

The paper promotes creativity and balance amid unprecedented variety. It builds upon the set of contributions with the theme “Ancient Geography in the Twenty-First Century Classroom” published electronically in the Committee’s *Occasional Papers* (vol. 3, 2006). State-of-the-art tools and techniques introduce extraordinary sophistication into the maps and associated materials now available; some evaluation of their use in the classroom is offered. Among these remarkable resources are re-creations of battles (e.g. Cannae) that convey their successive crucial stages; Google Earth and its ‘Ancient Rome’ layer; Stanford’s digital Marble Plan of Rome [<http://formaurbis.stanford.edu>]; the Peutinger Map deconstructed into its cartographic components; and the routes on the Peutinger Map, as well as in Roman itineraries, traced out on a mosaic of geo-registered *Barrington Atlas* raster maps.

At the same time, by contrast, there is recognition that cartography of lasting value continues to be produced only in a traditional print format (e.g. *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* and now Neue Pauly’s 2007 *Historischer Atlas der antiken Welt*). Moreover for many students – especially in introductory classes that rove rapidly across vast swathes of space and time – the primary need remains basic orientation in a bewildering, unfamiliar physical and cultural landscape. The Persian Wars, Alexander’s conquests, Augustus’ initiatives to extend Roman rule, and Diocletian’s provincial reorganization are but four of many key developments that must be visualized cartographically to become meaningful. Wall-maps were once the principal tool for the purpose in large classes, but few students seated further back than the third row could ever learn much from them, and recent production has proven limited and unsatisfying. While there remains a valid role for such print products in certain contexts, experimental alternatives that tap digital technology are now emerging.

Here lies the importance of the set of seven large overview maps newly produced by the Ancient World Mapping Center both in hardcopy (5-6 x 3-5 ft.) and in pdf for projection, based upon satellite images (in the public domain) with physical landscape restored to its ancient aspect. Their versatility for class use is illustrated. These maps may form a viable platform for advancing (as already urged in 2006, above) to the establishment of a ‘GIS Clearinghouse’ that enables instructors and students themselves to create their own maps tailored to individual class or project requirements. Such a facility could provide an invaluable extension of print ancient history atlases designed for students’ reference.