

TBSRJMUN XXI

The Roman Empire Committee



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LETTER TO DELEGATES

Dear Delegates,

Our names are Santiago Iturri and Lucas Botelho and we'll be your chairs for the Roman Empire Committee. We have been working hard to provide the best committee possible for you, and after long deliberation as well as extensive amending we've decided on the Roman Empire Committee with the topics below.

Topic A, "Deciding the Leadership of the Roman Empire (government)", will have delegates use their different perspectives as leaders from different times to decide how to rule the empire. Whether this be approached through military power, political systems, or other types of changes is up to each individual emperor.

Topic B, "Discussing political reforms regarding the maintenance and future of the Roman Empire", will have delegates who will shift the focus from a power struggle to something more collaborative, wherein leader's will be expected to act diplomatically to reach a beneficial conclusion for all. Because it is set very close to the fall of the empire, research will be key for each delegate to have in mind what events they'd like to focus on to try and fix or expand upon.

We're very excited to be chairing you all and hope our study guide can help get you on the right track! If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

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Committee Description

This committee was established in 476 BC, prior to the deposition of Romulus Augustulus. The Western Roman Empire was at the brink of being destroyed when suddenly, 30 Roman figures, long dead and yet now suddenly alive, appeared at a roundtable in a space away from any civilization. Regardless of whether it was a god, or many gods who brought them together, the emperors were there for two reasons. They had to discuss which political party should rule over the empire moving forward (Topic A), and how they could save the empire from its dissolution (Topic B).

In essence, this committee's role is to bring together the multitudinous perspectives of these significant figures of Roman history, and let them decide how best to rule. It mixes the ideas of militaristic dictators, beloved peaceful reformers, and cruel rulers, as they are encouraged to reflect upon the effects they had on the empire, both good and bad.

Procedural Changes

Because this is a Special Committee there are some changes to the procedure:

- As you will be representing historical individuals (former roman leaders) rather than referring to themselves in the third person, delegates will be allowed to use personal pronouns such as: I, me, you, we, us, etc...
- Resolutions will represent agreements between emperors, and they'll hold final power in the committee. Emperors should contribute their specific knowledge to these agreements.
 - Resolutions should propose laws, but maintain normal resolution format, using operative verbs such as "Affirms" and "Designates".



Image of important roman figures

<https://imperiumromanum.pl/en/roman-constitution/roman-empire/roman-emperors/>

Topic A:

Deciding the “Great Emperor” of the Roman Empire

Background Information

Spanning more than a millennium, the Roman Empire holds an extensive and intricate history. From the rise of the first emperor in 27 BCE and culminating with the fall of the empire in 476 CE, Rome has witnessed the reign of many leaders. Today, as these former rulers are convened to decide the empire's future, we must first look back to Rome's history.

The First Triumvirate

Before the forming of the Roman Empire, the First Triumvirate took place. It was a political alliance between Julius Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus created in 60 BCE, formed due to the chaos Rome was experiencing up until that point. Through bribery, controlling elections, and threatening officials these three gained nearly full control over both the consulship and military command. Regardless of the means of their rise to power, the effect they had on Roman politics is undeniable; the willingness of the three to set aside their differences in order to achieve even greater power than they already had is an excellent demonstration of Ancient Roman political struggles. The triumvirate came to an end in 53 BCE when Crassus died attempting to incite a revolt, which led Pompey to turn on Caesar and caused the First Triumvirate to collapse.

Roman Empire (30 BCE - 284 CE)

Octavian, also known as Augustus, became the first Roman Emperor in 27 BCE after defeating Mark Antony and Cleopatra in the struggle for power following the assassination of Julius Caesar. Augustus established the Roman Empire, which saw a period of relative stability and prosperity known as the Pax Romana (Roman Peace).

During this period, the Roman Empire expanded its territorial boundaries, reaching its greatest extent under Emperor Trajan in the 2nd century CE. The empire's government was characterised by a combination of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, with the emperor holding significant power. Roman society was highly developed, with advances in art, literature, engineering, and law.

Despite its strength, however, the empire faced challenges from external threats and internal strife, including invasions by Germanic tribes and economic difficulties.

