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Essay for Test 1

For many people Christianity and Rome might seem as something that was always together since Rome nowadays is like a center of the catholic Christianity. However, Christianity started to rise as an actual religion only during the Roman empire. So it was for a while before Rome made it way to empire and all that time people in Rome had their own values, philosophical and religious views.

Rome as the city was founded in 753 BC by two brothers at the perfect geographical location where all the roads cross. Geographical location was always a key point for the cities and countries because infrastructure was super weak and it would take weeks and months to go from one city to the other one. So Rome begun to expand and the government needed a good way of ruling to avoid different kind of conflicts. Eventually Rome become a republic – where male citizens vote not on the laws but for representatives for assemblies who was working on the laws. But still assembly did not have all the power. Wealthy landowners (Patricians) in the senate were the ones who controlled military and finance government systems. Later on plebeians wanted more rights and The Struggle of the Orders system helped them to increase their rights and power. As Rome kept growing the Roman citizenship became a privilege and everyone wanted to get one. Rome also developed very good on the military level and started to conquer lands around them starting with pushing Etruscans out. They conquered many land around Mediterranean Sea including Greek, nowadays Spain and many others. But their main rival was Carthage. Rome needed 3 Punic wars, around 2-1 BC centuries, to finally beat Carthage and get the full dominance of the Mediterranean.

Rome kept growing even more and they moved even to the east. Military became the main ideology as there was so many borders to protect and still the will to get more land. Military leader, generals went out of control. Republic system worked well but it is impossible to rule such a huge land. So Roman general Sulla showed his good military and government skills proclaimed himself as a dictator around 1st BC. Later Pompey, who colonized Spain, formed political alliance – first triumvirate, with Julio Cesar and Crassus. Cesar loved the power and in Rome proclaimed himself a dictator. After his death second triumvirate led again to the civil war and Octavian succeeded military and also won the love of the people, so he got the title of Augustus. Technically Cesar and Octavian both were trying to restore the republic, but they had so much duties in all kinds of government - military, finance, public affairs, so they actually were as Emperors. Especially Octavian, even though he rejected it. Roman empire started briefly late 1st BC and existed as a whole huge empire till around 2-3th AD. Empire did not expand a lot more, their focus was more to keep the borders from outsiders (Germans, Persians) and to keep the balance inside the Empire. During the five “good emperors” Rome had its golden ages because so much was done in all sides – science, literature and etc.

Rome power was based on military skills, whereas Christianity had moral strengthens. It has its roots in Hebrews and Jewish world. Hebrews had their own monotheistic belief and would never accept any other one. That is why they had a lot of arguments with Rome, because Rome wanted everyone to follow some of their principles. Christianity started with the birth of the Christ – messiah. For Hebrews it was a sign that they are chosen people and it changed their lives to the best side (morality). But Paul saw it as the mission for him to spread out these ideas to gentiles (non Hebrews). So this is how Christianity started to become one of the major religion – Paul was going around the empire and founded churches. People liked the Christian ideas so they followed them. They felt more self-worth and unified. Christians suffered a lot of prosecution from Rome but eventually so many people turned to the Christian religion that the whole empire became Christian with the catholic center at Rome and orthodox center at Constantinople.

The way Rome developed as a republic and then empire build their values. To keep the borders safe so many effort was towards military. All kids were raised with the focus in military. And when they grow up they are mostly proud of their military achievements, like Marcus Aurelius or Julio Cesar, not about their moral achievements. Bravery is an important characteristic for Romans, like for Cato. If they care about moral issues, like reason, it still builds up to the fact that reason gives a better opportunity to succeed and become a higher rank in government or military. Power also brings another value – money. That is why people wanted to succeed because money is everything. Romans have this willing to dominate, be better. And people want their children to be best after them – to prove their powerful name. So the family value was pretty important – Cato was raising his children to make them the best, he cares about his family. Also they are monotheistic and feel like their life is like – I want to get all the best from gods (good weather) but I will live for myself. Scarface is enough to fulfill gods. So Romans are pretty selfish, even care inside the family is still selfish as they did not care about the people around.

Christianity is super different in values from Romans religions. Christians always suffered and they believe that it will pay off after death – they will deserve to go to heaven. Christians live more not today but for tomorrow. The Jesus played a crucial role in forming the values of Christianity. His unselfishness and suffering for better living of others was like the perfect example that people should follow. So instead of fighting back if someone beats the Christian he will let them keep beating him. With the true belief that it will him to be closer to God. Because God does not like any kind of valiance. Christians are more selfless – they are ready to help everyone around. They do not just stick to their family because for Christians all people around are their family kind of. We are all sons of God. Christians are not afraid to lose something in this life because what is most important is to go to the heaven afterwards. That is why the value of money is not important. Money will not buy you the place in heaven. But good doings will. Whereas Romans try to achieve everything on this life. Christianity admires one and

only God – Lord and consider all the other Romans' gods as false gods. For Christians there is a different type of bravery. Brave is the one who faces the suffer with pride and not step back. For Romans brave is the one who fights, kills and goes for power. Christians are more united because they do not care that much about the power, they care about each other.

It is not surprising why Christianity had such a success in Roman Empire. For ordinary people who did not really succeeded in military, government – Roman values was too harsh and they felt alone. Christianity gave them an opportunity to feel not alone but part of everything. Christianity is like a total movement – for everyone (strong, weak, poor, wealthy). That is why people up Top in Rome did not like it. Because Christianity makes them look bad. Whereas ordinary people like women, farmers and etc. loved it because it made them feel better and more valuable.