

ATHENS AND ROME: LIFE AND CULTURE IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

The City of Athens and Rome
Lecture 1 - Introduction and Overview

CLCS4007
Matthew Cobb

Today's Lecture

- ▣ Athens and Rome as they are popularly known today – legacies.
- ▣ Themes of the module and learning outcomes.
- ▣ Chronological and geographical context.
- ▣ Brief overview of the Athens and Rome and their surrounding territory.
- ▣ Differences between us and Greeks and Romans.
- ▣ Structure of the course.
- ▣ Assessments.

Famous People (1)

JULIUS CAESAR



CLEOPATRA VII

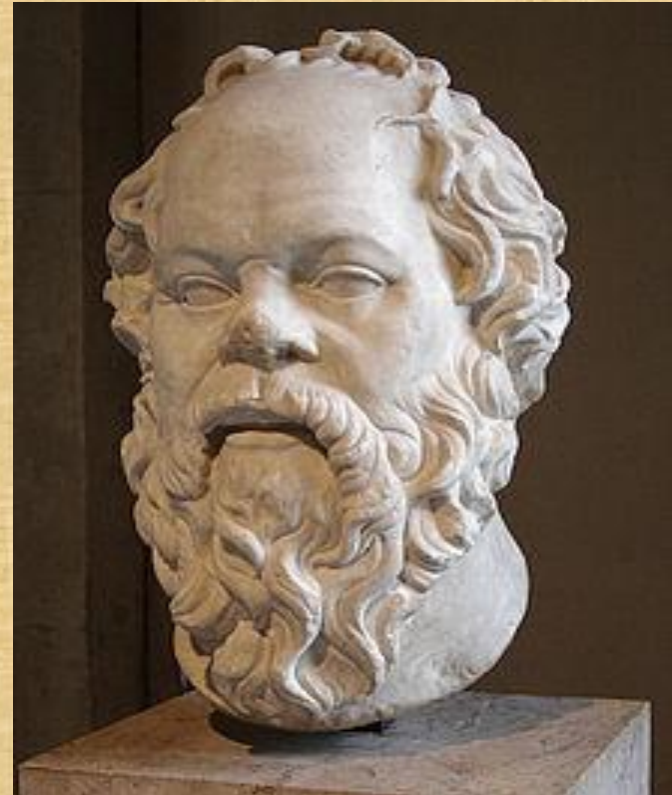


Famous People (2)

PERICLES



SOCRATES



Famous Events

- ❑ Persians invade Greece – Battles of Thermopylae, Salamis, and (lesser known) Plataea.
- ❑ Trial of Socrates and his forced suicide.
- ❑ Hannibal marches across the Alps with his elephants.
- ❑ Julius Caesar and Cleopatra as lovers, and (probably more famously) Antony and Cleopatra as lovers.

Legacies

- ▣ Politics – e.g. democracy, republic, empire.
- ▣ Culture – philosophy, literature (epic, tragedy, comedy, satire, poetry), geography, history, biography.
- ▣ Physical Objects – art, monuments and buildings (in various states of repair).

Purpose of the Module

- ▣ Social history – a study of a society and its cultural habits and values.
- ▣ Political history – a study of major political events and individuals who shaped them.
- ▣ Economic history – diverse areas from demography, productive capacity (esp. agricultural) and other phenomena such as trade.
- ▣ **Interrelation of these aspects in the Ancient World.**

Themes of the Module – Differences and Similarities

- ▣ Family and household.
- ▣ Slavery.
- ▣ Culture and social customs.
- ▣ Politics, government and law.
- ▣ Economy.
- ▣ Art and architecture.
- ▣ Religion.
- ▣ Entertainment and public spectacles.
- ▣ Death, disease and crime.
- ▣ Warfare.
- ▣ Imperialism and Empire.

Learning Outcomes

- ▣ Demonstrate a elementary understanding of cultural history Athens and Rome.
- ▣ Show a basic understanding of the historical sources and their place in the context of Athenian and Roman society.
- ▣ Demonstrate a familiarity and understanding of the key scholarship.
- ▣ Produce written work appropriate for a professional reader/audience.

Athens and Rome

CLASSICAL ATHENS – C.5TH
TO 4TH CENTURIES BC.