Crisis of the Third Century (235 - 284 CE)

The 3rd century CE was marked by a series of political, military, and economic crises, leading to the fragmentation of the Roman Empire. The empire experienced numerous civil wars and short-lived and ineffective usurpers: Domitian II, Tetricus I, Tetricus II, Victorinus, Marius, and Laelianus all ruled across five years. Furthermore, it's unclear what most of them did throughout their times in power, showing how little they provided to the progress of the empire.

During this period, two breakaway empires formed, as the Roman Empire was divided into the Gallic, Palmyrene, and the Roman Empire. This happened because of a mix of reasons including: the shift in leadership with the death of Alexander Severus, which left a void of power; the plague, which increased fears in the people; and the growth of the armies, which lessened the efforts put into agriculture and consequently allowed the Roman people less food. Both the Gallic and Palmyrene empires declared themselves independent with the direct objective to free themselves from direct Roman rule. However, their status as an independent state was short-lived and the Romans eventually regained control over both Gaul and Palmyrene. The consequence of this rebellion was the establishment of numerous reforms related to how Rome's economy, government and military operated.

Reforms and the Tetrarchy (284 - 306 CE)

Emperor Diocletian became ruler in 284 CE and implemented significant reforms to stabilise the empire. Diocletian introduced the Tetrarchy, a system where there were two Augusti (emperors) and two Caesars (junior emperors) who would succeed them. In this system of co-emperors and junior co-emperors control would be divided among the four into quarters of the empire. At first this system had only an Augusti, Diocletian, and a Caesar, Maximian. It was necessary because having a co-emperor allowed Diocletian to look closer into the issues in the Eastern part of the empire, which demonstrates how at this point a single emperor in one semi-central

location wasn't going to work any longer. Later when Diocletian thought there was more focus needed on the civic and military issues he made Maximian an Augustus and appointed Galerius and Constantius as Caesars (one helping each Augusti), creating the first Tetrarchy. With this system the empire was able to expand without placing an impossible administrative task on one emperor.

It is also important to note that with this system, especially during the second tetrarchy which featured Constantius and his Caesar Severus II in the West and Galerius and his Caesar Galerius in the East, had the four tetrarchs all ruling outside of Rome, leaving it was a capital only by name.

In the end this system fell apart because of conflict of power and a complication when Severus II died in the third tetrarchy, but that does not take away from its effectiveness as a system, or its interesting nature.

Western Roman Empire (286 - 476 CE)

In 286 CE, Diocletian split the Roman Empire into Eastern and Western halves, with each governed by a separate Augustus and Caesar.

The Western Roman Empire faced severe challenges, including invasions by various barbarian tribes, economic struggles, and political instability. In 410 CE, the Visigoths, under King Alaric, sacked Rome, marking the first time the city had been captured in over 800 years.

In 476 CE, the last Roman emperor, Romulus Augustulus, was deposed by the Germanic chieftain Odoacer, marking the traditional date for the fall of the Western Roman Empire.

It's essential to note that the Eastern Roman Empire, also known as the Byzantine Empire, continued to exist for nearly a thousand years after the fall of the Western Roman Empire, with its capital at Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul). The Byzantine Empire thrived until its ultimate conquest by the Ottoman Empire in 1453 CE.

The Battle of Ravenna

The Battle of Ravenna is the battle that decided the fate of the Western Roman Empire in 475 CE. It was a civil war between Julius Nepos and Orestes which ended with the emperor at the time, Nepos, being defeated, deposed, and forced to flee to Dalmatia. This put Romulus Augustulus in power from 475 CE-476 CE until his defeat later in 476 CE by Odacear, a leader of a barbarian tribe. This defeat marked the end of the empire, showing just how unstable it was at the time of its fall.

Current Situation

In 476 CE, as the fall of the Western Roman Empire seems inevitable, 30 prominent Roman leaders are transported to a roundtable. The ghosts of the previous emperors had been watching and now they've reconvened to decide how to save the empire, and rule it moving forward.

The invasions, political instability, economic and social problems are all issues in dire need of addressing. The current emperor, Romulus Augustulus, and his fellow politicians are showing deeper and deeper corruption. In the past 75 years, there have been 20 emperors, most of them being murdered for their power; with rich politicians resorting to the buying of votes and bribery, the democratic elements of the empire are falling apart as well.

