

# Chapter 5: Ancient Rome and the Rise of Christianity

509 BC-AD 476



# Geography

- Like Greece **Italy is a peninsula.**
- Not broken into small valleys
- Apennine **Mts run down the length** of the peninsula and are **less rugged** than the Mts of Greece.
- **Broad fertile plains** in the north and the west-  
**support** growing **population**

# Origins

- **800 BC Latins** arrive along the **Tiber River**
- 7 small villages on seven small hilltops-Rome “**the city on 7 hills**”
- Twin Brothers, **Romulus and Remus**, sons of a **Latin woman** and the **war god, Mars**, founded Rome
- Belief in **Divine origin**.



# Early Italian Peninsula

- **Greek colonists** lived in city-states in the south
- **Etruscans** lived in the North



# Early Italian Peninsula

- Rome adopted the **alphabet** from the Etruscans who had learned it from the **Greeks**.
- Learned the **arch** in construction
- Used engineering techniques to **drain the marshy lands** along the Tiber.
- Adopted some **Etruscan gods and goddesses** and **merged** them with Roman deities.

# Early Italian Peninsula

- Rome **drove out Etruscan rule by 509 BC-this Roman state would last 500 years.**
- Government called in Latin a **res publica**, or **“that which belongs to the people.”**
- **People chose some officials** so nobody could gain too much power.

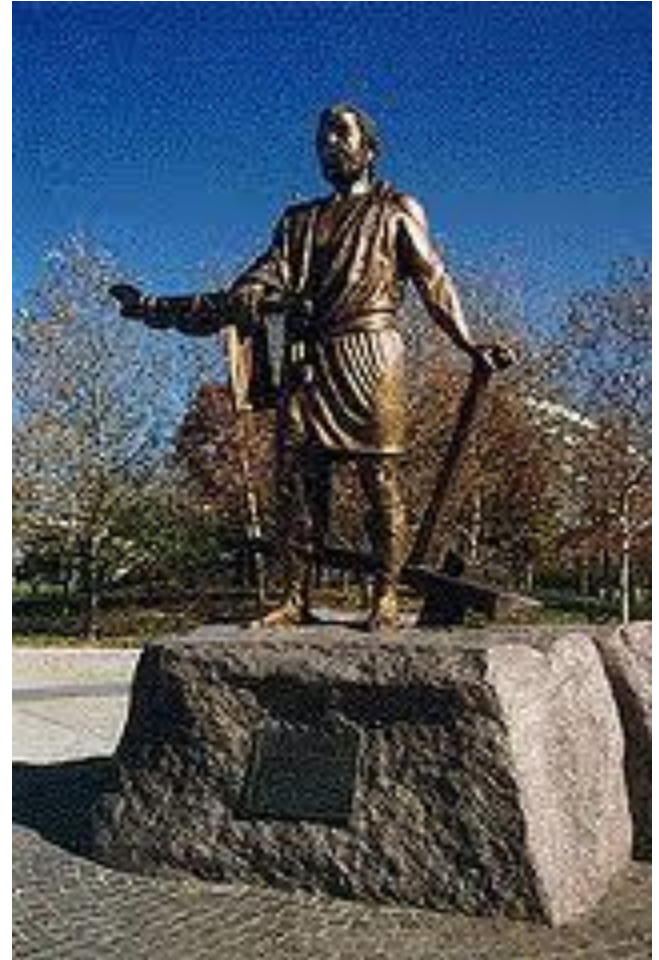
# Early Roman Republic

- Originally **300 members of the senate:**  
**Patricians-land holding upper class**
- Each year **two consuls** from the **patrician** class-  
consuls **supervise govt business** and **commanded armies**



# Early Roman Republic

- A **dictator** was chosen in the **event of war-term limit of 6 months.**
- **Cincinnatus**-model dictator. He organized an army, led to a victory, attended a celebration, and was back on his farm in **15 days.**



# Early Roman Republic

- **Plebeians-farmers, merchants, and artisans** had citizenship, but little influence.
- Gained the **right to elect their own tribunes** to protect interest and **veto laws harmful to plebeians.**
- The **Laws of the Twelve Tablets-made it possible for plebeians to appeal court decisions.**
- **US Constitution** modeled after the Roman ideas of **senate, veto, and checks on political power**

# Early Roman Republic

- **Male**, head of household, had **absolute power**.
- **Women** could **own property**, run **businesses**.
- **Wealthy** Romans **hired tutors** for their children, memorized **Roman history**.
- Future **politicians** studied **rhetoric**.
- Romans were **polytheistic-Greek gods-Roman names**

# Early Roman Republic

- Romans **first conquered the Etruscans and then the Greek city-states.**
- Roman **Legions** consisted of **5000 men. Citizen soldiers---** small stipend--mostly spoils of war
- Taught **loyalty and obedience--** also harsh punishment
- Bravery was rewarded
- A disgraced unit saw 1 of every 10 men put to death.



