

# Ancient Rome: Study Guide

## Introduction to Rome

### Geographic Appeal of Rome

- on a peninsula
  - harder to attack
  - easier trade (by sea)
  - prompted a strong navy
  - fish was constant food source
- much more united than Greece (Greece was an arpelegio)
- inland enough to stop pirates (15 miles)
- built on the Tiber River, good freshwater source
- built on seven hills for easier defense
- crossroads between East and West
- moderate climate like Greece

### Founding of Rome

- Indo-European speakers migrated and created upper warrior class
- nomadic/clan-like society at first, many warrior tribes
- Phoenicians were
  - wealthy
  - sea-faring
  - shipbuilding
  - people who invented purple dye
  - people who influenced Roman alphabet
  - also known as Palestine, Israel, Canaan, the “Land of Milk and Honey”
- Etruscans
  - lived north of Rome
  - established a monarch
  - influenced Rome’s language
  - taught Romans engineering and water control/drainage
  - created idea of urban life
  - were good weapon makers
  - wore the toga
- Greeks
  - cultivated olives and vines before the Romans
  - influenced Roman alphabet
  - gave artistic, cultural models of of fine arts and architecture
- in 509 B.C. the Roman Republic was founded
- according to legend, Romulus and Remus founded Rome:
  - raised by she-wolf
  - stood on the seven hills
  - Romulus killed Remus and named the city of Rome after himself

## The Republic

## Introduction to the Republic

- republic means “concern of the people”, is an indirect democracy like the U.S.
  - democracy means “power to the people” (Greeks)
- government positions:
  - all positions were, at the end of the Republic, allowed to be held by either class
  - consul
    - 2 most powerful rulers of Rome
    - lead the government and the military
    - one year term
  - praetor
    - 2 judges of Rome
    - commanded Rome when consuls were absent
  - quaestor
    - official of Rome who controlled finances
  - aedile
    - official that maintained public buildings
  - tribunes of the plebs
    - ten officials to protect the rights of the plebs
  - censors
    - officials who led the census of Rome
  - Senate
    - most powerful assembly that was the main power behind Rome
    - 300 (later 900) people, whose word was as powerful as law
  - Centuriate Assembly
    - council that had the right to elect higher officials
    - made of patricians
  - Council of the Plebs
    - council that had the right to make laws binding to all people
    - made of the plebs
- from 509-27B.C.
  - from overthrowing of last Etruscan king
  - to beginning of Augustus’s reign and the beginning of the Pax Romana
- engaged in war for the first two centuries - where the beliefs of Rome originated
- Livy tried teaching Romans what made them great, such as the story of Cincinnatus
- devised the Roman Confederation
  - some people (especially Latins) had full citizenship
  - most remaining communities were allies (provide soldiers, taxes) that could run their own governments without interference
- very successful because:
  - good diplomats
  - cruel or firm
  - accomplished, diligent soldiers
  - very practical (built great infrastructure)
  - strong beliefs:
    - strengths:
      - government
      - law

- engineering
- values
  - courage
  - dedication
  - determination

### **Cincinnatus (by Livy)**

- Rome in “state-of-emergency”, needed dictator for efficient ruling
- Cincinnatus on 3-acre farm, called upon by Senate for help
- raised an army, defeated the enemy, and resigned within 15 days
- his accepted position’s term was six months, but he retired to farm
- shows that:
  - not all power comes with wealth
  - not all powerful people are corrupted
  - duty, humbleness, and powers of Roman ideals
- he was a patrician, a Senator

### **Consuls**

- 2 leaders elected annually to rule Rome (run government and lead military)
- similar to president and vice president
- most important and powerful leaders of Rome were consuls, including the members of First Triumvirate
- chief diplomats

### **Senate**

- body of 300 (raised to 900 by Caesar) that ruled the Republic (lost some power under emperors)
- couldn’t make laws, but decrees were still as powerful as law

