race

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Summary

Contrary to the assumptions of previous eras, since the late 20th century, race has been widely regarded as a form of identity based in social construction rather than biology. The concept of race has experienced a corresponding return to classical studies, although this approach gives it significant overlap with terminology like ethnicity and cultural identity. The ancient Greeks and Romans did not consider human biology or skin color the source of racial identity, although the belief that human variation was determined by the environment or climate persisted throughout antiquity. Ancient ethnographic writing provides insight into ancient racial thought and stereotypes in both the Greek and Roman periods. Race in the Greek world centered in large part around the emergence of the category of *Greek* alongside that of *barbarian*, but there were other important racial frameworks in operation, including a form of racialized citizenship in Athens. Modes for expressing racial identity changed in the aftermath of the campaigns of Alexander the Great, a figure whose own racial identity has been the subject of debate. In the Roman period, Roman citizenship became a major factor in determining one's identity, but racial thought nonetheless persisted. Ideas about race were closely correlated with the Roman practice of empire, and representations of diverse racial groups are especially prominent in conquest narratives. Hellenistic and Roman Egypt provide an opportunity for looking at race in everyday life in antiquity, while Greek and Roman attitudes towards Jews suggest that they were perceived as a distinct group. Reception studies play a critical role in analyzing the continuing connections between race and classics.

Keywords: race, environment, climate, ethnography, Herodotus, Julius Caesar, Tacitus, barbarian, slavery, Alexander the Great, migration, Romanization, Cleopatra VII, Jews, reception

Subjects: Greek History and Historiography, Reception, Roman History and Historiography

Updated in this version

Text and bibliography heavily expanded. Primary texts and digital materials added.

Key Locations

Athens, Rome, Egypt, Alexandria (Egypt)

The concept of race has had a long and often troubled history in classical studies. Ideas about race were central to the field from its inception and were often employed in the service of overtly racist interpretations of antiquity, such as Roman historian Tenney Frank's claim, in 1916, that "race mixture" had led to the decline of Rome. Consonant with broader global trends, the term *race* receded from classical scholarship following the Second World War and was increasingly replaced by *ethnicity*. Such a turn relied on the assumption that race was primarily a biological concept, whereas ethnicity was an identity dependent on social practices, such as religion or language. By the 1970s, discussions of race in classical antiquity were mainly restricted to the topic of black skin color. Although black Africans (generally called "Ethiopians"; see Ethiopia) can be found in classical literature and art from the earliest periods, classical scholars have concluded that black skin color in and of itself did not have the same meaning or racial weight in antiquity that it acquired in the modern era.[1] Such conclusions reinforced the widely held belief at the time that race was not relevant to the study of antiquity.

Beginning in the 1980s, Martin Bernal's multivolume *Black Athena* project renewed debate about the role of race in classics. *Black Athena* argued that classical scholars beginning in the 18th century had replaced the Greeks' view of their origins with an *Aryan Model* that erased the formative influence of ancient Egypt and Phoenicia on early Greek civilization. Bernal, in turn, advocated for a *Revised Ancient Model*, which posited an invasion of Indo-European speakers in the fourth or 3rd millennium BCE and periods of Egyptian and Phoenician colonization in the following millennium.[2] Bernal's "Revised Ancient Model" was strongly disputed by researchers in many fields of classics, including linguistics and archaeology.[3]

Since the late 20th century, critical race theorists have challenged the notion that race is a form of identity invariably and objectively linked to human biology, demonstrating that the current partnership of race and science took hold during the modern nineteenth century when racial identity was closely linked to select features of the human body such as skull size or skin color.[4] Such approaches to race, approaches based in scientific methods of the day, pervaded 19th and early 20th-century anthropology, as did attendant claims about the relationship of race to human progress.[5] Interpretations of classical history likewise became deeply entangled in such theories (see anthropology and the classics).[6]

