feat of arms, if you suffer them not to escape. For there is no union in their counsels, nor will they withstand you any more, and you will see them battling against each other, your friends against your foes.' With that declaration he departed away. The Persians put faith in the message; and first they landed many of their men on the islet Psyttalea, which lies between Salamis and the mainland; then, at midnight, they advanced their western wing towards Salamis for encirclement, and they too put out to sea that were stationed off Ceos and Cynosura; and they held all the passage with their ships as far as Munychia.

**SOURCE 19.17** Herodotus, *Histories*, 8

- a. What were the Peloponnesians intending to do?
- b. What did Themistokles do to prevent this?
- c. Do you think Herodotus is praising Themistokles or damning him with faint praise? (To 'damn with faint praise' is to provide praise that is minimal or inconsequential, implying that such praise is the best that could be said.)

### 4. Herodotus continues:

In the midst of their contention, Aristides, the son of Lysimachus, who had crossed from Egina, arrived in Salamis. He was an Athenian, and had been ostracised by the commonalty; yet I believe, from what I have heard concerning his character, that there was not in all Athens a man so worthy or so just as he. He now came to the council, and, standing outside, called for Themistokles. Now Themistokles was not his friend, but his most determined enemy. However, under the pressure of the great dangers impending, Aristides forgot their feud, and called Themistokles out of the council, since he wished to confer with him. He had heard before his arrival of the impatience of the Peloponnesians to withdraw the fleet to the Isthmus. As soon therefore as Themistokles came forth, Aristides addressed him in these words: 'Our rivalry at all times, and especially at the present season, ought to be a struggle, which of us shall most advantage our country. Let me then say to thee, that so far as regards the departure of the Peloponnesians from this place, much talk and little will be found precisely alike. I have seen with my own eyes that which I now report: that, however much the Corinthians or Eurybiades himself may wish it, they cannot now retreat; for we are enclosed on every side by the enemy. Go in to them, and make this known.'

Aristides then came forward and told them; he was come, he said, from Egina, and had been hard put to it to slip unseen through the blockade; for all the Greek fleet was compassed round by Xerxes's ships, and they had best (he said) prepare to defend themselves. Thus he



## ACTIVITY 19.7 continued

spoke, and took his departure. They fell a-wrangling again; for the more part of the admirals would not believe that the news was true ... It was now earliest dawn, and they called the fighting men to an assembly, wherein Themistokles made an harangue in which he excelled all others; the tenor of his words was to array all the good in man's nature and estate against the evil; and having exhorted them to choose the better, he made an end of speaking and bade them embark. Even as they so did, came the trireme from Aegina which had been sent away for the Sons of Aeacus ... but the great multitude of the ships were shattered at Salamis, some destroyed by the Athenians and some by the Aeginetans.

**SOURCE 19.18** Herodotus, *Histories*, 8

- a. Themistokles was responsible for the ostracism of Aristides (see earlier in chapter, Activity 19.5 and Source 19.11). Yet Aristides returned to help Athens in the crisis after the sack of Athens and before the Battle of Salamis. Between Themistokles and Aristides, what evidence is there to suggest that Herodotus has a bias towards one and is against the other?
  - b. Overall, do you think Herodotus is a good, balanced and objective historian, or one who is prone to subtle bias? What is the overall impression he gives about Themistokles – favourable or unfavourable? Give reasons and evidence as part of your answer. (Some additional research on this may be required.)
5. Aeschylus's play *The Persians* is set in Susa at the time of the defeat at Salamis, beginning just before the ruling family is told of the defeat. Modern commentators are divided as to whether the play should be viewed as commemorating victory or as mediating loss.

**Messenger:** My Queen, some destructive power or evil spirit, appearing from somewhere or other, caused the beginning of our utter rout. A Hellene, from the Athenian host, came to your son Xerxes and told this tale: that, when the gloom of black night should set in, the Hellenes would not remain in place, but, springing upon the rowing benches of their ships, would seek, some here, some there, to preserve their lives by stealthy flight. But Xerxes, when he heard this, comprehending neither the cleverness of the Greek nor that the gods grudged him success, straightway gave all his captains orders to this effect – that, when the sun had ceased to illumine the earth with his beams, and darkness had covered the region of the sky, they should bring up in a tight group the main body of the fleet, disposed in triple line, to bar the exits and the sounding straits, and station other ships in a circle around the island of Ajax. Night began to wane, yet the fleet of the Hellenes in no way attempted to put forth by stealth. When, however, radiant Day with her white horses shone over all the land, a loud cheer like a song of triumph first rang out from the Hellenes, and, at the same instant, clear from the island crags, an echo returned an answering cry. Terror fell on all the barbarians, balked of their purpose; for then the Hellenes chanted their solemn paean, not as in flight, but as men rushing to the onset with the courage of gallant hearts.

**Atossa:** O hateful divinity, how have you foiled the purpose of the Persians! Cruel was the vengeance which my son brought upon himself for his designs against illustrious Athens; the barbarians whom Marathon destroyed were not enough. It was in an effort to exact retribution for them that my son has drawn upon himself so great a multitude of woes. But the ships that escaped destruction – tell me about them. Where did you leave them? Can you give a clear report?

**SOURCE 19.19** Aeschylus, *The Persians*, 353–394

## ACTIVITY 19.7 continued

Aeschylus staged the play in 472 BCE. One year later, Themistokles was exiled from Athens through a vote of ostracism.

- a. Themistokles is not specifically mentioned in the drama. Why is this?
- b. Even though unmentioned, the audience would have known what he was responsible for in the story. Make three points in the table below concerning this issue, supporting each with an appropriate quotation from the text (one has been completed for you as an example).

	Point	Quotes
	Themistokles's use of deception to make Xerxes think the Greeks were trying to escape	'A Hellene, from the Athenian host, came to your son Xerxes and told this tale ... [they] would seek ... to preserve their lives by stealthy flight.'
1		
2		
3		

6. An extract from Plutarch's *Life of Themistokles*

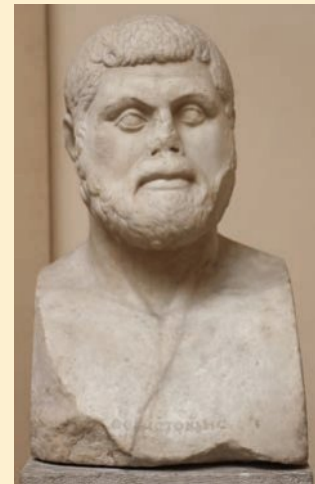
Then indeed it was that Themistokles, despairing of bringing the multitude over to his views by any human reasonings, set up machinery, as it were, to introduce the gods to them, as a theatrical manager would for a tragedy, and brought to bear upon them signs from heaven and oracles. As a sign from heaven he took the behaviour of the serpent, which is held to have disappeared about that time from the sacred enclosure on the Acropolis. When the priests found that the daily offerings made to it were left whole and untouched, they proclaimed to the multitude – Themistokles putting the story into their mouths – that the goddess had abandoned her city and was showing them their way to the sea.

**SOURCE 19.20** Plutarch, *Life of Themistokles*, 10

How did Themistokles motivate the Greeks, and how does Plutarch view his use of religion in this?

7. Historian Barry Strauss writes about the Themistokles Decree.

As the assembly took the heavy step of voting for mass departure, the rarest of things may have descended on that rowdiest of parliaments: silence. The Athenian people had voted for their own exile. But behind the strategy was one man. Themistokles was the leader whose name was recorded on the official record and the politician who would be blamed if everything failed in the end. A document inscribed on stone, known as the Themistokles Decree for the name of the man who moved its passage, confirms Herodotus's report while adding several important details. Dating from c. 300 BCE, the inscription may indeed be based on the original document passed by the Athenian assembly. The Themistokles



**SOURCE 19.21** Bust of Themistokles. What features and implied characteristics does this bust reveal regarding the life and achievements of Themistokles?

## ACTIVITY 19.7 continued

Decree shows that the evacuation of Athens began well before the battle of Artemisium, in August 480 BCE. It also demonstrates how carefully the people of Athens were thinking ahead.

**SOURCE 19.22** Strauss, B., 2004, 'Flames over Athens', *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics*, Trustees of Boston University, vol. 12, no.1, p. 104

Select one quote from Source 19.20 and one from Source 19.22 to demonstrate Themistokles's leadership and stratagem for forcing the battle that led to victory.



**SOURCE 19.23** Modern recreation of a Greek trireme. How might the design of Greek triremes affected the nature of naval warfare in the fifth century BCE?

## ACTIVITY 19.8

1. Create a flow chart based on the sources outlining the important events which occurred in the lead up to the Battle of Salamis.
2. What do such actions reveal about the nature and purposes of Themistokles's power at this time? Provide, with evaluation, specific examples to support your decisions.

(continued)



## ACTIVITY 19.8 continued

3. Given the importance of Herodotus's account in providing details of Salamis, how does he portray the contributions of Themistokles in the ultimate victory?
4. To what extent is Herodotus's assessment of Themistokles corroborated by other ancient authors?
5. Conduct background research for the author Aeschylus and his work *The Persians*. Why would such a source be important for understanding Athenian views of Themistokles's contribution to the defeat of the Persians?

## 19.4 Themistokles after Salamis

### ACTIVITY 19.9

Consider the following questions when reading Sources 19.24 to 19.28. These can be answered as an extension or revision exercise.

1. Evaluate the following statement: The full extent of Themistokles's leadership of Athens and greatness to Greece after Salamis has rarely been acknowledged and recognised, overshadowed so much as it is by the great naval victory of 480 BCE.
2. To what extent did Themistokles's actions post-Salamis provide increased unity amongst the Greek city-states?
3. How do Herodotus, Thucydides and Plutarch view Themistokles's post-Salamis activities? Are their views and attitudes towards Themistokles essentially similar or dissimilar?
4. To what extent was Themistokles unfairly treated by the democracy that he served, and was his exile fair and just? Depending on your opinion, what does this say about Themistokles's character? (Revisit the opening page of this chapter.)

Herodotus writes about events following the departure of Xerxes's fleet.

When it was day, the Greeks saw the [Persian] land army abiding where it had been and supposed the ships also to be at Phalerum; and thinking that there would be a sea-fight they prepared to defend themselves. But when they learnt that the ships were gone, they straightway resolved on pursuit; so they pursued Xerxes's fleet as far as Andros, but had no sight of it; and when they came to Andros they held a council there. Themistokles declared his opinion that they should hold their course through the islands, and having pursued after the ships should sail forthwith to the Hellespont to break the bridges; but Eurybiades offered a contrary opinion, saying that to break the bridges would be the greatest harm that they could do to Hellas. With that opinion the rest of the Peloponnesian admirals also agreed. When Themistokles perceived that he could not persuade the greater part of them to sail to the Hellespont, he turned to the Athenians (for they were the angriest at the Persians' escape, and they were minded to sail to the Hellespont even by themselves, if the rest would not) and thus addressed them: "This I have often seen with my eyes, and much oftener heard, that beaten men when they be driven to bay will rally and retrieve their former mishap. But as it is well with us

for [now], let us abide now in Hellas and take thought for ourselves and our households; let us build our houses again and be diligent in sowing, when we have driven the foreigner wholly away; and when the next spring comes let us set sail for the Hellespont and Ionia.' This he said with intent to put somewhat to his credit with the Persian, so that he might have a place of refuge if ever (as might chance) he should suffer aught at the hands of the Athenians; and indeed it did so happen. Thus spoke Themistokles with intent to deceive, and the Athenians obeyed him; for since he had ever been esteemed wise and now had shown himself to be both wise and prudent, they were ready to obey whatsoever he said. But the Greeks, now that they were no longer minded to pursue the foreigners' ships farther or sail to the Hellespont and break the way of passage, beleaguered Andros that they might take it. For the men of that place, the first islanders of whom Themistokles demanded money, would not give it; but when Themistokles gave them to understand that the Athenians had come with two great gods to aid them, even Persuasion and Necessity, and that therefore the Andrians must assuredly give money, they answered and said, 'It is then but reasonable that Athens is great and prosperous, being blest with serviceable gods; as for us Andrians, we are but blest with a plentiful lack of land, and we have two unserviceable gods who never quit our island but are ever fain to dwell there, even Poverty and Impotence; being possessed of these gods, we of Andros will give no money; for the power of Athens can never be stronger than our inability'.

So for thus answering and refusing to give they were besieged. There was no end to Themistokles's avarice; using the same agents whom he had used with the king, he sent threatening messages to the other islands, demanding money, and saying that if they would not give what he asked he would bring the Greek armada upon them and besiege and take their islands. After the division of the spoil, the Greeks sailed to the Isthmus, there to award the prize of excellence to him who had shown himself most worthy of it in that war. But when the admirals came and gave their divers votes at the altar of Poseidon, to judge who was first and who second among them, each of them there voted for himself, supposing himself to have done the best service, but the greater part of them united in giving the second place to Themistokles. So they each gained but one vote, but Themistokles far outstripped them in votes for the second place.

**SOURCE 19.24** Herodotus, *The Persian Wars*, 8.108–112

Plutarch describes events leading up to Themistokles's ostracism.

After the great achievements now described, he straightway undertook to rebuild and fortify the city, as Theopompus relates, by bribing the Spartan Ephors not to oppose the project; but as the majority say, by hoodwinking them.

After this he equipped the Piraeus, because he had noticed the favourable shape of its harbours, and wished to attach the whole city to the sea; thus in a certain manner counteracting the policies of the ancient Athenian kings. And so it was that he increased the privileges of the common people as against the nobles, and filled them with boldness, since the controlling power came now into the hands of skippers and boatswains and pilots.

And at last, when even his fellow-citizens were led by the jealousy of his greatness to welcome such slanders against him, he was forced to allude to his own achievements when he addressed the Assembly, till he became tiresome thereby, and he once said to the malcontents: 'Why are ye vexed that the same men should often benefit you?' He offended the multitude also by building the temple of Artemis, whom he surnamed Aristoboulé, or Best Counsellor, intimating thus that it was he who had given the best counsel to the city and to the Hellenes. A portrait-statue of Themistokles stood in this temple of Aristoboulé down to my time, from which he appears to have been a man not only of heroic spirit, but also of heroic presence.

(continued)



Well then, they visited him with ostracism, curtailing his dignity and pre-eminence, as they were wont to do in the case of all whom they thought to have oppressive power, and to be incommensurate with true democratic equality. For ostracism was not a penalty, but a way of pacifying and alleviating that jealousy which delights to humble the eminent, breathing out its malice into this disfranchisement.

**SOURCE 19.25** Plutarch, *Life of Themistokles*, 19–22

Thucydides recounts Themistokles's ostracism and approach to King Artaxerxes of Persia.

To return to the *medism* of Pausanias. Matter was found in the course of the inquiry to implicate Themistokles; and the Lacedaemonians accordingly sent envoys to the Athenians and required them to punish him as they had punished Pausanias. The Athenians consented to do so. But he had, as it happened, been ostracised, and, with a residence at Argos, was in the habit of visiting other parts of Peloponnese. So they sent with the Lacedaemonians, who were ready to join in the pursuit, persons with instructions to take him wherever they found him ...

After having rewarded him with a present of money, as soon as he received some from his friends at Athens and from his secret hoards at Argos, Themistokles started inland with one of the coast Persians, and sent a letter to King Artaxerxes, Xerxes's son, who had just come to the throne. Its contents were as follows: 'I, Themistokles, am come to you, who did your house more harm than any of the Hellenes, when I was compelled to defend myself against your father's invasion – harm, however, far surpassed by the good that I did him during his retreat, which brought no danger for me but much for him. For the past, you are a good turn in my debt' – here he mentioned the warning sent to Xerxes from Salamis to retreat, as well as his finding the bridges unbroken, which, as he falsely pretended, was due to him – 'for the present, able to do you great service, I am here, pursued by the Hellenes for my friendship for you. However, I desire a year's grace, when I shall be able to declare in person the objects of my coming.'

It is said that the King approved his intention, and told him to do as he said. He employed the interval in making what progress he could in the study of the Persian tongue, and of the customs of the country. Arrived at court at the end of the year, he attained to very high consideration there, such as no Hellene has ever possessed before or since; partly from his splendid antecedents, partly from the hopes which he held out of effecting for him the subjugation of Hellas, but principally by the proof which experience daily gave of his capacity.

**SOURCE 19.26** Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, 1.135–138

Historian Mary Beard writes about ostracism and democracy.



**SOURCE 19.27** Ostraka bearing the name of Themistokles

Modern historians have found in ostracism one of the most appealing inventions of fifth-century BCE politics. It involved the Athenian citizens getting together and deciding which politician they wanted to get rid of from their city, into honourable exile, for ten years. Each man wrote the name of his chosen victim on a little piece of broken pottery (an *ostrakon*, hence *ostracism*), chucked it into a voting urn – and, with a few safeguards such as a quorum of 6 000, whoever got the most votes was sent away. It is not surprising that ostracism has become such a modern favourite.



One of the most curious archaeological finds of the last century was a cache of 190 *ostraka*, with the name of Themistokles (who was ostracised in 472 BCE) scratched on each one, in just fourteen different hands. Some of Themistokles's powerful enemies presumably prepared a huge pile of ready-inscribed *ostraka* (the 190 are only the left-overs) and handed them out to the mostly illiterate voters, maybe even disguising whose name was actually on the *ostraka*. You can get away with a lot if the electorate can't read: it was more popular manipulation than popular power.

Fifth-century Athens was ostensibly committed to direct democratic power, from top to bottom: all decisions of state – on everything from going to war to the administration of temple estates – were taken in mass meetings, by every citizen who was entitled to vote and bothered to turn out. Did it really deliver direct people power, and to what effect? That is not as easy to decide as we might imagine, and the whole issue is clouded by the almost universal hostility to democracy of surviving ancient commentators and the almost universal admiration of modern historians. Plato was not the only writer to see the Athenian electorate as an undisciplined, uneducated and fickle mob, swayed by unscrupulous demagogues; and he was not quite as wrong as one might hope. On one notorious occasion, the people assembled on one day and voted to put to death the entire male population of the town of Mytilene on the island of Lesbos, as punishment for their revolt against Athenian imperial control. On the next day, they decided to have a second vote – the ancient equivalent of a second referendum – and opted instead for leniency. A desperate race ensued, as the ship taking news of the change of heart rowed furiously to catch up with the first one already dispatched. It just made it, and the victims were spared.

Since the early nineteenth century, modern judgements have generally been very different. For many Western political pundits, the Athenian system not only represents a shining example of how the people could really take charge of a city (right down to the use of random selection by lot for most political offices); it has also been a useful stick with which to beat our own representative versions of democracy, which have always marginalised the ordinary citizen.

As the stories of ostracism hint, it was not in practice quite so egalitarian as that rosy modern image suggests.

**SOURCE 19.28** Beard, M., 29 June 2016, 'Power to the People?', *The Times Literary Supplement*

## ACTIVITY 19.10

1. According to the accounts above, what significant actions did Themistokles undertake in the aftermath of the Greek victory at Salamis? Why do you think each of these actions was significant? Complete the table below to support your response.

Action taken by Themistokles	Significance of action

(continued)

## ACTIVITY 19.10 continued

2. What do the actions of Themistokles following the victory at Salamis reveal about his motives and power as an individual?
3. How did such actions contribute to the change in Themistokles's status in Athens and Greece?
4. How does the nature of Athenian democracy account for the eventual ostracism of Themistokles?
5. To what extent was the exiling of Themistokles an appropriate course of action for Athens?
6. Why is the *ostraka* featuring the name of Themistokles a significant and useful archaeological source in understanding the downfall of Themistokles?
7. By referring to a variety of evidence to support your position, what does the exile of Themistokles reveal about the strengths and weaknesses of Athenian democracy at the peak of its power?  
Record notes in the table below and identify relevant quotes from the sources above to support your response.

	Strengths of Athenian democracy	Weaknesses of Athenian democracy
Source 19.24		
Source 19.25		
Source 19.26		
Source 19.28		

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about people, power and authority in the Ancient World

As seen throughout this chapter so far, significant variety exists within the historical sources when accounting for Themistokles's contribution to the defence of Greece during the time of the Greco-Persian Wars. Yet more than this, the accounts of Themistokles are important given what they do and do not reveal about the nature of political power in Athens at the time. The later part of Themistokles's career is exceptional due to his fall from influence, most notably the way he became the victim of ostracism and sought exile at the court of the Persian king. At this point it is therefore essential to closely evaluate the authors who have shaped the short- and long-term legacies of Themistokles.

### 19.5 Shaping the legacies of Themistokles

#### Ancient writers

Thucydides's thoughts on Themistokles.

For Themistokles was a man who exhibited the most indubitable signs of genius; indeed, in this particular he has a claim on our admiration quite extraordinary and unparalleled. By his own native capacity, alike unformed and unsupplemented by study, he was at once the best judge in those sudden crises which admit of little or of no deliberation, and the best prophet of the future, even to its most distant possibilities. An able theoretical expositor of all that came within the sphere of his practice, he was not without the power of passing an adequate judgement in matters in which he had

no experience. He could also excellently divine the good and evil which lay hid in the unseen future. In fine, whether we consider the extent of his natural powers, or the slightness of his application, this extraordinary man must be allowed to have surpassed all others in the faculty of intuitively meeting an emergency. Disease was the real cause of his death; though there is a story of his having ended his life by poison, on finding himself unable to fulfil his promises to the king. However this may be, there is a monument to him in the marketplace of Asiatic Magnesia. He was governor of the district, the King having given him Magnesia, which brought in fifty talents a year, for bread, Lampsacus, which was considered to be the richest wine country, for wine, and Myos for other provisions. His bones, it is said, were conveyed home by his relatives in accordance with his wishes, and interred in Attic ground. This was done without the knowledge of the Athenians; as it is against the law to bury in Attica an outlaw for treason. So ends the history of Pausanias and Themistokles, the Lacedaemonian and the Athenian, the most famous men of their time in Hellas.

**SOURCE 19.29** Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 1.139

Aristotle on political change:

and also revolutions to oligarchy and democracy and constitutional government arise from the growth in reputation or in power of some magistracy or some section of the state; as for example the Council on the *Areopagus* having risen in reputation during the Persian wars was believed to have made the constitution more rigid, and then again the naval multitude, having been the cause of the victory off Salamis and thereby of the leadership of Athens due to her power at sea, made the democracy stronger

**SOURCE 19.30** Aristotle, *Politics*, 5.5

Plutarch describes the death of Themistokles:

But when Egypt revolted with Athenian aid, and Hellenic triremes sailed up as far as Cyprus and Cilicia, and Cimon's mastery of the sea forced the King to resist the efforts of the Hellenes and to hinder their hostile growth; and when at last forces began to be moved, and generals were despatched hither and thither, and messages came down to Themistokles saying that the King commanded him to make good his promises by applying himself to the Hellenic problem, then, neither embittered by anything like anger against his former fellow-citizens, nor lifted up by the great honour and power he was to have in the war, but possibly thinking his task not even approachable, both because Hellas had other great generals at the time, and especially because Cimon was so marvellously successful in his campaigns; yet most of all out of regard for the reputation of his own achievements and the trophies of those early days; having decided that his best course was to put a fitting end to his life, he made a sacrifice to the gods, then called his friends together, gave them a farewell clasp of his hand, and, as the current story goes, drank bull's blood, or as some say, took a quick poison, and so died in Magnesia, in the sixty-fifth year of his life, most of which had been spent in political leadership. They say that the King, on learning the cause and the manner of his death, admired the man yet more, and continued to treat his friends and kindred with kindness.

**SOURCE 19.31** Plutarch, *Life of Themistokles*, 31

Didorus Siculus expresses his views on Themistokles:

But if any man, putting envy aside, will estimate closely not only the man's natural gifts but also his achievements, he will find that on both counts Themistokles holds first place among all of whom we

(continued)



have record. Therefore one may well be amazed that the Athenians were willing to rid themselves of a man of such genius. What other man, while Sparta still had the superior strength and the Spartan Eurybiades held the supreme command of the fleet, could by his single-handed efforts have deprived Sparta of that glory? Of what other man have we learned from history that by a single act he caused himself to surpass all the commanders, his city all other Greek states, and the Greeks the barbarians? In whose term as general have the resources been more inferior and the dangers they faced greater?

Consequently, when we survey the magnitude of his deeds and, examining them one by one, find that such a man suffered disgrace at the hands of his city, whereas it was by his deeds that the city rose to greatness, we have good reason to conclude that the city which is reputed to rank highest among all cities in wisdom and fair-dealing acted towards him with great cruelty.

**SOURCE 19.32** Diodorus Siculus, *Library of World History*, 58–59

### ACTIVITY 19.11

1. Complete the table below to summarise the accounts given in Sources 19.29 to 19.32. To what extent can each account be corroborated by the other accounts in their assessment of Themistokles's life?

Thucydides	Plutarch	Diodorus

2. Consider Sources 19.29 and 19.31. Why might there be differences between Thucydides and Plutarch regarding Themistokles's death? To what extent do such differences effect how Themistokles is remembered in Athenian history?
3. How might the backgrounds and motives of these authors have influenced their writings?
4. What does the evaluation of Athenian government by Aristotle in Source 19.30 imply about the changes brought about by Themistokles and the relationship of these changes to political power?
5. Of the ancient sources provided within this chapter, which author do you believe provides the most accurate portrayal of Themistokles's life? Support your decision with evaluation of appropriate evidence.

### Modern historians

Historian and archaeologist Frank Frost outlines views of Themistokles.

The search for the political Themistokles has not been rewarding. The nature of the testimony makes it too easy to accept one or another of a set of clichés, which have the advantage of being immediately understood. Thus, Themistokles is seen as a *novus homo*, or a 'democrat' or as 'the great radical'. The trouble with all these labels is that they give the picture of politics in the Marathon generation a vividness, a sharpness of focus that no one has a right to expect, considering the state of our evidence ...

But the most detailed portrait of Themistokles that has survived is that drawn by Plutarch, and his impression of the general is that of a radical democrat who looked to the mob for support of his innovations. Plutarch's portraits are seductive and deceptively compelling.

It is not until the year of Salamis that Themistokles emerges as a living personality. His accomplishments during this year were so impressive that both ancient and modern writers have frequently made deductions about both earlier and later activities from what they know of this period. Themistokles's *boule* and *dynamis* during this crucial year made his reputation for all time. First, he successfully challenged the vested interests of the Delphic interpreters by persuading the Athenians to accept his reading of the Wooden Wall response. Second, he masterminded the Artemisium and Salamis campaigns despite his subordinate position in the councils of war. Finally, he acted on behalf of unity and sound strategy throughout in the face of the defeatism, stupidity and shortsightedness of those in command. The most convincing proof of his genius is that we are compelled to these judgements by the narrative of a historian who disliked him and made every attempt to belittle his accomplishments.

**SOURCE 19.33** Frost, F., 1968, 'Themistocles' Place in Athenian Politics', *California Studies in Classical Antiquity*, vol. 1, pp. 105–10

Classical and military historian Victor Hanson considers the importance of the Battle of Salamis.

Before Salamis, Athens was a rather eccentric city-state whose experiment with radical democracy was in its infancy and the verdict on its success still pending. After the battle, an imperial democratic culture arose that ruled the Aegean and gave us Aeschylus, Sophocles, the Parthenon, Pericles, and Thucydides.

Salamis, then, takes on enormous importance as a critical counterfactual example. First, the battle very easily could have been lost had not the efforts of a single man at a precise moment resulted in a Greek decision to fight off Salamis. Second, Themistokles seems to have been an extraordinary individual: of all the Greek leaders, he alone possessed the vision to commit to a sea battle, the rhetorical and political acumen to win adherents, and the guile and intelligence to force the Persians to commit their fleet to battle in an unfavorable strait. Had the battle of Salamis been the result of a collective decision or the efforts of a typical Greek conservative, rather than a half-Greek, radically democratic, and brilliant iconoclast, it would be logical to imagine a predetermined Greek victory.

Third, Persian and Greece represented antithetical social and political systems; thus, a pivotal victory by either in a war of annihilation presaged a radically different course of history for the entire Mediterranean.

**SOURCE 19.34** Hanson, V.D., 2006, 'A Stillborn West?' in *Unmaking the West: 'What-if' Scenarios that Rewrite World History*, University of Michigan Press, pp. 82–3

## ACTIVITY 19.12

1. Regarding the modern accounts provided above, how do they portray Themistokles's role in Athenian politics and the Greco-Persian wars? To what extent do you believe they corroborate or contradict one another in their assessments?
2. Why might modern accounts differ in their presentation of Themistokles? How would different interpretations of his life potentially support personal motives or agendas?

(continued)

## ACTIVITY 19.12 continued

3. Based on your analysis of the evidence in this chapter, which ancient author is likely to provide the most accurate depiction of Themistokles's role in Athenian history? Refer to specific examples from the sources provided in this chapter to support your position. Complete the table below to assist and inform your response.

	Main characteristics associated with Themistokles	Notable quotes	What groups are represented?	How is this perspective different from other authors?	Is this source reliable?	Is this source useful for understanding power in fifth century Athens?
Herodotus						
Thucydides						
Diodorus						
Plutarch						

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### 19.6 Creating responses about Themistokles's character and significance

Drawing upon the sources of evidence provided within this chapter, respond to the questions below.

## ACTIVITY 19.13

1. To what extent was Themistokles able to achieve unity within Greece during the course of his career?
2. Provide an evaluation of the following statement by drawing upon relevant historical evidence: The significance of Themistokles's career should be attributed to the naval policies before the second Persian invasion, rather than the Battle of Salamis.
3. What can be implied about the effectiveness of the Athenian democratic system in balancing power in Athens with particular reference to the rise and fall of Themistokles?
4. To what extent do you believe that Themistokles's character has been fairly depicted in the surviving ancient sources?
5. Why should the life and career of Themistokles still be considered relevant for understanding political power in the twenty-first century?
6. Was Themistokles essentially a selfish rather than a principled character? If no, then how do you account for Herodotus's less-praiseworthy opinion of Themistokles? If yes, then should Themistokles be remembered more for his selfishness, rather than his protection of Athenian interests?



# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- The Athenian democratic government was at a pivotal point during the life of Themistokles having survived the first Persian invasion of Darius the Great.
- Themistokles's rise to influence in fifth century BCE Athens was notable due to his lack of family nobility and apparent desire to achieve fame and influence.
- Themistokles's prominence was achieved by aligning with the needs of common Athenians which appears to have challenged traditional aristocratic strongholds within the political system.
- Throughout Themistokles's career he was able to attain power and fame through his wisdom, acumen and, at times, manipulation of political developments.
- The decision by Athens to invest recent silver findings into the development of the navy under the guidance of Themistokles was notable for its foresight in preparation for a second Persian invasion. This motive was not immediately made known to the Athenian population, but rather focused on the short-term conflict with Aegina.
- The choice to evacuate Athenians to Salamis was controversial as the city was sacked by the Persians in 480 BCE. Themistokles was able to persuade the Greeks to remain and fight at Salamis. Themistokles was able to deceive Xerxes by convincing him to attack the Greek navy in the straits of Salamis which nullified the numerical advantage held by the Persian navy. The defeat of the Persian navy led to the retreat of Xerxes.
- Themistokles's fame became renowned throughout Greece, however, he was eventually ostracised from Athens.
- Themistokles ultimately sought refuge at the court of the Persian king where he eventually died.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

Why was Themistokles able to rise to become a prominent individual within Athens during the early part of the fifth century BCE?

### Devise

To understand the power of Themistokles further, create and investigate three research questions which focus on his attainment, maintenance and fall from power.

### Analyse

How did the naval policies implemented by Themistokles contribute to Athens's rise in power during the fifth century BCE?

### Synthesise

To what extent does historical evidence support the following statement? Themistokles's career should be characterised as that of a self-serving individual who was able to use Athenian democracy to achieve power and fame within the context of the Greco-Persian wars.

## Evaluate

Provide a justification for or against the following statement through an analysis and evaluation of relevant sources: It is impossible to create an accurate assessment of Themistokles's motives in attaining power within Athens and his usage of it due to the large disagreements within the ancient sources.

## Respond

Why is the career of Themistokles valuable for understanding democratic power in the twenty-first century?

## Assessment

### Examination-style questions

1. Why is the career of Themistokles important for understanding the growth of democracy in Athens during the fifth century BCE?
2. To what extent were the policies and strategies of Themistokles controversial during his rise to power?
3. To what extent do modern interpretations of Themistokles's career align with ancient understandings?
4. Evaluate the role of Themistokles's relationship with other Greek city-states during his career.

### Investigation tasks

1. Evaluate the extent to which Themistokles's role at the Battle of Salamis supports the great man theory of history.
2. How did the democratic beliefs of fifth-century Athens allow for Themistokles's rise to power, and subsequent downfall?





# CHAPTER 20

## Alkibiades

ALAN BARRIE

This chapter is available in the digital version of the textbook.

Cambridge





A detailed engraving of the Roman general Scipio Africanus. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a Roman military cloak (paludamentum) with a decorative border and a fibula. He has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the left. The engraving uses fine lines and cross-hatching to create texture and shading.

# CHAPTER 21

## Scipio Africanus

ALAN BARRIE

This chapter is available in the digital version of the textbook.

Cambridge







# CHAPTER 22

## Julius Caesar

SARAH COLEMAN

This chapter is available in the digital version of the textbook.

Cambridge





## CHAPTER 23

## Augustus

SARAH COLEMAN

## TOPIC DESCRIPTION

## Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the geographical and historical context of Augustus
  - his family background and status.
  - the key events in his rise to prominence.
  - the significant influences on his early development.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period, and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources.

## Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the career of Augustus.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding.
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the change of role, position, status over time.
  - the depictions of Augustus during his lifetime.
  - the possible motivations for his actions.
  - the methods used to achieve his aims.
  - his relationships with groups and other individuals.
  - the significant events in the career of Augustus.
  - the manner and impact of his death.
  - the judgements of Augustus by other individuals in his lifetime and after his death; for example, in writings, images and film.
- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose by completing short responses to historical sources.

## KEY DATES

63 BCE

Birth of Augustus as Gaius Octavius (23 September), son of Gaius Octavius (praetor 61) and Atia of the Julii, Caesar's niece

59 BCE

Death of Gaius Octavius senior

51 BCE

Death of Julia (minor), Caesar's sister and Octavian's grandmother, at whose funeral Octavius delivers the eulogy, his first public appearance

48 BCE

Octavius elected to the pontifical college

46 BCE

Octavius is included in Caesar's triumphal celebrations, but is too ill to accompany him on his Spanish campaign

45 BCE

Octavius arrives in Spain on his own initiative in May, too late to take part in the Battle of Munda, but not too late to make himself useful. He is promoted to patrician rank



## Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the impact and legacy of Augustus.
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the assessments of Augustus's life and career.
  - the influence of Augustus on his time.
  - the long-term impact and legacy of Augustus.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Julius Caesar
- Mark Antony
- Lepidus
- Cleopatra
- Marcus Agrippa
- Octavia
- Tiberius
- Marcus Junius Brutus
- Cato the Younger
- Livia
- Marcus Agrippa
- Marcus Tullius Cicero
- Marcellus
- Gaius and Lucius Caesar
- Germanicus
- Julia
- Vergil
- Horace
- Ovid.

### 44 BCE

- Octavius is appointed to replace Lepidus as *magister equitum* when the Parthian expedition leaves
  - Caesar is assassinated on the Ides of March and Octavian arrives in Rome to claim his inheritance

### 43 BCE

- Mark Antony is joined in Gaul by the consuls of 43 BCE, Hirtius and Pansa
  - Octavian is granted *imperium* and sent against Mark Antony, who is defeated at Mutina, and the consuls Hirtius and Pansa are killed in battle; Octavian marches on Rome and is named sole consul
  - Formation of the Second Triumvirate and proscriptions



## MAPS



**SOURCE 23.2** Growth of the Roman Empire 27 BCE–180 CE.

### 42 BCE

- Julius Caesar officially deified (as *Divus Julius*) after which Octavian takes to calling himself *divi filius* (son of a god)
- Proscriptions continue, taxes imposed in Rome and the East
  - 'Liberators' successful at sea
  - Campaigns in Macedonia (October)

### 41 BCE

- Resettlement of Octavian's veteran soldiers causes unrest in Italy; he confiscates and then redistributes land
- Mark Antony, now the leading figure, stays in the East, in order to prepare for the invasion of Parthia that had been planned by Caesar

### 40 BCE

- Differences between Octavian and Mark Antony nominally resolved at the so-called Pact of Brundisium which was signed in November and the Triumvirate renewed
- Rome divided between the *triumvirs*: Mark Antony took the East, Octavian took the West, and Lepidus took Africa. Sextus Pompey went back to Sicily.









## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Ara Pacis</b>	Altar of Peace, commissioned by Augustus in 9 BCE which stood on the Campus Martius
<b>Augustus</b>	official title bestowed upon Octavian; Loosely translates as 'revered one'
<b>Battle of Actium</b>	the decisive confrontation of the Final War of the Roman Republic; a naval engagement between Octavian and the combined forces of Mark Antony and Cleopatra on 2 September 31 BCE
<b>Caesarian</b>	those who sided with Caesar in the struggle between the <i>optimates</i> , and Caesar and his supporters
<b>divi filius</b>	son of god; a term used by Octavian to strengthen his divine connection to Julius Caesar
<b>First Settlement</b>	the first series of political arrangements giving Augustus significant powers that took place in 27 BCE
<b>imperator</b>	Latin term meaning commander or general; the modern terms imperial and emperor are derived from this word
<b>imperium maius</b>	loosely translates as greater total command; provides the holder with total military control over land and sea
<b>Lex Papia Poppaea</b>	one of the moral laws enacted by Augustus; the <i>Lex Papia Poppaea</i> was introduced in 9 CE to encourage and strengthen marriage; it included provisions against adultery and celibacy
<b>magister equitum</b>	Master of the Horse; the dictator's lieutenant
<b>mos maiorum</b>	unwritten code from which the ancient Romans derived their social norms; the core concept of Roman traditionalism
<b>pater patriae</b>	Latin honorary title meaning father of the country or father of the fatherland
<b>pontifex maximus</b>	high priest of the College of Pontiffs
<b>princeps</b>	first man among equals; the Roman emperor

### 36 BCE

- Agrippa is responsible for leading a victorious offensive against Sextus Pompeius, who is defeated off Naulochus (3 September)
  - Sextus Pompey flees eastwards to Mark Antony but is murdered before he reaches his destination
- Lepidus unwisely tries to assert himself by invading Sicily from Africa
  - Mark Antony's Parthian campaign
  - Octavian is granted tribunician power

### 35 BCE

Octavian campaigns in Illyricum

### 34 BCE

Mark Antony invades Armenia, celebrates a triumph at Alexandria

### 33 BCE

Octavian serves as consul for the second time (*Consul Secundum* or Consul for the second time, known as COS II)



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>princeps civitatus</b>	first citizen; an official title of a Roman Emperor
<b>princeps senatus</b>	senator whose name was entered first on the Senate list compiled by the censors; once selected, he held his position for life; the senator then had the honour of speaking first on all matters raised in the Senate
<b>principate</b>	rule by a single emperor ( <i>princeps</i> )
<b>republican</b>	those who sided with the political view of the <i>optimates</i> who believed that their actions were in the best interests of the Republic
<b>Res Gestae</b>	<i>Res Gestae Divi Augustus</i> , or the Deeds of the Divine Augustus, was a monument depicting the achievements of the <i>princeps</i> , as penned by himself
<b>res publica</b>	the public thing and the root of the word republic
<b>Second Triumvirate</b>	the official political alliance of Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus (Caesar Augustus), Marcus Antonius (Mark Antony), and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, formed on 27 November 43 BCE with the enactment of the <i>Lex Titia</i>
<b>Senate</b>	advisory body to Rome's magistrates; composed of the city's most experienced public servants and society's elite; its decisions carried great weight, even if they were not always converted into laws in practice
<b>Senatus consultum ultimum</b>	by ultimate decree of the Senate — more properly <i>Senatus consultum de re publica defendenda</i> (decree of the Senate about defending the Republic); it means the final resolution of the Senate; declared only in times of emergency, it effectively gave the consul the right to do whatever was felt best to preserve the Republic
<b>tribunicia potestas</b>	power of the tribune, the holder could veto or forbid any law or act of which he disapproved; he could convene both the Senate and the tribal assembly, and put measures before them; he could also intercede to protect any plebeian who was being threatened
<b>Triumvirate</b>	joint rule between three individuals, termed <i>triumvirs</i>

32 BCE	31 BCE	30 BCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Octavian sits between the consuls and takes upon himself the leadership of the Roman people, denouncing Mark Antony in the Senate               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mark Antony divorces his loyal Roman wife, Octavia                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The oath of allegiance</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Octavian's third consulship, an office he now holds every successive year until 23 BCE               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Battle of Actium (2 September)</li> <li>Mark Antony and Cleopatra cross into Greece, summer of 31 BCE</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Octavian in Egypt               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suicides of Mark Antony and Cleopatra (9 August)</li> <li>Egypt made a province under an equestrian prefect directly responsible to Octavian. It was, for all intents and purposes, his private property</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Introduction

When Julius Caesar was murdered in 44 BCE, his will named his grand-nephew, Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, as his adopted son and heir. The 18-year-old Octavius was thrust into the political and military upheaval that followed. He avenged his father's death at Philippi in 42 BCE and in the same year, together with Mark Antony and Lepidus, became part of the Second Triumvirate by which they divided the Roman world. Tensions within the Triumvirate eventually led to civil war between Octavian and Mark Antony for control. Octavian's victory against Mark Antony and Cleopatra at Actium in 31 BCE, and their deaths the following year left him in sole command. He returned to Rome in 29 BCE; his immediate task was to restore order and confidence, and to normalise his own position within the state. In 27 BCE he was granted the name 'Augustus' by the Senate and it is from that date that the new political order known as the principate came into being. Augustus as commander of the imperial army with *maius imperium* (supreme power) was the master of the State, but with *tribunicia potestas*, and the use of compromise and constructive statesmanship from 27 BCE to 14 CE, he brought relative peace (*pax Romana*) to the empire, as well as law, order and good government. He made use of all forms of propaganda (literature, buildings and the introduction of an imperial cult) to promote his rule, which after a hundred years of political violence, bloodshed and various civil wars was described as a Golden Age. Although the principate was not hereditary, he hoped that a Julian (direct descendant of himself as the son of Julius Caesar) would succeed him, but it was eventually his adopted son, Tiberius (a Claudian), who became *princeps* when Augustus died in 14 CE.

The Augustan Age is often considered the turning point of Roman history. The last century of the millennia had witnessed the dominance of military dictatorships, civil war and political violence, which continuously undermined, thereby weakening, the traditional republican constitution. By the time of Julius Caesar, the republican government had outgrown itself; the extensive expansion of its borders, coupled with changes in number to the lower magistracies and the increased involvement of the equestrian class in the Senate, changed the fabric of Rome's political and administrative machinery. The rewards of power were far greater than they had ever been, and as such, so were its defects. Competition intensified, and in turn, violence and bribery prevailed; senators were intimidated, elections were rigged and violence became a standard political tool. It was this world that Octavian (later Augustus) was born into; a year marked by senatorial conspiracy and execution without trial. He inherited a Rome scarred by a century of civil war, a discredited political system and a demoralised and embittered Senate. It was clear that reform, or at the very least adaptation, was required to return Rome to its former glory. Octavian's dilemma, however, was how to go about implementing such change without alienating sections of the populace, and in doing so, meeting the same fate as his father. To preserve himself and the State, Octavian avoided extremes because, according to Dio Cassius, 'he knew that he would fail if he tried to change ... too rapidly' (*Roman History*: 52.41) Octavian looked to the traditions of Republican Rome instead. Velleius Paterculus, a younger contemporary of Augustus, asserts, 'the Senate had dignity, and the power of the magistrates was again as before ... agriculture returned to the fields, piety to religion, and humanity freed from fear. The property of each citizen was protected by law, the old laws were adapted and new

### 29 BCE

- Octavian returns to Italy, and on entering the capitol, celebrated a triple triumph and closed the doors of the Temple of Janus – an explicit and public indication of the peace he had brought to Rome. He had the treasure of Egypt to pay his debts, and he had all the prestige of the conqueror.
- Dedication of the temple of Divus Julius ('the Deified Julius Caesar') in Rome

### 28 BCE

- Sixth consulship of Octavian, with Agrippa
- Census held by Octavian and Agrippa
- Dedication of the temple of Apollo on the Palatine
  - Messalla in Spain

### 27 BCE

- First Settlement
- Octavian, now Augustus, receives *imperium* for 10 years
- Augustus tours Gaul and Spain until 25 BCE
- Agrippa builds the first Pantheon



ones passed for the general good' (*Roman History*: 2.89). This attitude of restoration and renewal, rather than revolutionary change, ensured that stability could return to Rome, and a period of security, peace and prosperity could ensue.

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

The Augustan Age is a period that has garnered extensive study, criticism and emulation since the death of Augustus in 14 CE. As a political figure, both he and his methods have been closely examined, and most often are considered through the historical lens of the time during which he is being studied. For example, the debate of the benefits or drawbacks of autocracy, revolution, military dictatorships and imperialism, are very much shaped by its recent historical events. The historians writing in the early twenty-first century, writing in a post-imperial context, provide a different view from those writing in the era of Trump. Additionally, the views held by ancient historians are shaped by their own context. As a consequence, examining the concepts associated with Augustus can be very complex. You will need to understand, evaluate and apply the implications and use of terms and concepts such as restoration, revolution, intent, nostalgia and tradition, image and propaganda, and imperialism. It is also important to consider our own times, and examine the extent to which such terms and concepts have been replicated throughout history.

### 23.1 Restoration and renewal

The theme of restoration is greatly emphasised by Augustus and subsequently questioned by later historians. The *Res Gestae* is crucial in considering the attitude of Augustus or indeed the attitude that Augustus displayed to the world. This list of 35 deeds, or non-deeds as they are sometimes referred to, demonstrates the official line of non-radical reform Augustus took throughout his career. The world according to Augustus interpretation as many ancient and modern historians have pointed out. A key point of contention is Augustus's claim that, 'at a time when, with universal consent, I was in complete control of affairs, I transferred the republic from my power to the dominion of the Senate and people of Rome thereby restoring the *res publica*.' Velleius Paterculus enthusiastically accepts this:

There is nothing that man can desire from the gods, nothing that the gods can grant to a man, nothing that wish can conceive or good fortune bring to pass, which Augustus on his return to the city did not bestow upon the Republic, the Roman people, and the world. The civil wars were ended after twenty years ... [and] the old traditional form of the republic was restored.

**SOURCE 23.4** Velleius Paterculus, *Roman History*, Book 2, Chapter 89

As a contemporary of Augustus, however, Paterculus may have been swayed by elements of Augustan propaganda. Tacitus, writing in the first century CE, takes a far more contemptuous approach to this

26 BCE	25 BCE	24 BCE	23 BCE	22 BCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disgrace of Cornelius Gallus</li> <li>Arabian expedition of Aelius Gallus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Augustus Consul IX</li> <li>Arabian expedition of Aelius Gallus</li> <li>The annexation of Galatia (25–23 BCE)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marriage of Julia with M. Claudius Marcellus, son of Octavia</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Augustus Consul X</li> <li>Annexation of Galatia</li> </ul>	Augustus Consul XI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food shortages hit the city in 23–22 BCE and riots result</li> <li>Augustus refuses the dictatorship</li> <li>Augustus goes to Greece and Asia for three years</li> </ul>

supposed restoration, suggesting that Augustus ‘absorbed the functions of the Senate, the officials and even the law’ (*Annals* 1.9–10). Dio Cassius similarly claims that Augustus had the power of the people and the Senate, and thus it was not a principate but a monarchy (*Roman History* 53.2). The key difficulty here is that both Tacitus and Dio Cassius were writing at a time when the empire had been well established as a dynastic succession and thus was monarchical in nature. Additionally, both were senators, and harboured a deep nostalgia for a time when the senatorial class held real power, and was not merely a governmental ornament. Ironically, it was this same nostalgia that Augustus appealed to, not only to garner public support in cementing his power, but throughout his principate.

The contemporaries of Augustus, such as Paterculus, Livy, and the poets Horace and Virgil were, if not directly commissioned by Augustus (as was the case with the latter), certainly influenced by the propaganda in circulation. For these men the contrast between the civil war years and the *pax Romana* of Augustus would have been heavily influential, and they no doubt ‘preferred the safety of the present to the dangers of the past’ (Tacitus, *Annals*: 1).

Tacitus and Dio Cassius, however, are in some respects correct in their claims that Augustus had the control of the Senate, and thus cannot be considered to be either traditional or restorative. This is supported by Scullard, a British historian of the mid-twentieth century, who suggests that although the Senate maintained their traditional power, Augustus had the military force and therefore control over the Senate.

While some historians, namely nineteenth-century German scholar Theodor Mommsen, have suggested the *principate* was a diarchy, whereby *princeps* and Senate shared power equally, Augustus’s control of the military makes this possibility unlikely. The *proconsular imperium maius*, which gave Augustus control of the armies and the provinces, is not emphasised in the *Res Gestae* and is indicative of the *principate* that Augustus sought to be published, rather than the reality of the military dictatorship he had created.

The relationship between Augustus and the Senate was complex. However, Augustus’s understanding of the political nuances of the ‘conscript fathers’ was such that explicit change was unwise. Therefore, Augustus’s restoration to the traditions of the *res publica* backed by military force was a shrewd political move.

## ACTIVITY 23.1

Having read the text, answer the following questions:

1. Explain what is meant by the terms restoration, renewal and revolution.
2. Explain what the term monarchy means and how it can be applied to your study of Augustus.
3. Who held power in the Roman Republic? Why is understanding this important in examining Augustus?
4. Identify the ancient historians referred to in the text. What are their points of view on the Augustan government?
5. Identify the modern historians referred to in this text. What are their views on the government of Augustus?

### 21 BCE

Agrippa marries Julia

- Augustus in Asia Minor, where he makes many administrative changes in the provinces there
- The Parthians return Roman standards captured from Crassus in 53 BCE and Mark Antony in 36 BCE

### 20 BCE

### 19 BCE

Augustus returns to Rome (October); he is considered an equal of the consuls

### 18 BCE

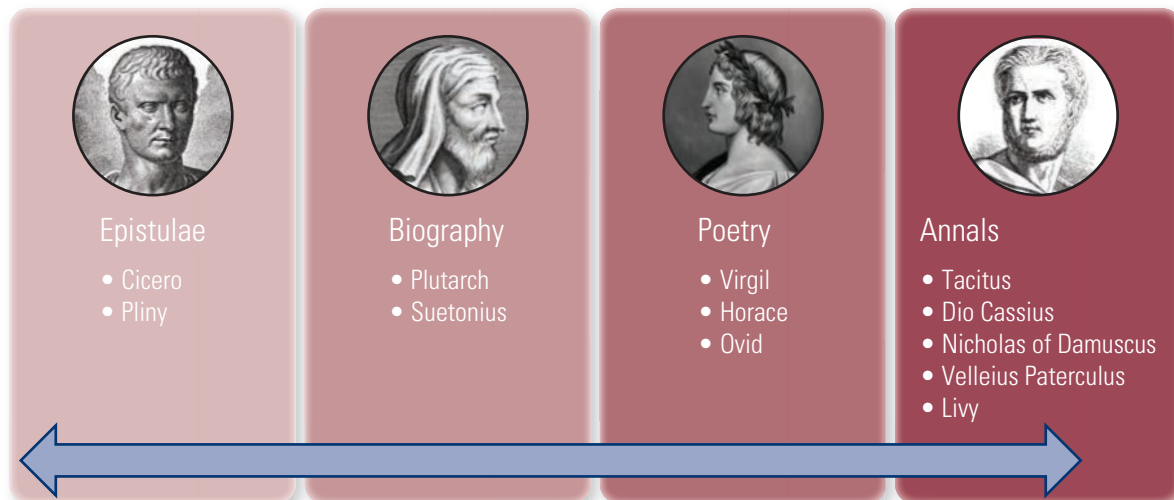
- Augustus’s *imperium* is renewed for five years
- Agrippa receives *imperium maius* (greater *imperium*) and *tribunicia potestas* (tribunician power) for five years
- Passing of the *leges Juliae* (Julian laws); laws on marriage, divorce, extravagance

## ACTIVITY 23.1 continued

6. The text says that Augustus appealed to nostalgia. What is meant by this term, and how can it be applied to our study of Augustus?
7. According to the text, in what ways can the regime of Augustus be considered a military dictatorship?
8. What are the different forms of government that the historians suggest Augustus led?

### Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature of power and how it was exercised in the Ancient World

A historiographical understanding and critical analysis of the ancient historians is crucial in building our understanding of Augustus and his *principate*. The Roman literary record for the rise of Augustus and the creation of the *principate* is extensive: it encompasses everyone from contemporaries of Octavian as a young man or as Augustus *princeps* to historians writing centuries after his death. Accounts of Augustus as *princeps* is obviously problematic. The literary record includes letters, poetry, biographies and annalistic histories, not only about Augustus, but his opponents also.



**SOURCE 23.5** Genres of literary evidence and key historians

The early years and even the months following Octavian's acceptance of his inheritance are significant in understanding his rise to power. According to Cicero, who openly lamented the liberator's failure to leave Mark Antony alive as a grave mistake, wrote that Mark Antony said of the young Octavian, '*O puer, qui omnia nomini debes*' (you, boy, who owe everything to a name). Refer to the Interactive Textbook for a detailed timeline of Octavian's life.



17 BCE	16 BCE	14 BCE	13 BCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Augustus adopts Agrippa's and Julia's two sons, Gaius and Lucius, as his own sons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Augustus in Gaul (to 13 BCE)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agrippa in the East</li> <li>• Noricum incorporated as a province</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Augustus in Gaul</li> <li>• Polemo is made king of the Bosporan kingdom</li> <li>• Return of Augustus to Rome                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Death of Lepidus</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Augustus returns to Rome from Gaul; renewal of his <i>imperium</i> for five years</li> <li>• Return of Agrippa to Rome from the East</li> </ul>



Below are two sources that should be read critically against the events of his life. The first is from Nicolaus of Damascus, who was a Greek philosopher and historian, who lived at the same time as Octavian. Here he considers reasons for Antony's dislike of Octavian:

This was the beginning of good both for himself and all mankind, but especially for the State and the entire Roman people. He sent immediately to Asia for the money and means that Caesar had previously dispatched for the Parthian War, and when he received it along with a year's tribute from the people of Asia, contenting himself with the portion that had belonged to Caesar he turned the public property over to the state treasury. At that time, too, some of his friends urged him as they had at Apollonia to go to Caesar's colonies and to levy an army, inducing the men to join an expedition on his behalf by employing the prestige of the great name of Caesar. They declared that the soldiers would gladly follow the leadership of Caesar's son and would do everything for him; for there persisted among them a wonderful loyalty and good will toward Caesar and a memory of what they had accomplished with him in his lifetime, and they desired under the auspices of Caesar's name to win the power which they had formerly bestowed upon Caesar. However, the opportunity for this did not seem to be at hand. He therefore turned his attention toward seeking legally, through a senatorial decree, the dignity his father had held; and he was careful not to acquire the reputation of being one who was ambitious and not a law abiding man. Accordingly, he listened especially to the eldest of his friends and those of the greatest experience, and set out from Brundisium for Rome.

After the great Caesar's death and burial, his friends counselled Octavian to cultivate Antonius's friendship, and put him in charge of his interests .... [long lacuna, some months]. And though there were many other contributory causes toward disagreement between them, he seemed the more to incite enmity between them, for he was at odds with Octavian, and a partisan of Antonius. Octavian, however, in no wise frightened, because of his high spirit, gave some exhibitions on the occasion of the festival of Venus Genetrix which his father had established. He again approached Antonius with a number of his friends, requesting that permission be given for the throne and wreath to be set up in his father's honor. Antonius made the same threat as before, if he did not drop that proposal and keep quiet. Octavian withdrew and made no opposition to the veto of the consul. When he entered the theater, however, the people applauded him loudly, and his father's soldiers, angered because he had been prevented from paying tribute to the honored memory of his father, gave him, as a mark of their approval, one round of applause after another all through the performance. Then he counted out for the people their allotted money, and that secured him their especial good will.

The first move in the city came from his father's soldiers, who resented Antonius's contempt for them. At first they discussed their own forgetfulness of Caesar in allowing his son to be thus insulted, that son for whom they all ought to act as guardians if they were to take any account of what was just and righteous. Then gathering in a great company and reproaching themselves still more bitterly they set out for Antonius's house (for he also was relying on them) and made some plain statements to him: that he ought to treat Octavian more fairly and keep in mind his father's instructions; that it was their sacred duty not to overlook these, but to carry out even the details of

#### 12 BCE

- Augustus is elected *pontifex maximus*
- Death of Agrippa

#### 11 BCE

Tiberius is compelled to divorce Vipsania Agrippina (daughter of Agrippa and Attica) and marry Julia (Augustus's daughter)

#### 10 BCE

Herod names his new city Caesarea in honour of Augustus

#### 9 BCE

- Dedication of Augustus's *Ara Pacis* in Rome
- Death of Drusus, Tiberius's younger brother

his memoranda, not to mention supporting the man he had named as his son and successor; that they saw that to Antonius and Octavian a reconciliation would be most advantageous at the present time because of the multitude of foes pressing on from every side. After this speech Antonius, in order not to seem to be opposing their endeavour, for he happened to be really in need of their services, said that he approved of and desired that very course, if only Octavian would also act with moderation and render him the honour which was his due; that he was ready to have a conference with him in their presence and within their hearing. They were satisfied with this and agreed to conduct him into the Capitol and act as mediators in the reconciliation if he should so desire. He then assented and immediately went up into the Temple of Jupiter, and sent them after Octavian.

**SOURCE 23.6** Nicolaus of Damascus, *Life of Augustus*

Suetonius was a Roman historian who lived about 100 years after Augustus. In this extract he considers the consequences of the Battle of Actium:

... The underlying motive of every campaign was that Augustus felt it his duty, above all, to avenge Caesar and keep his decrees in force.

... Because Hirtius fell in battle, and Pansa later succumbed to a wound, a rumour went about that Augustus had engineered both deaths with the object of gaining sole control over their victorious armies after [Mark] Antony's defeat. Pansa certainly died in such suspicious circumstances that Glyco, his physician, was arrested on a charge of poisoning the wound; and Aquilius Niger goes so far as to assert that in the confusion of battle Augustus despatched Hirtius with his own hand.

... At last he broke off his alliance with Marcus Antonius, which was always doubtful and uncertain, and with difficulty kept alive by various reconciliations; and the better to show that his rival had fallen away from conduct becoming a citizen, he had the will which Antonius had left in Rome, naming his children by Cleopatra among his heirs, opened and read before the people. But when Antonius was declared a public enemy, he sent back to him all his kinsfolk and friends, among others Gaius Sosius and Titus Domitius, who were still consuls at the time. He also excused the community of Bononia from joining in the rally of all Italy to his standards, since they had been from ancient days dependents of the Antonii. Not long afterwards [31 B.C.] he won the sea-fight at Actium, where the contest continued to so late an hour that the victor passed the night on board. Having gone into winter quarters at Samos after Actium, he was disturbed by the news of a mutiny of the troops that he had selected from every division of his army and sent on to Brundisium after the victory, who demanded their rewards and discharge; and on his way back to Italy he twice encountered storms at sea, first between the headlands of the Peloponnesus and Aetolia, and again off the Ceraunian mountains. In both places a part of his galleys were sunk, while the rigging of the ship in which he was sailing was carried away and its rudder broken. He delayed at Brundisium only twenty-seven days – just long enough to satisfy all the demands of the soldiers---and then went to Egypt by a roundabout way through Asia and Syria, laid siege to Alexandria, where Antonius had

(continued)

### 8 BCE

- The month Sextilis is renamed Augustus
- Augustus's *imperium* is renewed for 10 years
  - A census is held
- Deaths of Maecenas and the poet Horace
  - Tiberius campaigns in Germany

### 7 BCE

- Tiberius celebrates triumph for victories in Germany
- Rome divided into 14 *regiones* (regions)

### 6 BCE

- Tiberius received *tribunicia potestas* (tribunician power) for five years, withdraws into voluntary exile on Rhodes
- Paphlagonia is added to the province of Galatia
  - Alpine peoples finally subjugated

taken refuge with Cleopatra, and soon took the city. Although Antonius tried to make terms at the eleventh hour, Augustus forced him to commit suicide, and viewed his corpse. He greatly desired to save Cleopatra alive for his triumph, and even had Psylli brought to her, to suck the poison from her wound, since it was thought that she died from the bite of an asp. He allowed them both the honour of burial, and in the same tomb, giving orders that the mausoleum which they had begun should be finished. The young Antonius, the elder of Fulvia's two sons, he dragged from the image of the Deified Julius, to which he had fled after many vain entreaties, and slew him. Caesarion, too, whom Cleopatra fathered on Caesar, he overtook in his flight, brought back, and put to death. But he spared the rest of the offspring of Antonius and Cleopatra, and afterwards maintained and reared them according to their several positions, as carefully as if they were his own kin.

**SOURCE 23.7** Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*



The literary evidence for the Augustan period is extensive and varied and requires close analysis of author, context, purpose and audience to be truly useful to the historian. It is important to note that not all literary or written evidence is the same and needs to be examined with genre in mind, as this can affect its reliability. The Interactive Textbook contains further sources that detail Augustus's rise to power, and an activity to help you analyse them.

## ACTIVITY 23.2

1. Create a profile of ancient historians on Augustus. Be sure to include the following:

- full name
- picture (if possible)
- years when writing
- names of all works
- genre
- audience
- completeness (e.g. extant or fragmentary)
- achievements/public career/notable experiences
- nationality and class (if relevant)
- strengths
- limitations
- usefulness.

The list of ancient historians, poets and speech writers to write profiles on are as follows:

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>a.</b> Suetonius            | <b>f.</b> Cicero              |
| <b>b.</b> Tacitus              | <b>g.</b> Velleius Paterculus |
| <b>c.</b> Plutarch             | <b>h.</b> Horace              |
| <b>d.</b> Nicholas of Damascus | <b>i.</b> Appian              |
| <b>e.</b> Dio Cassius          | <b>j.</b> Virgil.             |

### 5 BCE

- Twelfth consulship of Augustus
- Gaius Caesar introduced to public life

### 4 BCE

Death of Herod the Great, whose will, dividing his territories between his three sons, is confirmed by Augustus

### 2 BCE

- Augustus consul XIII. He receives the title *pater patriae*
  - Julia is banished for adultery to Pandateria, from which she is allowed in 4 CE to move to Rhegium

### 1 BCE

Publication of first two books of Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*



## 23.2 Contemporary historians

Augustus has been the focus of study and research for centuries. The historiographical development of studying the Augustan Age and the *princeps* himself has developed over the last 250 years; it is fundamentally shaped by the context of the historian, not only historically but geographically and educationally as well. For example, Ronald Syme – whose work *The Roman Revolution* has underpinned much of the scholarship on this subject for the latter part of the twentieth century – was a New Zealander and student of the eminent German scholar, Theodor Mommsen. Syme's book was released one week after the outbreak of World War II, which meant that serious discussion of his research was impossible until the end of the war and much of his implicit warnings about the dangers of continental dictators was missed. For Syme, the Spanish Civil War, which raged during his time at Oxford, and the rise of men such as Hitler and Mussolini, fundamentally influenced the way he interpreted the deeds of Augustus. Dr Penny Goodman from the University of Leeds, highlights the crux of this problem:

At present, attitudes towards Augustus tend to be critical, and his public profile is low by comparison with other emperors. For example, he appears relatively little in films and on TV, and when he does it is usually as the ruthless overthrewer of the Republic – not the widely-acclaimed mature emperor. This perspective may well be fitting for the early 21st century, but it is shaped by the critical view of Augustus expressed in Syme's influential book *The Roman Revolution* (1939) and by Mussolini's attempts to associate himself with Augustus in the 1930s. We can only be sure whether or not it is really our perspective if we first understand how it has been influenced by previous assessments.

**SOURCE 23.8** Goodman, P., 2014, 'Augustus and His Legacy', *The Commemorating Augustus Project*

This example shows that modern historians, like ancient historians, implicate their prejudices and biases within their historical research and work.

### ACTIVITY 23.3

Keeping in mind the context and purpose of the historians of the Augustan Age, read Sources 23.6 and 23.7, and the additional sources in the Interactive Textbook, answer the questions below.

1. Has your understanding of the evidence changed in light of your understanding of the authors, their purpose and context? Answer for each source and be specific in your detail.
2. To what extent has the public career and achievements of the historians influenced their works for better or worse?
3. Organise the sources chronologically. How has the passage of time influenced the representation of Augustus in the Ancient World? How might one account for this?

(continued)

#### 1 CE

Gaius Caesar Consul I; campaigns in Syria

#### 2 CE

- Tiberius returns to Rome from Rhodes
- Death of Lucius Caesar at Massilia
- Gaius Caesar settles Armenia

#### 3 CE

Augustus's *imperium* is renewed for 10 years

## ACTIVITY 23.3 continued

4. Based on your understanding of the historians, whose account do you deem to be the most reliable in comprehending the early years of Augustus? Explain your answer in detail.
5. Which account do you believe to be the most useful? Explain your answer in detail.
6. Which account do you believe to be the most significant? Explain your answer in detail.
7. How do you account for the representation of the role of Cleopatra in these excerpts? Research this online and then respond to the extent of these sources' reliability and accuracy. Use specific evidence in your response.
8. Select one or more of the sources and write a detailed historical analysis or gobbet. This requires you to examine the author, context, content and historical significance of the excerpt. Use the outline below to structure your analysis:
  - Title and author
    - What is the title of the work, and who wrote it?
    - Consider the author's biases, their skills, their sources and the genre of the work
    - When was it written?
  - Purpose
    - Who is the intended audience?
    - Was it written to inform, to entertain or to argue a case?
    - Consider the propaganda value of the source
  - Context
    - What are the incidents or series of incidents to which the text relates?
  - Historical significance
    - This should be the main part of your answer and should address why this particular text is an important piece of historical evidence. Be sure to read the passage closely and focus on the text at hand.
9. Based on the evidence provided and your own research, answer the following questions in extended format.
  - a. What were the actions taken by Octavian and Mark Antony to justify their claims to power immediately following the death of Caesar?
  - b. How did Mark Antony's behaviour undermine his position in Rome and how was Octavian able to use this to his advantage?
  - c. Assess the role of Cleopatra VII in the period 44–29 BCE.
  - d. Discuss, with a partner, the limitations of the evidence for Mark Antony and Cleopatra in this period.
  - e. What evidence is there to support the claim that Octavian was severely underestimated by his peers?

### 4 CE

- Death of Gaius Caesar in Lycia
- Augustus adopts Tiberius, who receives *tribunicia potestas* (tribunician power) for 10 years
  - Augustus adopts Agrippa Postumus
  - Tiberius adopts Germanicus and invades Germany
    - Fourth purge of the Senate

### 5 CE

Tiberius advances to the Elbe River in the north

### 6 CE

- Augustus creates the *aerarium militare* (military treasury) and the *praefectus vigilum* (prefect of the watchmen)
- Revolt of Pannonia and Illyricum



**SOURCE 23.9** Fresco paintings inside the House of Augustus, his residence during his reign as emperor

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about people, power and authority in the Ancient World

Following Octavian's victory at Actium in 32 BCE, he emerged as the sole leader of the Roman world. The evidence for the remainder of his life is arguably less clear than his early years, primarily because it is either directly influenced by his regime (for better or worse) or commissioned by him. There are no one like the ancient historian Cicero in the post-Augustan Age, so truly objective primary evidence is a thing of the past; all sources are influenced by the reputation of Augustus and his successors to various degrees. The actions taken by Augustus in terms of art and literature, but also his social and moral reforms, are often referred to as the Augustan Program; some examples are explored in this section.

A key source for any study of the Augustan Age is the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, a list of achievements written by Augustus for a public audience. This is a source that you will need to refer to throughout this chapter.

### 23.3 *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*

The original *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* (the deeds of the divine Augustus) is engraved on two bronze pillars set up at Rome. Its content is introduced in the following way: 'by which he brought the world under the empire of the Roman people, and of the expenses which he bore for the state and people of Rome'. An abbreviated version is set out in Source 23.11; the full text is included in the Interactive Textbook.



7 CE

Victories of Germanicus in Dalmatia and Tiberius in Pannonia

8 CE

*Lex Papia Poppaea* and subsequent banishment of Julia, daughter of Agrippa and Augustus's daughter Julia

9 CE

Varus is defeated in Germany by Arminius with the loss of three legions

12 CE

- First consulship of Germanicus
- Birth of Caligula

14 CE

- Death of Augustus Nola (19 August) at the age of 76
- Accession of Tiberius



- 1) At the age of nineteen [44 BCE] on my own responsibility and at my own expense I raised an army, with which I successfully championed the liberty of the Republic when it was oppressed by the tyranny of a faction.
- 2) I drove into exile the murderers of my father, avenging their crime through tribunals established by law [43 BCE]; and afterwards, when they made war on the Republic, I twice defeated them in battle [42 BCE].
- 3) I undertook many civil and foreign wars by land and sea throughout the world, and as victor I spared the lives of all citizens who asked for mercy.
- 4) I celebrated two ovations and three curule triumphs and I was twenty-one times saluted as *imperator*. On fifty-five occasions the Senate decreed that thanksgivings should be offered to the immortal gods on account of the successes on land and sea gained by me or by my legates acting under my auspices.
- 5) The dictatorship was offered to me by both Senate and people ... but I refused it ... At that time the consulship was also offered to me, to be held each year for the rest of my life, and I refused it.
- 6) In the consulship of Marcus Vinicius and Quintus Lucretius [19 BCE] and afterwards in that of Publius and Gnaeus Lentulus [18 BCE], and thirdly in that of Paullus Fabius Maximus and Quintus Tubero [11 BCE], the Senate and people of Rome agreed that I should be appointed supervisor of laws and morals without a colleague and with supreme power, but I would not accept any office inconsistent with the custom of our ancestors. The measures that the Senate then desired me to take I carried out in virtue of my tribunician power. On five occasions, of my own initiative, I asked for and received from the Senate a colleague in that power.
- 7) I was triumvir for the organisation of the Republic for ten consecutive years. Up to the day of writing I have been *princeps senatus* for forty years. I am *pontifex maximus*, *augur*, *quindecimvir sacrisfaciundis*, *septemvir epulonum*, *frater arvalis*, *sodalis Titius*, *fetialis*.
- 8) In my fifth consulship [29 BCE] I increased the number of patricians on the instructions of the people and the Senate. I revised the roll of the Senate three times ... By new laws passed on my proposal I brought back into use many exemplary practices of our ancestors which were disappearing in our time, and in many ways I myself transmitted exemplary practices to posterity for their imitation.
- 9) The Senate decreed that vows should be undertaken every fifth year by the consuls and priests for my health.
- 10) My name was inserted in the hymn of the Salii by a decree of the Senate, and it was enacted by law that my person should be inviolable for ever and that I should hold the tribunician power for the duration of my life. I declined to be made *pontifex maximus* in the place of my colleague who was still alive, when the people offered me this priesthood which my father had held.
- 13) It was the will of our ancestors that the gateway of Janus Quirinus should be shut when victories had secured peace by land and sea throughout the whole empire of the Roman people; from the foundation of the city down to my birth, tradition records that it was shut only twice, but while I was the leading citizen the Senate resolved that it should be shut on three occasions.
- 15) To each member of the Roman plebs I paid under my father's will 300 sesterces ... I paid out 400 sesterces as a largesse to each man from my own patrimony, and in my eleventh consulship [23 BCE] I bought grain with my own money and distributed twelve rations apiece, and in the twelfth year of my tribunician power [11 BCE] I gave every man 400 sesterces for the third time.
- 17) Four times I assisted the treasury with my own money, so that I transferred to the administrators of the treasury 150 000 000 sesterces. In the consulship of Marcus Lepidus and Lucius Arruntius [6 CE], when the military treasury was founded by my advice for the purpose of

- paying rewards to soldiers who had served for twenty years or more, I transferred to it from my own patrimony 170 000 000 sesterces.
- 19) I built the Senate House, and the Chalcidicum adjacent to it, the temple of Apollo on the Palatine with its porticoes, the temple of the divine Julius, the Lupercal, the portico at the Flaminian circus, which I permitted to bear the name of the portico of Octavius after the man who erected the previous portico on the same site, a pulvinar at the Circus Maximus, the temples on the Capitol of Jupiter Feretrius and Jupiter the Thunderer, the temple of Quirinus, the temples of Minerva and Queen Juno and Jupiter Libertas on the Aventine, the temple of the Lares at the top of the Sacred Way, the temple of the Di Penates in the Velia, the temple of Youth, and the temple of the Great Mother on the Palatine.
  - 20) I restored the Capitol and the theatre of Pompey, both works at great expense without inscribing my own name on either. I restored the channels of the aqueducts, which in several places were falling into disrepair through age, and I brought water from a new spring into the aqueduct called Marcia, doubling the supply. I completed the Forum Julium and the basilica between the temples of Castor and Saturn, works begun and almost finished by my father, and when that same basilica was destroyed by fire [12 CE], I began to rebuild it on an enlarged site, to be dedicated in the name of my sons, and in case I do not complete it in my life time, I have given orders that it should be completed by my heirs. In my sixth consulship [28 BCE] I restored eighty-two temples of the gods in the city on the authority of the Senate, neglecting none that required restoration at that time. In my seventh consulship [27 BCE] I restored the Via Flaminia from the city as far as Rimini, together with all bridges except the Mulvian and the Minucian.
  - 21) I built the temple of Mars the Avenger and the Forum Augustum on private ground from the proceeds of booty. I built the theatre adjacent to the temple of Apollo on ground in large part bought from private owners, and provided that it should be called after Marcus Marcellus, my son-in-law. From the proceeds of booty I dedicated gifts in the Capitol and in the temples of the divine Julius, of Apollo, of Vesta and of Mars the Avenger.
  - 25) I made the sea peaceful and freed it of pirates. In that war I captured about 30 000 slaves who had escaped from their masters and taken up arms against the Republic, and I handed them over to their masters for punishment. The whole of Italy of its own free will swore allegiance to me and demanded me as the leader in the war in which I was victorious at Actium. The Gallic and Spanish provinces, Africa, Sicily and Sardinia swore the same oath of allegiance. More than seven hundred senators served under my standards at that time, including eighty-three who previously or subsequently (down to the time of writing) were appointed consuls, and about one hundred and seventy who were appointed priests.
  - 26) I extended the territory of all those provinces of the Roman people on whose borders lay peoples not subject to our government. I founded colonies of soldiers in Africa, Sicily, Macedonia, both Spanish provinces, Achaea, Asia, Syria, Gallia Narbonensis and Pisidia. Italy too has twenty-eight colonies founded by my authority, which were densely populated in my lifetime.
  - 29) By victories over enemies I recovered in Spain and in Gaul, and from the Dalmatians several standards lost by other commanders. I compelled the Parthians to restore to me the spoils and standards of three Roman armies and to ask as suppliants for the friendship of the Roman people. Those standards I deposited in the innermost shrine of the temple of Mars the Avenger.
  - 34) In my sixth and seventh consulships [28–27 BCE], after I had extinguished civil wars, and at a time when with universal consent I was in complete control of affairs, I transferred the Republic from my power to the dominion of the Senate and people of Rome. For this service of mine I was named Augustus by decree of the Senate, and the door-posts of my house were publicly wreathed with bay leaves and a civic crown was fixed over my door and a golden shield was set in the Curia

(continued)



Julia, which, as attested by the inscription thereon, was given me by the Senate and people of Rome on account of my courage, clemency, justice and piety. After this time, I excelled all in influence [*auctoritas*], although I possessed no more official power [*potestas*] than others who were my colleagues in the several magistracies.

35) In my thirteenth consulship [2 BCE] the Senate, the equestrian order and the whole people of Rome gave me the title of Father of my Country, and resolved that this should be inscribed in the porch of my house and in the Curia Julia and in the Forum Augustum below the chariot which had been set there in my honour by decree of the Senate. At the time of writing I am in my seventy-sixth year.

**SOURCE 23.10** *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*

## ACTIVITY 23.4

Having examined the *Res Gestae* answer the following questions.