### **Social Classes**

- patrician class
  - the wealthy people
  - landowners
  - originally only patricians could become the highest officials
- plebeian class
  - the poorer people
  - merchants
  - poorer landowners
  - craftspeople
  - small farmers
- struggle for equality
  - both were citizens:
    - both fought in wars
    - both paid taxes
    - both could vote
  - centuries-long struggle for equality ended in plebeian victory
  - tribunes for the plebs and Council of the plebs created to protect their rights
  - eventually had all the rights of patricians, so they were supposed to be equal under the law by 287 B.C., but they never really became equal
    - it was always biased in favor of the wealthy

- patronage system:
  - votes for legal protection
  - a hierarchy- the richest and most powerful stayed that way

### **Women and Slaves**

- didn't have many rights at first
  - Etruscans established a patriarchal system over Rome, major idea behind Rome
  - gained rights over time
- slaves supported Rome for centuries
- lots of slaves (~2 million, 1/4 of the population)
- slaves were completely dependant on owners
- slaves rarely escaped

### **Twelve Tables**

- 450 B.C.
- first attempt to create code of law
- by ten men, binding to both classes
- consuls had to enforce it

### **Roman Citizenship**

- Romans did two things when conquering
  - a. first, they threatened annihilation
  - b. then, they showed justice if the city acknowledged and resigned to their power
    - they gave them partial or full citizenship
- had to supply soldiers and pay taxes
- backing of most powerful military
- Twelve Tables to protect rights
- lighter taxes (than non-citizens)
- Roman courts
- access to public grain

### **Punic Wars**

#### **First**

- 264-261 B.C.
- Carthaginians of North Africa became commercial rivals with Rome in 300 B.C., very powerful and rich, great navy
- tried to conquer Sicily, but Rome helped Greece
- Rome had to build navy, and won the battle
- gained Sicily, important to them because of proximity

#### **Second**

- 218-201 B.C.
- Hannibal led troops down from Spain through the Alps to Rome, Rome lost many battles but kept their city
- Scipio led army to Carthage, defeated Carthage, destroyed their navy, and gained Spain
- effectively destroyed the power of Carthage

#### **Third**

- 149-146 B.C.
- destruction of Carthage
- Rome saw it as an emerging threat, so they made sure it was gone

- much wealth and slaves to Rome
- gained northern Africa, controlled entire western Mediterranean

## Fall of the Republic

### Last Voices of the Republic

Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus (The Gracchi Brothers)

- grandsons of Scipio
- rich patricians, both became Tribunes of the plebs because they were champions of the plebs
- Tiberius returned land to the plebs from the patricians
- Gaius stored grain from good years for bad years of the plebs
- got patricians extremely angry at them
- killed when leading revolts against Roman government
- tried to close gap of economic polarity
- last ones to make reforms to the government before the empire

Cicero

- conservative of the Republic- liked old Roman ways
- thought that a dictatorship would be rash and that was not the idea that Rome was founded on
- last important Republican voice left
- killed by Marc Antony, hands and head put on a podium, threat to new ideas
- a great orator, liked rhetoric and philosophy
- actually invited to enter first Triumvirate, but declined- he was exiled but then pardoned

### First Triumvirate

- Julius Caesar, Crassus, Pompey - three most powerful men in Rome
- well liked, rich, and good military
- ruled over Rome even after their consulships expired
- joined together to overcome Senate
- Crassus died first, then Pompey by Caesar, then Caesar died, leading to second triumvirate