Even as historians and critical race theorists documented the conditions under which the modern view of race was invented, scientists also began debunking the assumption *<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2018/04/race-genetics-science-africa/>* that racial categories defined by skin color had any coherent scientific foundation.[7] The putative links between race and biology were further contested *<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/race-is-a-social-construct-scientists-argue/>* by geneticists *<http://sitn.hms.harvard.edu/flash/2017/science-genetics-reshaping-race-debate-21st-century/>* in the wake of the completion of the Human Genome Project.[8] Overall, such studies have reached the consensus that race is not a so-called scientific *fact* but rather a social construction, a framework for thinking about human variation that is deeply dependent on social processes and historical context for its forms and meanings.

In light of these conclusions, classical historians are increasingly asking both how ideas about race were formed in antiquity and what impact such racial ideologies had on ancient society. Still, the late 20th-century shift in the conceptualization of race means that it frequently overlaps with other terminology applied to collective identity. Thus, it can be difficult to draw a conclusive line between the use of race and ethnicity among ancient historians, so also between what some scholars might call a cultural identity and others a racial identity defined by cultural practices.

Ancient Theories of Racial Difference

The most prominent racial theory in antiquity, the ancient environmental theory, proposed that human variation could be explained by geographic location and climate, meaning that a group's physical, emotional, and mental capacities were thought to be shaped by the climate of the territory a group inhabited. In many cases, ancient authors specifically promoted the advantages of a climate that fell between the extremes of southern (hot) and northern (cold) lands. Such a formulation advocated the racial superiority of those living in the "middle" zone of the inhabited world or *oikumene* (see geography), a zone strongly associated with the Greeks, then later the Romans (Pl. *Ti*. 24c <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0059.tlg031.perseus-grc1*>). Although the Hippocratic essay *Airs, Waters, Places* <*http://classics.mit.edu/Hippocrates/airwatpl.html*>, which draws a strong contrast between the residents of "Europe" and "Asia," provides the most extensive surviving account of the ancient environmental theory (see Hippocrates), allusions to the theory can be found in a range of Greek texts (e.g., Aris. *Pol*.1327b <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0086.tlg035.perseus-grc1*>). The theory persisted into the Roman period, where Vitruvius, for example, used it to explain the dominance of the Roman Empire (*On Architecture*, 6.1.10–11 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:phi1056.phi001.perseus-lat1*>). The proposition that climate plays a fundamental role in human development—also called environmental determinism—retained a strong hold on the western racial imagination for centuries.[9] Some have argued it is experiencing a resurgence in the early decades of the 21st century.[10]

The environmental theory was not the only framework used to explain human variation, however. Just as today, ancient authors were especially divided about the relative impact of nature versus culture on the formation of identity. Even *Airs, Waters, Places*, which places primary emphasis on climate, hedges when suggesting that modes of government also help shape racial character (ch. 23 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0627.tlg002.perseus-grc1*>). There is evidence, nonetheless, for a broad shift during the Greek era from a nature-based view of racial identity—one linked to genealogy and bloodline—to one based in cultural practice, that is, a shift from conceptualizing Greek identity as a state of being or essence to Greek identity conceived as a mode of social performance.[11] In his *Histories*, Herodotus recorded a definition of Greek identity that includes both aspects, citing not only blood, but also language and a shared way of life (8.144.2 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0016.tlg001.perseus-grc1*>).[12] Isocrates, on the other hand, later denied the role of blood and posited mindset and culture (*paideia*) as the basis of Greek identity (Isoc.*Paneg*. 50 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0010.tlg011.perseus-grc1*>).

