Urban History
Athens ~ Greece

Neolithic Athens

- Founded on the Acropolis ("high city") between 3rd and 4th centuries BCE
  - Natural defensive position
- 20 kilometers or 12 miles inland from Saronic Gulf
  - Center of Cephisian Plain
  - Fertile ground
  - Eridanus River flows through the city
- Transportation, water supply, food supply
- The Agora located 400 meters or 1,312 feet north of Acropolis
  - Commercial and social center
- Pnyx Hill in the western part of the city
  - Assembly
Population of Neolithic Athens

- Beginning of the Peloponnesian War – 431 BCE
  - 360,000 to 610,000 total
    - 40,000 male citizens
    - Voting power and ability to be elected into office
    - 100,000 male citizen family members
    - Women and children
    - 70,000 metics
      - No citizen rights; paid to live in the city
    - 150,000 to 400,000 slaves
      - based on Thucydides

Roman Athens

- 2nd century BCE to 529 CE
- Athenian houses demolished – 88 to 85 BCE
  - Monuments and schools left intact
    - Left as a free city because of its widely accredited education system
- Emperor Hadrian
  - Library, gymnasium, aqueduct, temples, sanctuaries, etc.
  - Financed the finishing of the Temple of Zeus
Byzantine Athens

- 529 CE to 1205 CE
- Pagan temples converted into churches
  - Parthenon
- Athens reduced to a shadow of its former self
  - Raids
    - Slavs, Avars, Turks
  - No longer important in trade world

Latin Athens

- 1205 to 1458
- Replaced Byzantium as the capital of Latin Empire
  - Agora returned as commercial and social center of Greece
- Once Thebes was possessed by Latin Dukes, it overtook Athens as capital of empire
  - Athens remained influential ecclesiastical center
- Burgundian period
  - Under the Burgundian dukes, a bell tower was added to the Parthenon.
  - Chivalry and tournaments
  - Fortified the Acropolis
- Catalan period
  - The Acropolis was further fortified
- Florentine period
  - Florentines disputed the city with the Republic of Venice
  - Emerged victorious after seven years of Venetian rule
  - Remained under Latin rule until Ottoman Turks rose to power
Ottoman Athens

- Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II the Conqueror – 1458
  - Forbid any pillaging of the ancient buildings
  - Parthenon became main mosque
- Turkish presence
- Population decline
- Unintentional destruction – 1687
  - Parthenon and Propylaea
  - Gun powder storage
  - Lightning and misfire
- Intentional destruction – 1688
  - Fire throughout the city
  - Monuments destroyed
  - Provided material for protective walls
- Independence – 19th century
  - Lord Byron
  - Funding
  - 1833
  - Ottomans relinquish power
  - Kingdom of Greece formed

Modern Athens

- 1832 – Prince of Bavaria named King – Otto
  - Took on Greek customs and Greek spelling of his name – King Othon
- Population – 19th century
  - 4,000 to 5,000 distributed near today’s Plaka district
- Athens named official Greek capital – 19th century
  - History and sentimental reasons
    - Education center of the Ancient world
    - Commercial and social center of Ancient Greece

Population of Modern Athens

- 20th century
  - Greco-Turkish War – 1919 to 1922
    - Population explosion in city as a result of refugees from Asia Minor
    - Suburbs created
    - Nea Ionia and Nea Smyrni
  - Population Exchange – 1923
    - Turkey and Greece
    - Greek Orthodox followers in Asia Minor were to move into Greece. Muslims were to move from Greece into Turkey
    - 500,000 “Turks” from Greece and 1,500,000 “Greeks” from Asia Minor
  - WWII
    - Fighting between the Communist followers and Royalists (back by the British)
    - Diminished population
  - Post WWII
    - Migrants from surrounding villages and the Cyclades looking for work
Population of Modern Athens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>City population</th>
<th>Urban population</th>
<th>Metro population</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>4,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>44,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>123,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1921 (Pre-Population exchange)</td>
<td>473,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1921 (Post-Population exchange)</td>
<td>718,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>867,023</td>
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<td>1981</td>
<td>885,737</td>
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<td>1991</td>
<td>772,072</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,444,358</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>745,514</td>
<td>3,130,841</td>
<td>3,761,810</td>
</tr>
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Modern Athens

- Greece entered the EU in 1981
- Backed by EU funds
  - Built a new international airport
  - Instilled new metro transit system
  - Tackled air pollution
    - One of the worse places in the world
    - Restricted car use in center of the city
      - Daktylos Ring
    - Aided in slowing the corrosion of the ancient monuments
    - As a result, city awarded the 2004 Olympic Games
      - Wanted the 1996 Olympics