Julius Caesar

- “master of propaganda” similar to Octavian, so was extremely popular
- gained wealth and military experience
- gained a lot of wealth and land and soldiers for Rome from Gaul
- created military dictatorship to overrule Senate
- gained and defeated many enemies of Rome
- nephew and adopted son was Octavian
- killed by Brutus and Senators who hated him for attempting to end the Republic
- in first Triumvirate with Crassus and Pompey - made them popular, lasted longest
- killed Pompey by chasing him to Egypt, killed on a statue of Pompey
- Senate caused him to lead civil war against Pompey and city of Rome - he defeated Rome
- very dishonest, corrupted by money, very ruthless
- conquered Gaul to accumulate wealth, power (loyal army), and fame (defeating long-enemy of Rome)
- Crassus tried to get fame in the same way, died in battle, Pompey alone in Rome
- Senate decreed Julius enemy of Rome - he knew it
  - when he crossed the Rubicon, he told his troops “the die is cast!” - there was no turning back - he couldn’t lose his reputation
- ensured Cleopatra’s rule over Egypt, returned to Rome as dictator-for-life, all honors on him as an absolute dictator

- many people were insulted, people killed him, left power vacuum of second Triumvirate

#### Pompey (the Great)

- member of the first Triumvirate
- great military general
- “friend” of Caesar, was pitted against him by Senate
- could not defend Rome - too hectic - and fled to Egypt
- Pharaoh Ptolemy of Egypt beheaded him, sent his head to Caesar to try to appease him
- Caesar died on statue of Pompey
- Crassus was third member of Triumvirate: he burnt down houses, and renovated them for a profit

#### Second Triumvirate

- Octavian, Marc Antony, and Marcus Lepidus
- good speaker, good military
- Octavian and Marc Antony bound together to overcome Senate
- Marcus Lepidus resigned in fear
- Octavian killed Marc Antony, proceeded to become first emperor

#### Marc Antony

- member of second Triumvirate
- best friend of Julius Caesar and was his bodyguard
- led astray by accomplices when Caesar was killed
- underestimated Octavian as a little naive boy
- took eastern provinces of Rome, and Octavian took west
- married Cleopatra, had children with her, Romans were disgusted
- Octavian created faults about him, plotted civil war against him
- committed suicide when surrounded and defeated by Octavian
- killed Cicero defeated Crassus's and Brutus's revolts against Rome

#### Cleopatra

- smart woman and politician, cunning and seductive
- had child with Julius and multiple with Marc Antony (Octavian killed Julius's one)
- power secured over her brother to become ruler of Egypt by Julius Caesar, who favored her
- when Caesar died, started forming relationship with Marc Antony to achieve power over Rome
- wanted to secure Egypt's power and wealth in Rome for the long term
- disgusted Romans - got Marc Antony killed
  - Romeo and Juliet love story based on their story
- went back to Rome with Octavian to try and persuade him to release her and Egypt - committed suicide
- Egypt became province of Rome (“the breadbasket of the Mediterranean”), made Rome wealthy

#### Octavian

- underestimated by Marc Antony, proceeded to become first emperor
- declared war on Antony after he was acquainted with Cleopatra
- in 29 he established a new government on Rome so that much was similar (still had a Senate, courts, assemblies, officials), and he did not use military force openly
- granted himself (from Senate) many important, powerful powers that ultimately led to his becoming of a dictator
- avoided titles of dictatorship, but took the title “Augustus” and “princeps”, meaning first citizen, to avoid Julius's fate
- master of propaganda - people liked him as memories of civil war faded
- beginning of Empire and the Pax Romana
- the first emperor

# The Roman Empire

## Pax Romana

- literally “Roman Peace”
- 200 years (27 B.C. to 180 A.D.)
  - from beginning of reign of Augustus (first emperor)
  - to death of Marcus Aurelius (last “great emperor”)
- time of relative tranquility and no threat of destruction
- honored Republican ideals, but put competent officials up
- revived religion
- adopted children to avoid war when transitioning power
- empire expanded to Trajan’s rule
- officials more closely watched
- citizens and provincial people held less differences
- free market economy (supply and demand)
- roads, ships used for trade, easy travel
- most emperors were mature, great men who sought to improve Rome