Ancient Ethnography

There are few surviving ancient treatises devoted to racial theory *per se*, so ancient ethnography often provides our best means for reconstructing both broad racial ideologies and the individual perceptions, often stereotypes, attached to specific groups by Greek and Roman writers.[13] Herodotus has often been called the "Father of History" (e.g., Cic. *Leg*. 1.5 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:phi0474.phi044.perseus-lat1*>), and he included cultural descriptions of a range of groups in his *Histories*.[14] Herodotus' work was read for centuries, and not only were his general methods emulated, but his accounts helped shape the way many groups were perceived in the later western tradition. In particular, Herodotus' lengthy description of Egypt in Book 2 contributed to a broader fascination with Egypt in Greek writing.[15] Herodotus' passing comments about Egyptian skin color (2.57 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0016.tlg001.perseus-grc1*> and 2.104 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0016.tlg001.perseus-grc1*>) have provoked particular scrutiny over the last few centuries, appearing, for example, in 19th-century debates about slavery.[16]

Roman writers also employed ethnographic methods. Julius Caesar included a discussion of the differences between the Germans and Gauls in his *Gallic Wars* (6.11–24 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:phi0448.phi001.perseus-lat1*>), an account that would heavily influence later writers and the Roman imaginary more broadly. In the *Gallic Wars*, Caesar also briefly described Britain (5.12–14 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:phi0448.phi001.perseus-lat1*>), a place and people Tacitus addressed as well in his *Agricola* (10–13 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:phi1351.phi001.perseus-lat1*>). Perhaps most notably, Tacitus provided for his Roman audience a much more expansive report of the Germans in his *Germania* <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:phi1351.phi002.perseus-lat1*> (see also Germania). Tacitus' notorious references to the alleged purity of German blood at the beginning of his discussion (chapter 2 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:phi1351.phi002.perseus-lat1*> and 4 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:phi1351.phi002.perseus-lat1*>) led to the Nazis' keen interest in the treatise, including attempts to acquire original manuscripts of Tacitus' work.[17]

Race in the Greek World

Although classical scholars of the 19th and early 20th centuries sought to pinpoint the racial origins of the ancient Greeks, promoting such dubious events as the so-called *Dorian invasion* (see Dorians), the ancient Greeks themselves did not consistently promote any single account of their beginnings.[18] Some later Greek writers believed there had been earlier indigenous groups inhabiting Greece called the Leleges or Pelasgians.[19] Greek authors also relate various migration stories (see migration), and Greek myth contains stories of individuals arriving from outside Greece to establish different cities, such as Danaus' flight to Argos (see also Danaus and the Danaids). By the end of the 6th century, a mythical genealogy had emerged naming Hellen the original ancestor of all Greeks.[20]

In practice, early Greek identity was generally centered around one's belonging to a smaller polity or city-state.[21] Individual Greek city-states were participating in expanding trade networks and establishing what scholars have traditionally called "colonies," mainly to the

west, by the 8th century BCE (see also colonization, Greek), leading archaeologists to query the types of identities formed by contact between the Greeks and other groups at these sites.[2] [2] Ancient historians nonetheless see the early 5th-century BCE as an important turning point in the ways the Greeks defined themselves, meaning that it was only during this era that the residents of the independent Greek city-states began to identify collectively as Greeks or "Hellenes."[23] Such an identification was consolidated in large part by the complementary rise of the concept of the barbarian (Thuc. 1.3.3 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0003.tlg001.perseus-grc1*>).[24] In the shadow of the Persian wars, the barbarian label was initially attached to the Persians, and Greek depictions of the Persians have often been linked to the inauguration of western Orientalism.[25] Eventually, the term *barbarian* came to connote all non-Greeks; *barbarians* from a range of locales appear throughout Athenian literature and art (see also nationalism, Greek).[26]

In addition to disseminating ideas about the barbarian, the city-state of Athens relied on a racialized form of citizenship beginning in the early 5th-century BCE, eventually passing Pericles' law in 451/450 BCE (see also Pericles), which restricted Athenian citizenship to those born from both an Athenian mother and father.[27] Athens' designation of bloodline as key to its citizenship was reinforced by widescale promotion of the myth of Athens' autochthonous origin. The theme of autochthony (see also autochthons and Erichthonius) appears in many genres of Greek literature (e.g., Euripides' *Ion*), but it was especially prominent in Athenian funeral oration (see epitaphios [logos]). There were also metics—resident foreigners or immigrants—living in Athens, and their rights differed in important ways from those of citizens; however, since that category could include Greeks from other city-states, its correlation with racial ideology is complicated.[28]