Compounding this predicament, there has been a notable escalation of conflict, exemplified by events like the Battle of Ravenna and the constant political uprisings. This has placed the Empire in a precarious position, subject to the imminent risk of separation — this vulnerability could lead to an ensuing decline or even the dissolution of specific regions in the empire.

Finally the Visigoths, Huns, Franks, Vandals, and other such barbarian tribes are attacking the empire, which further complicates the struggle to pacify the ongoing civil wars. Within this century alone, the empire has witnessed the eruption of four major conflicts: a civil war from 406 to 413 over Emperor Honorius's throne; a conflict between Emperor Valentinian III and Joannes; a clash between Comes Africae Bonifacius and Magister Militum Felix; and a battle between military rivals Magistri Militum Flavius Aetius and Bonifacius. These civil wars exemplify the significant lack of stability in the empire throughout this century, highlighting the need for significant change.

There have been many figures across Roman history who fought to conquer, to lead, and to restore. Now they've all come together with one common goal: to

maintain. For the first time in history major sole leading powers will be forced into diplomacy. Will there be peace for the nation? That is yet to be seen.

Major Bloc Positions

Julius Caesar

Julius Caesar, born in 100 BCE was a Roman noble, general, and politician, who played a major role in forming the Roman Empire. During his youth, Rome was an unstable republic, with a system of government that prohibited the absolute power that would be seen in the nation's Imperial time after. Throughout his life he served as governor of Spain (a Roman province), Gaul (a space which today has France and Belgium within it), and finally as the absolute dictator of the Republic.

Caesar was a very steadfast man, strong on militaristic power with a nationalist perspective which led him to make great successful efforts to expand Rome. During his governorship of Gaul he made these traits shine but also faced the consequences. During his eight years in power he expanded his military and got many riches from the area, but eventually was called back by his rivals to become a private citizen of Rome. With this call he used his army to take down his rivals, beginning "Caesar's Civil War" where he fought his rival "Pompey the Great", from 49BC-45BC, winning, and taking absolute power in 46 BC. Prior to this he had obtained power by participating in the First Triumvirate. This was a secret political alliance between himself, "Pompey the Great" (Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus), and Marcus Licinius Crassus. It lasted from 59 BC until his complete assumption of power in 46 BC.

In power Caesar created useful government reforms like: creating a civil service, a postal system, introducing new coins for money deals, and reforming the census to favour a more equitable tax system; decreased Rome's debt, and enlarged the senate. He also granted citizenship to foreigners living in Rome, sponsored the building of the Forum Iulium and helped to rebuild Carthage and Corinth, two city-states. Eventually, because of his many enemies, and his strong fight for power Caesar was assassinated in 43 BCE.

Caesar Augustus

Caesar Augustus, also known as Octavian, born in 63 BCE, was the first Roman Emperor in 31 BCE, whose great uncle was Julius Caesar. Because of this relationship and the deep respect he gained from his relatives, Augustus received his inheritance which he accepted at the age of 19, thrusting him into Roman politics. His political strategy could be described as swift; immediately into his rise to power Augustus began to form alliances and take down his rivals. It is because of this cleverness and quick thinking that he was able to defeat his rival, Marc Antony, who formed a part of the second triumvirate with him and Lepidus. The triumvirate was dissolved in 36BC after Lepidus's membership was removed for attempting to raise a revolt against Octavian. In 31 BCE Augustus became Roman Emperor, beginning Rome's imperial phase.

As an emperor, Augustus said he represented the people. Being held as a hero by the Roman people, as well as showing himself to live a modest life, he won over the population. He allowed laws that increased marital stability and renewed religious practices to pass. Furthermore, he put into place a system of taxation and a census, grew the network of Roman roads, as well as putting into place a consistent police force and postal service. Finally, he expanded Rome itself, annexing Egypt, part of Spain, places in the Middle East, and some parts of central Europe. Because of this and the end of many civil wars a massive trade network managed to thrive.

In 14 CE when Augustus died, stores closed, and his body was returned to the capital. His capacity to rule and sight for the empire were incredible, leading the senate to name him a Roman God, forever cementing his importance to the empire.

Trajan

Trajan ruled from 98 CE to 117 CE, born in Italica (Seville, Spain today). He is especially interesting as an emperor because he was the first to be born outside of Rome, and one of the first to be chosen rather than inherit the power. Before becoming the emperor, Trajan served as the governor of upper Germany, an army commander, and

senator, which helped become an ally of the previous emperor, Nerva, who chose him as his successor, and many Roman army generals.