1. Identify the intended audience of the *Res Gestae*.
2. How might a Roman citizen in Rome have reacted to the text differently from a non-citizen in the provinces?
3. Even though it was written toward the end of Augustus's lifetime, how does the *Res Gestae* attempt to claim a certain legitimacy for Augustus's position within the Republic?
4. Suggest reasons for Augustus's repeated claims that his power was granted to him by the Senate. What purpose would this have in the public perception of Augustus's power base?
5. This work is not an exhaustive list of what Augustus did in his lifetime.
  - a. What are the main themes and how are they arranged?
  - b. What is included or highlighted in this text?
  - c. What is omitted or played down? Why?
6. What image do you think Augustus was attempting to put forth with the *Res Gestae*?
7. How might you account for Augustus's omission of his military titles?
8. To what extent could the *Res Gestae* be considered propagandic in nature?
9. Create a mind map of the key themes emerging from the *Res Gestae*.
10. What is the significance of section 35 in understanding the powers of Augustus in 27 BCE?

A particular interest of the Augustan Age is what is referred to in the modern era as propaganda. There are significant issues in the application of this term because in ancient times it did not exist. There is no doubt that Augustus used art, inscriptions and coinage in a manner that promoted a specific image of the *princeps* and his government. However, we cannot consider it propaganda in the same way we might consider the 'spin' of the likes of Goebbels in the Third Reich.

## 23.4 The imagery of Augustus

The statue *Augustus of Prima Porta*, so called because of its location in Livia's villa at Prima Porta, is arguably one of the finest examples of the Augustan ideology realised in sculpture. From head to toe, this portrait sums up the view that Augustus wanted to convey of himself to the world. Laden with references to mythology and history and appealing to the Rome of days gone by, it conveys a very clear fusion of tradition and military might – the two legs upon which the newly formed principate stood.





**SOURCE 23.11** Augustus of Prima Porta



**SOURCE 23.12** Details of Augustus of Prima Porta

### Gemma Augustea

This cameo is an example of small private works of art commissioned by the *princeps*. Unlike art in the public sphere, private art would not have been seen by a large audience, however the messages contained therein are largely the same. Motifs that include mythological, imperial, and religious symbolism largely reflected across all Augustan imagery were a reminder of the *princeps's* restoration of the Republic and the security of the *pax Romana*, facilitated by military strength. The Gemma Augustea is divided into two registers: the upper register contains three historical figures and a host of deities and personifications, while the lower register depicts captive barbarians and victorious Romans.



**SOURCE 23.13** The Gemma Augustea

## Ara Pacis



**SOURCE 23.14** *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Altar of Augustan Peace), 9 BCE, Ara Pacis Museum, Rome

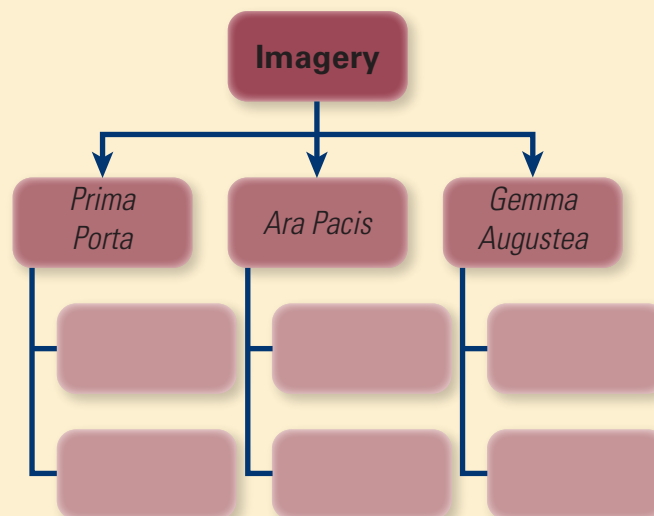


**SOURCE 23.15** Processional scene (south side), *Ara Pacis Augustae* (Altar of Augustan Peace), 9 BCE (Ara Pacis Museum, Rome)

### ACTIVITY 23.5

Examine the images of these sources found in Sources 23.11 to 23.15 (you can find excellent close-up and detailed panels online as well) and identify the key features of Augustan iconography. This includes, but is not limited to:

- the cornucopia
  - she-wolf
  - eagle
  - imperial household
  - barbarians
  - soldiers
  - Rome
  - dolphin and cupid
  - deities (Apollo, Diana, Tellus, Sol, Jupiter).
1. document your findings in a flow chart, like the one below.





## ACTIVITY 23.5 continued

2. What does the imagery in these works suggest about the way Augustus portrayed himself?
3. How does the prevalence of religious imagery support the views examined in this chapter's earlier section 23.1 around restoration and tradition?
4. How do you interpret the role of the military and the imperial family in these works? What conclusions could you draw at this point about Augustus's intent?
5. Explain how Augustus used artwork and religious imagery to cement his position as *princeps*.
6. How useful are these sources for making judgements about Augustus's power base?

## Modern perspectives of Augustan art

Historian Paul Zanker describes a portrait created in around 19 BCE.

A new portrait of Caesar Augustus (as he was now commonly known) must have been created about this time (19 BCE) ... The face is now characterised by a calm, elevated expression and the spontaneous turn of the head in the youthful portrait has given way to a timeless and remote dignity. Instead of the tousled hair over the forehead, each lock has been carefully arranged according to classical principles of symmetry ... It was reproduced in every part of the empire and fixed the visual image of Augustus for all time, although it had little to do with his actual appearance ... The new portrait type is indeed the visual equivalent of the title 'Augustus' and exploits all the best possible associations of the name. Augustus's extraordinary position in the Roman State is here defined in art. Rarely has art been pressed into the service of political power so directly as in the age of Augustus. Poetry and art are filled with the imagery of a blessed world, an empire at peace, under the sway of a great ruler.

**SOURCE 23.16** Zanker P., 1990, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, University of Michigan Press, pp. 98–9

Historian Werner Eck comments on Augustus's desire to have his name connected with military valour.

Augustus made it emphatically clear that he wanted his name to be associated with victory. Military valour was one of his four virtues recognised by official decree of the Senate in 27 BCE ... His very name implied triumph after he adopted *Imperateur* (meaning victorious commander) as a permanent praenomen (first name). His list of titles (on coins for example) listed how many times he had been acclaimed *imperateur* on the battlefield. By 13 CE it had reached 21 ... All of this goes hand in hand with his claim to have brought peace to Rome. ... The altar of Augustan peace which the Senate voted to build in 13 BCE on his return from Spain and Gaul, represents one public demonstration of his intention; another is the three times he closed the doors of the temple of Janus. Augustus was in charge of most of the large provinces and commanded the legions stationed in them. This gave him an obvious position of dominance which could not help but influence the Senate's daily deliberations, as all of them were aware. Another factor which contributed even more to his dominance was the new composition of the Senate. Many of the old senatorial families had died out during the civil wars; others had become so impoverished that they could survive only with support from Augustus.

**SOURCE 23.17** Eck, W., 2007, *Age of Augustus*, Wiley-Blackwell, p. 112



## ACTIVITY 23.6

The role of images in the Augustan era has been of significant focus among modern historians. Examine the extracts above from contemporary Augustan scholars, and complete the questions that follow.

1. According to these modern sources, how did Augustus use art and image to strengthen his position in Rome?
2. Identify the views conveyed by the historians regarding the Augustan image.
3. Do these views support the judgements based on the ancient sources? Why or why not?

### Augustan literature

Augustus did not only convey his image through art, but also through literature. The *princeps* sponsored poets, who in turn, wrote favourably of him. The following extracts are from three poets who lived at the same time as Augustus: Ovid, Vergil and Horace.

Ovid's *Fasti* is a six-book poem about Roman holidays and customs. Here he is talking about the Altar of Peace, which was built in 13 BCE to honour Augustus's return to Rome.

My song has led to the Altar of Peace one day from the month's end  
Peace, be present with the wreath of Actium on your head and stay in kindness through the world. Let there be no reason for a triumph – and no enemies: you will bring more glory than war! Let the soldier carry arms only to repress arms. Let the trumpet sound only for ceremony. Let the ends of the earth stand in awe of the men of Rome: if not fear, let there be love. Priests, add incense to the flames of Peace, strike down the white victim. May the house which guarantees peace, in peace last forever – be that your prayer to the gods who love piety.

**SOURCE 23.18** Ovid, *Fasti*, Book 1, Section 709

The *Ecologues* is the first major work by the poet Virgil. It is a dramatic and mythic presentation of the turmoils in Rome. Eclogue 4 envisages a golden age brought about by the birth of a boy descended from Jove.

Unbidden, the goats will bring home their udders swollen with milk, and the cattle will not fear huge lions. The serpent, too, will perish, and perish will the plant that hides its poison; Assyrian spice will spring up on every soil ... Next, when now the strength of years has made you a man, even the trader will quit the sea, nor will the ship of pine exchange wares; every land will bear all fruits. Earth will not suffer the harrow, nor the vine the pruning hook; the sturdy ploughman, too, will now loose his oxen from the yoke. No more will wool be taught to put on varied hues, but of himself the ram in the meadows will change his fleece, now to sweetly blushing purple, now to a saffron yellow; and scarlet shall clothe the grazing lambs at will.

**SOURCE 23.19** Virgil, *Ecologues*, Section 18–37

Virgil's *Aeneid* tells the story of Aeneas, the prince who escaped the destruction of Troy and became the ancestor of the Romans. In Book 6 he receives a vision of the future of Rome.

Yes, and a child of Mars will join his grandfather to accompany him,  
Romulus, whom his mother Ilia will bear, of Assaracus's line.  
See how Mars's twin plumes stand on his crest, and his father

Marks him out for the world above with his own emblems?  
 Behold, my son, under his command glorious Rome  
 Will match Earth's power and heaven's will, and encircle  
 Seven hills with a single wall, happy in her race of men:  
 As Cybele, the Berecynthian 'Great Mother', crowned  
 With turrets, rides through the Phrygian cities, delighting  
 In her divine children, clasping a hundred descendants,  
 All gods, all dwelling in the heights above.  
 Now direct your eyes here, gaze at this people,  
 Your own Romans. Here is Caesar, and all the offspring  
 Of Iulus destined to live under the pole of heaven.  
 This is the man, this is him, whom you so often hear  
 Promised you, Augustus Caesar, son of the Deified,  
 Who will make a Golden Age again in the fields  
 Where Saturn once reigned, and extend the empire beyond  
 The Libyans and the Indians (to a land that lies outside the zodiac's belt,  
 Beyond the sun's ecliptic and the year's, where sky-carrying Atlas  
 Turns the sphere, inset with gleaming stars, on his shoulders):  
 Even now the Caspian realms, and Maeotian Earth,  
 Tremble at divine prophecies of his coming, and  
 The restless mouths of the seven-branched Nile are troubled.  
 Truly, Hercules never crossed so much of the earth,  
 Though he shot the bronze-footed Arcadian deer, brought peace  
 To the woods of Erymanthus, made Lerna tremble at his bow:  
 Nor did Bacchus, who steers his chariot, in triumph, with reins  
 Made of vines, guiding his tigers down from Nysa's high peak.  
 Do we really hesitate still to extend our power by our actions,  
 And does fear prevent us settling the Italian lands?

**SOURCE 23.20** Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book VI, Lines 777–807

Horace's *Odes* was a collection of lyric poems, focussing on emotions and feelings. The final poem in the collection is in praise of Augustus.

Thine age, O Caesar, has brought back fertile crops to the fields and has restored to our own Jupiter the military standards stripped from the proud columns of the Parthians; has closed Janus's temple freed of wars; has put reins on licence overstepping righteous bounds; has wiped away our sins and revived the ancient virtues through which the Latin name and the might of Italy waxed great, and the fame and majesty of our empire were spread from the sun's bed in the west to the east. As long as Caesar is the guardian of the state, neither civil dissension nor violence shall banish peace, nor wrath that forges swords and brings discord and misery to cities. Not those who drink the deep Danube shall violate the orders of Caesar, nor the Getae, nor the Seres, nor the perfidious Parthians, nor those born by the Don River.

**SOURCE 23.21** Horace, *Odes*, Book IV, Section XV

## ACTIVITY 23.7

Ensure you have read the excerpts above before answering the questions that follow.

1. To what extent does the literature of Virgil, Ovid and Horace support the imagery in Sources 23.11 to 23.15?
2. Identify the key themes in the poetry. Can these be connected to key concepts such as tradition and restoration? Be specific in your explanation.
3. Evaluate the usefulness of poetry as a historical source.
4. Explain the value these sources have when examining the methods used by Augustus to maintain power.
5. To what extent was the literature of the principate able to shape public perception?

## Economic and public works

Augustan propaganda was not limited to the creative arts, but economics and public works also. It became clear that coinage could be used to spread information about the achievements of the emperor, the strength of the government and the reaffirmation that the state was, and would remain, in safe hands. Augustus recognised this by creating a system of coinage that remained the basis of the coinage systems for the Roman Empire for the next two and a half centuries. The coinage of the Augustan era provides an invaluable source for the Roman historian. The dissemination of Augustan propaganda through coins highlights three dominant themes throughout the period: the *princeps* and his founding honours, the imperial house and the steps taken towards dynastic continuity, and military success and the vindication of past defeats. This would form the basis of knowledge, official in character and creating a foundation on which opinions could be formed throughout the Empire.



**SOURCE 23.22** Silver denarius from Ephesus commemorating the Roman Peace. OBV: Bust of Augustus wearing *corona civica*; Imp (*imperator*) Caesar Augustus Divi F Consul VI REV: Liberty / Pax (peace) / Olive branches

## ACTIVITY 23.8

1. Identify the key images in the coins that support Augustus's power base.
2. Describe how the audience of the coins differs from the intended audience of the literature and art.
3. Assess the value of the numismatic record in the study of Augustus.
4. To what extent was coinage an effective means of disseminating information? Explain your answer.

Public works were also a means of reflecting key messages of the Augustan program to a broader audience.



**SOURCE 23.23** Silver denarius from the Lugdunum mint (Gaul).



Suetonius gives the following description of Augustus's building programs.

The city, which was not built in a manner suitable to the grandeur of the empire, and was liable to inundation 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. He also rendered it secure for the time to come against such disasters, as far as could be effected by human foresight.

A great number of public buildings were erected by him, the most considerable of which were a forum, containing the Temple of Mars the Avenger, the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine hill, and the temple of Jupiter Tonans in the Capitol ... The Temple of Mars was built in fulfilment of a vow made during the war of Philippi, undertaken by him to avenge his father's murder ... He erected the Temple of Apollo in that part of his house on the Palatine Hill which had been struck with lightning, and which, on that account, the soothsayers declared the God to have chosen. He added porticos to it, with a library of Latin and Greek authors; and when advanced in years, used frequently there to hold Senate, and examine the rolls of the judges.

He dedicated the temple to Jupiter the Thunderer, in acknowledgment of his escape from a great danger in his Cantabrian expedition ... He likewise constructed some public buildings in the name of others; for instance, his grandsons, his wife, and sister. Thus he built the portico and basilica of Lucius and Gaius, and the porticos of Livia and Octavia, and the theatre of Marcellus. He also often exhorted other persons of rank to embellish the city by new buildings, or repairing and improving the old, according to their means. In consequence of this recommendation, many were raised; such as the Temple of Hercules and the Muses, by Marcius Philippus; a Temple of Diana by Lucius Cornificius; the Court of Freedom by Asinius Pollio; a Temple of Saturn by Munatius Plancus; a theatre by Cornelius Balbus; an amphitheatre by Statilius Taurus; and several other noble edifices by Marcus Agrippa.

**SOURCE 23.24** Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 28-30

Professor David Shotter reflects on the sources of Augustus's complete control.

Augustus's domination then derived from two sources. A framework for government existed in the powers with which he had been invested, and for which he was accountable; the means to make himself the centre of an administrative system had its roots in a concept hallowed by Republican tradition – *autocras*. The existence of this provided him with the means to exercise an all-embracing patronage. Despite the public emphasis put on the *tribunicia potestas*, there is little doubt that the ultimate sanction of the *princeps* lay in the *proconsular imperium*. The legions were not on public display in Rome, but the 9 000-strong praetorian cohorts, though dispersed into small towns in Rome's vicinity, were a closer reminder of where the real strength of the *princeps* lay.

**SOURCE 23.25** Shotter, S., 2005, *Augustus Caesar* (2nd ed.), Routledge, p. 97



**SOURCE 23.26** Augustan Forum, Temple of Mars Ultor

The Roman historian Dio Cassius on governance of the provinces.

Augustus declared that he would not personally govern all the provinces, and that in the case of such provinces as he should govern he would not do so indefinitely. And he did, in fact, restore to the Senate the weaker provinces, on the ground that they were peaceful and free from war, while he retained the more powerful ones, alleging that they were insecure and precarious and either had enemies on their borders or were able on their own account to begin a serious revolt. His professed motive in this was that the Senate might enjoy without fears the finest portion of the empire, while he himself had the hardships and the dangers; but his real purpose was that by this arrangement the senators should be unarmed and peaceful, while he alone had arms and maintained soldiers.

**SOURCE 23.27** Dio Cassius, *Historia Romanae*, Book 53, Chapter 13

*The Dictionary of Art* talks about the artistic patronage of Augustus.

Octavian's most important program of artistic patronage, however, followed his assumption in 27 BCE of the title 'Augustus' (Lat.: 'venerable') and with it effective monarchic power. Artistic patronage was a vehicle by which Augustus sought to legitimate his new position in terms of traditional Roman values. He rebuilt 82 temples in order to demonstrate his piety and to restore the *pax deorum* ('peace of the gods') disrupted by the civil wars of the late Republic. New building in the Forum Romanum allowed him to redefine civic space in order to display his exceptional power. A temple of his deified father, Julius Caesar, dominated the eastern end of the forum. Two triumphal arches celebrating Augustus's victories at Actium and against the Parthians flanked the temple and formed the entrance to the forum. Such buildings provided the setting for an extensive programme of sculpture commissioned by Augustus. A series of some 70 portrait statues in the porticos of the Forum Augustum presented Augustus as the inevitable conclusion of two lines of succession: the first, *summi viri* ('great men') from Roman history stretching back to the founder of Rome, Romulus; the second, *summi viri* of the Julian family stretching back to Aeneas. Framed by these porticos was the Temple of Mars Ultor ('Mars the Avenger'), with cult statues of Mars, the father of Romulus, and Venus the mother of Aeneas, thus tying Augustus's succession to sole power into the divine order of things.

**SOURCE 23.28** *The Dictionary of Art*, vol. 26, (ed. Jane Turner), 1996, Oxford University Press, p. 726

### ACTIVITY 23.9

Re-examine paragraphs 19–21 in the *Res Gestae* in addition to the evidence above, before completing the questions below.

1. Assess the significance of the Augustan building program.
2. Beyond the power of image, what value does an ambitious building program have for a city or society?
3. Identify the key elements of the image Augustus wanted to convey that is apparent in the evidence.
4. Evaluate the interpretations of the modern historians. How useful are they in establishing an understanding of the significance of Augustus's building program?
5. To what extent do these sources reflect the concepts of restoration and tradition?

## ACTIVITY 23.10

1. To what extent do these sources reflect the concepts of restoration and tradition?
2. Review all the evidence and assess the validity of this statement: Augustus was the master of image, and recognised the use of its power.

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a powerful individual, group or society in the Ancient World

### 23.5 Augustus and the Senate

At the conclusion of the civil wars Augustus sought a political settlement that would provide some stability. This would be difficult; he had to safeguard himself while at the same time be considerate of key figures in the State. He could not make himself king or dictator, for these offices were an affront to all citizens who were drawn to republican ideals of liberty and power-sharing. The actions of Sulla and Caesar in the years of the later Republic had undermined its legitimacy. He also could not restore the Republic to its traditional form, or emulate Sulla by passing reforms designed to entrench the power of his friends in the Senate. Many among the Roman people were opposed to government by the nobles because the past corrupt, inept and violent behaviour had caused the civil wars in the first place.

By 27 BCE, there was the first of a range of so-called settlements, that reorganised the power of the state. In this reorganisation, Octavian was granted the position of consul from 31–23 BCE; he reduced the number of legions under arms from 70 to 28, the wealth of Egypt was used to purchase (rather than confiscate) land for the veterans, he removed from the Senate 200 members of whose loyalty he was doubtful, and the magistracies were accorded honour.

The intent of Augustus, and the powers he gained following the settlement of 27 BCE, have been the focus of much conjecture by ancient and modern historians. During the *principate* there was significant reform in the Senate. It was necessary for Augustus to develop an administration capable of running the empire, a significant problem in the late republican era. In doing this, Augustus carefully preserved what he could from the deteriorating Republic and relied heavily on the Senate's support. Augustus made sure he gave more attention to this austere body than Julius Caesar did. According to Dio Cassius and Suetonius, as a result of the bribery and corruption that coloured the civil wars, the number of senators was swollen by a large number of equestrian and low-born men Augustus, however, 'revised the roll of the Senate three times' (*Res Gestae* 8) and thus restored it to its 'former limits and distinction' (Suetonius, *Augustus*: 35). The Senate's reputation was redeemed and once again was proclaimed to be a position of considerable prestige and influence.

In keeping with this tradition, Augustus took great pains to emphasise the republican nature of the *principate*, emphasising in the *Res Gestae* accolades given to him by the Senate, yet possessing 'no more *potestas* than others who were my colleagues in the several magistracies' (*Res Gestae* 34). The term *princeps* never appeared on coinage, but Augustus, a formal title with religious roots was used regularly; there is minimal reference to *auctoritas* and *dignitas* which formed the basis of his power, but rather, emphasised the *tribunicia potestas*, *pontifex maximus* and *pater patriae*, which gave him the authority to work through the Senate. The art and coinage of the time did not want to admit that Augustus controlled the army because that would mean he was an autocrat. Instead, by using the aforementioned titles, Augustus worked on the sentimental, traditional and antiquarian feelings of his people. The evidence in the next section pertains to Augustus's reform and intentions.



Suetonius considers Augustus's administration of the provinces.

Augustus kept for himself all the more vigorous provinces – those that could not be safely administered by an annual governor; the remainder went to proconsuls chosen by lot. Yet, as occasion arose, he would change the status of provinces from imperial to senatorial, or contrariwise, and paid frequent visits to either sort. Finding that certain city-states which had treaties of alliance with Rome were ruining themselves through political irresponsibility, he took away their independence; but also granted subsidies to others crippled by public debts, rebuilt some cities which had been devastated by earthquakes, and even awarded Latin rights or full citizenship to states that could show a record of faithful service in the Roman cause. So far as I know, Augustus inspected every province of the Empire.

**SOURCE 23.29** Suetonius, *Divi Augustus*, 47

Roman historian Tacitus introduces Augustus in his *Annals*, a history of the Roman empire.

Rome at the beginning was ruled by kings. Freedom and the consulship were established by Lucius Brutus. Dictatorships were held for a temporary crisis. The power of the *decemvirs* did not last beyond two years, nor was the consular jurisdiction of the military tribunes of long duration. The despotisms of Cinna and Sulla were brief; the rule of Pompey and of Crassus soon yielded before Caesar; the arms of Lepidus and (Mark) Antony before Augustus; who, when the world was wearied by civil strife, subjected it to empire under the title of 'Prince'. But the successes and reverses of the old Roman people have been recorded by famous historians; and fine intellects were not wanting to describe the times of Augustus, till growing sycophancy scared them away. The histories of Tiberius, Caius (Caligula), Claudius, and Nero, while they were in power, were falsified through terror, and after their death were written under the irritation of a recent hatred. Hence my purpose is to relate a few facts about Augustus – more particularly his last acts, then the reign of Tiberius, and all which follows, without either bitterness or partiality, from any motives to which I am far removed.

When after the destruction of Brutus and Cassius there was no longer any army of the Republic, when Pompey was crushed in Sicily, and when, with Lepidus pushed aside and (Mark) Antony slain, even the Julian faction had only Caesar left to lead it, then, dropping the title of triumvir, and giving out that he was a Consul, and was satisfied with a tribune's authority for the protection of the people, Augustus won over the soldiers with gifts, the populace with cheap corn, and all men with the sweets of repose, and so grew greater by degrees, while he concentrated in himself the functions of the Senate, the magistrates, and the laws. He was wholly unopposed, for the boldest spirits had fallen in battle, or in the proscription, while the remaining nobles, the readier they were to be slaves, were raised the higher by wealth and promotion, so that, aggrandised by revolution, they preferred the safety of the present to the dangerous past. Nor did the provinces dislike that condition of affairs, for they distrusted the government of the Senate and the people, because of the rivalries between the leading men and the rapacity of the officials, while the protection of the laws was unavailing, as they were continually deranged by violence, intrigue, and finally by corruption.

**SOURCE 23.30** Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 1

Shotter disagrees with Tacitus.

Tacitus characterised the historiography of the principate as being vitiated [corrupted, impaired or devalued] by two considerations. First, as government became progressively the business of one

man, general knowledge of events and the thinking that lay behind them deteriorated. Second, the dominance of the *princeps* and in many cases his capricious character made it increasingly inevitable that writers would flatter the *princeps* whilst he was alive and vilify him once dead. In both these ways, the interests of posterity were compromised, and the truth was therefore hard to discover. It is likely, however, that the history of Augustus's reign was to a degree less affected by these considerations than was the case with the reigns of his successors.

**SOURCE 23.31** Shotter, D., 2005, *Augustus Caesar* (2nd ed), Routledge, p. 86

The following comes from an overview on Augustus, written for undergraduate humanities students at Reed College.

On July 1 of that year he resigned the consulship. Thereafter he would hold it again only for ceremonial purposes, as in 5 and 3 BCE to honour the entry of his grandsons Gaius and Lucius into public life. The centrepiece of the settlement of 23 was the adoption by Augustus of the office of tribune of the people, the *tribunicia potestas*, which he held thereafter continuously until his death in 14 CE. This is a bit tricky in so far as we hear on two previous occasions of Augustus taking the tribunician power, first in 36 BCE (Appian, BCE 5.132; Orosius, 6.18.34), and then again in 30 (Dio Cassius 51.19.6). However, Augustus clearly states in the *Res Gestae* (4.4) that his tribunician power began in 23. The likeliest explanation is that on the previous occasions he had been interested only in acquiring the tribunician inviolability (*sacrosanctitas*). In practical terms the tribunician power did not amount to much, except insofar as it allowed him to veto any public act and to propose measures directly to the popular assembly. But in symbolic terms its importance cannot be overstated. The tribunician power came to be identified completely with the office of the *princeps*, and Augustus and his successors, on their coins and public documents, date the years of their reigns by it. When Augustus sought to identify someone as his designated successor (a delicate business inasmuch as he had to avoid the appearance of creating a dynasty) he did so by taking that person as a colleague in the tribunician power. Tribunes of the people do not command armies. Augustus's command of the armies was not, however, jeopardised by the settlement of 23. He was granted *proconsular imperium* (extended in 19 BCE to a life term), and this was to be *imperium maius quam proconsulare*, which meant that he could overrule the authority of other provincial governors in their own provinces (Dio Cassius 53.32). Although there were (dubious) Republican precedents for the holding of *maius imperium* (Pompey had had it in the 60s), Augustus's was unique in that it did not stop at the *pomerium*, the sacred boundary of the city.

**SOURCE 23.32** Silverman, D.L., 1996, *Augustus: Nature of the sources*, Reed College website

Classics professor Matthew McGowan discusses Roman names.

Notably, he never took to the name Octavianus, as would have been customary among the Romans after such an adoption, but immediately began calling himself 'Julius Caesar, the son of Julius Caesar'. Roman nomenclature is notoriously vexing, and the confusion we may have today about the many names of Rome's first emperor—ultimately called Imperator Caesar *divi filius* Augustus, 'Emperor Caesar Augustus, son of the deified (Caesar)' – may also have been at play in antiquity. At the very least, the newly adopted 'Caesar' knew the power of that name to compel and to revile. Thus, in a letter composed less than a month after the assassination, Cicero writes: 'his followers call him Caesar, but Philippus does not, so neither do I.' In the same letter, Cicero expresses doubts about the youth – 'I'm sure he's not a good citizen' – and refers to him dismissively as 'boy' (*puer*), a

(continued)



term famously deployed by [Mark] Antony to insult Octavian: 'And you, boy, who owe everything to a name.' Of course, [Mark] Antony was only partly right: a keen intellect and ruthlessness of purpose played a part in everything, too, and rivals underestimated him at their peril.

**SOURCE 23.33** McGowan, M.M., 2014, *Caesar, princeps, Augustus, god*, The University Bookman website

The following is an oath of loyalty sworn to Augustus.

In the third year from the twelfth consulship of the Emperor Caesar Augustus, son of a god, March 6, at Gangra, the following oath was taken by the inhabitants of Paphlagonia and the Roman businessmen dwelling among them:

'I swear by Jupiter, Earth, Sun, by all the gods and goddesses, and by Augustus himself, that I will be loyal to Caesar Augustus and to his children and descendants all my life in word, in deed, and in thought, regarding as friends whomever they so regard, and considering as enemies whomever they so adjudge; that in defence of their interests I will spare neither body, soul, life, nor children, but will in every way undergo every danger in defence of their interests; that whenever I perceive or hear anything being said or planned of done against them I will lodge information about this and will be an enemy to whoever says or plans or does any such thing; and that whomever they adjudge to be enemies I will by land and sea, with weapons and sword, pursue and punish.'

**SOURCE 23.34** 'Oath of Allegiance', cited in Lewis, N. & Reinhold, M., 1990, *Roman Civilization: Selected Readings, Volume 2*, Columbia University Press, p. 589

## ACTIVITY 23.11

In addition to the *Res Gestae*, examine the sources above before answering the questions that follow.

1. Summarise the political reforms and changes made by Augustus as identified in the sources.
2. What was the legal basis of Augustus's power as emperor (*princeps*), and how did it differ from the basis of political power during the Republic?
3. How did Augustus avoid the fate of Caesar – that is, conspiracy and assassination?
4. Examine the significance of Augustus's titles and the extent to which these underpinned his power base.
5. Compare the *Res Gestae* with the sources above. How does their perception of Augustus's power differ? How might you account for this?
6. Based on your understanding of the evidence, assess whether or not the relationship between *princeps* and Senate can be considered diarchic in nature.

The ancient sources also document extensively the various views that existed around the intent of Augustus. Some suggest monarchy was his sole aim, others that he restored the *res publica*. Read through the below extracts from Roman historians, and identify the perspective provided.

From Dio Cassius:

And inasmuch as he had put into effect very many illegal and unjust regulations during the factional strife and the wars, especially in the period of his joint rule with [Mark] Antony and Lepidus, he abolished them all by a single decree, setting the end of his sixth consulship as the time for their expiration.



When, now, he obtained approbation and praise for this act, he desired to exhibit another instance of magnanimity, that by such a policy he might be honoured all the more and might have his sovereignty voluntarily confirmed by the people, so as to avoid the appearance of having forced them against their will. Therefore, having first primed his most intimate friends among the senators, he entered the Senate in his seventh consulship and read the following address:

I am sure that I shall seem to some of you, Conscript Fathers, to have made an incredible choice. For what each one of my hearers would not wish to do himself, he does not like to believe, either, when another claims to have done it, especially as everyone is jealous of anybody who is superior to him and so is more prone to disbelieve any utterance that is above his own standard. Besides, I know this, that those who say what appears to be incredible not only fail to persuade others but also appear to be impostors. And indeed, if it were a question of my promising something that I was not intending to put into effect immediately, I should have been exceedingly loath to proclaim it, for fear of gaining, instead of gratitude, some grievous imputation ... You see for yourselves, of course, that it is in my power to rule over you for life; for every factious element has either been put down through the application of justice or brought to its sense by receiving mercy, while those who were on my side have been made devoted by my reciprocating their friendly services and bound fast by having a share in the government. Therefore none of them desires a revolution, and if anything of the sort should take place, at least the party which will stand by me is even more ready than it was before. My military is in the finest condition as regards both loyalty and strength; there is money and there are allies; and, most important of all, you and the people are so disposed toward me that you would distinctly wish to have me at your head. However, I shall lead you no longer, and no one will be able to say that it was to win absolute power that I did whatever has hitherto been done. Nay, I give up my office completely, and restore to you absolutely everything – the army, the laws, and the provinces – not only those which you committed to me, but also those which I myself later acquired for you. Thus my very deeds also will prove to you that even at the outset I desired no position of power, but in very truth wished to avenge my father, cruelly murdered, and to extricate the city from great evils that came on unceasingly. Indeed, I would that I had not gone so far as to assume charge of affairs as I did; that is, I would that the city had not required me for any such task, but that we of this generation also might have lived from the beginning in peace and harmony, as our fathers lived of yore. But since some destiny, as it appears, brought you to a position where you had need even of me, young as I still was at the time, and put me to the test, I did everything with a zeal even beyond my years and accomplished everything with a good fortune even beyond my powers, so long as the situation demanded my help. And nothing in the world could deter me from aiding you when you were in danger, neither toil, nor fear, nor threats of foes, nor prayers of friends, nor the multitude of the conspirators, nor the desperation of our adversaries; nay, I gave myself to you unstintingly for any and all the exigencies which have arisen, and what I did and suffered, you know. From all this I have derived no gain for myself except that I have kept my country from perishing; but as for you, you are enjoying both safety and tranquillity. Since, then, Fortune, by using me, has graciously restored to you peace without treachery and harmony without faction, receive back also your liberty and the republic; take over the army and the subject provinces, and govern yourselves as has been your wont.

I myself have undergone both labours and hardships and am no longer able to stand the strain, either in mind or in body. Furthermore, I foresee the jealousy and hatred which are engendered in certain persons against even the best men and the plots which arise therefrom. It is for these reasons that I choose the life of a private citizen and fair fame rather than that of a sovereign and constant peril. And as for the business of the commonwealth, it would be carried on far better by all in common, inasmuch as it would be transacted by many men together instead of being dependent upon some one man.

**SOURCE 23.35** Dio Cassius, *Historia Romanae*, Book 51, Chapters 2–3

From Tacitus:

Meanwhile, to consolidate his power, Augustus raised Claudius Marcellus, his sister's son and a mere stripling, to the pontificate and curule aedileship: Marcus Agrippa, no aristocrat, but a good soldier and his partner in victory, he honoured with two successive consulates, and a little later, on the death of Marcellus, selected him as a son-in-law. Each of his step-children, Tiberius Nero and Claudius Drusus, was given the title of Imperator, though his family proper was still intact: for he had admitted Agrippa's children, Gaius and Lucius, to the Caesarian hearth, and even during their minority had shown, under a veil of reluctance, a consuming desire to see them consuls designate with the title Princes of the Youth. At home all was calm. The officials carried the old names; the younger men had been born after the victory of Actium; most even of the elder generation, during the civil wars; few indeed were left who had seen the Republic. It was thus an altered world, and of the old, unspoilt Roman character not a trace lingered. Equality was an outworn creed, and all eyes looked to the mandate of the sovereign – with no immediate misgivings, so long as Augustus in the full vigour of his prime upheld himself, his house, and peace.

**SOURCE 23.36** Tacitus, *Annals*, 1, 2–4

From Velleius Paterculus:

As for Caesar's return to Italy and to Rome – the procession which met him, the enthusiasm of his reception by men of all classes, ages, and ranks, and the magnificence of his triumphs and of the spectacles which he gave – all this it would be impossible adequately to describe even within the compass of a formal history, to say nothing of a work so circumscribed as this. There is nothing that man can desire from the gods, nothing that the gods can grant to a man, nothing that wish can conceive or good fortune bring to pass, which Augustus on his return to the city did not bestow upon the republic, the Roman people, and the world. The civil wars were ended after twenty years, foreign wars suppressed, peace restored, the frenzy of arms everywhere lulled to rest; validity was restored to the laws, authority to the courts, and dignity to the Senate; the power of the magistrates was reduced to its former limits, with the sole exception that two were added to the eight existing praetors. The old traditional form of the republic was restored. Agriculture returned to the fields, respect to religion, to mankind freedom from anxiety, and to each citizen his property rights were now assured; old laws were usefully emended, and new laws passed for the general good; the revision of the Senate, while not too drastic, was not lacking in severity. The chief men of the state who had won triumphs and had held high office were at the invitation of Augustus induced to adorn the city. In the case of the consulship only, Caesar was not able to have his way, but was obliged to hold that office consecutively until the eleventh time in spite of his frequent efforts to prevent it; but the dictatorship which the people persistently offered him, he as stubbornly refused. To tell of the wars waged under his command, of the pacification of the world by his victories, of his many works at home and outside of Italy would weary a writer intending to devote his whole life to this one task.

**SOURCE 23.37** Velleius Paterculus, *Roman History*, Book 2, Chapters 89

From Suetonius:

He received the tribunician power for life, and once or twice chose a colleague in the office for periods of five years each. He was also given the supervision of morals and of the laws for all time, and by the virtue of this position, although without the title of censor, he nevertheless took the census thrice, the first and last time with a colleague, the second time alone.



He twice thought of restoring the republic; first immediately after the overthrow of [Mark] Antony, remembering that his rival had often made the charge that it was his fault that it was not restored; and again in the weariness of a lingering illness, when he went so far as to summon the magistrates and the Senate to his house, and submit an account of the general condition of the empire. Reflecting, however, that as he himself would not be free from danger if he should retire, so too it would be hazardous to trust the State to the control of more than one, he continued to keep it in his hands; and it is not easy to say whether his intentions or their results were the better. His good intentions he not only expressed from time to time, but put them on record as well in an edict in the following words: 'May it be my privilege to establish the State in a firm and secure position, and reap from that act the fruit that I desire; but only if I may be called the author of the best possible government, and bear with me the hope when I die that the foundations which I have laid for the State will remain unshaken.' And he realised his hope by making every effort to prevent any dissatisfaction with the new régime.

**SOURCE 23.38** Suetonius, *Divi Augustus*, 27–28

## ACTIVITY 23.12

1. Consider the judgements of the ancient historians in the sources as well as the *Res Gestae* with regards to the intentions of Augustus and complete the table below (the first one has been done for you). It would be useful to review the definition of *res publica*.

Historian	Perspective	Evidence	Comments
Augustus, <i>Res Gestae</i>	A melding of the past and present, Augustus places significant emphasis on his role in restoring the <i>res publica</i> and ensuring that his deeds are portrayed as republican or at the very least popular in nature.	The dictatorship offered me by the people and the Roman Senate, in my absence and later when present, in the consulship of Marcus Marcellus and Lucius Arruntius I did not accept.	Emphasis on the denial of the dictatorship – this was an office that was unpalatable to many Romans as a consequence of its use by Caesar and Sulla in the later years of the republic.
		The Senate and the Roman people unanimously agreed that I should be elected overseer of laws and morals.	Laws and morals puts him in charge of the way people act – consequently, he is able to influence the way people conduct themselves, which he ultimately does by harking back to the pre-civil war era.

(continued)



ACTIVITY 23.12 continued

Historian	Perspective	Evidence	Comments
	Referral to honours that were bestowed by the Senate and the People of Rome, and his refusal to accept anything that was out of keeping with Roman traditions reflects the way Augustus wanted to be remembered. As a result many aspects of his reign are omitted or glossed over.	I refused to accept any power offered me which was contrary to the traditions of our ancestors.	Augustus places the emphasis on the powers given to him that were not uncommon so as to demonstrate that he was adhering to the republican mores and not assuming significant power as Caesar had.
		I carried out by virtue of my tribunician power.	Focus is placed on his <i>tribunicia potestas</i> , not <i>imperium maius</i> etc., which has a strong military focus and can be considered uncommon and exceptional.
Tacitus			
Velleius Paterculus			
Suetonius			
Dio Cassius			

2. What claims can be made about the authenticity of Augustus?
3. Consider the other evidence provided in this chapter. What judgements can be made about Augustus's intent in establishing a monarchy?
4. Describe the foundation or the principate according to the evidence.
5. To what extent has your understanding of Augustus's acquisition of power changed after reading these sources?

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### 23.6 Creating responses about Augustus

Based on your knowledge and the evidence in this chapter, complete the following activities.

## ACTIVITY 23.13

1. The imperial system was born of revolution and civil war and was the result of the victory of one military leader from the governing class over his rivals. The system never lost the military-revolutionary aspect of its origin, no matter how much Augustus and his successors tried to conceal it. Their power always relied ultimately on the power of the army. Assess the extent to which the power of the emperor and the stability of the principate, in the period 27 BCE to 54 CE, relied on the army.
2. Individual senators could be replaced or killed, but senators in general were vital to Roman society. What the Senate failed to realise until Gaius Caligula's death was that the same was now true of Roman emperors. Examine the changing nature of the relationship between the Senate and the *princeps* in the period 27 BCE to 54 CE.
3. Ronald Syme in his seminal work *The Roman Revolution* (1939), made many assertions about Augustus and his power base. He argued, that 'the *Princeps*, now a monopolist of the means of influencing opinion, used all his arts to persuade men to accept the Principate and its programme' (p. 458). Assess the validity of Syme's assertion that Augustus utilised propaganda in order to cement his position of power in Rome.
4. In recent years, historians have reassessed the main features of the Augustan Age. Karl Galinsky is one such historian who has concluded that the success of Augustus is related to his identification with Roman culture and values, and his suggestion that he and his family embodied traditional values. He claimed that 'the poets in particular contributed significantly to the creation of the Augustan ethos'. To what extent is the suggestion valid that the poets of the Augustan era were the most important factor in the creation and validation of the Augustan ethos?
5. The role of the military in Augustus's rise to power cannot be denied. Contemporary historian Philip Matyszak, however, suggests that the influence of the military did not end with Augustus's victory at Actium, but rather, that 'despite the republican façade, the principate was essentially a military dictatorship'. To what extent does the evidence support Matyszak's claim, that the principate was a military dictatorship?

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- The Augustan Principate is one of the most divisive periods in Roman history.
- Octavian, later Augustus, was vastly underestimated by Mark Antony, and the young boy used his skills and the name of Caesar to establish a power base.
- Augustus sought to convey an image of tradition and restoration to avoid the fate of Julius Caesar.
- He implemented significant reform in order to renew Roman tradition which had been so desperately damaged by the civil wars of the first century BCE.
- His building program was one of the most successful seen by Rome at the time.
- The power of the name Caesar, in addition to a series of constitutional appointments, gave his power a legal basis.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

Based on the evidence, what key themes did Augustus seek to convey to the Roman people?

### Analyse

Assess the nature of the evidence for the Augustan period, including its strengths and limitations.

### Evaluate

Assess the usefulness of art and literature in making judgements about the Augustan era.

### Synthesise

How did Augustus convey a theme of restoration and tradition in his lifetime?

### Respond

To what extent is the statement 'Augustus restored the *res publica*' valid?

## Assessment

### Examination-style questions

1. 'I excelled all in influence, although I possessed no more official power than others who were my colleagues in the several magistracies.' How does this claim accurately reflect the basis of Augustus's power?
2. 'He seduced the army with bonuses, absorbed the functions of the Senate, the officials and even the law'. To what extent do these reasons explain Augustus's success?
3. '*Sic semper tyrannis*' [thus always to tyrants]. How was Augustus able to avoid the fate of Julius Caesar?



## Investigation tasks

1. Examine the changes to the name of Octavius to Augustus, and assess how important the changes are in his exercise of power and rule:
  - 63 BCE: born Gaius Octavius
  - 44 BCE: upon adoption, became Gaius Julius Caesar (contemporaries referred to him as 'Caesar'; he dropped the name 'Octavius')
  - 42 BCE: Octavian added *divi filius* (son of the divine), becoming Gaius Julius Caesar Divi Filius
  - 38 BCE: Octavian replaced 'Gaius' and 'Julius' with 'Imperator', officially becoming Imperator Caesar Divi Filius
  - 27 BCE: the Roman Senate voted new titles for him, officially becoming Imperator Caesar Divi Filius Augustus.

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# CHAPTER 9

## Boudica

SARAH COLEMAN

### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the historical and geographical background of Boudica and the time in which she lived
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about:
  - key archaeological and written sources for the period
  - issues involved with the nature of evidence from the leadership of Boudica.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to Boudica's personality and achievements
- devise historical questions and conduct research
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the various interpretations and representations of Boudica in primary sources
  - the various interpretations and representations of Boudica presented in secondary sources and how these have differed over time
  - changing ancient and modern perceptions of the achievements and legacy of Boudica.
- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose.

### KEY DATES

54 BCE

40 CE

Julius Caesar conducts an expedition to Britain on the premise that the local tribes were providing financial support to the Gallic tribes he was busy subduing across the English Channel. Whilst largely a failure, the expedition brought Britain into the psyche of Rome, and Caesar made several alliances with southern tribes, which would later form the justification for Claudius's invasion.

Farcical campaign of Caius Caligula, who allegedly drew up his armies at the channel and hurled spears into the ocean before claiming he had conquered Poseidon

**SOURCE 9.1** Boudica and her daughters outside the Houses of Parliament, London



## Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the aftermath of Boudica's leadership
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the impact of significant personalities on their times.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Boudica (*variant spellings: Boudicca, Boadicea*)
- Julius Caesar
- Caracatus
- Cartamandua
- Nero
- Ostorius Scapula
- Prasutagus
- Suetonius Paulinus

43 CE

Verika, also referred to as Berikos, likely a descendant of Commius with whom Caesar had forged an alliance, was an Atrebatian king who appealed to Rome for assistance having been unseated by the neighbouring Catuvellauni. As a result, Rome invaded Britain in the summer. Under the leadership of Aulus Plautius, four legions and around 20000 auxiliaries landed at Richborough. Despite facing a large army lead by the Catuvellaunian kings Caracatus and Togodumnus, the Romans were victorious after only two days of battle. When Claudius arrived with his elephants following the victory, Camulodunum (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'.





**MAP**



**SOURCE 9.2** Map of Roman Britain

**44 CE**

Plautius is appointed governor of the fledgling province, and the four legions on the island are split up into a series of battle groups to continue the work of subjugating the island. Vespasian and the Legio II Augusta continued campaigning in southern Britain, where they fought 30 battles and captured more than 20 native towns. There is evidence of siege warfare at Hod Hill; masses of ballista bolts fired into the interior attests to the ferocity of the attacks. Maiden Castle holds a war cemetery of British dead, one with a Roman arrow embedded in his spine (Frere 1978: 58). Both are believed to be sieges of fortified Roman hillforts, which further attest to the Roman commitment to force in this phase.





## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>client kingdom</b>	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. 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.
<b>coloniae</b>	translates quite simply as colony; in the case of Rome, these were settlements of retired Roman soldiers. Their presence is attested to extensively in the epigraphic record, as a consequence of the number of military graves. <i>Coloniae</i> operated as self-governing entities, and comprised a chessboard Roman town with a certain amount of land or <i>territorium</i> , which was allocated to the retiring soldiers for their personal use. Following the establishment of Colchester in 49 CE were Gloucester and Lincoln, for the veterans of <i>Legio II Augusta</i> and <i>IX Hispania</i> respectively. Like Colchester, these were formed on the remnants of a military fortress, but while Colchester played a key role in the pacification and urbanisation of the core of the initial provincial area, Gloucester and Lincoln enhanced the potential of urban growth towards the fringes of the settlement.
<b>druid</b>	Celtic priests and scholars who are often associated with British resistance to Roman rule
<b>freedom fighter</b>	an individual or group who are perceived to have justly resisted oppressive rule. This usually involved, in ancient contexts, armed and violent resistance.

### 47 CE

- Plautius receives an *ovatio* in Rome
- Ostorius Scapula becomes governor of Britannia
- The Iceni tribe are ordered to surrender their weapons by Scapula, and a resistance ensues. The revolt is swiftly quelled but the Iceni remained nominally independent. However, the installation of Prasutagas, a pro-Roman king, is believed to have occurred soon after.

### 49 CE

*Coloniae* of Camulodunum (Colchester) is founded. This causes much resentment amongst the British tribes.



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>hillfort</b>	Iron Age British settlements, which in the south particularly were populated thriving centres of commerce, agriculture and religion
<b>Iceni</b>	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. Boudica is the most well-known ruler of the Iceni.
<b>imperialism</b>	the modern term comes from the Latin <i>imperator</i> which was a military salute to a victorious general. It has come to refer to a deliberate government policy that seeks military expansion through the establishment of colonies. This is often associated in negative terms with the suppression of native peoples, and the imposition of the customs of the conquering nation. Whether such a policy (in the modern sense) existed in ancient Roman is hard to discern. However, the Romans did not use the term imperialism to describe their actions, and thus, like all modern terms, it must be used judiciously and with caution.
<b>Iron Age</b>	period following on from the Stone and Bronze Ages, and immediately preceding Roman occupation. Iron Age refers to the use of iron implements, and in developmental terms is the most advanced age prior to classical civilisation. Some areas, especially in the north and west, remained Iron Age settlements for a significantly longer period, due to resistance. This particularly applies to the regions known today as Wales and Scotland.
<b>jus ad bellum</b>	a just war – closely linked to the notion of the freedom fighter, it is a war that is undertaken because it is morally right to do so
<b>mythologisation</b>	process by which a historical figure takes on mythical proportions, often to such an extent that the realities of the historical figure are lost
<b>Romanisation</b>	first coined by British Historian Francis Haverfield in 1905, Romanisation is a term that is fraught with difficulty. At a very basic level, it suggests the adoption of Roman customs in place of traditional ones. In recent decades the term has evolved, as evidence emerges that suggests fusion, and a heterogeneous Romano-British culture, rather than a purely homogenous Roman one.

## 51 CE

Caracatus, the Catuvellaunian king, fled to Wales for protection following the initial invasion. He appealed to Cartamandua, Queen of the Brigantes, who handed him over to the Romans.

## 52 CE

Following the capture of Caracatus, the Silures, a tribe native to modern Wales and Gloucestershire, continued to resist.



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Roman Britain</b>	period during which Britannia was a province of the Roman Empire. This commenced with the Claudian invasion of 43/44 CE and concluded with the removal of Roman garrisons in 476 CE.
<b>state-sponsored terrorism</b>	active engagement in acts of terror by government bodies, or non-government bodies who have the support of the state. In the context of ancient Rome, practices such as crucifixion, decimation, proscriptions, and razings were common methods of using terror and force to control a populace.
<b>Trinovates</b>	the tribe immediately to the south of the Iceni, who were among the first to join the revolt. They were unhappy about losing their tribal capital to the Roman <i>coloniae</i> of Camulodunum (Colchester).

## Introduction

This chapter explores one of the key personalities in the Roman occupation of the province Britannia, Boudica of the Iceni; a woman whose actions have found her cemented in the national psyche of the British peoples, for better or worse.

The Mediterranean Sea formed the source of life for the civilisations that established themselves on its shores, and witnessed the evolution of the Roman Empire. From a small village at the foot of the Palatine Hill, the Romans conquered their way across vast areas of the globe, extending the Empire's grasp from Persia across the ocean to Britain. The variety of perspectives on Rome as a power is unsurprising, given the longevity of her rule and influence. Roman military occupation brought with it Roman culture that was to varying degrees encouraged and adopted by those who fell under Rome's yoke. Conquest was not as simple as taking military victory and subjugating the inhabitants by force, in what some would consider in contemporary terms to be state-sponsored terrorism; they needed to win the hearts and minds of the people. This approach has received much attention in recent years, particularly in consideration of modern conflicts such as the Vietnam War. Where the US failed in Vietnam, Rome, for the most part, experienced success, as the conquered were Romanised and 'became different without knowing it'. There is, however, a key difference: a crucial component of US foreign policy in Vietnam was to win 'hearts and minds'. The extent to which such policies existed in Rome as a predetermined imperial process on behalf of the state is questionable.

In the modern era, empires and colonial powers have received heavy condemnation for their treatment of indigenous peoples and the values of racial and cultural superiority adopted in their campaigns for 'god, gold and glory'. Britain is one such power to have come under scrutiny in recent decades. The treatment

58 CE

Silures are finally defeated by Quintus Veranius Nepos who installs a series of roads, forts and garrisons in the region

61 CE

Suetonius Paulinus leads a campaign against the druids in their stronghold at Anglesey. It is at this time that the Boudican revolt occurs. Boudica's rebel army attacks and burns Londinium (London), Camulodunum (Colchester) and Verulamium (St Albans), resulting in thousands of deaths; some estimates are as high as 150,000. Boudica's revolt is brought to an end at the Battle of Watling, where a Roman army led by governor Gaius Suetonius Paulinus claims defeat against Boudica's forces, despite being significantly outnumbered. Soon after, Boudica dies.



of the Australian Indigenous population has continued to haunt the post-colonial governments of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. As a consequence of their attempts to Christianise, civilise, and, to quote James Page, to 'bleach' the population (House of Representatives discussion on the Immigration Restriction Bill, 1 October 1901), the British colonial powers have been fairly criticised for the ways the native population was treated. It is interesting then, given this post-colonial criticism faced by members of the Commonwealth, that Rome continues to be looked at with awe and respect; a benchmark for all who have followed. This irony, perhaps, is not lost on those who, upon crossing Westminster Bridge in London, come face-to-face with Boudica, the woman who sought to bring about Rome's undoing in the British Isles; a statue commissioned by the Prince Consort of Queen Victoria, whose imperial hand reached all corners of the world.

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 providing assistance to 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, and, in some instances, millennia.

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the ancient personalities and their times being studied

### 9.1 Was Boudica a freedom fighter or a terrorist?

The Boudican revolt refers to a large-scale act of resistance by the native Britons against the rapacious Roman army in 60/61 CE.

#### Background

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.

Following the success of Claudius's armies, a number of tribal chiefs (possibly up to 11 of them) allied themselves and their people with the Roman State, becoming 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. According to David Mattingly, whose *An Imperial Possession: Britain in the Roman Empire* is a crucial text for any study of Roman Britain, client rulers were controlled by Rome in a number of ways, but one of the most significant was the succession of rulers. When a client king died, there would be pressure for his replacement to be one of the 'educated hostages from the pool held in Rome' (2007:75).

One of the client kings in Britannia was Prasutagus of the Iceni, in the east of England (roughly, modern Norfolk). He is not mentioned as one of the kings who submitted to Claudius in 43 CE, so perhaps he

already had a longstanding relationship with Rome or had approached Claudius upon his arrival. Whatever the case, Prasutagus was a Roman citizen, a status highly prized in the provinces and again indicating some longstanding allegiance. He had named the emperor his heir, along with his two daughters, and may have believed that this would keep his kingdom safe. However, when he died in 60/61 CE, his kingdom was pillaged by Roman centurions, his wife Boudica was flogged, their two daughters were raped, and many leading Iceni men had their estates confiscated.

## The Iceni rebellion

In 61 CE, Suetonius Paulinus, the fifth governor of Britain, decided that resolute action needed to be taken against the Druids in Anglesey and consequently the XIV and XX legions left the heavily militarised south-east and headed west. It was in this absence that the Iceni rebelled.

Roman historians Dio Cassius and Tacitus both identify Boudica, the wife of Prasutagus, as the leader of the rebellion; however, there are no earlier attestations. Both authors 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 as she was a woman. Tacitus depicted Boudica and her daughters riding on a chariot and haranguing the Britons, calling on them to ‘conquer or die’ (*Annals* 14:36). Dio provides greater detail, noting her appearance, dress and stature, before turning to the battle speech, where he adopts the Tacitean line of slavery:

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.

**SOURCE 9.3** Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, 62:3

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.

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?’ (Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, 176:22). It is possible that if the Romans had been less cruel, the Boudica Rebellion 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?’ (2017).

## Characteristics of the revolt

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 Dio Cassius and Tacitus. These accounts are extensive, and provide us with detailed information and some epic speechifying for analysis. Much of the work of Dio Cassius 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 – much of what we know about Roman Britain would not exist. Whilst Tacitus is writing some 50 years after the events in question, Agricola in all likelihood experienced 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 futile. Tacitus comments:

...[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.

**SOURCE 9.4** Tacitus, *Annals*, 14:31

### 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 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 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 (Dio says they severed the breasts of noblewomen and sewed the cleaved flesh to their mouths, see Source 9.25) seem more in line with a reactionary act of terror. The nuances of language used, such as ‘atrocities’, give negative connotations to these actions, whilst the idea of a freedom fighter tends to be more positive. The Tacitean model is less ornate in its description, yet supports 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, whilst 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.

The long-term significance of Boudica and what she stood for is hard to ignore. Whilst the bestial details of the attack on Camulodunum that Dio Cassius delighted in have been whitewashed, the image of the proud Briton and queen has been etched into the British national psyche.

### ACTIVITY 9.1

GO

Go online and read the 2006 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?

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding of ancient personalities and their historical context

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 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.

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 of some 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 produce, 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.

Whilst the literary sources for Roman Britain are sporadic, we do have sizeable contributions from the likes of Tacitus, Dio Cassius, Suetonius, Julius Caesar and Strabo. Profiles of these writers are available in the *Primary sources* downloadable document.

## 9.2 Britain prior to 43 CE

The Roman military forms the basis for modern knowledge of the Romano-British period. As previously noted, military deeds of noble and illustrious men, and similarly their inability to perform, provided the benchmark on which they were assessed. The army was the stage on which ambitious men, or incompetent emperors, could leave their mark. As such, it formed the basis for the works of the classical authors and in turn, contemporary understandings of Britain. This modern understanding begins in the late republican era, with the geography of Strabo, and the writings associated with the ‘invasion’ of Julius Caesar in 54 BCE.

### Written sources

In the following source, Strabo, a Greek geographer from the turn of the millennium, describes Britain:

Now Pytheas of Massilia tells us that Thule, the most northerly of the Britannic Islands, is farthest north, and that there the circle of the summer tropic is the same as the arctic circle ... modern scientific writers are not able to speak of any country north of Ierne, which lies to the north of Britain and near thereto, and is the home of men who are complete savages and lead a miserable existence because of the cold; and therefore, in my opinion, the northern limit of our inhabited world

is to be placed there ... And for governmental purposes there would be no advantage in knowing such countries and their inhabitants, and particularly if the people live in islands which are of such a nature that they can neither injure nor benefit us in any way because of their isolation. For although they could have held even Britain, the Romans scorned to do so, because they saw that there was nothing at all to fear from the Britons (for they are not strong enough to cross over and attack us), and that no corresponding advantage was to be gained by taking and holding their country. For it seems that at present more revenue is derived from the duty on their commerce than the tribute could bring in, if we deduct the expense involved in the maintenance of an army for the purpose of guarding the island and collecting the tribute; and the unprofitableness of an occupation would be still greater in the case of the other islands about Britain.

Britain is triangular in shape ... Most of the island is flat and overgrown with forests, although many of its districts are hilly. It bears grain, cattle, gold, silver, and iron. These things, accordingly, are exported from the island, as also hides, and slaves, and dogs that are by nature suited to the purposes of the chase; the Celti, however, use both these and the native dogs for the purposes of war too. The men of Britain are taller than the Celti, and not so yellow-haired, although their bodies are of looser build. The following is an indication of their size: I myself, in Rome, saw mere lads towering as much as half a foot above the tallest people in the city, although they were bandy-legged and presented no fair lines anywhere else in their figure. Their habits are in part like those of the Celti, but in part more simple and barbaric – so much so that, on account of their inexperience, some of them, although well supplied with milk, make no cheese; and they have no experience in gardening or other agricultural pursuits. And they have powerful chieftains in their country. For the purposes of war they use chariots for the most part, just as some of the Celti do.

The Deified Caesar crossed over to the island twice, although he came back in haste, without accomplishing anything great or proceeding far into the island, not only on account of the quarrels that took place in the land of the Celti, among the barbarians and his own soldiers as well, but also on account of the fact that many of his ships had been lost at the time of the full moon, since the ebb-tides and the flood-tides got their increase at that time. However, he won two or three victories over the Britons, albeit he carried along only two legions of his army; and he brought back hostages, slaves, and quantities of the rest of the booty. At present, however, some of the chieftains there, after procuring the friendship of Caesar Augustus by sending embassies and by paying court to him, have not only dedicated offerings in the Capitol, but have also managed to make the whole of the island virtually Roman property. Further, they submit so easily to heavy duties, both on the exports from there to Celtica and on the imports from Celtica (these latter are ivory chains and necklaces, and amber-gems and glass vessels and other petty wares of that sort), that there is no need of garrisoning the island; for one legion, at the least, and some cavalry would be required in order to carry off tribute from them, and the expense of the army would offset the tribute-money; in fact, the duties must necessarily be lessened if tribute is imposed, and, at the same time, dangers be encountered, if force is applied.

**SOURCE 9.5** Strabo, *Geography*, 2:5

Julius Caesar's *Commentarii de Bello Gallico*, a record of his undertakings and victories (written in the third person), are a vital source in understanding the history of Roman dealings with Britain.

[4.21] In the meantime, his purpose having been discovered, and reported to the Britons by merchants, ambassadors come to him from several states of the island, to promise that they will give hostages, and submit to the government of the Roman people. Having given them an audience, he after promising liberally, and exhorting them to continue in that purpose, sends them back to their own country, and [dispatches] with them Commius, whom, upon subduing the Atrebatas, he had



created king there, a man whose courage and conduct he esteemed, and who he thought would be faithful to him, and whose influence ranked highly in those countries. He orders him to visit as many states as he could, and persuade them to embrace the protection of the Roman people, and apprise them that he would shortly come thither. Volusenus, having viewed the localities as far as means could be afforded one who dared not leave his ship and trust himself to barbarians, returns to Caesar on the fifth day, and reports what he had there observed.

[4.24] But the barbarians, upon perceiving the design of the Romans, sent forward their cavalry and charioteers, a class of warriors of whom it is their practice to make great use in their battles, and following with the rest of their forces, endeavoured to prevent our men landing. In this was the greatest difficulty, for the following reasons, namely, because our ships, on account of their great size, could be stationed only in deep water; and our soldiers, in places unknown to them, with their hands embarrassed, oppressed with a large and heavy weight of armour, had at the same time to leap from the ships, stand amid the waves, and encounter the enemy; whereas they, either on dry ground, or advancing a little way into the water, free in all their limbs in places thoroughly known to them, could confidently throw their weapons and spur on their horses, which were accustomed to this kind of service. Dismayed by these circumstances and altogether untrained in this mode of battle, our men did not all exert the same vigour and eagerness which they had been wont to exert in engagements on dry ground.

[4.28] A peace being established by these proceedings four days after we had come into Britain, the eighteen ships, to which reference has been made above, and which conveyed the cavalry, set sail from the upper port with a gentle gale, when, however, they were approaching Britain and were seen from the camp, so great a storm suddenly arose that none of them could maintain their course at sea; and some were taken back to the same port from which they had started; others, to their great danger, were driven to the lower part of the island, nearer to the west; which, however, after having cast anchor, as they were getting filled with water, put out to sea through necessity in a stormy night, and made for the continent.

[4.33] Their mode of fighting with their chariots is this: firstly, they drive about in all directions and throw their weapons and generally break the ranks of the enemy with the very dread of their horses and the noise of their wheels; and when they have worked themselves in between the troops of horse, leap from their chariots and engage on foot. The charioteers in the meantime withdraw some little distance from the battle, and so place themselves with the chariots that, if their masters are overpowered by the number of the enemy, they may have a ready retreat to their own troops. Thus they display in battle the speed of horse, [together with] the firmness of infantry; and by daily practice and exercise attain to such expertness that they are accustomed, even on a declining and steep place, to check their horses at full speed, and manage and turn them in an instant and run along the pole, and stand on the yoke, and thence betake themselves with the greatest celerity to their chariots again.

[4.34] Under these circumstances, our men being dismayed by the novelty of this mode of battle, Caesar most seasonably brought assistance; for upon his arrival the enemy paused, and our men recovered from their fear; upon which thinking the time unfavourable for provoking the enemy and coming to an action, he kept himself in his own quarter, and, a short time having intervened, drew back the legions into the camp. While these things are going on, and all our men engaged, the rest of the Britons, who were in the fields, departed. Storms then set in for several successive days, which both confined our men to the camp and hindered the enemy from attacking us. In the meantime the barbarians dispatched messengers to all parts, and reported to their people the small number of our soldiers, and how good an opportunity was given for obtaining spoil and for liberating themselves forever, if they should only drive the Romans from their camp. Having by these means speedily got together a large force of infantry and of cavalry they came up to the camp.

[5.12] The interior portion of Britain is inhabited by those of whom they say that it is handed down by tradition that they were born in the island itself: the maritime portion by those who had passed over from the country of the Belgae for the purpose of plunder and making war; almost all of whom are called by the names of those states from which being sprung they went thither, and having waged war, continued there and began to cultivate the lands. The number of the people is countless, and their buildings exceedingly numerous, for the most part very like those of the Gauls: the number of cattle is great. They use either brass or iron rings, determined at a certain weight, as their money. Tin is produced in the midland regions; in the maritime, iron; but the quantity of it is small: they employ brass, which is imported. There, as in Gaul, is timber of every description, except beech and fir. They do not regard it lawful to eat the hare, and the cock, and the goose; they, however, breed them for amusement and pleasure. The climate is more temperate than in Gaul, the colds being less severe.

[5.14] The most civilized of all these nations are they who inhabit Kent, which is entirely a maritime district, nor do they differ much from the Gallic customs. Most of the inland inhabitants do not sow corn, but live on milk and flesh, and are clad with skins. All the Britons, indeed, dye themselves with woad, which occasions a bluish color, and thereby have a more terrible appearance in fight. They wear their hair long, and have every part of their body shaved except their head and upper lip. Ten and even twelve have wives common to them, and particularly brothers among brothers, and parents among their children.

**SOURCE 9.6** Julius Caesar, *Commentarii de Bello Gallico*, 4.21–5.14

Cicero, a politician, orator and statesman of the first century BCE, mentioned Britain in a letter to his friend Atticus.

The Paccius letter having been answered, let me tell you the rest of my news. A letter from my brother contains some quite extraordinary things about Caesar's warm feelings towards me, and is corroborated by a very copious letter from Caesar himself. The result of the war against Britain is eagerly awaited, for the approaches to the island are known to be 'warded with wondrous massy walls'. It is also now ascertained that there isn't a grain of silver on the island nor any prospect of booty apart from captives, and I fancy you won't expect any of them to be highly qualified in literature or music!

**SOURCE 9.7** Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Letters to Atticus*, 4.16.7

The Roman historian Suetonius, writing in the second century CE, discusses Julius Caesar's invasion of Britain.

During the nine years of his command this is in substance what he did. All that part of Gaul which is bounded by the Pyrenees, the Alps and the Cévennes, and by the Rhine and Rhone rivers, a circuit of some 3200 miles, with the exception of some allied states which had rendered him good service, he reduced to the form of a province; and imposed upon it a yearly tribute of 40 000 000 sesterces. 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. Amid all these successes he met with adverse fortune but three times in all: in Britain, where his fleet narrowly escaped destruction in a violent storm; in Gaul, when one of his legions was routed at Gergovia; and on the borders of Germany, when his lieutenants Titurius and Aurunculeius were ambushed and slain.

**SOURCE 9.8** Suetonius, *Divus Iulius*



## ACTIVITY 9.2

- For each of the Sources 9.5 to 9.8, make notes on the following features:
  - The geography of Britain
  - The ethnography of Britain
  - Trade and commerce
  - Warfare
  - The level of Roman contact with Britons.
- Based on the evidence you have collected in the previous question, create a mind map that highlights the features of Iron Age Britain.
- Having examined the evidence, were there any contradictions in what you have found? How would you account for this?
- According to the evidence, what was the extent of British-Roman contact prior to 43 CE? What benefits would this have had for each side, and what was the value in invading?
- Although it is a very small reference, the letter from Cicero is very important. Why?
- The sources spend a lot of time discussing the barbaric features of the Britons.
  - On what basis are the Britons deemed uncivilised by the evidence?
  - What do we need to know about Roman attitudes towards civilisation to make judgements about this?
  - How might one go about dispelling the Roman view that the Britons were uncivilised?
  - Identify one method that could be used to disprove this view.
- What were the aims and objectives of Caesar's invasion in 54 BCE? What was its significance?
- Is there any evidence that suggests ties with Rome existed prior to Caesar's crossing in 54 BCE? How might we account for this?
- What effect does Caesar's account being written in the third person have? What do you think his purpose was here?
- Suetonius's account is very brief. How would you account for this?
- How has the genre of each source influenced the way it was written? What ramifications does this have for students of ancient history?

### Archaeological evidence

The images below come from the British Museum's Iron Age Collection, and both date to pre-Roman times.



**SOURCE 9.9** Snettisham Great Torc from the British Museum



**SOURCE 9.10** Battersea Shield from the British Museum



### ACTIVITY 9.3

1. Identify the category of archaeological evidence these items would fall under. Justify your response.
2. What materials are required to create works such as these?
3. Based on the evidence, could these materials have come from Britain?
4. What skills are required to create pieces like these? Additionally, what is required to get the materials needed to England in order to make them?
5. What does this suggest about economics, trade, and skilled workforce in Iron Age Britain?
6. Does this support or reject the views put forth in the sources? Give evidence in your response.

Maiden Castle is a significant archaeological site of Iron Age Britain. It is the largest Iron Age hillfort 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.



SOURCE 9.11 Maiden Castle, Dorset

### ACTIVITY 9.4

Consider all the evidence, and respond to the following.

1. Does the archaeological record support the written record's claims that the pre-Roman British were uncivilised?
2. What do these contradictions highlight about the purpose and intent of the authors?
3. Consider the examination of terms such as imperialism from the last section. Can you make any links between imperialism and the specific characterisation attributed to the Britons?
4. Why is it important to understand life in Britain before Roman occupation? What will this add to our study of Boudica?
5. Write a well-structured historical paragraph that dispels the myth of British barbarism. Be sure to cite clear and specific evidence in your response.

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument in relation to ancient personalities and their historical context

The presence of the military in Roman Britain is the most documented facet of the period. Conventional estimates of the military in Britain number around 55 000 men in the second century CE (Mattingly, 1997:166), and their impact cannot be underestimated. Much historical inquiry focuses around the role of the army in Britain: the location of battlefields, army movements and documentation of their presence in the province. Forts and garrisons comprise an extensive portion of the archaeological record, and many Romano-British towns began their lives as Roman army bases, as is evident in British etymology. At a basic level, the military were conquerors, suppressors and subjugators; the conquistadors of their age, seeking glory on the behalf of the emperor. When Boudica decided to challenge the might of the Roman army, the consequences were both severe and wide-reaching.

### 9.3 The Roman army in Britain

The military life of the province not only dominates the fragmented Roman accounts of life in Britain, but also the archaeological and epigraphic records. Inscriptions from the military phases of British towns form a disproportionately large part of the surviving epigraphic record and inscriptions from Hadrian's Wall alone comprise nearly half of all inscriptions in Britain. Distribution of memorials leaving inscriptions and artefacts shows that soldiers were present almost everywhere in Britain and as such makes the distinction between the military and the civilian difficult and at times misleading. Forts and fortresses provide the most conspicuous structural remnants of the Roman period in Britain, predominantly due to the sheer scale of initial construction and therefore the remains.

Dio Cassius wrote about the campaigns of Aulus Plautius and then Claudius.

While these events were happening in the city, Aulus Plautius, a senator of great renown, made a campaign against Britain; for a certain Bericus, who had been driven out of the island as a result of an uprising, had persuaded Claudius to send a force thither. Thus it came about that Plautius undertook this campaign; but he had difficulty in inducing his army to advance beyond Gaul. For the soldiers were indignant at the thought of carrying on a campaign outside the limits of the known world ... Their delay, however, had made their departure late in the season. They were sent over in three divisions, in order that they should not be hindered in landing, as might happen to a single force, and in their voyage across they first became discouraged because they were driven back in their course, and then plucked up courage because a flash of light rising in the east shot across to the west, the direction in which they were sailing. So they put in to the island and found none to oppose them. For the Britons as a result of their inquiries had not expected that they would come, and had therefore not assembled beforehand. And even when they did assemble, they would not come to close quarters with the Romans, but took refuge in the swamps and the forests, hoping to wear out the invaders in fruitless effort, so that, just as in the days of Julius Caesar, they should sail back with nothing accomplished ... When the message reached him, Claudius entrusted affairs at home, including the command of the troops, to his colleague Lucius Vitellus, whom he had caused to remain in office like himself for a whole half-year; and he himself then set out for the front. He sailed down the river to Ostia, and from there followed the coast to Massilia; thence, advancing partly by land and partly along the rivers, he came to the ocean and crossed over to Britain, where he joined the legions that were waiting for him near the Thames. Taking over the command of these, he crossed the stream, and engaging the barbarians, who had gathered at his approach, he defeated them and captured Camulodunum, the capital of Cynobellinus. Thereupon he won over numerous tribes,

in some cases by capitulation, in others by force, and was saluted as imperator several times, contrary to precedent; for no man may receive this title more than once for one and the same war. He deprived the conquered of their arms and handed them over to Plautius, bidding him also subjugate the remaining districts. Claudius himself now hastened back to Rome, sending ahead the news of his victory by his sons-in-law Magnus and Silanus. These on learning of his achievement gave him the title of Britannicus and granted him permission to celebrate a triumph. They voted also that there should be an annual festival to commemorate the event and that two triumphal arches should be erected, one in the city and the other in Gaul, because it was from that country that he had set sail when he crossed over to Britain.

**SOURCE 9.12** Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, 60:19

Small pieces of the arch in Gaul at Gesoriacum remain today. The inscription has been restored, and reads ‘The Senate and People of Rome [dedicated this] to Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus ... because he received into surrender eleven kings of the Britons conquered without loss and he first brought the barbarian peoples across the ocean under the authority of the Roman people’. However, this text is a reconstruction. The first five, and the last two, lines are probably right, but the sixth and seventh line have to be regarded as speculative, particularly with regard to the number of kings. Suetonius does not give a number, only saying ‘the surrender of the kings of the Britons’ (XXI:6).

Suetonius wrote about the invasion of Britain in his biographies of Claudius, and of Vespasian.



**SOURCE 9.13** A fragment of the arch in Gaul

[Claudius] made but one campaign and that of little importance. When the senate voted him the triumphal regalia, thinking the honour beneath the imperial dignity and desiring the glory of a legitimate triumph, he chose Britain as the best place for gaining it, a land that had been attempted by no one since the Deified Julius and was just at that time in a state of rebellion because of the refusal to return certain deserters ... [he] without any battle or bloodshed received the submission of a part of the island, returned to Rome within six months after leaving the city, and celebrated a triumph of great splendour.

**SOURCE 9.14** Suetonius, *Life of Claudius*, XVII:1–2

In the reign of Claudius, by the interest of Narcissus, [Vespasian] was sent to Germany, in command of a legion; whence being removed into Britain, he engaged the enemy in thirty several battles. He reduced under subjection to the Romans two very powerful tribes, and above twenty great towns, with the Isle of Wight, which lies close to the coast of Britain; partly under the command of Aulus Plautius, the consular lieutenant, and partly under Claudius himself. For this success he received the triumphal ornaments, and in a short time after two priesthoods, besides the consulship, which he held during the last two months of the year.

**SOURCE 9.15** Suetonius, *Life of Vespasian*, IV:12–13



Here are two more extracts from Tacitus – one from *Agricola* describing the Britons, and one from *Annals* recounting a speech attributed to British king Caratacus.

The Britons themselves bear cheerfully the conscription, the taxes, and the other burdens imposed on them by the Empire, if there be no oppression. Of this they are impatient; they are reduced to subjection, not as yet to slavery. The deified Julius, the very first Roman who entered Britain with an army, though by a successful engagement he struck terror into the inhabitants and gained possession of the coast, must be regarded as having indicated rather than transmitted the acquisition to future generations. Then came the civil wars, and the arms of our leaders were turned against their country, and even when there was peace, there was a long neglect of Britain. This Augustus spoke of as policy, Tiberius as an inherited maxim. That Gaius Caesar meditated an invasion of Britain is perfectly clear, but his purposes, rapidly formed, were easily changed, and his vast attempts on Germany had failed. Claudius was the first to renew the attempt, and conveyed over into the island some legions and auxiliaries, choosing Vespasian to share with him the campaign, whose approaching elevation had this beginning. Several tribes were subdued and kings made prisoners, and destiny learnt to know its favourite.