The concept of the barbarian has an important overlap with Greek slavery (see slavery, Greek).[29] Enslaved persons were acquired through war and the slave trade. Although the Greeks at times enslaved other Greeks, most Athenian slaves came from Thrace, Asia Minor, and the area around the Black Sea; as such origins suggest, Greek (and later Roman) slavery was not defined by skin color difference. Aristotle's theory of natural slavery proposed that slaves were slaves by nature, meaning their natural role was best fulfilled in serving the needs of their masters. It is difficult to know how widely Aristotle's views of slavery were shared, however, since his discussion often alludes to dissenting opinions (see Aristotle and political theory).[30] Nonetheless, his theory had significant impact in later centuries, including helping justify slavery in the American South.[31]

Structures for thinking about race and identity in the Greek world shifted in light of both the migrations following the campaigns of Alexander the Great (see Alexander III) and the adoption of Greek language and culture throughout the territories he had conquered. Alexander's own racial identity has often been examined, including whether, as a Macedonian, he also qualified as Greek.[32] Debates over Alexander's identity vis-à-vis his place of origin continue to hold political significance in the early 21st century.[33] So, too, while ancient authors suggest a certain broadmindedness in Alexander's personal views—Eratosthenes noted his alleged refusal to treat barbarians as categorically different from Greeks (cited at Strabo, *Geography*, 1.4.9 <*http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0099.tlg001.perseus-grc1*>)—the proposition, first argued by W. W. Tarn in the 1930s, that Alexander's campaigns were fueled in part by the attempt to create a world system in which racial difference would be eradicated has been strongly refuted.[34]

Roman views of race differed from Greek ones in significant ways. For one, myths about Rome's origins depict a manifest openness of racial boundaries. Romulus (see Romulus and Remus), the city's legendary founder, was thought to have built a community by bringing together a range of groups, in one version through forcible marriage with the Sabine women (a violent scenario often called the "rape of the Sabine women"; see Sabini), and in another by opening the city to criminals and runaway slaves. Similarly, although the Romans inherited the concept of the barbarian, they did not employ it in a strict binary sense, but used it to locate foreign groups along a scale defined by how civilized each group was perceived to be. The meaning and connotations of the concept would continue to evolve over the course of Roman period.[35]

The Roman practice of empire encouraged (or demanded) assimilation from the communities it had conquered, including the adoption of an apparent conformity with Roman culture and Roman social practice. This process was traditionally labeled Romanization by historians, although the term is today considered too one-sided as it obscures the diversity of local responses to Roman rule. One notable reaction to the arrival of the Romans was resistance or violent uprising.[36] The attempt to assimilate various individuals was also part of Roman imperial strategies, and men from around the Empire were brought to Rome to be educated and socialized. After spending time in Rome, Juba II (see Juba (2) II), son of Juba I of Numidia, became a loyal client king in Mauretania. On the other hand, Arminius, leader of the Cherusci, led an alliance of German tribes against the Romans at the Battle of Teutoburg Forest (see teutoburgiensis, saltus) in 9 CE, having previously served in the Roman army.