Upon becoming emperor, Trajan focused on defending and expanding the empire, defeating the people of Dacia twice, and using the plunder from those victories to fund many projects in Rome. He built a large forum with two libraries, and a massive column called "Trajan's Column" which is one of the largest Roman artefacts to still be intact today.

As a leader, Trajan found a good balance between protecting and conquering. Never forgetting his people and the fight to improve their lives, as well as always remembering to expand the empire. He died in CE 117 while defending the Roman borders.

Vespasian Flavian

Vespasian's rule was turbulent, being born in 9 CE and ruling after emperor Nero in 69 CE. He wasn't appointed nor did he inherit the power, rather he took it, becoming a dictator after defeating his two biggest enemies, Otho and Vitellius.

He gained his first real military power in 43 CE, when he made himself stand out in an invasion of England, after which he was given his first military command. Through these and other successes throughout the years Vespasian managed to become consul of Britain in 51 CE. Later in 63 CE he was also appointed to be proconsul of Africa, where he ruled so strictly that the people once threw vegetables at him. In 67 CE Emperor Nero put him in charge of pacifying the Jewish rebellion in Judea, and when he succeeded at this he was given the title of one of the most successful Roman generals. This success could have led him to be assassinated, but because he came from humble origins, he wasn't seen as much of a threat.

When Nero died, in 69 CE, there was complete chaos in Rome, leading there to be three emperor's within the span of one year: Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. Making use of the chaos, Vespasian marched on Rome, facing Vitellius's army and fighting in the main city itself, leaving 50,000 dead by the end of it and Vespasian victorious.

He was proclaimed emperor and did a lot for the empire since then. Despite his forceful way into power Vespasian was still able to improve Rome; giving it the first real stability it had had for 20 years, beginning work on the colosseum, establishing his dynasty, and raising money after Nero's extravagant and reckless reign.

Vespasian was a lighthearted leader, who had more humour than an emperor would be expected to, and despite his forceful way into power didn't let the inherited system of leading be destroyed.

Hadrian

Hadrian's reign was prosperous and great for the nation, marking its peak in 117 CE. He reigned from 117-138 CE, using his extensive culture and knowledge to bring great buildings and military success to the nation. He's famous for Hadrian's Wall in Britain, many of his literary pursuits including his own poetry, and his efforts to closely supervise his building projects. This close supervision also showed in his closeness with people, having extensive support of the army Hadrian was able to solidify his reign to the point where not even the senate would be able to take away his power. Because of how stable he had made the empire, Hadrian was able to venture away from the main city of Rome without criticism from the people, once again showing how successful his dedication to his rule was regarding the people's care for him.

During his rule, the Bar Kokhba revolt occurred in Judaea in 132 CE, which the emperor took upon himself to pacify by renaming the region Syria Palestine and kicking the Jewish population out. This revolt took a large toll on him, with his health declining from then until his eventual death in 138 CE.

Timeline of Events

- | | |
|--------|--|
| 27 BC | Augustus becomes the first Roman Emperor, marking the beginning of the Roman Empire. This event laid the foundation for the subsequent Western Roman Empire. |
| 212 AD | Emperor Caracalla issued the Constitutio Antoniniana, granting Roman citizenship to all free inhabitants of the empire. This marked a significant change in Roman society and citizenship. |
| 313 AD | Emperor Constantine issued the Edict of Milan, granting religious tolerance to Christianity and ending the persecution of Christians. This was a crucial step in the transformation of the Roman Empire into a Christian state. |
| 380 AD | Emperor Theodosius I issued the Edict of Thessalonica, making Nicene Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire. This event further solidified the influence of Christianity within the empire. |
| 410 AD | The Visigoths, led by Alaric, sack Rome. This event marked the first time in over 800 years that the city of Rome had been captured by an enemy force, symbolising the declining power and authority of the Western Roman Empire. |
| 451 AD | The Battle of the Catalaunian Plains takes place, where a coalition of Roman and Germanic forces, led by Flavius Aetius, defeats Attila the Hun's army. This battle is often considered a turning point in halting the Hunnic expansion and preserving the Western Roman Empire. |
| 455 AD | The Vandals, under the leadership of Genseric, sack Rome. This event further weakened the already struggling Western |

Roman Empire and led to the loss of many valuable treasures and artefacts.