- ▣ Archaic Greece - 8th to 6th centuries BC.
- ▣ **Classical Greece – 5th to 4th centuries BC.**
- ▣ Hellenistic Period – 323 BC (death of Alexander) to 30 BC (suicide of Cleopatra).
- ▣ Athens is under Roman hegemony by mid-second century BC, revolts and is crushed between 88-85 BC.

RISE AND PEAK OF ROME
– C.200 BC – AD 200.

- ▣ Foundation and Rome under the Kings – 753-509 BC.
- ▣ Early-Republic – c.500-c.mid-third century BC.
- ▣ Mid-Republic – 264-146 BC (Punic Wars, 264-41, 218-201, 149-46 BC)
- ▣ Late Republic – c.130's BC to 31/30 BC (Actium).
- ▣ Imperial Period – Augustus to Alexander Severus.
- ▣ “Third Century Crisis”.
- ▣ **Roman victory in second Punic war to the Severans.**

Mediterranean



The Ancient City of Athens



Attica

- ▣ Attica is roughly 1,000 sq. miles in extent.
- ▣ Made up of various regions
 - Athens itself
 - Piraeus (main harbour)
 - SE Laurium (silver mines)
 - NE Eleusis (mystery cult centre).



Area of Athens

- ▣ The area of ancient Athens occupied around 1 sq. mile.
- ▣ Main centre
 - acropolis (Parthenon etc)
 - agora (Boule, Royal Stoa etc).
- ▣ The population of Athens is estimated as being around c.200 thousand.