# Early Roman Republic

- **Conquered people** had to **acknowledge Roman leadership, pay taxes, and supply soldiers, but kept their own customs, money, and local govt.**
- **Some** groups received **full citizenship**-other partial citizenship--even marry a Roman or trade in Rome.
- **Generous policies** kept **conquered land loyal** even in troubled times.

# Early Roman Republic

- **Soldier were posted throughout the land-military roads link territories.**
- **Local people incorporated Latin in their languages as trade increased.**
- **Slowly Italy united under Roman Rule.**



# Rome-Republic to Empire

- 1. Generals and Senators **compete for power**
- 2. **Civil Wars ensue** because of the competition



# 1st Triumvirate

- **-3 powerful individuals**
- 1. **Pompey**-a general-the muscle-takes Spain
- 2. **Marcius Lucius Crassus**-richest man in Rome-the money-takes Syria
- 3. **Julius Caesar**-young general-the mouth-takes Gaul



# 1st Triumvirate

- Crassus dies 53 BC-Senators support Pompey and vote for Caesar to give up his command.
- Caesar and his loyal army illegally **cross the Rubicon River and march into Rome**, defeats Pompey and becomes **Dictator from 49 (47)-44 BC**.

# Reforms of Caesar

- 1. **Redistributes land** to poor
- 2. **Grants citizenship** to newly acquired peoples
- 3. **Unites empire** by allowing provinces a stake in the empire
- 4. Public **building projects** help reduce unemployment (FDR)
- 5. **Increase pay** for soldiers
- 6. **Julian calendar**
- 7. **Restricts importation of slaves** into city of Rome



# Caesar

- Absolute power-**wore purple** as if a **king**-opposition appears in the Senate-fear of a dynasty
- **March 15, 44 BC-Ides of March**
- **Brutus**, his best friend, and a group of men **stab Caesar to death** as he entered the Senate-
- “Et tu Brute?”-Civil War ensues
- Prior to his death, Caesar adopted his **grandnephew-Octavian**-18 years old (he claimed to have no son, but most likely had a son with Cleopatra of Egypt.)

# 2nd Triumvirate

- 1. **Octavian**
- 2. **Marc Antony**-asst. to Caesar-**allies with Egypt**
- 3. Marcus Lepidus-commander of the cavalry  
(not a contender)
- Octavian's army smashed **Antony and Cleopatra** who flee back to Egypt and **commit suicide one year later. Octavian, 32, sole supreme rule** over the Roman world-**ended the civil war** and the republic

# Age of Augustus

- Octavian returns some power to the Senate but **maintains absolute power.**
- Offers to resign, but the **Senate wants him** to keep the empire stable
- Awarded the title “**Augustus**” (**exalted one**) he prefers Principis-meaning 1st citizen
- **After 100 years of civil war, peace is achieved-Pax Romana-Roman peace 27 BC-180 AD**

# Reforms

- 1. Maintained a **standing army** of 28 legions, 150,000 men (only citizens)
- 2. Subject peoples could serve in **aux. forces**-130,000 men
- 3. **Praetorian guard**-9,000 men-guard **the emperor**
- 4. Augustus had **power to overrule the senatorial governors** and establish unity in politics
- 5. **Stabilized the frontiers** of Roman Empire (failed to conquer Germanic tribes)
- 6. A complete **census** was taken so taxes could be set fairly



# Augustus

- Augustus **dies of old** age-4 members of his family (or adoptive family succeed him)
- 1. **Tiberius and Claudius-dedicated to peace**
- 2. **Caligula and Nero-viewed as insane**
- Caligula appoints his **favorite horse to the senate**
- **64 AD fire destroys Rome under Nero**
- **68 AD Nero commits suicide**

# Outstanding emperors:

- Trajan, Spaniard-empire reaches largest size;
- **Hadrian**-issued laws protecting women, children, and slaves-**Hadrian's wall** in Britain;
- Marcus Aurelius-educated-study more than fight



# Roman Achievement

- “Greek has conquered her crude conqueror.”
- Virgil, “**The Aeneid**”: Roman equivalent to Homer
- Romans adopt **Greek philosophy**-stoicism; concern for all people, ...Emperor **Marcus Aurelius** is an example of a great Roman thinker.