**SOURCE 9.16** Tacitus, *Agricola*, 1:13

Caratacus, seeking the protection of Cartamandua, queen of the Brigantes, was put in chains and delivered up to the conquerors ...

When he was set before the emperor's tribunal, he spoke as follows: 'Had my moderation in prosperity been equal to my birth and fortune, I should have entered this city as your friend rather than your captive ... My present lot is as glorious to you as it is degrading to myself. I had men, horses, arms and wealth ... If you Romans choose to lord it over the world, does it follow that the world is to accept slavery? ... If you save my life, I will be an everlasting memorial of your clemency.'

**SOURCE 9.17** Tacitus, *Annals*, 12:37



**SOURCE 9.18** Roman campaigns in Britain

## ACTIVITY 9.5

1. Select 3–5 sources from Sources 9.12 to 9.18.
2. Undertake an analysis of each, taking into consideration type, author, purpose and context.
3. Organise your information into a well-developed paragraph that discusses the significance of the Roman army in the years following the invasion (43–60 CE)
4. What in the actions of Rome could be considered imperial in nature?
5. What is the importance of understanding the military in the context of the Boudican revolt?

## 9.4 Views on the Boudican revolt

There are a number of reasons that have been suggested for the Boudican revolt. These are summarised below:

- Long term discontent with the Roman presence in Britain
  - As a tribal entity in the southeast, 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, growing numbers of Roman informers, all aided in creating discontent amongst 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 amongst not only members of the Iceni, but the neighbouring tribes also. There are some historians who challenge the orthodox 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 horrific.
- Resentment over the weapons ban following the capture of Caracatus in 51 CE under the governorship of Ostorius Scapula
  - Following uprisings at the beginning of his tenure, Scapula responded in kind, attacking relentlessly and allowing the native resistance no time 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.

### The revolt: reasons

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.

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.

**SOURCE 9.19** Aldhouse-Green, M., BBC History Podcast

Here Tacitus sketches the events that followed Prasutagus's death and the treatment of his family and followers at the hands of the Romans.

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.

**SOURCE 9.20** Tacitus, *Annals*, XIV:31

In this extract, Dio Cassius relates the reasons for the revolt.

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.

**SOURCE 9.21** Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, 62:1

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.

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 ...

**SOURCE 9.22** Webster, G., 1993, *Boudica: The British Revolt Against Rome AD 60*, Routledge, p. 88

Tacitus describes how the revolt was suppressed, bringing to an end any further thought of rebellion.

Meanwhile, in Britain the propraetor Publius Ostorius had a troubled reception, as the enemy had poured into the territory of our allies with a violence all the greater from their belief that a new commander would not take the field with an untried army and with winter begun. Ostorius, aware that the first results are those which engender fear or confidence, swept his cohorts forward at speed, cut down the resisters, chased the broken bands and – to obviate a second rally, to be followed by a sullen and disloyal peace which would allow no rest either to the general or his troops – prepared to disarm the suspect and to overawe the whole district on this side of the Trent and Severn. The first to become restive were the Iceni, a powerful community not yet broken in battle, as they had voluntarily acceded to our alliance. At their suggestion, the surrounding tribes chose for their field of battle a position protected by a rustic embankment with a narrow approach, designed to be impervious to cavalry ... By the Icenian defeat all who were wavering between war and peace were reduced to quietude.

**SOURCE 9.23** Tacitus, *Annals*, XII:1–40

## ACTIVITY 9.6

Having examined the evidence, complete the following.

1. Identify the short- and long-term causes of the revolt by creating a list using dot points.
2. Complete the table below by identifying which view/s the source subscribes to, and provide evidence to support your position. Use the 'Comments' column for any additional notes or comments that will help you organise your ideas.

Source	View	Evidence/quotation	Comments
9.19			
9.20			
9.21			
9.22			
9.23			

3. Consider what you have learned above in your response to the next exercise. 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. (You can refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit* for guidelines on structuring paragraphs.)

## Classical historians

One of the key areas of interest in understanding Boudica, her leadership and legacy, is the attention she is given by the classical historians Dio Cassius 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.

Read the accounts of Tacitus and Dio Cassius below.

While the Britons were preparing to throw off the yoke, the statue of victory, erected at Camulodunum, fell from its base, without any apparent cause, and lay extended on the ground with its face averted, as if the goddess yielded to the enemies of Rome. Women in restless ecstasy rushed among the people, and with frantic screams denounced impending ruin. In the council-chamber of the Romans hideous clamours were heard in a foreign accent; savage howlings filled the theatre, and near the mouth of the Thames the image of a colony in ruins was seen in the transparent water; the sea was purpled with blood, and, at the tide of ebb, the figures of human bodies were traced in the sand. By these appearances the Romans were sunk in despair, while the Britons anticipated a glorious victory. Suetonius, in the meantime, was detained in the isle of Mona. In this alarming crisis, the veterans sent to Catus Decianus, the procurator of the province, for a reinforcement. Two hundred men, and those not completely armed, were all that officer could spare. The colony had but a handful of soldiers. Their temple was strongly fortified, and there they hoped to make a stand. But even for the defense of that place no measures were concerted. Secret enemies mixed in all their deliberations. No fosse was made; no palisade thrown up; nor were the women, and such as were disabled by age or infirmity, sent out of the garrison. Unguarded and unprepared, they were taken by surprise, and, in the moment of profound peace, overpowered by the Barbarians in one general assault. The colony was laid waste with fire and sword.

The temple held out, but, after a siege of two days, was taken by storm. Petilius Cerealis, who commanded the ninth legion, marched to the relief of the place. The Britons, flushed with success, advanced to give him battle. The legion was put to the rout, and the infantry cut to pieces ... The inhabitants of Verulamium, a municipal town, were in like manner put to the sword. The genius of a savage people leads them always in quest of plunder; and, accordingly, the Britons left behind them all places of strength. Wherever they expected feeble resistance, and considerable booty, there they were sure to attack with the fiercest rage. Military skill was not the talent of Barbarians. The number massacred in the places which have been mentioned, amounted to no less than seventy thousand, all citizens or allies of Rome. To make prisoners, and reserve them for slavery, or to exchange them, was not in the idea of a people, who despised all the laws of war. The halter and the gibbet, slaughter and defoliation, fire and sword, were the marks of savage valour. Aware that vengeance would overtake them, they were resolved to make sure of their revenge, and glut themselves with the blood of their enemies.

The fourteenth legion, with the veterans of the twentieth, and the auxiliaries from the adjacent stations, having joined Suetonius, his army amounted to little less than ten thousand men. Thus reinforced, he resolved, without loss of time, to bring on a decisive action.

Boudica, in a [chariot], with her two daughters before her, drove through the ranks. She harangued the different nations in their turn: 'This,' she said, 'is not the first time that the Britons have been led to battle by a woman. But now she did not come to boast the pride of a long line of ancestry, nor even to recover her kingdom and the plundered wealth of her family. She took the field, like the meanest among them, to assert the cause of public liberty, and to seek revenge for her body seamed with ignominious stripes, and her two daughters infamously ravished. From the pride and arrogance of the Romans nothing is sacred; all are subject to violation; the old endure the



scourge, and the virgins are deflowered. But the vindictive gods are now at hand. A Roman legion dared to face the warlike Britons: with their lives they paid for their rashness; those who survived the carnage of that day, lie poorly hid behind their entrenchments, meditating nothing but how to save themselves by an ignominious flight. From the din of preparation, and the shouts of the British army, the Romans, even now, shrink back with terror. What will be their case when the assault begins? Look round, and view your numbers. Behold the proud display of warlike spirits, and consider the motives for which we draw the avenging sword. On this spot we must either conquer, or die with glory. There is no alternative. Though a woman, my resolution is fixed: the men, if they please, may survive with infamy, and live in bondage.'

**SOURCE 9.24** Tacitus, *Annals*, XII:1–40

But the person who most stirred their spirits and persuaded them to fight the Romans, who was deemed worthy to stand at their head and to have the conduct of the entire war, was a British woman, Boudica, of the royal family and possessed of greater judgement than often belongs to women ... In person she was very tall, with a most sturdy figure and a piercing glance; her voice was harsh; a great mass of yellow hair fell below her waist and a large golden necklace clasped her throat; wound about her was a tunic of every conceivable colour and over it a thick chlamys had been fastened with a brooch. This was her constant attire. She now grasped a spear to aid her in terrifying all beholders and spoke as follows:

'You have had actual experience of the difference between freedom and slavery. Hence, though some of you previously through ignorance of which was better may have been deceived by the alluring announcements of the Romans, yet now that you have tried both you have learned how great a mistake you made by preferring a self-imposed despotism to your ancestral mode of life. You have come to recognise how far superior is the poverty of independence to wealth in servitude. What treatment have we met with that is not most outrageous, that is not most grievous, ever since these men insinuated themselves into Britain? Have we not been deprived of our most numerous and our greatest possessions entire, while for what remains we must pay taxes? Besides pasturing and tilling all the various regions for them do we not contribute a yearly sum for our very bodies? How much better it would have been to be sold to masters once and for all than to ransom ourselves annually and possess empty names of freedom! How much better to have been slain and perish rather than go about with subservient heads! Yet what have I said? Even dying is not free from expense among them, and you know what fees we deposit on behalf of the dead. Throughout the rest of mankind death frees even those who are in slavery; only in the case of the Romans do the very dead live for their profit. Why is it that though none of us has any money, and how or whence should we get it, we are stripped and despoiled like a murderer's victims? How should the Romans grow milder in process of time, when they have conducted themselves so toward us at the very start, a period when all men show consideration for even newly captured beasts?

'But, to tell the truth, it is we who have made ourselves responsible for all these evils in allowing them so much as to set foot on the island in the first place instead of expelling them at once as we did their famous Julius Caesar, yes, in not making the idea of attempting the voyage formidable to them, while they were as yet far off, as it was to Augustus and to Gaius Caligula. So great an island, or rather in one sense a continent encircled by water, do we inhabit, a veritable world of our own, and so far are we separated by the ocean from all the rest of mankind that we have been believed to dwell on a different earth and under a different sky and some of their wisest men were not previously sure of even our exact name. Yet for all this we have been scorned and trampled underfoot by men who know naught else than how to secure gain. Still, let us even at this late day, if not before, fellow-



citizens, friends and relatives, for I deem you all relatives, in that you inhabit a single island and are called by one common name, let us do our duty while the memory of freedom still abides within us, that we may leave both the name and the fact of it to our children. For if we utterly lose sight of the happy conditions amid which we were born and bred, what pray will they do, reared in bondage?

‘This I say not to inspire you with a hatred of present circumstances, that hatred is already apparent, nor with a fear of the future, that fear you already have, but to commend you because of your own accord you choose to do just what you ought, and to thank you for cooperating so readily with me and your own selves at once. Be nowise afraid of the Romans. They are not more numerous than are we nor yet braver. And the proof is that they have protected themselves with helmets and breastplates and greaves and furthermore have equipped their camps with palisades and walls and ditches to make sure that they shall suffer no harm by any hostile assault. Their fears impel them to choose this method rather than engage in any active work like us. We enjoy such a superabundance of bravery that we regard tents as safer than walls and our shields as affording greater protection than their whole suits of mail. As a consequence, we when victorious can capture them and when overcome by force can elude them. And should we ever choose to retreat, we can conceal ourselves in swamps and mountains so inaccessible that we can be neither found nor taken. The enemy, however, can neither pursue any one by reason of their heavy armour nor yet flee. And if they ever should slip away from us, taking refuge in certain designated spots, there, too, they are sure to be enclosed as in a trap. These are some of the respects in which they are vastly inferior to us, and others are their inability to bear up under hunger, thirst, cold, or heat, as we can; for they require shade and protection, they require kneaded bread and wine and oil, and if the supply of any of these things fails them they simply perish. For us, on the other hand, any root or grass serves as bread, any plant juice as olive oil, any water as wine, any tree as a house. Indeed, this very region is to us an acquaintance and ally, but to them unknown and hostile. As for the rivers, we swim them naked, but they even with boats cannot cross easily. Let us therefore go against them trusting boldly to good fortune. Let us show them that they are hares and foxes trying to rule dogs and wolves.’

Boudica raising her hand to heaven, spoke: ‘I thank thee, Andraste, and call upon thee, who are a woman, being myself also a woman that rules not burden-bearing Egyptians like Nitocris, nor merchant Assyrians like Semiramis (of these things we have heard from the Romans), nor even the Romans themselves, as did Messalina first and later Agrippina; at present their chief is Nero, in name a man, in fact a woman, as is shown by his singing, his playing the cithara, his adorning himself: but ruling as I do men of Britain that know not how to till the soil or ply a trade yet are thoroughly versed in the arts of war and hold all things common, even children and wives; wherefore the latter possess the same valour as the males: being therefore queen of such men and such women I supplicate and pray thee for victory and salvation and liberty against men insolent, unjust, insatiable, impious, if, indeed we ought to term those creatures men who wash in warm water, eat artificial dainties, drink unmixed wine, anoint themselves with myrrh, sleep on soft couches with boys for bedfellows (and past their prime at that), are slaves to a zither-player, yes, an inferior zither-player. Wherefore may this Domitia-Nero woman reign no more over you or over me: let the wench sing and play the despot over the Romans. They surely deserve to be in slavery to such a being whose tyranny they have patiently borne already this long time. But may we, mistress, ever look to thee alone as our head.’

After a harangue of this general nature Boudica led her army against the Romans. The latter chanced to be without a leader for the reason that Paulinus their commander had gone on an expedition to Mona, an island near Britain. This enabled her to sack and plunder two Roman cities, and, as I said, she wrought indescribable slaughter. Persons captured by the Britons underwent every form of most frightful treatment. The conquerors committed the most atrocious and bestial outrages. For instance, they hung up naked the noblest and most distinguished women, cut off their

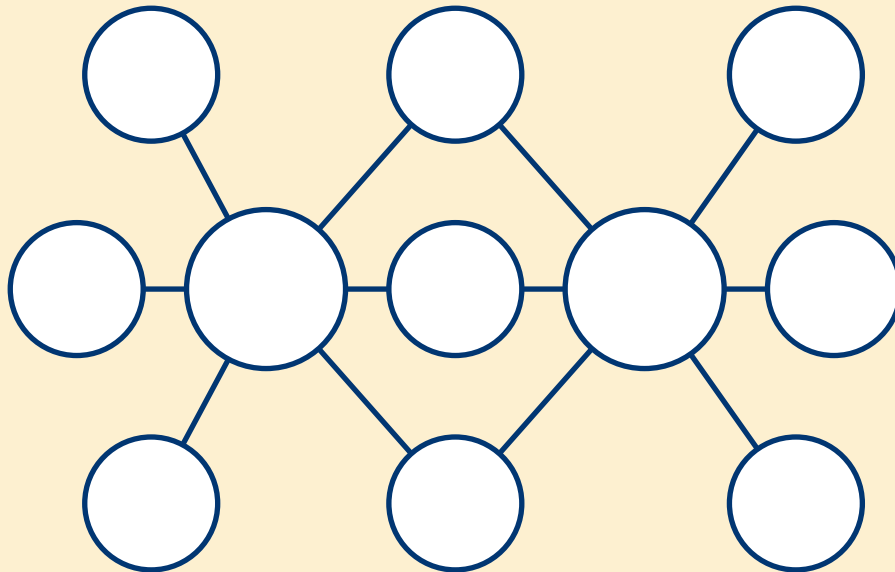
breasts and sewed them to their mouths, to make the victims appear to be eating them. After that they impaled them on sharp skewers run perpendicularly the whole length of the body. All this they did to the accompaniment of sacrifices, banquets, and exhibitions of insolence in all of their sacred places, but chiefly in the grove of Andate, – that being the name of their personification of Victory, to whom they paid the most excessive reverence.

**SOURCE 9.25** Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, 62:2–7

## ACTIVITY 9.7

Having read these accounts, complete the following:

- Create a double bubble diagram to compare the accounts of the two historians.
- In the centre circle, write 'Tacitus and Dio'. Label the centre right circle 'differences' and the centre left circle 'similarities'.



**Double bubble map for comparing similarities and differences**

Respond to the following questions:

1. What is the likelihood, given your knowledge of these historians, that these speeches ever took place?
2. What is the purpose of including speeches in literary works?
3. Consider the context of the historians. How significantly was their writing influenced by their own time, and views of Rome in the mid-first century?
4. British Historian Juliette Wood has argued that 'what we know from other sources about Celtic battles, does not suggest that this is a particularly credible thing that Tacitus is doing ... We know from other sources that before a battle [of] the Celts, there would be a lot of noise, a lot of music, the individual fighters would be boasting one against the other ... This picture of them standing there while Boudica and her daughters make a chariot circle around the field, does not necessarily ring true ... The sentiments, the rhetoric, is very much Roman rhetoric rather than Celtic rhetoric.' Does this statement change your view regarding the role of speeches in literary works? Explain your response.

## ACTIVITY 9.7 continued

5. 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?
6. At this point, where do you feel the sympathies of the authors lie? Justify your response using evidence.
7. Tacitus reported a speech made by Paulinus before the battle:

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

**SOURCE 9.26** Tacitus, *Annals*, XIV:36

Further speeches were reported by Dio Cassius, in *Roman History* 62:9–12, which you can find online. Does reading these speeches change our view regarding authorial sympathies?

8. Boudica was, first and foremost, a political leader. Make a list of the qualities of her leadership.
9. Draw together your knowledge and the accounts of Dio Cassius 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?



**SOURCE 9.27** Queen Boudica in John Opie's painting *Boadicea Haranguing the Britons*. To what extent does this portrayal of Boudica reflect the accounts of the ancient authors?



## ACTIVITY 9.7 continued

- d. The expression *jus ad bellum* means a 'just war'. To what extent can the actions of Boudica and her army be justified?
- e. 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?

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about ancient personalities

### 9.5 Boudica's legacy

The long-term significance of Boudica and what she stood for is hard to ignore. Whilst the bestial details of the attack on Camulodunum that Dio Cassius delighted in recounting have been whitewashed, the image of the proud Briton and 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 become a symbol for female leaders many times in the centuries since her death.

#### Elizabeth I

The famous Tilbury speech that Elizabeth 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 Dio.

Consider the account of the famed Tilbury speech below. There are multiple versions, but this one is most widely considered to be authentic and was found in a letter from Leonel Sharp, sometime after 1624 to the Duke of Buckingham.

#### 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.

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 9.28** *The Speech to the Troops at Tilbury* was delivered on 9 August Old Style (19 August New Style) 1588 by Queen Elizabeth I

## ACTIVITY 9.8

Having read the speech, answer the following:

1. What similarities are there between the speech in Source 9.28 and the speeches attributed to Boudica in Sources 9.24 and 9.25?
2. To what extent does the context of Elizabethan England and the Spanish Armada align with the experience of Roman Britain in the first century CE? (You may need to conduct additional research on Elizabethan England.)
3. What do you believe is Elizabeth's intent in this speech?
4. How does Elizabeth use her gender for her own purpose here?
5. Consider the image presented in Source 9.29. How does this align with the iconography associated with Boudica?
6. To what extent can this speech by Elizabeth I be deemed useful in assessing the legacy of Boudica?
7. 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.



**SOURCE 9.29** *Elizabeth addressing the troops at Tilbury*, engraving c. 1754



**SOURCE 9.30** *Boudicca Haranguing the Britons* by H. C. Selous, early 1840s



## 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. Consequently the Victorians felt an especial affinity with the Iron Age ruler. Shortly after Victoria became Queen of England in 1837, the artist Selous painted a portrait of a bare-breasted, gesticulating Boadicea in full battle-rig, addressing her forces before battle.

Not only that, but poets and other artists also 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 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.

Consider the poem, *Boädicéa* by Alfred Lord Tennyson, written in 1859, but not published until 1864.

While about the shore of Mona those Neronian legionaries Burnt and broke the grove and altar of the Druid and Druidess, Far in the East Boädicéa, standing loftily charioted, Mad and maddening all that heard her in her fierce volubility, Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near the colony Cámulodúne, Yell'd and shriek'd between her daughters o'er a wild confederacy.

'They that scorn the tribes and call us Britain's barbarous populaces, Did they hear me, would they listen, did they pity me supplicating? Shall I heed them in their anguish? shall I brook to be supplicated? Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant! Must their ever-ravening eagle's beak and talon annihilate us? Tear the noble heart of Britain, leave it gorily quivering? Bark an answer, Britain's raven! bark and blacken innumerable, Blacken round the Roman carrion, make the carcase a skeleton, Kite and kestrel, wolf and wolfskin, from the wilderness, wallow in it, Till the face of Bel be brighten'd, Taranis be propitiated. Lo their colony half-defended! lo their colony, Cámulodúne! There the horde of Roman robbers mock at a barbarous adversary. There the hive of Roman liars worship a gluttonous emperor-idiot. Such is Rome, and this her deity: hear it, Spirit of Cássivelaún!

'Hear it, Gods! the Gods have heard it, O Icenian, O Coritanian! Doubt not ye the Gods have answer'd, Catiuechlanian, Trinobant. These have told us all their anger in miraculous utterances, Thunder, a flying fire in heaven, a murmur heard aërially, Phantom sound of blows descending, moan of an enemy massacred, Phantom wail of women and children, multitudinous agonies. Bloodily flow'd the Tamesa rolling phantom bodies of horses and men; Then a phantom colony smoulder'd on the refluent estuary; Lastly yonder yester-even, suddenly giddily tottering – There was one who watch'd and told me – down their statue of Victory fell. Lo their precious Roman bantling, lo the colony Cámulodúne, Shall we teach it a Roman lesson? shall we care to be pitiful? Shall we deal with it as an infant? shall we dandle it amorously?

'Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant! While I roved about the forest, long and bitterly meditating, There I heard them in the darkness, at the mystical ceremony, Loosely robed in flying raiment, sang the terrible prophetesses. 'Fear not, isle of blowing woodland, isle of silvery parapets! Tho' the Roman eagle shadow thee, tho' the gathering enemy narrow thee, Thou shalt wax and he shall dwindle, thou shalt be the mighty one yet! Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine the deeds to be celebrated, Thine the myriad-rolling ocean, light and shadow illimitable, Thine the lands of lasting summer, many-blossoming Paradises, Thine the North and thine the South and thine the battle-thunder of God.' So they chanted: how shall Britain light upon auguries happier? So they chanted in the darkness, and there cometh a victory now.

Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear Coritanian, Trinobant! Me the wife of rich Prasútagus, me the lover of liberty, Me they seized and me they tortured, me they lash'd and humiliated, Me the sport of ribald Veterans, mine of ruffian violators! See they sit, they hide their faces, miserable in ignominy!



Wherefore in me burns an anger, not by blood to be satiated. Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the colony C  mulod  ne! There they ruled, and thence they wasted all the flourishing territory, Thither at their will they haled the yellow-ringed Britoness – Bloodily, bloodily fall the battle-axe, unexhausted, inexorable. Shout Icenian, Catieuchlanian, shout Coritanian, Trinobant, Till the victim hear within and yearn to hurry precipitously Like the leaf in a roaring whirlwind, like the smoke in a hurricane whirl’d. Lo the colony, there they rioted in the city of C  nobel  ne! There they drank in cups of emerald, there at tables of ebony lay, Rolling on their purple couches in their tender effeminacy. There they dwelt and there they rioted; there – there – they dwell no more.

Burst the gates, and burn the palaces, break the works of the statuary, Take the hoary Roman head and shatter it, hold it abominable, Cut the Roman boy to pieces in his lust and voluptuousness, Lash the maiden into swooning, me they lash’d and humiliated, Chop the breasts from off the mother, dash the brains of the little one out, Up my Britons, on my chariot, on my chargers, trample them under us.’

So the Queen Bo  dic  a, standing loftily charioted, Brandishing in her hand a dart and rolling glances lioness-like, Yell’d and shriek’d between her daughters in her fierce volubility. Till her people all around the royal chariot agitated, Madly dash’d the darts together, writhing barbarous lineaments, Made the noise of frosty woodlands, when they shiver in January, Roar’d as when the rolling breakers boom and blanch on the precipices, Yell’d as when the winds of winter tear an oak on a promontory.

So the silent colony hearing her tumultuous adversaries Clash the darts and on the buckler beat with rapid unanimous hand, Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all her pitiless avarice, Till she felt the heart within her fall and flutter tremulously, Then her pulses at the clamouring of her enemy fainted away. Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyranny tyranny buds. Ran the land with Roman slaughter, multitudinous agonies. Perish’d many a maid and matron, many a valorous legionary. Fell the colony, city, and citadel, London, Verulam, C  mulod  ne.

**SOURCE 9.31** Tennyson, A.L., 1859, *Bo  dic  a*

### ACTIVITY 9.9

1. What similarities can you identify between the historical narrative and the poem of Tennyson?
2. What image is presented of Boudica in this poem?
3. Conduct some research into Tennyson. How does his genre, purpose and context influence his work?
4. Is this poem useful as a source for the historical event of the Boudican revolt? Explain your response.
5. Is this poem a useful source in studying the ‘mythologisation’ of Boudica? Explain your response.
6. Account for any differences in your responses and suggest reasons for this.



**SOURCE 9.32** *Boadicea and Her Daughters*, Thomas Thornycroft. The statue was commissioned in the 1850s and completed by 1885, although it was not cast in bronze and installed until 1902.

In a similar genre is the great bronze statue of *Boadicea and Her Daughters* on the Thames Embankment, outside Westminster tube station, which was produced by Thomas Thornycroft and put in its present place by London County Council in 1902.

## ACTIVITY 9.10

1. Compare the image of Boudica that is referenced in each of the sources in this section so far and complete the following table:

Source	Characteristics of Boudica presented
9.28	
9.29	
9.30	
9.31	
9.32	

2. To what extent is the image of Boudica 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?

## Modern assessments of Boudica's legacy

Read the following assessments of the significance of Boudica.

Durham University Professor of Archaeology, Richard Hingley, is a member of the Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies, with a research focus on transforming knowledge of the Roman past. Here he explains the symbolic significance of Boudica.

[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.

**SOURCE 9.33** Hingley, R., 2010, Boudica [Internet], BBC Radio

Stephanie Lawson, Professor of Politics and International Law at Macquarie University, presents a different view of Boudica.

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.

**SOURCE 9.34** Lawson, S., *Nationalism and Biographical Transformation: The Case of Boudica*, Humanities Research; Canberra Vol. 19, Iss. 1, (2013): 101–IV.

### ACTIVITY 9.11

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.

## Objective 2: Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to an ancient personality

### ACTIVITY 9.12

Refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 2* for guidelines on framing research questions. This will be useful in helping you complete this activity.

#### Statement 1

‘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’, Miranda Aldhouse-Green



## ACTIVITY 9.12 continued

### Statement 2

'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', Graham Webster

### Statement 3

'History is written by the victors', Winston Churchill

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 one (or more) of the three statements above, by using it as the basis for an inquiry question, which will then allow for a historical investigation. You will need to:
  - 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).

Research question 1:

Research question 2:

Research question 3:



**SOURCE 9.35** A nineteenth century engraving depicting Queen Boudica of the Iceni exhorting the Britons to defend their country against the Romans, c. 60 CE

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to ancient personalities

### ACTIVITY 9.13

Based on the research conducted in the last section, you are to 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 your working thesis based on your research.
2. Review your focus questions and the information collected, and 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 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 formal third person, and have used analytical language, including signposting for the evaluation of sources.

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- 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 over time, and has been appropriated by key female figures in history, such as Victoria and 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.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### 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?

### Comprehend

Summarise how Tacitus and Dio Cassius 'see' Boudica.

### Synthesise

Explain the significance of the defeat of Boudica and her rebel force by the Romans.

### Respond

Did Boudica initiate a rebellion against the Romans for personal vengeance, or was it religiously motivated?

### Analyse

Explain the value of the images of Boudica from popular culture for understanding her as a woman and a rebel leader.

### Evaluate

To what extent did the Roman annexation affect ancient Britons in the first century CE?

## Assessment

### Examination-style question

1. 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.



## CHAPTER 10

## Thebes East and West: Unearthing the city of the living and the dead

MICHAEL COCKS

## TOPIC DESCRIPTION

## Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the geographical and historical context of Egypt during the 18th Dynasty with particular reference to the remains at key sites and other relevant sources
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources, e.g. authentication, excavation, reconstruction and/or conservation.

## Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the nature of governance and political developments
  - significant events and key individuals
  - social structure
  - cultural life and practices
  - religious beliefs and practices.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the limitations, reliability and usefulness of sources

and either

- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose by presenting an essay in response to historical sources

## KEY DATES

## 11th Dynasty

Local governors of Thebes unite Egypt under their rule

## 18th Dynasty

Thebes is transformed into the capital city of the Egyptian empire

## Seventh century BCE

Nubian pharaohs make Thebes their capital city



or

- devise historical questions and conduct research and create a response that communicates meaning by presenting an independent source investigation.

### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of 18th Dynasty Egypt
- evaluate changing interpretations of sources over time relating to an understanding of the period using, for example, new discoveries, research and technologies.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

### SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Amenhotep III: built Pylon III at Karnak
- Hatshepsut: built Pylon VIII at Karnak, along with two obelisks and smaller chapels
- Horemheb: built Pylons IX and X at Karnak
- Nectanebo I: began the construction of Pylon I at Karnak and lined the procession road to Luxor with sphinxes
- Rameses II: completed the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak
- Seti I: began constructing the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak
- Thutmose I: built Pylons IV and V at Karnak, along with a stone wall around the 12th Dynasty temple
- Thutmose II: built festival court and raised a pair of obelisks at Karnak
- Thutmose III: enlarged the Karnak temple and Pylons VI and VII, along with courts and halls, inscribing the annals of his campaigns

**663 BCE**

Thebes is sacked by the Assyrians under Ashurbanipal

**1922 CE**

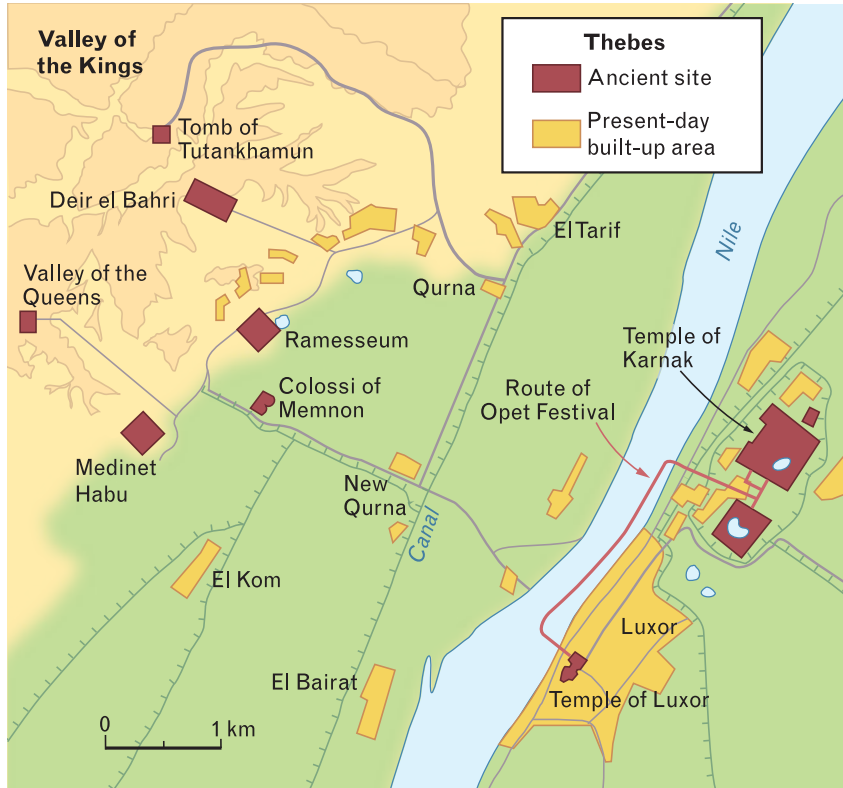
Howard Carter discovers the tomb of Tutankhamun

**1979 CE**

Thebes and its necropolis declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site



MAP



**SOURCE 10.2** A map showing the locations of the major sites of ancient Thebes



**SOURCE 10.3** A map showing the location of Thebes





## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	EXPLANATION
<b>Amun/Amun-Ra</b> (variant spelling: <b>Amun-Re, or Amen-Ra</b> )	the major god of Thebes who was designated as ‘the king of the gods’ of the Egyptian pantheon during the New Kingdom
<b>bark/barque</b>	boat that transported the statue of a god during religious festivals
<b>Festival of the Valley</b>	a major Egyptian religious festival that occurred between the Karnak temple (east bank) and the mortuary temples (west bank) of Thebes
<b>hypostyle hall</b>	a hall with a roof held up by a series of columns
<b>Ipet-Isut</b>	ancient name for the Karnak temple complex, meaning ‘the finest of places’
<b>Ipet-Resyt</b>	ancient name for the temple of Luxor, meaning ‘the southern sanctuary’
<b>mortuary temple</b>	a temple dedicated to the spirit of a deceased person, worshippers offered food and drink to help the dead to survive in the afterlife
<b>necropolis</b>	a word meaning ‘city of the dead’
<b>Opet Festival</b>	a major Egyptian religious festival that occurred between the temples of Karnak and Luxor on the east bank of Thebes
<b>pantheon</b>	the full group of gods of a particular religion
<b>pylon</b>	a monumental gateway which stood over the entrances to Egyptian temples, often large enough to have inscriptions carved onto them
<b>sanctuary</b>	central room in an Egyptian temple where the statue of the god was kept
<b>stela</b>	an upright stone slab containing an inscription

## Introduction

The ancient city of Thebes was located on the banks of the Nile in the south of Egypt. Thebes was one of the largest, wealthiest and most important cities in the ancient world. During the Old Kingdom (c. 2686–2160 BCE) and Middle Kingdom (c. 2055–1650 BCE) periods of Egyptian history, Thebes was only a minor town but during the New Kingdom (c. 1550–1069 BCE), it was chosen to be the political and religious centre of the Egyptian empire. The transformation of Thebes was the direct result of decisions made by the pharaohs of the 18th Dynasty to move their capital from the city of Memphis in the north of Egypt to Thebes in the south. Following the relocation, successive pharaohs invested vast sums of money in improving the city’s infrastructure. As a result, the area in and around Thebes was filled with grand temples and lavish tombs. Over the course of several centuries, however, Thebes fell into ruins and today it is one of the world’s largest archaeological sites. Thanks to the wealth of source material available in Thebes we are able to reconstruct and understand much about life in ancient Egypt.

# Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of a historical period of the Ancient World

## 10.1 Ancient Thebes

Ancient Thebes became the most important location for the Egyptians during much of the New Kingdom period. The reason for this importance had nothing to do with the geographical location of the town because, despite being located on the Nile River, the city did not have the best agricultural land. Furthermore, despite its position next to impressive hills, it did not provide particularly beneficial military defences. Instead, the significance of Thebes lay primarily in the role it played in Egypt's religious life.

In his 1988 book *Valley of the Kings*, British Egyptologist John Romer described the geography of Thebes.

For nearly a thousand years, from 2060 until 1085 BCE the city of Thebes ... had more temples, palaces and tombs built in and around it than any other place on earth. To this day archaeological remains stretch for miles along the banks of the river and into the desert beyond. There are, indeed, hundreds of temples at Thebes, ranging from the largest single temple in the world, that of Amun Re, king of the Theban pantheon of gods, to numerous small boxlike buildings that stand in the precincts of the temples of the principal gods. The temples that were the houses of the gods were built upon the east bank of the river, while upon the west side, running along the desert edge for almost two miles, were constructed the temples of the cults of the dead kings and the chapels of their ministers and courtiers. They contain some of the finest reliefs and paintings ever made by the ancient Egyptians. The Valley of the Kings lies behind these lines of temples and tomb chapels, separated from them by an immense ridge of cliffs which run parallel to the river like a high wall...

The entire area of the west bank at Thebes ... is an unusually variegated area of desert landscape dominated by a two-mile long prominence of cliffs, some [180 metres] high, that form an extraordinary backcloth for the temples on the east bank. On the west the area in front of these cliffs provided an easily accessible series of small valleys, clefts and plains which are now sprinkled with tombs and temples.

**SOURCE 10.4** Romer, J., 1988, *Valley of the Kings*, Michael O'Mara Books Limited, p. 12

### ACTIVITY 10.1

1. According to Source 10.4, who was Amun-Re and why was his temple at Thebes so impressive?
2. What was built on the eastern bank of the Nile river at Thebes?
3. What was located on the western bank of the Nile river at Thebes?
4. What was the most important geographical feature of the west bank?

The city of Thebes was founded upon the religious importance of its patron god, Amun. Even though the Egyptian religion had a pantheon of hundreds of minor and major deities, Amun became the preeminent god in the Egyptian pantheon. He became so important in Egyptian religious life that Amun was merged with another god, Ra, to become a single deity who had the powers of both. As a result of this merger, Amun-Ra's chief city of Thebes also increased in prominence.

In the following source, Egyptologist Barry Kemp discusses the role of the god Amun in Theban history.

The supreme god who fathered the king and remained the ultimate basis of royal respect was ... the god Amun. It was not an arbitrary choice, for Amun was an ancient god of Thebes, the home of the kings of the 18th Dynasty. The early history of Amun is not well documented, but it is clear that his pre-eminence in the New Kingdom was a result of deliberate theological emphasis. Two characteristics, at least as old as the Middle Kingdom, gave Amun a particularly powerful image. With no modification to his human form he had become the sun-god, Amun-Ra, and was now the recipient (even under the simpler name Amun) of hymns addressed to the sun... In the New Kingdom his position was well expressed by a common epithet, 'Amun-Ra, King of the Gods'. At Thebes especially he was shown in the temples as the divine father-figure who looked after the king and presided over his victories ...

**SOURCE 10.5** Kemp, B., 1991, *Ancient Egypt: An Anatomy of a Civilisation*, Routledge, p. 262

## ACTIVITY 10.2

Read Source 10.5 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. According to Source 10.5, aside from being the city of Amun, who was Thebes also home to?
2. What powers and roles did Amun receive?
3. What relationship did the pharaoh apparently have with the god, Amun? (Use a direct quote from the source to support your answer.)

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding in relation to specific historical periods in the Ancient World

### 10.2 Thebes's historical development

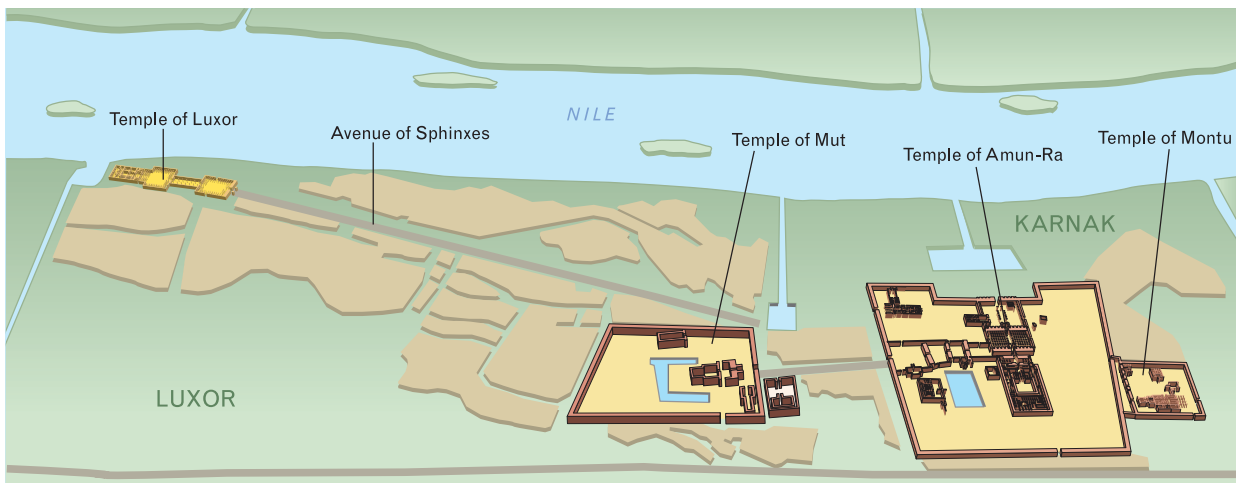
Ancient Thebes was an impressive sight to behold. The ancient Egyptians must have marveled at the richly decorated temples and vast monuments which filled the east and west banks of the Nile. Sadly, despite the impressive size and grandeur of ancient Thebes, when people visit its ruins today, they are usually overwhelmed by the confusing rubble that remains. It is difficult for modern tourists to imagine how the city once looked. The result of four thousand years of different building projects, renovation activities, eventual neglect and, sadly, the destruction of vast sections of the ruins in favour of modern constructions have only added to the bewildering impression of the remains.

In order to gain an understanding of the original layout of the ancient site, this section will attempt to highlight each of the major landmarks of Thebes by dividing the city into two distinct sections. The ruins on the eastern bank of the Nile, which are predominantly made up of the major temples, will be referred to as the 'City of the Living'. The ruins on the western bank, which are dominated by the tombs and mortuary temples of the pharaohs, will be referred to as the 'City of the Dead'.

### 10.3 Eastern Thebes: the city of the living

In ancient times, the skyline of eastern Thebes was filled with buildings. While these included some royal palaces and many residential areas for the common people, most visually recognisable were the great temples dedicated to the chief gods of the Theban pantheon. The largest of these, and the most well-known, were the Karnak and Luxor temple complexes.





**SOURCE 10.6** An artist's reconstruction of the eastern bank of Thebes with the major locations labelled



**SOURCE 10.7** The ruins of the Karnak temple of Amun-Ra today. What prominent features can you see in the ruins?

clear chronological order of how the different parts of the Karnak temple complex were built. Marc Van de Mieroop, professor of Ancient Near Eastern History, provided an overview in his 2011 book *A History of Ancient Egypt*.

Kings of [the Middle Kingdom] had initiated work at Karnak, but 18th-dynasty kings, starting with Thutmose I, expanded the temple enormously, often replacing Middle Kingdom structures with newer ones. In essence the temple was a dark shrine for the statue of the god, in front of which successive builders constructed complexes of rooms, courtyards, and massive gateways (we call those pylons) leading westward toward the Nile. The Karnak complex also grew in other directions after the early 18th dynasty to incorporate temples for Amun's wife Mut and his son Khonsu, and to connect it to the second major temple in Thebes at Luxor to the south. Embellishing Karnak was a source of great pride. On the walls of her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri Hatshepsut depicted how she had two obelisks carved at Aswan and then transported and erected at Karnak. One of them is still in place: it is 97 feet (29.5 metres) high and weighs 300 tons.

**SOURCE 10.8** Van de Mieroop, M., 2011, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell, p. 182

## The Temple of Amun-Ra (Karnak)

By far the most important religious structure in the ancient city of Thebes was the temple of Amun, known as Karnak. The Egyptians called it Ipet-Isut, which means 'the finest of places'. It was the central sanctuary for the god and the complex was built and expanded over the course of several centuries by various pharaohs. Many of these rulers even removed sections which had been built by earlier monarchs and replaced them with their own.

Due to this, it is not easy to find a

### ACTIVITY 10.3

Read Source 10.8 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. When did the building of the Karnak temple begin?
2. What was the temple's main task?
3. What were 'pylons'?
4. What did the pharaohs of the 18th Dynasty do to the temple?
5. Why did pharaohs choose to embellish the temple at Karnak?

Temples in ancient Egypt were not used in the same way as churches in the modern era. Egyptians treated their places of worship as the physical home of a particular god. Egyptians believed that different sections of the building had different levels of holiness and, as a result, only certain people could enter particular areas. Due to these beliefs, Egyptian temples had various buildings, halls, sanctuaries and chapels which were meant for specific individuals and groups. Most common people would enter the temples as part of particular religious festivals, where the statue of the god would be brought out, carried by priests as part of a procession along set routes through the city of Thebes. In the following source, Alan Jeffrey Spencer of the British Museum describes the purpose and layout of Egyptian temples.

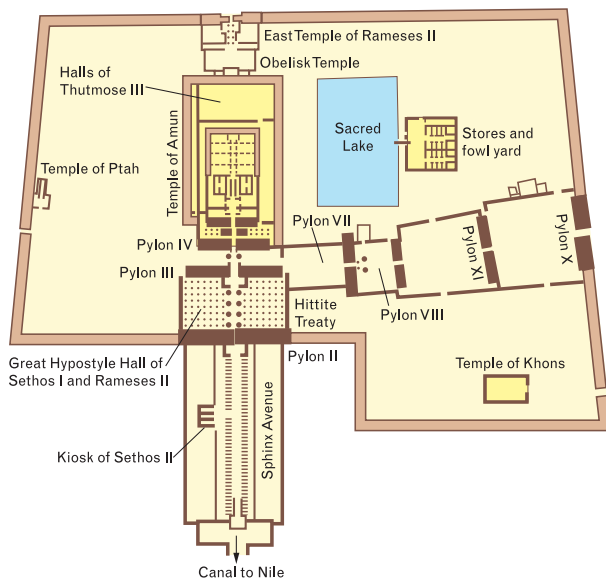
The different parts of the temple were arranged on an axial plan, to suit the processional nature of many ceremonies, although in the earlier temples this axial layout had not been so apparent and the temple had been closer to the design of a house. The concept of the temple as the 'House of the God' always remained and the phrase was used as a regular term for the monument. Large temples, sometimes constructed by gradual development over a long period of time, had adapted versions of the standard plan in which additional courts and pillared halls separated by pylon gates, were added along the axis of the building. Great entrances were normally marked by monolithic paired obelisks, flanking the pathway. The finest example of this process occurred in the Great Temple of Amun-Ra at Karnak in Thebes. No temple was complete, however, until the stone building was enclosed by a mud-brick perimeter wall which ran around the whole of the sacred precincts, within which the subsidiary buildings – stores, priests' houses, temple libraries and usually a Sacred Lake – were constructed. However, many temples must have seemed like perpetual building sites, with constant repairs, additions and renovations taking place, creating inevitable noise, dust and rubble.

**SOURCE 10.9** Spencer, A.J., 2007, *The British Museum Book of Ancient Egypt*, British Museum Press, p. 206

### ACTIVITY 10.4

Read Source 10.9 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. Why were temples arranged on an axial plan?
2. What key concept lay behind the Egyptian temple?
3. What other structures made up the temple complex?

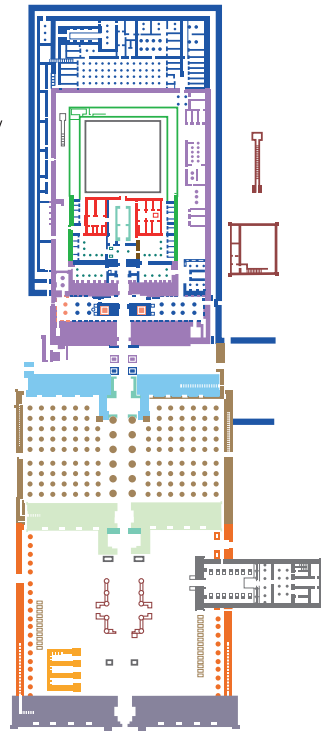


**SOURCE 10.10** The significant locations in the Karnak temple of Amun-Ra. What architectural elements seem to comprise much of the Karnak temple?

TEMPLE OF AMUN-RA AT KARNAK

Construction Colour Key

- Amenhotep I
- Thutmose I and II
- Hatshepsut
- Thutmose III, Amenhotep II and Thutmose IV
- Amenhotep III
- Horemheb
- Seti I/Rameses II
- Seti II
- Rameses III
- Bubastite Era (Dyn. 22)
- Taharqa
- Nectanebo I
- Ptolemaic Era



**SOURCE 10.11** A diagram showing the stages of the expansion of the Karnak temple with the name of the pharaoh responsible for each one. Which pharaohs appear to have invested most in expanding the Karnak temple site?

Some of the most interesting components of the Karnak temple are the monumental gateways known as pylons. These look like large stone walls that are built over the main paved entranceways into the temple. As the ancient Egyptian worshippers walked along the roads during major religious festivals, they would pass through the courtyards and large halls, as well as walking through the pylons.

At Karnak, there are ten pylons in total and all have been assigned a number by modern Egyptologists in order to help identify each one. The pylons that are numbered one to six (I–VI) are built along the east-west processional avenue which starts at the river Nile and leads east to the central sanctuary of Amun-Ra. The pylons numbered seven to ten (VII–X) are located on the north to south avenue, which links Karnak to the Luxor temple, which is about three kilometres further south.

Due to their impressive size, the pharaohs who commissioned the construction of each pylon would cover the surfaces of these gates with their own political propaganda. Since thousands of Egyptians would see these inscriptions during every religious festival, the pylons became an important place for Egyptian rulers to convey messages that they wanted their population to hear.

For example, the female pharaoh Hatshepsut built Pylon VIII at Karnak and chose to decorate it with a speech given by her father, Thutmose I, to the Egyptian gods after his death. The words of the speech were obviously created by Hatshepsut. Since she may have felt insecure in her position as ruler after her father's death, sharing this fictional speech from her father may have been a clever use of propaganda to encourage the Egyptian people to accept her as their pharaoh. Hatshepsut's inscription on Pylon VIII is as follows:

I [Thutmose I] come to you, lord of gods; I worship [before] you, in return for this, that [you have] put the Black and the Red Land under [the dominion of] my daughter, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt ... [Hatshepsut], who lives forever, just as you did put [it] under [the dominion of] my majesty ... You have given to me the kingdom of every land in the presence of the Two Lands, exalting my beauty while I was a youth ... [the Black Land] and the Red Land are under my dominion. I am



satisfied with victories, you have placed every rebellious land under my sandals which your serpent-crown has bound, bearing their gifts; thou have strengthened the fear [of me] ... their limbs tremble, I have seized them in victory according to your command; they are made my subjects; [they come to me] paying respect, and all countries with bowed head... the heart of my majesty is glad because of her ... [my request] concerning my daughter [Hatshepsut] King of Upper and Lower Egypt, of whom you have desired, that she be associated with [you, that] you might assign [this] land [to] her grasp. Make her prosperous as King ... may you [grant] for me the prayer ... concerning [my] beloved ... under her majesty.

**SOURCE 10.12** Adapted from Breasted, J.H., 1907, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Volume 2*, University of Chicago Press, pp. 101–2



**SOURCE 10.13** The ruins of Hatshepsut's Pylon VIII at Karnak. Who do you think the seated figures are meant to represent?

## ACTIVITY 10.5

Study Source 10.12 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. Thutmose (via Hatshepsut) addresses 'lord of gods'. Who do you think this is? How did you come to this conclusion?
2. What might Thutmose (via Hatshepsut) mean when he uses the phrase 'Black and Red Land'? (Hint: consider the different geographical environments of Egypt.)
3. Who was the intended audience of this inscription?
4. For what reason would Hatshepsut have wanted this speech to be on display at Karnak?
5. Since a vast majority of Egyptians could not read, how might they have learned about messages inscribed on the pylons?

Another equally interesting pylon inscription comes from Pylon III, which was built by Amenhotep III about a century after Hatshepsut's. Unfortunately, the original inscription is badly damaged and is difficult to read, but the fragmentary information that has survived shows how much money and time pharaohs were willing to invest in building these grand gateways at Karnak.

The source below shows the inscription of Amenhotep III on Pylon III at Karnak.

[I] founded for [Amun] very great divine offerings anew in the land, true and pure in the [divine] presence in the great [temple], which I have supplied with food ... [Amun] the king, the unique one of the gods, so that they are satisfied every day true, pure and flourishing with divine offerings of every day, living and fixed in his house forever ...

[Amun] is divine in my heart at all times, that I may present flowers ... according as he creates them, I bring to him silver, gold, genuine lapis lazuli, malachite ... every costly stone, every splendid vessel of electrum without limit of number ... in his [temple] of truth...

... in the splendid [temple], in which he loves to be, made of sandstone ... all flowers which he gathered, all food at all times. If there be [anything] like ... all – in [pleasing] him, restored and established as he desires it ... flourishing and established, which his son, [Amenhotep III] made for him ... flourishing in every garden, sweet in fragrance of all flowers ... a great [pylon] over against the temple, [its door] made high and wide, of cedar of ... [Karnak] illuminates this whole land, its beauty seems like the horizon of heaven ... [I made] wide for [Amun] its extent, an august judgment-hall of ... an august – for this portal [of the maker of his majesty as my father].

**SOURCE 10.14** Adapted from Breasted, J.H., 1907, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Volume 2*, University of Chicago Press, pp. 367–8



**SOURCE 10.15** Part of the surviving inscription on Pylon III at Karnak. Which figure on the pylon do you think is supposed to represent the pharaoh? What visual elements helped you draw this conclusion?

## ACTIVITY 10.6

Study Source 10.14 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. What are some of the things which Amenhotep boasted about supplying to the temple of Karnak in his inscription?
2. What building materials did Amenhotep apparently use when constructing his temple which no longer survive today?
3. Given the vast cost involved in building, inscribing and maintaining these pylons, why do you think pharaohs were so willing to invest in them?

### Extension activities

4. Research some of the building materials listed by Amenhotep that you've never heard of before. Find out from where they originate and what they were typically used for in the ancient world.
5. What do the results of your research tell you about the power and influence of Egypt's trading networks at the time of Amenhotep III?
6. To what degree can modern readers trust all the details provided in this inscription? (E.g. might there be intentional hyperbole or exaggeration?)

## ACTIVITY 10.7

Using the internet or a library, research the other pylons at the Karnak temple and fill in the table below:

Pylon number	Pharaoh who built it	Approximate date of creation	Summary of the inscription on the pylon
I			
II			
III	Amenhotep III	1390–52 BCE	The only remaining text describes the luxurious materials used in the renovations of the Karnak temple
IV			
V			
VI			
VII			
VIII	Hatshepsut	1473–58 BCE	A fictional prayer by Hatshepsut's father, Thutmose I, asking Amun to recognise her as his legitimate heir to the Egyptian kingdom
IX			
X			

It must be noted that the construction of pylons was not the only way that pharaohs could display their propaganda. Rulers also erected stelae throughout Karnak which proclaimed their greatness and their relationship to the god Amun-Ra. Below is an inscription from a stela set up by the pharaoh Thutmose III (ruled c. 1479–25 BCE) in one of the halls in the temple. The text on the stela is supposed to be a speech from the god Amun to Thutmose III himself. The Poetical Stela of Thutmose III from the Karnak Temple Cairo Museum reads as follows:

I gave you valour and victory over all lands. I set your might, your fear in every country. The dread of you as far as heaven's four supports. I magnified your awe in everybody, I made your person's fame traverse the Nine Bows. The princes of all lands are gathered in your grasp, I stretched my own hands out and bound them for you. I fettered Nubia's Bowmen by ten thousand thousands, the northerners a hundred thousand captives. I made your enemies succumb beneath your soles, so that you crushed the rebels and the traitors. For I bestowed on you the earth, its length and breadth, westerners and easterners are under your command ... You have built my temple as a work of eternity, made longer and wider than it had been, With its great gateway ... Your monuments surpass those of all former kings. I commanded you to make them, I am satisfied with them; I have placed you on the Horus-throne of millions of years, That you may lead the living forever.

**SOURCE 10.16** Translation from Lichtheim, M., 2006, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: Vol. II*, University of California Press, pp. 36–7



## ACTIVITY 10.8

Read Source 10.16 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. Who do you think actually wrote the words for the inscription in Source 10.16?
2. For what purpose do you think this stela was made?
3. Based upon the information provided on page 582 of this chapter, who was the intended audience of inscriptions such as these?
4. What evidence is there in the text that shows that there is a use of deliberate exaggeration in order to get the stela's message across to its audience? Use direct quotes to support your answer.

Another 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. 1294–79 BCE) and Rameses II (ruled c. 1279–13 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 Karnak building inscription describing the completion of the Great Hypostyle Hall begun by Seti I follows:

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-Ra, 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-Ra, 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.

**SOURCE 10.17** Adapted from Breasted, J.H., 1907, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Volume 3*, University of Chicago Press, pp. 217–8

## ACTIVITY 10.9

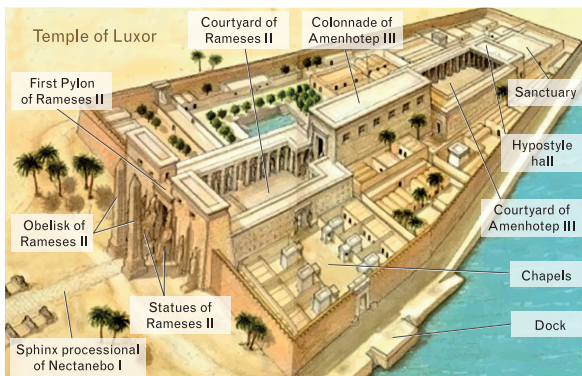
Study Source 10.17 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. According to this inscription, what relationship does Rameses claim to have with the god, Amun-Ra?
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. Based upon what you have read in this section about the different pharaohs who contributed to the building of the hall, what information has been intentionally omitted by Rameses?

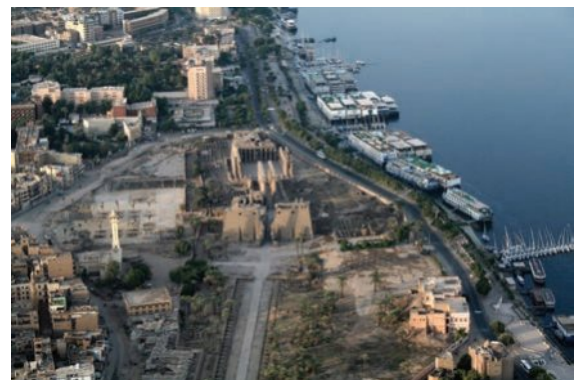


**SOURCE 10.18** A modern tourist sitting in the ruins of the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak. How do you think ancient visitors would have reacted to the monumental constructions at Karnak temple like the hypostyle hall pictured above?

## Luxor Temple



**SOURCE 10.19** A modern reconstruction of the Luxor Temple



**SOURCE 10.20** The modern ruins of Luxor Temple

The second largest temple on the eastern bank of ancient Thebes is known as the Luxor Temple. It was built around the year 1400 BCE and was called Ipet-Resyt by the ancient Egyptians, which means ‘the southern sanctuary’. Just like the Karnak temple, it consisted of a main sanctuary for the god Amun, along with a number of halls and pylons. The temple was initially built by Amenhotep III (ruled c. 1390–52 BCE) who described its construction in the inscription in Source 10.21, which was found in his mortuary temple. Amenhotep’s mortuary temple is located on the other side of the river



at Thebes, facing Luxor Temple. The building inscription of Amenhotep III discusses the construction of the Luxor Temple:

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands: Nibmare, Heir of Re; Son of Re, Lord of Diadems: Amenhotep [III], Ruler of Thebes, is satisfied with a building for his father Amon-Re, lord of Thebes, in Southern [Luxor], of fine white sandstone, made very wide and large and its beauty increased. Its walls are of electrum, its floor is of silver, all the portals are wrought with gold, its towers reach heaven and mingle with the stars. When the people see it, they give praise to his majesty. It is the king [Amenhotep III] who has satisfied the heart of his father, Amon, lord of Thebes, who has assigned to him every country, the Son of Re, Amenhotep [III], Ruler of Thebes, Brilliance of Re

**SOURCE 10.21** Breasted, J.H., 1907, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Volume 2*, University of Chicago Press, pp. 357–8

## ACTIVITY 10.10

Study Source 10.21 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. What materials did Amenhotep III boast of using in the construction of the Luxor Temple?
2. According to the words in the inscription, what did Amenhotep hope would happen when people saw the Luxor Temple?
3. Given the fact that this inscription is located in Amenhotep's mortuary temple which faces the Luxor Temple from across the other side of the river Nile, what do you think the pharaoh was wanting to achieve by the creation of this stela?
4. Aside from being a religious building, what hints exist in this inscription that the construction of the temple served a political or military purpose for the pharaoh?

Amenhotep III clearly wanted the two major temples of eastern Thebes, Luxor and Karnak, to be associated with each other and he created a long processional road to link them. The later pharaoh, Nectanebo I (ruled 380–362 BCE) lined this road with sphinx statues and it has become known as the Avenue of the Sphinxes.

These two major temples, Luxor and Karnak, formed the religious heart of eastern Thebes. Together they became the most important locations for a series of major religious festivals during the Egyptian year. In the following source, Marc Van de Mieroop describes Amenhotep's building of Luxor Temple.



**SOURCE 10.22** The Avenue of the Sphinxes with the Luxor Temple in the background

Amenhotep III also devoted much attention to eastern Thebes, the religious center of Amun. He expanded the temple at Karnak, and connected it to Luxor ... with a processional road. His work at Luxor was of special importance. He removed the existing temple and established the core of the temple as it is still visible today. Luxor's exact function is a puzzle, which scholars have tried to solve



through study of the representations on its walls. Located on an unusual north–south axis along the Nile, the temple was crucial for the annual festival called Opet ... The festival is first known from Queen Hatshepsut's reign, when it lasted 11 days. It grew in importance over time and by the end of the New Kingdom it went on for 27 days and involved a royal voyage through the country with many stages. Amenhotep III rebuilt Luxor to provide a monumental setting for Opet's crucial moment, the renewal of the king's divine birth. During the festival the statues of the gods Amun, his companion Mut, and junior god Khonsu, left Karnak carried in boats and accompanied by the king and priests. A select group entered Luxor, where Amun's boat was placed in a special shrine. The king then entered the birth chamber to renew his special birth ... The focus of the renewal was the king's *ka*. Each Egyptian had a *ka*, a vital force separate from the body. In the case of the king the *ka* contained his divine essence, fashioned at the same time as his human body. During the Opet festival the king united again with his *ka* in the Luxor temple and when he re-emerged his divine being was reaffirmed. Hence Amenhotep III called Luxor 'his place of justification, in which he is rejuvenated, the palace from which he sets out in joy at the moment of his appearance, his transformation being visible to all.' Although Amenhotep III identified himself with the sun god Ra, it was the chief god Amun who assured his divinity.'

**SOURCE 10.23** Van de Mieroop, M., 2011, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 195–6

## ACTIVITY 10.11

Study Source 10.23 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. What was unusual about the alignment of the temple of Luxor in comparison to most Egyptian temples?
2. What is the *ka* in the thinking of ancient Egypt?
3. Explain the meaning of the main ceremony which the pharaoh enacted at the Luxor Temple.

Spencer writes about the role of festivals at Thebes:

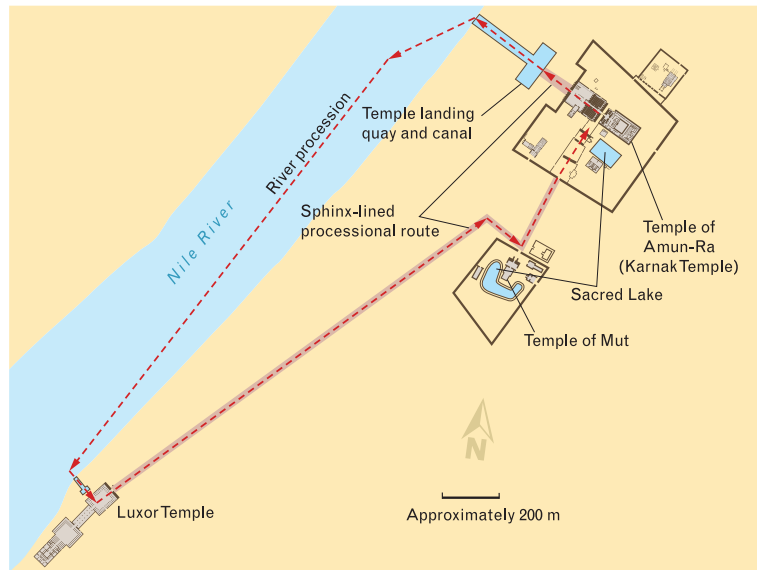
At Thebes the most important festivals of procession were the Valley Festival and the Opet Festival. The Valley Festival originated in the Eleventh Dynasty. With the visit of Amun from Karnak on the East Bank to the temple of king Nebhepetra Mentuhotep on the West Bank ... The procession became the annual festival for the necropolis on the West Bank, an occasion at which the Karnak Amun statue visited the Amun statue of the royal cult-temple on the opposite side of the river. The festival began at the new moon of the second month of summer, and provided an occasion for families of people buried in the western cemeteries to sail across and celebrate with their dead kin. The Opet Festival brought the Karnak Amun statue to visit the Amun statue in the Luxor temple to the south of the city of Thebes ... The Opet Festival seems to have revolved around the fertility of Amun and the identical potency of the king, and may have included some form of sacred marriage or union of the creator and his consort, perhaps for the regeneration of the reigning king. The festival lasted between three and four weeks starting in the second month of the season of flood. The central spectacle came in the solemn procession of the Karnak cult images of Amun, his consort Mut and their child Khonsu to the riverside at Karnak and then in their ceremonial barks towed along the riverbank south to Luxor, with a musical and military escort and a series of offerings on a massive scale.

**SOURCE 10.24** Spencer, A.J., 2007, *The British Museum Book of Ancient Egypt*, British Museum Press, p. 96

## ACTIVITY 10.12

Read Source 10.24 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. Provide a short description of the Valley Festival and the Opet Festival.
2. What is similar about these two festivals?
3. What role did the temples at Karnak and Luxor play in these events?
4. What information is similar in Sources 10.23 and 10.24?



**SOURCE 10.25** A map showing the procession of the statue of Amun during the Opet Festival



**SOURCE 10.26** An artist's recreation of the Opet Festival at Karnak in Thebes. How do you imagine that the average Egyptian would have reacted during the Opet Festival, as the god was taken on procession between the temples?

## 10.4 Western Thebes: the city of the dead

While the eastern bank of Thebes was focused on the religious life surrounding major temple complexes, the western river bank became focused on the process of royal burials. As a result, the plains and cliffs of western Thebes were filled with tombs and mortuary temples. The amount of manpower required to build

so many structures necessitated the presence of a full-time workforce, and an entire workers' village was built to accommodate them. Due to the focus on the burying of the dead, this area of Thebes is referred to as the 'necropolis' ('City of the Dead').

The temples located on the western bank of Thebes are known as mortuary temples, and they have a different role to those of Karnak and Luxor. Mortuary temples were places where worshippers offered food and drink to the spirits of a deceased person to help them live on for eternity.



**SOURCE 10.27** A map of western Thebes showing the main sites of interest

Swedish archaeologist Goran Burenhult outlines the development of the mortuary temple:

In the New Kingdom, the increasing importance of the temples for ensuring the immortality of the ruler led to the separation of the royal tomb and the funerary temple. Earlier, the royal funerary temple was attached to the pyramid tomb, but now the tombs were built in the Valley of the Kings, in Thebes. The symbol of the pyramid maintained its significance, however, and chapels of the tombs of commoners were usually topped with a small pyramid. It may well be more than coincidence that from certain viewpoints, the highest peak of the mountains in which the royal tombs were excavated has the appearance of a pyramid ...

The funerary temples were built where everyone could see them, on the edge of the cultivated land. In fact, they were shrines of the state-god, Amun, incorporating the funerary cult of the ruler, who was also worshipped as a form of the god. Here, just as in the main temples, the deeds of the rulers were recorded in word and image for future generations, thereby securing the rulers' immortality.

**SOURCE 10.28** Burenhult, G., 2004, *Great Civilizations*, Fog City Press, pp. 50–1



## ACTIVITY 10.13

Study Source 10.28 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. Why were funerary temples important to the rulers of Egypt?
2. What evidence is there in this source that it wasn't just wealthy pharaohs who built tombs during the New Kingdom?
3. Why do you think that the funerary temples were built 'where everyone could see them'?
4. Aside from being the mortuary temple of a particular person, what did these temples also serve as?
5. Why would these temples be decorated with words and images of 'the deeds of the rulers'?

During the New Kingdom, there were a number of large and impressive mortuary temples which dominated the western river bank. They were built in such a way that people could clearly see them from the eastern bank of Thebes. Two of the most famous mortuary temples are outlined below.

### Mortuary Temple of Amenhotep III

Located directly across the river from the temple of Luxor, the mortuary temple of Amenhotep III is now almost completely gone. The only elements that remain are two large statues of the pharaoh, known as the Colossi of Memnon, which used to sit by the entry to the temple. Despite the fact that the original mortuary temple no longer survives, Amenhotep did leave a record of its construction in one of his inscriptions and it provides a glimpse into how impressive it must have been when it was standing.

The building inscription of Amenhotep III discusses the construction of his mortuary temple:

Behold, the heart of his majesty was satisfied with making a very great monument; never has happened the like since the beginning. He made (it) as his monument for his father, Amon, lord of Thebes, making for him an august temple on the west of Thebes, an eternal, ever-lasting fortress of fine white sandstone, wrought with gold throughout; its floor is adorned with silver, all its portals with electrum; it is made very wide and large, and established forever; and adorned with this very great monument. It is numerous in royal statues, of Elephantine granite, of costly gritstone, of every splendid costly stone, established as everlasting works. Their stature shines more than the heavens, their rays are in the faces (of men) like the sun, when he shines early in the morning.

**SOURCE 10.29** Breasted, J.H., 1907, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Volume 2*, University of Chicago Press, p. 355–6



**SOURCE 10.30** The Colossi of Memnon, two massive stone statues of Amenhotep III. What do you think happened to the rest of the mortuary temple?

## ACTIVITY 10.14

Study Source 10.29 and use it to answer the questions below.

1. What information in the source shows that Amenhotep wanted his mortuary to be an impressive structure?
2. Who would have visited this temple and why would they have done so?
3. For what purpose would Amenhotep III have spent such vast sums of money to build this structure?
4. Given the fact that this inscription would have been located in the mortuary temple itself, why would Amenhotep feel the need to explain what it looked like?

On the same building inscription, Amenhotep III also boasted about the creation of Pylon III in the Karnak temple:

King of Upper and Lower Egypt: Nibmare, Son of Re: Amenhotep [III], Ruler of Thebes, who is vigilant to seek that which is useful, the king, who has built another monument for Amon, making for him a very great portal over against Amon-Re, lord of Thebes, wrought with gold throughout. The Divine Shadow, as a ram, is inlaid with real lazuli wrought with gold and many costly stones; there is no instance of doing the like. Its floor is adorned with silver; [towers] are against it. Stelae of lazuli are set up, one on each side. Its pylons reach heaven like the four pillars of heaven; its flagstaves shine more than the heavens, made with electrum. His majesty brought gold for it in the land of Karoy on the first victorious campaign, slaying the wretched Kush.

**SOURCE 10.31** Adapted from Breasted, J.H., 1907, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Volume 2*, University of Chicago Press, pp. 359–60

## ACTIVITY 10.15

Compare the details in Source 10.31 with the inscription by the same pharaoh on the pylon itself (Source 10.29). What is similar and what is different about the two descriptions?

## Ramesseum

Another impressive mortuary temple in the necropolis is that built by pharaoh Rameses II, known as the Ramesseum. This pharaoh was one of the longest rulers in Egyptian history and was famous for his military campaigns as well as his vast building projects. Egyptologist Ian Shaw wrote about the importance of the Ramesseum:

During his long years on the throne, Rameses II carried out a vast building programme. He began by adding a great peristyle courtyard and pylon to the temple of Amun in Luxor, built by Amenhotep III and completed by the last 18th-Dynasty kings. The courtyard was planned at a curious angle to the rest of the temple, presumably in order to create a straight line across the river to the site of the king's mortuary temple, the Ramesseum, in much the same way as his father had done with the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak and his Abd el-Qurna temple on the west bank.

**SOURCE 10.32** Shaw, I., 2004, *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford University Press, p. 291



**SOURCE 10.33** The ruins of the Ramesseum

### ACTIVITY 10.16

1. Aside from the Ramesseum, what other building projects did Rameses II complete in Thebes? Refer to information from earlier in the chapter to answer this question.
2. Why might Rameses have wanted the new courtyard at Luxor on the east bank of Thebes to face his mortuary temple on the west bank?

### ACTIVITY 10.17

Conduct some research into the following mortuary temples which still survive today and answer the questions below about each one.

	Mortuary Temple of Hatshepsut	Mortuary Temple of Seti I	Mortuary Temple of Rameses III
When did the pharaoh it was built for die?			
For what was this pharaoh famous?			
What important information was inscribed in the temple?			
Where is the tomb of this pharaoh located?			

Even though the western bank of ancient Thebes focused on the dead, it was still a hub of activity. Since the mortuary temples required worshippers to visit the buildings, family members and religious devotees must have frequently travelled across the river. Furthermore, there were dedicated religious festivals which also attracted Egyptians to the west bank. The most famous of these was the Festival of the Valley. The procession for this religious event began on the east bank, at the temple of Karnak, but its focus was on the necropolis. Kemp describes the role of the mortuary temples in festivals:

Once a year, roughly five months before the Opet Festival, the ‘Festival of the Valley’ took place. In this the images of Amun, Mut and Khonsu, the holy family of Thebes, were brought from Karnak and ferried over the river. Once across they continued their journey either by road or canal to Deir el-Bahari, site of the ancient mortuary temple and tomb of King Mentuhetep II of the 11th Dynasty and of the recent mortuary temple of Queen Hatshepsut. Deir el-Bahari lies almost exactly opposite to Karnak so that the whole journey could have been accomplished along a single line. However, as the New Kingdom progressed the route was extended so that the portable barques with their statues could rest overnight in the mortuary temple of the reigning king. On the next day the procession



returned to Karnak. Although it was a much shorter festival than that of Opet it was highly regarded and was the occasion for families with relatives or ancestors buried in the Theban hills to make their own journey to the family tomb, to have a meal there, and to stay overnight.

**SOURCE 10.34** Kemp, B., 1991, *Ancient Egypt: An Anatomy of a Civilisation*, Routledge, p. 274

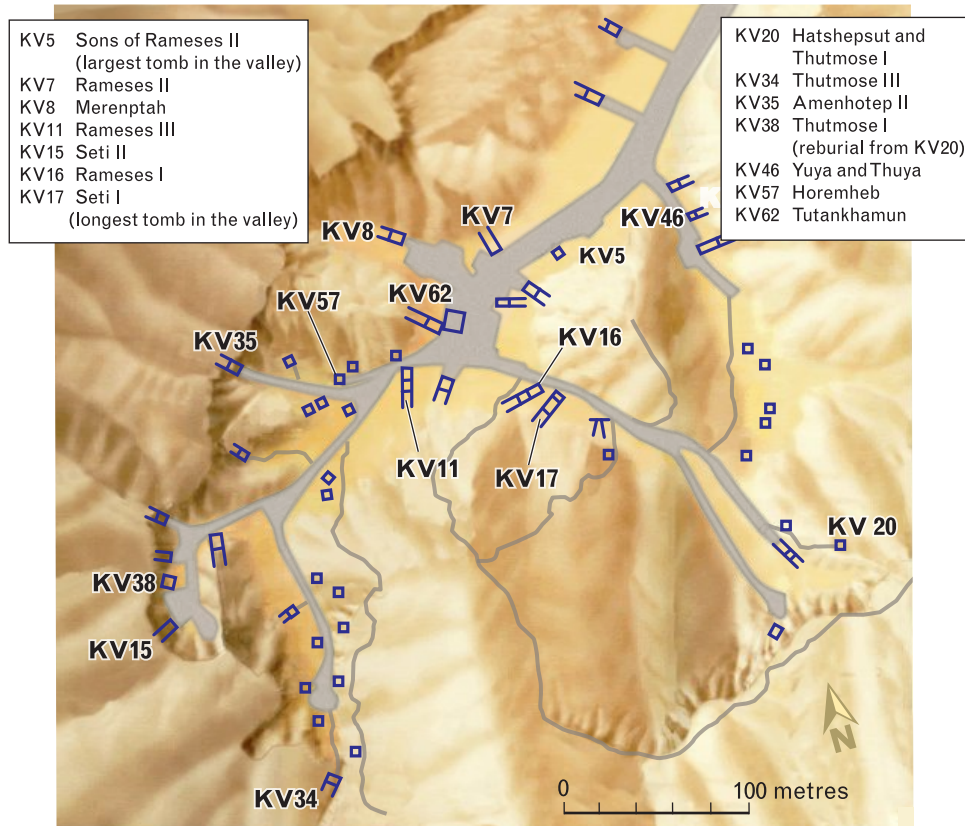
## ACTIVITY 10.18

Study Source 10.34 and answer the questions below.