Widescale population movement, as well as the increasing diversity of those serving in the Roman army (see armies, roman, monarchy to 3rd centuryCE and armies, Roman, late empire), meant individuals from a range of geographic origins can be found living throughout the Empire. The emperor Septimius Severus, himself from Lepcis Magna in Libya, notably encountered a black Roman soldier when inspecting Hadrian's Wall (Hist. Aug.*Sev*.22 *<http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/L/Roman/Texts/Historia_Augusta/Septimius_Severus*.html>*) (see wall of Hadrian). Rome itself housed an especially diverse population, a condition Juvenal bitterly lamented in a number of his *Satires* (cf. Seneca, *Cons. Helv*. 6.2–4 *<http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:stoa0255.stoa006.perseus-lat1>*). Immigrants came to Rome from throughout the Empire; there is evidence for Jewish neighborhoods in Trastevere, for example, and, although less clear, Syrians living on the Aventine and Janiculum and Egyptians in the Campus Martius.[37]

Under the Romans, the possession of Roman citizenship (see citizenship, Roman) became a major factor in defining identity, and the extension of citizenship to individuals and communities throughout the territory of Rome's control constantly reconfigured the boundaries between Romans and others. Still, racial ideas and categories persisted in Roman thought alongside citizenship designations. Thus, even as he outlined the myriad rights and shared cultural practices associated with citizenship (*civitas*), Cicero also cited the bonds of *gens*, *natio*, and *lingua* (Cic. *Off*. 1.53 *<http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:phi0474.phi055.perseus-lat1>*).[38] Cicero himself employed racial stereotypes in many of his speeches.[39] In *On the Responses of the Haruspices*, he explicitly identified what

he considered the best traits of the Spanish, Gauls, Carthaginians, Greeks, Latins, and Italians, but ultimately declared the Romans superior to all other races and nations because of their piety and relationship with the gods (19 <http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:phi0474.phi021.perseus-lat1>). Roman literature likewise portrays characters from a range of racial groups.[40] The Roman deployment of racial frameworks is especially prominent in texts that seek to distinguish Rome from its enemies, including the ethnographies discussed in "Ancient ethnography."[41] We can witness visual strategies for depicting various foreign groups in Roman art, especially on victory monuments like Trajan's column.[42]

Augustan propaganda in the second half of the 1st century BCE famously cited Cleopatra VII's racial—as well as sexual—difference when justifying Augustus' role in the civil wars following Julius Caesar's assassination (see also Augustus, Roman emperor). Cleopatra testified well to the complexity of racial identity under the Romans. The last of the Greek Ptolemaic dynasty by birth, and so portrayed as Greek in certain contexts, a racial identification as Egyptian was both actively asserted by her own cultural performances and also imposed on her by the Romans as a symbol of her debauchery.[43] Needless to say, while both processes asserted a similar conclusion, namely that Cleopatra could be considered Egyptian, Cleopatra would have interpreted the meaning of that racial identity very differently.

Roman conquest provided a major source of slaves, and Roman slavery was thus, like the Greek version, an institution infused with racial ideologies (see slavery, Roman).[44] Still, the greater attention to manumission in the Roman world suggests that the Romans did not believe certain groups were inherently servile, but rather envisioned the condition as one of circumstance. That enslaved persons, on the other hand, could mobilize around their own forms of collective identification is suggested by the fact that slave revolts took place more often under the Romans and were a source of considerable anxiety.[45]

Race in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt

Documentary evidence provides invaluable access to some of the forms and meanings of racial identity as practiced in everyday life in Egypt during the Hellenistic and Roman periods (see papyrology, Greek. Ptolemaic Egypt was home to a diverse population, especially in cities like Alexandria (see Alexandria (1)) and Memphis, although papyrologists have focused particular attention on the interactions between the two largest groups: Greek settlers (*kleruchs*) and native Egyptians.[46] While there are indications of tension, and even violence, between the two groups, there is also evidence of intermarriage, especially between Greek men and Egyptian women.[47] Racial boundaries became more rigid under Roman rule.[48] The *Gnomon of the Idios Logos* (*BGU* V 1210 <https://droitromain.univ-grenoble-alpes.fr/Negotia/Idiologi_riccobono.gr.htm>) lists a series of penalties imposed by the Romans, including those designed to curtail marriage between groups and also punish those trying to "pass" as Roman. In trying to estimate how racial identities were actually determined by Roman officials, it is notable that when the emperor Caracalla (see Aurelius Antoninus (1)) issued an edict in 215 CE seeking to expel certain Egyptians from the city of Alexandria, he instructed that "genuine" Egyptians were most readily identifiable by speech, appearance, and lifestyle (*P. Giss*. 40 ii = *Select Papyri* 215 <http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.giss;;40?rows=3&start=20&fl=id%2Ctitle&fq=series_led_path%3Ap.giss%3B*%3B*%3B*&sort=series+asc%2Cvolume+asc%2Citem+asc&p=21&t=81>).[49]