## Roman Emperors

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1G07CQTOh2YUa1wZO-A1O4W94BT0Iz7Grs6wIXZjt2QM/edit>

# Monotheism

## History and Importance

- Rome originally polytheistic like Greeks and Etruscans - monotheism didn’t really exist yet
- polytheism was a belief in many gods and divine spirits, especially those of nature
  - local entities - reduced their power
  - frequently unreliable
  - distant, non-personal
- monotheistic god is exclusive, solves problems of polytheism
  - all-powerful
  - only one to adore
  - omnipresent
  - omniscient
  - personal but also saves the whole world
- based on the Jewish covenant: if they believed in him as their only savior and most powerful being, he would help them with divine favors and deliverance (escape from enslavement)
- gave people a set of ethics (including moral, spiritual)
- all the monotheistic religions based on those: impacts billions worldwide
- Judaism: small religion, 20 million people
  - Yahweh is god, Torah is book
  - original monotheism
  - Abraham of 2000 B.C. from Arabia, Ur (Mesopotamia)
  - Moses of 1300 B.C. led out of enslavement from Egypt
    - met with God on top of Mount Sinai
    - got Covenant and Ten Commandments (the code of ethics)
  - Joshua crossed river, fought with Canaanites and Philistines for the promised land

- after 200 years, King David won
  - diaspora (spreading of Jews) caused by destruction of King Solomon's temple by Babylonians
- Jews disregard Christians, Muslims
- Christians hate Jews and Muslims
- Muslims accept Christians, Jews (as lesser forms)
- Hebrew = Israelite = Jew
- Abraham is biblical patriarch
- shapes most of the world today
- Hebrews originally nomadic shepherds
- Abraham patriarch, led people from Ur
  - father of Judaism, making covenant
  - descendants of him and Sarah included Isaac, Jacob, and eventually Jesus
  - descendants of him and Hagar led to Ishmael, and eventually Muhammad
- own government based on Christian principles
- Israel established
- results of Hebrewism: monotheism, code of Ethics
- all fight in Jerusalem, a holy city for all

### **Rise of Christianity**

- born in 4 B.C. in Bethlehem, Judea, as a Jew
- did not try to create a separate branch of religion, but tried to improve the ideas behind Judaism
- fled to Egypt during "slaughter of the innocents" - the king worried about him
- actual teachings were not offensive, but his existence as the son of God was
- conflict with conservative Jews and Romans
- Jews condemned him first for blasphemy, left him alone
- Romans put him on Trial by Pilate, found him innocent
- Romans choose him to die over the mass murderer Barabbas
- faith in Jesus is huge, extremely strong
- refused to worship emperor as god, thought of as treason
- a lot of people died for this, thinking that life after death is so much better (Heaven)
- early Roman emperors (e.g. Tiberius) persecuted Christians wrongly
- later ones did not (Constantine, Theodosius)
- Christianity used as a unifying force, replace Roman pagan gods
- Nero blamed Great Fire of Rome on Them

## **Fall of Rome**

### **Main Causes**

- too large, citizens not protected
  - Hadrian attempted to stop this by building a wall and stopping the expansion of Rome
- army chose emperors, more of a military dictatorship
- local leaders started breaking off from Rome
- Eastern Rome became stronger than Western Rome
- taxes high, debts unpaid
- trade routes damaged by war
- regulation of business by emperors failed
- economic polarity increased
- Roman soldiers not loyal

- “salad bowl: of religions and cultures of new people into Roman were not loyal to Rome, but their own cultures and beliefs
- troops deserted as they lost patriotism
- Christianity preached against the emperor worship and killing that strengthened Rome
- the number of slaves and unemployed citizens grew
- health and birth rates declined (from poisoning of pewter bowls, lead pipes)
- invaders killed Romans, Rome could not defend itself, then stormed Rome
- barbarians took over western Rome, and the city of Rome
- Rome disregarded barbarians earlier, did not stop their threat