

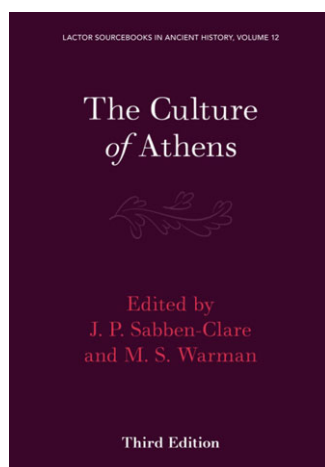
## Book Review

### The Culture of Athens

Sabben-Clare (J. P.), Warman (M.S.) (edd.)  
(LACTOR Sourcebooks in Ancient History, Volume 12), pp. 164. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023 (Third Edition). Paper, £15.99. ISBN: 978100938134

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*The Culture of Athens* is a sourcebook providing the reader with a collection of written sources pertaining to the lives of Athenians living in the 5th century BC. Originally designed to be used alongside the JACT Ancient History syllabus, the book provides a range of primary literary and epigraphical sources related to a broad variety of subjects grouped into chapters covering: Attica, society, civic life, education, religion, the arts, the sciences, philosophy, sport and recreation. The

breadth of the material found in this volume ought to make it a useful resource for many wishing to offer students access to

primary sources on Athenian life in the 5th century BC. Since Athens in the 5th century features prominently in both GCSE and A Level syllabuses, *The Culture of Athens* is a resource which many Classics teachers will find useful to some degree. It should be noted that the sources used in the book are largely restricted to those which, as articulated by Sabben -Claire in the introduction, are not easily available in translation. Although this decision does contribute to some of the individual topics seeming to be quite sparse in terms of content, it is a valid one, and makes it easier for the reader to come across sources which they might not be overly familiar with and to find new content to introduce to their classes.

The book's broad scope naturally will mean that only certain parts of it will be of use to individual teachers. For instance, for those teaching the OCR GCSE Myth and Religion syllabus, the chapter containing material on the arts and sports and recreation might be of particular use, whilst these teachers may also find the chapter on religion to be useful. In terms of the arts, the book presents material on the City Dionysia, whilst the sports and recreation chapter includes sources on the Greater Panathenaia. Given OCR's requirement for candidates to be able to utilise primary sources to achieve results in the upper bands of 15-mark questions, *The Culture of Athens* will give teachers a quick and easy way to introduce such primary sources to students, potentially cutting down planning time to some extent. The value of this book to an individual teacher will therefore vary depending on the amount of content which that teacher covers. As somebody who does not teach an A Level syllabus, for instance, only the chapters previously mentioned as directly relevant to the Myth and Religion syllabus would be used by myself in my planning. Whilst I am glad to have access to this volume, it would not be a book the purchase of which I would necessarily prioritise. It should be stressed that this is not a comment on the volume's quality, but a natural consequence of the book's format. The more content on Athens which an individual teaches, the more valuable it will be to that individual.

doi:10.1017/S2058631024001120