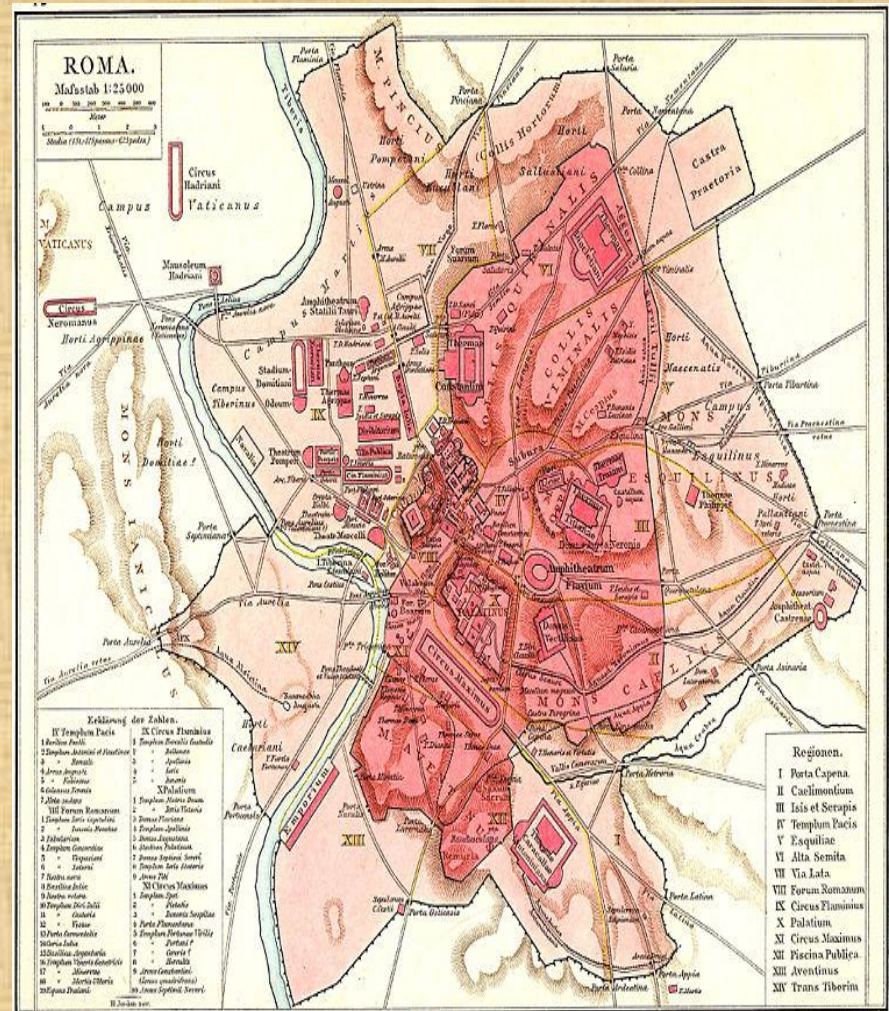
Population of Athens and Attica

- ▣ Athens the modern (not the ancient) capitol of Greece.
- ▣ Citizens (and there families) c.30,000 citizens + families = c.135,000.
- ▣ Slaves c.30-40,000? - Metics (foreigners resident in Athens) c.10,000.
- ▣ Athens one of the largest *polies* some cities fairly small:
 - Plataea c.2000-2500?.
 - Olynthos c.3500-4200?
 - Majority of *polies* probably had populations around 1000-10,000 people.

The Ancient City of Rome



Area of the City of Rome (1)



Area of the City of Rome (2)

- ▣ The area within the Servian walls is about 1.6 sq miles.
- ▣ Centres – Roman Forum (and Imperial *Fora*), Imperial Palaces.



Population

- ▣ During the first and second centuries AD there is a total population in Rome of around $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 million people.
- ▣ Compare
 - Alexandria 300,000-600,000?
 - Roman Carthage 500,000?
 - Antioch-on-the-Orontes (Syria) 200,000?
- ▣ Population of Roman Empire at its height – 40 to 50 million people.

Peoples of Rome

- ▣ By 1st century AD highly heterogeneous
- ▣ Elite and wealthy
- ▣ Urban poor
- ▣ Immigrants from rural Italy
- ▣ Slaves and freedmen
- ▣ Foreigners (*peregrini*)
- ▣ Merchant communities



c. 1st century BC –
Montemartini Museum.

Differences Between Us and the Greco-Roman World

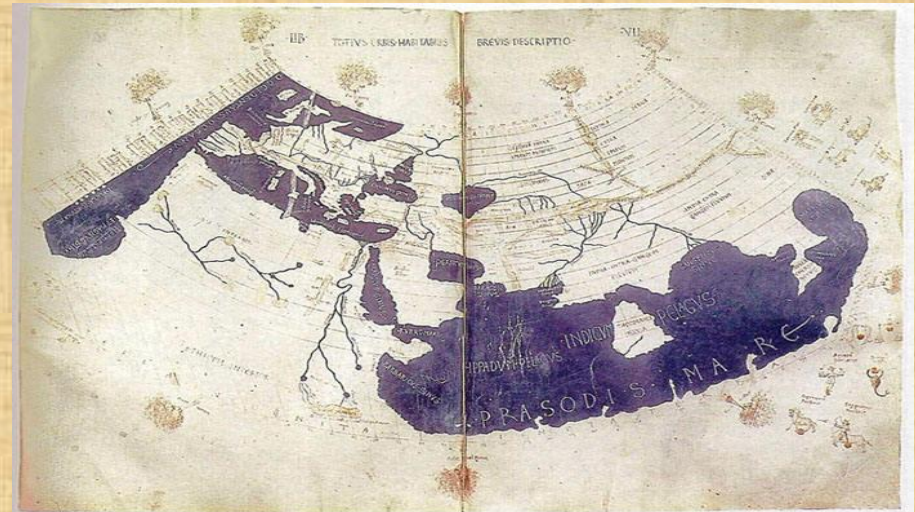
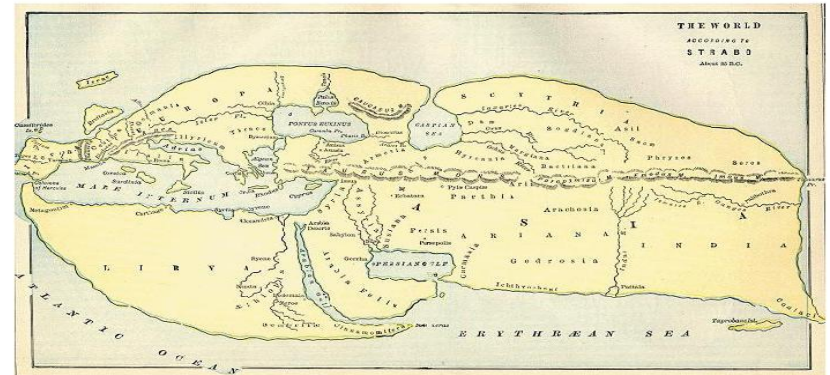
- ▣ Conception of the world – Mediterranean as the centre.
- ▣ Human-kind and the environment.
- ▣ The edges of the known world and the marvels of nature.
- ▣ Calendars and dating.