1. According to the source, what ancient sites are found at the location now known as Deir el-Bahari?
2. What geographical relationship does Deir el-Bahari have with the temple of Karnak? To what extent do you think this relationship was intentional?
3. Given the fact that the statues of the gods spent the night in the mortuary temple of the currently reigning pharaoh, what does this tell you about when pharaohs had their mortuary temples built?
4. According to the source, why would this festival have been of special importance to particular Egyptian families?

## Valley of the Kings

Probably the most famous location in all of Thebes is the Valley of the Kings. This valley is the location of many of the tombs of the New Kingdom pharaohs. The valley appears to have become a popular location for tomb building because the secluded location detracted tomb robbers. Subsequently, between the years 1550 and 1070 BCE, dozens of Egyptian rulers chose to be buried in the valley. So far, modern archaeologists have uncovered 62 tombs in the Valley of the Kings and each one has been assigned a number (preceded by the letters KV, which stand for Valley of the Kings) to help catalogue them.



**SOURCE 10.35** A map showing the locations of the main tombs in the Valley of the Kings

Spencer writes about the development of the Valley of the Kings:

From the reign of Thutmose I, throughout the New Kingdom, kings were buried in rock-cut tombs in the Valley of the Kings, lying in the hills on the west bank of the Nile at Thebes. These tombs consisted of a series of corridors and rooms, extending far into the rock, their walls richly decorated with scenes and texts from various funerary compositions describing the journey of the sun-god through the underworld. The location of these tombs necessitated the separation of the burial places from the mortuary chapels, which were constructed in the style of complete cult-temples some distance away on the edge of the cultivated land. The Valley of the Kings remained in use as a royal necropolis until the end of the Twentieth Dynasty ...

**SOURCE 10.36** Spencer, A.J., 2007, *The British Museum Book of Ancient Egypt*, British Museum Press, p. 147

### ACTIVITY 10.19

1. According to Source 10.36, what architectural elements made up the tombs in the Valley of the Kings?
2. What elements were painted on the walls of the tombs in the Valley of the Kings?
3. When did pharaohs stop being buried at this location?

Romer describes the construction of the tombs in the Valley of the Kings:

The actual tombs of the New Kingdom Pharaohs, situated mostly in the Valley of the Kings, were the equivalent of the burial chamber systems inside the earlier pyramids. They were cut into cliffs below the skyline of the Theban mountains, the splendid natural range that stands across the Nile opposite Thebes, replacing the dominating shapes of the pyramids of earlier periods. It has sometimes been claimed that the mountain peak of [al-Qurn] (The Peak) high above the Valley was imagined by the ancients to be a natural pyramid and that the tombs in the Valley were simply quarried into these cliffs to make the corridors and burial chamber reflect those of the pyramids. Little attempt was ever made, however, to enter this 'pyramid' at its correct ritual location on the north face. This mountain was identified as a holy place of quite a different type from the pyramids of earlier times.

**SOURCE 10.37** Romer, J., 1988, *Valley of the Kings*, Michael O'Mara Books Limited, pp. 23–4

### ACTIVITY 10.20

1. In what ways does Source 10.37 corroborate the information provided by Source 10.36?
2. According to this source, what do some people believe about the mountain peak known as al-Qurn?
3. What is this source's opinion about this belief? How did you draw this conclusion?



**SOURCE 10.38** The pyramid-shaped mountain in Valley of the Kings known as al-Qurn

The Valley of the Kings has become a famous archaeological site because of some very well-publicised discoveries that have been made there over the years. The most famous is probably the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922 by British archaeologist, Howard Carter. This discovery became particularly famous because it was the only tomb found in recent memory that still contained its original burial items.

Almost every other tomb in the Valley of the Kings had been broken into and robbed by the ancient Egyptians themselves. Carter's discovery captured the world's attention because it was shared through the photos and eye-witnesses accounts provided by the archaeologist himself. The following source is his diary entry reporting the opening of Tutankhamun's tomb:

Sunday, November 26.

Open second doorway about 2pm ...

After clearing 9 metres of the descending passage, in about the middle of the afternoon, we came upon a second sealed doorway, which was almost the exact replica of the first. It bore similar seal impressions and had similar traces of successive re-openings and re-closings in the plastering. The seal impressions were of Tutankhamen and of the Royal Necropolis ...

Feverishly we cleared away the remaining last scraps of rubbish on the floor of the passage before the doorway, until we had only the clean sealed doorway before us... It was sometime before one could see, the hot air escaping caused the candle to flicker, but as soon as one's eyes became accustomed to the glimmer of light the interior of the chamber gradually loomed before one, with its strange and wonderful medley of extraordinary and beautiful objects heaped upon one another.

There was naturally short suspense for those present who could not see, when Lord Carnarvon said to me 'Can you see anything'. I replied to him Yes, it is wonderful. I then with precaution made the hole sufficiently large for both of us to see. With the light of an electric torch as well as an additional candle we looked in. Our sensations and astonishment are difficult to describe as the better light revealed to us the marvellous collection of treasures: two strange ebony-black effigies of a King, gold sandalled, bearing staff and mace, loomed out from the cloak of darkness; gilded couches in strange forms, lion-headed, Hathor-headed, and beast infernal; exquisitely painted, inlaid, and ornamental caskets; flowers; alabaster vases, some beautifully executed of lotus and papyrus device; strange black shrines with a gilded monster snake appearing from within; quite ordinary looking white chests; finely carved chairs; a golden inlaid throne; a heap of large curious white oviform boxes; beneath our very eyes, on the threshold, a lovely lotiform wishing-cup in translucent alabaster; stools of all shapes and design, of both common and rare materials; and, lastly a confusion of overturned parts of chariots glinting with gold, peering from amongst which was a mannikin. The first impression of which suggested the property-room of an opera of a vanished civilization. Our sensations were bewildering and full of strange emotion. We questioned one another as to the meaning of it all. Was it a tomb or merely a cache? A sealed doorway between the two sentinel statues proved there was more beyond, and with the numerous cartouches bearing the name of Tutankhamen on most of the objects before us, there was little doubt that there behind was the grave of that Pharaoh ...

**SOURCE 10.39** Carter, H., 1922, *Tutankhamun: Anatomy of an Excavation, Part 1*

## ACTIVITY 10.21

Read Source 10.39 and answer the questions below.

1. What grave goods does Carter describe in the tomb?
2. What does this kind of wealth indicate about how pharaohs were buried in ancient Egypt?
3. As Carter intended his writings to be published, what evidence is there that he has used deliberately descriptive language in order to encourage more public interest in his work? Use direct quotes to support your answer.



Even though Tutankhamun's tomb is the most famous of the pharaonic burials, it is not the only impressive burial in the valley. Almost every tomb that has been discovered is a display of the immense effort involved and the concern the ancient Egyptians had for the burial of their rulers. One of the most impressively decorated tombs is that of Seti I, whose tomb is covered in intricate and colourful hieroglyphs which represent the pharaoh's journey through the afterlife.

## Valley of the Queens

Even though it is less well-known than the Valley of the Kings, the Valley of the Queens was a major site of importance in ancient Thebes. It is located just south of the tombs of the male pharaohs and, as the name implies, the Valley of the Queens was the burial place of the wives of the rulers of Egypt. Around 90 tombs have been discovered at the site. Unfortunately, many of the people who had their tombs built here do not have the same prestige of Tutankhamun, but include such powerful individuals as Nefertari (wife of Rameses II) and Queen Tyti (wife of Rameses III). Aside from housing the tombs of Egyptian queens, the Valley of the Queens also contains the burial sites of many Egyptian princes and princesses.



**SOURCE 10.41** Mural paintings in the tomb of Seti I. Why did pharaohs invest so much time and money decorating their tombs when they were intended to be forever sealed shut?

## Tombs of the Nobles

The west bank of Thebes became such an important place for pharaonic burials that other people started to build their tombs there as well. Even though these Egyptians were not royalty, they had accrued sufficient wealth to commission their own small burial sites. A large collection of these small tombs developed in an area which has become known as the Tombs of the Nobles. While they are not of the same size or grandeur as those in the Valley of the Kings or Queens, these tombs have left a record of the names of wealthy nobles and what kind of jobs they did in their lifetimes.



**SOURCE 10.43** Tombs of the Nobles on the west bank of the Nile at Luxor



**SOURCE 10.40** British archaeologist Howard Carter opens the doors of the second of four gold shrines surrounding the sarcophagus of Pharaoh Tutankhamun in 1923. With the knowledge that this was an intentionally posed photograph, what message was Howard Carter trying to convey about his discoveries?



**SOURCE 10.42** Aerial view of the Valley of the Queens

To date, over 400 tombs have been discovered here, all of which display the wide range of wealth, artistic styles and funerary inscriptions of their owners.

## Deir el-Medina

One of the greatest archaeological finds on the western bank of Thebes is the remains of the village of Deir el-Medina. This village was occupied during ancient Egypt by the workmen and artisans that were needed for the construction of all the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings and Queens. The skilled workmen were required so regularly on the various construction sites that they formed their own permanent village so that they did not have to travel back and forth over the Nile every day. The reason that this archeological site has become so important to Egyptologists is that it has preserved artefacts from sections of Egyptian society that have not been found elsewhere in Egypt. In many cases, the exact names, careers and family details of individuals have been preserved. Here, Marc Van de Mieroop considers the purpose of the village of Deir el Medina:

We know the craftsmen who built these tombs because the village where they lived was excavated in western Thebes in between the farming area and the valleys of kings and queens. The desert location led to an especially good preservation of the remains and they provide the best available source of a village community in ancient Egypt. Scholars refer to the place as Deir el-Medina after a later monastery built nearby. The Deir el-Medina community was unusual. Made up of specialist workers and their families, its inhabitants were exceptionally literate and artistic because they decorated tombs with writing and art. They were probably relatively well off also, as their income was guaranteed in bad and in good agricultural years. We cannot see them as typical Egyptian villagers then, but they are the closest we get to such people for the moment ... The houses were packed closely together along a main street that transected the village from north to south and two perpendicular streets. All houses were quite small. Most of those whose plans are clear contain four areas in a straight line, with the kitchen at the back. Stairs led to the roof, where people probably slept when it was hot. The village had a number of shrines, including for King Amenhotep I and his mother Ahmose-Nefertari, who may have founded the village of Deir el-Medina or its community of artisans. The written remains are extraordinarily well preserved, counting more than 10 000 texts in hieratic script. Most of them were written on pieces of pottery or limestone (ostraca), fewer on papyrus. They include letters, lists, accounts, reports on work and deliveries, legal records, and an amazing array of literary and magical texts. They provide a unique insight in the inhabitants' lives.

**SOURCE 10.44** Van de Mieroop, M., 2011, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 233–4

### ACTIVITY 10.22

1. What kind of people lived in the village of Deir el-Medina?
2. What kinds of artefacts have survived from ancient Egypt?
3. Why is it important to recognise that we 'cannot see them as typical Egyptian villagers'?



**SOURCE 10.45** A photo showing the ruins of the village of Deir el-Medina with the Nile River and Eastern Thebes in the distance. What challenges would have faced the community of Deir el-Medina since it was located so far away from fresh water and arable land?



## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about a historical period in the Ancient World

### 10.5 Ancient and modern interpretations

The previous sections of this chapter have provided a brief introduction to the main sites of ancient Thebes. As part of this overview, many conclusions have been drawn about what each location was made for and how it was used. However, these conclusions are often based upon fragmentary evidence from the archaeological remains at Thebes. One of the most difficult parts of trying to understand what Thebes was like in the time of ancient Egypt is that the information that has survived from that era is very 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:

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.

**SOURCE 10.46** Van de Mieroop, M., 2011, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell, p. 13

#### ACTIVITY 10.23

1. Based upon what is said in Source 10.46, why is historical criticism difficult for ancient Egyptian scholars?
2. What is meant by the rule used in other fields of historical research that 'a single testimony is no testimony'? Why do you think this rule exists?
3. Why would the application of this rule 'leave ancient Egyptian history in tatters'?

What makes the nature of the ancient sources more difficult is that Thebes is rarely mentioned by other cultures. While the city was a powerful and wealthy location within Egypt, only a few non-Egyptian ancient sources have survived and their descriptions of Thebes are scant. There is a very brief mention of Thebes in the work of the eighth century BCE Greek poet, Homer, which indicates that the city was still famous for its wealth during this time:

... all the wealth that goes in to ... Thebes of Egypt, where treasures in greatest store are laid up in men's houses. Thebes, which is a city of a hundred gates from which ride out through each two hundred warriors with horses and chariots.

**SOURCE 10.47** Homer, *Iliad*, IX.376–89



At the time of Homer's writing, though, Thebes was already in decline. Only a century after this, Egypt was invaded by the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal who attacked and looted the city in 663 BCE. Here is Ashurbanipal's description of the looting:

That city [Thebes] my hands captured in its entirety, with the aid of [the Assyrian gods] Assur and Ishtar. Silver, gold, precious stones, the goods of his palace, all there was, brightly coloured and linen garments, great horses, the people, male and female, two tall obelisks, made of shining electrum, whose weight was 2500 talents, [and] which stood by the gate of the temple, I removed from their positions and carried them off to Assyria. Heavy plunder, and countless, I carried away from [Thebes].

**SOURCE 10.48** The Rassam Cylinder, (636 BCE), The British Museum, Item No. 91026. As found in Luckenbill, D.D., 1927, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, University of Chicago Press, p. 296

### ACTIVITY 10.24

1. What does Ashurbanipal specifically mention taking from Thebes? Where do you think these items were taken from?
2. Why do you think Ashurbanipal mentions the names of Assyrian gods when talking about the capture of Thebes?
3. Using the internet or a library, conduct some research to find out the historical context of the Rassam Cylinder. Where was it found and what was its purpose?

Almost seven hundred years after the pillaging of Thebes by the Assyrians, Thebes is mentioned by an ancient Greek geographer called Strabo. The city had clearly suffered since the time of the Assyrians and many of its impressive structures were already starting to disappear. Strabo mentions Thebes in the first century CE:

Next to the city of Apollo is Thebes, now called Diospolis, 'with her hundred gates, through each of which issue two hundred men, with horses and chariots,' according to Homer, who mentions also its wealth; 'not all the wealth the palaces of Egyptian Thebes contain.' Other writers use the same language, and consider Thebes as the metropolis of Egypt. Vestiges of its magnitude still exist, which extend [almost 15 kilometres] in length. There are a great number of temples ... The spot is at present occupied by villages. One part of it [is a] city ... another is ... on the other side of the river, where is the [mortuary temple of Amenhotep III]. Here are two colossal figures near one another, each consisting of a single stone. One is entire; the upper parts of the other, from the chair, are fallen down, the effect, it is said, of an earthquake ... When I was at those places with Ælius Gallus, and numerous friends and soldiers about him, I heard a noise at the first hour (of the day), but whether proceeding from the base or from the colossus, or produced on purpose by some of those standing around the base, I cannot confidently assert ... Above the Memnonium are tombs of kings in caves, and hewn out of the stone, about forty in number; they are executed with singular skill, and are worthy of notice. Among the tombs are obelisks with inscriptions, denoting the wealth of the kings of that time ...

**SOURCE 10.49** Strabo, *Geography*, XVII.1.46

## ACTIVITY 10.25

1. What famous sites were still visible to Strabo when he was writing his *Geography*?
2. What clues are there in Strabo's description of Thebes that indicate it was no longer a major city by his time of writing? Use a direct quote to support your answer.
3. What information does Strabo provide that shows he had seen these things personally?

After the 'fall' of the Roman Empire in the fifth century CE, the existence of Thebes was practically forgotten. It wouldn't become famous again until the eighteenth century, when wealthy European aristocrats began touring Egypt and discovered the ruins of the city. When news of the incredible remains were published throughout Europe in the nineteenth century, enthusiasm for all things Egyptian began to rise. Artists began to sell drawings and paintings of the Theban ruins. The publicity attracted amateur archaeologists to the area and for the first time in millennia, the city of Thebes reappeared from the sand.

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 (KV 17), but his archaeological technique often destroyed as many artefacts as it saved. Here, Belzoni describes exploring the Theban tombs in 1817:

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.

**SOURCE 10.50** Belzoni, G., 1820, *Narrative of the Operations and Recent Discoveries in Egypt and Nubia*, John Murray, pp. 156–8



## ACTIVITY 10.26

Read Source 10.50 and answer the questions below.

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 background 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?

**SOURCE 10.51** *Portrait of Giovanni Belzoni*, J.A. Kruseman, 1824. Belzoni is depicted here, dressed in obviously 'foreign' clothing. Why would he have wanted himself shown in this way?

As a result of the looting by tomb robbers, destruction by invading armies, and the careless work of amateur archaeologists, the number and quality of the surviving artefacts from ancient Thebes is quite low. However, despite the problematic nature of the ancient source

material, archaeologists and Egyptologists can generally draw some basic conclusions. First, Thebes was the site of vast and expensive building projects by many pharaohs. Second, Thebes was an important religious site. Third, Thebes was a significant location for the burials of the pharaohs.

While the above conclusions seem fairly obvious, scholars tend to disagree on why and how these things came to be. In other words, what motives drove the pharaohs to spend so much money on the religious, architectural and funerary aspects of this one city? The amount of time, money and manpower that would have been needed over years, or even decades, by so many different rulers seems to be disproportionate to the economic or military benefits offered by the city of Thebes. To answer these questions, various scholars have offered some potential solutions. For example, Burenhult suggests it reflects the consciousness of eternity:

Ancient Egypt is best known for the brilliance and impressiveness of its monumental art and architecture, which expresses its people's love of life and their search for eternity. The link between monumental architecture and the consciousness of eternity is illustrated by the oldest surviving monumental structures ... the [pharaohs] were responsible for building the temples and maintaining their cults, which offered them the opportunity to leave monuments to themselves while gaining the favor of the gods. The result was an explosion of building activity in the New Kingdom. Not only were old mudbrick temples rebuilt in stone, but older structures were expanded. In particular, the temple of Amun, the great state-god of the empire, was added to, resulting in the vast complex that has survived to the present day.

**SOURCE 10.52** Burenhult, G., 2004, *Great Civilizations*, Fog City Press, p. 50

## ACTIVITY 10.27

1. According to Source 10.52, what does the monumental architecture of ancient Egypt express?
2. How could a pharaoh hope to gain 'the favour of the gods'?
3. According to Source 10.52, summarise the main reason pharaohs spent so much time and money on their building projects at Thebes.



Other historians are reluctant to assign purely religious reasons to the pharaonic investments at Thebes. Alternative motives focus more on the gaining or use of political power. In this view, such constructions and investments at Karnak were a way to influence the ancient Egyptian people or to use the popularity of the cult of Amun to legitimise a ruler's position as leader of Egypt. Here, Kemp discusses the political role of Amun:

The Hatshepsut texts also reveal the political value of the Amun cult at Karnak. On various festivals the portable barque containing the god's image was carried out of the main temple, borne on poles resting on the shoulders of priests. This could be made the opportunity for Amun to perform a 'miracle'. Some movement from the heavy wooden barque would be communicated to the shoulders of the bearers, and magnified so that a distinct deviation from the prescribed course occurred, and sometimes a dipping forwards of the shrine. The texts also claim that speeches were communicated from the god, but by what means is unclear. In this way Hatshepsut was publicly picked out by Amun and the miracle interpreted as being a divine choice of the next monarch.

Subsequently Thutmose II claimed that by a similar miracle at Karnak he also had been chosen by Amun. How should we react to claims of this kind? Should we be cynical and say that it was all made up afterwards for propaganda reasons? ... What we can say is that statements of this kind make an ideological point, stressing the particular importance of the event in question. The reader is informed that the choice of the next king or the laying out of a temple (or the various other acts sanctioned by Amun's oracle) has the greatest authority that mind and vocabulary can convey. They demonstrate the legitimising role of Amun and the use of the Karnak temple precinct as the proper arena for it.

**SOURCE 10.53** Kemp, B., 1991, *Ancient Egypt, An Anatomy of a Civilisation*, Routledge, pp. 267–8

## ACTIVITY 10.28

1. According to Source 10.53, what political benefit did some pharaohs gain from the religious significance of the god Amun?
2. Why would the act of Amun 'selecting' the next pharaoh be something that both Hatshepsut or Thutmose III would record?
3. Why would Kemp say in Source 10.53 that to believe that these events were 'all made up afterwards for propaganda reasons' would be a 'cynical' thing to do?

While some scholars see the constructions at Karnak as an exercise in power-broking by the pharaohs, other scholars have seen the use of power being exercised by another figure. Rather than Karnak being a demonstration of power by the pharaohs, perhaps it demonstrates the political power of the priests of Amun – in particular, the high priest. Marc Van de Mieroop discusses this power:

Meanwhile the office of high-priest of Amen-Ré at Karnak had become hereditary, and after being held by Nesamün, a son of Ra-messenakhte, had passed into the powerful hands of Amenhotpe, another son ... in year 10 of Ramesses IX we find him arrogating for himself an eminence such as no subject of the Pharaoh had ever previously enjoyed. That a great dignitary should figure in the reliefs of a temple was not altogether unprecedented ... . But Amenhotpe went a step further: Egyptian Art had always made a point of proportioning the size of its human representations to the rank and importance of the persons represented, and now for the first time Amenhotpe, facing the Pharaoh,

is shown as of equal height with him ... The king might be the undisputed ruler in the north, but in the south the great pontiff at Karnak loomed larger than he ... That [the high priest of Amun] united all the powers of the State in his own person and handed them onto his descendants seems clear from the military, judicial, administrative, and sacerdotal titles which he and they bore.

**SOURCE 10.54** Van de Mieroop, M., 2011, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Wiley-Blackwell, p. 180

## ACTIVITY 10.29

Read Source 10.54 and answer the questions below.

1. What did the high priests of Karnak do that mimicked what the pharaohs did?
2. How did the high priests use art to push their own agendas?
3. What do you think the phrase 'military, judicial, administrative, and sacerdotal titles' mean?

## ACTIVITY 10.30

1. Do some background research on the three authors of Sources 10.52 to 10.54. 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.



**SOURCE 10.55** The Karnak Temple at sunrise. Why do you think the ancient ruins of Thebes are still such a popular tourism destination?

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- The east bank of the River Nile at Thebes is dominated by major temples to the primary gods of Thebes.
- Pharaohs used the pylon gates of the temples to display specific messages.
- The Karnak and Luxor Temple complexes were the major sites of the Opet Festival.
- The west bank of the River Nile at Thebes is dominated by mortuary temples and royal tombs.
- The ancient sources about Thebes are fragmentary which hinders modern interpretation of motives.
- Historians provide different motives for the investments made by the pharaohs at Thebes.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

Based upon what the pharaohs included in their inscriptions, what were they most concerned about conveying to the ancient Egyptian people?

### Analyse

What kind of bias is evident in the pharaonic inscriptions at Thebes? Provide evidence from the sources to support your answer.

### Evaluate

Why are the ancient sources about Thebes both useful to historians and also problematic?

### Synthesise

How did the pharaohs use both the temples on the east and the west bank of Thebes to demonstrate their wealth and power?

### Respond

From the three alternatives provided for the motives of the construction projects at Thebes, which do you think is the most convincing? Ensure you provide both an analysis and evaluation of your sources as part of your answer.

## Assessment

### Examination-style questions

1. What were the primary motivations for the pharaohs to build various structures at Thebes?
2. What do the archaeological remains of Thebes tell historians about ancient Egyptian society?
3. In what ways did the spheres of religion and politics overlap in ancient Thebes?

### Investigation tasks

1. What role did obelisks play in the constructions at Thebes?
2. What do the tombs in the Valley of the Kings tell historians about Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife during the New Kingdom period?
3. In what ways did the priesthood of Amun become a powerful political position in ancient Thebes?







## CHAPTER 15

## The fall of the Western Roman Empire

ALAN BARRIE

## TOPIC INTRODUCTION

## Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the geographical and historical context of the Roman Empire from its height of power to its decline with particular reference to the remains at key sites and other relevant sources
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources, e.g. authentication, excavation, reconstruction and/or conservation.

## Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the nature of governance and political developments
  - significant events and key individuals
  - social structure
  - cultural life and practices
  - religious beliefs and practices.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the limitations, reliability and usefulness of sources

and either

- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose by presenting an essay in response to historical sources

## KEY DATES (CE)

337–351

Up until Constantius's victory, Constantine's three sons fight to control the empire

361–363

The Romans fail to defeat the Persians. In the process, the Eastern Emperor Julianus is killed.

363–367

Eastern emperors are chosen by Roman generals

376

Due to Hunnic hostility, Thervingi chieftain Fritigern leads the Goths, now political refugees, to cross the Danube and enter the Eastern Empire

376–382

Gothic War: Civil unrest in Thrace results in the death of several Roman soldiers. Subsequently, Roman officer Lupicinus arrests Fritigern and the Greuthungi chieftain Alatheus.



or

- devise historical questions and conduct research and create a response that communicates meaning by presenting an independent source investigation.

## Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of the historical period around the fall of the Western Roman Empire
- evaluate changing interpretations of sources over time relating to an understanding of the period using, for example, new discoveries, research and technologies.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

### ROMANS

#### List of Roman Emperors 379–476 CE

(W = Western Emperors, E = Eastern Emperors)

Theodosius I (the Great, 379 CE)

Honorius (W, 393 CE)

Arcadius (E, 395 CE)

Theodosius II (E, 408 CE)

Valentinian III (W, 425 CE)

Marcian (E, 450 CE)

Maximus, Avitus (W, 455 CE)

Majorian (W, 457 CE)

Leo I (E, 457 CE)

Severus (W, 461 CE)

Anthemius (W, 467 CE)

Olybrius (W, 472 CE)

Glycerius (W, 473 CE)

Julius Nepos (W, 474 CE)

Leo II (E, 474 CE)

Zeno (E, 474 CE)

Romulus Augustulus (W, 475 CE)

### BARBARIANS

Alaric

Fritigern

Attila

Gaiseric

Odoacar

Theodoric the Ostrogoth

Theodoric the Visigoth

Arbogast

Ricimer

Jordanes

Gelimer

Totila

Gundobad

Ulfillus

Radagaisus

Athaulf

378

**9 August**

Roman Emperor Valens is killed in the Battle of Adrianople against an allied Gothic-Alanic force near Edirne, and his army is decisively defeated

379

**19 January**

The general Theodosius I the Great is declared Emperor in the East by Gratian

380

**27 February**

The Edict of Thessalonica, which proclaims Christianity to be the state church of the Roman Empire, is issued by Theodosius the Great

382

The title of Pontus Maximus (leader of the Church) is relinquished by the Roman emperors and given to the Bishops of Rome

**3 October**

The Gothic War (376–382) ends as the Goths are made foederati of Rome and granted land and autonomy in Thrace





## MAP



**SOURCE 15.2** Map of the Roman Empire

**383**

**25 August**  
Gratian executed by mutineers

**392**

**15 May**  
Valentinian II is found hanging in his residence, possibly murdered by the Frankish general Arbogast, Valentinian II's guardian  
**22 August**  
Eugenius is declared Augustus and ruler of the Western Roman Empire by Arbogast

**393**

**23 January**  
Honorius, son of Theodosius the Great, is declared Augustus and Emperor of the Western Roman Empire by his father

**394**

**6 September**  
Arbogast and Eugenius are killed by Theodosius the Great's forces in the Battle of the Frigidus, most likely near the Vipava

## KEY TERMS AND GROUPS

WORD	DEFINITION
<b>Alamanni</b>	a large Germanic tribe that settled on the upper Rhine near Gaul in around 200 CE. From the late 200s the Alamanni launched raids, which intensified in the 300s after the arrival of the Huns.
<b>barracks-room emperor</b>	term referring to emperors who ascended to power through the strength of their armies, reigning in the period following the fall of the Severi. Many barracks-room emperors were not pure Roman-born. These soldier-emperors were almost always at war, battling the Sassanids, Parthians and Barbarians.
<b>barbarian</b>	a member of a people not belonging to one of the great civilisations (Greek, Roman, Christian)
<b>Burgundians</b>	an eastern Germanic tribe that entered Roman territories with the Vandals, led by Rhadagaesius, and which plundered from the 410s CE. After settling in the Worms region, the Burgundians operated as Roman foederati. In the aftermath of the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the Burgundians migrated to Gaul in the south, and founded a Burgundian kingdom.
<b>Franks</b>	a very large German tribe situated between the Alamanni and the Saxon tribes on the northern Rhine, first emerging in the 250s CE. The Franks operated as Roman foederati. Eventually, in the 400s CE, they crossed the Rhine. Their acceptance in the west was assisted by their conversion to Catholic Christianity.
<b>Huns</b>	a Slavic-Turkic tribe from far central Asia. In the 350–370s CE, the Huns forced tribes westward to converge on the border of Roman lands, which eventually led to the migration of Germanic tribes into Roman territory. Those who resisted the Huns' westward push were subjugated and used as slaves in their armies. Rugilla and Attila led the Huns to raid East Roman areas from the 430s CE. In 451–453 CE, Attila took the Huns pillaging west. In 451 CE at the Battle of Catalaunian Plains, Aetius, Roman and German troops defeated the Huns, and by 455 CE, during the Germanic Uprising, the Huns were dispersed.
<b>limes</b>	Latin word referring to the areas located along the borders of the Rhine and Danube that were heavily fortified
<b>Marcomanni</b>	a western German barbarian tribe from the north-central Rhine that repeatedly invaded Roman territory in the 160s CE. Marcus Aurelius had to give a lot of attention to this threat.

395	398	402	406	408
<b>17 January</b> Death of Theodosius the Great. His sons succeed him: Arcadius, the elder, as Augustus in the eastern Byzantine Empire; and Honorius, under the regency of Magister militum Stilicho, as sole Augustus in the Western Roman Empire.	Gildonic War: After an unsuccessful rebellion against the Western Roman Empire, Gildo of Africa is killed	The Western Roman Empire's capital is relocated to Ravenna	<b>31 December</b> Foreign tribes including the Vandals, Alans and Suebi form a coalition and cross the Rhine to invade the Western Roman Empire	Honorius orders the assassination of Stilicho



WORD	DEFINITION
<b>Nicomedia</b>	ancient city located in Western Asia Minor. The tradition of emperors ruling from the east began there with Dicoletian.
<b>Ostrogoths</b>	tribe of eastern Goths of Arian Christian persuasion who settled to the north of Thrace in the Visigoth realms in the 370s, after being forced west from the Crimea and Black Sea area. In 378, the Ostrogoths assisted the Visigoths to defeat Valens. Since they pressured emperors, such as Zeno in the 470–480s, the Ostrogoths presented problems for East Rome. Zeno rid the east of the Ostrogoths by prompting their leader, Theodoric, to conquer Odovacar in the west and resettle there. Thus began the Ostrogothic Kingdom in Italy, located in Southern Gaul.
<b>Parthians</b>	long-established adversaries of the Romans in Mesopotamia. After re-entering hostilities in the 160s CE, they were conquered by Marcus Aurelius. Despite causing sporadic destruction, they were ultimately superseded by the greater threat of the aggressively expansionist Sassanids.
<b>Pax Romana</b>	meaning 'Roman peace', this term refers to the notion of a secure, peaceful Mediterranean world ensured by Roman governance, laws, and military force, which took place from the reign of Augustus to 200 CE
<b>Praetorian Guard</b>	a group of elite soldiers selected to protect the emperor and their family, operating from the start of the Empire period and disbanded by the end of third century. On occasion, the Praetorian Guards used their power to overthrow emperors and proclaim new ones.
<b>Quadi</b>	a barbarian tribe that lived outside the Roman borders in Pannonia (the Balkans). During the reign of Aurelius, the Quadi carried out westward raids.
<b>Sarmatians</b>	a group of lower Balkan Germanic tribes who carried out raids with the Quadi until they were defeated by Marcus Aurelius
<b>Sassanid</b>	a powerful Persian dynasty that defeated the Parthians in the 220s CE, pursued expansion in an unprecedentedly aggressive fashion, and presented major problems for military emperors of the third century CE. As far west as Palestine, the Sassanids reclaimed ancient Persian-held lands, and up until the 630s CE they were a significant military threat to Roman territory.

409	410	421	423
Alaric's Visigoths defy Honorius and the Eastern Emperor by invading and establishing governance over northern Italy <b>1 May</b> Emperor Arcadius dies	<b>24 August</b> Visigoths forces under King Alaric I sack Rome The last Roman forces withdraw from Britain, marking the end of Roman rule in Britain	<b>8 February</b> <i>Magister militum</i> , Constantius III, is appointed as co-ruler of the Western Roman Empire by Honorius, his brother-in-law <b>2 September</b> Constantius III dies	<b>15 August</b> Honorius dies





**WORD**

**DEFINITION**

**Vandals**

an eastern Germanic tribe who lived in the region beyond the Burgundians up until 400 CE. In 406 CE, the Vandals crossed the Rhine into Gaul at Mainz and proceeded to pillage their way across Gaul and Iberia. In 429 CE, they crossed into North Africa. They seized Carthage, and afterward became involved in piracy in the Mediterranean, cutting off Rome’s supply of food from North Africa. The Vandals voyaged up the Tiber and sacked Rome in 455 CE.

**Introduction**

Of all the complex topics across ancient history, the ‘fall’ of the Western Roman Empire is one of the most controversial and hotly debated issues that has generated, and continues to generate, a mountain of scholarship. This therefore makes the task of creating a historical narrative on this topic somewhat difficult, given the variety of interpretations of when, where, what, how and why did Rome fall, not to mention the question, did it even ‘fall’ at all? However, what is common across the third to sixth centuries of the Common Era are the mix of external pressures, internal weaknesses, and processes of change, adaptation, transformation, and strategies to enhance continuity and survival in the Roman Empire. For this chapter, you will decide for yourself which of the issues and factors are the most important in considering the nature of historical truth and accuracy when reconstructing and interpreting what actually happened in these dynamic centuries of human history.

Along with the key dates provided at the bottom of these pages, consider the following historical overview.

After the reign of the ‘good emperors’ Nerva (ruled 96–98 CE), Trajan (98–117 CE), Hadrian (117–138 CE), Antoninus Pius (138–161 CE), and Marcus Aurelius (161–180 CE), each of whom presided over the most majestic days of the Roman Empire, problems began to plague the great empire. Some see this as the beginning of the decline of the Roman Empire, but in fact it survived for at least another 300 years.

In the third century alone, these problems included:

- disease: the Antonine plague, c. 165–190 CE
- a deterioration in the quality and longevity of Roman Emperors: known as the Crisis of the Third Century, Military Anarchy, or the Imperial Crisis, 26 emperors came and went between 235 CE and 284 CE
- a resurgent, powerful, aggressive and highly militaristic Persian empire in the east, known as the Sassanid Empire
- incursions and invasions by ‘barbarians’ called Goths to the north, led by Cniva, a Gothic chieftain who invaded the Roman Empire
- the rise of Eastern Mystic religions
- economic downturns and depression.

**429–431**

An independent Vandal kingdom is founded in Roman Africa

**435**

The sovereignty of the Vandal kingdom in Africa is recognised by the Eastern Roman Emperor

**439**

The city of Carthage is captured by the Vandals

**447**

Battle of the Utus: Attila leads the Huns to a bloody victory against Byzantine forces

**450**

- Attila leads the Huns into Gaul
- Eastern Roman Emperor, Theodosius the Younger dies in a riding accident

Stability was restored in the next century by the emperors Diocletian and Constantine. But, according to the formative and influential view of the historian Edward Gibbon in his book *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776), the move towards Christianity – initiated by Constantine and formalised by Theodosius in 380 CE – was paramount in the weakening or dilution of the Roman character. Gibbon argues that this changed the traditional Roman mindset of militaristic devotion and civic duty to one of spiritual contemplativeness and peaceful isolationism, which in turn led to agrarianism replacing urbanisation, pro-Roman barbarian groups replacing Romans in the legions, and the rejection of material wealth which led to decline in tax revenue. However, many scholars who feel that Rome didn't fall but simply underwent a transformation, argue that these movements of change had begun long before the adoption of Christianity as the state religion.

The growth of the Hunnic Empire placed pressure on Rome's northern borders. Germanic groups (the Visigoths) seeking shelter from the Huns wanted to cross the Danube and Rhine rivers into Roman territory. But mutual mistrust and suspicion led to violence and disaster, with the Emperor Valens being defeated and killed in the Battle of Adrianople in 378 CE – the first defeat of a Roman army by an invader on Roman soil since Hannibal slaughtered the Roman legions at Cannae in 216 BCE. Then in 410 CE, the Visigoths captured and sacked Rome, a feat last achieved by the Gauls in 390 BCE, 800 years before.

From 440–530 CE the Huns, under their leader, Attila, ravaged the Roman Empire. Both the eastern and western parts of the Roman Empire had their wealth and revenues drained by having to pay ransoms to Attila or through the mass destruction of cities. After this, another Germanic group – the Vandals – sacked Rome in 455 CE. Finally, in 476 CE, a barbarian king (Odoacer) replaced the Roman Emperor (Romulus Augustulus), bringing about the end of the Roman Empire and the beginning of the barbarian kingdoms.

## The end of a civilisation

When does a civilisation end, when it loses its political freedom, or its socio-cultural identity? The historians advocating a transformation stance argue that Roman identity, traditions, language, structures – basically, Roman civilisation itself – continued well after 476 CE. Indeed, the quality of government under the Ostrogoths, particularly Theodoric the Great (ruled 488–526 CE), actually stabilised and enhanced Roman ideas and customs that lived through the secular administration of the new kingdoms and through the organisations of the Roman Catholic Church. These pro-transformation historians suggest that the real end of Roman power and influence can be found instead at either the mid-sixth century or the late seventh century.

The mid-sixth century saw the wholesale depopulation of the Mediterranean, especially Italy, through a plague in 541–542 CE that is estimated to have wiped out up to one quarter of the entire Mediterranean population. There were also the costly and damaging wars of reconquest by Justinian, the Eastern Roman Emperor, from 533–554 CE. Then, into this power and population vacuum, came the arrival in Italy of a new barbarian group – the Lombards, whose rule in Italy lasted from 568–774 CE. The rise of the Islamic Empire in the mid to late seventh century redirected the economic and cultural highways away from Europe and the Mediterranean Sea to a new Muslim trade corridor stretching from Spain, through North Africa, the Middle East, the Old Persian Empire, and still further eastwards along the Silk Road routes to China.

452

After a meeting at the Mincio with Pope Leo I, Attila abandons his invasion of Italy

455

**16 March**  
Assassination of Valentinian III (as ordered by the senator Petronius Maximus)  
**17 March**  
Maximus is proclaimed Augustus of the Western Roman Empire by the Senate

**31 May**  
Maximus attempts to flee Rome due to the Vandal advance but is killed by a mob in the process

**2 June**  
The Vandals sack Rome

**9 July**  
At Toulouse, Visigoth king Theodoric II pronounces *magister militum* Avitus as Augustus of the Western Roman Empire

It is thus in the sixth and seventh centuries, not the fifth, that historians of the transformationist tradition would argue that the end of Rome truly lies, and so the period of the fourth to the seventh centuries has been relabelled as Late Antiquity. This has been the most dominant thread regarding studies of late Rome in universities, but recent scholars such as Bryce Ward-Perkins, Peter Heather and Adrian Goldsworthy have, in the last decade, brought attention back to the fifth century as the space, time, and catalyst for lasting change.

Dr Florin Curta, at University of Florida, describes Late Antiquity as follows:

Late Antiquity is a field of research that witnessed an explosion of interest in the last few years. The relations between the Late Roman Empire and its neighbours across the frontier have by now become a key component of the study of Late Antiquity, as the historical model associated with the so-called 'ethnogenesis controversy' attempts to explain the change from the classical world to medieval conditions as the effect of ethnic identification supplanting Hellenistic forms of public discourse. Culturally specific dynamics of ethnicity, arising from proto-historical northern Europe, are seen as the engines of change. Recent critiques of the approach, however, see both its methodology and historiographic assumptions as problematic.

**SOURCE 15.3** Curta, F., 'The Empire and the Barbarians' course overview

An academic conference entitled 'Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity' has been held every two years since 1995. The publication of papers from 2005 included the following overview:

One of the most significant transformations of the Roman world in Late Antiquity was the integration of barbarian peoples into the social, cultural, religious, and political milieu of the Mediterranean world. The nature of these transformations was considered at the sixth biennial Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity Conference, at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in March of 2005, and this volume presents an updated selection of the papers given on that occasion, complemented with a few others. These 25 studies do much to break down old stereotypes about the cultural and social segregation of Roman and barbarian populations, and demonstrate that, contrary to the past orthodoxy, Romans and barbarians interacted in a multitude of ways, and it was not just barbarians who experienced 'ethnogenesis' or cultural assimilation. The same Romans who disparaged barbarian behaviour also adopted aspects of it in their everyday lives, providing graphic examples of the ambiguity and negotiation that characterized the integration of Romans and barbarians, a process that altered the concepts of identity of both populations. The resultant late antique polyethnic cultural world, with cultural frontiers between Romans and barbarians that became increasingly permeable in both directions, does much to help explain how the barbarian settlement of the west was accomplished with much less disruption than there might have been, and how barbarian populations were integrated seamlessly into the old Roman world.

**SOURCE 15.4** Abstract from Mathisen, R.W., & Shanzer, D. (Eds.), 2011, *Romans, Barbarians, and the Transformation of the Roman world: Cultural Interaction and the Creation of Identity in Late Antiquity*, Ashgate Publishing Ltd.

456

**17 October**

Following a military coup by the general Ricimer and the domesticus Majorian, Avitus flees Rome

457

Death of Avitus

**27 January**

Death of the Byzantine Augustus Marcian

**28 February**

Augustus Leo I, a Byzantine, is appointed Majorian Magister militum in the west

**1 April**

Majorian is declared Augustus of the Western Roman Empire by the army

461

**7 August**

After being tortured near the Staffora on Ricimer's orders, Majorian is killed

**19 November**

Libius Severus is elected as Augustus of the Western Roman Empire by his fellow Senators



## ACTIVITY 15.1

With reference to the previous historical overview, and especially to Sources 15.3 and 15.4, complete the questions below, giving clear reasons for your choices, in order to understand the concept of 'ethnogenesis'.

1. Which of the following mosaics do you think represents 'barbarian/s'?



SOURCE 15.5



SOURCE 15.6

2. Do you think the building below (depicted in a mosaic) was built by Romans or Barbarians?



SOURCE 15.7

3. Do you think this statue depicts Romans or barbarians?



SOURCE 15.8

(Answers are at the end of the chapter.)

465

**15 August**  
Death of Severus

467

**12 April**  
Anthemius is appointed  
Caesar of the Western  
Roman Empire by  
Byzantine emperor Leo

468

A joint Western Roman  
and Byzantine invasion  
fleet is destroyed by the  
Vandal Kingdom in the  
Battle of Cap Bon

472

- Ricimer conquers Rome and Anthemius is killed as he escapes. Olybrius is proclaimed Emperor
- Ricimer dies in August, and his nephew Gundobad becomes *magister militum*
- Olybrius dies in October or November.

# Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the reconstruction of a historical period in the Ancient World

## 15.1 Why did Rome 'fall'?

The study of the decline, fall, end or simply the evolution of civilisations is not only a matter of great interest in the study of history, but equips historians with an understanding of issues relating to change and continuity. As such, it is of interest to see if modern trends replicate past historical periods. Thus, is the study of history useful in our own understanding of the world today? Or is it dangerous to apply different historical contexts to modern day issues?

### The end of empire

By Steven Guess

Tuesday 20 January, 2009

*As America's global influence wanes, it can either learn from the Roman empire's mistakes or suffer the same fate*

Over 1500 years ago, Rome fell to Germanic tribes once seen by the empire as a mere nuisance. While the fall of the Roman Empire has spawned hundreds of theories and comparisons to modern troubles, this much at least is clear: no superpower is immortal. Americans seem unable to conceive of a world in which we are not supreme, but we are slowly getting the message. Much like the US today, Rome was once the world's sole superpower. An empire whose influence spanned across the entire Mediterranean and into Asia and Africa, few civilisations in history can rival the sheer breadth of Roman influence in global affairs. Rome's collapse was precipitated by numerous internal factors, but it also faced strengthening external threats that capitalised on the internal chaos of the western empire. The small tribes which had fought the empire for years on the margins of their territory joined forces to form more powerful coalitions that the empire was unable to resist with its border armies. Even toward the very end, the well-financed and organised Roman military was formidable, but too often Rome found itself wasting resources it desperately needed to survive on costly internal divisions. After the fall of the western empire, the eastern empire, which had separated years earlier, fought mightily to recover the territories lost to the Germanic tribes in the west. But it was a foolish endeavour. Emperor Justinian's attempts to re-conquer the west proved too difficult and merely wasted treasure and manpower. The eastern empire would have been far better off consolidating its defences to prepare for what new threats would come later rather than throwing good resources after bad. And thus the Roman empire, both east and west, found itself an increasingly small voice in a region of the world which once called them master.

473

**3 March**

- Glycerius is elected as Augustus of the Western Roman Empire by Germanic elements of the army
- Gundobad succeeds his father to become king of Burgundy, relinquishing his Western Roman titles in the process

Julius Nepos, the governor of Dalmatia, is appointed ruler of the Western Roman Empire in opposition to Glycerius by his uncle, Byzantine emperor Leo I

**18 January**

Emperor Leo II succeeds his grandfather Leo the Thracian on his death

474

**9 February**

Leo II's father, Zeno, is made co-Augustus of the Byzantine Empire

**July**

Nepos deposes Glycerius

**17 November**

Leo II dies, possibly due to being poisoned by his mother

As Barack Obama prepares to take office, some are predicting that America has reached the limits of its superpower status and is now facing a decline in our ability to shape world events. America, like Rome, seems to play by different rules from other nations in world affairs, a nod to the idea of 'American exceptionalism' and Reagan's 'Shining city on a hill'. By virtue of its economic and military power, as well as a political system extolled for its superiority to all other systems, America has been the leader of the free world for the last 60 years. But from China's rapidly rising status as a global player, to Russia's show of force in Georgia, to rising tensions in South Asia and the Middle East, America is facing a wide array of increasingly troubling threats, while struggling internally to recover from an economic collapse not seen since the Great Depression. American supremacy in a post-Cold War environment seems outmatched by a progressively more unstable world. Like Rome, America has spread itself too thin and is unable to respond to new threats as they emerge with either a convincing show of military force or a skilled use of soft power to leverage its credibility in the world. While the dangers we face were once diverse and scattered, the Iraq war pushed many of our enemies to see us as a common threat where religious differences would have otherwise made cooperation impossible. Moreover, in collapsing the Ba'athist regime of Saddam Hussein, America has paved the way for an even less palatable Iranian dominance in the region. While the comparison to ancient Rome is imperfect, there are nonetheless parallels worth considering. America today faces the same dilemma of the eastern Roman empire: should it attempt to regain its lost global supremacy or fortify and adapt to the new world? Will we follow Virgil's famous line from the Aeneid, 'Rome, it is thine alone, with awful sway, To rule mankind, and make the world obey,' or preserve our strength and create a framework for global cooperation in which America acts as a mediator and responsible actor rather than instigator. To be sure, America still boasts a powerful military and massive nuclear arsenal, and even under the most dire economic predictions, it is still a key player in global commerce. But if Roman history is any lesson, America must humble itself to its new position and work as a global partner instead of seeking to once again control the world in the palm of its hands. Hopefully America possesses the self-awareness that Rome did not, and will work to advance an agenda driven less by Machievelli than by self-interested cooperation.

**SOURCE 15.9** Guess, S., 2009, 'The end of empire', *The Guardian*

## 475

Due to a popular revolt, Zeno flees Constantinople for his homeland Isauria

**January**

**9 January**

- The Byzantine Senate acclaims Basiliscus, brother of Leo the Thracian's widow Verina, as Augustus of the Byzantine Empire
- Orestes, father of Romulus Augustulus, is appointed *magister militum* and commander-in-chief of the Western Roman military by Nepos

**28 August**

Orestes takes control of Ravenna, the Western Roman capital, and Nepos escapes to Dalmatia

**31 October**

The young Romulus Augustulus is declared Emperor of the Western Roman Empire by his father Orestes



## ACTIVITY 15.2

Read Source 15.9 and answer the following questions.

1. How and why, according to the author, did the Roman Empire 'fall'?
2. How, according to the author, is the US in 2009 in a similar situation as Rome in the fifth century CE?
3. What is the main point the author is trying to make? (Quote from the source.)
4. How valid do you think the comparison is?
5. Write a paragraph on the following:

What is the main message of the source, and to what extent does the evidence support the message? (Refer to the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 6*.)

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding in relation to specific historical periods in the Ancient World

### 15.2 Theories and explanations of a fall: Historiography

Traditions and theories concerning the nature of change and continuities in the era of Late Roman Empire/Early Middle Ages, otherwise known as late antiquity, vary considerably. There are three broad categories:

1. Internal decline (e.g. Christianity, foedarati, lead poisoning/sickness)
2. External pressure (the barbarians)
3. A system of transformation occurred, not a dramatic fall. Real change/fall occurred later (sixth to seventh centuries).

#### Internal decline

- a. Rome falls in the fifth century CE due to weaknesses that Rome itself was at fault for. In *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1766–88), Edward Gibbon argues that a decline in the civic virtue of the Roman citizens was the cause of Rome's fall. Basically, the adoption of Christianity as the state religion by the Emperor Constantine led to a significant change of character and focus, away from service to the state of Rome and from the essential militarism of the Roman character. The relative prosperity of Rome had set the Romans at ease, and the gradual outsourcing of the defense of the empire to barbarian mercenaries eventually led to Rome's downfall.
- b. Other historians who have followed this reasoning include historian Arthur Ferrill who, using the Roman historian Vegetius who pleaded for army reform, suggests that the flow of Germanic mercenaries into the ranks of the legions was largely to blame for the decline of the Roman military. This Germanisation, or barbarisation, which led to the sully of pure Roman culture, ultimately resulted in the disintegration

476

August Zeno recaptures Constantinople and accepts Basiliscus's surrender

**23 August**

Germanic foederati reject Western Roman authority and declare their general, Odoacer, as king

**28 August**

Orestes is captured and executed by Odoacer at Piacenza

480

**4 September**

• Odoacer declares himself king of Italy after conquering the Western Roman capital of Ravenna and forcing Romulus to abdicate

• Zeno is sent the imperial regalia of the Western Roman Empire by the Senate

**25 April**

Nepos murdered in his residence in Split

of power held by the Roman military and government. The standard of drill and general military preparedness throughout the Empire decreased, and as loyalty to individual commanders increased, loyalty to the Roman government declined.

- c. For A.H.M. Jones, the high taxation needed to defend the frontiers created a large scale decline in agriculture and cultivation of the land, as farmers working marginal land were unable to pay their taxes, and so abandoned their farms.
- d. According to James Burke and Arnold J Toynbee, the fall of the Roman Empire can be attributed to the fact that the empire relied too heavily on riches from conquered territories. The heavy financial burden of maintaining the Roman military increasingly had to be shouldered by Roman citizens as tributes from imperial territories declined. This was compounded by the empire's scarce supply of exportable goods, as well as the near-cessation of material innovation, in terms of both entrepreneurialism and technological advancement, which had already begun a long time before the complete disintegration of the empire. Moreover, the existence of a middle class with purchasing power was impeded by the economy, which was structured upon slave labour. Ultimately, as financial pressures increased, from both the military and from the excesses of the emperor, the capacity to alleviate these pressures deteriorated.
- e. Historian Michael Rostovtzeff and economist Ludwig von Mises both argue that the debasement of the currency in the third century, which involved reducing the gold, silver and bronze content of coins, was the cause for inflation. They propose that the scarcity of food, which was particularly felt by city-dwellers who relied on trade to acquire food, was caused by artificially low prices, which had plummeted well beyond their free-market equilibrium levels. As such, people steadily left the cities and urban areas for the country, regardless of laws that attempted to prevent this migration. As Roman citizens began to abandon their specialised trades in favour of subsistence farming, the empire consequently suffered a steep decline in trade and technical innovation. Combined with heavy-handed, arbitrary taxation, the overall wealth of the empire was left severely weakened.
- f. Similarly, Bruce Bartlett accepts that by the third century, the monetary economy had collapsed, but the armies still had to be paid (if not, the Emperor would be deposed). Therefore, the panicked actions taken by the Roman Empire to pay the armies, such as the direct requisitioning of physical goods including farmers' cattle and food, ultimately led to social chaos and an eventual disintegration of trade, according to Bartlett. To restore order to society, free people were commanded by the authorities to stay in the same occupation, a practice that was eventually applied to children; soldier's sons became soldiers by default, and farming families were bound to toil the land. At this time, many common people migrated to the countryside, where they tried to remain self-sufficient and avoid interaction with imperial authorities. Often, they joined existing wealthy estates. In Bartlett's view, Roman society started disintegrating into a number of individual estates that were self-sufficient, did not engage in trade, and operated as closed systems – precursors to feudalism.
- g. American anthropologist Joseph Tainter proposes in *The Collapse of Complex Societies* (1988) that with increased complexity comes an inherent decline in returns, as systems exhaust their resources to unsustainable levels. Archaeological studies of human bones from former areas of the Roman Empire found that average nutrition levels increased after the collapse. As common people were no longer

491

9 April  
Zeno dies

493

Italy becomes part  
of the Ostrogoth  
kingdom

518

9 July  
Death of  
Augustus  
Anastasius I  
Dicorus

527

1 April  
Justinian I the Great becomes  
co-augustus with his father  
Justin I  
  
1 August  
Death of Justin I

529

7 April  
Promulgation of the  
Codex Justinianus,  
an attempt to address  
contradictions in  
Roman law

532

Construction of  
the Hagia Sophia  
in Constantinople  
is ordered by  
Justinian the Great

required to function within the empire's oppressive complexity, they may have benefited. Ultimately, Tainter proposes that the fundamental cause of societal collapse in complex societies comes down to diminishing returns on investment, rather than the apparent range of causal factors for collapse, such as crop failures, diseases, invasions and environmental degradation.

- h. According to Adrian Goldsworthy, the collapse of the Roman Empire can be attributed to the relentless civil wars fought between separate factions of the Roman army fighting to gain control of the empire, rather than the decadence of the Roman legions. This constant conflict had a weakening effect on both the army and society, rendering it more vulnerable to attack from Rome's increasing number of enemies.
- i. In chapter three of *Plagues and Peoples* (1976), William H. McNeill argues that the Roman Empire declined due to depopulation caused by epidemics that swept the empire from 165 CE onwards. The immense army and state apparatus were too burdensome for the severely depleted population to support, which caused the additional decline of the economy and society, ultimately leading to the death of the Western Empire. Suffering from a weak economy and a scarce population, the Roman Army was compelled to hire barbarians in their fight against other barbarians.
- j. In Jeremy Rifkin's view, population and economic decline were caused by gradual environmental degradation.
- k. Jerome Nriagu, supported by Clair Patterson, argued that the Roman Empire collapsed as a result of lead poisoning.

### External pressure/catastrophic collapse

- a. J.B. Bury's *History of the Later Roman Empire* held that because the enrolment of large numbers of barbarians into the army had become crucial, luring them with the prospect of wealth and power was essential. While the Germans in high command such as Stilicho, Merabaudes, Arbogastes and Alaric had proven their usefulness, they had also exposed the dangerous nature of this arrangement. Eventually, the establishment of independent Germanic Kingdoms in what had previously been the Western Roman Empire was the end result of Rome's failure to accommodate the newcomers.
- b. Peter Heather puts forward that, already stretched financially and militarily through engagement in conflict with its eastern neighbours, the Sassanid Persians (226–651), the root cause of Rome's fall in the fifth century was the expansion of the Huns. Their rise led to Germanic groups like the Goths and Vandals applying pressure on the frontier with Rome, which led to the chaos and problems associated with these newcomers from 370–470.
- c. In his 2005 book *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization*, Bryan Ward-Perkins contends that a cycle of foreign invasions, ceaseless



**SOURCE 15.10** The emperor Honorius, a contemporary depiction on a consular diptych issued by Anicius Petronius Probus to celebrate Probus's consulship in 406

533

21 June

Vandalic War: General Belisarius leads a Byzantine force to depart for for the Vandal Kingdom.

13 September

Battle of Ad Decimum: A Vandal force is defeated by a Byzantine army near Carthage

15 December

At the Battle of Tricamarum, the Byzantines overpower a Vandal army, forcing the Vandal king Gelimer into flight

534

March

The Vandalic War ends with Gelimer's surrender to Belisarius and his acceptance of Belisarius's offer of a peaceful retirement.

The praetorian prefecture of Africa emerges from the former territories of the Vandals.

535

Gothic War

(535–554): Byzantine forces invade Sicily, then under the control of the Ostrogoths, after crossing from Africa





**SOURCE 15.11** Thomas Cole, *The Course of Empire*, 1836.

### ACTIVITY 15.3

Identify five features in the painting in Source 15.11 that support the notion of 'catastrophic collapse'. Why do you think this representation is problematic?

political instability and diminished tax revenue were to blame for the collapse of the empire. Constant invasions caused multiple issues: they prompted provincial rebellion as a form of self-defence, which diminished imperial resources, as well as diminishing the provincial tax base – necessary to pay and equip the army. In several areas of the former empire, the collapse was doubtlessly a disaster, Ward-Perkins argues, pointing to the archaeological record.

### Transformation

- For Henri Pirenne, the barbarians did not bring about real change; instead, they merely assisted in shaping the existing Roman institutions. Real change came with the Arabs. In the 1920s, Pirenne published the Pirenne Thesis, which held that the barbarians did not completely reject the Roman way of life when they invaded Rome, and instead, attempted to preserve it. Their intention was not to destroy, but rather to benefit from the institutions of Rome. Pirenne sees the rise of the Frankish realm in Europe as merely a preservation of the Roman Empire, and thus Charlemagne's crowning as the first Holy Roman Emperor, as a successor of the Roman Emperors, is considered valid. The Islamic

536

**December**

Gothic War (535–554): After little resistance from the Ostrogoths, Byzantine forces take Rome

537

**27 December**

The Hagia Sophia is completed

552

**July**

Battle of Taginae: At Gualdo Tadino, a Byzantine army defeats the Ostrogoths, killing the Byzantine king Totila

553

Battle of Mons Lactarius: At Monti Lattari, the Ostrogoth king Teia is killed after he and his forces are ambushed and defeated while travelling to relieve a Byzantine siege of Cumae

565

**March**

Death of Belisarius  
**14 November**  
Death of Justinian the Great

conquest of south-eastern Turkey, Syria, Palestine, North Africa, Spain and Portugal, and Arab pirates controlling the Mediterranean Sea, meant that economic ties to Europe were damaged. Consequently, while precious raw resources were exported from this region, nothing came back in return, rendering the region as a stagnant backwater cut off from trade. By the time of Charlemagne, Western Europe had suffered a steep decline into impoverishment, engaged in no long-distance trade, and had become almost completely agrarian from subsistence agriculture.

- b. In studying the Barbarian invasions, French historian Lucien Musset contended that the civilisation of Medieval Europe could be attributed to a synthesis of both the Germanic civilisations that spread into the Roman Empire and the Graeco-Roman world. Rather than falling or declining, the Roman Empire experienced transformation, as did the new Germanic invaders. Musset offered a wide array of evidence to support this theory, including the analysis of archaeological records, linguistic surveys of toponymy and anthroponymy, analyses of both the urban and rural society, and examinations of the institutions, art, religion and technology of the time.
- c. To historians of Late Antiquity, the notion that the Roman Empire fell at all is called into question. This field, pioneered by Peter Brown in 1971, re-shines the spotlight on Pirenne's thesis. Ultimately, this theory argues that there was no clear break between Roman and Medieval worlds, rather, there was a gradual transformation across the centuries. This field of study thus focuses on locating continuity between the Roman and Medieval worlds, and contends that Roman culture greatly informed Medieval culture. In *The World of Late Antiquity*, Brown asserts that the people of the late second and third centuries may not have been as threatened by the changing world around them – despite the public disasters, infirmity caused by urbanisation, the invasion of foreign culture and religion, and heightened religious hopes and fears – as we might think. He notes that the Mediterranean towns were small, isolated, 'fragile excrescences in a spreading country'.
- d. Other aspects of this academic school of thought include ideas about ethnic identity (ethnogenesis – the distinctions between 'barbarian' and 'Roman' are not as clear cut as they first seem), processes of transformation were occurring long before the appearance of the barbarians (such as ruralisation), the Germanic Kings ruled like (if not better than) Roman Emperors, that depopulation (and hence real change – socio-cultural in nature) occurred in the mid sixth century with a) Justinians wars of Reconquest in Italy, b) the Plague and finally c) The Lombard occupation of Italy. For example, John Moorhead, in *Gregory the Great* (2005), wrote:



**SOURCE 15.12** Tomb of Theodoric

568

The Lombards invade Italy

573

The Byzantine general Narses dies

578

**5 October** Justin II dies

602

Byzantine–Sasanian War of 602–628: The Sasanian Empire declare war on Byzantium

607

**1 August** The Column of Phocas in the Roman Forum is dedicated by Phocas

At the beginning of the sixth century, Italy had enjoyed peace and a degree of prosperity under the long rule of Theodoric, king of the Germanic Ostrogoths (493–526). But in 535 it was invaded by an army sent by the emperor Justinian to bring it back under the control of the Roman Empire, the capital of which was now Constantinople. The war between the Ostrogoths and the Empire lasted some twenty years, devastating the countryside and disrupting social organisation. Rome suffered repeated sieges, and during 546 the city lay uninhabited for forty days. The final victory of the Imperial forces left Italy dangerously open to the attentions of another Germanic group, the Lombards.

**SOURCE 15.13** Moorhead, J., 2005, *Gregory the Great*, Routledge, London, p. 4

## ACTIVITY 15.4

1. Identify the key reasons given for each of the three theories about the fall of the Roman Empire.
2. Which tradition thus far do you think is most valid? Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each, giving clear reasons as to why you think your view is correct.

## 15.3 Primary sources on the fall

Having studied the theories about the unique nature of the Roman Empire in the west in the fifth and sixth centuries, in order to make reasoned judgements about the correctness of each, one needs to study the primary source historical material of the era.

King Theodoric the Great ruled over the combined Gothic territories during the late fifth- and early sixth centuries. This letter is addressed to the Senate of the City of Rome.

We hear with sorrow, by the report of the Provincial judges, that you the Father of the State, who ought to set an example to your sons (the ordinary citizens), have been so remiss in the payment of taxes that on this first collection nothing, or next to nothing, has been brought in from any Senatorial house. Thus a crushing weight has fallen on the lower orders, who have had to make good your deficiencies and have been distraught by the violence of the tax gatherers.

Now then, oh Conscript Fathers, who owe as much duty to the Republic as we do, pay the taxes for which each of you is liable, to the Procurators appointed in each Province, by three instalments. Or, if you prefer to do so – and is used to be accounted a privilege pay, all once into the chest of the Vicarius. And let this following edict be published, that all the Provincials may know that they are not to be imposed upon and that they are invited to state their grievances.

**SOURCE 15.14** Letters of King Theodoric the Ostrogoth, Ruler of Italy, 493–526

626

632

634

1453

**June**  
Siege of Constantinople (626):  
Sasanian and Avar forces lay siege to  
Constantinople

Foundation of Islam by  
Mohammed in Mecca

**April**  
Muslim conquest of the  
Levant: A Rashidun army  
departs for the Levant from  
Medina

Constantinople conquered by  
Ottoman Muslims



In this extract Sidonius Apollinaris, c. 430–489 CE, describes the hospitality shown to the guests of King Theodoric II of the Visigoths.

His banquets do not differ to those of a private gentleman. You never see the vulgarity of a vast mass of tarnished plate, heaped upon a groaning table by a puffing and perspiring slave. The only thing that is weighty is the conversation: for either serious subjects are discussed, or none at all. Sometimes purple, and sometimes fine silk are employed in adorning the furniture of the dining room. The dinner is recommended by the skill of the cookery, not by the costliness of the provisions: the plate by its brightness, not by its massive weight. The guests are much more frequently called upon to complain of thirst, from finding the goblet too seldom pressed, than to shun sobriety by refusing it. In brief, one sees there the elegance of Greece and promptness of Italy, the splendour of a public along with the personal attention of a private entertainment, likewise the regular order of royal household.

**SOURCE 15.15** Sidonius Apollinaris on Theodoric II, King of the Visigoths, ruler of South Gaul, c.460

Here Orientius, Bishop of Auch and ambassador in Rome, describes the invasion of Gaul in 407–409:

The whole of Gaul smoked on a single funeral pyre.  
Some lay as food for dogs; for many, a burning roof  
both took their soul, and cremated their corpse.

**SOURCE 15.16** Orientius of Auch, *Commonitorium*

Procopius of Caesarea was a historian who lived in the first half of the sixth century. Here he comments on the Sack of Rome in 410 CE by King Alaric of the Visigoths.

For they destroyed all the cities which they captured, especially those south of the Ionian Gulf, so completely that nothing has been left to my time to know them by, unless, indeed, it might be one tower or one gate or some such thing which chanced to remain. And they killed all the people, as many as came in their way, both old and young alike, sparing neither women nor children. Wherefore, even up to the present time Italy is sparsely populated. They also gathered as plunder all the money out of all Europe, and, most important of all, they left in Rome nothing whatever of public or private wealth when they moved on to Gaul.

**SOURCE 15.17** Procopius of Caesarea, *History of the Wars*

Fifth-century African Bishop, Victor of Vita, enumerates some of the atrocities inflicted by the Vandals:

Some had their mouths forced open with poles and stakes, and disgusting filth was put in their jaws so that they would tell the truth about their money. They tortured others by twisting cords around their foreheads and shins until they snapped. Devoid of mercy they offered many people sea water, others vinegar, the lees of olive oil, fish sauce and many other cruel things, while wineskins were placed near their mouths. Neither the weaker sex, nor regard for nobility, nor reverence for the priesthood softened those cruel hearts; on the contrary, when they caught sight of some officeholder worthy of honour, the wrath of their fury was thereupon increased.

**SOURCE 15.18** Victor of Vita, *History of the Vandal Persecutions*

In this extract Procopius blames Valentinian III (425–455 CE) for the successes of the Vandal King Gaiseric in North Africa.

Thus Valentinian took over the power of the West. But Placidia, his mother, had reared this emperor and educated him in an altogether effeminate manner, and in consequence he was filled with wickedness from childhood. For he associated mostly with sorcerers and those who busy themselves with the stars, and, being extraordinarily zealous pursuer of love affairs with other men's wives, he conducted himself in a most indecent manner, although he was married to a woman of exceptional beauty. And not only was this true, but he also failed to recover for the empire anything of what had been wrested from it before, and he both lost Libya in addition to the territory previously lost and was himself destroyed. And when he perished, it fell to the lot of his wife and children to become captives.

**SOURCE 15.19** Procopius, *History of the Wars*

Here Procopius relates the reaction of Emperor Honorius on receiving the news that Rome had fallen to the Visigoths.

At that time they say that the Emperor Honorius in Ravenna received the message from one of the eunuchs, evidently a keeper of the poultry, that Rome had perished. And he cried out and said, 'And yet it has just eaten from my hands!' For he had a very large [rooster], Roma by name; and the eunuch comprehending his words said that it was the city of Rome which had perished at the hands of Alaric, and the emperor with a sigh of relief answered quickly, 'But I, my good fellow, thought that my fowl Roma had perished.' So great, they say, was the folly with which this emperor was possessed.

**SOURCE 15.20** Procopius, *Delphi Complete Works of Procopius*

The next source is from the Augnet website, a work of the Australian Province of the Order of St Augustine. It outlines St Augustine's response, in his book *The City of God* (early fifth century CE), to arguments that Christianity brought about the decline of Rome.

The sack of Rome in the year 410 was a disaster for which the Classical Roman consciousness was unprepared. Throughout the Empire people panicked. Pagans blamed the tragedy on the Christians. Rome had not been sacked in seven hundred years, and there was the fable of *Roma Aeterna*, Rome the Eternal City. The Christians had predicted the end of the world, the pagans said, and by refusing to offer sacrifices to the ancient Roman pagan gods, Christians had turned these gods against Rome. Pagans also accused Christians of undermining the empire by refusing to serve in the army. Even Christians expressed anxiety. Why were the righteous also suffering? Where was the kingdom of God on earth that had been promised?

The *City of God* was a response by Augustine to the crisis of the Roman Empire in the same manner that the book by Plato called *The Republic* was a reaction to the crisis of the Athenian polis. But whereas Plato expressed hope that a state founded on rational principles could remedy the abuses of Athenian society, Augustine maintained that the worldly city could never be the central focus and hope of a Christian. Augustine said that perfect government could not happen on earth, but that it belonged only to heaven.

He wrote that the attack of Rome in the year 410, therefore, should not upset Christians greatly, for the Christian faith belonged to the kingdom of the spirit and could not be identified with any particular kingdom on earth. He [said] that the collapse of Rome did not diminish the Christian religion, for the true Christian was a citizen of a 'heavenly city' that could not possibly be pillaged



by evil men, but would endure forever. Compared to heavenly city of God, the decline of Rome was unimportant. The welfare of the Christian religion was not to be identified with the material progress of Rome, or even with its very existence.

Augustine provided comfort to Christians worried by the fall of Rome. He said that both the decay and the prosperity of Rome meant nothing in comparison with the happiness that awaited them in the 'city of heaven'. They were told that the Christian religion was measured neither by the successes nor by the failures of Rome.

**SOURCE 15.21** 'The sack of Rome', Augnet website

St. Jerome (c. 340–420 CE) was baptised in Rome and is best known for translating the Bible into Latin. In 388 CE he moved to Israel and lived as a hermit. The following description of the devastation of the empire comes from a letter he wrote to Ageruchia, a lady of Gaul, in around 409 CE.

Savage tribes in countless numbers have overrun all parts of Gaul. The whole country between the Alps and the Pyrenees, between the Rhine and the Ocean, has been laid waste by hordes of Quadi, Vandals, Sarmatians, Alans, Gepids, Herules, Saxons, Burgundians, Allemanni and – alas! for the commonweal! – even Pannonians. For 'Assur also is joined with them'. The once noble city of Moguntiacum has been captured and destroyed. In its church many thousands have been massacred. The people of Vangium after standing a long siege have been extirpated. The powerful city of Rheims, the Ambiani, the Altrebatæ, the Belgians on the skirts of the world, Tournay, Spire, and Strasburg have fallen to Germany: while the provinces of Aquitaine and of the Nine Nations, of Lyons and of Narbonne are with the exception of a few cities one universal scene of desolation. And those which the sword spares without, famine ravages within. I cannot speak without tears of Toulouse which has been kept from failing hitherto by the merits of its reverend bishop Exuperius. Even the Spains are on the brink of ruin and tremble daily as they recall the invasion of the Cymry; and, while others suffer misfortunes once in actual fact, they suffer them continually in anticipation.

I say nothing of other places that I may not seem to despair of God's mercy. All that is ours now from the Pontic Sea to the Julian Alps in days gone by once ceased to be ours. For thirty years the barbarians burst the barrier of the Danube and fought in the heart of the Roman Empire. Long use dried our tears. For all but a few old people had been born either in captivity or during a blockade, and consequently they did not miss a liberty which they had never known. Yet who will hereafter credit the fact or what histories will seriously discuss it, that Rome has to fight within her own borders not for glory but for bare life; and that she does not even fight but buys the right to exist by giving gold and sacrificing all her substance?

**SOURCE 15.22** St. Jerome, *Letter CXXIII, to Ageruchia*, c. 409 CE

Cassiodorus was a Roman statesman in the administration of King Theodoric the Great of the Ostrogoths. A modern work, *The Ruin of the Roman Empire*, cites an observation he made about Romans and Goths.

Cassiodorus observed drily that it was poor Romans who imitated the Goths, just as rich Goths imitated the Romans.

**SOURCE 15.23** O'Donnell, J., 2009, *The Ruin of the Roman Empire*, p. 120

Saint Paulinus of Nola (354–431 CE) was not only a distinguished lawyer who held several public offices in the Roman Empire, but was also chosen to be Bishop of Nola. In this letter he encourages Crispinianus, a Roman soldier and a Christian, to leave the military and devote his life to God.



Do not any longer love this world or its military service, for Scripture's authority attests that whoever is a friend of this world is an enemy of God. He who is a soldier with the sword is the servant of death, and when he sheds his own blood or that of another, this is the reward for his service.

He will be regarded as guilty of death either because of his own death or because of his sin, because a soldier in war, fighting not so much for himself as for another, is either conquered and killed, or conquers and wins a pretext for death – for he cannot be a victor unless he first sheds blood.

**SOURCE 15.24** St Paulinus of Nola, *Letter 25, to Crispinianus*

Ammianus Marcellinus (330–395 CE) was a Roman soldier and historian. In this extract he describes the Battle of Hadrianopolis in 378 CE.

Many illustrious men fell in this disastrous defeat, and among them one of the most remarkable was Trajan, and another was Sebastian; there perished also thirty-five tribunes who had no particular command, many captains of battalions, and Valerianus and Equitius, one of whom was Master of the Horse and the other High Steward. Potentius, too, tribune of the promoted officers, fell in the flower of his age, a man respected by all persons of virtue, and recommended by the merits of his father, Ursicinus, who had formerly been commander of the forces, as well as by his own. Scarcely one-third of the whole army escaped. Nor, except the battle of Cannae, is so destructive a slaughter recorded in our annals; though, even in the times of their prosperity, the Romans have more than once had to deplore the uncertainty of war, and have for a time succumbed to evil Fortune; while the well-known dirges of the Greeks have bewailed many disastrous battles. ... Such was the death of [the Emperor] Valens, when he was about fifty years old, and had reigned rather less than fourteen years.

**SOURCE 15.25** Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, Book XXXI, 13–14.

Rutilius Numantius wrote this tribute to Rome while he was the City Prefect of Rome in 413 CE. Despite the fact that the city is in ruins, to him Rome is still the Eternal City.

**The Greatness of Rome in the Days of Ruin, 413 CE**

Give ear to me, Queen of the world which you rule,  
O Rome, whose place is amongst the stars!  
Give ear to me, mother of men, and mother of gods!

Through your temples we draw near to the very heaven.  
You do we sing, yea and while the Fates give us life,  
You we will sing.

For who can live and forget you?  
Before your image my soul is abased –  
Graceless and sacrilegious,  
It were better for me to forget the sun,  
For your beneficent influence shines  
Even as his light  
To the limits of the habitable world.  
Yea the sun himself, in his vast course,  
Seems only to turn in your behalf.  
He rises upon your domains;  
And on your domains, it is again that he sets.

As far as from one pole to the other spreads the vital  
power of nature, so far your virtue has penetrated over the earth.  
For all the scattered nations you created one common country.  
Those that struggle against you are constrained to bend to your yoke;  
For you proffer to the conquered the partnership in your just laws;  
You have made one city what was aforesaid the wide world!

O! Queen, the remotest regions of the universe join in  
a hymn to your glory!  
Our heads are raised freely under your peaceful yoke.  
For you to reign, is less than to have so deserved to reign;  
The grandeur of your deeds surpasses even your mighty destinies.

**SOURCE 15.26** Rutilius Numantius, *On His Return*, l.xi.47, 413 CE

In this extract Procopius comments on the plague that occurred in Constantinople in 542 CE.

During these times there was a pestilence, by which the whole human race came near to being annihilated. Now in the case of all other scourges sent from heaven some explanation of a cause might be given by daring men, such as the many theories propounded by those who are clever in these matters; for they love to conjure up causes which are absolutely incomprehensible to man, and to fabricate outlandish theories of natural philosophy knowing well that they are saying nothing sound but considering it sufficient for them, if they completely deceive by their argument some of those whom they meet and persuade them to their view. But for this calamity it is quite impossible either to express in words or to conceive in thought any explanation, except indeed to refer it to God. For it did not come in a part of the world nor upon certain men, nor did it confine itself to any season of the year, so that from such circumstances it might be possible to find subtle explanations of a cause, but it embraced the entire world, and blighted the lives of all men, though differing from one another in the most marked degree, respecting neither sex nor age.