Jews among the Greeks and Romans

Greek and Roman attitudes towards Jews and ancient Judaism have been much debated (see also religion, Jewish). Ancient authors used labels like *ethnos*, *natio*, and *gens* when writing about Jewish communities, suggesting that they considered them a separate group. So, too, pagan observers regularly associated a number of distinct practices with Jews, such as isolationism, observation of the Sabbath, and proselytism (see conversion, Jewish).[50] While Jews had begun dwelling in large numbers outside Palestine beginning in 586 BCE, the Jewish diaspora, like other migrations, increased after Alexander's conquests, and Jewish communities spread throughout the ancient Mediterranean, including the Greek islands, Asia Minor, Egypt, and Syria. The Jewish community in Alexandria in Egypt served as an important center of Jewish cultural life; most Jewish texts in the diaspora were composed in Greek (see Jewish-Greek literature).

Although Jewish writers often evoked the relatively tolerant policies of the Roman emperor Augustus, the Romans seem to have become more hostile to Jewish difference over time (see also anti-Semitism, pagan).[51] The emperor Claudius' letter to the Alexandrians (see Claudius, Roman emperor) (*P. London* 6 1912 <http://www.papyri.info/ddbdp/p.lond;6;1912?rows=2&start=0&fl=id%2Ctitle&fq=series_led_path%3AP.Lond.%3B6%3B*%3B*&sort=series+asc%2Cvolume+asc%2Citem+asc&p=0&t=14>; in translation <https://www.csun.edu/~hcfll004/claualex.html>)—written in response to violent events in Alexandria beginning in 38 CE—gives a confusing, and perhaps contradictory, characterization of the Jews' rights of belonging in that city. The letter also makes unsettling reference to a plague, which many have read as a reference to Judaism itself. In 70 CE, the Romans destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem, and Jews throughout the Empire were subsequently subject to a special tax. Suetonius wrote that he recalled seeing a 90-year-old man publicly inspected for circumcision to determine if he was Jewish in light of that tax (*Domitian* 12 <http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:phi1348.abo022.perseus-lat1>). Such a scenario seems unlikely, however, and it is not entirely clear how Roman officials would have identified Jews during attempts at expulsion or in regard to the tax.[52]

Race and the Classical Tradition

Scholars working in the field of classical reception have played an important role in examining the ongoing links between race and classics.[53] In one of its earliest stages, often called *Classica Africana* <https://department.monm.edu/classics/cpl/PromotionalMaterials/Africana.htm>, classicists focused specifically on the relationship of classics to people of African descent, including the role of black classicists in the development of the field.[54] Scholars also explored the ways classical culture was read and responded to by a range of African-American and Caribbean writers.[55] Since that time, the exploration of classics in regard to those communities has continued.[56] The scope of such work has also broadened considerably to incorporate the study of classical receptions in many other parts of the world, including Africa and Latin America.[57] Classical scholars have also sought to explore the influence of classical thought on later forms of racism.[58] So, too, they have attempted to chart the contribution of classics and classical education to the practice of empire and colonialism in post-classical contexts.[59]