476 AD

Romulus Augustus, the last Western Roman Emperor, is deposed by the Germanic chieftain Odoacer. This event is commonly regarded as the end of the Western Roman Empire and the beginning of the Middle Ages in Europe.

Definition of Key Terms

❖ Taxation

The imposition of a tax. Taxation is an essential part of every leader's job, as it can decide both the leader's popularity with the people, and the country's economic status.

❖ Empire

An extensive group of states or countries under a single supreme authority, formerly especially an emperor or empress.

❖ Ideology

A system of ideas and ideals, especially one which forms the basis of economic or political theory and policy.

❖ Caesars

A title used by Roman emperors, especially those from Augustus to Hadrian. This title was later changed to be a junior co-emperor during Diocletian's rule when he created the "tetrarchy"

❖ Augusti

In a tetrarchy an Augusti is a co-emperor, usually ruling over either the western or eastern half of the roman empire.

❖ Western Roman Empire

"The westernmost of the two empires created by the division of the later Roman Empire, esp after its final severance from the Eastern Roman Empire"

❖ Eastern Roman Empire

The eastern half of the Roman Empire as well as the later Byzantine Empire which continued the empire into the middle ages.

❖ **First Triumvirate**

The first triumvirate was an informal political deal between Julius Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus which took complete control over the civic and military parts of the Roman Empire from 60 BC - 53 BC.

❖ **Magister Militum**

Magister militum was a top-level military command used in the later Roman Empire, dating from the reign of Constantine the Great

❖ **Comes Africae**

Senior officer in the late Roman army

Further Research

1. This website provides a comprehensive overview of Roman history, including articles, maps, and timelines covering various aspects of Roman civilization:

<https://www.worldhistory.org/search/?q=roman+history>

2. Livius.org is a resource for ancient history, including detailed information on the history of Rome. It features articles, maps, and photographs for a comprehensive study of the topic:

<https://www.livius.org/>

3. Imperium Romanum is the “largest compendium of knowledge about the history of ancient Rome”. It is a very useful resource to learn about all general facets and specific periods of Ancient Rome:

<https://imperiumromanum.pl/en/roman-constitution/roman-empire/roman-emperors/>

Guiding Questions

- ❖ In what ways can I achieve the greatest power?
- ❖ How can my emperor's rule influence my actions now?
- ❖ What reasoning could I suggest for my political party/method of governance?
- ❖ When have there been efforts to change the system?
- ❖ How can I be diplomatic in compromise, while still gaining power?
- ❖ What can I take from my reign to improve the empire?
- ❖ Why am I fit to lead the empire?