**SOURCE 15.27** Procopius of Caesarea, *History of the Wars*, II.xxii-iii, c. 551 CE

The greatest work of Salvian, a fifth-century Christian writer, is *The Government of God*. In this extract he compares the actions of the Barbarians to those of the Romans.

It is urged that if we Romans are wicked and corrupt, that the barbarians commit the same sins, and are not so miserable as we. There is, however, this difference, that the barbarians commit the same crimes as we, yet we more grievously ... All the barbarians, as we have already said, are pagans or heretics. The Saxon race is cruel, the Franks are faithless, the Gepidae are inhuman, the Huns are unchaste, in short, there is vice in the life of all the barbarian peoples. But are their offenses as serious as ours? Is the unchastity of the Hun so criminal as ours? Is the faithlessness of the Frank so blameworthy as ours? Is the intemperance of the Alemanni so base as the intemperance of the Christians? Does the greed of the Alani so merit condemnation as the greed of the Christians? If Hun or the Gepid cheat, what is there to wonder at, since he does not know that cheating is a crime? If a Frank perjures himself, does he do anything strange, he who regards perjury as a way of speaking, not as a crime?

**SOURCE 15.28** Salvian, *De gubernatione Dei (De praesenti iudicio)*, c. 440

## ACTIVITY 15.5

### Primary source analysis

1. Fill in the table below to record which historiographical viewpoint each of these sources support:

- Internal decline
- External pressure
- Transformation

Source	Viewpoint (1, 2 or 3)	Best evidence/quotation from the source that proves this
15.14		
15.15		
15.16		
15.17		
15.18		
15.19		
15.20		
15.21		
15.22		
15.23		
15.24		
15.25		
15.26		
15.27		
15.28		

2. Based on this new material, which tradition now do you think is most valid? Have you changed your viewpoint or has it been strengthened? Give clear reasons for your thinking.

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about a historical period in the Ancient World

### 15.4 Author information

Author information is a key feature for successful evaluation of sources. By learning about the author, his/her 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. The following table gives some brief background information on the authors of the sources in the previous section.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orentius (or Orientius) of Auch</li> <li>• Fifth century CE: unknown birth year, c. 439</li> </ul>	<p>A Gaul who converted to Christianity, and became a hermit, and then Bishop of Auch in southern France. His elegiac poem <i>Commonitorium</i> describes how to get to heaven, and warns against various types of sin, especially sexual desire. The poem draws on the devastation of Gaul. Orentius became a Catholic saint.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victor Vitensis (of Vita)</li> <li>• Fifth century CE: c. 430, unknown death year</li> </ul>	<p>Little is known about the life of this bishop from the central part of Roman North Africa. He was the author of <i>Historia persecutionis Africanae Provinciae, temporibus Genserici et Hunirici regum Wandalorum</i> (<i>A History of the African Province Persecution, in the Times of Genseric and Huneric, the Kings of the Vandals</i>), published c. 488 CE. The work was previously divided into five books, but is now normally presented as three. The description of the reign of Genseric (427–77), who established the Vandal kingdom, is derived from other accounts, but Victor was an eyewitness to events during the time of Genseric's successor, Huneric. The focus of the work, as the title suggests, is on the cruelties the Vandals inflicted upon North African Christians. While the work may be exaggerated, it is felt that the events recorded did, in fact, occur.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sidonius Apollinaris</li> <li>• Fifth century CE: c. 430–489</li> </ul>	<p>A Gaul born in Lugdunum: both his father and his grandfather had been Prefect of Gaul. He was a poet and diplomat, and became Bishop of Auvergne in central France. Many of his letters survive, shedding light on the aristocratic Gallo-Roman network and other aspects of life at the time. They suggest that in personality, Sidonius was pleasant tempered, and enjoyed good living. Aside from his letters, he also wrote <i>Panegyrics</i> on several emperors, which cover a number of significant political events.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procopius of Caesarea</li> <li>• Sixth century CE: c. 500–c. 565</li> </ul>	<p>Probably born in Caesarea (modern Israel), Procopius was educated in the Greek classics, understood Latin, and became a rhetor (barrister) after studying law, possibly at Constantinople or Berytus (modern Beirut). From 527 to 544 he served as adsector (legal advisor) to Belisarius, the chief military commander of Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian I. His writings are the key source of information about the period of Justinian's rule. He wrote the eight volume <i>Wars of Justinian</i>, and also the <i>Buildings of Justinian</i>, which covers the emperor's public works. His best known work is <i>Secret History</i>; not published until centuries after his life, it covers the same period as <i>Wars</i> and <i>Buildings</i>, but deals with scandals that could not be included in the published history: the truth of some of this material is questionable.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flavius Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator</li> <li>• Fifth to sixth century CE: c. 485–c. 585</li> </ul>	<p>Cassiodorus was born to a family of possibly Syrian origin, based in Scylletium (southern Italy). Many of his ancestors had been prominent state ministers. His father was governor of Sicily, and the young Cassiodorus became his <i>consiliarius</i> – a form of legal advisor – and became recognised for his knowledge of the law. After working as a <i>quaestor</i> and a consul, he entered the administration of the Ostrogoth king, Theodoric the Great, and his successor Athalaric. His final role was as praetorian prefect for Italy, essentially heading up the Ostrogothic civil government. Throughout all this time, Cassiodorus maintained extensive records of public affairs, and due to his literary skill he was often asked to draft important public documents and official correspondence. Towards the end of his life, he founded a monastery, Vivarium.</p>

## ACTIVITY 15.6

Revisit the source extracts by Orientius, Victor Vitensis, Sidonius Apollinaris, Procopius of Caesarea and Cassiodorus, considering what you now know about the authors. For each source, respond to the following questions.

1. Who is the source by?
2. Who is it for (audience)?
3. Is this information useful in anyway with regards to understanding the intent of the source? How?
4. Based on this new biographical material provided, which primary source authors do you think are most reliable? Give reasons for your response.
5. Alternatively, how might author information help weaken the validity of a particular source? Give reasons.
6. Link quotes from the information about the primary source authors to the primary source examples themselves when completing questions 4 and 5.
7. After completing these steps, consider which tradition you now think is most valid. Have you changed your viewpoint again or has it been strengthened? Give clear reasons for your thinking.



**SOURCE 15.29** *The Favorites of the Emperor Honorius*, John William Waterhouse, 1883. What does the painting imply about the nature of the Roman emperor's court in the fifth century?

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- The study of the decline, fall, end or simply the evolution of civilisations is not only a matter of great interest in the study of history, but also equips historians with an understanding of issues relating to change and continuity.
- Traditions and theories concerning the nature of change and continuities in the era of Late Roman Empire/ Early Middle Ages, otherwise known as Late Antiquity, vary considerably.
- Rome fell in the fifth century CE due to weaknesses that Rome itself was at fault for.
- The Roman Empire became reliant on the large numbers of barbarians enrolling in the army, and so they lured them with the idea of power and wealth in exchange for their services
- The barbarians did not bring about real change; instead, they merely assisted in shaping the existing Roman institutions.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

In groups, create a game (such as Kahoot) that tests your knowledge of the key terms, concepts and issues, and use it to test the rest of the class.

### Devise

Select an issue from the chapter. Generate an investigation question and sub-questions as necessary and ensure your research includes primary and secondary sources.

### Analyse

Choose an extract from a primary or secondary source. What is the main message of that source? What are the most significant parts of the source that go towards creating that message? Prioritise those parts in order of importance.

### Synthesise

Create your own hypothesis about the nature of the 'fall' of the Roman Empire. What are the strengths of your position? What are the weaknesses in the alternatives?

### Evaluate

Using a primary and secondary source gathered from the 'Devise' section, evaluate its usefulness and reliability. In so doing, identify the author or creator's perspective and explain how that influenced the work they produced.

### Respond

Using the research conducted for the 'Devise' consolidation question, present your findings to the class in a format of your choice (visual, oral or written).



## Assessment

### Examination-style questions

1. In studying the fall of the Roman Empire, what actually 'falls'?
2. Does the surrender of one's political and military systems, but the survival of its social customs and cultural identity, represent a greater sense of continuity rather than change?
3. Did the Roman Empire collapse from external pressures, implode from within, or did it survive the fifth century (although in a weaker state)?

### Investigation tasks

1. In examining the literature from Roman writers pre-476 CE and post-476 CE, to what extent were the writers themselves aware that a great and dramatic change for the worse had occurred?
2. Evaluate the statement that 'Constantine's adoption of Christianity as the state religion of Rome weakened, rather than strengthened, the Roman Empire'.

## Answers for Activity 15.1

Here are the details of Sources 15.5 to 15.8. Don't be concerned if you got any wrong! Completing this activity should have helped you to see that in fact there was very little distinction between Romans and Barbarians, due to ethnogenesis (cultural assimilation).

1. Even though the figures in both mosaics have round shields, and appear to be dressed in a similar fashion, in fact the ones on the left are barbarians (the barbarian bodyguard of Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian) while the one on the right is a Roman soldier taking part in an animal hunt.
2. The pillars and styling may suggest that this is a Roman building, but it was actually the palace of the barbarian Theodoric, the Great king of the Ostrogoths.
3. The longer hair and necklaces suggest that these were barbarians: short hair was the norm in the Principate. However, the statue – from a bas-relief on the base of Theodosius I's obelisk in Constantinople (c. 390) – depicts Roman soldiers: troops belong to a regiment of palatinae detailed to guard the emperor. But this does not mean they were not also barbarians, as more than one third of soldiers in the palatini were barbarian-born by this time. In particular, the necklaces with regimental pendants and the long hair were styles imported by barbarian recruits.





# CHAPTER 17

## Thutmose III

ALAN BARRIE

### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the geographical and historical context of Thutmose III
  - family background and status
  - key events in his rise to prominence
  - significant influences on early development.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the career of Thutmose III
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - change of role, position, status over time
  - depictions of Thutmose III during his lifetime
  - possible motivations for actions
  - methods used to achieve aims
  - relationships with groups and other individuals
  - significant events in the career of Thutmose III
  - manner and impact of his death
  - judgements of Thutmose III by other individuals in his lifetime and after his death, e.g. in writings, images and film.
- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose by completing short responses to historical sources.

### KEY DATES

1479 BCE

Following the death of Thutmose II, Hatshepsut becomes regent for Thutmose III

1479–1458 BCE

Reign of Queen Hatshepsut as Pharaoh of Egypt

1458–1425 BCE

Reign of Thutmose III in Egypt





## Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the impact and legacy of Thutmose III
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - assessments of life and career of Thutmose III
  - the influence of Thutmose III on his time
  - the long-term impact and legacy of Thutmose III.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- Thutmose III (*variant spellings: Thutmosis, Thothmes*)
- Thutmose II
- Hatshepsut
- Amenemhat (oldest son)
- Neferure
- Amunemhab

Wives of Thutmose III:

- Satiah
- Merytre-Hatshepsut (mother of future king Amenhotep II and the daughter of the divine adoratrice Huy). With Merytre-Hatshepsut, he also had a son, Menkheperre, and four daughters: Nebetiunet, Meryetamun, Meryetamun and Iset.
- Nebtu
- Three foreign wives: Menwi, Merti, Menhet
- Neferure, Thutmose III's half-sister. However, there is no conclusive evidence for this marriage.

c. 1458 BCE c. 1457 BCE

1425 BCE

- A Canaanite alliance is led by Kadesh and Megiddo against Thutmose III's Egyptian invasion
- In the Battle of Megiddo, a coalition of Canaan, Kadesh, Mitanni and Megiddo, led by the Kadesh king Durusha, is defeated by Thutmose III of Egypt

Thutmose III dies





# MAP



**SOURCE 17.2** Map of the Egyptian Empire during the reign of Thutmose III



## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Abydos</b>	a city associated with the god Osiris, who was lord of the underworld. Location of many funerary temples for worship of past pharaohs.
<b>Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV)</b>	one of the last pharaohs of the 18th dynasty, whose reign is known as the Amarna period. Worshipped the Aten sun-disc and considered by many to have been a religious fanatic.
<b>Amun-Re</b>	(also spelled Amun-Ra) the major god of Thebes who was designated as the king of the gods of the Egyptian pantheon during the New Kingdom era
<b>Asiatic</b>	the name used by Egyptians to refer to anyone from the eastern regions, including Canaan and Syria-Palestine
<b>Atum</b>	an Egyptian god of creation, considered the first god by many Egyptians
<b>Baal</b>	a Canaanite god
<b>Canaan</b>	the southern region of the Levant, roughly where modern day Israel and Palestine are located
<b>chariot</b>	a two-wheeled vehicle pulled by horses, these mobile fighting platforms were an essential weapon for the Egyptian armies during the New Kingdom. Egyptian chariots contained two soldiers: one driver and one archer.
<b>delta</b>	the region in the north of Egypt where the Nile River spreads out into many channels as it approaches the Mediterranean Sea, making it a fertile and important place
<b>dynasty</b>	a family of rulers where the position of king is passed down from one generation to the next, and thus also the name given to periods of time in Egypt's history where the position of pharaoh was controlled by a single family and passed on through the family line of inheritance. Ancient Egypt is divided by historians into 30 dynasties – Thutmose III was a pharaoh of the 19th Dynasty.
<b>Horus</b>	the falcon-headed sky god, the pharaoh was seen as the physical embodiment of this god
<b>inscription</b>	a piece of writing, e.g. carved into stone
<b>Kadesh</b>	the city that represented a threat to Thutmose III at Megiddo
<b>Karnak</b>	Egypt's major temple complex in the New Kingdom
<b>kingdom</b>	the name given to a region ruled by a king, and used for the long periods of Egypt's history when pharaohs had relatively secure control over Egypt's borders and people
<b>Levant (also called Syria-Palestine)</b>	the name given to the region that includes Syria, Palestine and Israel
<b>Libya</b>	the region to the west of Egypt





TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Luxor</b>	a temple located near Karnak, on the east side of the Nile opposite Thebes
<b>maat</b>	a very important Egyptian concept roughly meaning harmony or balance; Maat was also the goddess who personified these concepts
<b>Megiddo</b>	The Battle of Megiddo, which took place in the fifteenth century BCE, was a clash between a large coalition of rebellious Canaanite vassal states, led by the Kadesh king, and Pharaoh Thutmose III's Egyptian forces
<b>Mitanni</b>	a Hurrian-speaking state in northern Syria and southeast Anatolia from c. 1500–1300 BCE
<b>Montu</b>	an Egyptian god of war
<b>mortuary temple</b>	a temple used for worship of a deceased pharaoh
<b>Nukhashshe</b>	an area that was inhabited by semi-nomadic people
<b>Nubia</b>	(also known as Kush) region to the south, directly controlled by Egypt
<b>obelisk</b>	a stone pillar used as a monument, tapering to a point at the top
<b>propaganda</b>	the selective presentation and dissemination of information to promote a particular point of view
<b>Re (or Ra)</b>	chief god of the Old Kingdom. In the New Kingdom, he was combined with the new chief god, Amun, to make the god Amun-Re.
<b>Re-Harakhte</b>	a form of Re associated with Horus. Egyptians had a tradition of conflating existing gods to create new gods.
<b>relief</b>	a sculptural technique involving carving sculptural images out of a stone surface – the sculptural images remain attached to the stone background
<b>Retenu</b>	Canaan
<b>Sed festival</b>	a jubilee celebration to commemorate the event of a pharaoh's 30th year on the throne
<b>Set</b>	one of the primary Egyptian gods, associated with chaos and war
<b>smiting</b>	another term for striking. Pharaohs traditionally had artwork commissioned that depicted them in a smiting pose, holding a weapon in one hand and a captured enemy prisoner in the other.
<b>stelae</b> <i>(singular: stela)</i>	stone slabs used to bear inscriptions
<b>temple</b>	a religious building used for worship of gods
<b>Thebes</b>	the capital city for most pharaohs of the new Kingdom
<b>Viceroy of Kush</b>	the title of the governor of the region of Nubia, he reported directly to the pharaoh
<b>visual representation</b>	the phrase used in this chapter to refer to pictorial inscriptions or carvings on rock that depict individuals or events

## Introduction

The entry on Thutmose III in the online *Ancient History Encyclopedia* comes to the following conclusion:

Thutmose III essentially created the Egyptian empire single-handedly. He elevated Egypt's status as a powerful and prosperous nation, employed the people in monumental building projects, and epitomised the ideal of the valiant Egyptian warrior-king who led his forces to successive victories. Thutmose III's consideration for his enemies in defeat and gentle treatment of them made him respected far beyond the boundaries of his country. He established an empire stretching from the Euphrates River in Mesopotamia, through Syria and the Levant, down through Nubia to the Fifth Cataract of the Nile. Although there is little doubt that the people of these lands would have preferred their independence, they prospered under his reign through the peace he established and maintained through his military and diplomatic skills. In every respect, Thutmose III represented the ideal pharaoh to his people and his memory has endured to the present day as one of the greatest kings of ancient Egypt.

**SOURCE 17.3** Mark, J.J., 2017, 'Thutmose III', *Ancient History Encyclopedia online*

This chapter will examine these claims.

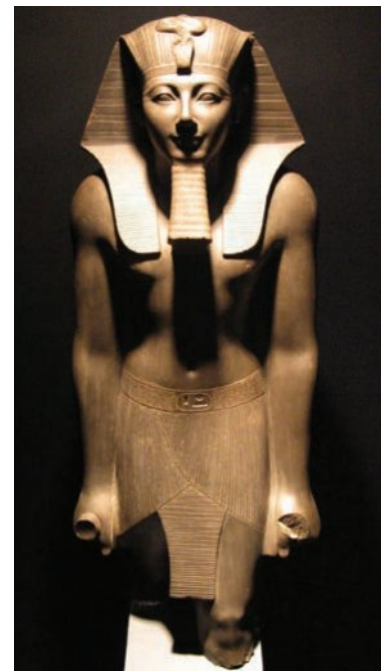
Another idea to bear in mind when studying Thutmose III is the following, from leading English archaeologist and Egyptologist Barry Kemp. In his 2006 book *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilisation* he considered the issue of power and authority, comparing power in antiquity to power today:

Those who actually seek power find aspects of the ancient stage-managed style irresistible. They build monuments, they elevate symbols, they identify enemies to smite ... the forms and trappings of rule by a divine leader have shown a remarkable capacity to adapt and to live on, often much loved.

**SOURCE 17.5** Kemp, B., 2006, *Ancient Egypt: An anatomy of a civilisation*, Routledge, p. 247

You will revisit this statement at the end of your study of Thutmose III.

The controversy surrounding Thutmose III's relationship with Hatshepsut is covered elsewhere in this textbook, particularly in Chapter 6: Hatshepsut. This chapter however will focus on elements of Thutmose III's reign such as the Battle of Megiddo, his other conquests, and his building constructions, and explore whether or not the historical reality of his rule matches the image that he projected.



**SOURCE 17.4** Thutmose III statue in Luxor Museum

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### 17.1 The nature of divine rule in Thutmose III's reign

Divine kingship was one of the fundamental aspects of ancient Egyptian religion. Religion and politics were entwined in the person of the pharaoh, with the ruler being perceived as either a living god or a divinely

appointed agent of god. The pharaoh was thus both the head of state and the intermediary between the gods and the people, ruling with the blessing and support of the deities.

The following two sources are from a stela in the temple of Amun-Re at Karnak. It was written to celebrate the conquests of Thutmose, and is in the form of a speech by Amun-Re.

### **The prologue**

I shine for love of you, my heart exults  
At your good coming to my temple.  
My hands have endowed your body with safety and life.  
How pleasant to my breast is your grace!  
I placed you in my temple and did signs for you  
I gave you valor and victory over all lands  
I set your might, your fear in every country  
The dread of you as far as heaven's four supports.  
I magnified your awe in every body,  
I made your person's fame traverse the Nine Bows.  
The princes of all lands are gathered in your grasp.  
I stretched my own hands out and bound them for you.  
I fettered Nubia's Bowmen by ten-thousand thousands,  
The northerners a hundred thousand captives.  
I made your enemies succumb beneath your soles,  
So that you crushed the rebels and the traitors.  
For I bestowed on you the earth, its length and breadth.  
Westerners and easterners are under your command  
You trod all foreign lands with joyful heart.  
None could approach your majesty's vicinity,  
But you, with me your guide, attained them  
You crossed the water of Nahrin's Euphrates  
In might and victory ordained by me.  
Hearing your battle cry they hid in holes  
I robbed their nostrils of the breath of life,  
And made the dread of you pervade their hearts.  
My serpent on your brow consumed them.  
She made quick booty of the evildoers.  
The lowlanders she swallowed by her flame,  
Asiatic heads she severed, none escaped.  
The foes were tottering before her might.  
I let your valor course through every land  
The gleaming diadem protected you  
In all that heaven circles none defy you  
They came bearing their tribute on their backs,  
Bowed down before your majesty as I decreed.  
The foes who came toward you I made weak.  
Their hearts aflame, their bodies trembled.

**SOURCE 17.6** Extract from the poetical stela of Thutmose III, Temple of Amun-Re



### The poem

I came to let you tread on Djahi's chiefs.  
I spread them under your feet throughout their lands:  
I let them see your majesty as lord of light,  
so that you shone before them in my likeness  
I came to let you tread on those of Asia.  
to smite the Asians heads in [Retenu]:  
I let them see your majesty clad in your panoply  
I came to let you tread on eastern lands.  
I let them see your majesty as shooting star.  
I came to let you tread on western lands,  
I let them see your majesty as youthful bull.  
when you displayed your weapons on your chariot.  
to crush the dwellers in the realm of god's land:  
that scatters fire as it sheds its flame.  
Keftiu, Isy are in awe of you:  
firm-hearted, sharp of horns, invincible  
I came to let you tread on lowlanders.  
I let them see your majesty as crocodile.  
I came to let you tread on islanders.  
I let them see your majesty as the avenger  
I came to let you tread on Tjehenu,  
I let them see your majesty as fearsome lion,  
I came to let you tread on earth's limits  
[Mitanni's] regions cringe in fear of you:  
master of terror in the water, unapproached  
the sea-borne people hear your battle cry:  
standing in triumph on his victim's back  
the Utjentiu isles are in your power;  
as you made corpses of them in their valleys.  
what ocean circles is enfolded in your fist:  
who grasps what he espies as he desires  
I let them see your majesty as falcon-winged  
I came to let you tread on border people.  
I let them see your majesty as southern jackal  
I came to let you tread on Nubians;  
I let them see your majesty as your Two Brothers.  
to bind as captives those upon the sand  
the racer, runner, roving the Two Lands.  
as far as Shat you hold them in your grasp:  
whose hands I joined for you in victory

**SOURCE 17.7** Extract from the poetical stela of Thutmose III, Temple of Amun-Re

## ACTIVITY 17.1

Review Sources 17.6 and 17.7 and answer the following questions. Support each response with specific examples and quotations from the source.

1. How does the poetry link Thutmose to nature?
2. How is the divinity of the pharaoh expressed?
3. How is he linked to other divine elements (such as other gods)?

## 17.2 The achievements of Thutmose III

### What kind of kingdom did Thutmose III inherit?

At the time of Thutmose III's father's death and his stepmother Hatshepsut's accession as regent and reigning monarch, Thutmose III was only three years old. Born c.1479 BCE, Thutmose III grew up during most of the New Kingdom period (c. 1550–1069 BCE), residing at the royal court of Thebes, Egypt's capital. Little documentation exists to paint a detailed picture of his life at this time; however, as the physical and intellectual development of princes of the New Kingdom of Egypt was greatly stressed, guesses can be made about the happenings of Thutmose III's early life.

As he was expected to eventually rule a growing empire, Thutmose III likely spent much of his early years at school, learning about military tactics and strategies, and developing skills in athletics, archery, horsemanship and hand-to-hand combat. As New Kingdom pharaohs were traditionally exposed to warfare from an early age, it is also likely that Thutmose went along on Hatshepsut's early campaigns. Despite the fact that Thutmose III undoubtedly prioritised his military training, battle tactics, and knowledge of weaponry, he was also a man of thought and learning. From his later reign, it is evident that Thutmose was a sophisticated, highly cultured individual who appreciated the importance of music and art, recognised the value of foreign culture, and possessed deep respect for the value of human life.

Thutmose III grew up during one of Egypt's most prosperous periods. As such, there was little need for military action or force; once the campaigns to secure Hatshepsut's position were undertaken, there were no other campaigns launched throughout her reign. Small troops of the army were deployed to protect Egypt's borders and to guard trade expeditions. However, the speed at which Thutmose III was able to mobilise and lead the armies once he was ruler reflects the fact that Hatshepsut did not allow the military to weaken or stand idle on her watch.

Thutmose III was married to Hatshepsut's daughter, Neferu-Ra, possibly in order to secure succession. Despite this, it appears that Thutmose III did not spend much time at court after his youth. According to the orientalist James Henry Breasted, it is possible that he lived among the soldiers from an early age, in order to prove his value to Hatshepsut's reign. It was not uncommon for reigning monarchs to do away with noble princes who were viewed as a potential threat; Thutmose III's great ambition led him to avoid such vulnerability. This tactic proved successful; Thutmose III was appointed in command of the armies by the end of Hatshepsut's reign. After her death in 1458 BCE, Thutmose III ascended to the throne. He was immediately faced with rebellion from the Egyptian-controlled states of Canaan and Syria, despite the tight control Hatshepsut had wielded over Egyptian provinces and borders during her reign. This sparked Thutmose III's first military campaign, as he was uninterested in negotiation and determined to keep these provinces within the empire.

## What was the nature of Thutmose III's military conquests and achievements?

In the space of twenty years, Thutmose III led his army through seventeen successful military campaigns as pharaoh. The specifics of these victories were memorialised through inscriptions at the Temple of Amun at Karnak. These narratives are considered to be the most expansive records of ancient Egyptian military history in existence. The inscriptions hold varying levels of narrative detail; the Battle of Megiddo – his first campaign – is the most precise and thorough, whereas later campaigns are recorded with less flourish. Rather than detailed narratives of the pharaoh's victorious battles, later inscriptions are simpler, just describing lists of spoils. Scholars have theorised that this decline in the narrative form possibly indicates a change in the purpose of these inscriptions, from narrative to pragmatic lists, though this theory is not sound. In the centuries following Thutmose III's reign, there are indeed many instances of this detailed narrative form, notably regarding Kadesh and Rameses III's (1184–1153 BCE) victory over the Sea Peoples. A likely theory is that after the Megiddo narrative was completed, the writer died, meaning that the brevity of the later inscriptions was due to a different writing style.

### Megiddo

Thutmose's private secretary, military scribe, and general Tjaneni (also known as Thanuny, c.1455 BCE), was the writer of the narrative of the Battle of Megiddo. Present at the event, he kept a diary on a leather scroll. Later, this scroll was stored at the Temple of Amun at Karnak in Thebes. Thutmose III felt such admiration for Tjaneni's narrative of the battle that he ordered it to be inscribed on the walls of this and other temples. In these inscriptions, Thutmose III is characterised in a positive light, as a great commander confident of victory due to his faith in his and his troops' abilities. Tjaneni documented one of the more well-known events of the Battle of Megiddo, in which Thutmose III discusses the march to Megiddo with his senior personnel. The pharaoh reveals that rather than taking wide, easily accessible roads from Aruna, the army will have to march single-file down the narrow road. However, the generals say that have recent intelligence that the enemy is waiting to ambush them at the pass from the Aruna road to the Megiddo plains, and warn that while the vanguard fights the enemy, the rearguard will still be marching. On hearing their counsel, Thutmose III reaffirms that he will take the Aruna road route, and that they may take whichever road they choose. Ultimately, the generals follow Thutmose III's path.

This story is particularly revealing of Thutmose III's character; no matter the difficulties, he tended to follow the path he thought best. To Thutmose III, taking the Aruna road was imperative to their victory, as he recognised that it provided the army with the crucial element of surprise, despite the fact that this journey was difficult and required the army to dismantle and carry the supply wagons and chariots. As Thutmose III predicted, the enemy was waiting for the army on the two easier roads, not the Aruna road, as they did not expect that Thutmose III would lead his large military forces down such a narrow path. The next morning, after a brief respite, the army, lead from the front by Thutmose III, attacked the enemy and drove them from the battlefield. However, Thutmose III's forces did not seize complete victory, as, according to the inscription, they took too long to take the city and pursue survivors, and instead gathered the spoils from the fallen enemy soldiers. Consequently, the people of Megiddo had time to prepare themselves for attack, but ultimately, Thutmose III's forces surrounded the city with a moat and stockade and sieged the city for the next seven or eight months. On their surrender, Thutmose III offered the people of Megiddo generous terms, such as agreeing not to kill their ringleaders, in exchange for a guarantee that Megiddo would never again create rebellion. En route back to Egypt, Thutmose III's army harvested the crops of Megiddo, taking them home as well as the large amount of spoils.

At the siege of Megiddo, Thutmose III also initiated one of his campaign traditions: to take the defeated king's noble children and educate them in the ways of the Egyptians. By holding these



children as hostages, the Egyptians ensured that their parents would maintain obedience to Thutmose III, though they were treated as royals and given many privileges and freedoms. Through this policy, Thutmose III ensured the future obedience of these provinces, because when these noble children came of age and rose to positions of power, they were supportive of Egypt, its culture, and the state's interests. Another benefit of Thutmose III's victory at Megiddo was the control it gave him over northern Canaan, which, due to its proximity to Syria, gave him a strategic edge in his campaign to take Kadesh. He launched a campaign against the Mitanni, erecting a monument at the Euphrates River, as commemorated in the 'Thutmose III's Hymn of Victory' inscription at Karnak. Further successful campaigns were fought against the Nubians. Thutmose III was responsible for enlarging Egypt's territories, assets and wealth to levels far higher than any previous ruler, all by his 50th year. Indeed, by this point, Egypt had surpassed the level of wealth accumulated at the beginning 4th Dynasty of the Old Kingdom of Egypt (c. 2686–2160 BCE).

### How and why was Thutmose III such a great builder?

The reign of Thutmose III was a time of great activity in terms of art, design and construction; he was not solely focused on military campaigns. Thutmose III's commissioning was extensive – he commissioned more than 50 temples – and of extremely fine quality. Indeed, Thutmose III's artisans produced some of the finest work in Egypt's history, including monuments and elaborately decorated tombs featuring intricate paintings and freestanding columns. The most significant construction of this time was the renovation and additions to the Temple of Amun at Karnak – signifying a greater contribution to the temple than any other pharaoh. Thutmose III's work at Karnak is considered some of his most significant, not only because the narratives of his own campaigns and initiatives have been essential for cultural studies scholars, but because he directed the names of past kings to be preserved (though their monuments were often removed in his renovations). Thutmose III's patronage to the arts meant that artistic techniques and experimentation flourished under his reign; glasswork reached new levels of perfection as it was moulded into usable drinking glasses.

During the Middle Kingdom of Egypt (c. 2055–1650 BCE) statuary (the making of statues) became less idealised and more realistic, though later the style established during the Old Kingdom, that of traditional idealism, was reintroduced. The depiction of Thutmose III in his statuary as a tall, handsome, physically fit man is believed to be a realistic portrayal because all of his depictions are consistent, and the depictions of others are unflattering. Thutmose III honoured Egypt's admiration and respect for nature by commissioning public parks, gardens, lakes and ponds for the recreation and enjoyment of his people. At his palace and at the Karnak temple, he also had a private garden cultivated.

## ACTIVITY 17.2

1. Summarise the above information by using dot points in the categories below:
  - Divine Kingship
  - Context of Thutmose's reign
  - Military conquests
  - Buildings.
2. Why did the attention paid by Thutmose III to the last two categories in particular make him an ideal pharaoh?

## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature of power and how it was exercised in the Ancient World

Most of our knowledge of Thutmose III's reign comes from the non-literary evidence he himself left behind in the form of hundreds of written inscriptions and visual representations carved on the buildings, stelae and statues he constructed at Karnak. The following sources provide examples of some of the most common types of sources used for a study of the reign of Thutmose III. There are however, others, including earthworks, biological/anatomical sources, tomb contents and wall paintings which can also enhance our understanding of his life.

Written evidence that provides clues about the reign of Thutmose III includes inscriptions on walls of buildings, stelae, statue bases, tomb hieroglyphs, and papyri (including private letters and official correspondence). Non-written evidence includes visual representations of the pharaoh and gods inscribed on walls of the buildings, stelae, and other physical structures such as buildings, monuments, obelisks.

### 17.3 Written evidence from the reign of Thutmose III

We will look at the written evidence for two events from the time of Thutmose III: the time his life was saved by Amunemhab, and the taking of Joppa.

#### Amunemhab

Thutmose III's life was saved by Amunemhab, one of his generals, when an elephant was charging at the king. An official record of this event is inscribed on a stela found in the Temple of Amun at Gebel Barkal (the Napata Stela). Amunemhab's own account is written on the wall of his tomb, in Thebes, along with other incidents from his campaigns.

Ra made me do something very brave at the sea of Niy. He made me run across a troop of 120 elephants and My Majesty fought them. Never had the like been done by a king since the god who first received the white crown of Upper Egypt. I say this without boasting and without lie therein.

**SOURCE 17.8** Inscription on the Napata Stela, Temple of Amun at Gebel Barkal

I began again to see another perfect action performed by the master of the two worlds in the country of Nii. He took in hunting 120 elephants for their tusks ... The largest among them attempted to fight face to face with his majesty. As for me, I cut off his foot, although he was alive ... I entered for thee into the water which is between the two stones; then my master rewarded me with gold.

**SOURCE 17.9** From an inscription on the wall of Amunemhab's tomb in Thebes

#### ACTIVITY 17.3

Study Sources 17.8 and 17.9 and answer the following questions.

1. How does Amunemhab confirm or negate the official view of Thutmose's prowess and bravery?
2. Is there any reason to cast doubt on these accounts? (Think about where the information is located.)

## The taking of Joppa

*The Taking of Joppa* is an ancient Egyptian tale which describes the conquest of Joppa, the Canaanite town, by Thutmose III's general Djehuty. It is recorded on the Papyrus Harris 500, which dates from the 19th Dynasty. It was translated by early twentieth century Egyptologist Sir William Mathew Flinders Petrie, who also wrote some opening paragraphs, as the beginning of the story had been lost.

There was once in the time of King Men-kheper-Re a revolt of the servants of his majesty who were in Joppa; and his majesty said: 'Let Djehuti go with his footmen and destroy this wicked Foe in Joppa.'

And he called one of his followers, and said moreover: 'Hide thou my great cane, which works wonders, in the baggage of Djehuti that my power may go with him.'

Now when Djehuti came near to Joppa, with all the footmen of Pharaoh, he sent unto the Foe in Joppa, and said: 'Behold now his majesty, King Men-kheper-Re, has sent all this great army against thee; but what is that if my heart is as thy heart? Do thou come, and let us talk in the field, and see each other face to face.'

So Djehuti came with certain of his men; and the Foe in Joppa came likewise, but his charioteer that was with him was true of heart unto the king of Egypt. And they spoke with one another in his great tent, which Djehuti had placed far off from the soldiers.

**SOURCE 17.10** Flinders Petrie, W.M., new opening for *The Taking of Joppa*, included with translation of the Papyrus Harris 500

But Djehuti had made ready two hundred sacks, with cords and fetters, and had made a great sack of skins with bronze fetters, and many baskets: and they were in his tent, the sacks and the baskets, and he had placed them as the forage for the horses is put in baskets.

For whilst the Foe in Joppa drank with Djehuti, the people who were with him drank with the footmen of Pharaoh, and made merry with them. And when their bout of drinking was past, Djehuti said to the Foe in Joppa:

'If it please thee, while I remain with the women and children of thy own city, let one bring of my people with their horses, that they may give them provender, or let one of the Apuro run to fetch them.'

So they came, and hobbled their horses, and gave them provender, and one found the great cane of Men-kheper-Re and came to tell of it to Djehuti. And thereupon the Foe in Joppa said to Djehuti:

'My heart is set on examining the great cane of Men-kheper-Re, which is named ... tautnefer. By the ka of the King Men-kheper-Re it will be in thy hands to-day; now do thou well and bring thou it to me.'

And Djehuti did thus, and he brought the cane of King Men-kheper-Re. And he laid hold on the Foe in Joppa by his garment, and he arose and stood up, and said:

'Look on me, o Foe in Joppa; here is the great cane of King Men-kheper-Re, the terrible lion, the son of Sekhet, to whom Amen his father gives power and strength.'

And he raised his hand and struck the forehead of the Foe in Joppa, and he fell helpless before him. He put him in the sack of skins and he bound with gyves the hands of the Foe in Joppa, and put on his feet the fetters with four rings.

And he made them bring the two hundred sacks which he had cleaned, and made to enter into them two hundred soldiers, and filled the hollows with cords and fetters of wood, he sealed them with a seal, and added to them their rope-nets and the poles to bear them. And he put every strong footman to bear them, in all six hundred men, and said to them:



‘When you come into the town you shall open your burdens, you shall seize on all the inhabitants of the town, and you shall quickly put fetters upon them.’

Then one went out and said unto the charioteer of the Foe in Joppa:

‘Thy master is fallen; go, say to thy mistress, ‘A pleasant message! For Sutekh has given Djehuti to us, with his wife and his children; behold the beginning of their tribute’, that she may comprehend the two hundred sacks, which are full of men and cords and fetters.’

So he went before them to please the heart of his mistress, saying:

‘We have laid hands on Djehuti.’

Then the gates of the city were opened before the footmen: they entered the city, they opened their burdens, they laid hands on them of the city, both small and great, they put on them the cords and fetters quickly; the power of Pharaoh seized upon that city. After he had rested, Djehuti sent a message to Egypt to the King Men-kheper-Re his lord, saying:

‘Be pleased, for Amen thy good father has given to thee the Foe in Joppa, together with all his people, likewise also his city. Send, therefore, people to take them as captives that thou mayest fill the house of thy father Amen Re, king of the gods, with men-servants and maidservants, and that they may be overthrown beneath thy feet for ever and ever.’

**SOURCE 17.11** *The Taking of Joppa*, from The Papyrus Harris 500 (Dynasties 19 and 20, 1292–1077 BCE)

## ACTIVITY 17.4

1. In dot points, map out the narrative of the story in Source 17.11.
2. Make 2–3 key quotations from each section of the text that amplifies the greatness of Thutmose III.
3. Why would Djehuti create this source? Think about both the author and the intended audience.

## ACTIVITY 17.5

1. Use the source analysis table contained in the *Historical Skills Toolkit – Objective 3* to analyse Sources 17.4–11.

After completing the table, answer the following questions:

2. What do these sources show about how Egypt regarded its enemies, or foreigners?
3. How might these sources have helped reinforce Thutmose’s power over his people?
4. Which of the following aspects of Egyptian life might these sources be useful for (explain your answer):
  - Daily life
  - Warfare
  - Religious beliefs
  - Administration of the empire
  - Diplomatic relations
  - Art and architecture.

These same questions and activities can be completed for the primary source accounts that follow in Sources 17.13 to 17.21.

## 17.4 Is visual evidence of Thutmose III's reign reliable?

Along with written inscriptions, the visual representations of historical events that adorn the walls of many Egyptian temples provide us with an important source of information about what happened in the past. In ancient times, these images were a powerful form of propaganda for the pharaohs to advertise achievements and conquests to their subjects, almost all of whom were illiterate. Virtually all of these sources present the official perspective of Thutmose III and his court. But how useful and reliable are these sources in developing a picture of specific historical events? Do they accurately portray what happened in the past and can they be used as evidence for historical arguments? Consider the following sources and determine for yourself what the place of visual representations is in developing our understanding of Thutmose's reign.



**SOURCE 17.12** Thutmose III smiting his Asian foes, detail of a limestone relief from the Temple of Amon at Karnak

Source 17.13 is a description of Thutmose's Canaanite city list.

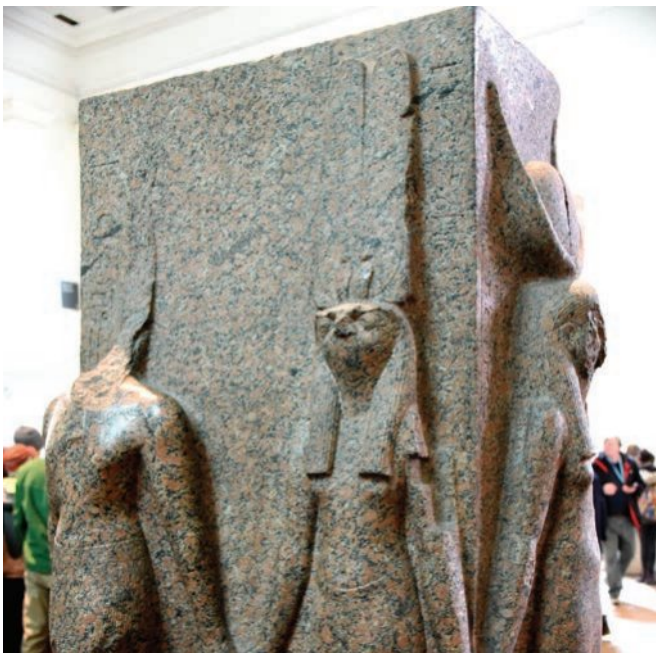
In Thutmose III's city lists, hundreds of princes are depicted with hands tied behind their backs and their cartouches on their shields. This is a depiction of the rulers of the cities of Canaan that Thutmose III captured when Megiddo fell. All the rulers, except the king of Kadesh, were trapped in Megiddo, and so by the capture of Megiddo, Thutmose could say that it was as the capture of a thousand cities. At Thutmose's death, the Egyptian empire stretched from the Euphrates to the Fourth Cataract, the greatest extent of Egypt's territory ever.

**SOURCE 17.13** Description of Thutmose's Canaanite city list, 'Karnak Temple', BiblePlaces.com





**SOURCE 17.14** Scenes of tribute offerings in Rekhmire's tomb



**SOURCE 17.15** Sculpture of Thutmose III, with the god Montu-Ra and goddess Hathor, 18th Dynasty, from temple of Amun-Re at Karnak, housed in the British Museum

### ACTIVITY 17.6

Use Sources 17.12 to 17.15 to answer the following questions.

1. What are some of the strengths of using visual depictions of battles inscribed on the exterior walls of Thutmose III's temples?
2. What aspects of Egyptian society are overrepresented in the official sources? Suggest what kinds of other sources might be used to give a more balanced picture of Egyptian life.
3. Based on your reading of these sources, how might you use visual representations in understanding the reign of Thutmose III?



## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a powerful individual, group or society in the Ancient World

In this section, you will assess Thutmose III's reign by considering his reputation versus his actual achievements as a warrior.

### 17.5 Thutmose III as a warrior

The first source is the Egyptian Account of the Battle of Megiddo by Thutmose III, located on the Hall of Annals in the Temple of Amun-Re at Karnak, Thebes (now Luxor), by the military scribe Tjaneni.

Mighty Bull, Shining in Thebes; King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands; Menkheperre; Son of Re.

His Majesty commanded to cause to be recorded his victories which his father, Amon, gave to him, upon a tablet in the temple which his majesty made for his father, Amon, setting forth each expedition by its name, together with the plunder which his majesty carried away therein. It was done according to all the command which his father, Re, gave to him.

Year 22, fourth month of the second season, on the twenty-fifth day his majesty was in Tharu on the first victorious expedition to extend the boundaries of Egypt with might.

Now, at that period the Asiatics had fallen into disagreement, each man fighting against his neighbour. Now, it happened that the tribes – the people, who were there in the city of Sharuhem; behold, from Yeraza to the marshes of the earth, they had begun to revolt against his majesty.

Year 23, first month of the third season, on the fourth day, the day of the feast of the king's coronation, he arrived at the city, the possession of the ruler, Gaza.

Year 23, first month of the third season, on the fifth day; departure from this place in might, in power, and in triumph, to overthrow that wretched foe, to extend the boundaries of Egypt, according as his father, Amon-Re, had commanded that he seize.

Year 23, first month of the third season, on the sixteenth day, he arrived at the city of Yehem.

[His majesty] ordered a consultation with his valiant troops, saying as follows: 'That wretched enemy, the chief of Kadesh, has come and entered into Megiddo; he [is there] at this moment. He has gathered to himself the chiefs of all the countries which are on the water of Egypt, and as far as Naharin, consisting of [the countries] of the Kharu, the Kode, their horses, their troops, ... Thus he speaks, "I have arisen to [fight against his majesty] in Megiddo." Tell ye me ...'

They spoke in the presence of his majesty, 'How is it, that we should go upon this road, which threatens to be narrow? While they [come] and say that the enemy is there waiting, [hold]ing the way against a multitude. Will not horse come behind [horse and man] behind man likewise? Shall our [advance-guard] be fighting while our [rear-guard] is yet standing yonder in Aruna not having fought? There are yet two (other) roads: one road, behold, it [will] ... us, for it comes forth at Taanach, the other, [behold], it will [bring us upon] the way north of Zefiti, so that we shall come out to the north of Megiddo. Let our victorious lord proceed upon the road he desires; (but) cause us not to go by a difficult road.'

Then [went (?)] messengers concerning [this] design which they had uttered, in view of what had been said [by (?)] the majesty of the Court: 'I [swear], as Re loves me, as my father Amon, favours me, as my [nostrils] are rejuvenated with satisfying life, my majesty will proceed upon this road of Aruna. Let him who will among you, go upon those roads ye have mentioned, and let him

who will among you, come in the following of my majesty. Shall they think among those enemies whom Re detests: "Does his majesty proceed upon another road? He begins to be fearful of us," so will they think.'

They spoke before his majesty: 'May thy father Amon, lord of Thebes, presider over Karnak, [grant thee life]. Behold, we are the following of thy majesty in every place, whither [thy majesty] proceedeth; as the servant is behind [his] master.'

[Then his majesty] commanded the entire army [to march] ... [upon] that road which threatened to be [narrow. His majesty] swore, saying: 'None shall go forth [in the way] before my majesty, in ...' He went forth at the head of his army himself, [showing the way] by his (own) footsteps; horse behind [horse], [his majesty] being at the head of his army.

Year 23, first month of the third season, on the nineteenth day; the watch in [safety] in the royal tent was at the city of Aruna. 'My majesty proceeded northward under the protection of my father, Amon-Re, lord of Thebes, [who went] before me, while Harakhte [strengthened my arms] ... (my) father, Amon-Re, lord of Thebes, victorious of the sword ... over my majesty.'

The enemy went forth ... in numerous battle array ... The southern wing was in Taa[nach] the northern wing was on the ground south of ... His majesty cried out to them before ... they fell; behold, that wretched foe ... of [the city] Aruna.

Now, the rear of the victorious army of his majesty was at the city of Aruna, the front was going forth to the valley of ...a; they filled the opening of this valley. Then [they] said in the presence of his majesty, L. P. H.: 'Behold, his majesty goeth forth with his victorious army, and it has filled the hollow of the valley; let our victorious lord hearken to us this time and let our lord protect for us the rear of his army and his people. Let the rear of this army come forth to us behind; then shall they (also) fight against these barbarians; then we shall not need to take thought for the rear of our army.' His majesty halted outside and waited there, protecting the rear of his victorious army.

Behold, when the front had reached the exit upon this road, the shadow had turned, and when his majesty arrived at the south of Megiddo on the bank of the brook of Kina, the seventh hour was turning, measured by the sun.

Then was set up the camp of his majesty, and command was given to the whole army, saying: 'Equip yourselves! Prepare your weapons! for we shall advance to fight with that wretched foe in the morning.' Therefore the king rested in the royal tent, the affairs of the chiefs were arranged, and the provisions of the attendants. The watch of the army went about, saying, 'Steady of heart! Steady of heart! Watchful! Watchful! Watch for life at the tent of the king.' One came to say to his majesty, 'The land is well, and the infantry of the South and North likewise.'

Year 23, first (month) of the third season, on the twenty-first day, the day of the feast of the new moon, [corresponding to (?)] the royal coronation, early in the morning, behold, command was given to the entire army to move ... His majesty went forth in a chariot of electrum, arrayed in his weapons of war, like Horus, the Smiter, lord of power; like Montu of Thebes, while his father, Amon, strengthened his arms. The southern wing of this army of his majesty was on a hill south of the [brook of] Kina, the northern wing was at the northwest of Megiddo, while his majesty was in their centre, with Amon as the protection of his members, the valour of his limbs. Then his majesty prevailed against them at the head of his army, and when they saw his majesty prevailing against them they fled headlong to Megiddo in fear, abandoning their horses and their chariots of gold and silver. The people hauled them up, pulling them by their clothing, into this city; the people of this city having closed it against them and lowered clothing to pull them up into this city. Now, if only the army of his majesty had not given their heart to plundering the things of the enemy, they would have captured Megiddo at this moment, when the wretched foe of Kadesh and the wretched foe of this



city were hauled up in haste to bring them into this city. The fear of his majesty had entered their hearts, their arms were powerless, his serpent diadem was victorious among them.

Then were captured their horses, their chariots of gold and silver were made spoil, their champions lay stretched out like fishes on the ground. The victorious army of his majesty went around counting their portions. Behold, there was captured the tent of that wretched foe [in] which was [his] son ... The whole army made jubilee, giving praise to Amon for the victory which he had granted to his son on [this day, giving praise] to his majesty, exalting his victories. They brought up the booty which they had taken, consisting of hands, of living prisoners, of horses, chariots of gold and silver, of ...

[Then spake his majesty on hearing (?) the words of his army, saying: 'Had ye captured this city afterward, behold, I would have given ... Re this day; because every chief of every country that has revolted is within it; and because it is the capture of a thousand cities, this capture of Megiddo. Capture ye [mightily, mightily (?)] ...'

[His majesty commanded] the [officers (?) of the troops to go ..., [assigning to (?) each his place. They measured this city, [surrounding it (?) with an enclosure, walled about with green timber of all their pleasant trees. His majesty himself was upon the fortification east of this city, [inspecting (?)] ...

It was [wa]lled about with its thick wall ... with its thick wall. Its name was made: 'Menkheperre-is-the-Surrounder-of-the-Asiatics.' People were stationed to watch over the tent of his majesty; to whom it was said: 'Steady of heart! Watch ...' His majesty [commanded, saying: 'Let not o]ne among them [come forth] outside, beyond this wall, except to come out in order to [knock (?)] at the other door of their fortification.'

Now, all that his majesty did to this city, to that wretched foe and his wretched army, was recorded on (each) day by its (the day's) name. Then it was recorded upon a roll of leather in the temple of Amon this day.

Behold, the chiefs of this country came to render their portions, to do obeisance to the fame of his majesty, to crave breath for their nostrils, because of the greatness of his power, because of the might of the fame of his majesty ... the country ... came to his fame, bearing their gifts, consisting of silver, gold, lapis lazuli, malachite; bringing clean grain, wine, large cattle, and small cattle ... for the army of his majesty. [Each of the Kode (?) among them bore the tribute southward. Behold, his majesty appointed the chiefs anew for ...

... 340 living prisoners; 83 hands; 2041 mares; 191 foals; 6 stallions; a chariot, wrought with gold, its pole of gold, belonging to that foe; a beautiful chariot, wrought with gold, belonging to the chief of [Megiddo]; ... 892 chariot[s] of his wretched army; total, 924 chariots; a beautiful [suit (?) of bronze armour, belonging to that foe; a beautiful [suit (?) of bronze armour, belonging to the chief of Megiddo; ... 200 suits of armour, belonging to his wretched army; 502 bows; 7 poles of [mry] wood, wrought with silver, belonging to the tent of that foe. Behold, the army of his majesty took 1929 large cattle, 2000 small cattle, 20 500 white small cattle.

List of that which was afterward taken by the king, of the household goods of that foe who was [in the city of] Yenoam, in Nuges, and in Herenkeru, together with all the goods of those cities which submitted themselves, which were brought [to his majesty: 474] ...; 38 lords of theirs, 87 children of that foe and of the chiefs who were with him, 5 lords of theirs, 1796 male and female slaves with their children, non-combatants who surrendered because of famine with that foe, 103 men; total 2503. Besides flat dishes of costly stone and gold, various vessels, ..., a large (two-handled) vase of the work of Kharu, vases, flat dishes, (xntw)-dishes, various drinking-vessels, 3 large kettles, [8]7 knives, amounting to 784 deben. Gold in rings found in the hands of the artificers, and silver in many rings, 966 deben and 1 kidet. A silver statue in beaten work, ... the head of gold, the staff with



human faces; 6 chairs of that foe, of ivory, ebony and carob wood, wrought with gold; 6 footstools belonging to them; 6 large tables of ivory and carob wood, a staff of carob wood, wrought with gold and all costly stones in the fashion of a sceptre, belonging to that foe, all of it wrought with gold; a statue of that foe, of ebony wrought with gold, the head of which [was inlaid (?)] with lapis lazuli ...; vessels of bronze, much clothing of that foe.

**SOURCE 17.16** Tjaneni, Account of the Battle of Megiddo, c. 1482 BCE, inscribed on the Hall of Annals in the Temple of Amun-Re at Karnak, Thebes

## ACTIVITY 17.7

Answer the following questions based on your reading of the text in Source 17.16.

1. In what region of the world did the Battle of Megiddo take place?
2. Why was Megiddo strategically important?
3. Why did Thutmose III go to Megiddo?
4. What evidence is there that Thutmose III considered this event a highlight of his reign?
5. Create a flow chart to summarise the narrative of the story.

The next source is from the Napata Stela in the Temple of Amun at Gebel Barkal. This stela (also known as the Gebel Barkal stela) outlines Thutmose's military achievements and hunting prowess.

The good god Menkheperre, son of Re, Thutmose, ruler of Thebes, may life be given him like Re, eternally! May he have protection, life, endurance and rulership, everything like Re.

He does it so that life will be given (him). He shall be at the head of the kas of all the living, appearing glorious as king of Upper and Lower Egypt on the throne of Horus like Re.

Amen-Re on the summit of the Pure Mountain says: I have given you the kingship over both lands.

Offering wine for Amen-Re. He does it so that life may be given (him).

He (the king) is at the head of the kas of all the living, having appeared glorious as king of Upper and Lower Egypt (in) Upper and Lower Egypt.

(Amen-Re) says: I have given you all the lands and foreign countries.

Words spoken: I have given you all

### Main inscription

In the year 47, month 3 of the season of inundation, day 10, under the majesty of the Horus mighty bull, appeared glorious in Thebes, under the two ladies enduring in kingship like Re in the heavens, Gold Horus, holy in appearance, mighty in power, king of Upper and Lower Egypt Menkheperre, beloved son of his body of Re, lord over every foreign land, Thutmose, beautiful of being.

He built as memorial for his father Amen-Re, lord of thrones and of both lands, the fortress 'Killing the Desert Dwellers'. He made for him a resting place for eternity, as he augmented the victories of my majesty more than for every other king who had been. I seized the Southerners on the command of his ka and the Northerners according to his instruction. He created the son of Re, Thutmose, ruler of Thebes, may life be given (him) like Re, eternally, the good god who grasps with his hand, who beats the Southerners, who beheads the Northerners, who smashes the skulls of the enemies of Egypt, who slaughters the Bedouins of Asia, who strikes the rebels among the sand dwellers, who vanquishes the lands of the far north, who beats the inhabitants of Nubia, who reached the borders of the foreign

lands which attacked him. On the battlefield he attacks, raging. All the foreign lands stood together as one ready to fight, there was no escape, for they trusted their numerous warriors. There was no end to men and horses. When they came their hearts were courageous and no fear was in their hearts. The powerful one cast them down, strong of arm, trampling down his enemies. He is the king who fights alone, no throng is surrounding his heart. He is more courageous than millions in the great army, one does not find his like, a warrior, courageous on the battlefield, one can not resist him. He fights with both his arms against all foreign countries at the front of his army. He flashes like a star crossing the sky between two troops of bowmen. As soon as he enters the fray his attack is indeed like a flame. He extinguishes them completely and they lie in their blood. It is his akh spirit which casts them down for him, his flame casts down his enemies.

The numerous army of Mitanni is cast down in one hour. They have disappeared completely as those who never were, like an end of (by) the Devourer, by act of the arms of the great good god, strong in battle, who causes slaughter among everyone.

He is for himself alone the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Menkheperre, may he live forever. He is the Horus of (with) a powerful arm, an excellent fortress for his army, a refuge for the (his) subjects, who attacks all countries in a battle face to face, who frees Egypt on the battlefield, a protector who does not fear the greedy. He is a strong-willed bull. His southern borders (reach) to the 'Horn of the Earth' to the south of this land, the northern to the far north of Asia, to the pillars of the heavens. They come to him with bowed head in search of his breath of life.

He is a king, strong like Monthu, who robs, but no one has robbed him, who tramples all foreign lands that rebel, without one who could protect them in that land of Naharin that his lord had left for fear.

I destroyed his cities and his settlements and I set fire to them. My Majesty turned them into ruins, so that they could not be rebuilt. I captured all their people, who were carried off as prisoners, and the cattle thereof without bound, and likewise their property. I took their corn, I tore out their barley. I felled their trees and all their fruit-trees. Their region was [killed(?)], my majesty destroyed it. It has become a burned place where there are no trees.

And my Majesty sailed to the northern border of Asia. My Majesty ordered that many ships be built of cedar from the mountains of God's Land in the neighbourhood of the Mistress of Byblos. They were placed on wagons towed by bulls. They travelled ahead of my Majesty to ferry across that river that is between this foreign land and Naharin – a king to be boasted of because of his two arms in melee, and who crossed the Euphrates after them who had attacked him, as the first of his army while seeking that miserable enemy in the foreign lands of Mitanni, while he fled for fear before His Majesty to another land, a far place.

Then my Majesty established my stele on that mountain of Naharin, as one extracted from the mountain on the western side of the Euphrates.

I have no enemy in the southern lands, the northerners come bowing because of my might. It is Re who has commanded them to me. I enclosed that which his eye encircled. He gave me the land in its length and breadth. I have bound together the Nine Bows, islands in the middle of the sea, the Nine Bow peoples and the rebellious foreign lands. I returned south to the beloved land, after I had subdued Naharin.

Fear was great in the mouth of the Sand dwellers. Therefore, their doors were closed, and they did not step out of their door for fear of the bull. A king he is, strong, an excellent fortress for his army, a wall of metal of the sky. He seizes every land with his power without there being millions of men around him, who shoots accurately whenever he aims, whose arrows do not miss; strong, there was none like him, Monthu, strong on the battlefield.



Another feat of prowess which Re commanded me: He granted me another brave deed by the sea of Ny. He made me drive together a herd of elephants. My Majesty fought them, they being a herd of 120 elephants. Never had the like been done by a king since the god who had seized the white crown of Upper Egypt. I said this without boasting with it, and without a lie therein. I did it according to what my father, Amun-Re, lord of the thrones of the two lands, commanded me, who guided My Majesty on the good path by his effective plans. He united for me the Black Land and the Red Land, and that which the sun encircles is in my grasp.

I am reporting to you now, listen, people! He gave to me the foreign countries of Retenu on the first campaign. They came to meet my Majesty with millions of men, hundreds of thousands of the best from all foreign countries, who manned their chariots with 330 chiefs, every one there with his army. They were ready in the Wadi Qanu, massed together. An excellent exploit was made by me among them. My Majesty attacked them, they immediately fled and fell in droves. They entered Megiddo, my Majesty enclosed them for a period of 7 months, before they came out, imploring my Majesty with the words: 'Give us your breath, our lord! The desert dwellers of Retenu will not rebel again.'

Then he caused that enemy together with the chiefs who were with him, to be brought before my Majesty, all their children, with many gifts of gold and silver, all their horses that were with them, their great chariots of gold and silver, (also) those painted brightly, all battle tunics, their bows and their arrows, all their weapons. This was what they had come to war with and threatened my Majesty. They brought it as tribute to my Majesty. They stood on their walls in order to give praise to my Majesty, begging that the breath of life may be given them. Then my Majesty made them swear an oath of loyalty, in these words: 'We shall not do evil again to Menkheperre, may he live forever, our lord, for the period of our life, for we have seen his power. He gave us the breath of life, according to his wish.'

It was my father Amen-Re, lord of thrones of both lands, who has accomplished it, not the arm of men. Then my Majesty caused them to be given free passage (lit. the road) to their cities. They all left on donkeys, for I had taken their horses. I captured the inhabitants for Egypt and their possessions as well. It was my father Amen-Re, lord of the thrones of both lands, who has accomplished it, the excellent god, successful in deeds, his plans do not fail. My Majesty came in order to seize the countries and inhabitants of foreign lands, completely. I threw them down, obeying his command, because he did it this way. He caused me to strike all inhabitants of foreign lands, not one who dared to approach me. It was my mace which felled the Asiatics, it was my Ames sceptre that struck the Nine Bows. My Majesty subdued every land, Retenu is under my sandals, the Nubians are slaves of my Majesty.

They pay me (tribute) as one (man), being taxable millions of times in numerous things of the top of the earth, much gold from Wawat, its amount without bounds. One built there for the palace every year Eight-boats and many transporters for the crews, beside the tribute, the Nubians bring ivory and ebony. Precious wood from Kush was brought to me as beams of doum palms and wooden things without number as acacia wood from the Southland. My army made them in Kush, which existed there in millions, besides Eight-boats and many transporters made of doum palms which my Majesty had fetched by force. One built for me in Djahi every year, from genuine cedars of the Lebanon, which were brought to the palace, l.p.h. Precious wood came to me to Egypt, taken to the south, ... genuine cedars from the Lebanon as the best from God's Land which was delivered, the best wood like hard alabaster, to be delivered to the residence, without letting go by the appropriate season every year. My army arrives, which is as garrison in Wan Rata. ... (made) of cedar wood of the victories of my Majesty according to the plans of my father Amen-Re, who has given me the rule over



all foreign peoples. I gave nothing of it to the Asiatics; this is the timber which he loves. He subdued them, they recognised my lord, their suffering was ended.

... my Majesty. Listen, people of the southern land, which is by the Gebel Barkal, called the 'Throne of Both Lands' by the people before it was known. Oh, you shall learn of this miracle of Amen-Re before of the two lands, completely ... When the guards were just about to come in order to meet at night and to keep the regular watch, it was at the second hour, a star appeared to their south. Never had the like happened. It shone exactly towards them.

None withstood there. I killed them like those who had never been, they lay in their blood, enemies in heaps(?). But now the snake was behind their backs with flame towards their faces, not one found his hand among them, not one looked back. Their horse teams were no more, they had bolted in ... the desert. ... in order to make that all inhabitants of foreign lands see the might of my Majesty. I returned south with a happy heart, after I had celebrated a feast for my lord Amen-Re, lord of the thrones of the two lands, who had commanded this victory and had caused the panic ... in my time. He instilled fear of me among all inhabitants of foreign lands. They fled far before me. Everything on which the sun shines is bound under my soles.

My Majesty himself says ... [victory], for I am very experienced in power and victory, which my noble father Amen, lord of the thrones of both lands, has granted me. He made me master of the five parts, of that which the sun encircles. I am str[ong] ... [the northern] The fear of my Majesty is in the southern regions, there is no path far from me. He sealed the whole land for me. There is no boundary to that which became mine through force. He enforced my power in Upper Retenu. ... They brought me tribute from there to the place where my Majesty was, at all times. The foreign country delivered to me all good things that are found there. After it had hidden them from other kings, it opened them up. ... electrum, gold, lapis lazuli, turquoise, every precious stone, all kinds of spices, sweet of smell, which have grown in Punt, all good things of the south. Everything which has reached my Majesty through trade belongs to him (i.e. Amen). I fill his house and repay him for his protection. ... on the battlefield. I for my part shall bring offerings, wonderful things from all lands, of the best which his strong arm has taken. He has given me the order for it against all inhabitants of foreign lands. These courtiers ... Amen-Re, lord of the thrones of both lands, the great god of the beginning, the primordial, who has created your beauty. He has given you every land. Rule it for him who knows that you have emerged before him. It is him who guides your Majesty on the path.

I have spread fear of me to the northern borders of Asia, so that my messenger will not be hindered. My soldiers cut down the flagpole on the terraces of the cedars, on the mountains of God's Land. ... for the memorials of my fathers, all the gods of Upper and Lower Egypt. Then my Majesty built a neshmet-bark of cedar wood for the water-procession ... on the coast of Lebanon as fortress ... All chiefs of Lebanon built the royal boats in order to sail south in them (and) bring all the precious things of Lebanon to the palace, l.p.h. The chiefs of ... The chiefs of Retenu pulled the poles with cattle to the coast. They came with their tribute to the place where his majesty was, to the residence in ... with all the beautiful products which were brought as precious things of the South, the revenues as yearly taxes like all subjects of my Majesty.

That which the people say ... The inhabitants of the foreign lands have seen your power, your glory, it encircled the summit of the earth. Awe, the hearts of those who attack you, tremble before it ... the people ... every Nubian, they disregard your plans. It is your father who will give you victories over every foreign land. Now, his Majesty was in the palace on the west side of the town ... forever.

**SOURCE 17.17** Inscription on the Napata Stela, Temple of Amun at Gebel Barkal

## ACTIVITY 17.8

1. Create a flow chart to summarise the narrative of the story.

You will create further narrative flow charts in Activity 17.9 and Activity 17.10, which will set the groundwork for the analytic tasks in Activity 17.11.

2. Complete the table below by selecting quotes from the sources that show Thutmose III to be:

- a. a great strategist
- b. a brave leader
- c. great battle commander
- d. favoured by the gods.

<b>Great strategist</b>	
<b>Brave leader</b>	
<b>Great battle commander</b>	
<b>Favoured by the gods</b>	

The Armant Stela is from the Temple of Montu, at Armant (near Thebes). The inscription summarises Thutmose III's athletic prowess, and also references his first campaign. The next four sources are all from this stela.

Horus of Edfu, great god, lord of heaven, may he give life! Words to be spoken: 'I have given you all life and dominion, all health, and all valour and strength.'

[Montu], lord of Thebes. The good god, lord of action, Menkheperre, given life forever, Tjenuet. Praising the god four times, so that he may be given life. Words to be spoken: 'I have given you all life and dominion, all health, all joy, while the kingship of the Two Lands is under your command. May you live like Re!'

Words to be spoken: 'I have given you millions of years, while all foreign lands are under your feet.'

**SOURCE 17.18** From the Armant Stela of Thutmose III, Temple of Montu, Armant

Son of Re, his beloved, Tuthmosis, ruler of truth, given life forever.

Live Horus: Mighty Bull, Appearing in Thebes;

the Two Goddesses: Enduring of Kingship, like Re in Heaven;

the Horus of Gold: Majestic of Appearances, Mighty of Strength;



the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, Lord of Making Offerings: Men-kheper-Re; the Son of Re, of his Body: Thut-mose Heqa-Maat, beloved of Montu, Lord of Thebes, residing in Hermonthis, living forever.

Year 22, 2nd month of the second season, day 10. Summary of the deeds of valour and victory which this good god performed, being every effective deed of heroism, beginning from the first generation; that which the Lord of the Gods, the Lord of Hermonthis, did for him: the magnification of his victories, to cause that his deeds of valour be related for millions of years to come, apart from the deeds of heroism which his majesty did at all times. If (they) were to be related all together by their names, they would be (too) numerous to put them into writing.

**SOURCE 17.19** From the Armant Stela of Thutmose III, Temple of Montu, Armant

When he shoots at a copper target, all wood is splintered like a papyrus reed. His Majesty offered an example thereof in the temple of Amun, with a target of hammered copper of three digits in thickness; when he had shot his arrow there, he caused protrusion of three palms behind it, so as to cause the followers to pray for the proficiency of his arms in valour and strength. I am telling you what he did, without deception and without lie, in front of his entire army, and there is no word of exaggeration therein.

When he spent a moment of recreation, hunting in any foreign land, the quantity that he captured was greater than what the entire army achieved. He slew seven lions by shooting in an instant. He captured a herd of twelve wild bulls in an hour at the time of breakfast, their tails behind him. He killed 120 elephants in the foreign country of Nija when he came from Naharina.

He crossed the river Euphrates, and trampled the towns on its banks, which were destroyed by fire forever. He erected a stela of victory on its [...] side.

He captured a rhinoceros by shooting in the southern land of Taseti, after he had gone to Miu to seek out him who had rebelled against him in that land. He erected his stela there as he had done at the ends [...]

**SOURCE 17.20** From the Armant Stela of Thutmose III, Temple of Montu, Armant

His majesty made no delay in proceeding to the land of Djahi, to kill the treacherous ones who were in it and to give things to those who were loyal to him; witness, indeed, [their] names, each [country] according to its time. His majesty returned on each occasion, when his attack had been effected in valour and victory, so that he caused Egypt to be in its condition as (it was) when Re was in it as king.

[Year 22, 4th month of the second season, day ...

Proceeding] from Memphis, to slay the countries of the wretched Retenu, on the first occasion of victory. It was his majesty who opened its roads and foxed its every way for his army, after it had made [rebellion, gathered in Megid]do. His majesty entered upon that road which becomes very narrow, as the first of his entire army, while every country had gathered, standing prepared at its mouth. ... The enemy quailed, fleeing headlong to their town, together with the prince who was in... (15) ... to them, beseeching [breath], their goods upon their backs. His majesty returned in gladness of heart, with this entire land as vassal ... [Asia]tics, coming at one time, bearing [their] tribute ...

**SOURCE 17.21** From the Armant Stela of Thutmose III, Temple of Montu, Armant



## ACTIVITY 17.9

1. Complete the table below by selecting quotes from Sources 17.16 to 17.22 that show Thutmose III to be:
- a. A great strategist
  - b. A brave leader
  - c. A great battle commander
  - d. Favoured by the gods

<b>Great strategist</b>	
<b>Brave leader</b>	
<b>Great battle commander</b>	
<b>Favoured by the gods</b>	

Here is the inscription from the tomb of Amunemhab, the officer who saved Thutmose III when he was being charged by an elephant. The inscription details various other events from his campaigns.

As for me, I was the very faithful [instrument] of the sovereign, the half of the heart of the king of the south, the light of the heart of the king of the north, while I followed my master in his expeditions to the regions of the north or of the south, [those which] he desired, for I was as the companion of his feet, and that in the midst of his valour and his power, in order to give testimony.

Now I captured in the country of Nekeb, and brought back [certain] Asiatics, three men as prisoners, alive.

When his majesty reached Naharain I brought thither the three men as booty, whom I placed before thy majesty, as living prisoners.

Another time I captured [it was in the expedition to the country of mount Uan, to the west of Aleppo], and I brought back [certain] captured Asiatics, as living prisoners 13 men, 70 asses alive, 13 basons of iron ... basons of worked gold ...

Another time I captured [it was in an expedition to the country of Carchemish] and brought away ... as living prisoners. I traversed the water of Naharain without letting them escape, [and] [set] them before my master. Behold, therefore, he rewarded me with a great reward, namely ... I saw the victory of the king, the king of the south and of the north, even Ra-men-kheper, the life-giver, in the country of Senzar. He made ... them. There I captured before the king and I brought back a hand. He gave me the gold of guerdon, namely 2 rings [of gold] and silver.

When I began again to behold his valour, I was among his bodyguard, at the capture of Kadesh, without quitting the place which was under him. I brought back of the Marinas 2 personages as [living prisoners] before the king, the lord of the two worlds, Thothmes ... who gives life eternally. He gave me gold for my valour in the presence of the master, namely the collar of the lion of gold, 2 shebi collars, 2 helmets and 4 bracelets.

And I saw my master ... ha; then afresh [it was] overthrown. As for me, I ascended towards ...

I began again to see his valour in the country of Takhis; ... I captured there before the king and brought away (certain) Asiatics 3 men alive as prisoners. Then my lord gave me the gold of guerdon, namely, 2 collars, 4 bracelets [with] 2 helmets [and] a tame lion.

I began again to see another perfect action performed by the master of the two worlds in the country of Nii. He took in hunting 120 elephants for their tusks ... The largest among them attempted to fight face to face with his majesty. As for me, I cut off his foot, although he was alive ... I entered for thee into the water which is between the two stones; then my master rewarded me with gold. ...

Behold, the prince of Kadesh drove a mare straight against ... as it charged among the soldiers I hurried to meet it on foot, with my dagger, [and] I opened its stomach. I cut off its tail [and] made of it a trophy in the royal work of giving thanks to God because thereof. That caused joy to take possession of my heart [and] cheerfulness to alight upon my limbs.

His majesty despatched the most valiant of his soldiers to force the newly-constructed rampart of Kadesh. It was I who forced it, for I was in advance of the most valiant; no other [was] before me. When I left (it) I brought back (with me) of the Marinas 2 personages as living prisoners. My master began again to reward me because of this with every sort of good thing, for it was pleasing to the king that I had made this capture.

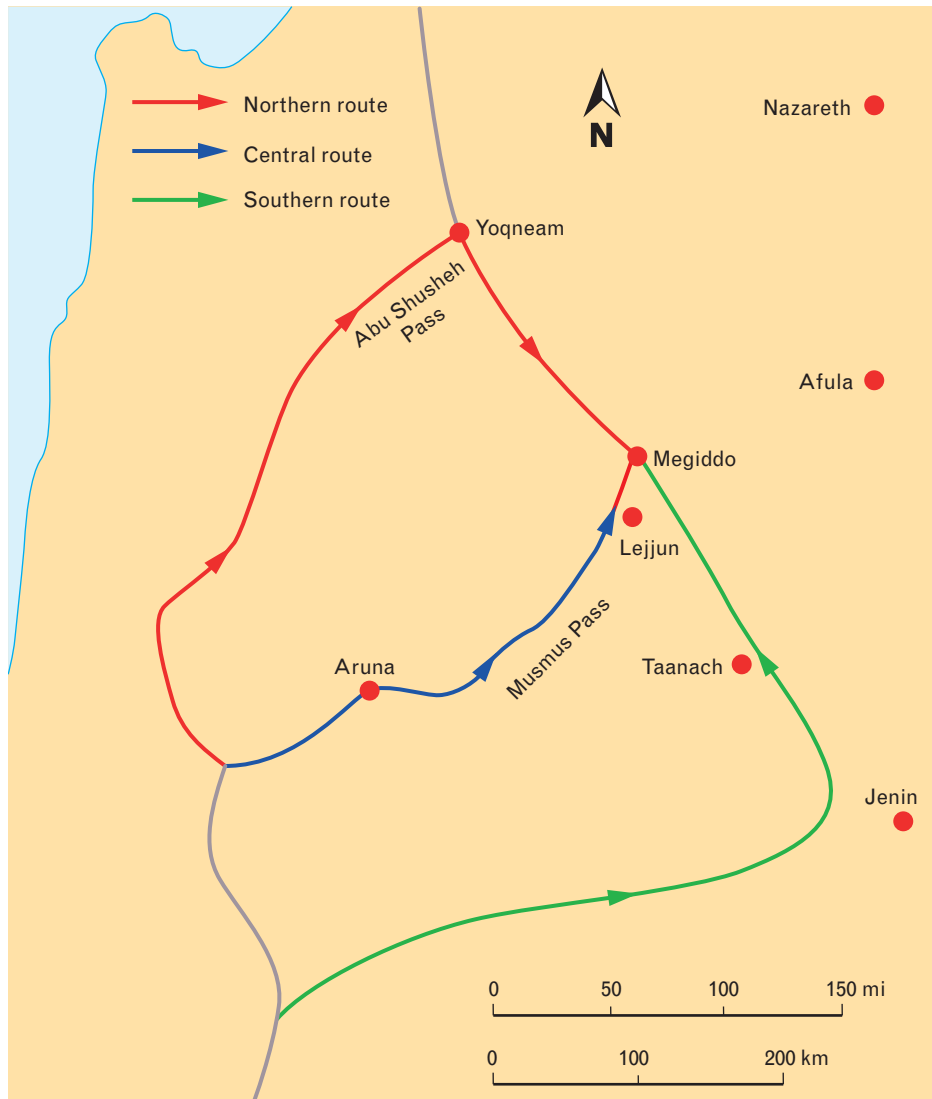
Being an officer ... it was I who directed the manoeuvre in ... as captain of his body-guard. ... in his fair festival of Apet, when men [were] full of joy ... Behold, for the king, the age he passed of years abundant and happy, as a strong man, as a ... as a truth-speaker, from his happy first year until his 54th year, the last day of the month Phamenoth. Then the king of the south and of the north, Ra-men-kheper, the truth-speaker, ascended to heaven, to unite himself with the solar disk, and to follow God, who penetrates when he makes himself luminous under the form of the solar disk which illuminates the sky at the same time that it shines.