Beginning in 2016, a number of classical historians started calling attention to the ways the ancient Greeks and Romans were being appropriated by groups advocating white supremacy.[60] A related controversy arose in the United Kingdom in the summer of 2017 over the BBC's inclusion of a black-skinned character in a cartoon about Roman Britain.[61] Despite the prevailing assumption in such contexts that the Greeks and Romans had been white, it is actually difficult to determine what color they assigned to their appearance or skin color. For one, given the subjective nature of color perception (see colour, ancient perception of), the translation of Greek and Latin skin color terminology into modern languages is often imprecise.[62] So, too, ancient artwork does not always resolve the question, since different visual media <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/index.htm> follow their own conventions, such as the use of black to depict men's skin color and white to depict women's skin color on Athenian black figure vases <https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/vase/hd_vase.htm> (see pottery, Greek). Marble sculpture might suggest the predominance of light skin tone in antiquity, but that is often because the original paintwork applied to ancient sculpture has worn off (see sculpture, Greek, sculpture, Roman, and polychromy, sculptural, Greek and Roman).[63] The most realistic visual representations of ancient people likely come from the Fayum mummy portraits <http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/antiquity/fayum-mummy-portraits.htm> (see portraiture, Roman), which depict individuals with a range of skin tones; there is no indication that any distinction in social status attends skin color differences across the portraits. Most significantly, just as scholars concluded that black skin color did not connote the same thing in antiquity as it does in the modern world, there is no evidence that the ancient Greeks and Romans collectively identified as "white" or invested any meaning in that modern category.[64]

Primary Texts

Julius Caesar. Seven Commentaries on the Gallic War <https://www.oxfordscholarlyeditions.com/view/10.1093/actrade/9780199540266.book.1/actrade-9780199540266-book-1>. Translated by Carolyn Hammond. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008

Herodotus. The Histories <http://classics.mit.edu/Herodotus/history.html>. Translated by Aubrey De Sélincourt. Revised by John Marincola. London: Penguin Books, 2003.

Juvenal. The Satires <https://www.oxfordscholarlyeditions.com/view/10.1093/actrade/9780199540662.book.1/actrade-9780199540662-book-1>. Translated by Niall Rudd. Edited by William Barr. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

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Papyrology Online Resources

Papyrology Home Page <https://users.drew.edu/~jmuccigr/papyrology/> (with links to online archives)

Advanced Papyrological Information System <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/a/apis>

Sourcebooks in Translation

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Links to Digital Materials

The Image of the Black in Western Art <http://www.imageoftheblack.com/> project.

An exchange on "the colorblind bard <https://newcriterion.com/blogs/dispatch/colorblind-bard-exchange>."

Everyday Orientalism <https://everydayorientalism.wordpress.com/>, a platform for reflecting on how history and power shape the perception of others.

Eidolon <https://eidolon.pub/>, an online journal with a range of articles exploring the links between race and classics.

Pharos <http://pages.vassar.edu/pharos/>, a site that tracks the appropriation of Greece and Rome by hate groups.

Claiming the Classical <https://gallery.mailchimp.com/e4b7257bd19a17701886e8617/files/a07d8ce5-a078-47cd-9f90-c50f0e8d090d/MAC_SWEENEY_ET_AL_Claiming_the_Classical.pdf>,

on the global use of classics in contemporary political discourse.

Celebrating African American Classicists <https://classicalstudies.org/scs-blog/nina-papathanasopoulou/blog-classics-everywhere-celebrating-african-american-classicists>,

on the Society for Classical Studies Blog.

Eos <https://www.eosafricana.org/>, an organization promoting the study of Africana receptions of Greece and Rome.

The Asian and Asian American Classical Caucus <https://www.aaaclassicalcaucus.org/>.

The Mountaintop Coalition <https://www.mountaintopcoalition.org/>.

Classics and Social Justice <https://classicssocialjustice.wordpress.com/home/>, including syllabi and outreach outside the academy.

Classics at the Intersections: Teaching Resources <https://rfkclassics.blogspot.com/p/teaching-race-and-ethnicity.html>.

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