- Knowledge increase with conquest and trade.
- Mediterranean remains best understood region.



Based on Hecataeus'
Circuit of the World –
c.500 BC

Strabo
About 25 BCE



Based on Claudius Ptolemy's
Geography c.150 AD

1) “The study of living creatures in the world is as important as the study of almost any other field... Pride of place will be given to one for whose benefit Nature appears to have created everything else... Man is the only creature whom Nature covers with materials derived from others.” – **Pliny *Natural History* 7.1-2 (mid-first century AD).**

2) “From all this it is evident that the *polis* [i.e. the Greek city state] exists by natural processes, and that it is natural for a man to live in a *polis*. Anyone who has no *polis*, not by accident but by reason of his own nature, must be sub-human — or else superhuman! He is like the man reviled by Homer as ‘Without clan, law, or hearth’ [= *Odyssey* 9. 63]. Any such man must be a lover of war; he is just like an isolated piece in a game of draughts.” – **Aristotle *The Politics* 1253 a (mid-fourth century BC).**

“Ctesias writes ... of a tribe of men called the Monocoli, who have only one leg and hop with amazing speed. These people are also called the Shadow-feet, because when the weather is hot they lie on their backs stretched out on the ground and protect themselves by the shade of their feet.”
– **Pliny *Natural History* 7.21-23.**



Image from the
Nuremberg
Chronicle
(1493).

Calendars and Dates

- ▣ Modern conventions by which ancient history is dated
 - Periodisation (e.g. Hellenistic period)
 - BC (Before Christ) and AD (*Anno Domini* – year of our Lord) modern alternatives BCE and CE.
- ▣ Ancient calendars often based on religious or political system.
- ▣ Years may be dated by political offices (e.g. consulships), priesthoods and in some sources (from the Hellenistic period) by Olympiads (first Olympiad 776 BC).

Dating Years

ATHENS

- ▣ Archonships
 - Fourteen years after the Thirty Years' Peace... [the treaty] remained unbroken, but in the fifteenth year – which was the forty-eight year of the priestess-ship of Chrysis at Argos... Pythodoros still had four months to serve as *Archon* at Athens... just as the spring was beginning = **March 431 BC** - (start of Peloponnesian War).

ROME

- ▣ Consulships (consular list begins in 509 BC).
 - Ides of March in the year when the consuls were Julius Caesar for the fifth time, and Marcus Antonius = **15 March 44 BC** - (assassination of Caesar).

Calendars

ATHENS – LUNAR CALENDAR

Hecatombaeon– Jul/ Aug

Metageitnion- Aug/Sep

Boedromion- Sep/Oct

Pyanepsion- Oct/Nov

Maemacterion- Nov/Dec

Poseideon- Dec/Jan

Gamelion- Jan/Feb

Anthesterion- Feb/Mar

Elaphebolion- Mar/Apr

Mounychion- Apr/May

Thargelion- May/Jun

Sciophorion- Jun/Jul

ROME – JULIAN CALENDAR (AS REFORMED BY CAESAR)

Ianuarius

Februarius

Martius

Aprilis

Maius

Iunius

Iulius (originally Quintilis)

Augustus (originally Sextilis)

September (**Germanic**)

October (**Domitian**)

November

December

Structure of the Lectures

- ▣ Two hour sessions.
- ▣ Lectures 60-70 minutes (30-40 minutes each).
- ▣ Break 10 minutes.
- ▣ Discussion 20-30 minutes.

- ▣ You will be required to do a small amount of supplementary reading and think about certain questions for the discussion. These will be uploaded onto Moodle.
- ▣ **Participation in the discussions is essential!**

Coursework

- ▣ Gobbet exercise - 1000 words – 04/12/12 (Semester 1) - 50% of total mark.
- ▣ Essay - 1500 words – 23/04/13 (Semester 2) - 50% of total mark.

**Party hardy makes
you tardy!** – Otto



Scenes from the Brygos painter, first half of the fifth century BC