The king of the south and of the north, Ra-aa-khepru, the son of the Sun, Amen-hotep, the giver of life, establishing himself on the throne of his father, reduced under the royal banner all that made opposition to him. He pierced the wretches ... and of the desert; he immolated their chiefs, rising like Horus the son of Isis, taking possession of ... the extremity (?) of all those who exist and breathe, all the mountain and plain, bowed as it were before his wishes, their tributes on their backs. [He] granted unto them the breath of life. Behold, his majesty saw me sailing with him in his bark named Kha-m-suten-uaa, while I was at ... of the fair festival of Apet-rest, conformably to custom ... when I re-ascended, even I, into the interior of the palace, an order [was given] to stand in the presence [of the king] ... Ra-aa-khepru; it was a great honour. I flew, even I, on the spot, into the presence of his majesty. He said to me: 'I know thy conduct ... serving my father. Advance in dignity, be tennu of the army, and from the moment that this is said watch over the royal forces.' The tennu Mahu executed all his words.

**SOURCE 17.22** Inscription on the wall of Amunemhab's tomb, in Thebes

## ACTIVITY 17.10

Create a flow chart to summarise the narrative of the story in Source 17.22.



**SOURCE 17.23** Thutmose III's three possible routes to Megiddo

## ACTIVITY 17.11

1. Copy and complete the table below by selecting quotes from Sources 17.16 to 17.22 that show Thutmose III to be:
  - a. A great strategist
  - b. A brave leader
  - c. A great battle commander
  - d. Favoured by the gods



## ACTIVITY 17.11 continued

<b>Great strategist</b>	
<b>Brave leader</b>	
<b>Great battle commander</b>	
<b>Favoured by the gods</b>	

### Critical appraisal

Even though Sources 17.16 to 17.22 are totally praiseworthy of the pharaoh, one can still, if careful, read between the lines to create a more sceptical reappraisal. The table below has some evidence supporting a reappraisal of the view that Thutmose III was a brave leader. Prepare similar tables for the other three statements you considered above.

#### Thutmose III as a brave leader: a critical reappraisal and evaluation

Source	Quote	Elaboration (evidence for reappraisal)
17.16	Now, at that period the Asiatics had fallen into disagreement, each man fighting against his neighbour.	The region was already internally divided, so opposition to Thutmose was not as strong as it might have been. So the quality (and unity) of the opposition is questionable.
17.21	His majesty made no delay in proceeding to the land of Djahi, to kill the treacherous ones who were in it and to give things to those who were loyal to him.	Again – only some opposition. There was still loyalty to him (i.e. pro-Egyptian factions amongst the Canaanites). Thutmose had the power to buy off opposition – and it seems that he probably, and often, did.

**ACTIVITY 17.11 continued**

Source	Quote	Elaboration (evidence for reappraisal)
17.16	<p>They spoke in the presence of his majesty, 'How is it, that we should go upon this road, which threatens to be narrow? While they [come] and say that the enemy is there waiting, [hold]ing the way against a multitude. Will not horse come behind [horse and man] behind man likewise? Shall our [advance-guard] be fighting while our [rear-guard] is yet standing yonder in Aruna not having fought? There are yet two (other) roads: one road, behold, it [will] ... us, for it comes forth at Taanach, the other, [behol]d, it will [bring us upon] the way north of Zeffi, so that we shall come out to the north of Megiddo. Let our victorious lord proceed upon the road he desires; (but) cause us not to go by a difficult road.'</p> <p>Then [went (?)] messengers concerning [this] design which they had uttered, in view of what had been said [by (?)] the majesty of the Court: 'I [swear], as Re loves me, as my father Amon, favours me, as my [nostrils] are rejuvenated with satisfying life, my majesty will proceed upon this road of Aruna. Let him who will among you, go upon those roads ye have mentioned, and let him who will among you, come in the following of my majesty. Shall they think among those enemies whom Re detests: "Does his majesty proceed upon another road? He begins to be fearful of us," so will they think'</p>	<p>In other words, Thutmose III ignored the sensible advice of his military generals and went his own way. It turned out to be correct, but how much of that was pure dumb luck?</p>
17.16	<p>... and when they saw his majesty prevailing against them they fled headlong to Megiddo in fear, abandoning their horses and their chariots of gold and silver. The people hauled them up, pulling them by their clothing, into this city; the people of this city having closed it against them and lowered clothing to pull them up into this city. Now, if only the army of his majesty had not given their heart to plundering the things of the enemy, they would have captured Megiddo at this moment.</p>	<p>In other words, Thutmose lost control of his army. The victory was not complete. The leader of the opposition got away.</p>

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about people, power and authority in the Ancient World

Evaluation is assessing the range of evidence that is used to support arguments. The quality of a source is of prime importance when using evidence in support of a point that one is making. It is thus important to be aware of what the strengths and limitations of your sources of evidence are.

### Some guidelines for evaluation

One does not necessarily need to integrate some critical comment each time you refer to a source, but the first time you use a particular source of importance it is appropriate. While there are many frameworks available for source evaluation, one simple way to evaluate a source is just to consider strengths and limitations. Remember that you don't always need to be negative or critical of your evidence; comments about the strengths of a source are valid demonstrations of source criticism.

## 17.6 The reputation of Thutmose III

### Ancient sources

- **Accuracy:** for example, determining the numbers of dead in battle. On the one hand, numbers of dead could be inflated and exaggerated through pharaonic propaganda to bolster the magnificence of the king, or the practice of cutting off a hand of every dead victim could be actual evidence or accurate record keeping of the slain.
- **Perspective:** there is little to nothing in terms of non-Egyptian source material. Therefore, the perspective we have of Thutmose is limited, representing the official version that Thutmose III wishes us to see. On the other hand, these sources are useful for showing how Thutmose wished to be portrayed and how he used propaganda to spread his desired messages.
- **Time of production:** sources from the time (eye-witness) accounts are useful for capturing the immediacy of an event. But sources from after the event have the benefit of hindsight and time for deeper reflection as to significance and importance.
- **Representation (idealised or traditional imagery vs reality):** a common problem with visual depictions of the pharaoh smiting enemies or defeating opponents in battle is that they generally cannot be taken literally as factual records of specific event. Often these are stylised images, whose purpose is to reinforce the traditional ideals of the office of the pharaoh, rather than any particular information about a specific pharaoh. Virtually all pharaohs represented themselves in the same pose. See Source 17.12 for an example.
- **Physical condition (damaged, fragmented, deteriorated evidence):** on occasions where an inscription is obscured or difficult to read, interpretations of the evidence may not be accurate and are often based on educated guesswork by Egyptologists. In the case of Thutmose, images and inscriptions of his step-mother, Hatshepsut, were deliberately defaced. While this is intriguing with regard to the motives of Thutmose III, it leaves interpretation about the reign of Hatshepsut more difficult to assess.

### Modern historians

Twentieth century and modern scholarship is overwhelmingly favourable towards Thutmose III. Due to his warlike tendencies, the 18th Dynasty pharaoh was described by Professor James Henry Breasted, in 1914, as 'the Napoleon of Egypt' (*Ancient Times*, Volume I, Ginn and Co., 1914, p. 85). T.D. van Basten also recently used the term in his book (*Ancient Egypt: The Egypt of Thutmose III – Volume 6*, 2016). In addition, there is a surprisingly limited amount of material writing on Thutmose III – perhaps because of the lack of any controversy of critical arguments when evaluating his reign. (See further reading at the end



of this chapter.) However, as seen before, there are opportunities to critically assess and judge Thutmose III. Think, for example, about the following questions:

- If Megiddo was such a success, why did he go back 17 more times?
- Was he a self-made man or privileged brat?
- Image vs reality – the role of propaganda: Master of Egypt or Master of Information?
- Napoleon of Egypt, or just lucky?
- Magnanimous and generous or nasty and vindictive?
- Was external expansion at the expense of internal infrastructure?
- Megiddo – genius or luck?

Below is a collection of some of the latest scholarship of Thutmose III, and some critical comments by reviewers.

A 2009 book on Thutmose by Richard A. Gabriel, *Thutmose III: The Military Biography of Egypt's Greatest Warrior King*, continues the tradition of positively reviewing Thutmose III. A highly respected military academic, Professor Gabriel is a member of the faculty of both the Royal Military College of Canada's Department of History and War Studies, and the Canadian Forces College's Department of Defence Studies. However, in some reviews of his book, a more critical appraisal becomes apparent. The next two sources are from Amazon.com customer reviews of the book.

This book reads like a book that was cobbled together over a weekend because the author needed the money. Indeed, large chunks are cut and pasted nearly verbatim from Gabriel's other books. Worse, it is poorly executed and cries out for a proof reader ... It also fails because of unnecessary hyperbole used to build Thutmose III up and justify writing the book. Gabriel takes pains to regularly mention Thutmose's brilliance, but the most excessive hyperbole occurs early in the book. In comparing Thutmose favorably to Alexander the Great Gabriel writes; 'If the greatness of a field commander is judged by the ability of the enemy he faces ... then compared to Alexander, Thutmose must rank as the greater field commander.' That is nonsense as judged by Gabriel's own criteria. The evidence provided in his book describes Thutmose's 'battles' as skirmishes against inferior opposition. Certainly, Thutmose was an admirable military leader but, as Gabriel's own book shows, he was no Alexander. Indeed, one significant question that goes unexamined is why there was so little serious resistance to Thutmose's raids.

**SOURCE 17.24** Boyle, C.E., review of Gabriel, R.A.'s *Thutmose III: The Military Biography of Egypt's Greatest Warrior King*, Amazon.com, 13 November 2009

The author has produced another fine work detailing the exploits of Thutmose III, Pharaoh of Egypt. Here we learn how Thutmose was the one who was primarily responsible for turning Egypt from a sophisticated but isolated civilisation to a first rate imperial power with a sphere of influence in the middle east and Africa. The author gives a background of the situation in the area around that time including details of the Hyksos' invasion of Egypt and its effects on the Egyptians. We also learn about the militaries of the various players in the region: the Egyptians, the Canaanite and Syrian city-states and the Mitanni. Thutmose through a number of unspectacular but strategic victories seized a number of strategic towns that guarded key routes first in Canaan (Megiddo), then in Interior Lebanon (near the Litani River) and then along the Coast of Lebanon and Syria before he embarked on a campaign against the Mitanni. These strategic victories had the purpose of extending Egypt's buffer zone and enhanced its national security by ensuring that any attempted invasion would be fought far away from Egypt's homeland. In the process of doing this, Thutmose became the first commander in history to use amphibious landings to achieve surprise and speed. The lessons

from this book are not only Thutmose's brilliance but that the concept of a sphere of influence is a very old one and is as much about great states seeking to protect themselves by having friendly states on their borders as much as it is about imperialism. ... The author illustrates these points in his unorthodox, questioning style that is both interesting and intriguing. That said there are flaws with this book, such as the errors and contradictions pointed out by other reviewers or the author's insistence that Thutmose was superior to Alexander in some regards. The author states that Persia was led by a corrupt elite and was ready for the picking whilst Thutmose faced professional armies, neglecting of course that Alexander accomplished the conquest of an empire that was superior to Macedonia in terms of wealth, size, demographics and in sea power (the last point could have worked decisively against Alexander) whereas Thutmose only managed to expand Egypt's sphere of influence over the Syrians, Canaanites and Nubians who were inferior to Egypt. He failed to destroy the Mitanni. He also forgets that Alexander fought 4 battles and 4 sieges that are considered tactical masterpieces and was also skilled in mountain warfare whereas he fails to record any such tactical masterpieces by Thutmose. Indeed the most famous victory of Thutmose was at Megiddo which although a strategic victory was only a minor skirmish followed by a blockade. He also says that the strategic vision for the conquest of Persia was invented by Phillip, Alexander's father, also neglecting that Thutmose's strategy was also invented by his grandfather Thutmose I. The only area in which Thutmose was superior to Alexander is the amphibious operations. Nevertheless, in spite of these flaws, I recommend this book.

**SOURCE 17.25** Williams, H., review of Gabriel, R.A.'s *Thutmose III: The Military Biography of Egypt's Greatest Warrior King*, Amazon.com, 22 January 2011

### ACTIVITY 17.12

1. Use the previous sources to deliberately create a historical argument that critically reappraises the reputation of Thutmose III. Does he really deserve to be called 'The Napoleon of Egypt', and 'greater than Alexander'?
2. The sources are non-academic online reviews of a published book by a significant academic. To what extent do the weaknesses of the credentials and quality of the sources affect the argument that you have just created?

### ACTIVITY 17.13

#### The Battle of Megiddo

Following on from the previous activity, write a paragraph to argue whether you can objectively prove, using evidence, that Thutmose III deserves his reputation in history as a great warrior and military commander. Aim to use at least two primary and two secondary sources that you have already come across in this chapter.

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### ACTIVITY 17.14

Answer the following questions based on what you have learned from this chapter.

1. For each of the following statements below, write a well-structured paragraph in response. Your answer should:
  - clearly address whether the historical evidence supports or refutes the claims made
  - refer to at least three sources used in this chapter; and
  - include some evaluation of the usefulness and reliability of the sources.
    - a. Thutmose III's excellent diplomatic skills ensured Egypt's supremacy was maintained over its neighbours.
    - b. The size, quantity and quality of Thutmose III's buildings and monuments place him unquestionably at the top of the list of Egypt's great builders.
    - c. Due to the unparalleled length of his reign, one of Thutmose III's greatest legacies was to be able to ensure that he left Egypt stable and secure for the long-term benefit of his successors.
    - d. Thutmose III 'the Great' was really only great at propaganda. Rather than accurate insights into his reign, his depictions of events from his reign are fabricated and false.
    - e. Thutmose III distinguished himself in the way he overcame the many challenges he encountered throughout his reign, and thus clearly deserves to be called 'the Great'.

### ACTIVITY 17.15

Consider again the statement by Kemp, which you read at the start of this chapter, comparing power in antiquity to power in the world today:

**Those who actually seek power find aspects of the ancient stage-managed style irresistible. They build monuments, they elevate symbols, they identify enemies to smite ... the forms and trappings of rule by a divine leader have shown a remarkable capacity to adapt and to live on, often much loved.**

**SOURCE 17.26** Kemp, B., 2006, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilisation*, p. 247

1. To what extent do you agree with this statement, particularly in relation to at least one of the great dictators of the twentieth century, such as Stalin, Lenin, Hitler, Mao? (If you have not examined any of these leaders in your previous Modern History study, you may need to conduct some research.)
2. Find recent news articles about significant actions of at least two current world leaders (e.g. President of the USA, President of the People's Republic of China, President of the Russian Federation, British Prime Minister). What parallels with Thutmose III can you identify?



# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- Thutmose III has been called 'the Napoleon of Ancient Egypt' for his military achievements.
- Much of his expertise in warfare stem from his extensive military training during the reign of his stepmother, Hatshepsut.
- Hatshepsut left Thutmose with a rich, stable and profitable country.
- Thutmose tried to erase Hatshepsut's name from history.
- Megiddo showcased Thutmose's abilities in campaign strategy and battle tactics.
- His further campaigns and diplomacy kept Egypt stable for the rest of his reign.
- His building program showcased his patronage of the arts and religion, especially the Priesthood of Amun at Karnak, and helped promote the success of his reign. This 'propaganda' makes assessing the success of his reign a contentious issue.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidation

### Comprehend

What are some of the key controversies associated with Thutmose III's reign?

### Analyse

Assess the nature of the evidence for Thutmose III's reign: what types of sources and evidence are available?

### Synthesise

Assess Thutmose III's main achievements in the fields of warfare, diplomacy and building. What criticisms of his achievements in these areas have been raised by historians?

### Evaluate

Evaluate the usefulness and reliability of inscriptions and visual representations in making judgements about Thutmose III's reign.

### Respond

Based on your knowledge from the chapter, to what extent does Thutmose III deserve the title, 'the Napoleon of Egypt'?

## Assessment

### Examination-style questions

1. Should Thutmose III, whose reputation ranks him amongst Egypt's greatest pharaohs, actually be remembered as a fraud and a spin-doctor?
2. To what extent did Thutmose III successfully overcome the challenges at the beginning of his reign and during it?
3. Evaluate Thutmose III's foreign policy, including military and diplomatic activities and construction of infrastructure: what strategies did Thutmose III use to maintain power over the Egyptian empire?

### Investigation tasks

1. Examine the inscriptional and visual evidence for Thutmose III. To what extent do these provide us with an accurate window into his reign?
2. Which aspect of Thutmose III's reign – e.g. military achievements, diplomatic negotiations, building projects or another of your choice – should be seen as his greatest achievement?







# CHAPTER 20

## Alkibiades

ALAN BARRIE

### TOPIC INTRODUCTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the geographical and historical context of Alkibiades
  - family background and status
  - key events in his rise to prominence
  - significant influences on early development.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the career of Alkibiades
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - change of role, position, status over time
  - depictions of Alkibiades during his lifetime
  - possible motivations for actions
  - methods used to achieve aims
  - relationships with groups and other individuals
  - significant events in the career of Alkibiades

### KEY DATES

**480 BCE**

Cleinias, father of Alkibiades, distinguishes himself at the Battle of Artemisium

**c. 450 BCE**

Alkibiades is born

**447 BCE**

Cleinias dies at the Battle of Coronea. As a result, Alkibiades becomes Perikles's ward

**431–404 BCE**

Peloponnesian War



- manner and impact of his death
- judgements of Alkibiades by other individuals in his lifetime and after his death, e.g. in writings, images and film.
- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose by completing short responses to historical sources.

### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the impact and legacy of Alkibiades
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - assessments of Alkibiades's life and career
  - the influence of Alkibiades on his time
  - the long-term impact and legacy of Alkibiades.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

### SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| • Agis II  | • Lamachus     |
| • Alkibiades the Younger ( <i>variant spelling: Alcibiades</i> ) | • Leotychides  |
| • Alcmaeonids  | • Lysander     |
| • Antiochus  | • Mindarus     |
| • Aripbron   | • Nicias       |
| • Astyochns  | • Perikles     |
| • Cleinias   | • Pharnabazus  |
| • Cleon  | • Phrynichus   |
| • Critias  | • Pisander     |
| • Cyrus the Younger  | • Socrates     |
| • Deinomache   | • Timaia       |
| • Demosthenes  | • Thessalus    |
| • Hipparete  | • Theramenes   |
| • Hyperbolos   | • Thrasybulus  |
|  | • Tissaphernes |

431–430 BCE

Potidean campaign. Alkibiades's life is saved by Socrates.

424 BCE

At the Battle of Delium, Socrates's life is saved by Alkibiades.

422 BCE

Serious peace negotiations are opened with Sparta after the death of Cleon.

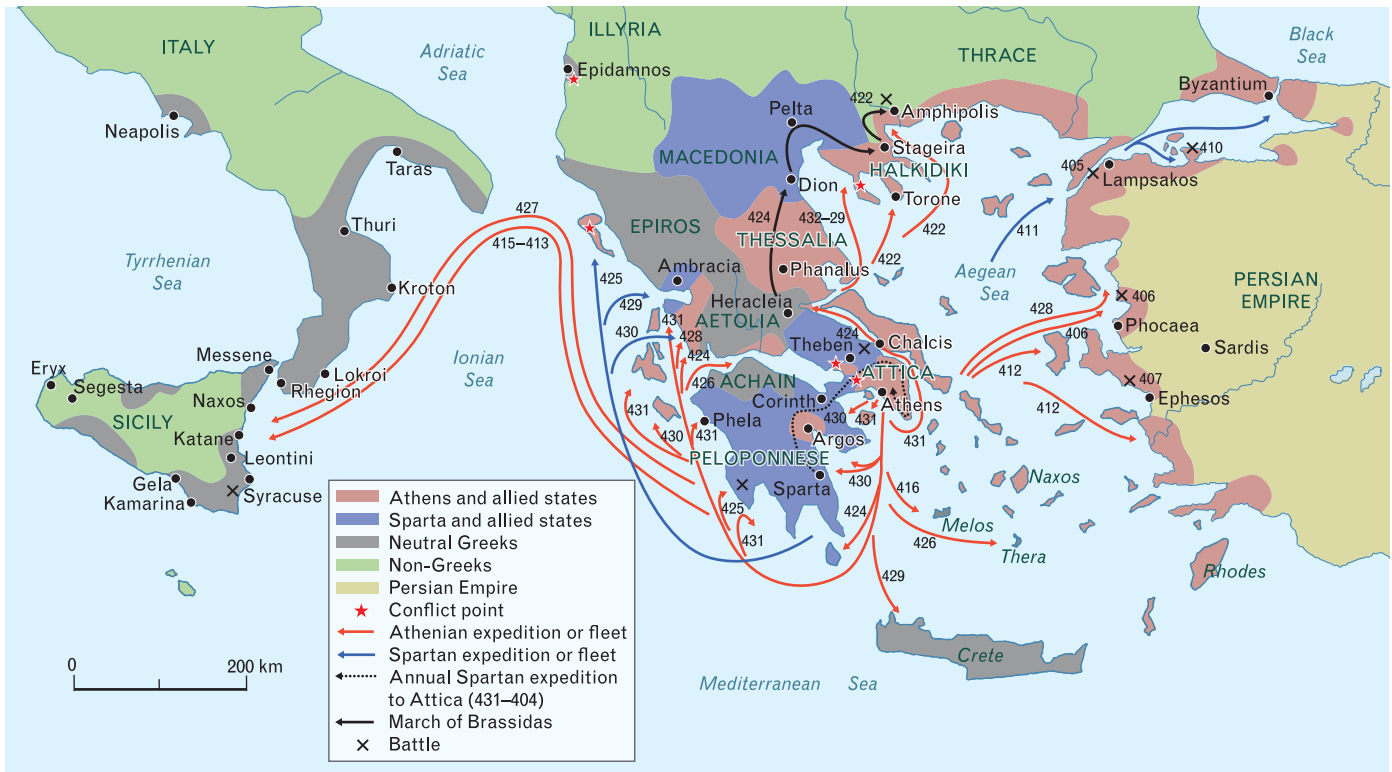
421 BCE

Peace with Sparta, known as the Peace of Nicias.





## MAP



**SOURCE 20.2** Map of the extent of the Peloponnesian War

### 420 BCE

Alkibiades is elected general (*strategos*) in his early 30s, a relatively young age, and secures an alliance between Athens and the Peloponnesian states of Argos, Mantinea and Elis

### 418 BCE

The Peace of Nicias ends after Sparta defeats the alliance at the Battle of Mantinea

### 417 BCE

At Argos, the Democrats are overthrown and later restored

### 416 BCE

- Alkibiades enters seven teams into the Olympic four-horse chariot race and wins first, second and fourth prize – an unparalleled triumph
- Melos is attacked by Athens, resulting in the death of men and the enslavement of women and children, as told by Thucydides in the *Melian Dialogue*
- Athens debates whether or not to go to war against Syracuse in Sicily, known as the Sicilian Debate. The speeches of Nicias (against) and Alkibiades (for) are featured in Thucydides's account. Nicias, Lamachus and Alkibiades are made co-commanders after the Athenians vote to attack Sicily.



## KEY TERMS AND GROUPS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Attica</b>	region surrounding the countryside of Athens which was occupied by many farms and communities; the region of Attica was divided into <i>demos</i> under the democratic reforms of Cleisthenes in 507 BCE
<b>democracy</b>	government by the people; a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free electoral system
<b>hoplite</b>	heavily-armed foot soldier
<b>Hellenes</b>	term used to refer to the ancient Greek population; Hellas referred to the region of ancient Greece
<b>Lacedaemonians</b>	people of Sparta
<b>oligarchy</b>	a form of government in which all power is vested in a few persons or in a dominant class or clique; government by the few
<b>ostracism</b>	a political feature of Athenian democracy in the fifth century BCE which allowed the ecclesia to exile a citizen for ten years based on a popular vote; this process took place once a year where the name of an individual was scribed onto shards of pottery known as <i>ostraka</i> ; in order to be valid an ostracism required that 6000 votes were cast
<b>Peloponnese/ Peloponnesos</b>	geographic region of southern Greece that is separated from mainland Greece by the Isthmus of Corinth; this region contained the city-state of Sparta
<b>Peloponnesian War</b>	a war fought from 431–404 BCE between two associations of Greek city-states: the Delian League led by Athens, and the Spartan-dominated Peloponnesian League

### 415 BCE

Athenians advance upon Syracuse. Alkibiades defects to Sparta after charges are filed against him due to the mutilation of the Herms and desecration of the Mysteries at Athens.

### 413 BCE

The Athenians are defeated at Syracuse, partly because Alkibiades gave the Spartans military advice, prompting them to send help to Syracuse. Multiple revolts among Athens's allies occur after the defeat.

### 411–410 BCE

At Athens, Alkibiades assists in organising a revolution, known as the Oligarchy of the 400; however, it is not long before democracy is restored





<b>polis</b> (plural: <i>poleis</i> )	term referring to the individual cities which existed within ancient Greece; these cities had their own distinct identity with regards to political, legal and religious practices, but shared broader cultural customs with other <i>poleis</i> ; a <i>polis</i> is commonly translated as a city-state; it was common for a <i>polis</i> to engage in warfare with neighbouring <i>poleis</i>
<b>strategos</b>	a significant position within Athens where ten men were elected annually to make decisions on military matters; these individuals would often take on the function of a general for military campaigns
<b>trireme</b>	ancient naval vessel that was operated by up to 30 oarsmen and equipped with a ram on the prow. Athenian triremes were noted for their manoeuvrability and speed.
<b>tyrant</b>	in ancient Greece a tyrant was identified as a ruler who suppressed the rights of the population; tyrants were often aristocratic and claimed to represent the needs of the wider population in contrast to that of a monarchy; it was against the rule of tyranny that the Athenian democratic revolution emerged

## Introduction

Alkibiades was an Athenian politician who lived from c. 450–404 BCE. During the Peloponnesian War, he operated as a general, and changed his allegiance several times.

There are a number of key ancient sources which can be used in a study of Alkibiades:

- ***History of the Peloponnesian War*, Thucydides** (c. 460–395 BCE). This work, written about 404 BCE, is the main source for this period. It is a contemporary account, not only of the war itself but of the Athenian people and what they thought about current affairs. Thucydides has often been regarded as the first scientific historian because of the rigorous methods he used to establish the truth. He investigated his facts meticulously and would not accept any evidence uncritically.
- ***Hellenica*, Xenophon** (c. 430–354 BCE). Xenophon was a Greek philosopher, historian and soldier. The *Hellenica* is a history of Greek affairs which offer a continuation of Thucydides work. Although born in Athens, Xenophon fought under the Spartan king, and some of his works have an admiring pro-Spartan bias.
- ***Parallel Lives*, Plutarch** (c. 45–120 CE). This is a series of biographies of famous men, including Alkibiades. Plutarch's surviving works were written in Greek, but intended for both Greek and Roman readers. He focuses on issues relating to character and morals through the pairing of a Greek personality with a Roman one, unified together by a common characteristic. As such, the purpose of his writing is

### 408 BCE

Alkibiades finally returns to Athens after being recalled from exile in 411 BCE by Critias's decree

### 406 BCE

Alkibiades is forced into exile for the last time, as he is held accountable for the naval defeat at Notium and subsequently comes under attack by his Athenian opponents

### 404 BCE

Athens is conquered by the Spartans, heralding the end of the Peloponnesian War. The Oligarchy of the 30 is installed, and Critias, among other leaders, orders Alkibiades to be killed.

not exclusively concerned with history, but more on the revelation of certain moral truths by comparing historical figures.

- ***The Athenian Constitution*, Aristotle** (430–354 BCE). This treatise was composed between 330 and 322 BCE, and describes the political system of ancient Athens. The first part covers the constitution, and the second is a description of the city’s institutions, including the court system.
- ***The Symposium*, Plato** (c. 428–348 BCE). This philosophical text is set at a banquet, during which a number of notable men are challenged to give a speech about love. Alkibiades is one of the speakers. It is important to remember that this work was not intended to be a biography, and so its portrayal of Alkibiades may not be accurate.
- ***Bibliotheca Historica*, Diodorus Siculus** (80–c. 20 BCE). Diodorus Siculus was a Greek historian whose *Bibliotheca Historica* is a general world history in 40 volumes, many of which still survive. He used the writings of numerous other authors when compiling it (hence the title *bibliotheca*, meaning ‘library’). It starts with mythic history, and then goes from the Trojan War through to Alexander the Great, and finally up to about 60 BCE, 20 years before the Diodorus’s birth.

## ACTIVITY 20.1

By referring to the background information provided, the downloadable *Primary Sources* document, and further research where necessary, complete the table below for the key ancient sources on Alkibiades.

	Origin	Motive	Audience	Perspective
Plato				
Thucydides				
Plutarch				
Diodorus				
Aristotle				
Xenophon				

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### 20.1 Who was Alkibiades?

#### The changes in fortune of Alkibiades’s life

Alkibiades was raised by Perikles and Perikles’ brother Ariphron after the death of his father in 447 BCE. Various sources state that Alkibiades was a highly accomplished, intelligent, wealthy, handsome man from a good family background. He was admired by many, including Socrates, who saved Alkibiades’s life in battle and later had the favour returned. The launch of the Sicilian Campaign in 415 BCE was significantly prompted by Alkibiades, who was one of the leading figures eager for the war to continue. Not long before the expedition was due to set sail, Alkibiades was accused of mocking and parodying the Mysteries of Eleusis at a party, and of being involved in the mutilation of the herms (sacred statues). Alkibiades felt that he would be safer from punishment if the trial occurred before the expedition, as he would be surrounded by supporters; however, he had no choice but to leave with the rest of the expedition and face trial at a later date. He later fled to Argos after being recalled from Sicily to stand trial.

## Alkibiades traitorously helps the Spartans

Alkibiades then joined the Spartans and advised them to fortify the Attican town of Decelea, a move that gave them a critical strategic advantage over the Athenians. However, he seduced the wife of Spartan King Agis II, and is rumoured to have fathered a son with her. This resulted in the king viewing Alkibiades as an enemy. After persuading the Spartans to help Chios revolt against Athens, Alkibiades became aware of a Spartan conspiracy to kill him. In light of this information, Alkibiades escaped to the court of Tissaphernes, a Persian satrap (governor), in 412 BCE. While there, Alkibiades won Tissaphernes's support for the Athenians, by persuading him to discard his previous pro-Spartan policy.

## Athens recalls and forgives Alkibiades

After this move, the Athenians forgave Alkibiades and recalled him. Alkibiades initially remained as a general with the fleet at Samos and brought over Pharnabazus, another satrap, to assist the Athenians. Despite being appointed as a commander-in-chief on his return to Athens in 407 BCE, Alkibiades was less popular a year later due to the defeat of Antiochus, one of his subordinates. He spent the rest of the war in retirement at his fortress in Thrace, and offered his opinion about the Athenian generals' imprudence at Aegospotami, though this advice was ignored. The fall of Athens in 404 BCE prompted Alkibiades to travel to the court of Artaxerxes, the Persian king. On the way, however, Alkibiades was murdered. This murder is thought to have been committed either by the brothers of a Persian woman who Alkibiades had seduced, or by the Spartans, in fear of Alkibiades potentially launching an uprising at Athens.

## Alkibiades's place in Greek literature

Alkibiades appears in several places in Greek literature. In Plato's *Symposium* he appears as a character, as well as in two more Socratic dialogues, which may or may not have been written by Plato, *Alkibiades I* and *Alkibiades II*. He appears in Thucydides's account of the Peloponnesian War, and Plutarch wrote his biography as one of the *Parallel Lives* series, paired with Coriolanus. He also appears in several speeches which still exist: in two by Lysias, spoken against Alkibiades, grouped with Lysias's speech against Agoratus; and in another speech that may or may not be by Andocides, grouped with his speech concerning peace with Sparta.

# Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature of power and how it was exercised in the Ancient World

## 20.2 Alkibiades the politician

The following extracts from Plutarch show a variety of different perspectives on Alkibiades as a politician.

### Populist

A populist leader is one who gains support through being popular with ordinary people.

He saw that the people, upon occasion, served their own turn with experienced men of eloquence or surpassing ability, but ever looked with suspicious and cautious eyes upon such powers, and tried to abate the pride and reputation to which they gave rise.

**SOURCE 20.3** Plutarch, *Life of Nicias*, 6



It was Nicias, then, who, when an embassy came from Egesta and Leontini seeking to persuade the Athenians to undertake an expedition against Sicily, opposed the measure, only to be defeated by the ambitious purposes of Alkibiades. Before the assembly had met at all, Alkibiades had already corrupted the multitude and got them into his power by means of his sanguine promises, so that the youth in their training-schools and the old men in their work-shops and lounging-places would sit in clusters drawing maps of Sicily, charts of the sea about it, and plans of the harbours and districts of the island which look towards Libya. For they did not regard Sicily itself as the prize of the war, but rather as a mere base of operations, purposing therefrom to wage a contest with the Carthaginians and get possession of both Libya and of all the sea this side the Pillars of Heracles.

**SOURCE 20.4** Plutarch, *Life of Nicias*, 12

## Oligarch

An oligarchy is a system in which a small number of people hold all the power. Typically they have gained this power less through ability than through privilege, such as wealth, class position or family.

At this time almost all the forces of Athens were at Samos. From this island as their naval base of operations they were trying to win back some of their Ionian allies who had revolted, and were watching others who were disaffected. After a fashion, they still managed to cope with their enemies on the sea, but they were afraid of Tissaphernes and of the fleet of one hundred and fifty Phoenician triremes which was said to be all but at hand; if this once came up, no hope of safety was left for their city. Alkibiades was aware of this, and sent secret messages to the influential Athenians at Samos, in which he held out the hope that he might bring Tissaphernes over to be their friend. He did not seek, he said, the favour of the multitude, nor trust them, but rather that of the aristocrats, in case they would venture to show themselves men, put a stop to the insolence of the people, take the direction of affairs into their own hands, and save their cause and city.

**SOURCE 20.5** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 25

## Military tyrant

A tyrant is an absolute ruler. Today the term is normally used in a negative sense, implying that the person is cruel and oppressive, but these connotations were not necessarily present in the original Greek usage.

In the following extract, Plutarch discusses Alkibiades's return to Athens in 410 BCE.

Ever since Deceleia had been fortified, and the enemy, by their presence there, commanded the approaches to Eleusis, the festal rite had been celebrated with no splendour at all, being conducted by sea. Sacrifices, choral dances, and many of the sacred ceremonies usually held on the road, when Iacchus is conducted forth from Athens to Eleusis, had of necessity been omitted. Accordingly, it seemed to Alkibiades that it would be a fine thing, enhancing his holiness in the eyes of the gods and his good repute in the minds of men, to restore its traditional fashion to the sacred festival by escorting the rite with his infantry along past the enemy by land. He would thus either thwart and humble Agis, if the king kept entirely quiet, or would fight a fight that was sacred and approved by the gods, in behalf of the greatest and holiest interests, in full sight of his native city, and with all his fellow citizens eye-witnesses of his valour. When he had determined upon this course and made known his design to the Eumolpidae and Heralds, he stationed sentries on the heights, sent out an

advance-guard at break of day, and then took the priests, mystae, and mystagogues, encompassed them with his men-at-arms, and led them over the road to Eleusis in decorous and silent array. So august and devout was the spectacle which, as general, he thus displayed, that he was hailed by those who were not unfriendly to him as High Priest, rather, and Mystagogue. No enemy dared to attack him, and he conducted the procession safely back to the city. At this he was exalted in spirit himself, and exalted his army with the feeling that it was irresistible and invincible under his command. People of the humbler and poorer sort he so captivated by his leadership that they were filled with an amazing passion to have him for their tyrant, and some proposed it, and actually came to him in solicitation of it. He was to rise superior to envy, abolish decrees and laws, and stop the mouths of the babblers who were so fatal to the life of the city, that he might bear an absolute sway and act without fear of the public informer. What thoughts he himself had about a tyranny, is uncertain.

**SOURCE 20.6** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 34–35

### An aggressive Perikles

In this final extract on Alkibiades as a politician, Plutarch points out that the Athenian desire to take Sicily began during the time of Perikles, but it was Alkibiades who took it to action.

On Sicily, the Athenians had cast longing eyes even while Perikles was living; and after his death they actually tried to lay hands upon it. The lesser expeditions which they sent thither from time to time, ostensibly for the aid and comfort of their allies on the island who were being wronged by the Syracusans, they regarded merely as stepping stones to the greater expedition of conquest. But the man who finally fanned this desire of theirs into flame, and persuaded them not to attempt the island any more in part and little by little, but to sail thither with a great armament and subdue it utterly, was Alkibiades; he persuaded the people to have great hopes, and he himself had greater aspirations still. Such were his hopes that he regarded Sicily as a mere beginning, and not, like the rest, as an end of the expedition. So while Nicias was trying to divert the people from the capture of Syracuse as an undertaking too difficult for them, Alkibiades was dreaming of Carthage and Libya, and, after winning these, of at once encompassing Italy and Peloponnesus. He almost regarded Sicily as the ways and means provided for his greater war. The young men were at once carried away on the wings of such hopes, and their elders kept recounting in their ears many wonderful things about the projected expedition. Many were they who sat in the palaestras and lounging-places mapping out in the sand the shape of Sicily and the position of Libya and Carthage.

**SOURCE 20.7** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 17

### ACTIVITY 20.2

Study Sources 20.3 to 20.7 and use them to answer the following questions.

1. Successful politicians generally have a power base – a particular group who support them, or an area in which they are influential. What was Alkibiades's power base?
2. Analyse the sources as a basis for group discussion.  
Which sources do you think favour Alkibiades? Why?

## 20.3 Popularity and persuasiveness

In his *Life of Alkibiades*, Plutarch offers a variety of reasons for Alkibiades's popularity and persuasiveness.

One reason was that Alkibiades was the proverbial 'big spender', a spendthrift, someone who lavishes money on people and projects.

And indeed, his voluntary contributions of money, his support of public exhibitions, his unsurpassed munificence towards the city, the glory of his ancestry, the power of his eloquence, the comeliness and vigour of his person, together with his experience and prowess in war, made the Athenians lenient and tolerant towards everything else; they were forever giving the mildest of names to his transgressions, calling them the product of youthful spirits and ambition ... So undecided was public opinion about Alkibiades, by reason of the unevenness of his nature.

**SOURCE 20.8** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 16

In the following three extracts Plutarch describes not only the positive influence Socrates had on Alkibiades, but also how this relationship redeemed Alkibiades in the eyes of some of his critics.

It is said, and with good reason, that the favour and affection which Socrates showed him contributed much to his reputation.

**SOURCE 20.9** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 1

But the love of Socrates, though it had many powerful rivals, somehow mastered Alkibiades. For he was of good natural parts, and the words of his teacher took hold of him and wrung his heart and brought tears to his eyes. But sometimes he would surrender himself to the flatterers who tempted him with many pleasures, and slip away from Socrates, and suffer himself to be actually hunted down by him like a runaway slave. And yet he feared and revered Socrates alone, and despised the rest of his lovers.

**SOURCE 20.10** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 6

... it was rather his love of distinction and love of fame to which his corrupters appealed, and thereby plunged him all too soon into ways of presumptuous scheming, persuading him that he had only to enter public life, and he would straightway cast into total eclipse the ordinary generals and public leaders, and not only that, he would even surpass Perikles in power and reputation among the Hellenes. Accordingly, just as iron, which has been softened in the fire, is hardened again by cold water, and has its particles compacted together, so Alkibiades, whenever Socrates found him filled with vanity and wantonness, was reduced to shape by the Master's discourse, and rendered humble and cautious. He learned how great were his deficiencies and how incomplete his excellence.

**SOURCE 20.11** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 7



Here Plutarch comments on the physical attraction that Alkibiades held for many – both as a child and as an adult.

As regards the beauty of Alkibiades, it is perhaps unnecessary to say aught, except that it flowered out with each successive season of his bodily growth, and made him, alike in boyhood, youth and manhood, lovely and pleasant. The saying of Euripides, that ‘beauty’s autumn, too, is beautiful,’ is not always true. But it was certainly the case with Alkibiades, as with few besides, because of his excellent natural parts. Even the lisp that he had became his speech, they say, and made his talk persuasive and full of charm.

**SOURCE 20.12** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 1

Eloquent speaking was an important skill in ancient Greece and Rome. In this extract Plutarch considers Alkibiades’s oratorical skills.

Though great doors to public service were opened to him by his birth, his wealth, and his personal bravery in battle; and though he had many friends and followers, he thought that nothing should give him more influence with the people than the charm of his discourse. And that he was a powerful speaker, not only do the comic poets testify, but also the most powerful of the orators himself, who says, in his speech *Against Meidias*, that Alkibiades was a most able speaker in addition to his other gifts. And if we are to trust Theophrastus, the most versatile and learned of the philosophers, Alkibiades was of all men the most capable of discovering and understanding what was required in a given case. But since he strove to find not only the proper thing to say, but also the proper words and phrases in which to say it; and since in this last regard he was not a man of large resources, he would often stumble in the midst of his speech, come to a stop, and pause a while, a particular phrase eluding him. Then he would resume, and proceed with all the caution in the world.

**SOURCE 20.13** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 10

Plutarch points out that Alkibiades was attractive to both men and women.

It was not long before many men of high birth clustered about him and paid him their attentions. Most of them were plainly smitten with his brilliant youthful beauty and fondly courted him. But it was the love which Socrates had for him that bore strong testimony to the boy’s native excellence and good parts.

**SOURCE 20.14** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 23

For while Agis the king was away on his campaigns, Alkibiades corrupted Timaea his wife, so that she was with child by him and made no denial of it. When she had given birth to a male child, it was called Leotyichides in public, but in private the name which the boy’s mother whispered to her friends and attendants was Alkibiades. Such was the passion that possessed the woman. But he, in his mocking way, said he had not done this thing for a wanton insult, nor at the behest of mere pleasure, but in order that descendants of his might be kings of the Lacedaemonians.

**SOURCE 20.15** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 23

Chariot racing, especially at the ancient Olympic Games, granted wealthy Greeks the opportunity to flaunt their wealth and increase their fame. Plutarch describes the awe in which Alkibiades was held owing to his success in the hippodrome.

His breeds of horses were famous the world over, and so was the number of his racing-chariots. No one else ever entered seven of these at the Olympic games – neither commoner nor king – but he alone. And his coming off first, second, and fourth victor (as Thucydides says; third, according to Euripides), transcends in the splendour of its renown all that ambition can aspire to in this field. The ode of Euripides to which I refer runs thus:

Thee will I sing, O child of Cleinias;  
A fair thing is victory, but fairest is what no other Hellene has achieved,  
To run first, and second, and third in the contest of racing-chariots,  
And to come off unwearied, and, wreathed with the olive of Zeus,  
To furnish theme for herald's proclamation.

**SOURCE 20.16** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 11

Plutarch has mentioned Alkibiades's charm in previous extracts, but here he describes in detail how Alkibiades could engage with people of all social levels as though he was one of them.

At Sparta, he was held in high repute publicly, and privately was no less admired. The multitude was brought under his influence, and was actually bewitched, by his assumption of the Spartan mode of life. When they saw him with his hair untrimmed, taking cold baths, on terms of intimacy with their coarse bread, and supping on black porridge, they could scarcely trust their eyes, and doubted whether such a man as he now was had ever had a cook in his own house, had even so much as looked upon a perfumer, or endured the touch of Milesian wool. He had, as they say, one power which transcended all others, and proved an implement of his chase for men: that of assimilating and adapting himself to the pursuits and lives of others, thereby assuming more violent changes than the chameleon. That animal, however, as it is said, is utterly unable to assume one colour, namely, white; but Alkibiades could associate with good and bad alike, and found naught that he could not imitate and practice. In Sparta, he was all for bodily training, simplicity of life, and severity of countenance; in Ionia, for luxurious ease and pleasure; in Thrace, for drinking deep; in Thessaly, for riding hard; and when he was thrown with Tissaphernes the satrap, he outdid even Persian magnificence in his pomp and lavishness.

**SOURCE 20.17** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 23

### ACTIVITY 20.3

1. Make a list of reasons for Alkibiades's popularity, and for each one provide an example from Plutarch.
2. Choose one of the reasons and write a paragraph explaining why it would have been effective in ancient Greece.

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### 20.4 What are the reasons for considering Alkibiades to be 'great' and a 'genius'?

There are three areas in particular for which Alkibiades is recognised: his powers of persuasion, his political machinations and his military successes.

#### Persuasion and power of arguments

The following source comes from Alkibiades's oration before the Sicilian expedition, as reported by Thucydides.

Men do not rest content with parrying the attacks of a superior, but often strike the first blow to prevent the attack being made. And we cannot fix the exact point at which our empire shall stop; we have reached a position in which we must not be content with retaining but must scheme to extend it, for, if we cease to rule others, we are in danger of being ruled ourselves. Nor can you look at inaction from the same point of view as others, unless you are prepared to change your habits and make them like theirs.

**SOURCE 20.18** *Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War, 6.18*

#### Masterful political operator and manipulator

Alkibiades seduced the Spartan King Agis's wife and was commonly believed to be the father of her son, Leotychides. In the source that follows, Plutarch describes how this later led to him being pursued by King Agis after the defeat of Athens in Sicily (415 BCE). At the time, Alkibiades was in Ionia, courting an alliance between Sparta and Persia. He even fought against the Athenians at Miletus (the only time he fought against Athens).

Agis was hostile to him because of the wrong he had suffered as a husband, and he was also vexed at the repute in which Alkibiades stood; for most of the successes won were due to him, as report had it. The most influential and ambitious of the other Spartans also were already envious and tired of him, and soon grew strong enough to induce the magistrates at home to send out orders to Ionia that he be put to death.

His stealthy discovery of this put him on his guard, and while in all their undertakings he took part with the Lacedaemonians, he sedulously avoided coming into their hands. Then, resorting to Tissaphernes, the [Persians] King's satrap, for safety, he was soon first and foremost in that grandee's favour. ... Alkibiades now abandoned the cause of the Spartans, since he distrusted them and feared Agis, and began to malign and slander them to Tissaphernes. He advised him not to aid them very generously, and yet not to put down the Athenians completely, but rather by niggardly assistance to straighten and gradually wear out both, and so make them easy victims for King when they had weakened and exhausted each other.

**SOURCE 20.19** *Plutarch, Life of Alkibiades, 24–25*

At this time, the Athenians were concerned that Sparta and Persia were uniting their navies. In the following source, Plutarch tells of how Alkibiades took advantage of this and plotted with aristocratic oligarchs – part of his master plan to return to Athens.



Alkibiades was aware of this, and sent secret messages to the influential Athenians at Samos, in which he held out the hope that he might bring Tissaphernes over to be their friend. He did not seek, he said, the favour of the multitude, nor trust them, but rather that of the aristocrats, in case they would venture to show themselves men, put a stop to the insolence of the people, take the direction of affairs into their own hands, and save their cause and city. ... At Samos the friends of Alkibiades soon got the upper hand, and sent Peisander to Athens to change the form of government. He was to encourage the leading men to overthrow the democracy and take control of affairs, with the plea that on these terms alone would Alkibiades make Tissaphernes their friend and ally. This was the pretence and this the pretext of those who established the oligarchy at Athens. [we could assume here that after this was achieved, Alkibiades probably expected that he would be invited back to Athens and take over power but things took a new twist] ... But as soon as the so-called Five Thousand (they were really only four hundred) got the power and took control of affairs, they at once neglected Alkibiades entirely, and waged the war with less vigour, partly because they distrusted the citizens, who still looked askance at the new form of government, and partly because they thought that the Lacedaemonians, who always looked with favour on an oligarchy, would be more lenient towards them.

The popular party in the city [Athens] was constrained by fear to keep quiet, because many of those who openly opposed the Four Hundred had been slain. But when the army in Samos learned what had been done at home, they were enraged, and were eager to sail forthwith to the Piraeus, and sending for Alkibiades, they appointed him general, and bade him lead them in putting down the tyrants.

**SOURCE 20.20** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 25–26

## Return to Athens through military battles and victories

The key element of Alkibiades's return to Athens was a series of good military and political decisions.

An ordinary man, thus suddenly raised to great power by the favour of the multitude, would have been full of complaisance, thinking that he must at once gratify them in all things and oppose them in nothing, since they had made him, instead of a wandering exile, leader and general of such a fleet and of so large an armed force. But Alkibiades, as became a great leader, felt that he must oppose them in their career of blind fury, and prevented them from making a fatal mistake. Therefore in this instance, at least, he was the manifest salvation of the city. For had they sailed off home, their enemies might at once have occupied all Ionia, the Hellespont without a battle, and the islands, while Athenians were fighting Athenians and making their own city the seat of war. Such a war Alkibiades, more than any other one man, prevented, not only persuading and instructing the multitude together, but also, taking them man by man, supplicating some and constraining others.

**SOURCE 20.21** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 26

Plutarch continues the story by telling of how, even after the city was willing for Alkibiades to come home, he chose not to do so immediately.

After this the Four Hundred were overthrown, the friends of Alkibiades now zealously assisting the party of the people. Then the city willingly ordered Alkibiades to come back home. But he thought he must not return with empty hands and without achievement, through the pity and favour of the multitude, but rather in a blaze of glory. So, to begin with, he set sail with a small fleet from Samos and cruised off Cnidus and Cos.

There he heard that Mindarus the Spartan admiral had sailed off to the Hellespont with his entire fleet, followed by the Athenians, and so he hastened to the assistance of their generals. By chance he came up, with his eighteen triremes, at just that critical point when both parties, having joined battle with all their ships off Abydos, and sharing almost equally in victory and defeat until evening, were locked in a great struggle. The appearance of Alkibiades inspired both sides with a false opinion of his coming: the enemy were emboldened and the Athenians were confounded. But he quickly hoisted Athenian colours on his flagship and darted straight upon the victorious and pursuing Peloponnesians. Routing them, he drove them to land, and following hard after them, rammed and shattered their ships.

**SOURCE 20.22** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 27

A series of victories followed for Alkibiades: a decisive naval battle at Cyzicus, and the captures of Chalcedon, Selybria and Byzantium. Alkibiades returned home in triumph.

Alkibiades, yearning at last to see his home, and still more desirous of being seen by his fellow citizens, now that he had conquered their enemies so many times, set sail. ... When he landed, however, people did not deign so much as to look at the other generals whom they met, but ran in throngs to Alkibiades with shouts of welcome, escorting him on his way, and putting wreaths on his head as they could get to him, while those who could not come to him for the throng, gazed at him from afar, the elderly men pointing him out to the young ... For now he had taken the city when she was almost banished from the sea, when on land she was hardly mistress of her own suburbs, and when factions raged within her walls, and had raised her up from this wretched and lowly plight, not only restoring her dominion over the sea, but actually rendering her victorious over her enemies everywhere on land.

**SOURCE 20.23** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 24–32

## ACTIVITY 20.4

Create a dot point summary or flow chart to capture the narrative described, then highlight/select a quotation from each source that can be used to answer the following question: *What are the reasons for considering Alkibiades to be 'great' and a 'genius'?*

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a powerful individual, group or society in the Ancient World

### 20.5 Was Alkibiades a patriot and saviour of Athens?

#### Leader

In these three extracts Plutarch and Thucydides comment on Alkibiades's leadership style.

He was naturally a man of many strong passions, the mightiest of which were the love of rivalry and the love of pre-eminence.

**SOURCE 20.24** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 2



Alkibiades was appointed general, and straightway brought the Argives [Argos], Mantineans, and Eleans into alliance with Athens. [Although Sparta won the Battle of Mantinea], their victory brought them no great advantage, whereas, had they been defeated, the very existence of Sparta would have been at stake.

**SOURCE 20.25** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 15

It is thus that empire has been won, both by us and by all others that have held it, by a constant readiness to support all, whether barbarians or Hellenes, that invite assistance; since if all were to keep quiet or to pick and choose whom they ought to assist, we should make but few new conquests, and should imperil those we have already won. Men do not rest content with parrying the attacks of a superior, but often strike the first blow to prevent the attack being made. And we cannot fix the exact point at which our empire shall stop; we have reached a position in which we must not be content with retaining but must scheme to extend it, for, if we cease to rule others, we are in danger of being ruled ourselves. Nor can you look at inaction from the same point of view as others, unless you are prepared to change your habits and make them like theirs. 'Be convinced, then, that we shall augment our power at home by this adventure abroad, and let us make the expedition, and so humble the pride of the Peloponnesians by sailing off to Sicily, and letting them see how little we care for the peace that we are now enjoying; and at the same time we shall either become masters, as we very easily may, of the whole of Hellas through the accession of the Sicilian Hellenes, or in any case ruin the Syracusans, to the no small advantage of ourselves and our allies. The faculty of staying if successful, or of returning, will be secured to us by our navy, as we shall be superior at sea to all the Siceliots put together. And do not let the do-nothing policy which Nicias advocates, or his setting of the young against the old, turn you from your purpose, but in the good old fashion by which our fathers, old and young together, by their united counsels brought our affairs to their present height, do you endeavour still to advance them; understanding that neither youth nor old age can do anything the one without the other, but that levity, sobriety, and deliberate judgement are strongest when united, and that, by sinking into inaction, the city, like everything else, will wear itself out, and its skill in everything decay; while each fresh struggle will give it fresh experience, and make it more used to defend itself not in word but in deed. In short, my conviction is that a city not inactive by nature could not choose a quicker way to ruin itself than by suddenly adopting such a policy, and that the safest rule of life is to take one's character and institutions for better and for worse, and to live up to them as closely as one can.' Such were the words of Alkibiades. After hearing him and the Eggestaeans and some Leontine exiles, who came forward reminding them of their oaths and imploring their assistance, the Athenians became more eager for the expedition than before.

**SOURCE 20.26** Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, 6:18–19

## Loyal democrat

Here is Alkibiades's speech to the Spartans, as recorded by Thucydides.

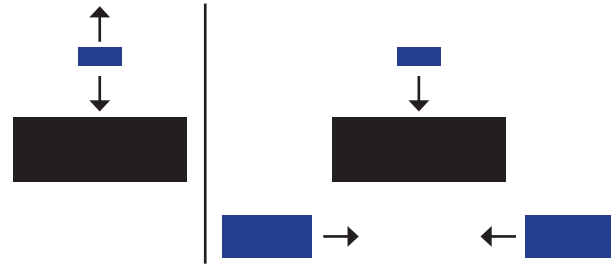
Our party was that of the whole people, our creed being to do our part in preserving the form of government under which the city enjoyed the utmost greatness and freedom, and which we had found existing. As for democracy, the men of sense among us knew what it was, and I perhaps as well as any, as I have the more cause to complain of it; but there is nothing new to be said of a patent absurdity – meanwhile we did not think it safe to alter it under the pressure of your hostility.

**SOURCE 20.27** Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, 6:20



## Military tactician

The naval Battle of Cyzicus, in 410 BCE, saw an Athenian fleet commanded by Alkibiades, Thrasybulus and Theramenes defeat a Spartan fleet. Source 20.28 shows the strategy of the Athenians. The Spartan fleet (black) was initially lured out to sea by Alkibiades's decoy force (blue). After this, the Spartans' retreat towards Cyzicus was blockaded as Thrasybulus and Theramenes brought squadrons in behind them. Meanwhile, Alkibiades angled to face the force moving in pursuit.



**SOURCE 20.28** The Athenian strategy at Cyzicus

Now it chanced that copious rain fell all of a sudden, and thunder-peals and darkness cooperated with [Alkibiades] in concealing his design. Indeed, not only did he elude the enemy, but even the Athenians themselves had already given up all expectation of fighting, when he suddenly ordered them aboard ship and put out to sea. After a little the darkness cleared away, and the Peloponnesian ships were seen hovering off the harbour of Cyzicus. Fearing then lest they catch sight of the full extent of his array and take refuge ashore, he ordered his fellow-commanders to sail slowly and so remain in the rear, while he himself, with only forty ships, hove in sight and challenged the foe to battle. The Peloponnesians were utterly deceived, and scorning what they deemed the small numbers of their enemy, put out to meet them, and closed at once with them in a grappling fight. Presently, while the battle was raging, the Athenian reserves bore down upon their foe, who were panic stricken and took to flight. Then Alkibiades with twenty of his best ships broke through their line, put to shore, and disembarking his crews, attacked his enemy as they fled from their ships, and slew many of them. Mindarus and Pharnabazus, who came to their aid, he overwhelmed; Mindarus was slain fighting sturdily, but Pharnabazus made his escape. Many were the dead bodies and the arms of which the Athenians became masters, and they captured all their enemy's ships. Then they also stormed Cyzicus, which Pharnabazus abandoned to its fate, and the Peloponnesians in it were annihilated. Thus, the Athenians not only had the Hellespont under their sure control, but even drove the Lacedaemonians at a stroke from the rest of the sea. A dispatch was captured announcing the disaster to the ephors in true laconic style: 'Our ships are lost; Mindarus is gone; our men are starving; we know not what to do.'

**SOURCE 20.29** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 28

Five years later, in 405 BCE, the Battle of Aegospotami saw a complete reversal of fortune for the Athenians, and effectively finished the Peloponnesian War. Here, Plutarch tells of how Alkibiades criticised the tactics of his fellow generals before the battle.

Tydeus, Menander, and Adeimantus, the generals, who had all the ships which the Athenians could finally muster in station at Aegospotami, were wont to sail out at daybreak against Lysander, who lay with his fleet at Lampsacus, and challenge him to battle. Then they would sail back again, to spend the rest of the day in disorder and unconcern, since, forsooth, they despised their enemy. Alkibiades, who was near at hand, could not see such conduct with calmness or indifference, but rode up on horseback and read the generals a lesson. He said their anchorage was a bad one; the place had no harbour and no city, but they had to get their supplies from Sestos, a long way off;

and they permitted their crews, whenever they were on land, to wander and scatter about at their own sweet wills, while there lay at anchor over against them an armament which was trained to do everything silently at a word of absolute command. In spite of what Alkibiades said, and in spite of his advice to change their station to Sestos, the generals paid no heed. Tydeus actually insulted him by bidding him be gone: he was not general now, but others. So, Alkibiades departed, suspecting that some treachery was on foot among them. He told his acquaintances who were escorting him out of the camp that, had he not been so grievously insulted by the generals, within a few days he would have forced the Lacedaemonians to engage them whether they wished to do so or not, or else lose their ships. Some thought that what he said was arrant boasting; but others that it was likely, since he had merely to bring up his numerous Thracian javelineers and horsemen to assault by land and confound the enemy's camp. However, that he saw only too well the errors of the Athenians the event soon testified. Lysander suddenly and unexpectedly fell upon them, and only eight of their triremes escaped with Conon; the rest, something less than two hundred, were captured and taken away. Three thousand of their crews were taken alive and executed by Lysander. In a short time he also captured Athens, burned her ships, and tore down her long walls.

**SOURCE 20.30** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 39

### ACTIVITY 20.5

1. Summarise each of the previous sources and provide a quotation from each on what you think the most important element is in terms of shedding light on Alkibiades's abilities.
2. How do these sources point to a positive evaluation of Alkibiades's contribution to Athens in the Peloponnesian War?
3. To what extent do you agree with this positive evaluation? Why/why not?

## 20.6 The follies of Alkibiades

In 416 BCE, Alkibiades spoke in support of attacking Syracuse: this was the first time he had advocated attacking another democracy. In this section, you will consider what consequence this might have had amongst Athens's own democratic allies.

### Destruction of the Peace of Nicias

Alkibiades orchestrated the downfall of Nicias (the Athenian politician and general who had been largely responsible for successful peace negotiations with Sparta in 421 BCE) and the destruction of the peace between Athens and Sparta. Plutarch suggests that reason for his antagonism against Nicias and the subsequent taking over of Athens's foreign policy was simply jealousy.

Alkibiades was sore distressed to see Nicias no less admired by his enemies than honoured by his fellow-citizens. For although Alkibiades was resident consul for the Lacedaemonians [Spartans] at Athens, and had ministered to their men who had been taken prisoners at Pylos, still, they felt that it was chiefly due to Nicias that they had obtained peace and the final surrender of those men, and so they lavished their regard upon him. And Hellenes everywhere said that it was Perikles who had plunged them into war, but Nicias who had delivered them out of it, and most men called the peace the 'Peace of Nicias'. Alkibiades was therefore distressed beyond measure, and in his envy planned a



violation of the solemn treaty. To begin with, he saw that the Argives hated and feared the Spartans and sought to be rid of them. So he secretly held out hopes to them of an alliance with Athens, and encouraged them, by conferences with the chief men of their popular party, not to fear nor yield to the Lacedaemonians, but to look to Athens and await her action, since she was now all but repentant, and desirous of abandoning the peace which she had made with Sparta ...

**SOURCE 20.31** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 14

When he [Nicias] had actually set the state fairly in the path of safety, was hurled from it by an impetuous onset of Alkibiades's ambition

**SOURCE 20.32** Plutarch, *Life of Nicias*, 9

## Massacres at Scione and Melos

In the following post from 2015, an online blogger considers the way Athens treated the people of Melos, comparing it to US actions in the Vietnam war.

### **Athens's worst atrocities at Melos and Scione**

During the Vietnam War, Noam Chomsky liked making the point that just because the US was a democracy and respected (for the most part) the rights of its own citizens did not mean that it had any regards for the people of other countries. So it was at the time; so it has proven yet again in Iraq. Nor is this new. Chomsky had many examples of atrocities committed by democratic governments that respected the rights of their own citizens from the British Empire all the way back to Ancient Athens. Which brings us to the worst atrocities of the war, the massacres at Scione and Melos. Neither played any direct role in the city's downfall, yet they stand as indelible blemishes on Athens's record, as the city itself was to acknowledge.

....

While Scione has been largely forgotten, Melos stands with My Lai as an example of the horrors democracy is capable of committing. Melos was an island, a Spartan colony, but a neutral and of no strategic significance. The Athenians nonetheless demanded, on penalty of extirpation, that Melos pay tribute and join the alliance. When the Melians refused, the Athenians laid siege, surrounded the city, cut off its food supply, and starved it into submission. Thucydides tantalisingly speaks of some treachery within. Perhaps the Melians hoped, like the people of Mytilene, to be spared if they sought the safety of surrender. If so, it was a futile hope. The Athenians massacred all the men and sold the women and children as slaves. So why does the atrocity at Melos live on in infamy to this day, while Scione is forgotten? Partly, perhaps, because in Scione the Athenians had at least the minimal excuse that the city had revolted during a truce (even if they didn't know about the truce), while Melos was a neutral that gave no excuse whatever. Partly, perhaps, because the Spartans had (apparently) evacuated most of the non-combatants, leaving only a few women to be enslaved (probably already slaves). But mostly it is presumably because of the Melian Dialogue, Thucydides's horrifying account of the negotiations that took place between the parties before the siege.

According to Thucydides, the Melian Council refused to allow the Athenian ambassadors to address the Assembly, fearing that it would be intimidated. In their private negotiations, the Athenians made no pretence that there was any justice in their demands. They were strong enough to destroy Melos; Melos should therefore capitulate; that was all. The Melians replied that everyone benefits from having certain standards in war of how the defeated will be treated, since everyone risks being defeated some time. They offered to be neutral. The Athenians said that to allow a small



island to be neutral might be taken as weakness, while to destroy it was certain proof of strength. The Melians suggested that the Spartans might come to their aid, but the Athenians warned that in great power rivalry, the great powers tend to treat small countries as expendable. The Melians said that Sparta would have to come to their rescue or lose all credibility with its allies. The Athenians replied that whatever their intentions, the Spartans lacked the naval power to rescue an island. Nonetheless, the Melians would not yield, and the siege and massacre ensued.

Historians [have] since debated whether the dialogue actually took place as Thucydides says. [They] dispute whether anyone could really have made such ruthlessly amoral pronouncements as the Athenians are portrayed as making. My only answer can be, what difference does it make what was *said*? No one disputes what was *done*. What difference can it possibly make what mere words surrounded it? Some have argued that the massacre at Melos was not a unique atrocity, but that the Athenians were unique in making no attempt to rationalise it, in acknowledging that they were wrong and proceeding anyhow. To this I can only say, look at Plataea. Granted, the destruction of Plataea was not quite as bad as the destruction of Melos. The Plataeans, after all, had slaughtered Theban soldiers after they surrendered, while the Melians asked only to be neutral. Most of the Plataean non-combatants had been evacuated and about half the garrison escaped. But the execution of the remaining garrison for the 'crime' of being on the wrong side of the war, and selling of the few remaining women is quite bad enough. And read the horrible self-righteous posturing of the Thebans as [they] demand the execution of the helpless Plataeans to see if it in any way mitigates the massacre that follows. Then compare it to the Melian dialogue. The Melian dialogue chills to the bone; the 'Plataean dialogue' turns the stomach. Pick your poison.

Also significant – if there was any controversy over the extirpation of Melos, Thucydides does not mention it. The main suggestion of any such controversy comes from Euripides's great tragedy, *Trojan Women*, about the fall of Troy, the city destroyed, all the men slaughtered, and the women and children sold as slaves. The play was written shortly after the fall of Melos and is generally seen as topical. Later accounts blame Alkibiades or passing the decree of extirpation. Plutarch says that the massacre was 'chiefly due' to his support for the decree. We also have what purports to be a contemporary speech blaming him for 'recommending' the massacre. That speech, incidentally, is generally regarded as spurious. It purports to be an argument that Alkibiades, rather than one of his rivals, should be ostracised (exiled). But votes on ostracism were not, in fact, preceded by any such speeches. And the speech contains a variety of errors, including, quite probably, that the massacre took place after the vote on ostracism. In any event, the speech contains many scandalous details of Alkibiades's life to date, making the main controversy whether it was written in the BCE and served as Plutarch's main source, or whether it was written much later and used Plutarch as its source. Most significantly, according to the speech, Alkibiades claimed one of the enslaved women of Melos for himself in the manner of a Homeric hero and had a son by her.

Alkibiades who carries his villainy to such unheard-of lengths that, after recommending that the people of Melos be sold into slavery, he purchased a woman from among the prisoners and has since had a son by her, a child whose birth was more unnatural than that of Aegisthus, since he is sprung from parents who are each other's deadliest enemies, and of his nearest kin the one has committed and the other has suffered the most terrible of wrongs. Indeed, it would be well to make such shamelessness still plainer. He got himself a child by the very woman whom he had turned from a free citizen into a slave, whose father and kinsfolk he had put to death and whose city he had made a waste, that he might thereby make his son the deadly enemy of himself and of this city; so inevitably is the boy driven to hate both. When you are shown things of this kind on the tragic stage, you regard them with horror; but when you see them taking place in Athens, you remain unmoved – and yet you are uncertain

whether the tales of tragedy are founded on the truth or spring merely from the imagination of the poets; whereas you well know that these other lawless outrages, which you accept with indifference, have occurred in fact.

It seems unlikely that any Athenian would have spoken of his city in such terms only shortly after the fall of Melos! Certainly, Alkibiades took no personal part in the siege of Melos, since he was busy fighting in Argos at the time, and was probably not available to propose anything to the Assembly (though this is guesswork). While it is quite clear that Alkibiades was treacherous, unscrupulous and an extreme hawk, nothing in his career suggests that he was particularly bloodthirsty or cruel. His fighting in Argos was gentlemanly enough as was his leadership in the later stages of the war.

... My own opinion then, is this. The massacre at Melos was the collective crime of the Athenian people. No one individual was particularly to blame; it was the decision of the voting public as a whole. Later on, as the massacre came to be generally recognised as an atrocity (perhaps in part thanks to Thucydides and Euripides), the Athenians went looking for a scapegoat and fastened on Alkibiades.

But this is a mere sidelight, important as showing Athens's worst moral failings, but not significant in the downfall of the democracy.

**SOURCE 20.33** 'Athens' Worst Atrocities at Melos and Scione', blog posting from *Essayist-Lawyer*, 12 September 2015

## Defection to Sparta

Plutarch writes about Alkibiades's defection to Sparta, and his suggestions for defeating Athens.

Alkibiades had no sooner sailed away than he robbed the Athenians of Massena. When these great judgements and condemnations were passed upon Alkibiades, he was tarrying in Argos, for as soon as he had made his escape from Thurii, he passed over into Peloponnesus. But fearing his foes there, and renouncing his country altogether, he sent to the Spartans, demanding immunity and confidence, and promising to render them aid and service greater than all the harm he had previously done them as an enemy. The Spartans granted this request and received him among them. No sooner was he come than he zealously brought one thing to pass: they had been delaying and postponing assistance to Syracuse; he roused and incited them to send Gylippus thither for a commander, and to crush the force which Athens had there. A second thing he did was to get them to stir up the war against Athens at home; and the third, and most important of all, to induce them to fortify Deceleia. This more than anything else wrought ruin and destruction to his native city.

**SOURCE 20.34** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 22–23

### ACTIVITY 20.6

1. Summarise Sources 20.31 to 20.34 in dot points. Provide at least one quotation from each on what you think the most important element is in the source.
2. How do these sources point to a negative evaluation of Alkibiades's contribution to Athens in the Peloponnesian War?
3. To what extent do you agree with this negative evaluation? Why/why not? (Consider your previous response to Alkibiades in Activity 20.5)



## 20.7 Investigating Athenian democracy and its love-hate relationship with Alkibiades

The relationship between Alkibiades and the Athenians was in a constant state of flux, as indicated by the following extracts.

Here Plutarch comments on the Athenians dividing the leadership between Alkibiades and his political enemy despite him having successfully invaded Sicily.

Nicias was elected general against his will, and he was anxious to avoid the command most of all because of his fellow commander. For it had seemed to the Athenians that the war would go on better if they did not send out Alkibiades unblended, but rather tempered his rash daring with the prudent forethought of Nicias.

**SOURCE 20.35** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 18

In this extract Thucydides tells of the events in Athens while Alkibiades was waging the Sicilian campaign.

The Salaminia [ship] came from Athens for Alkibiades, with orders for him to sail home to answer the charges which the state brought against him, and for certain others of the soldiers who with him were accused of sacrilege in the matter of the mysteries and of the Hermae. For the Athenians, after the departure of the expedition, had continued as active as ever in investigating the facts of the mysteries and of the Hermae, and, instead of testing the informers, in their suspicious temper welcomed all indifferently, arresting and imprisoning the best citizens upon the evidence of rascals, and preferring to sift the matter to the bottom sooner than to let an accused person of good character pass unquestioned, owing to the rascality of the informer.

The commons had heard how oppressive the tyranny of Pisistratus and his sons had become before it ended, and further that that had been put down at last, not by themselves and Harmodius, but by the Lacedaemonians, and so were always in fear and took everything suspiciously. ... To return to Alkibiades: public feeling was very hostile to him, being worked on by the same enemies who had attacked him before he went out; and now that the Athenians fancied that they had got at the truth of the matter of the Hermae, they believed more firmly than ever that the affair of the mysteries also, in which he was implicated, had been contrived by him in the same intention and was connected with the plot against the democracy.

**SOURCE 20.37** Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, 6:19

Plutarch quotes Aristophanes to demonstrate the level of negativity towards Alkibiades.

But all this statecraft and eloquence and lofty purpose and cleverness was attended with great luxuriousness of life, with wanton drunkenness and lewdness, with effeminacy in dress ... How the common folk felt towards him has been well set forth by Aristophanes in these words: —

*It yearns for him, and hates him too, but wants him back;*  
and again, veiling a yet greater severity in his metaphor: —



**SOURCE 20.36** Roman copy of a late fifth century BCE Athenian herma. Vandalising hermai was one of the crimes of which Alkibiades was accused.



*A lion is not to be reared within the state;  
But, once you've reared him up, consult his every mood.*

**SOURCE 20.38** Plutarch, *Life of Alcibiades*, 16

In these last two extracts Plutarch first describes how Alcibiades was finally toppled through rumours spread by his enemies after the Battle of Notium, 406 BCE, and then was vindicated when the Athenians realised they had misjudged him.

*[The Spartan commander Lysander paid his sailors almost double that which the Athenians were getting. Alcibiades went to Caria to levy money, leaving instructions for the navy not to engage in battle with the Spartans. This was ignored; Athens lost the battle]*

There were those who hated Alcibiades in the camp, and of these Thrasybulus, the son of Thraso, his particular enemy, set sail for Athens to denounce him. He stirred up the city against him by declaring to the people that it was Alcibiades who had ruined their cause and lost their ships by his wanton conduct in office. He had handed over – so Thrasybulus said – the duties of commander to men who won his confidence merely by drinking deep and reeling off sailors' yarns, in order that he himself might be free to cruise about collecting moneys and committing excesses of drunkenness and revelry with courtesans of Abydos and Ionia, and this while the enemy's fleet lay close to him. His enemies also found ground for accusation against him in the fortress which he had constructed in Thrace, near Bisanthe. It was to serve, they said, as a refuge for him in case he either could not or would not live at home. The Athenians were persuaded, and chose other generals in his place, thus displaying their anger and ill-will towards him. On learning this, Alcibiades was afraid, and departed from the camp altogether.

**SOURCE 20.39** Plutarch, *Life of Alcibiades*, 36

The Athenians were greatly depressed at the loss of their supremacy. But when Lysander robbed them of their freedom too, and handed the city over to thirty men, then, their cause being lost, their eyes were opened to the course they would not take when salvation was yet in their power. They sorrowfully rehearsed all their mistakes and follies, the greatest of which they considered to be their second outburst of wrath against Alcibiades. He had been cast aside for no fault of his own; but they got angry because a subordinate of his lost a few ships disgracefully, and then they themselves, more disgracefully still, robbed the city of its ablest and most experienced general. And yet, in spite of their present plight, a vague hope still prevailed that the cause of Athens was not wholly lost so long as Alcibiades was alive. He had not, in times past, been satisfied to live his exile's life in idleness and quiet; nor now, if his means allowed, would he tolerate the insolence of the Lacedaemonians and the madness of the Thirty.

**SOURCE 20.40** Plutarch, *Life of Alcibiades*, 38

## ACTIVITY 20.7

1. Summarise Sources 20.35 to 20.40 using dot points. Provide at least one quotation from each on what you think is the most important element in highlighting the weaknesses of the Athenian demos and its democracy.
2. Write an essay on the following statement: *The Athenian Demos, rather than the weaknesses of its leaders, was a more important factor in the defeat of Athens in the Peloponnesian War.*

## 20.8 The death of Alkibiades: politically orchestrated or private passionate feud?

Even in death Alkibiades caused some controversy as indicated by these two accounts provided by Plutarch.

... A dispatch-roll came from the authorities [in Sparta] bidding him [Lysander] to put Alkibiades out of the way; either because they too were alarmed at the vigour and enterprise of the man, or because they were trying to gratify Agis. Accordingly, Lysander sent to Pharnabazus and bade him do this thing, and Pharnabazus commissioned Magaeus, his brother, and Sousamithras, his uncle, to perform the deed. At that time Alkibiades was living in a certain village of Phrygia, where he had Timandra the courtesan with him, and in his sleep, he had the following vision. He thought he had the courtesan's garments upon him, and that she was holding his head in her arms while she adorned his face like a woman with paints and pigments. Others say that in his sleep he saw Magaeus's followers cutting off his head and his body burning. All agree in saying that he had the vision not long before his death. The party sent to kill him did not dare to enter his house, but surrounded it and set it on fire. When Alkibiades was aware of this, he gathered together most of the garments and bedding in the house and cast them on the fire. Then, wrapping his cloak about his left arm, and drawing his sword with his right, he dashed out, unscathed by the fire, before the garments were in flames, and scattered the Barbarians, who ran at the mere sight of him. Not a man stood ground against him, or came to close quarters with him, but all held aloof and shot him with javelins and arrows. Thus, he fell, and when the Barbarians were gone, Timandra took up his dead body, covered and wrapped it in her own garments, and gave it such brilliant and honourable burial as she could provide.

**SOURCE 20.41** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 38–39

But some, while agreeing in all other details of the death of Alkibiades with what I have written, say that it was not Pharnabazus who was the cause of it, nor Lysander, nor the Lacedaemonians, but Alkibiades himself. He had corrupted a girl belonging to a certain well-known family, and had her with him; and it was the brothers of this girl who, taking his wanton insolence much to heart, set fire by night to the house where he was living, and shot him down, as has been described, when he dashed out through the fire.