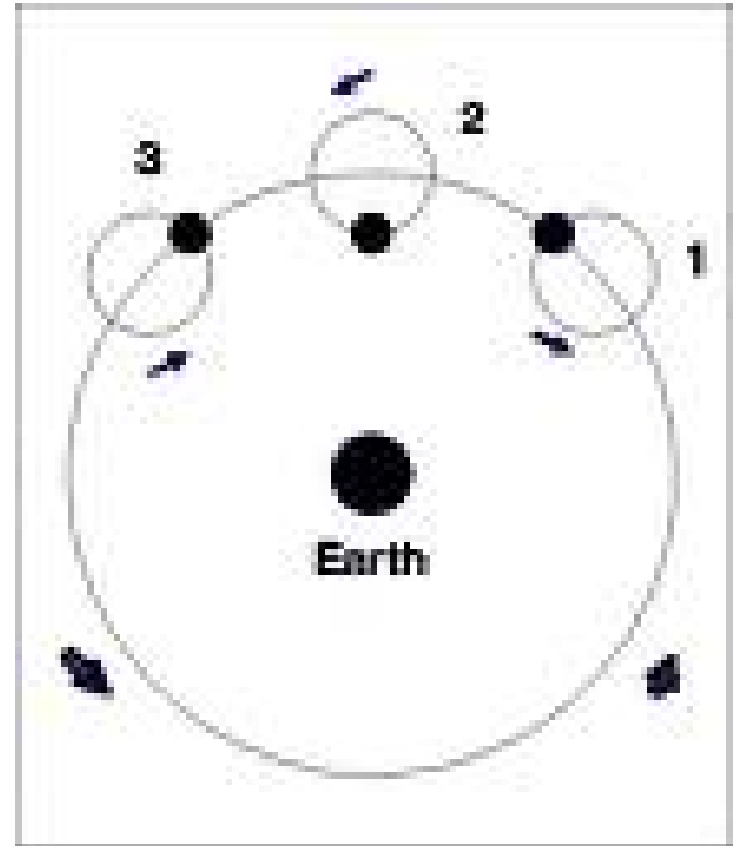


# Roman Achievement

- **Mosaic Art:** picture made from **chips of colored stone or glass.**
- Roman engineering excelled. They built **roads, bridges, harbors, and aqueducts;** **wealthy people had water piped to their houses and each community had public baths.**

# Roman Achievement

- **Ptolemy-Geocentric Universe-accepted for the next 1500 years.**
- **Civil Law ruled citizens- non citizens not covered.**
- **Two systems merged Law of Nations ruled both-citizenship was extended to all under Roman rule**



# Spread of Christianity

- Christianity/Judaism
- **Pharisees**-well educated in law, scholars, detailed religious **leaders-study the Torah-holy book**
- **Essenes**-awaited a Messiah to usher in the kingdom of God, paradise on Earth (1947 Dead Sea Scrolls)
- **Sadducees favored cooperation with Rome**
- **Zealots called on Jews to overthrow Roman Rule.**
- **Zealots and Essenes were waiting for a Messiah, anointed king sent by God who would soon appear to lead their people to freedom.**



# Spread of Christianity

- **AD 66 Diaspora (scattering), a Jewish rebellion arose, was defeated, and the Romans destroyed the temple, many Jews left their homeland.**
- **Jews did not regain their homeland, but religious teachers called rabbis kept their religion alive.**



# Jesus of Nazareth

- Story told by **gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John**
- Jesus was born about 4 BC in Bethlehem
- He was a **descendant of King David** of Israel
- He recruited **12 disciples** to help him in his mission. They were called **apostles**.



# Jesus of Nazareth

- He preached the beliefs of Judaism. He also referred to himself as the **“Son of God”** according to his disciples.
- Jesus was **sentenced to death by the Romans**. **Pontius Pilot** oversaw the hearing.
- Jesus was **crucified**. According to his followers, He **rose from the dead** and **told his followers to spread the word**.

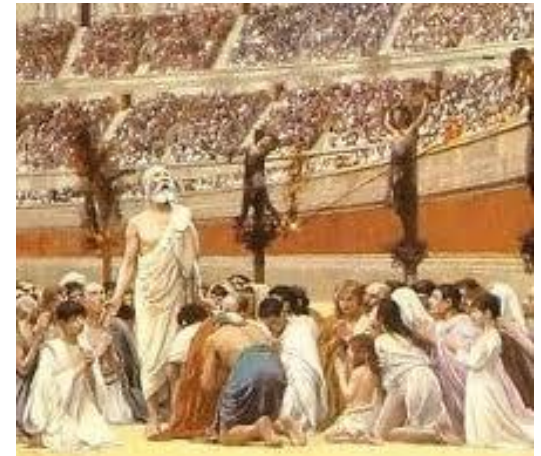


# Early Christianity

- Peter “the Rock” took Jesus’ message to Rome.
- Paul, a former Christian killer, spread the word through writings.
- Christianity was **oppressed**. Many became **Martyrs-people who suffer or die for their beliefs**.
- Christianity appealed to many. Jesus **welcomed all**. He appealed to the **poor and oppressed**. They found comfort in the message of **love, equality, dignity, and the promise of eternal salvation**.