**SOURCE 20.42** Plutarch, *Life of Alkibiades*, 39

### ACTIVITY 20.8

Knowing more about Alkibiades than you previously did, what do you think was the more likely explanation about the circumstances of Alkibiades's murder? Use evidence from the sources to support your case.

## 20.9 Viewpoints and judgements

As you have seen in this chapter, Alkibiades was a complex character, and both ancient and modern historians have a range of different views and opinions of him, which often can be diametrically opposed.

### ACTIVITY 20.9

The following table shows viewpoints of both ancient and modern historians and other writers. For each one, identify whether their view is positive, negative or neutral.

Historian	View	Positive, negative or neutral
ANCIENT		
Thucydides 431 BCE <i>History of the Peloponnesian War</i> , Book VI:15	Alkibiades was 'exceedingly ambitious' and proposed the expedition in Sicily 'to gain in wealth and reputation by means of his successes'. He was not responsible for the destruction of Athens, since 'his habits gave offence to every one, and caused the Athenians to commit affairs to other hands, and thus before long to ruin the city'.	
Thucydides 431 BCE <i>History of the Peloponnesian War</i> , Book VI:15	'Publicly his conduct of the war was as good as could be desired.'	
Plutarch First century CE <i>The Comparison of Alcibiades with Coriolanus</i> , 5	Alkibiades was '...the least scrupulous and most entirely careless of human beings'.	
Diodorus First century BCE Library, xiii, 68.5	Alkibiades was '...in spirit brilliant and intent upon great enterprises'.	
Xenophon Fourth century BCE <i>Hellenica</i> , 1.4.18	Xenophon emphasised the service Alkibiades gave to Athens, rather than the damage he caused.	
Demosthenes 361 BCE 'Against Meidias', 144–45	Demosthenes entered a legal complaint against fellow Athenian, Meidias. As part of this, he wrote (although may not have delivered) a speech in which he referred to Alkibiades, saying he had 'taken arms in the cause of democracy ... displaying his patriotism, not by gifts of money or by speeches, but by personal service ... he was regarded as the best general and the ablest speaker of the day'.	



ACTIVITY 20.9 continued

Isocrates Fourth century BCE 'Concerning the Team of Horses', 15	Alkibiades 'caused the most powerful cities in the Peloponnesus to revolt from the Lacedaemonians, and brought them into alliance with [Athens] ... For these services he is deserving of [the Athenians'] gratitude'.	
Lysias 395 BCE 'Against Alcibiades' 1, 1/2, 10	Alkibiades 'repays with injury the open assistance of any of his friends'.	
Aristotle Fourth century BCE <i>Constitution of the Athenians</i> , 28	Alkibiades is not included in Aristotle's list of the best Athenian politicians.	
Andocides 415 BCE 'Against Alcibiades', 19	'Instead of holding that he ought himself to conform with the laws of the state, [Alkibiades] expects you to conform with his own way of life.' (While some scholars attribute this oration to Andocides, others say Phaeax delivered it, while there is also an argument that it was a rhetorical exercise rather than an actual speech.)	
Aristophanes 405 BCE <i>The Frogs</i> , 1425	Athens '... yearns for [Alkibiades], and hates him too, but wants him back'.	
Cornelius Nepos First century BCE <i>Alcibiades</i> , XI	Alkibiades '... surpassed all the Athenians in grandeur and magnificence of living'.	
MODERN		
Jean Hatzfeld 1951 <i>Alcibiade: Étude sur l'histoire d'Athènes à la fin du Ve siècle</i> , 2d ed.	Hatzfeld sees Alkibiades as demanding and unyielding – an extraordinarily dynamic individual, who was always challenging limitations.	
Walter M. Ellis 1989 <i>Alcibiades</i> , p. 18	Ellis equates Alkibiades with Themistokles and Cimon as 'one of Athens's great military strategists', and argues that 'his actions were outrageous, yes, but they were performed with panache'.	

ACTIVITY 20.9 continued

<p>Marcel Delaunois 1978 'Les Leçons d' Alcibiade', <i>Les études classiques</i> 46:113–126</p>	<p>Delaunois draws attention to the fact that Alcibiades's career and character are both rife with ambiguities and contradictions.</p>	
<p>Peter J. Rhodes 2011 <i>Alcibiades</i></p>	<p>Rhodes feels that Alcibiades demonstrated intelligence and charisma, successfully convincing people that he was important; but that he was also selfish and reckless, and ultimately a disastrous figure.</p>	
<p>Jacqueline de Romilly 1995 <i>Alcibiade ou les dangers de l'ambition</i></p>	<p>Romilly sees Alcibiades as epitomising Athenian imperialism, in both its merits and its faults, and in reflecting two contrasting Athenian sets of characteristics: the quest for beauty and truth, versus the relentless pursuit of power and glory. She emphasises the enormous influence he had on his generation.</p>	
<p>Malcolm F. McGregor 1965 'The Genius of Alcibiades', <i>Phoenix</i> 19 (1): 27–50</p>	<p>McGregor argues that Alcibiades was not simply an opportunist, but in fact a shrewd gambler.</p>	
<p>Jack Meyer 2009 <i>Alcibiades: Fact, Fiction, Farce</i> p. 3</p>	<p>The narrator of Meyer's novel describes Alcibiades as having 'singular talent and daring audacity ... incredibly handsome and rich, brilliant tactical commander, rogue and scoundrel, and consummate traitor'. The story shows his talents, but also presents him as cruel, duplicitous, haughty and unyielding. The narrator holds Alcibiades primarily responsible for the defeat of Athens.</p>	
<p>Thomas N. Habinek 2004 <i>Ancient Rhetoric and Oratory</i> pp. 23–24</p>	<p>Alcibiades 'seemed to be whatever his audience needed on any given occasion'. He showed affection to the people, and they responded in kind. Habinek presents Alcibiades as 'the instantiation of the city talking to – and loving – itself'.</p>	

ACTIVITY 20.9 continued

<p>Evangelos P. Fotiadis 1952 'Alcibiades', <i>Encyclopaedic Dictionary: The Helios</i></p>	<p>Fotiadis feels that, as a general, Alcibiades was invincible, achieving victory everywhere. Fotiadis suggests that the Athenians would have been triumphant in Sicily if Alcibiades had been leading them; and also argues that if his advice at Aegospotami had been followed, they would have defeated Lysander and so ruled Greece.</p>	
<p>Constantine Paparrigopoulos <i>History of the Greek Nation 12</i>, 1877, pp. 264–68, 272</p>	<p>Greek historian Paparrigopoulos describes Alcibiades as a 'traitor, an audacious and impious man' and feels that he made a strategic error with the Sicilian Expedition.</p>	
<p>Athanasios G. Platias and Constantinos Koliopoulos 2010 <i>Thucydides on Strategy</i>, pp. 237–46</p>	<p>These professors of strategic studies and international politics feel that Alcibiades's own arguments 'should be sufficient to do away with the notion that [he] was a great statesman'. They also suggest that the Sicilian expedition was an enormous mistake, due to Alcibiades's 'frivolous attitude and ... unbelievable underestimation of the enemy'.</p>	
<p>Anna C. Salter 2005 <i>Predators: Pedophiles, Rapists, And Other Sex Offenders</i>, p. 128</p>	<p>In providing a psychological profile of sex-offenders, Salter uses Alcibiades as a case study, describing him as 'the poster child for deception and psychopathy ... [a] violent, brutal man who betrayed every country and nearly every person who ever befriended him'.</p>	
<p>Donald Kagan 1987 <i>The Fall of the Athenian Empire</i>, p. 420</p>	<p>Kagan argues that Alcibiades was not a military genius, making 'important errors and serious miscalculations ... [his] confidence and ambitions went far beyond his ability'. For example, Alcibiades did not seem to realise that leading a large military force undermined his strategy of diplomacy.</p>	



## ACTIVITY 20.9 continued

David Stuttard  
2018

*Nemesis: Alcibiades and  
the Fall of Athens*, p. 2

Stuttard describes Alcibiades as 'enviably well-connected, strikingly handsome, immensely rich, intensely charismatic [and] unashademdy louche'. He also compares him to Homer's Achilles in his ambition 'always to be best and to surpass all others'. Many people displayed passionate admiration for Alcibiades, but he also had enemies who envied his success, and were wary of what he might do. This was dangerous in a society which 'advocated ... harming enemies by every means imaginable'.

## ACTIVITY 20.10

After completing Activity 20.9, communicate your synthesis of opinions about Alcibiades (both primary and secondary) by responding to the following questions:

- To what extent are opinions on Alcibiades more critical than complementary?
  - Based on your readings throughout the chapter, why do you think this is so?
- What is your opinion about Alcibiades? Did he do more harm than good? Did his failures outweigh his achievements? (In other words, do you agree with the overall consensus about Alcibiades as outlined in your Synthesis [Question 1a and 1b] or do you differ in your views? Why?)

Support your viewpoint with at least four clear points. Prioritise these points in terms of most to least importance.

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- Alkibiades was a general during the Peloponnesian War and an Athenian politician. He was raised by Perikles and Perikles's brother Antiphron after the death of his father in 447 BCE.
- Alkibiades was eager to continue the war after the death of Cleon in 422 BCE, and became the leading pro-war figure. He was significantly responsible for instigating the Sicilian Expedition of 415 BCE.
- Before the fleet set sail, Alkibiades was accused of parodying and mocking the Mysteries of Eleusis at a party, and of being involved in the mutilation of the herms. He escaped to Argos after being recalled from Sicily to stand trial.
- Alkibiades sided with the Spartans. He advised them to fortify the Attican town of Decelea, which gave them a valuable strategic advantage. However, after seducing the wife of King Agis II and possibly fathering her son, King Agis II viewed Alkibiades as an enemy.
- The Athenians later forgave Alkibiades and requested that he return. He stayed on as a general with the fleet at Samos and brought over Pharnabazus, another satrap, to assist the Athenians.
- Alkibiades returned to Athens in 407 BCE and was appointed commander-in-chief. His popularity decreased a year later, however, due to his defeat of Antiochus, one of his subordinates. He retired at his fortress in Thrace for the rest of the war, giving advice concerning the Athenian generals' imprudence at Aegospotami; however, his advice was ignored.
- Alkibiades was murdered on the way to the court of Artaxerxes, the Persian king, after the fall of Athens in 404 BCE. His murder was committed either by the brothers of a Persian woman who he had seduced, or by the Spartans, who were fearful that Alkibiades would lead an uprising in Athens.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidation

### Comprehend

Why was Alkibiades able to rise to become a prominent individual in Athens during the latter part of the fifth century BCE?

### Devise

To understand the power of Alkibiades further, create and investigate three research questions which focus on his attainment, maintenance and fall from power.

### Analyse

In what ways did Alkibiades contribute to Athens's fortunes and calamities in the Peloponnesian War? Which outweighs the other in your opinion? Why?

### Synthesise

By integrating a variety of evidence from this chapter, provide a justification as to why the following statement should be considered a correct or incorrect interpretation of Alkibiades career:

*Alkibiades's career should be characterised as that of a self-serving individual who was able to use his personal strengths and the opportunities presented within Athenian democracy to achieve power and fame within the context of the Peloponnesian Wars.*

## **Evaluate**

How do the various biases of the sources affect the level of accuracy that can be achieved in understanding his significance? Is Alkibiades overrated?

## **Respond**

How and why might the career of Alkibiades be valuable for understanding democratic power in the twenty-first century?

## **Assessment**

### **Examination-style questions**

1. Why is the career of Alkibiades important for exposing the weaknesses of democracy in Athens during the late fifth century BCE?
2. To what extent were the policies and strategies of Alkibiades controversial during his (several) rises to power?

### **Investigation tasks**

1. To what extent do modern opinions of Alkibiades's career align with ancient understandings?







# CHAPTER 21

## Scipio Africanus

ALAN BARRIE

### TOPIC INTRODUCTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the geographical and historical context of Scipio Africanus
  - family background and status
  - key events in his rise to prominence
  - significant influences on early development.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the career of Scipio Africanus
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - change of role, position, status over time
  - depictions of Scipio Africanus during his lifetime
  - possible motivations for actions
  - methods used to achieve aims
  - relationships with groups and other individuals
  - significant events in the career of Scipio Africanus

### KEY DATES

**236–183 BCE**

Life of Scipio Africanus

**218 BCE**

During the Second Punic War, Scipio Africanus lands his army at the north-eastern Spanish city of Empuries

**216 BCE**

At the Battle of Cannae, Scipio Africanus is introduced to Hannibal's tactics

**211 BCE**

For the second time during the Second Punic War, Scipio Africanus lands his army at the north-eastern Spanish city of Empuries



- manner and impact of his death
- judgements of Scipio Africanus by other individuals in his lifetime and after his death, e.g. in writings, images and film.
- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose by completing short responses to historical sources.

### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the impact and legacy of Scipio Africanus
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - assessments of Scipio Africanus's life and career
  - the influence of Scipio Africanus on his time
  - the long-term impact and legacy of Scipio Africanus.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

### SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

#### Family

- Publius Cornelius Scipio – father
- Pomponia – mother
- Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio Calvus – uncle
- Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus – brother
- Cornelia Africana Minor – daughter
- Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus – grandsons

#### Enemies

- Hamilcar Barca
- Hannibal and Hasdrubal Barca
- Mago

- Hasdrubal Gisco

- Syphax
- Antiochus III of Syria

#### Allies

- Massinissa

#### Romans – rivals, critics and other

- Cato the Elder
- Fabius Maximus
- Gaius Claudius Nero
- Marcus Claudius Marcellus
- Cincinnatus

#### 210–207 BCE

Spain is conquered by Scipio Africanus

#### 210 BCE

Scipio Africanus and three legions land in Emporiae

#### 209 BCE

At Carthago Nova in southern Spain, Scipio Africanus seizes the Carthaginian base and the treasury

#### 208 BCE

A Carthaginian army led by Hasdrubal is defeated at Baecula in Spain by Scipio Africanus

#### 206 BCE

The Battle of Ilipa in Spain is won by Scipio Africanus





MAP



SOURCE 21.2 A map of the Second Punic War, 218–201 BCE

204–203 BCE                      204 BCE                      203 BCE

Scipio Africanus besieges Utica in North Africa after winning two battles

During the Second Punic War, Scipio Africanus sails to North Africa

- To defend against Scipio Africanus's siege of Carthage, Hannibal is recalled from Italy
- In North Africa, Scipio Africanus wins a battle against a Hasdrubal-led army
- The North African camps of Syphax and Gisgo are attacked by Scipio Africanus and their armies are destroyed

## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Alps</b>	extensive mountain range covering the northern border of Italy; crossed by Hannibal to attack Rome in the Second Punic War
<b>Carthage</b>	one of the most powerful cities in the ancient Mediterranean
<b>Gauls</b>	a group of Celtic peoples inhabiting an area called Gaul in Western Europe (which encompassed present day France, Luxembourg and Belgium, as well as parts of neighbouring countries). They attacked and sacked Rome in 390 BCE, but the Romans made changes to their army and eventually defeated the Gauls who had settled in the Po Valley.
<b>Hamilcar Barca</b>	a military commander for Carthage, great tactician who died mysteriously by a Spanish river while trying to conquer Spain
<b>Hannibal Barca</b>	Hamilcar's son, greatest general of Carthage, wanted to fulfill his father's wish, and led his army through the Second Punic War
<b>Mediterranean</b>	a large sea surrounded by Europe, Africa, and Asia; it played a vital role in the development of the civilisations and trade in the region
<b>peace treaty</b>	an agreement between hostile parties (such as Rome and Carthage) formally stating that they are no longer at war
<b>quinquereme</b>	a long narrow boat with 5 banks of rowers, 420 soldiers, 3 levels (Romans created it, inspired by Greek boats); it could ram into an opponent's boats and sink them
<b>Rome</b>	a city in Western Italy situated on the Tiber River near the Mediterranean Sea; it became the centre of the Roman Empire, which controlled most of the lands around the Mediterranean
<b>Scipio</b>	Roman leader, 25 years old when made a Consul
<b>Sicily</b>	a large island in the Mediterranean Sea, at the southern end of Italy; referred to as 'the jewel of the Mediterranean' because of its access to Mediterranean trade routes

**202 BCE**

Battle of Zama: The Second Punic War comes to an end when Hannibal is defeated by Scipio Africanus

**185 BCE**

Scipio Africanus retires to his estate in Liternum

**183 BCE**

Scipio Africanus dies

## Introduction

The Second Punic War challenged the power and authority of Rome in two unique ways. First, its very existence was threatened through the dealings and brilliance of the man considered Rome's greatest enemy, Hannibal Barca. As a consequence of this, Rome's own identity, its systems, and its values, came under threat through its own response – the empowerment of Scipio Africanus. Not only was the Punic War a clash between Rome and Carthage, it became also a clash within Rome itself: between old values and new values, between age and experience against youth and individual ability, between the maintenance of standards and traditions in a time of crisis against the need for innovation and change. Thus, this chapter will explore the nature, exercise of, and challenges to, power and authority in Republican Rome, by firstly examining Scipio the General, and then Scipio the Politician.

### Key questions for this chapter

- How was power and authority gained, maintained and challenged in the Ancient World?
- How does this understanding inform our modern perspectives on power?
- Did Scipio 'save' Rome?
- Did Scipio actually damage the Roman Republic rather than strengthening it?

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### 21.1 The Roman Republic

The Roman Republic was built on key features and reflected key concepts and beliefs/principles.

Many of these are reflected in the governing structure of the Republic: see Source 21.4.

The *cursus honorum* was the accepted process by which individuals moved from lower magistracies to higher magistracies – a 'sequence' of officers, annually elected and led by two consuls (usually patricians who exercised *imperium*). However, it was the Senate, representing *mos maiorum*, who dominated the Roman Republic through its exercise of *auctoritas* and *potestas*. Plebians were represented through the Assemblies, while the relationship between the Roman classes is best seen via the patron-client relationship, and the relationship in Roman families is best seen via *pater familias*. Indeed, *pater familias* reflects the political system, with the Senate acting like a father to its people – hence the phrase, *Senatus Populusque Romanum*.



**SOURCE 21.3** Wedding between two Roman citizens at the time of the Republic; detail from an Italian painting from 1856



## The Constitution of the Roman Republic

**Comitia Curiata:** Sole legal body representative of the entire Roman populace in the early decade of the Republic. By the late Republic, its role had become mostly ceremonial.

### Comitia Centuriata (Century Assembly)

Assembly of soldiers divided into blocs called centuries. Each century gets one vote before the assembly. Each soldier is assigned to a century according to how much property he owns. Since the wealthiest soldiers are grouped into a majority of centuries, the assembly is very aristocratic.

### Senate

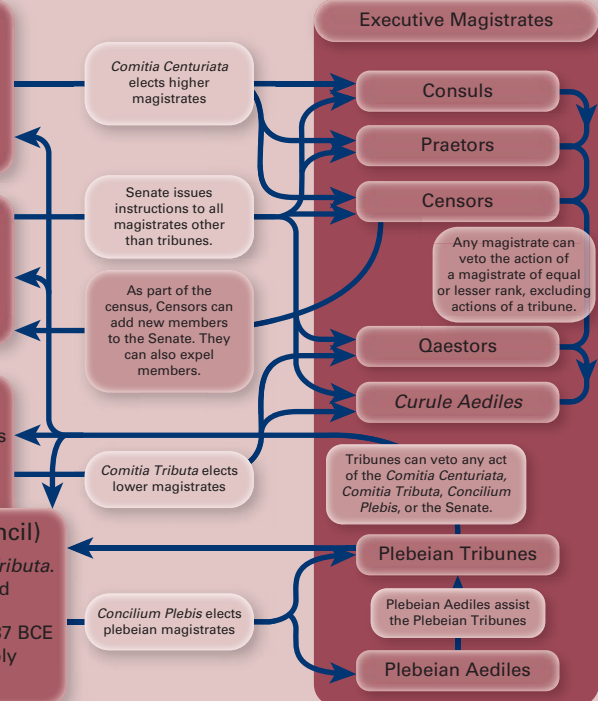
In practice, plays the central role in the day-to-day functionality of the constitution. It is a board of the most experienced politicians. It makes foreign and military policy, and directs domestic policy.

### Comitia Tributa (Tribal Assembly)

Assembly of citizens divided into blocs called tribes. Each tribe gets one vote before the assembly. Both patricians and plebeians vote in this assembly. Since each citizen is assigned to a tribe according to their geographical location, rather than property classification, this assembly is less aristocratic than the *Comitia Centuriata*. The *Concilium Plebis* is a subset of this assembly.

### Concilium Plebis (Plebeian Council)

Council almost identical to the *Comitia Tributa*. The only differences are that it is presided over by a Plebeian Tribune, and its tribes are only composed of plebeians. After 287 BCE any act passed by this council would apply to all of the Senate and People of Rome.



**SOURCE 21.4** The constitution of the Roman Republic

### ACTIVITY 21.1

- Create a timeline covering the years 509–31 BCE that sets out the key stages, dates and areas of conquest that occurred in the expansion of Rome during the Republic. Structure the timeline around the following key events: The Conquest of Italy, the Conquest of the Western Mediterranean, the Conquest of the Eastern Mediterranean, The Conquest of Gaul.
- Investigate and create brief dot point summaries of the following aspects of the Roman Republic:
  - Plebeians
  - Patricians
  - The Senate
  - Auctoritas*
  - Imperium*
  - Mos maiorum*
  - Potestas*
  - Cursus honorum*
  - Magistracies
  - The Assemblies
  - Patron-client relationship
  - Pater familias*
  - Senatus Populusque Romanum*.
- How did the Roman Republic work?
- How did the Roman Republic reflect the values and 'identity' of the Romans at this time?

## 21.2 The key characteristics of Roman identity

The following traits were held up as virtues to which every citizen of the Roman Republic should aspire to master. These virtues were thought to be the reason for Rome's power and influence.

- *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 – in contrast 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*: valour, personal excellence and courage.

### Case study: Cincinnatus

In 458 BCE, a Roman army was surrounded and attacked by local tribes known as the Aequi, and the situation soon became dire for the army. This prompted the Senate to appoint Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus to be dictator for six months, plucking him from his small farm for the job. Cincinnatus's rise to power became a 'true myth', a 'trend-setter', and he became associated as a model of the values that expanded and supported the Roman Republic. However, it is worth noting that although a farmer, Cincinnatus was still a member of the patrician class, and was known for his conservative views, and ruthless treatment of the plebeians.

In Source 21.6, Cincinnatus's rise to power is chronicled four hundred years later by Titus Livius Patavinus (c. 59 BCE – c. 17 CE), also known as Livy. Livy wrote about the period 753 BCE up to his own lifetime. He retrieved information from a range of Greek and Roman books of history, but there are doubts about the level of his Greek and so translations may not be trustworthy. Livy used the word 'story' to describe his work – his main interest was in the personalities of leading figures – and many modern historians believe that much of it was made up, or at least reshaped from sources, rather than being historically accurate.



**SOURCE 21.5** *Cincinnatus Receiving the Ambassadors of Rome*, Alexandre Cabanel, 1843

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’s 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 Tarquinius 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 Tarquinius, 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 Tarquinius 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.

**SOURCE 21.6** Livy, *The Histories*, 3.26–27

After just sixteen days in power, Cincinnatus resigned as dictator and went back to ploughing his farm, having completed his task of ensuring Roman victory. Cincinnatus’s story, among others, was very influential upon the Romans, prompting them to make great sacrifices and reach great extremes.



## ACTIVITY 21.2

1. Identify which of the following key terms and concepts of the Roman Republic can be seen in Source 21.6, and explain their role in it:
  - a. Plebeians
  - b. Patricians
  - c. Senate
  - d. *Auctoritas*
  - e. *Mos maiorum*
  - f. *Imperium*
  - g. *Potestas*
  - h. *Cursus honorum* and magistracies
  - i. Assemblies
  - j. Patron-client relationship
  - k. *Pater familias*
2. Identify the key characteristics of Roman identity (see the list of these characteristics on page 710) in the story, and explain how they are exemplified.
3. Consider Sources 21.5 and 21.6. How is Cincinnatus being presented? What does this suggest about the nature of power in the Roman Republic and his role within it?

### 21.3 The background and rise of Scipio Africanus

Publius Cornelius Scipio was born in c. 236 BCE, eldest son of the consul Publius Cornelius Scipio, in one of the six major patrician families in Rome. In the first year of the Second Punic War (219 BCE), after the Carthaginians led by Hannibal attacked Saguntum in Spain, Scipio and his father both joined the military to help defend Roman interests, and Scipio grew to be a talented leader and tactician. Greek historian Polybius describes how Scipio saved his father's life at the Battle of Ticinus by 'charging the encircling force alone with reckless daring' (*The Histories*, 10.3.5). Hannibal's army pushed on to Italy, and at the Battle of Cannae (216 BCE) encircled the Roman forces and inflicted heavy casualties. Around 4000 Roman survivors regrouped at Canusium, and Scipio worked to prevent desertions from the army. In 202 BCE he led the Roman army to a final, decisive victory against Hannibal in the Battle of Zama, in northern Africa, ending the war and cementing his reputation as a great commander and strategist. It was in recognition of this that he was given the name Africanus, although he refused other honours, such as consul for life and dictator. In spite of political moves against him, Scipio remained popular. In 185 BCE he retired to his estate at Liternum, and died around two years later.

In the following extract Livy paints a vivid picture of the Battle of Ticinus (218 BCE) between the Roman forces under Publius Cornelius Scipio (father of Scipio Africanus the Elder) and Hannibal's Carthaginian forces. This first battle of the Second Punic War to be fought on Italian soil ended in defeat for the Romans and the near death of Scipio – his life was saved by his son who was approximately 18 years old at the time.

Scipio moved out with a force of cavalry and light-armed javelin men towards the enemy's camp to get a nearer view and to ascertain the number and nature of his force. He fell in with Hannibal who was also advancing with his cavalry to explore the neighbourhood. Neither body at first saw the other; the

first indication of a hostile approach was given by the unusually dense cloud of dust which was raised by the tramp of so many men and horses. Each party halted and made ready for battle. Scipio placed the javelin men and the Gaulish cavalry in the front, the Roman horse and the heavy cavalry of the allies as reserves. Hannibal formed his centre with his regular cavalry, and posted the Numidians on the flanks. Scarcely had the battle shout been raised before the javelin men retired to the second line amongst the reserves. For some time the cavalry kept up an equal fight, but as the foot-soldiers became mixed up with the mounted men they made their horses unmanageable, many were thrown or else dismounted where they saw their comrades in difficulty, until the battle was mainly fought on foot. Then the Numidians on the flanks wheeled round and appeared on the rear of the Romans, creating dismay and panic amongst them. To make matters worse the consul was wounded and in danger; he was rescued by the intervention of his son who was just approaching manhood. This was the youth who afterwards won the glory of bringing this war to a close, and gained the soubriquet of Africanus for his splendid victory over Hannibal and the Carthaginians. The javelin men were the first to be attacked by the Numidians and they fled in disorder, the rest of the force, the cavalry, closed round the consul, shielding him as much by their persons as by their arms, and returned to camp in orderly retirement. Caelius assigns the honour of saving the consul to a Ligurian slave, but I would rather believe that it was his son; the majority of authors assert this and the tradition is generally accepted.

**SOURCE 21.7** Livy, *History of Rome*, 21:46

Early twentieth century writer R.H. Barrow reflects on the extensive influence of the Greek culture on the Romans:

For some of Greek thought the Romans had little use, as, for example, metaphysical speculation; some they appropriated in part, as, for example, the practical bearing of mathematics, but not its theoretical foundations; a great deal they put through their robust and matter-of-fact minds, modified, and handed on in a shape which was adapted for everyday use by the peoples whom they governed. It is important, therefore, to be on guard when using in this connection such terms as 'borrowing' or 'appropriating' or 'taking over', and to beware of condemning the 'borrower' for 'borrowing'. Not to have 'borrowed' would have deserved the more censure; deliberately to incur and readily to admit the debt in itself implies some sensitivity and appreciation and honesty. 'Borrowing' may be a quite false description, for one idea starts another and it is hard to say where the credit lies. Finally, it is of greater service to posterity to 'borrow' and to convert to use as much as a limited capacity can so convert than vainly to attempt to annex an alien whole without discrimination, and so to ensure its certain and total decay. In spite of Roman solidity – or stolidity – of character, the Greek genius left its mark; in spite of Greek 'influence' the Roman spirit preserved its individuality, its genius; Greco-Roman civilization thus became the root of European civilization.

The old and the new points of view are perhaps best seen in particular men. P. Cornelius Scipio, surnamed Africanus, may be taken as exemplifying the new type of Roman, Marcus Porcius Cato as embodying the old type, and Scipio Aemilianus, who was adopted from the Aemilian family by the son of Scipio Africanus, as the forerunner of many who attempted to reconcile the old and the new ways. The Cornelian family had already given men of note to the service of the state. When at a time of crisis in the Second Punic War the assembly of the people looked for a bold leader capable of ending the intolerable strain, and, when men of experience hesitated in face of the awful hazards, Scipio Africanus, aged twenty-four, confidently offered himself. He was given the task and he succeeded. His whole life was of a piece with that act. From that time he dramatised himself; he loved the spectacular and invested himself with a religious aura as though he were the favourite of



divine will. In Spain he was dazzlingly successful; his magnanimity attached the tribes to him; they offered him the crown, for they said he was god-like, and when he refused they furnished him with troops. In Africa he won over by sheer charm kings who were neighbours of Carthage, and Rome wondered whether such familiarity with foreign potentates was altogether right. Story made him stay as Hasdrubal's guest, or discuss with the exiled Hannibal the relative merits of each others in comparison with Alexander. At home he brushed aside custom and law, standing for offices before he was qualified by age, and receiving encouragement from an admiring people. He affected the grand manner and studied every action; even at the end, when in semi-exile he lay dying, he 'refused his body to an ungrateful country'. Hitherto the great men of Rome had been such as Cincinnatus, who left his plough to serve the state in time of crisis, and returned to it when his work was done. In Scipio the Roman people were offered a new kind of hero – a hero who asserted individuality in defiance of tradition, who based leadership on power of personality, and made a romantic appeal to the imagination now awakening in the ordinary Roman. How did such a type of hero arise? It arose – if we continue to illustrate 'movements' and 'influences' by men – when Livius Andronicus, a Greek slave captured at Tarentum, composed as a reading-book for his master's children a metrical Latin version of Homer's *Odyssey*. The work passed beyond its original intention; here was a new literature; stories of heroes who were at once godlike and human. No longer the statuesque forbidding heroes of early Rome, slaves of duty, but warm-blooded and erring and lively and full of zest. And what leaders of men, swaying multitudes by their word and guiding by their wise counsel the future of city and army! After Homer, Greek comedies were translated and were combined with native Italian farces and burlesques, and Roman comedy arose. Moreover, once the heroes of Homer – Agamemnon, Odysseus, and the rest – had been treated, there was no reason why Roman subjects should not be chosen, and Naevius, of Campania, wrote an epic of the First Punic War, combining Greek and Italian legend and motif. Ennius followed with an epic in hexameters which included the Second Punic War; the *Iliad* was his model, but his own strong Roman character shines through; and in his tragedies, though they owe much to the Greek tragedian Euripides, the moralising and philosophical discussion is Roman. And the achievements of Alexander and the legends clustering round his name made their appeal to the imagination of men like Scipio and stimulated them to dreams of similar exploits.

The rise of this literature and the performances of tragedies and comedies brought before the Roman public new types of human character, isolating the individual and drawing attention to special features. The opportunities for men of strong character to influence the life of society and of the state were revealed to the intelligent; the new knowledge of Greek legend and history showed that it had been done; there was no reason why it should not be done in Rome, and arguments could be drawn from Greek philosophy to justify it. The new ideas of Greek thought spread with the Greek language, and a lively and imaginative mind like the mind of Scipio Africanus grasped their implications and created for itself a role as a Roman leader of a new type.

**SOURCE 21.8** Barrow, R.H., 1949, *The Romans*, Penguin, pp. 62–63

### ACTIVITY 21.3

1. What would have been expected of Scipio as a young member of a major patrician noble family?
2. Based on the evidence, did Scipio represent a 'new type' of Roman leader, as opposed to the 'old type'? How and why?



## 21.4 Scipio as military general

In his *Compendium of Ancient History*, H.A. Kresner (1913–1996), an Australian teacher of English and History, summarised key events and their consequences for secondary school students, sometimes avoiding the conflicting interpretations found in more scholarly works.



SOURCE 21.10 Statue of Hannibal

- 1) Hannibal forestalled the Roman strategy of offensives in both Africa and Spain by invading Italy.
- 2) He won victories on the Ticinus and the Trebia (218 BCE), at Lake Trasimene (217 BCE) and Cannae (216 BCE).
- 3) Capua and much of southern Italy joined him, but Rome and the central part of her confederation held on, led by Fabius Cunctator in defensive strategy.
- 4) The elder Scipio invaded Spain.
- 5) Carthage started a policy of encirclement by operations in Sicily and Sardinia, alliances with Philip V of Macedon and Syracuse (215 BCE), and a counter-offensive in Spain, while Hannibal kept up the pressure in Italy, taking Tarentum (213 BCE).
- 6) Rome met these moves successfully in Sicily and Sardinia, capturing Syracuse in 211, and by navel operations, with the help of the Aetolian League and Pergamum, blocked Philip V in Greece (First Macedonian War, 214–205 BCE).
- 7) In Italy she recovered Capua (211 BCE); but P. Scipio (Africanus) regained control by seizing new Carthage and winning the victories of Baecula (208 BCE) and Ilipa (206 BCE).
- 8) Hasdrubal, reinforcing Hannibal from Spain, was defeated on the Metaurus (207 BCE).
- 9) Scipio shifted the attack to Africa, forcing the recall of Hannibal and defeating him at Zama (202 BCE), with the help of the Numidian chief, Masinissa.
- 10) Carthage was disarmed and limited to her own territory as a client state of Rome. Masinissa became king of Numidia. Carthage had to give up her fleet and pay a huge indemnity.

### Result of the Second Punic War

- 1) Rome was henceforth an imperialist power.
- 2) It solidified the Italian confederacy and hastened the process of levelling to a common status.
- 3) It increased the prestige of the senatorial class and discredited the popular assembly which was blamed for the folly of Cannae.
- 4) It prepared the way for the change from the conscripted citizen soldier to the professional volunteer.
- 5) Southern Italy, devastated for 12 years by Hannibal, rapidly declined. The Greek cities became unimportant villages. The farmers abandoned their farms to flock to the city. The wealthy took over farms to use as slave plantations.
- 6) There was tremendous depletion of Rome's financial resources.
- 7) Carthage was reduced to a minor power.
- 8) The war caused tremendous loss of citizen manpower.
- 9) A spirit of hard commercialism grew in the upper classes with a drive for wealth by plunder, war profits, exploitation of slave labour, etc.
- 10) It provided a system of provincial administration.

SOURCE 21.9 Kresner, H.A., 1961, *Compendium of Ancient History*, Horowitz

In the following extract, British historians N.G.L. Hammond (1907–2001) and H.H. Scullard (1903–1983) discuss how innovative tactics introduced by Scipio Africanus, in conjunction with the confidence to take risks, led to his successes on the battlefield.

Scipio Africanus Major, Publius Cornelius (236–184/3 n.c.) son of Publius and husband of Aemilia, the sister of Paullus; father of two sons and two daughters, Cornelia, wife of Scipio Nasica, and Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi. Born in 236 B.C., Scipio is said to have saved his father's life at the battle of Ticinus (218) and as military tribune to have rallied the survivors of Cannae at Canusium (216). After being curule aedile (213), he was appointed by the People to the command in Spain, being the first *privatus* to be invested with proconsular *imperium* (210). In Spain he followed his father's offensive strategy rather than the cautious policy of his own predecessor, Nero. He seized the enemy's base, Carthage Nova, by a brilliant *coup de main* (209). He drilled his army in new tactics, by which the three lines of the Roman army acted with greater mutual independence; he possibly adopted the Spanish sword and improved the *pilum*. In 208 he defeated Hasdrubal Barca at Baecula (*Bailen*) in Baetica: screened by his light troops, his main forces divided and fell on the enemy's flanks, a movement which was a complete break with traditional Roman tactics. He wisely avoided a wild-goose chase after the fleeing Hasdrubal and decided to fight on in Spain, where he finally defeated the two other Carthaginian armies at Ilipa (*Alcala del Rio*, near *Seville*): he held the enemy's main forces while the wings outflanked them (206). Thus Roman domination was established in Spain. Before he left Spain Scipio settled some veterans at Italica.

As consul for 205, Scipio carried through his determination to invade Africa, despite senatorial opposition led by Fabius. With an army composed partly of volunteers he crossed to Sicily; he also succeeded in snatching Locri from Hannibal. In 204 as proconsul he landed with perhaps 35 000 men in Africa, where he besieged Utica and wintered on a nearby headland (*Castra Cornelia*). Early in 203 he successfully attacked and burnt the camps of Syphax and Hasdrubal some 6 miles to the south. At *Campi Magni* (*Souk el Kremis*) on the upper Bagradas, Scipio defeated another enemy army by a double outflanking operation. When he captured Tunis, Carthage sought peace. During an armistice terms were referred to Rome, but after Hannibal's return to Africa the Carthaginians renewed the war in 202. After joining Masinissa, Scipio finally defeated Hannibal in the battle of Zama (q.v.), where neither side could outflank the other and the issue was decided by the Roman and Numidian cavalry, which broke off its pursuit of the Punic horsemen and fell on the rear of Hannibal's army. Scipio was named Africanus after the country he had conquered.

**SOURCE 21.11** Hammond, N.G.L. & Scullard, H.H. (ed.), 1970, *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, p. 962

Appian was a second-century Greek historian with Roman citizenship, also known as Appian of Alexandria. His *Roman History* covers nine centuries in 24 volumes. Here Appian describes Scipio Africanus's fearlessness and drive to succeed:

Scipio advised the people that they would never drive Hannibal and the Carthaginians out of Italy except by sending a Roman army into Africa and so bringing danger to their own doors. By persisting strenuously and persuading those who hesitated he was himself chosen general for Africa and sailed forthwith to Sicily. Having collected and drilled an army there he sailed suddenly to Locri in Italy which was garrisoned by Hannibal. Having slain the garrison and put the town under the command of Pleminius he embarked for Africa ...

**SOURCE 21.12** Appian, *Roman History – Book 7: War Against Hannibal*, 8:55



Richard A. Gabriel, the author of *Scipio Africanus: Rome's Greatest General* (2008), is a professor in the Department of History and War Studies at the Royal Military College of Canada. This publishers' description of the book details the integrity of the research and authorship, and also comments on modern historians' neglect of Scipio Africanus as military figure.

The world often misunderstands its greatest men while neglecting others entirely. Scipio Africanus, surely the greatest general that Rome produced, suffered both these fates. Today scholars celebrate the importance of Hannibal, even though Scipio defeated the legendary general in the Second Punic War and was the central military figure of his time. In this scholarly and heretofore unmatched military biography of the distinguished Roman soldier, Richard A. Gabriel establishes Scipio's rightful place in military history as the greater of the two generals. Before Scipio, few Romans would have dreamed of empire, and Scipio himself would have regarded such an ambition as a danger to his beloved republic. And yet, paradoxically, Scipio's victories in Spain and Africa enabled Rome to consolidate its hold over Italy and become the dominant power in the western Mediterranean, virtually ensuring a later confrontation with the Greco-Macedonian kingdoms to the east as well as the empire's expansion into North Africa and the Levant. The Roman imperium was being born, and it was Scipio who had sired it. Gabriel draws upon ancient texts, including those from Livy, Polybius, Diodorus, Silius Italicus, and others, as primary sources and examines all additional material available to the modern scholar in French, German, English, and Italian. His book offers a complete bibliography of all extant sources regarding Scipio's life. The result is a rich, detailed, and contextual treatment of the life and career of Scipio Africanus, one of Rome's greatest generals, if not the greatest of them all.

**SOURCE 21.13** Product description of Gabriel, R.A., 2008, *Scipio Africanus: Rome's Greatest General*, Potomac Books Inc, Washington

## ACTIVITY 21.4

1. Reading for a specific task: As this section is about assessing Scipio's military abilities, highlight 10 phrases/quotes from the sources that you consider to be of relevance to this task. Reference these sources appropriately.
2. Prioritisation: Of the 10 phrases you have highlighted, now rank them in terms of importance (1 being most important, 10 the least) giving specific reasons for your ranking. This is prioritisation, a critical thinking skill. What makes one point more important than another? A useful technique is to do the top and bottom rankings first, making your way towards the middle ranks.
3. Synthesis and communication: Using the material you have identified, write a response to the following question:  
*To what extent does Scipio deserve to be called, as R.A. Gabriel does, one of the Roman Republic's greatest commanders?*



### Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature of power and how it was exercised in the Ancient World

Here Polybius (203–c. 12 BCE) describes the emotional reaction of the Romans to Scipio's triumphant return from the battlefield where he had defeated Hannibal:

The expectation of the people concerning him was proportionable to the magnitude of his achievements: and the splendour of his reception, and the signs of popular favour which greeted him were extraordinary. Nor was this otherwise than reasonable and proper. For after despairing of ever driving Hannibal from Italy, or of averting that danger from themselves and their kinsfolk, they now looked on themselves as not only securely removed from every fear and every menace of attack, but as having conquered their enemies. Their joy therefore knew no bounds; and when Scipio came into the city in triumph, and the actual sight of the prisoners who formed the procession brought still more clearly to their memories the dangers of the past, they became almost wild in the expression of their thanks to the gods, and their affection for the author of such a signal change. For among the prisoners who were led in the triumphal procession was Syphax, the king of the Masaesylii, who shortly afterwards died in prison. The triumph concluded, the citizens celebrated games and festivals for several days running with great splendour, Scipio, in his magnificent liberality, supplying the cost ...

**SOURCE 21.14** Polybius, *Histories* – Book XVI, 5:23

Appian also describes Scipio's triumphant return, but with a different focus.

When Scipio had concluded the treaty, he sailed from Africa to Italy with his whole army, and made a triumphal entry into Rome more glorious than that of any of his predecessors.

The form of the triumph (which the Romans continue to employ) was as follows: All who were in the procession wore crowns. Trumpeters led the advance and wagons laden with spoils. Towers were borne along representing the captured cities, and pictures showing the exploits of the war; then gold and silver coin and bullion, and whatever else they had captured of that kind; then came the crowns that had been given to the general as a reward for his bravery by cities, by allies, or by the army itself. White oxen came next, and after them elephants and the captive Carthaginian and Numidian chiefs. Lictors clad in purple tunics preceded the general; also a chorus of musicians and pipers, in imitation of an Etruscan procession, wearing belts and golden crowns, and they march evenly with song and dance. They call themselves Lydi because, as I think, the Etruscans were a Lydian colony. One of these, in the middle of the procession, wearing a purple cloak and golden bracelets and necklace, caused laughter by making various gesticulations, as though he were insulting the enemy. Next came a lot of incense bearers, and after them the general himself on a chariot embellished with various designs, wearing a crown of gold and precious stones, and dressed, according to the fashion of the country, in a purple toga embroidered with golden stars. He bore a sceptre of ivory, and a laurel branch, which is always the Roman symbol of victory. Riding in the same chariot with him were boys and girls, and on horses on either side of him young men, his own relatives. Then followed those who had served him in the war as secretaries, aids, and armour-bearers. After these came the army arranged in companies and cohorts, all of them crowned and carrying laurel branches, the bravest of them bearing their military prizes. They praised some of their captains, derided others, and reproached others; for in a triumph everybody is free, and is allowed to say what he pleases. When Scipio arrived at the Capitol the procession came to an end, and he entertained his friends at a banquet in the temple.

**SOURCE 21.15** Appian, *Roman History* – Book 8: *The Punic Wars*, 9:65-66

This extract from Polybius's *Histories* comments on Scipio's character:

In Iberia [Spain], and in fact all the achievements in his life, I think it necessary to direct my readers' attention, to begin with, to his moral and mental qualities. For as he is perhaps the most illustrious man of any born before the present generation, everybody seeks to know what kind of man he was, and what advantages from natural ability or experience he enjoyed, to account for a career so crowded with brilliant achievement; and yet is compelled to remain in the dark, or to entertain false opinions, because those who write about him have not kept to the truth. The soundness of this assertion will be rendered evident in the course of my narrative to all who are capable of estimating the noblest and most gallant of his exploits. Now all other writers represent him as a man favoured by fortune, who succeeded in his undertakings contrary to rational expectation, and by the mere force of circumstances. They consider apparently such men to be, so to speak, more godlike and worthy of admiration, than those who act in every case by calculation. They do not seem to be aware of the distinction between credit for good fortune and credit for good conduct in the case of such men; and that the former may be assigned to any one however commonplace, while the latter belongs to those alone who act from prudent calculation and clear intelligence: and it is these last whom we should look upon as the most god-like and god-beloved.

**SOURCE 21.16** Polybius, *Histories* – Book X, 2:2

In the following extract, Polybius reflects on the death of Marcellus, a Roman general who died in a Carthaginian ambush in 208 BCE.

Marcellus, it must be confessed, brought this misfortune on himself by behaving not so much like a general as like a simpleton. Throughout this work I am often compelled to call the attention of my readers to such occurrences, as I observe that generals are more liable to make mistakes in this matter than in any other parts of their duty as commanders, although the error is such an obvious one. For what is the use of a general or commander who does not comprehend that he must keep himself as far away as possible from all partial encounters in which the fate of the whole army is not involved? Of what use is he if he does not know that, if circumstances at times compel commanders to undertake in person such partial encounters, they must sacrifice many of their men before the danger is suffered to approach the supreme commander of the whole? Let the risk be for the Carian, as the proverb has it, and not for the general. And as for saying 'I should never have thought it' or 'Who would have expected it to happen?' that in a general is a most manifest sign of incompetence and dullness.

**SOURCE 21.17** Polybius, *Histories* – Book X, 5:32



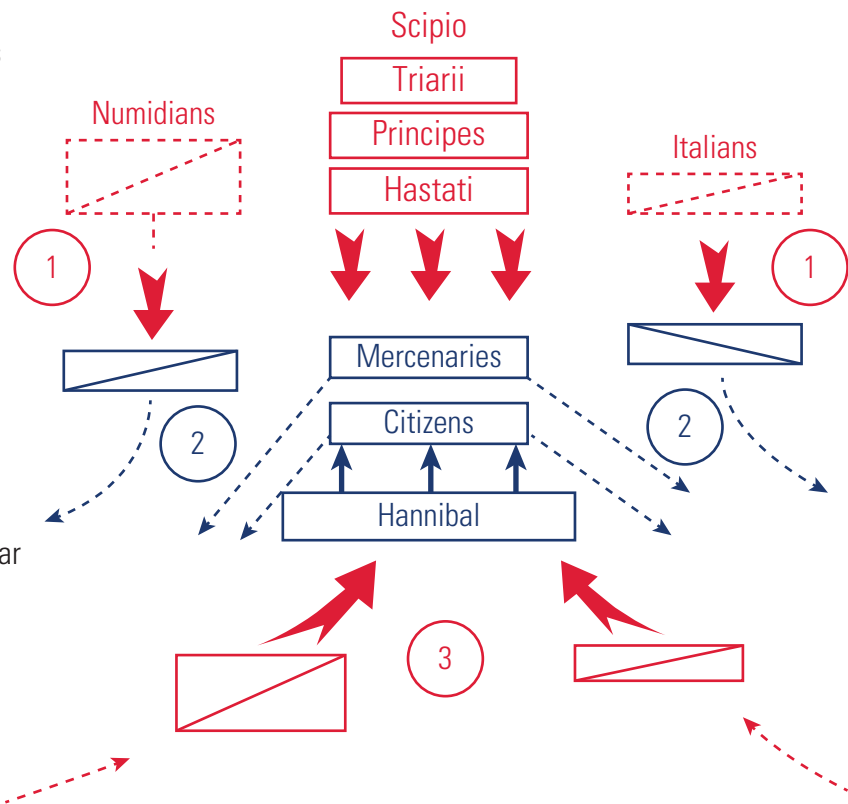
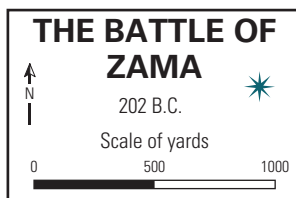
**FIGURE 21.18** A Carthaginian coin depicting Hasdrubal Barca (245–207 BCE), one of Hannibal's younger brothers, wearing a diadem



1 Roman cavalry drives Carthaginian cavalry from the field

2 Roman legion drives off Carthaginian mercenaries and citizens forces

3 After regrouping the Legion strikes Hannibal's cavalry, attacking from the rear



SOURCE 21.19 The battle of Zama

## ACTIVITY 21.5

What do the sources reveal about the nature of Scipio's achievements? Identify the key evidence in each source and then link similar evidence from all the sources together.

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about people, power and authority in the Ancient World

This anonymous review of *Scipio Africanus: Greater Than Napoleon* by B.H. Liddell Hart (1895–1970), a British military historian and military theorist, appears on a website called 'UNRV Roman Empire', an Ancient Roman history website and forum with the aim of giving people 'a substantial look into what Rome was'.

*That Caesar's work is known universally, and Scipio little more than a name to the ordinary educated man, is a curious standard, for one inaugurated the world dominion of Roman civilization, while the other paved the way for its decay.*

This is one of the many other statements in Liddell Hart's biography of Scipio Africanus titled *Scipio Africanus: Greater Than Napoleon* that completely betrays it as a shameless aggrandisement of the man. Similar to this we see other exaggerated statements proposing the idea that somehow the



empire might have survived longer had it followed an ideology of Scipio's that is based entirely on the assumption of the author. Here Hart feels himself free to take any small comment of Scipio's and to glorify it, giving it some prophetic meaning. These are taken from speeches which often actually come from the mouths of the famous Roman historian Livy, writing nearly two hundred years later. He finds himself almost unable to accept any negative aspect of this character, which while reading I almost found myself unable to call human.

A decorated and knighted captain and author, to those learned in military strategy Liddell Hart has been seen by many as one of the first to lay forward the theory later termed the Blitzkrieg. Writing during the twenties Liddell became a big advocate of mobility and speed in the art of warfare after seeing the disastrous effects of trench warfare during the First World War. Scipio Africanus is one of the biographies written by Hart to illustrate and recognize those he thought influential to his ideas. With this in mind we now move to the actual book. *Greater than Napoleon* can be considered the first book to delve into the military career of Africanus and this is rather easy to see when one reads the book. At times it will feel like a recital of the two main references on Scipio's career, Livy and Polybius. It's brevity, while largely due to the short career of Scipio (a man who died at the age of 54 and peaked at 35), also reveals the weak amount of study available. There are no references in the book outside of the first hand sources that are provided in the edition containing Michael Grant's forward. In the preface Hart tells us that the only other biography of the man, in English, was one written by a priest, completely ignoring his military exploits.

Through this book Hart puts forward his theories on warfare, often times placing them wrongly and without any kind of precedent, into the mind of Scipio. It is a way for him to prove their superiority by linking them to Scipio's successes. Throughout the book he will constantly relate the general's various actions and attribute them in a tactical way of thinking that has little historical credibility. Whether it's a peace treaty or some political move, Hart will praise it using a state or mind and mentality, which he seems to personally harbor.

Yet another fault of the book is the sycophantic mentality, which Hart holds for Scipio. He seems utterly unable to ever give any kind of criticism towards the man, whether it is that Scipio simply will forgo a call to trial or an emotional outburst. This is done to such an extent that it even overshadows Theodore Ayrault Dodge's shameless hero worship of Hannibal in his own book. The praises reach an unbelievable peak which propose the idea that somehow, had Rome followed an international policy which Scipio, he believes, carried it could have somehow defeated the barbarian invasions and held off the Dark Ages. This is something which occurred 600 years after the events at hand and which proposes an international policy which there is no evidence of Scipio holding. It is by far one of the weakest aspects of this book.

Yet another problem is that Hart has a nasty habit of taking words completely out of the mouths of the two main historical accounts of the war, Livy and Polybius. The book is filled with their quotations and more often than not Hart will take many of their speeches that they wrote for Scipio's mouth completely at face value. Other times he will recite a major passage from their books making you think you are reading some comparative study rather than a biography. Add this failure to the general brevity of the book, lacking as it does any real contemporary study.

However, there are positives. Being a military man himself he is best at what he excels in. If you can put aside his glorification of Scipio you will find his overall military review is actually quite adequate. Overall his degradation of other, more renown, generals can be dismissed as simply a way for Hart to bring more attention to Scipio, but it will be up to the reader himself to take what he reads at face value or to do further inquiry on the subject and make a decision thereafter.

Unfortunately even today, books on Scipio Africanus are few and far between in a world crammed with those men who changed the world in far more controversial ways. This remains one of the most widespread studies on the man, something, which is indeed, a sad fact considering it lacks much in terms of a proper critical study. However it is still a fun book to read and one that will take very little time out of one's hand. Those with little knowledge of Scipio's deeds will be very much entertained by this book, others who have gone through various other books on the Punic Wars will find that this book leaves much to be desired.

**SOURCE 21.20** 'Divi Filius', review of Liddell Hart, B.H., *Scipio Africanus: Greater Than Napoleon*, UNRV Roman Empire website



**SOURCE 21.21** *Battle of Zama*, Cornelis Cort, 1567

## ACTIVITY 21.6

1. When measuring the reliability and usefulness of information from historical sources, one needs to consider the authorship of the work. In this regard, considering your response in the previous activity, answer the following question in a detailed paragraph:  
*To what extent does the information contained in Source 21.20 validate or negate the image of Scipio Africanus, as seen in Sources 21.14 to 21.17?*
2. Source 21.20 is an anonymous review from a website, and Source 21.13 is a book description, written by the publisher. How might this affect the quality of what is said in the sources? Can either of these sources be considered useful? If so, how and why?



## 21.5 Scipio as politician

Here Hammond and Scullard outline Scipio Africanus's last years and comment on his legacy.

In 199 Scipio was elected censor and became *princeps senatus*. A keen supporter of a philhellenic policy, he prudently but vainly urged in his second consulship (194) that Greece should not be completely evacuated lest Antiochus of Syria should invade it. In 193 he was sent on an embassy to North Africa and perhaps also to the East. When his brother Lucius was given the command against Antiochus (190), Africanus, who could not constitutionally yet be re-elected consul, was 'associated' with the command and served as his brother's legate. After crossing to Asia, where he received back from Antiochus his captured son Lucius, Scipio fell ill and took no active part in his brother's victory at Magnesia (189). Meanwhile in Rome political attacks, led by Cato, were launched on the Scipios, culminating in the 'Trials of the Scipios', on which the ancient evidence is conflicting. Africanus intervened when Lucius was accused in 187; whether he himself was formally accused either in 187 or 184 is not beyond doubt. But his influence was undermined and he withdrew embittered and ill to Liternum where he died soon afterwards (184/3).

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 21.22** Hammond, N.G.L. & Scullard, H.H. (ed.), 1970, *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, p. 962

In the following three extracts from his *History of Rome*, Livy gives an account of confrontations between Scipio and the Roman Senate.

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 redound 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.

**SOURCE 21.23** Livy, *History of Rome*, 28:40–43

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 21.24** 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 Cadius 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 1000 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.

**SOURCE 21.25** Livy, *History of Rome*, 28:45

Any individual has meritorious qualities and weaknesses, and in assessing their place in, and contribution to, history, you need to weigh one against the other in forming an opinion about their historical worth. Complete the following table to help you answer the question at the end.

### ACTIVITY 21.7

- Copy and complete the following table, listing what each of the sources shows as Scipio's strength/s and weakness/es as a politician.

Scipio Africanus as a politician		
Source	Strengths	Weaknesses
Source 21.22		
Source 21.23		
Source 21.24		
Source 21.25		

- To what extent do you think that Scipio's weaknesses as a politician were more important than his strengths?

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a powerful individual, group or society in the Ancient World

### 21.6 Aftermath

The following timeline lists some military events and administrative changes that took place in Rome after Scipio's victory at the Battle of Zama.

202–196 BCE	Second Macedonian War, in which Rome defeats the forces of Philip V of Macedon
197 BCE	Rome increases the number of <i>quaestors</i> (treasury officials) from 8 to 12, and the number of <i>praetors</i> (army commanders and magistrates) from 4 to 6
192–189 BCE	Seleucid War, in which Rome defeats the Hellenistic Seleucid Empire
180 BCE	The <i>Lex Villia Annalis</i> law passed, setting minimum ages for public offices and also requiring a two year interval between holding offices
172–167 BCE	Third Macedonian War, in which Rome defeats the forces of King Perseus of Macedon (son of Philip V)
154–138 BCE	Lusitanian War, in which advancing Roman legions clash with tribes in Hispania Ulterior. Resistance collapses when the Lusitanian leader, Viriathus, is killed by three of his companions who had been bribed by a Roman.

149 BCE	The law of <i>Lex Calpurnia</i> creates a permanent court to prosecute magistrates and governors who commit extortion
149–148 BCE	Fourth Macedonian War, in which Rome defeats the forces of Andriscus
149–146 BCE	Third Punic War, in which Rome completely destroys Carthage and annexes its remaining territory
146 BCE	Macedonia becomes a Roman province
133 BCE	Tiberius Gracchus, a tribune, is murdered after giving approval to an agrarian reform

Scipio himself lived mostly out of the limelight after Zama. He refused positions such as consul for life and dictator, but accepted the election to censor in 199 BCE. After this, he largely withdrew from politics. In 193 BCE he was part of a commission to settle a dispute between the Carthaginians and Massinissa, in Africa. This was unsuccessful, but in 190 BCE Rome declared war on Antiochus III of Syria, and Scipio was given chief command. He and his brother, Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus, gained a swift victory.

When the brothers returned to Rome, there was an attempt to prosecute Lucius for misappropriation of funds, but Scipio shamed the court by pointing out that while 3000 talents had been spent, Rome was receiving 15 000 talents from Antiochus as tribute following his defeat. Scipio was later accused of having been bribed by Antiochus, but he reminded people that it was the anniversary of his victory at Zama, thus gaining popular support in the face of the court. Further attempts to bring him to trial may have been deflected by his future son-in-law, Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, the Elder.

From 185 BCE Scipio lived in retirement on his estate at Liternum. He died a few years later, although there are no contemporary accounts of this, or of his funeral, so it is not certain where he is buried. It is said that he ordered the following inscription for his tomb: *'Ingrata patria, ne ossa quidem habebis'* (ungrateful fatherland, you will not even have my bones).

Scullard and Hammond draw the following conclusions about the legend, significance and influence of Scipio Africanus.

### The legend of Scipio

Such was Scipio's impact upon the Romans that even during his lifetime legends began to cluster around him: he was regarded as favoured by Fortune or even divinely inspired. Not only did many believe that he had received a promise of help from Neptune in a dream on the night before his assault on Carthago Nova but that he also had a close connection with Jupiter. He used to visit Jupiter's temple on the Capitol at night to commune with the god, and later the story circulated that he was even a son of the god, who had appeared in his mother's bed in the form of a snake.

The historian Polybius thought that this popular view of Scipio was mistaken and argued that Scipio always acted only as the result of reasoned foresight and worked on men's superstitions in a calculating manner. But Polybius himself was a rationalist and has probably underestimated a streak of religious confidence, if not of mysticism, in Scipio's character that impressed so many of his contemporaries with its magnanimity and generosity. Thus, although Polybius had an intense admiration for Scipio, whom he called 'almost the most famous man of all time', the existence of the legend, a unique phenomenon in Rome's history, indicates that Polybius's portrait is too one-sided.

### Significance and influence

A man of wide sympathies, cultured and magnanimous, Scipio easily won the friendship of such men as Philip, king of Macedonia, and the native princes of Spain and Africa, while he secured the devotion of his own troops. Though essentially a man of action, he may also have been something of a mystic in whom, at any rate, contemporary legend saw a favourite of Jupiter as well as a spiritual descendant of Alexander the Great. One of the greatest soldiers of the ancient world, by his tactical



reforms and strategic insight he created an army that defeated even Hannibal and asserted Rome's supremacy in Spain, Africa, and the Hellenistic East. He had a great appreciation of Greek culture and enjoyed relaxing in the congenial atmosphere of the Greek cities of Sicily, conduct that provoked the anger of old-fashioned Romans such as Cato. Indeed, he was outstanding among those Roman nobles of the day who welcomed the civilizing influences of Greek culture that were beginning to permeate Roman society. His Greek sympathies led him to champion Rome's mission in the world as protector of Greek culture; he preferred to establish Roman protection rather than direct conquest and annexation. For 10 years (210–201) he commanded a devoted army at the people's wish. His position might seem almost kingly; he had been hailed as king by Spanish tribes, and he may have been the first Roman general to be acclaimed as imperator (emperor) by his troops; but, though convinced of his own powers, he offered no challenge to the dominance of the Roman nobility ensconced in the Senate except by normal political methods (in which he showed no outstanding ability). Reaction against his generous foreign policy and against his encouragement of Greek culture in Roman life led to his downfall amid personal and political rivalries, but his career had shown that Rome's destiny was to be a Mediterranean, not merely an Italian, power.

Scipio's influence outlived the Roman world. Great interest was shown in his life during the early Renaissance, and it helped the early humanists to build a bridge between the classical world and Christendom. He became an idealized perfect hero who was seen to have served the ends of Providence. Petrarch glorified him in a Latin epic, the *Africa*, which secured his own coronation as poet laureate in 1341 on the Capitol, where, some 1500 years earlier, the historical Scipio used to commune in the temple of Jupiter.

**SOURCE 21.26** Scullard, H.H., 'Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus', *Encyclopaedia Britannica*

## ACTIVITY 21.8

Explain in a few sentences what happened to Scipio after the Battle of Zama in 202 BCE.  
What is Scipio's legacy?

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

British classical scholar Robin Waterfield made the following observation about Scipio Africanus:

[Scipio] was the first of a long line of charismatic leaders who would eventually undermine the Republic, but he did not take undue advantage of the adulation he received or the loyalty of his troops. He was no Sulla, Caesar, or Octavian.

**SOURCE 21.27** Waterfield, R., 2014, *Taken at the Flood: The Roman Conquest of Greece*, Oxford University Press, p. 44

## ACTIVITY 21.9

Considering all the sources and all that you have learnt in this chapter answer the question:  
*Did Scipio actually damage the Roman Republic rather than strengthening it?*

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- Scipio Africanus (born Publius Cornelius Scipio) was a member of a patrician Roman family and took up the mantle of general during the Second Punic War.
- *Pater familias* represents both the relationship in Roman families, and also the political system, with the Senate acting like a father to its people.
- The story of Cincinnatus promotes the very best of the key characteristics of Roman identity.
- As a military general, Scipio Africanus is thought of by some historians as one of the greatest commanders in the Roman Republic.
- Scipio Africanus as Roman politician displayed both strengths and weaknesses.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

Create a revision game (such as a Kahoot) that tests your knowledge of the key terms, concepts and issues.

### Devise

Select an issue from the chapter. Generate an investigation question and sub-questions as necessary and ensure your research includes primary and secondary sources.

### Analyse

Choose an extract from a primary or secondary source. What is the main message of that source? What are the most significant parts of the source that go towards creating that message? Prioritise those parts in order of importance.

### Synthesise

Make your own judgement! Create your own hypothesis on an issue relating to Scipio. What are the strengths of your position? What different or alternative viewpoints are there? How can those viewpoints be criticised and weakened?

### Evaluate

Using a primary and secondary source gathered from the 'Devise' section, evaluate its usefulness and reliability. In so doing, identify the author or creator's perspective and explain how that influenced the work they produced.

### Respond

Using the research conducted for the 'Devise' consolidation question, present your findings to the class in a format of your choice (visual, oral or written).

## Assessment

### Examination-style questions

1. In 'saving' Rome, did Scipio do more damage to its Republican systems and values than protecting them?
2. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: *Rome could not have won the Second Punic War without Scipio Africanus.* [Although this is historical speculation, it requires you to justify a point of view based on historical knowledge and evidence.]
3. Did Rome's victory in the Punic Wars owe more to the strengths and foundations of its political system and values than to the victories of Scipio?

### Investigation tasks

1. Which other Roman generals achieved victories in the Second Punic War? Why have these been overshadowed by Scipio's?
2. Rome and Carthage both had a Senate, a Republic system (of sorts), a dominant nobility, well-trained armies and navies, and great military generals. Why, then, did Rome win, and what was Scipio's role in this?
3. Justify the following statement: *The promotion of Scipio's role and significance in the Second Punic War is equally reflective of his individual ambition and drive. This was not necessarily of long lasting benefit to the Roman Republic.*



# CHAPTER 22

## Julius Caesar

SARAH COLEMAN

### TOPIC INTRODUCTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to:
  - the geographical and historical context of Julius Caesar
  - family background and status
  - key events in his rise to prominence
  - significant influences on early development.
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature and range of sources for the period and identification of key issues related to the investigation of sources.

#### Depth study

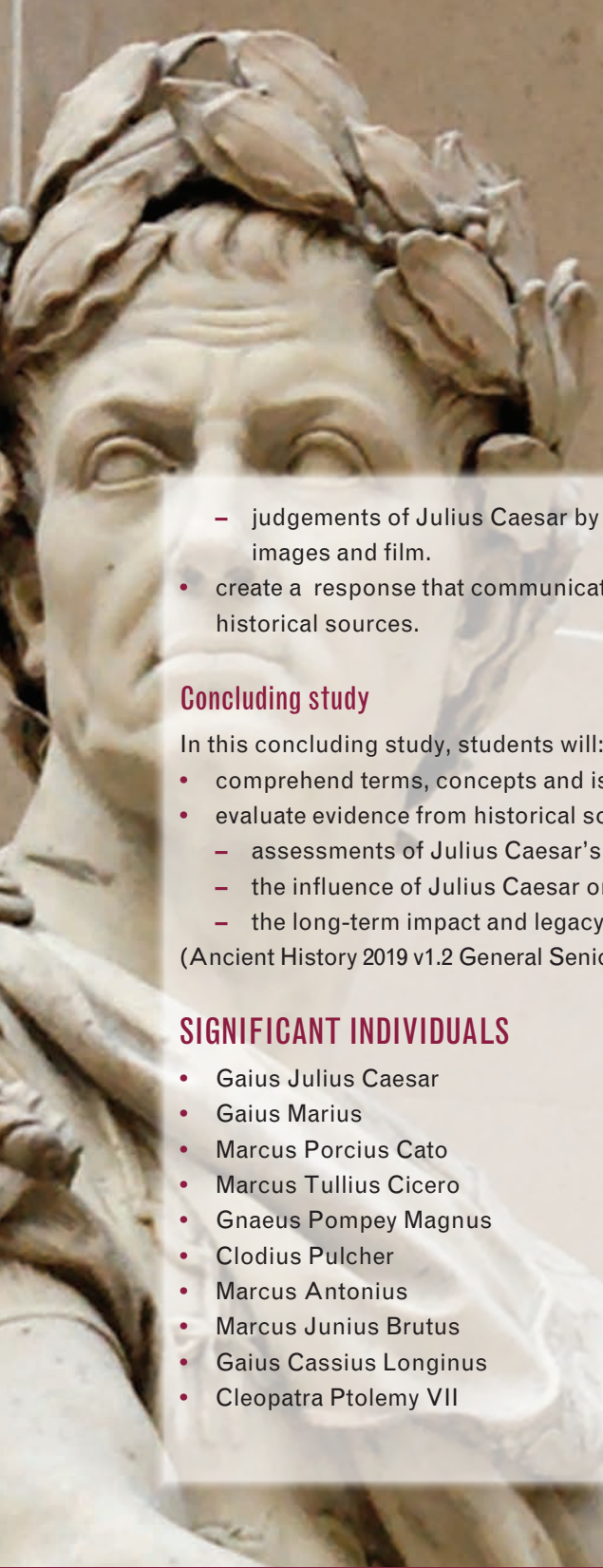
In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the career of Julius Caesar
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - change of role, position, status over time
  - depictions of Julius Caesar during his lifetime
  - possible motivations for actions
  - methods used to achieve aims
  - relationships with groups and other individuals
  - significant events in the career of Julius Caesar
  - manner and impact of his death

### KEY DATES

88 BCE	87 BCE	86 BCE	85 BCE	84 BCE	83 BCE
First consulship of Sulla, this marked the beginning of the Marian-Sullan civil war	Marius and Cinna take Rome	Death of Marius	Death of Caesar's father	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caesar nominated <i>flamen dialis</i></li> <li>• Marries Cornelia, daughter of Cinna</li> </ul>	Sulla returns from the East





- judgements of Julius Caesar by other individuals in his lifetime and after his death, e.g. in writings, images and film.
- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose by completing short responses to historical sources.

**Concluding study**

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the impact and legacy of Julius Caesar
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - assessments of Julius Caesar's life and career
  - the influence of Julius Caesar on his time
  - the long-term impact and legacy of Julius Caesar.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

**SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS**

- Gaius Julius Caesar
- Gaius Marius
- Marcus Porcius Cato
- Marcus Tullius Cicero
- Gnaeus Pompey Magnus
- Clodius Pulcher
- Marcus Antonius
- Marcus Junius Brutus
- Gaius Cassius Longinus
- Cleopatra Ptolemy VII

**82 BCE      81 BCE      78 BCE      77 BCE      75 BCE      73 BCE**

Sulla appointed dictator	Caesar in Asia	• Death of Sulla • Caesar returns to Rome	Caesar prosecutes Gnaeus Cornelius Dolabella	Caesar in Rhodes and Asia	Caesar appointed to the pontifical college, returns to Rome
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# MAP



**SOURCE 22.2** Rome in the time of Caesar

## 70 BCE

Crassus and Pompey hold their first consulship

## 69 BCE

Caesar serves as quaestor in Spain. His aunt Julia dies, as does Cornelia.

## 67 BCE

Caesar and Pompeia, granddaughter of Sulla, are wed

## 65 BCE

Caesar fills the role of aedile

## 63 BCE

- Cicero serves as consul
- Catiline 'conspiracy' takes place
- Caesar is elected *pontifex maximus*





## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>aedile</b>	Roman magistrate in charge of city maintenance, games and festivals
<b>ambitio</b>	political ambition as expected of a man of noble birth, which included a going about of candidates for office in Rome, and the soliciting of citizens for their vote; candidature; canvassing
<b>amicitia</b>	friendship, usually of a political and mutually beneficial nature
<b>auctoritas</b>	authority, influence and prestige
<b>commentarii</b>	loosely translates as commentaries – field notes and dispatches from the battlefield
<b>cursus honorum</b>	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
<b>dictatorship</b>	position in the <i>cursus honorum</i> held in times of political emergency by decree of the Senate
<b>dignitas</b>	prestige and dignity – one's standing in the community
<b>fides</b>	a term meaning 'good faith', this is a necessary constituent element of political and social dealings, and is an essential characteristic of men engaging in public affairs
<b>gloria</b>	reputation, which was twofold: <i>dignitas</i> refers to one's place in the community and <i>fama</i> refers to how one is thought of by others
<b>imperium</b>	supreme authority; held by consuls, praetors and dictators
<b>optimates</b>	'the good men', those who deemed themselves morally superior to others politically, believed in the defense of the republic, and had very conservative tendencies
<b>populare</b>	politicians who believed in the rights of the populace, or who used popular support to gain political power
<b>mob</b>	the urban mob who were largely unemployed and used by savvy politicians to gain and exert power and influence
<b>virtus</b>	<i>virtus</i> principally means 'acting like a man'. For the Romans, bravery in military matters brought <i>gloria</i> .

### 62 BCE

- Caesar serves as praetor
- Bona Dea scandal takes place
- Pompeia is divorced by Caesar

### 61 BCE

Caesar in Spain

### 60 BCE

- The role of consul for 59 BCE is given to Caesar
- Caesar, Crassus and Pompey form the First Triumvirate

### 59 BCE

- Caesar is consul
- Caesar marries Calpurnia, and his daughter Julia marries Pompey
- Caesar appointed governor in Gaul for five years

### 58 BCE

- Clodius is tribune
- Caesar defeats Helvetii and Suebi

## 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 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, the deeds of Caesar 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 was a consequence of the hard line senators who sought to defend their own position.



**SOURCE 22.3** *Caesar*, Adolphe Yvon, 1875

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### 22.1 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 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 can always be rooted in this ancient aristocratic ethos.

#### 58–54 BCE

Caesar writes books 1–4 of *De Bello Gallico*

#### 57 BCE

Caesar campaigns against Belgic coalition

#### 56 BCE

Renewal of triumvirate

#### 55 BCE

- Crassus and Pompey undertake their second consulship
- Caesar is elected as governor for five more years
  - Caesar crosses the Rhine
- Caesar invades Britain for the first time

#### 54 BCE

- Second invasion of Britain
- Death of Caesar's daughter Julia

## 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 L. 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 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 by. For example, that of Lucius Cornelius Scipio described him as being ‘the very best of all good men’, and records that he ‘captured Corsica and Aleria’ and that he was ‘aedile, consul and censor’.

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. 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 twenty families who greatly influenced political legislation, governed outer lying areas of the Empire and commanded Roman armies.

53 BCE	53–51 BCE	52 BCE	51 BCE	50 BCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rebellious tribes in Gaul are punished by Caesar</li><li>• Crassus dies in Parthia</li></ul>	Books 5–7 of <i>De Bello Gallico</i> are written by Caesar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clodius is murdered</li><li>• Pompey is appointed as sole consul</li><li>• Rebellion outbreak in Gaul. Its leader, Vercingetorix, surrenders at Alesia</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gallic wars come to an end</li><li>• Termination attempts on Caesar’s command</li></ul>	Caesar undertakes political manoeuvres so that he can maintain his command as well as stand for consul in 48 BCE



A young noble would typically serve in the military for a decade of military service, 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 republic.

## ACTIVITY 22.1

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 challenged.

1. Define the terms *gloria*, *nobilitas*, *virtus* and *auctoritas*.
2. In republican Rome, how important was the concept of ideals, especially amongst the nobility?
3. Which of these ideals seem to be the most significant? Why?
4. How were these ideals used by powerful and ambitious men to underscore their careers?
5. What processes existed in the republic to curtail the power of those who were particularly ambitious?
6. What is meant by the term *boni*? What are the implications of such a word?
7. What are 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 these concepts will have in your study of Julius Caesar?

## 22.2 Political career

By the time that Caesar was ready to commence his political career, the Rome established in the fifth century BCE had changed markedly. Once a small town of the plain of Latium, Rome was now a thriving metropolis (it would reach a million inhabitants during Caesar’s lifetime) with a growing empire. The conquest of Carthage in the second century resulted in an influx of wealth and slaves, and the rich grew richer, whilst the poor, who had in many cases lost their land and work, drifted to Rome, where the needs of the urban mob became ever more pressing. Sallust, a contemporary of Caesar, wrote extensively during the first century BCE; his most notable work is the *Bellum Catilinae* (*The War of Catiline*) chronicles the

### 49 BCE

- The Senate issues *senatus consultum ultimum* and demands that Caesar relinquish his command. Caesar leads his troops across the Rubicon.
- Pompey given dictatorial powers
  - Pompey leaves Italy

- Caesar in Spain
  - Battle of Ilerda
- Caesar appointed dictator
- Caesar elected consul for 48 BCE
  - Resigns dictatorship

### 48 BCE

- Battles of Dyrrachium and Pharsalus
  - Death of Pompey
- Caesar in Egypt with Cleopatra
  - Fighting in Alexandria
  - Caesar reappointed dictator

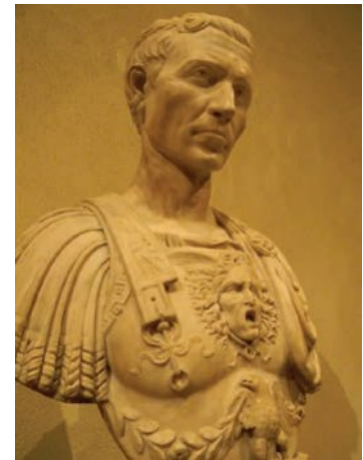
attempts of Cataline, who was the leader of an alleged conspiracy to have the consul of 63 BCE, Marcus Tullius Cicero, assassinated.

In establishing the context for such a transgression, Sallust details the moral decline of Roman society:

Accordingly, good morals were cultivated at home and in the field; there was the greatest harmony and little or no avarice; justice and probity prevailed among them, thanks not so much to laws as to nature. Quarrels, discord, and strife were reserved for their enemies; citizen vied with citizen only for the prize of merit. They were lavish in their offerings to the gods, frugal in the home, loyal to their friends. By practising these two qualities, boldness in warfare and justice when peace came, they watched over themselves and their country.

But when our country had grown great through toil and the practice of justice, when great kings had been vanquished in war, savage tribes and mighty peoples subdued by force of arms, when Carthage, the rival of Rome's sway, had perished root and branch, and all seas and lands were open, then Fortune began to grow cruel and to bring confusion into all our affairs. Those who had found it easy to bear hardship and dangers, anxiety and adversity, found leisure and wealth, desirable under other circumstances, a burden and a curse. Hence the lust for money first, then for power, grew upon them; these were, I may say, the root of all evils. For avarice destroyed honour, integrity, and all other noble qualities; taught in their place insolence, cruelty, to neglect the gods, to set a price on everything. Ambition drove many men to become false; to have one thought locked in the breast, another ready on the tongue; to value friendships and enmities not on their merits but by the standard of self-interest, and to show a good front rather than a good heart. At first these vices grew slowly, from time to time they were punished; finally, when the disease had spread like a deadly plague, the state was changed and a government second to none in equity and excellence became cruel and intolerable.

But at first men's souls were actuated less by avarice than by ambition - a fault, it is true, but not so far removed from virtue; for the noble and the base alike long for glory, honour, and power, but the former mount by the true path, whereas the latter, being destitute of noble qualities, rely upon craft and deception. As soon as riches came to be held in honour, when glory, dominion, and power followed in their train, virtue began to lose its lustre, poverty to be considered a disgrace, blamelessness to be termed malevolence. Therefore, as the result of riches, luxury and greed, united with insolence, took possession of our young manhood. They pillaged, squandered; set little value on their own, coveted the goods of others; they disregarded modesty, chastity, everything human and divine; in short, they were utterly thoughtless and reckless.



**SOURCE 22.4** *Julius Caesar*, marble sculpture, Andrea di Pietro di Marco Ferrucci, c. 1512

**SOURCE 22.5** Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae*, 9–12

#### 47 BCE

- Birth of Caesarion
- Battle of Zela
- Caesar returns to Rome

#### 46 BCE

- Caesar in Africa
- Battle of Thapsus
- Caesar appointed dictator for ten years
  - Caesar holds quadruple triumph
  - Caesar reforms the calendar
- Cleopatra in Rome

#### 45 BCE

- Caesar in Spain
- Battle of Munda signifies end of civil war
- Caesar appointed dictator for life

#### 44 BCE

- Caesar designated perpetual dictator
- On 15 February Caesar publicly refuses to be named as king, which was extended to him in the name of the people
  - On 15 March Caesar is assassinated

## ACTIVITY 22.2

Study Source 22.5 and answer the questions below.

1. According to Sallust, what characterised Roman conduct in the early republic?
2. Does the importance that Sallust places on Roman values align with the points of view conveyed in the first article?
3. Following the conquest of Carthage, how does Roman society change?
4. To what extent are the traditional ethics of the Roman republic corrupted? What examples does Sallust provide of this?
5. How did the influx of wealth as a result of conquest affect the traditional Roman way of life?
6. The inclusion of this in a work focused on corruption is a deliberate act. What purpose do you think this serves as a backdrop to the allegations against Catiline?

## 22.3 Caesar's rise to power

Key to Caesar's rise were his own ancestral connections and the capacity to exploit these for his own benefit. The Julii 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 Julii occurred in c. 110 BCE when Caesar's aunt Julia married the general Marius. This moment was to be of immense significance for Julius Caesar.

The following sources pertain specifically to the family of Caesar. Use the space in the table below to help you summarise information, annotate key ideas, and note down links to other sources, where concepts and ideas are corroborated or challenged.

The first source is from Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus (known as Suetonius), a Roman historian born about 100 years after Caesar's death. Here, he looks at Caesar's relationship with the women in his family, and particularly at his refusal to divorce his wife, Cornelia.

The Dictator Sulla tried to make Caesar divorce Cornelia; and when he refused stripped him of the priesthood, his wife's dowry, and his own inheritance, treating him as if he were a member of the popular party. Caesar disappeared from public view and, though suffering from a virulent attack of quartan fever, was forced to find a new hiding-place almost every night and bribe house holders to protect him from Sulla's secret police. Finally, he won Sulla's pardon through the intercession of the Vestal Virgins and his near relatives Mamerius Aemilius and Aurelius Cotta. It is well known that, when the most devoted and eminent members of the aristocratic party pleaded Caesar's cause and would not let the matter drop, Sulla at last gave way. Whether he was divinely inspired or showed peculiar foresight is an arguable point, but these were his words:

'Very well then, you win! Take him! But never forget that the man whom you want me to spare will one day prove the ruin of the party which you and I have so long defended. There are many Marius's in this fellow Caesar.'

... During his quaestorship he made the customary funeral speeches from the Rostra in honour of his aunt Julia and his wife Cornelia; and while eulogising Julia's maternal and paternal ancestry, did the same for the Caesars too. Her mother, he said, 'was a descendant of kings, namely the royal Marcians, a family founded by the Roman King Ancus Marcius; and her father, of gods – since the Julians (of which we Caesars are a branch) reckon descent from the goddess Venus. Thus Julia's stock can claim both the sanctity of kings, who reign supreme among mortals, and the reverence due to gods, who hold even kings in their power.'

**SOURCE 22.6** Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 1–6



Christian Meier is a professor emeritus of ancient history at the University of Munich. In this extract from his biography of Caesar, he considers how Caesar's family connections aided his political career.

... they [the Julii] 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 22.7** Meier, C., 1995, *Caesar: A biography*, Harper Collins, pp. 54–55

Plutarch was a first-century CE Greek biographer and essayist, whose works included a life of Julius Caesar. Here he discusses Caesar's funeral oration in praise of his aunt Julia.

A second and clearer instance of their favour appeared upon his making a magnificent oration in praise of his aunt Julia, wife to Marius, publicly in the forum, at whose funeral he was so bold as to bring forth the images of Marius, which nobody had dared to produce since the government came into Sulla's hands, Marius's party having from that time been declared enemies of the state. When some who were present had begun to raise a cry against Caesar, the people answered with loud shouts and clapping in his favour, expressing their joyful surprise and satisfaction at his having, as it were, brought up again from the grave those honours of Marius, which for so long a time had been lost to the city.

**SOURCE 22.8** Plutarch, *Parallel Lives: Julius Caesar*, 1

Matthias Gelzer was a twentieth-century classical historian and author of a highly regarded biography of Caesar. In this extract, he explains Caesar's entry to the college of pontifices following the death of his cousin.

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 from the remaining optimate members of the college ... The nobility accepted him as one of themselves.

**SOURCE 22.9** Gelzer, M., 1985, *Caesar: Politician and Statesman*, Harvard University Press, p. 25

This extract from Plutarch looks at Caesar's entry into the senate.

He [Caesar] turned to the people and put himself forward as a rival candidate ... Catulus, who, with his greater reputation in the first place was most disturbed at the prospect of this uncertainty, sent to Caesar and tried to bribe him with a large sum of money to stand down ... Caesar replied that he would fight the election to the end, even if he had to borrow more money than Catulus had offered him ... The contest was a close one, but, when the votes were taken, Caesar came out on top, and this made the senate and the nobles afraid that he would go on to lead the people forward on a course of violent extremism.

**SOURCE 22.10** Plutarch, *Parallel Lives: Julius Caesar*, 7

Here, Suetonius discusses Caesar's standing for the office of Chief Priest.

Caesar stood for the office of Chief Priest, and used the most flagrant bribery to secure it ... However, he defeated his two prominent rivals, both of whom were much older and more distinguished than himself, and the votes he won from their own tribes exceeded those cast for them in the entire poll.

**SOURCE 22.11** Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 13

Plutarch explains how Caesar celebrated Gaius Marius, husband of his aunt Julia.

... during his aedileship ... he had images of Marius made in secret and figures of Victory carrying trophies and brought them to the capitol by night and had them set up there ... there were inscriptions too commemorating Marius's victories over the Cimbri ... There were some who shouted out that this revival of honours which by laws and decrees were properly dead and done with was a sign that Caesar was aiming at securing supreme power in the state for himself ... On the other hand, Marius's party took heart and encouraged each other; it was amazing how many of them there were who suddenly showed themselves openly, and they filled the capitol with the noise of their applause. Many burst into tears of joy at the sight of Marius's features; they praised Caesar to the skies and declared him to be, more than anyone, worthy to be Marius's relation.

**SOURCE 22.12** Plutarch, *Parallel Lives: Julius Caesar*, 6

### ACTIVITY 22.3

1. Annotate the sources below using the following table.

Source	Key information/key quotations
Source 22.6	
Source 22.7	
Source 22.8	
Source 22.9	
Source 22.10	
Source 22.11	
Source 22.12	

Having read the sources, answer the following:

2. What was the significance of the Marin connection for Caesar's political future?
3. How did Caesar exploit 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. How were the relatives on Caesar's mother's side valuable to Caesar's early career? Provide evidence.

## ACTIVITY 22.3 continued

6. Why do you think 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 22.1 of this chapter. To what extent do the actions and accounts of Caesar detailed here match up with those morals? Use a table or mind map to record your findings, before responding in paragraph form.

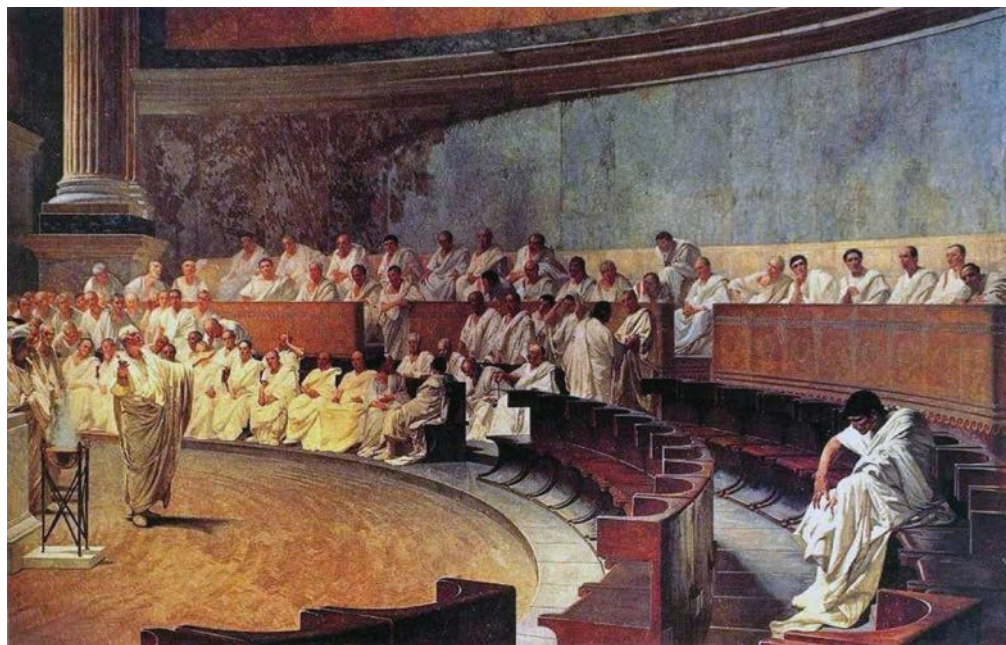
## Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about the nature of power and how it was exercised in the Ancient World

### 22.4 The collapse of the Roman Republic

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.

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.

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, but his actions in this period are the cause for comment throughout the historical record. Allegations of political bribery were rife, and the wedge between popular and conservative politics grew ever deeper. Cato the Younger



**SOURCE 22.13** *Cicero Denounces Catiline*, Cesare Maccari, 1889



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, and against the backdrop of the Catilinarian conspiracy, he contrasts the polarising views of the two men.

## ACTIVITY 22.4

In *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust gave an account of the speeches delivered by Cato and Caesar during the proceedings of the Catilinarian conspiracy. Find an online translation of Sallust's work and read these two speeches: Caesar's is in chapter LI, and Cato's in chapter LII. Identify important quotations, annotate key ideas, and note down links to other sources where concepts and ideas are corroborated or challenged.

Having read this account, respond to the following:

1. Identify the arguments regarding the fate of the conspirators put forth by each man.

	Arguments	Evidence (including quotes)
Caesar		
Cato		

2. Examine the extent to which each case reflects the values of Roman traditionalism.
3. Describe the characteristics attributed to each man. What does this suggest to you about the perspective of the author?
4. Review the profile of Sallust in the *Primary sources* downloadable document. Based on this information, describe the strengths and limitations of using this source as evidence for Julius Caesar.
5. 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?
6. Is there anything about these speeches that will be useful in understanding the events – and the role of Caesar in them – that took place between 60 and 49 BCE?

GO

Sir Ronald Syme was a professor at Oxford University and regarded as one of the twentieth century's greatest historians on ancient Rome. Here he describes how Cato set himself up for failure.

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.

**SOURCE 22.14** Syme, R., 2002, *The Roman Revolution*, Oxford University Press, p. 34

Twentieth-century British historian H.H. Scullard on events that led to the forming of the Triumvirate:

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.

**SOURCE 22.15** Scullard, H.H., 1979, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, Methuen, p. 112

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.

As the steady decline of republican institutions became too obvious to ignore, an adamantly conservative faction, called the *Optimates*, appeared in the Senate. Consisting of nostalgic traditionalists and led by Cato the Younger, the *Optimates* 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. In their hands, what had been a natural disposition to respect traditional ways of doing politics was turned into an inflexible ideology of unwavering adherence to tradition. While the motives driving their refusal to seek workable compromises with their chosen foes very well may have been admirable – a plausible case can be made for either side on that issue, for, on the one hand, 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 ... But Cato and his cohorts, determined not to suggest that the ultimate authority of the Senate was subject to negotiation or to circumstantial considerations, refused to reach any accommodation with men whom they saw as unsavoury demagogues. However, rather than extending the lifespan of the Republic, which a reasonable compromise might have accomplished, the intransigence of the *Optimates* almost surely reduced the years remaining to republican government in Rome. 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.

**SOURCE 22.16** Callahan, G., 2012, *Oakeshott on Rome and America*, Andrews UK Limited

Here Tom Stevenson, Associate Professor at The University of Queensland's School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry, emphasises the triumvirs' craving for power.

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

**SOURCE 22.17** Stevenson, T., 2016, *Julius Caesar and the Transformation of the Roman Republic*, Routledge, p. 73

Gelzer highlights Julius Caesar's key role in the Triumvirate:

The three men bound themselves by a solemn promise to take no political action of which one of the three disapproved ... The strength of the three confederates was quite uneven: Pompey was much stronger than Crassus, and Caesar still a beginner compared with either of them, but as consul the tactical initiative rested with him and, since he was also vastly their superior intellectually and in political skill, the actual leadership fell to him.

**SOURCE 22.18** Gelzer, M., 1985, *Caesar: Politician and Statesman*, Harvard University Press, pp. 68–9

## ACTIVITY 22.5

1. Annotate the sources above using the following table.

Source	Key information/key quotations
Source 22.14	
Source 22.15	
Source 22.16	
Source 22.17	
Source 22.18	

Respond to the following exercises and questions:

2. How are the views of the modern sources different from the views of the ancient sources? How would you account for these differences?
3. According to the modern sources, 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 ancient evidence?
5. Do any of the historians put forth a view that is unorthodox? If so, how would you test it?
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. Having consulted the modern historians, has your view of the formation of the first triumvirate changed? Justify your response.
8. 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.



## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about people, power and authority in the Ancient World

### 22.5 The power and authority of Julius Caesar

Once Caesar had achieved success in the elections for 59 BCE (amidst gratuitous bribery), he found himself co-consul to arch conservative and colleague in the aedileship (65 BCE) 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. 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 Dr Tom Stevenson of the University of Queensland notes, 'the use of force should not be underestimated' (2015). 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, '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' (1979: 115). Since the Marian reforms of the early first century, 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 what better arena to exploit this than in the province of Gaul.

Here Suetonius reviews Julius Caesar's achievements as military commander and coloniser of new territories – the equal of which Rome had never seen.

During the nine years of his command this is in substance what he did. All that part of Gaul which is bounded by the Pyrenees, the Alps and the Cévennes, and by the Rhine and Rhone rivers, a circuit of some 320 024 miles, with the exception of some allied states which had rendered him good service, he reduced to the form of a province; and imposed upon it a yearly tribute of 40 000 000 sesterces. 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. Amid all these successes he met with adverse fortune but three times in all: in Britain, where his fleet narrowly escaped destruction in a violent storm; in Gaul, when one of his legions was routed at Gergovia; and on the borders of Germany, when his lieutenants Titurius and Aurunculeius were ambushed and slain.

**SOURCE 22.19** Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 25

Whilst 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 powerbase, namely the soldiers of the Roman army, and the wealth gained through the spoils of war. The sources below describes Julius Caesar as an inspiring and magnanimous leader of his army, who thereby created an indomitable military force.

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.

**SOURCE 22.20** Plutarch, *Parallel Lives: Julius Caesar*, 16

He 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 22.21** Plutarch, *Life of Pompey*, 51

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 22.22** Plutarch, *Julius Caesar*, 17

In all probability the Romans would have been destroyed to the last man [by the Nervii] if Caesar himself had not snatched up a shield, forced his way through to the front of the fighting, and hurled himself on the natives; and if the tenth legion, seeing his danger, had not charged down from the high ground and cut their way through the enemy's ranks. As it was, Caesar's personal daring had its effect; in the fighting his men went, as the saying is, beyond themselves – though even then they never made the Nervii turn and run, but cut them down fighting on to the end.

**SOURCE 22.23** Plutarch, *Julius Caesar*, 20

The success encouraged Caesar to expand his regular army with legions raised at his own expense: one even recruited in Transalpine Gaul and called Alauda (Gallic for 'The Crested Lark'), which he trained and equipped in Roman style. Later he made every Alauda legionary a full citizen ... He fixed the daily pay of the regular soldiers at double what it had been, for all time. Whenever the granaries were full he would make a lavish distribution to the army, without measuring the amount, and occasionally gave every man a Gallic slave.

**SOURCE 22.24** Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 24–26

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 22.25** Gelzer, M., 1985, *Caesar: Politician and Statesman*, Harvard University Press, p. 167

Every infantryman of Caesar's veteran legions earned a war-gratuity of 240 gold pieces, in addition to the twenty paid at the outbreak of hostilities, and a farm.

**SOURCE 22.26** Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 38

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.

**SOURCE 22.27** Gelzer, M., 1985, *Caesar: Politician and Statesman*, Harvard University Press, p. 188

## ACTIVITY 22.6

Use the sources above to respond to the following questions.

1. Plutarch was both a moralist and a biographer. How has his moral perspective influenced the way in which he documents the life of Caesar? (Support your response by directly using Sources 22.20 to 22.23).
2. According to the evidence, how did Caesar use his position as both general and proconsular governor 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, do you think the motive here was for the glory of Rome, or himself? Justify your response.
5. What strategies were employed by Caesar to gain the support of his soldiers?
6. In the long term, how would military support be helpful for Caesar?
7. According to Plutarch, Cicero claimed that he saw beneath Caesar's kindly and cheerful exterior to a powerful character, whose political plans and projects held tyrannical purposes. At this point, what effect can it be said that Julius Caesar's personality had on his career?





**SOURCE 22.28** Vercingetorix Throwing down His Weapons at the Feet of Julius Caesar, Lionel Royer, 1899

By the late 50s, the position of Caesar was under threat, and as a consequence his *dignitas* was under threat. Following the death of his daughter Julia (Pompey's wife) in childbirth, and of Crassus in Parthia, the triumvirate was all but at an end. The machinations of Cato and the *optimates* to lure Pompey away from Caesar were in full flight, and were ultimately successful. Pompey, however, underestimated the capabilities of the younger Caesar, and the value that the latter placed on his *dignitas* and *gloria*. By 49 BCE Pompey had confirmed his allegiance with the *optimates* through marriage, and his political alliance with Caesar was ended.

### ACTIVITY 22.7

Annotate the sources below using the following table.

Source	Key information/key quotations
22.29	
22.30	
22.31	
22.32	
22.33	
22.34	
22.35	
22.36	
22.37	
22.38	

Appian was a second-century 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.

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. He said this because he saw that the people were incensed against Pompey on account of his prosecutions for bribery. As Curio's position was plausible, the plebeians praised him as the only one who was willing to incur the enmity of both Pompey and Caesar in order to fulfil worthily his duties as a citizen; and once they escorted him home, scattering flowers, as though he were an athlete and had won the prize in some great and difficult contest; for nothing was considered more perilous than than to have a difference with Pompey.

**SOURCE 22.29** Appian, *Bellum Civile*, 2:27

Suetonius presents possible motivations for Caesar's threat against the senate.

He [Caesar] crossed to Hither Gaul, and after holding all the assizes, halted at Ravenna, intending to resort to war if the senate took any drastic action against the tribunes of the commons who interposed vetoes in his behalf. Now this was his excuse for the civil war, but it is believed that he had other motives. Gnaeus Pompeius used to declare that since Caesar's own means were not sufficient to complete the works which he had planned, nor to do all that he had led the people to expect on his return, he desired a state of general unrest and turmoil. Others say that he dreaded the necessity of rendering an account for what he had done in his first consulship contrary to the auspices and the laws, and regardless of vetoes; for Marcus Cato often declared, and took oath too, that he would impeach Caesar the moment he had disbanded his army ... [and] he said, word for word: 'They would have it so. Even I, Gaius Caesar, after so many great deeds, should have been found guilty, if I had not turned to my army for help.' Some think that habit had given him a love of power, and that weighing the strength of his adversaries against his own, he grasped the opportunity of usurping the despotism which had been his heart's desire from early youth.

**SOURCE 22.30** Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 30–31

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.

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.

**SOURCE 22.31** Marcus Caelius Rufus, letter to Cicero

In this extract Symes outlines the seeming stalemate between Caesar and the senate.

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 22.32** Syme, R., 2002, *The Roman Revolution*, Oxford University Press, p. 48

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.

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. He complained that an innovation had been introduced into the republic, that the intercession of the tribunes, which had been restored a few years before by Sulla, was branded as a crime, and suppressed by force of arms; that Sulla, who had stripped the tribunes of every other power, had, nevertheless, left the privilege of intercession unrestrained; that Pompey, who pretended to restore what they had lost, had taken away the privileges which they formerly had; that whenever the senate decreed, "that the magistrates should take care that the republic sustained no injury" (by which words and decree the Roman people were obliged to repair to arms), it was only when pernicious laws were proposed; when the tribunes attempted violent measures; when the people seceded, and possessed themselves of the temples and eminences of the city; (and these instances of former times, he showed them were expiated by the fate of Saturninus and the Gracchi): that nothing of this kind was attempted now, nor even thought of: that no law was promulgated, no intrigue with the people going forward, no secession made; 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.

**SOURCE 22.33** Caesar, *Bellum Civile*, 1:7

Marcus Tullius Cicero served as Roman consul in 63 BCE. Considered one of Rome's greatest orators and prose stylists, he left behind close to 800 private letters in which he expressed his honest observations and opinions. In these three extracts he reviews the many options available to the senate and their potential consequences.

... 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 22.34** 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 22.35** 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 ...

**SOURCE 22.36** Cicero, letter to Atticus

Dio Cassius, a prominent politician in the third century CE, is the author of an 80-volume *History of Rome* that covers approximately 1000 years of history and took him 22 years to complete. In this extract he relates the events that followed on the senators voting that Caesar should demobilise.

He [Caesar] promised to disband his legions and give up his office if Pompey would also do the same; for while the latter bore arms it was not right, he claimed, that he should be compelled to give up his and so be exposed to his enemies ... 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, who had brought his letter, 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. When Caesar was informed of this, he came to Ariminum, then for the first time overstepping the confines of his own province, and after assembling his soldiers he ordered Curio and the others who had come with him to relate to them what had been done. After this was over he further aroused them by adding such words as the occasion demanded. Next 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; for he saw that the people in the city, in fact the very members of his party, even more than the rest, shrank from the war through remembrance of the deeds of Marius and Sulla and wished to be delivered from it.

**SOURCE 22.37** Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, 41:1–6

Scullard comments on the senators who voted against Caesar.

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.

**SOURCE 22.38** Scullard, H.H., 1979, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, Methuen, London, p. 104

## ACTIVITY 22.8

1. Cicero and Caesar are two of our primary sources for this period. How do their views about individuals and events differ?
2. A large portion of our evidence from Cicero comes in the form of letters. Cicero is a *novus homo* – a new man – who has conservative tendencies. How is his conservatism reflected in his writing, and what makes these letters a particularly valuable source?
3. What concerns about Caesar's actions emerge from Cicero's letters?
4. Caesar's *commentarii* have been considered by some as 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?
5. Proffer a reason for Caesar's use of the third person in his writing.
6. According to the sources, what were the demands of:
  - a. Caesar
  - b. The Senate?



## ACTIVITY 22.8 continued

7. Were the demands of the Senate unreasonable? What were the consequences for Caesar if he complied?
8. 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?
9. To what extent had Caesar's time in Gaul provided him with the power base to march on Rome?

Following Caesar's decision to cross the Rubicon River with his legions, and thereby enter Roman territory under arms, Cato, Pompey and the *optimates* supporters fled the city, and the civil war between Pompey and Caesar ensued. For the details of the war against Pompey, see Chapter 13: Early Imperial Rome or Chapter 16: Civil War and the Breakdown of the Republic.

## ACTIVITY 22.9

1. 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.



**SOURCE 22.39** *Triumphs of Caesar (scene 9)*, Andrea Mantegna, 1485–95, Royal Collection, Hampton Court



## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument about a powerful individual, group or society in the Ancient World

### 22.6 The civil war

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, including Mommsen, 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.

Stevenson (2015) presents two alternatives that could have underpinned Caesar's decisions and reforms in the period 49–44 BCE.

1. 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.
2. A chain of separate measures, hardly unprecedented, which in fact imply little structural change to the state and meant that Caesar was only attempting to deal with specific abuses as he saw them.

Here Suetonius lists the reforms introduced by Julius Caesar in his new role.

Then turning his attention to the reorganisation of the state, he reformed the calendar, which the negligence of the pontiffs had long since so disordered, through their privilege of adding months or days at pleasure, that the harvest festivals did not come in summer nor those of the vintage in the autumn; and he adjusted the year to the sun's course by making it consist of three hundred and sixty-five days, abolishing the intercalary month, and adding one day every fourth year. Furthermore, that the correct reckoning of seasons might begin with the next Kalends of January, he inserted two other months between those of November and December; hence the year in which these arrangements were made was one of fifteen months, including the intercalary month, which belonged to that year according to the former custom.

He filled the vacancies in the senate, enrolled additional patricians, and increased the number of praetors, aediles, and quaestors, as well as of the minor officials; he reinstated those who had been degraded by official action of the censors or found guilty of bribery by verdict of the jurors. He shared the elections with the people on this basis: that except in the case of the consulship, half of the magistrates should be appointed by the people's choice, while the rest should be those whom he had personally nominated. And these he announced in brief notes like the following, circulated in each tribe: 'Caesar the Dictator to this or that tribe. I commend to you so and so, to hold their positions by your votes.' He admitted to office even the sons of those who had been proscribed. He limited the right of serving as jurors to two classes, the equestrian and senatorial orders, disqualifying the third class, the tribunes of the treasury.

He made the enumeration of the people neither in the usual manner nor place, but from street to street aided by the owners of blocks of houses, and reduced the number of those who received grain at public expense from three hundred and twenty thousand to one hundred and fifty thousand. And to prevent the calling of additional meetings at any future time for purposes of enrolment, he provided that the places of such as died should be filled each year by the praetors from those who were not on the list.

Moreover, to keep up the population of the city, depleted as it was by the assignment of eighty thousand citizens to colonies across the sea, he made a law that no citizen older than twenty or younger than forty, who was not detained by service in the army, should be absent from Italy for more than three successive years; that no senator's son should go abroad except as the companion

of a magistrate or on his staff; and that those who made a business of grazing should have among their herdsmen at least one-third who were men of free birth. He conferred citizenship on all who practised medicine at Rome, and on all teachers of the liberal arts, to make them more desirous of living in the city and to induce others to resort to it.

As to debts, he disappointed those who looked for their cancellation, which was often agitated, but finally decreed that the debtors should satisfy their creditors according to a valuation of their possessions at the price what they had paid for them before the civil war, deducting from the principal whatever interest had been paid in cash or pledged through bankers; an arrangement which wiped out about a fourth part of their indebtedness. He dissolved all guilds, except those of ancient foundation. He increased the penalties for crimes; and inasmuch as the rich involved themselves in guilt with less hesitation because they merely suffered exile, without any loss of property, he punished murderers of freemen by the confiscation of all their goods, as Cicero writes, and others by the loss of one-half.

He administered justice with the utmost conscientiousness and strictness. Those convicted of extortion he even dismissed from the senatorial order. He annulled the marriage of an ex-praetor, who had married a woman the very day after her divorce, although there was no suspicion of adultery. He imposed duties on foreign wares. He denied the use of litters and the wearing of scarlet robes or pearls to all except those of a designated position and age, and on set days. In particular he enforced the laws against extravagance, setting watchmen in various parts of the market, to seize and bring to him dainties which were exposed for sale in violation of the law; and sometimes he sent his lictors and soldiers to take from a dining-room any articles which had escaped the vigilance of his watchmen, even after they had been served.

In particular, for the adornment and convenience of the city, also for the protection and extension of the Empire, he formed more projects and more extensive ones every day: first of all, to rear a temple of Mars, greater than any in existence, filling up and levelling the pool in which he had exhibited the sea-fight, and to build a theatre of vast size, sloping down from the Tarpeian rock; to reduce the civil code to fixed limits, and of the vast and prolix mass of statutes to include only the best and most essential in a limited number of volumes; to open to the public the greatest possible libraries of Greek and Latin books, assigning to Marcus Varro the charge of procuring and classifying them; to drain the Pomptine marshes; to let out the water from Lake Fucinus; to make a highway from the Adriatic across the summit of the Apennines as far as the Tiber; to cut a canal through the Isthmus; to check the Dacians, who had poured into Pontus and Thrace; then to make war on the Parthians by way of Lesser Armenia, but not to risk a battle with them until he had first tested their mettle.

All these enterprises and plans were cut short by his death. But before I speak of that, it will not be amiss to describe briefly his personal appearance, his dress, his mode of life, and his character, as well as his conduct in civil and military life.

**SOURCE 22.40** Suetonius, *Divi Iulius*, 40–44

In this extract Scullard examines the issues around and the motives for Caesar's assassination.

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. There is no reason to believe that illness undermined his physical or intellectual powers, but he was ageing and impatient: 'satis diu vel naturae vixi vel gloriae'. During his last months he showed a certain lack of responsibility which contrasts with the hopes he had inspired in men like Cicero in 46: 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: they did not stop to consider a fact which Caesar himself is said to have remarked upon, namely that his removal would merely involve the Republic in further troubles and civil wars. Caesar must have suspected that his life might be in peril, but he disdained any precautions: 'It was better to die than to live in dread of death.' 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. A student and philosopher rather than a man of action, he was deeply attached to the Republican tradition. As a young mint official in 60 or 59 he had issued coins with portraits of his ancestor and the inscription 'libertas', while the half-brother of his mother Servilia was Cato whose influence over him was so great as to lead him in the civil war to support Pompey, though the latter had in 77 been responsible for the death of Brutus's father. After Pharsalus Brutus had accepted pardon and office from Caesar, but he was not reconciled with him at heart, and his marriage with Cato's daughter Porcia in 45 renewed his links with the Republican tradition. Once he was persuaded where his duty lay, Brutus threw himself into the conspiracy with energy. Urged on by the prospect of Caesar's departure for the East, the conspirators decided to strike on the Ides (15th) of March. Undeterred by the fears of his wife Calpurnia, 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.

The motives of the conspirators were no doubt mixed. Some had private quarrels with Caesar, and some (e.g. Q. Ligarius) were Pompeians who had suffered in the civil war, but the conspiracy was in no way a resurrection of the Pompeian cause. Ex-Pompeians, as M. Brutus and Cassius, were actuated by loyalty to the Senate and constitution, Brutus being influenced by Greek ideas of the duty of tyrannicide. There is no contemporary evidence, or basis in fact, for the later legend that M. Brutus was Caesar's son: Caesar had an intrigue with Brutus's mother Servilia, but probably long after the birth of Brutus (which was probably in 85 or possibly 78). The conspirators included many Caesarians (as Decimus Brutus and C. Trebonius) who had much to hope for from Caesar (these two men had been allotted good provinces for 44); their motives must therefore have been disinterested. Cicero was not approached by the conspirators, but he approved the deed.

**SOURCE 22.41** Scullard, H.H., 1979, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, Methuen, London, p. 156–7



## ACTIVITY 22.10

With reference to the evidence in the sources, respond to the following:

1. Create a summary of the reforms of Caesar.
  - a. The reform
  - b. Who it benefited
  - 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 Dio Cassius and Plutarch. What are the attitudes towards Caesar that prevail in these accounts? Evaluate the interpretation of Caesar's actions provided by the sources.

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to people, power and authority in the Ancient World

Using the evidence provided in this chapter, in addition to your own knowledge, complete the following.

## ACTIVITY 22.11

In response to the questions below, formulate a valid hypothesis and prove this through the composition of a well-crafted analytical essay.

1. The great triumph was Cato's and the greater delusion.

**SOURCE 22.42** Syme, R., 2002, *The Roman Revolution*

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. 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 22.43** Scullard, H.H., 1979, *From the Gracchi to Nero*, Methuen, London, p. 113

Assess the validity of this statement by examining the role of the Senate in the formation of the first triumvirate.

3. Oh Pompey, I wish you had either never formed an alliance with Caesar or never broken it.

**SOURCE 22.44** Cicero

To what extent was the friendship that existed between Pompey and Caesar in the 60s and 50s a significant factor in the outbreak of civil war in 49 BCE?

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- 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.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## Consolidate

### Comprehend

Describe 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.

### Respond

Create a visual representation of Caesar's power, including the means he used to gain it and then maintain it.

## Assessment

### Examination-style 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. How did Marius pave the way for men like Caesar and Pompey to gain power?
- 3.** Compare the careers of Pompey, Caesar and Cicero.



# CHAPTER 7A

## Perikles

ALAN BARRIE

### TOPIC DESCRIPTION

#### Contextual study

In this contextual study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the historical and geographical background of Perikles and the time in which he lived
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding about:
  - key archaeological and written sources for the period
  - issues involved with the nature of evidence from the leadership of Perikles.

#### Depth study

In this depth study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues associated with Perikles, his personality and achievements
- devise historical questions and conduct research
- analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding
- synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about:
  - the various interpretations and representations of Perikles in primary sources
  - the various interpretations and representations of Perikles presented in secondary sources and how these have differed over time
  - changing ancient and modern perceptions of the achievements and legacy of Perikles.
- create a response that communicates meaning to suit purpose.

#### Concluding study

In this concluding study, students will:

- comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the aftermath of Perikles' leadership
- evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about the impact of significant personalities on their times.

(Ancient History 2019 v1.2 General Senior Syllabus, © Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority)

### KEY DATES

c. 495 BCE	c. 478 BCE	472 BCE	470 BCE	463 BCE	c. 462 BCE–458 BCE
Birth of Perikles	At age 17, Perikles inherits his family's wealth and becomes a patron of the arts	Perikles funds Aeschylus' play <i>The Persians</i>	Perikles enters politics	Perikles leads the prosecution against Kimon on charges of corruption (which fails)	Perikles radicalises democratic institutions in Athens. Kimon is ostracised.



Please note that the Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority uses spelling 'Perikles', but 'Pericles' is also an acceptable spelling and appears in this book and within some cited sources.

## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

### Ancient sources:

- Herodotus
- Thucydides
- Plutarch
- Diodorus Siculus

### Family:

- Cleisthenes: great uncle and democratic reformer
- Agariste: mother
- Xanthippus: father
- Paralus, Xanthippus: sons – the name of their mother is unknown, but she was Perikles' wife, whom he later divorced
- Aspasia: mother of his third son, also called Perikles
- Alkibiades: Perikles' nephew and ward after his own mother died; became a future leader of Athens

### Education and influences:

- Protagoras
- Zeno of Elea
- Anaxagoras

### Friends:

- Pheidias: 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

### Political associates:

- 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:

- 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

### 460 BCE–429 BCE

The Age of Perikles. The Agora is rebuilt, construction of Parthenon, the arts flourish.

### 454 BCE

Perikles leads his first military expedition in Sicyon and Acarnania

### 453 BCE

Athenian victory over the Sikyonians

### 448 BCE

Perikles defeats Spartans at the Battle of Delphi

### 447 BCE

Perikles' army expels people living at Gallipoli and establishes Athenian colonies there

MAP



SOURCE 7A.2 The major regions of mainland ancient Greece

447 BCE	c. 445 BCE	443 BCE	440 BCE	436 BCE–435 BCE
Building starts on the Acropolis. Perikles marries a close relative; they have two sons together: Paralus and Xanthippus	Marriage ends in divorce	Elected <i>Strategos</i>	Leads the Athenian navy in the siege against Samos	Expedition to Black Sea. Alienates Corinth through diplomatic machinations with Corcyra and Epidamnus.





## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>archon (pl. archontes)</b>	magistrates or public officials, commonly referred to in Athens as <i>archontes</i> . From 487 BCE they were appointed by lot rather than elected, which greatly reduced the prestige of the archonship. Perikles made a change in 457/6 that made it possible for the third property class, the <i>zeugitai</i> , to be eligible to serve in this role. After completing the office, following public scrutiny of his conduct during it, he became a member of the council of the <i>Areopagus</i> .
<b>Areopagus</b>	a council which originally advised the kings. Members of the <i>Areopagus</i> served for life. Its power was reduced after Ephialtes' reforms in 462/1 and it became the court presiding over cases of homicide and other serious crimes.
<b>boule</b>	a council of 500 members. Each year, 50 members were chosen by lot from each tribe. All members had to be over 30 and could serve no more than two times in their lifetime. It was the administrative body of the Assembly, seeing that the decisions of the Assembly were carried out. Each tribal contingent of 50 members was given an executive role for one of the 10 administrative months ( <i>prytany</i> ). When a tribal contingent was given this executive role they were known as the <i>prytaneis</i> , and they presided over Assembly meetings.
<b>cleruchy (pl. cleruchies)</b>	colony of citizens from Athens (usually from the poorer classes) who were sent as settlers throughout the Athenian empire.
<b>Delian League</b>	an alliance of Greek maritime <i>poleis</i> , led by Athens, organised after the Persian Wars to defend Greece against Persia. Athens' allies eventually became tribute-paying subjects of the Athenian Empire. Revolts against Athens were put down ruthlessly.
<b>demagogue</b>	a political leader in ancient Greece who appealed to the causes of the common people.
<b>deme</b>	a small division or area of the Attica region surrounding Athens which was used for voting and civil purposes in Athenian democracy based on the reforms of Cleisthenes; it was from these <i>demes</i> that individuals were selected to serve in the various branches of the Athenian democracy.

### 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.

### 430 BCE

Temporarily removed from power, Perikles returns when the Athenian attempts to settle disagreements with Sparta fail

### 429 BCE

Perikles dies from the plague

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>democracy</b>	a government controlled by the citizens of a state. Every citizen had a right to vote. In ancient Athens, citizens were chosen by lot or were elected to serve in government roles.
<b>ecclesia</b>	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 <i>boule</i> , make decisions on war, peace and alliances, and elect officials such as <i>archontes</i> .
<b>Golden Age of Athens</b>	the period ascribed to Perikles' rule where philosophical thinking, writing, art and science flourished
<b>Hellenism</b>	another word for ancient Greek culture; the ancient Greeks called Greece <i>Hellas</i>
<b>helots</b>	a class of slaves forced to work in Sparta
<b>hoplites</b>	heavily-armed foot soldiers
<b>jurors</b>	a pool of 6000 jurors were enrolled annually, selected by lot from citizens over 30. In the 450s BCE, Perikles introduced jury pay.
<b>oligarchy</b>	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
<b>ostracism</b>	the exile of a person thought to have become too powerful by the <i>demos</i> itself. Ostracism lasted for ten years – after this, the person could return to Athens.
<b>Peloponnesian War</b>	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
<b>Polis (pl. poleis)</b>	politically independent Greek city-state, which consisted of the city and its defensible acropolis and the surrounding land, usually farming land.
<b>Sophists</b>	skilled in the art of oratory, these people were influential in public speaking, especially in the Assembly and law courts (see, for example, Perikles' Funeral Oration)
<b>Sparta</b>	Athens' main rival for the leadership of Greece
<b>strategos (pl. strategoi)</b>	an elected role, these 10 generals were elected for one-year terms but could hold the office repeatedly. They led the armies and navies of Athens and underwent an audit at the end of their term. In addition, during each <i>prytany</i> (10 administrative months) the Assembly voted on whether an individual <i>strategos</i> should retain the office. In 430 BCE, Perikles was dismissed and fined but was re-elected in 429.
<b>tyranny</b>	the system of rule by a tyrant. In ancient Greece a tyrant was identified as a ruler who suppressed the rights of the population; tyrants were often aristocratic and claimed to represent the needs of the wider population in contrast to that of a monarchy; it was against the rule of tyranny that the Athenian democratic revolution emerged.

## Introduction

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 and Peloponnesian Wars (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.

Perikles was born c. 495 BCE to the distinguished Alcmaeonidae family – wealthy, noble and powerful. His father, Xanthippos, 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, whilst also becoming involved in politics. In 472 BCE he funded Aeschylus’ play *The Persians*, which echoed Perikles’ support for Athens’ populist leader Themistocles over Themistocles’ 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 jurors 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’ vocation in leading military expeditions. The first expedition was in 454 BCE, in Sicyon and Acarnania, and in 448 BCE Perikles’ 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.

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’



**SOURCE 7A.3** 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?



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' 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' successors did not have the great abilities of Perikles.

The period 460 BCE–429 BCE is often referred not only as the Golden Age of Athens, but as the Age of Perikles. His social reforms saw the rise of Athenian democracy. Athens also gained prestige and a lasting legacy from Perikles' 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 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.

## Objective 1: Comprehend terms, concepts and issues in relation to the ancient personalities and their times being studied

### 7A.1 Politics in ancient Athens

#### 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 *ecclesia*) 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 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 ten 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 *stratego*i. While the *stratego*i 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 his outstanding talents and 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.

## 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.

## 7A.2 Ancient sources on Perikles

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’ antipathy towards Cleon and his praise for Perikles. Thucydides’ views have influenced opinion, right up to today, about why Athens lost the war: that after Perikles’ death, Athens collapsed into unsuccessful popular demagoguery. 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’ 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 that he 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 an historical source. His opinion of Perikles is very much led by the views of Thucydides.

## Objective 2: Devise historical questions and conduct research in relation to an ancient personality

### 7A.3 How has Perikles been portrayed?

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:

The 'golden age' of Greece lasted for little more than a century but it laid the foundations of western civilization. The age began with the unlikely defeat of a vast Persian army by badly outnumbered Greeks and it ended with an inglorious and lengthy war between Athens and Sparta. This era is also referred to as the 'Age of Perikles' after the Athenian statesman who directed the affairs of Athens when she was at the height of her glory.

During this period of time significant advances were made in a number of fields including government, art, philosophy, drama and literature. Some of the Greek names most familiar to us lived in this exciting and productive time. It was an era marked by such high and diverse levels of achievement that many classical scholars refer to the phenomenon as 'the Greek miracle'.

Even those who don't believe in miracles will concede that it is possible that the ever-competitive Greeks were spurred on to higher levels of innovation in their field by seeing the bar being raised in so many other areas. None of this would have happened without an encouraging environment and Athens was at that time at the 'top of her game'. Her citizens were supremely confident, filled with energy and enthusiasm and utterly convinced that their city provided what a combined London-Paris-New York might offer today.

**SOURCE 7A.4** 'Greece: Secrets of the Past', The Golden Age of Greece, Canadian Museum of History.



**SOURCE 7A.5** *Perikles' Funeral Oration*, Philipp Foltz, 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.

In 431 BCE, Perikles gave the speech for which he became famous – an oration as part of an annual public funeral for 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.



No finer expression of the ideals of democracy exist 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.

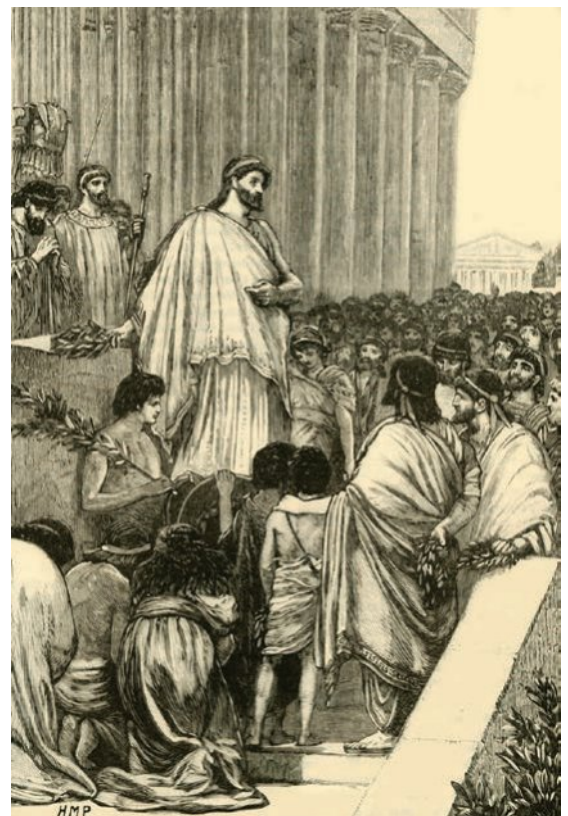
He emphasises as the outstanding feature of their democracy – and, we can add, of any democracy – the harmonious blending of opposite tendencies in politics, economics, and culture that it contains. This is perhaps the finest expression of the Greek ideal of a man between extremes. All this is described 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. Bugged 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.'

**SOURCE 7A.6** Bailkey, NM and Lim, R, 2002, *Readings in Ancient History*, Houghton Mifflin, p. 167



**SOURCE 7A.7** 'Perikles Delivering the Funeral Oration Over the Athenians', *Cassell's Illustrated Universal History*, Vol. I – *Early and Greek History*, Ollier, E., 1890

## ACTIVITY 7A.1

1. Read Source 7A.4 and identify examples of:
  - a. language that idealises the Golden Age
  - b. generalisations made about the period.
2. Study Source 7A.6. 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.
  - a. Do you think the authors express unqualified admiration of the speech? Give evidence to support your view.
  - b. 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.)
3. Consider Sources 7A.5 and 7A.7. Both of these 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.

The following sources are some tributes to Perikles from Plutarch, Diodorus and Thucydides.

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 7A.8** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 39:1

This man stood far above his fellow citizens in birth, renown, and ability as an orator.

**SOURCE 7A.9** Diodorus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, XII, 38:2

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

(continued)



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.

**SOURCE 7A.10** Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2:65

## ACTIVITY 7A.2

1. Rephrase each of the Sources 7A.8 to 7A.10 in your own words.
2. Highlight the key words in each of the sources 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.

## 7A.4 Does the individual create history or are they simply a product of history?

A lot of people, including people who aren't historians, believe in the legacy that great people can leave behind them. For instance, the lawyer, educator, author and U.S. diplomat Adolf Augustus Berle Jr. stated:

Great men have two lives; one which occurs while they work on this Earth; a second which begins at the day they die and continues as long as their ideas and conceptions remain powerful.

**SOURCE 7A.11** Berle, A., 1973, *Navigating the Rapids*, New York

In a study of Perikles as a 'great man' of ancient Athens, it is worth considering the issue of whether history is shaped by individuals such as Perikles or by larger forces. Questions you could consider include:

- 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?

In 1840, the Scottish philosopher and essayist Thomas Carlyle delivered a lecture series on heroism, in which he introduced the 'great man' theory of history.

Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here. They were the leaders of men, these great ones; the modellers, patterns, and, in a wide sense creators, of whatsoever the general mass of men contrived to do or to attain; all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realization and embodiment, of Thoughts that dwelt in the Great Men sent into the world: the soul of the whole world's history, it may justly be considered, were the history of these.

**SOURCE 7A.12** Carlyle, T., 1840, *On Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History*



English philosopher Herbert Spencer was a contemporary of Carlyle, but strongly disagreed with his theory, viewing it as childish and unscientific. He believed that the so-called 'great men' were merely the products of their social environment.

If you wish to understand these phenomena of social evolution, you will not do it though you should read yourself blind over the biographies of all the great rulers on record, down to Frederick the Greedy and Napoleon the Treacherous ... You must admit that the genesis of a great man depends on the long series of complex influences which has produced the race in which he appears, and the social state into which that race has slowly grown ... Before he can remake his society, his society must make him.

**SOURCE 7A.13** Spencer, H., 1873, *The Study of Sociology*

Another approach to history was expressed by the nineteenth-century German philosopher, political theorist and social revolutionary Karl Marx.

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

**SOURCE 7A.14** Marx, K. and Engels, F. 1848, *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*

However, Russian revolutionary and Marxist theoretician Georgi Valentinovich Plekhanov revisited the idea of the individual's role in history.

A great man is great not because his personal qualities give individual features to great historical events, but because he possesses qualities which make him most capable of serving the great social needs of his time, needs which arose as a result of general and particular causes. In his well-known book on heroes and hero-worship, Carlyle calls great men beginners – a very apt description.

A great man is a beginner precisely because he sees further than others and desires things more strongly than others. He solves the scientific problems brought up by the preceding process of intellectual development of society; he points to the new social needs created by the preceding development of social relationships; he takes the initiative in satisfying these needs. He is a hero. But he is a hero not in the sense that he can stop or change the natural course of things, but in the sense that his activities are the conscious and free expression of this inevitable and unconscious course.

Herein lies all his significance; herein lies his whole power. But this significance is colossal, and the power is terrible ... The more or less slow changes in 'economic conditions' periodically confront society with the necessity of more or less rapidly changing its institutions.

This change never takes place 'by itself'; it always needs the intervention of men, who thus are confronted with great social problems. And it is those men who do more than others to facilitate the solution of these problems who are called great men.

**SOURCE 7A.15** Plekhanov, G.V., 1898, *The Role of the Individual in History*

In their book on public leadership, Paul 't Hart, Professor of Public Administration at the School of Governance, and John Uhr, Professor of Political Science at ANU, consider whether history makes leaders or whether leaders are shaped by circumstances.

One question that has persisted is the extent to which, on the one hand, an individual can create history compared to the extent to which, on the other hand, any individual, even a leader, is merely the product or prisoner of historical circumstances. Do leaders make history or does history make leaders? ... Leaders, however, do have a significant impact on their own lives, their environment and on history. They may tend to merge into the organic life of their nation or organisation and certainly factors outside their control do provide both opportunities and impose limitations. Although context plays a key role, leaders should not be simply regarded as passive irrelevancies in a detailed analysis of context or buried in some collective mass. While they differ greatly, leaders can make a difference and can even substantially alter outcomes by the way they react to, facilitate or impede organisational, environmental and collective factors over which they may have only limited control and by which they may, in fact, be highly constrained. Evans is correct when he observes that, 'In the end, no one has managed to better Marx's dictum that people make their own history, but they do not do it under circumstances of their own choosing. It is precisely the interaction between the individual and his or her circumstances that makes the study of people in the past so fascinating' (Evans 1997: 189-90).

**SOURCE 7A.16** 't Hart, P., and Uhr, J. (editors), *Public Leadership: Perspectives and Practices*, 2008, The Australian National University, Canberra ACT, p.103-5

### ACTIVITY 7A.3

1. Provide a quotation from each source (7A.14 to 7A.16) that best represents the opinion being expressed.
2. What is the 'great man' theory and who are the main academics who have supported this theory?
3. What is your initial position on this historical debate about historical causality? Is history made by individuals or historical forces? (This can be discussed again at a later stage after you have learned more.)
4. How might this type of debate contribute to and help frame an inquiry investigation into Perikles? The following table lists some points for thought and further discussion.

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'.  He came from aristocracy, but used the people as a new power base, much like the Gracchi in Rome (Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus – see Chapter 16), and presided over Athens' enslavement of its allies and descent into popular demagoguery.

# Objective 3: Analyse evidence from historical sources to show understanding of ancient personalities and their historical context

## 7A.5 The rise of Perikles

Politics in fifth-century 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 Athens.

## The Persian Wars

While Sparta was anti-Athens and its growth of democracy, Sparta still joined forces with Athens to fight off several Persian invasions. During Perikles' childhood and early political career, the Greek city-states were



SOURCE 7A.17 The Greco-Persian Wars 499–479 BCE



engaged in a series of conflicts with the Persian Empire. This is an important background to Perikles' rise to power, as Athens' heavy commitment to the war allowed the growth of factions within the city's leadership.

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 then totally 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.

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.

During the late 470s BCE and 460s BCE the conservative, pro-Sparta faction under Kimon was gaining power in Athens. Defeat of the Persians at Eurymedon was Kimon's career apex. But in 465 BCE, Thasos revolted from the Delian League.

The Athenians under Kimon besieged Thasos. Thasos requested Spartan assistance to alleviate Athenian pressure by invading Attica. However, an earthquake and a subsequent helot revolt prevented the Spartans from doing so. In 463 BCE, after a three-year siege, Thasos fell to the Athenians. The Thasians were forced to destroy their walls and surrender their ships. They also had to pay an immediate fee and an annual contribution to Athens.

A peace treaty – the Peace of Kallias – was eventually signed in c.449 BCE, when Perikles was in power, which meant that 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.

*A more detailed discussion of the Persian Wars is available as a separate document in the downloadable resources on Cambridge GO.*

## The downfall of Kimon

While Athens was focusing on the Persian Wars, a new, powerful and radically democratic faction had arisen under the leadership of Ephialtes and his ally, Perikles. The faction gained in popularity by taking a much stronger stance against Sparta and by campaigning on a platform of granting more power to the lowest class (*thetes*).



**SOURCE 7A.18** 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.

Kimon returned from the siege of Thasos in 463 BCE, whereupon Perikles prosecuted Kimon on a charge of corruption. Kimon was acquitted, but soon became embroiled in an affair that would lead to his, and his faction's, fall. In 462 BCE Sparta suffered a huge earthquake. The helots (basically slaves – about 90 per cent of the population under Spartan rule) appealed to other Greeks *poleis* for help. Kimon sent Athenian hoplites but, feeling embarrassed and wary of the Athenian offer, the Spartans sent them back home.

In around 462–461 BCE, probably whilst Kimon was in the Peloponnese, Ephialtes organised a vote in the Assembly that deprived the *Areopagus* of most of its power. Ephialtes had systematically prepared the ground for his reforms by attempting to discredit the *Areopagus* by bringing many of its members to trial for administrative misconduct.

Shortly afterwards, Ephialtes was assassinated. This was the end for Kimon and his pro-Spartan faction. Athens revoked its alliance with Sparta and formed a new alliance with Sparta's enemy, Argos. As a result of the embarrassing episode with Sparta and his attempts to overturn Ephialtes' changes to the *Areopagus*, Kimon was ostracised in 461/0 BCE. The stage was now set for the rise and dominance of Perikles.

## Rise to prominence

Perikles' rise to prominence is covered in some detail by Plutarch.

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 7A.19** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 7

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.

**SOURCE 7A.20** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 9

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.

**SOURCE 7A.21** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 34

## ACTIVITY 7A.4

1. For each of the previous three sources on Perikles' rise to prominence, select a quote and explain what it reveals about Perikles' 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' attainment of power and character
Perikles 7		
Perikles 9		
Perikles 34		

2. How reliable do you consider Plutarch to be on this matter? An examination of the text reveals a series of damning comments about Perikles. Should we accept these?

### Euboea: 444 BCE

Ephialtes, a mentor of Perikles, introduced reforms that reduced the power of Council of the *Areopagus*, which was controlled by the Athenian aristocracy. Plutarch quotes Plato in saying this led to 'undiluted freedom' of the people.

One of these, as they say, was Ephialtes, who broke down the power of the Council of the *Areopagus*, and so poured out for the citizens, to use the words of Plato, too much 'undiluted freedom,' by which the people was rendered unruly, just like a horse, and, as the comic poets say, 'no longer had the patience to obey the rein, but nabbed Euboea and trampled on the islands'.

**SOURCE 7A.22** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 7

In 444 BCE, Perikles and his troops crushed a revolt on the island of Euboea. Plutarch describes how Perikles treated residents of the cities of Chalkis and Histiaea.

... after crossing to Euboea with fifty ships of war and five thousand hoplites, [Perikles] subdued the cities there.

Those of the Chalcidians who were styled Hippobotae, or Knights, and who were preeminent for wealth and reputation, he banished from their city, and all the Hestiaeans he removed from the country and settled Athenians in their places, treating them, and them only, thus inexorably, because they had taken an Attic ship captive and slain its crew.

**SOURCE 7A.23** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 23



Aristophanes, a comic playwright of ancient Athens, refers to Euboea in his play *Clouds*.

Pupil: And Euboea here, as you see, is stretched out a long way by the side of it to a great distance.  
Stepsiades: I know that; for it was stretched by us and Pericles.

**SOURCE 7A.24** Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 211–213, 422 BCE

### Samos: 440–439 BCE

In 440 BCE, a conflict developed between the island of Samos and the city of Miletus over control of Priene. Samos ignored the Athenian order to stop attacking Miletus, and in response Perikles and nine other generals led a successful naval battle against Samos. Plutarch writes of Perikles' treatment of the Samians, and their response.

After eight months the Samians surrendered, and Pericles tore down their walls, took away their ships of war, and laid a heavy fine upon them, part of which they paid at once, and part they agreed to pay at a fixed time, giving hostages therefor. 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.

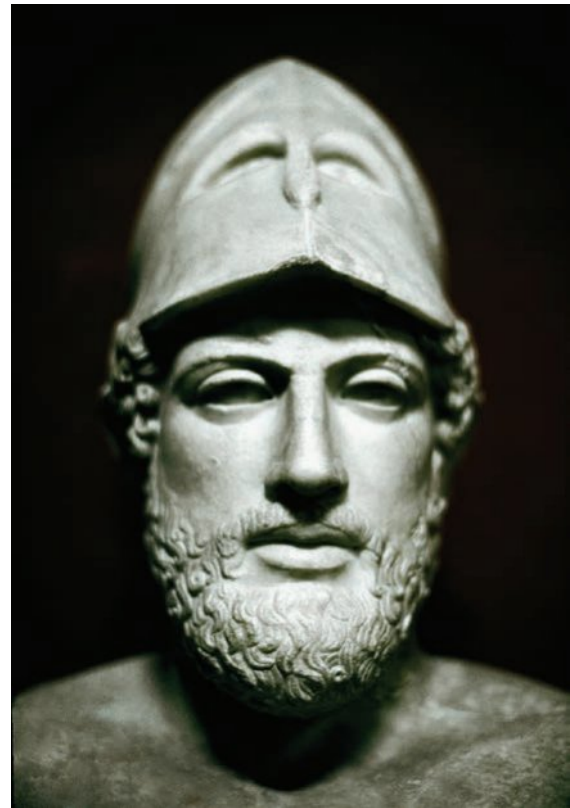
But he appears not to speak the truth when he says, forsooth, that Pericles had the Samian trierarchs and marines brought into the market-place of Miletus and crucified there, and that then, when they had already suffered grievously for ten days, he gave orders to break their heads in with clubs and 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 7A.26** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 28:3

[Samiian retaliation to Athenian branding:] The Samians retaliated upon the Athenians by branding their prisoners in the forehead with owls; for the Athenians had once branded some of them with the *samaena* [A ship of war with a boar's head for a prow (the pointed front of the ship)].

**SOURCE 7A.27** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 26



**SOURCE 7A.25** Roman copy of a bust of Perikles. Many depictions of Perikles show him wearing a helmet, symbolising his position as a general of Athens. Why do you think this aspect of his role is emphasised?

Diodorus wrote of Perikles' treatment of Samos:

For the year 441/0: [Perikles], by pushing the siege with energy and throwing down the walls by means of the siege machines, he gained the mastery of Samos. After punishing the ringleaders of the revolt, he exacted of the Samians the expenses incurred in the siege of the city, fixing the penalty at two hundred talents. He also took from them their ships and razed their walls; then he restored the democracy and returned to his country.

**SOURCE 7A.28** Diodorus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, XII, 28:3

Claudius Aelianus, commonly known as Aelian, was a Roman author and teacher of rhetoric in the third century CE. In his *Varia Historia* (*Various Histories*), he wrote about some of the decrees of the Athenians:

What decrees the Athenians passed, even though they were a democracy! They ordered that each Aeginetan should have his right thumb amputated so that he could not hold a spear but would be able to manage an oar ... Captured prisoners from Samos were to be branded on the forehead, the mark being an owl; this too was an Athenian decree. By Athena Polias, by Zeus god of freedom and all the gods of the Greeks, I wish these measures had not been passed by the Athenians and that such things were not reported of them.

**SOURCE 7A.29** Aelian, *Varia Historia*, 2:9

Photius I, who was the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople in the ninth century CE, also wrote about the treatment of the Samians by the Athenians:

You're suspecting what happened to the Samians: It is said about those fearing certain irreparable calamities of evils. It came across from the atrocities that were wrought by the Athenians upon the Samians: for when they captured them, the Athenians killed some, and tattooed the others with the so-called Samie, which is a kind of Samian calamity; in return for which the Samians, too, tattooed those of the Athenians that were subsequently captured.

**SOURCE 7A.30** Photius, *Lexicon*

### Aegina: 431 BCE

Another Greek island, Aegina, also came into conflict with Athens under Perikles. The Athenians gained a final victory in 458 BCE, and Plutarch describes Perikles' attitude towards the island, and his actions at the start of the Peloponnesian War.

In writing he left nothing behind him except the decrees which he proposed, and only a few in all of his memorable sayings are preserved, as, for instance, his urging the removal of Aegina as the 'eye-sore of the Piraeus', and his declaring that he 'already beheld war swooping down upon them from Peloponnesus'.

**SOURCE 7A.31** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 8

At the start of Peloponnesian war, 'then, by way of soothing the multitude, who, in spite of their enemies' departure, were distressed over the war, he won their favour by distributions of moneys and proposed allotments of conquered lands; the Aeginetans, for instance, he drove out entirely, and parcelled out their island among the Athenians by lot.

**SOURCE 7A.32** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 34

## ACTIVITY 7A.5

1. '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.' Measure this judgement by Plutarch about Perikles against the examples in Sources 7A.23 to 7A.33.
2. Using different colouring, highlight from each source (7A.23 to 7A.33) that which either SUPPORTS or COUNTERS the claim made in the quote in question 1.
3. Use your selections to write a historical paragraph that answers the following questions:
  - To what extent did Perikles show vindictiveness, and exercise malicious intent and cruelty in his treatment of rebel allies?
  - Were his measures appropriate for a democratic leader?In your response, consider the circumstances of Athens being at war.

### Treatment of the allies

Aristotle was a Greek philosopher during the Classical period in ancient Greece, the founder of the Lyceum and the Peripatetic school of philosophy and Aristotelian tradition. He said of the treatment of Athenian allies:

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.

**SOURCE 7A.33** Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens*, XXIV

The following two extracts are from Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*. The first extract is Perikles' 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).

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 conducive to a city that reigneth but to a subject city that it may safely serve.

**SOURCE 7A.34** Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2:63

In this extract, Thucydides describes Perikles' speech to the people at the start of the Peloponnesian War:

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.

**SOURCE 7A.35** Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 13:2–5



## ACTIVITY 7A.6

Use at least three sources when answering each of the questions below.

1. How do the Sources 7A.33 to 7A.34 reveal the importance of allied revenue to Athens at the start of the war?
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.

### Treatment of Kimon and his family

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 7A.36** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 28

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 7A.37** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 29

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.

**SOURCE 7A.38** Plutarch, *Life of Kimon*, 17

## ACTIVITY 7A.7

1. Why was Perikles the one to propose the return of his rival, Kimon, and what does this reveal about a) his political judgement and b) 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 7A.37 and 7A.38)?
3. Does Perikles' behaviour reflect pure personal vindictiveness or sound political judgement?

## Objective 4: Synthesise evidence from historical sources to form a historical argument in relation to ancient personalities and their historical context

### 7A.6 Towards total control and leadership in Athens

The Peloponnesian League (c. 550 BCE–c. 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.

After a 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 Kimon returned from his 10-year banishment but died soon after.

Following the death of Kimon, Thucydides of Alopece led the conservative faction in Athens. Following the Peace of Kallias in 449 BCE, the agreed purpose of the Delian League came to an end.

Nonetheless, the allies became Athens' subjects. In 447/6 BCE some Boeotian cities revolted and after defeating the Athenians, Boeotia was lost. Shortly afterwards, Euboea revolted, and Megara returned to its alliance with Sparta. The Spartans also invaded Attica. In 446/5 BCE, Athens made a Thirty Years' Peace with Sparta and its allies.

The Athenians continued to suffer revolts from Delian League members. In 440 BCE, Samos and Athens entered into a long conflict that led to the subjugation of Samos.



**SOURCE 7A.39** Battle of Coronea (also called the First Battle of Coronea) fought in 447 BCE during the First Peloponnesian War between the Athenian-led Delian League and the Boeotian League



In 447 BCE, work began on building the Parthenon. Thucydides of Alopece, Perikles' rival, criticised the spending of money for this ambitious building programme. 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.

### Civic virtue vs personal ambition

Read the following extracts from Plutarch, and then complete the activity questions.

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 7A.40** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 3

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 7A.41** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 5

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 7A.42** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 9

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.

(continued)



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 7A.43** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 11

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 7A.44** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 15

... 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.

**SOURCE 7A.45** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 16

## ACTIVITY 7A.8

Study Sources 7A.40 to 7A.45 to answer the questions below.

1. Which sources are being critical of Perikles? Which sources are showing admiration?
2. Synthesise information from Sources 7A.40 to 7A.45 to form a historical argument that answers the following question:

*To what extent was Perikles a shrewd, clever and calculating politician in democratic Athens, rather than a calculating and personally ambition demagogue?*

In your response, you will need to define and contrast the terms 'democracy' and 'demagogy'. Remember also to include a qualifier/disclaimer.

## Revenue and building

In the following extract, Plutarch writes about Perikles' use of public money for building works.

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.'

**SOURCE 7A.46** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 12

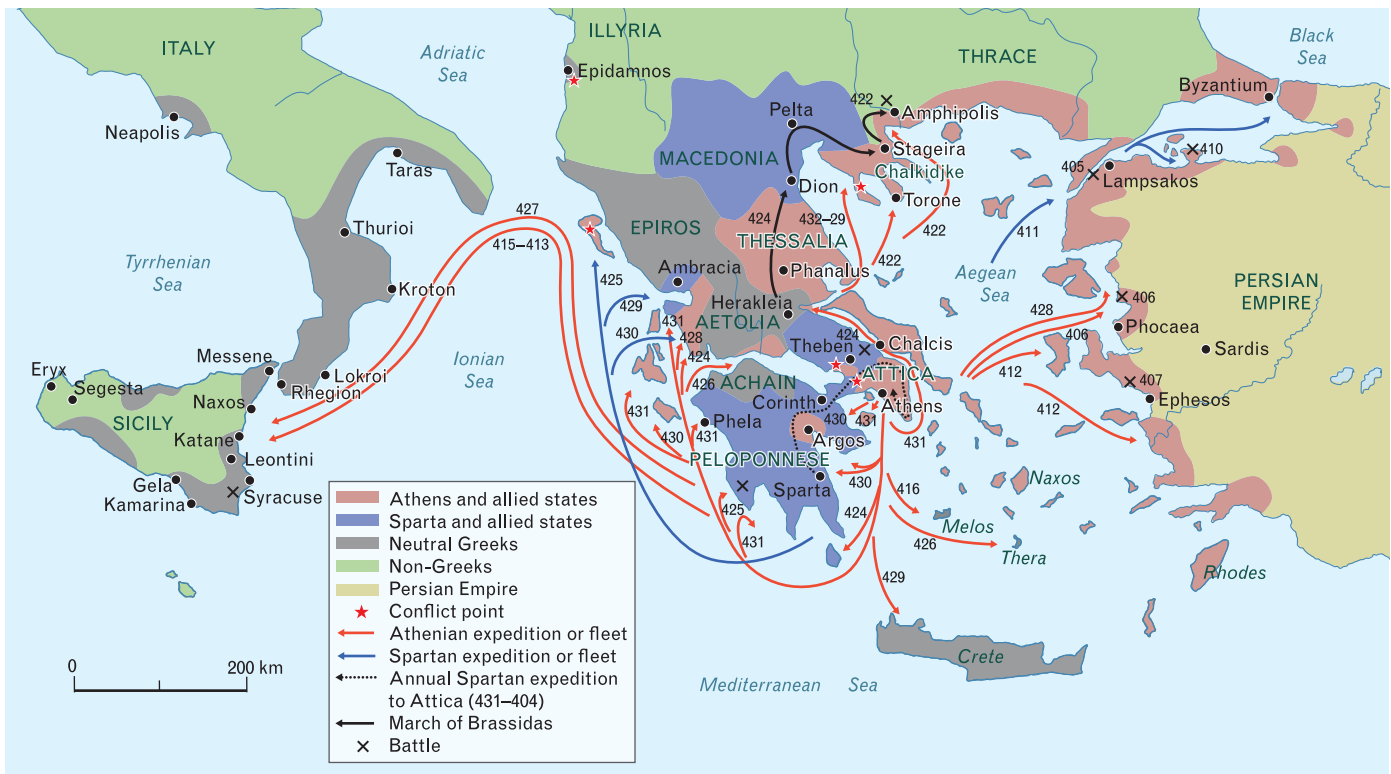
### ACTIVITY 7A.9

1. According to Source 7A.46, who were the winners and who were the losers in Perikles' building program?
2. What did Perikles' critics' think, and were their views valid or simply subversive?
3. Was Perikles' building program motivated more by genuine civic pride and duty rather than an exercise in personal power and propagandistic manipulation?

## The Peloponnesian War

The Peloponnesian War was fought from 431–404 BCE between two associations of Greek city-states: the Delian League led by Athens, and the Spartan-dominated Peloponnesian League.

*A more detailed discussion of the Peloponnesian War is available as a separate document in the downloadable resources on Cambridge GO.*



**SOURCE 7A.47** The extent of the Peloponnesian War, 431–404 BCE

### Provoking Sparta

The following extracts from Plutarch examine the relationship between Athens and Sparta at the start of the Peloponnesian War.

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 7A.48** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 17



But he 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 7A.49** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 19

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.

**SOURCE 7A.50** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 20

### Towards war

In the following extracts, Plutarch suggests that Perikles was a key figure in the move towards war.

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 7A.51** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 29

... 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 7A.52** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 31

### War

Plutarch considers Perikles' motivations.

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.

**SOURCE 7A.53** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 31

Perikles' opponents attacked him and his close associates, such as Pheidias, Aspasia and Anaxagoras, through the law courts.

Plutarch writes that Phidias, Perikles' friend and a renowned artist, was prosecuted by Perikles' 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' lover Aspasia was put on trial for impiety. Fearing the jury's verdict so soon after Phidias' unexpected prosecution, Perikles' reaction is described by Plutarch:

... 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 7A.54** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 32



**SOURCE 7A.55** Perikles and Aspasia, fifth century BCE engraving

## ACTIVITY 7A.10

Synthesise evidence from Sources 7A.49 to 7A.55 to form a historical argument that answers the following question:

*Was Perikles' 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)?*

## Objective 5: Evaluate evidence from historical sources to make judgements about ancient personalities

### 7A.7 Ancient sources

#### Praise of Perikles

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 acting brutally following the suppression of the revolt of Samos in 440 BCE.

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.

*(continued)*

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 7A.56** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 28

See also the following extract:

... 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.

**SOURCE 7A.57** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 13:11

## Bias

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' only direct reference to Perikles in his *Histories*. In it he describes a dream had by Perikles' mother Agariste, who was the niece of the democratic reformer Cleisthenes.

Agariste dreamt during her pregnancy that she gave birth to a lion, and a few days later become the mother of Pericles.

**SOURCE 7A.58** Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book VI:131

Similarly, we need to consider the possibility of bias in both Plutarch and Thucydides.

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 7A.59** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 2

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 7A.60** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 15:5

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.

(continued)



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. 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.

**SOURCE 7A.61** Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2:65

## ACTIVITY 7A.11

Conduct research into the strengths and weakness of Thucydides and Plutarch as sources of information about Perikles. Use the sources available in this chapter as a starting point, but also conduct your own research. Create a chart summary like the one below and answer the following question:

*To what extent does knowing more about the authors detract from or strengthen your confidence in their viewpoint on Perikles?*

Think: 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.

Author	Opinion (quote)	Author evaluation/reasons behind the opinion (i.e. influences, bias)
Plutarch		
Thucydides		

## 7A.8 Modern perceptions and judgements

In the article below, Cambridge University classicist Mary Beard considers the opinions provided on Perikles by various writers:

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. 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.

**SOURCE 7A.62** Beard, M., 2010, ‘Which Thucydides Can You Trust?’, *The New York Review of Books*

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:

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.

**SOURCE 7A.63** Tracy, S., 2009, *Pericles: A Sourcebook and Reader*, University of California Press, p. 23

Historian Dr Paul Halsall edited a book on Perikles, in which he talks about the policy of turning allies into subjects.

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).

**SOURCE 7A.64** Halsall, P. (ed.), 1999, *11th Britannica, Ancient History Sourcebook*

Stella Lange, an academic at Notre Dame, Indiana, comments on Plato's view of Perikles.

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.

**SOURCE 7A.65** Lange, S., 1939, 'Plato and Democracy', *The Classical Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 8, pp. 480–486

Philosopher and political economist Nicholas Partyka of the Hampton Institute discusses the example democratic Athens had on nearby Rome.

... 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.

**SOURCE 7A.66** Partyka, N., 7 December 2016, 'American Gracchi', *Politics and Government: Analysis*



Loren J. Samons II, Associate Professor of Classical Studies at Boston University, challenges the popular idea that majority rule leads to good government.

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.

**SOURCE 7A.67** Samons, L., 2004, *What's Wrong with Democracy? From Athenian Practice to American Worship*, University of California Press, p. 6



**SOURCE 7A.68** Twentieth century illustration of Perikles, from a series of cards entitled *Leaders of Men*

### ACTIVITY 7A.12

Create a table like the below to help you summarise modern scholastic viewpoints on Perikles. Use Sources 7A.62 to 7A.67 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 7A.13

Perikles himself had made the law that prevented bastard children from becoming full Athenian citizens, but when his two legitimate sons had died of the plague (430 BCE), and Perikles the younger became his only living male heir, Plutarch (32) writes that the Assembly took pity on Perikles' misfortunes and granted his request to make Perikles, his son with Aspasia, a full citizen of Athens.

## ACTIVITY 7A.13 continued

Consider the following 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 viewpoints citing other reasons and evidence from this chapter. 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.

## Objective 6: Create responses that communicate meaning to suit purpose in relation to ancient personalities

### 7A.9 Creating responses about Perikles

## ACTIVITY 7A.14

Based on the previous activity, 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.

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

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- 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 he 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.

# CHAPTER REVIEW

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## 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 regards 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 times?*

### Devise

Choose an aspect of Perikles' life and rule, and describe how you would frame an inquiry into this aspect.

### Analyse

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.

**SOURCE 7A.69** Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*, 39

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.

### Synthesise

What viewpoints exist about the nature of Perikles' rule? Create two lists; one list that is favourable towards him and the other that is critical. Which general viewpoint do you lean towards?



## Evaluate

Use your knowledge of information about the authors to make judgements about their viewpoints.

## Respond

Was Perikles a great democratic leader or simply a demagogue-cloaked tyrant?

## Assessment

### Examination-style questions

1. Discuss the extent to which Perikles' 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' 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 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 in fifth century BCE Athens?

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