# Early Christianity

- **Paul used ideas from Plato and the Stoics** to help spread the message. Early Christian documents were written in **Greek or Latin**. **Roman roads and waterways made the spread of Christianity efficient.**
- **Persecution of Christians ended in 313 AD**, when the emperor **Constantine issued the Edict of Milan**, granting freedom of religion in the Roman Empire.



# Early Christianity

- By the end of the century, **Theodosius made Christianity the official religion** of the Roman Empire and **repressed other** faiths.
- One had to be **baptized**, or blessed with holy water. They ate bread and drank wine as **Eucharist**.

# Early Christianity

- **Women were equal** early in the church, but they were **later barred from any official position.**
- Early **clergy were all men.** Every **diocese** had its own **priest, presided over by a bishop.** In the early Christian church, all bishops were equal. Bishops in the **Eastern Church came to be called Patriarchs.** The **bishops of Rome** came to be called **Popes.**

# Early Christianity

- Eventually, the **Latin speaking Popes claimed to be the most powerful bishops**; the **four Patriarchs** of the Eastern Church still desired **equality**.
- **Heresies, beliefs said to be contrary to official Church teachings**, caused division.
- **Augustine combined Christian doctrine with Greco-Roman learning (Plato)** to help define the early church.



# Rome: the eternal city

- **international city**-pop. grew to perhaps 5,000,000-people flock to city for **education, advancement, entertainment-**
- emperors undertook **projects to beautify the city**-rich in culture-
- **Latin language in the West-Greek in the East-** Roman culture spreads and mixes with Greek (others)-
- Huge **contrasts between the rich and poor-poor packed into tenements**

# Trade and Society

- trade flourishes-**coined money** issued
- Social Divisions: **sharp class divisions**-small **powerful business class**-
- thousands of **unemployed counted on emperor for bread**-riots-
- merchants and artisans form an **active middle class**-
- **small farmers-slaves-slavery destroy the small middle class because the wealthy would rather use slaves than pay the middle class.**



# Troubling Signs:

- **governing** such a large empire **required a great deal of money,**
- could **not rely on war loot** (no more wars), too expensive to maintain army, **reduced army size** (weakened defenses),
- **economy suffered** an unfavorable balance of trade (imported more than they exported),
- **lead was added to gold** to make more coins (devalued the coins), prices raised, increased money supply and **caused inflation.**

# Beginning of the end

- **180 AD the death of Marcus Aurelius-civil war erupts-end of Pax Romana (Augustus)**
- **No efficient system of succession-between 234-284 AD, 22-26 emperors ruled-2 died of natural causes-**
- **corruption weakens Civil Service-**
- **law and order decline-trade/commerce disrupted/decline-devalued coins-inflation-**
- **invaders attack (barbarians)**



# Reforms of Diocletian

- **284 AD-legions made Gen. Diocletian emperor-ruled as a Despot/Despotism-**
- harsh new laws meant to strengthen the empire-
- **divided the Empire in half** and took control of the **wealthier Eastern Provinces.**
- He appointed a **co-emperor** to rule the western prov.
- reorganized **civil service-enlarged the army**-trained new cavalry units-set limits on prices and **workers could not change jobs**



# Reign of Constantine

- **Diocletian ill, power struggle 312 AD  
Constantine wins-**
- **324 AD Constantine reunited eastern and western empire-**
- **built new capital of empire at Byzantium and renamed it Constantinople-influence of Rome declines (claiming Rome has a pagan past)-Constantinople is to be a Christian city (the new Rome)-**
- **after Constantine's conversion to Christianity, no more persecution of Christians)-**
- **337 AD Constantine dies-Empire splits once again-Eastern flourishes-Western collapsed**



# The Collapse

- **German Tribes:** Had **military strength**, courage, strict morality; Chiefs fight for victory-soldiers fight for chief; needed **more land for their growing pop cross into Roman Empire**
- **Huns:** from **Central Asia; superb riders and cruel warriors;** Huns are taking E. Europe under their leader, **Attila “Scourge of God”**
- **Visigoths and Ostrogoths: defeated Romans at Adrianople-** Rome is no longer an unbeatable army



# The Fall

- **476 AD** Minor German Chief **Odacer**-captures **Rome**, forced emperor to give up throne and **proclaimed himself “King of Italy”**
- The empire did not **collapse quickly-it fell gradually**: People **continued to enforce Roman law and speak Latin**

# The Fall

- **476 is the official year of Western collapse.**
- **Eastern survives for another 1000 years after Rome fell. Constantinople became a thriving area for commerce, strong civil service, and preserved Greco-Roman Civilization.**