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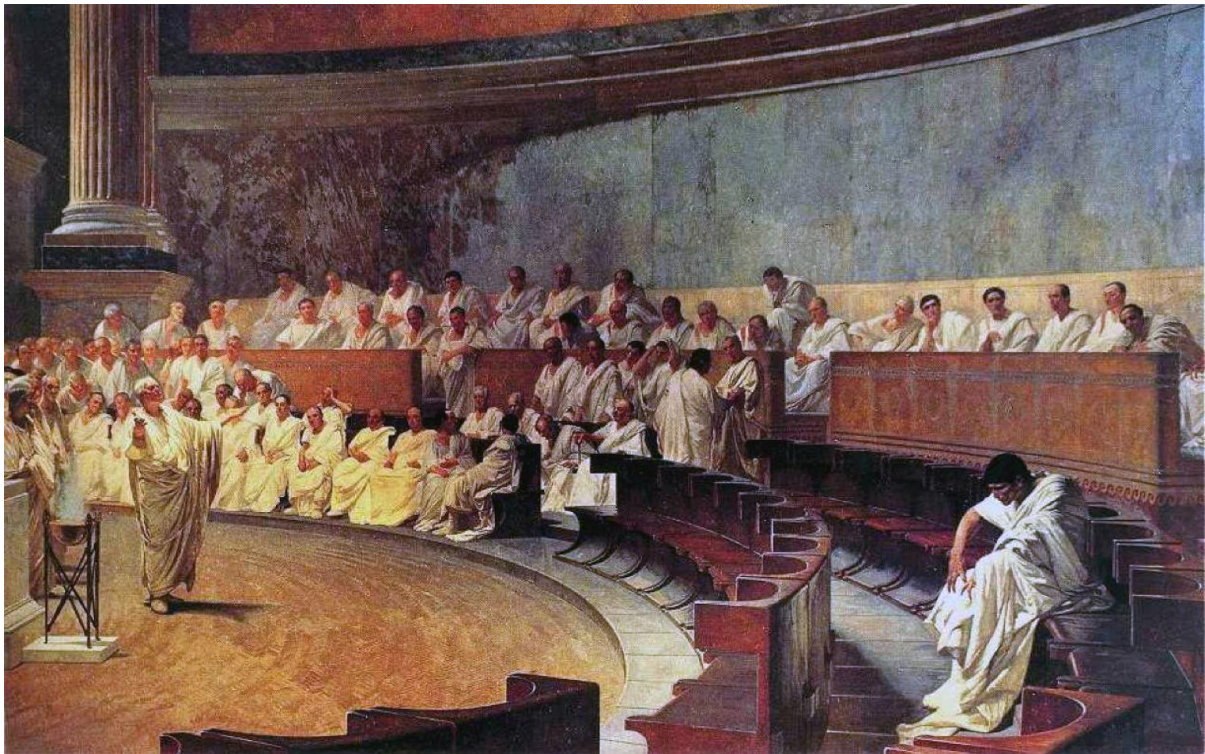
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The Roman Senate

<https://eclecticlight.co/2021/01/26/a-history-of-rome-in-paintings-24-the-senate/>

Topic B:

Discussing Political Reforms Regarding the Maintenance and Future of The Roman Empire

Background Information

Augustus, who became the first Roman Emperor in 27 BCE, introduced significant political reforms that established the Roman Empire and centralised power in the hands of the emperor. Through these reforms, Augustus cleverly retained the appearance of a republican system while holding considerable authority, effectively becoming a monarch in all but name.

To achieve this, Augustus established thorough control of the military and made heavy use of propaganda. He implemented substantial reforms in the political system, altering the structure of the Roman Senate to consolidate his power, incorporating religious elements to develop a cult of personality and link himself to the gods. Although it heavily concentrated power, this new political structure did allow for greater stability and more efficient decision-making compared to the often turbulent politics of the late Roman Republic.

Under Emperor Diocletian's rule (284 - 305 CE), the Roman Empire faced numerous crises, leading to important maintenance changes. In response, Diocletian enacted crucial administrative reforms. He divided the empire into the Eastern and Western Roman Empires, with separate rulers for each region, aiming to improve governance and security. Furthermore, Diocletian established the Tetrarchy, a system where four rulers shared power, which was intended to ensure a smoother succession process and reduce internal power struggles.

While these political reforms were well intentioned, they led to a tumultuous period known as the Crisis of the Third Century, characterized by internal strife and external threats. During this era, the Western Roman Empire witnessed a transformative shift, as Emperor Constantine the Great emerged as a key, playing a pivotal role in steering the empire towards stability through more political reforms. He, for instance, issued the Edict of Milan in 313 CE, granting religious tolerance to Christians and ending their persecution. Constantine also shifted the empire's capital from Rome to Byzantium, renaming it Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul), in 330

CE. This change marked the importance of the Eastern part of the empire and laid the foundation for the Byzantine Empire's later prominence.

However, the Western Roman Empire continued to face increasing external threats and internal struggles. As the empire faced pressure from barbarian invasions and economic decline, some emperors attempted to introduce military and economic reforms. However, the political fragmentation and instability hindered effective maintenance changes, contributing to the empire's eventual decline.

Current Situation

In 476 CE the Western Roman Empire fell, leaving the Eastern Part — then renamed Byzantine — to stay. However now, in a “forum of the greats”, 30 significant Roman emperors are meeting to discuss how they could have avoided the fall of the Roman Empire. With great generals like Caesar, and reformers like Hadrian there will be diverse opinions and thoughts being exchanged, however the end goal will remain the same: To decide how to rule the Empire, and what changes to make, to maintain it solidly held.

Specifically, Ancient Rome was on a positive path of development until 235CE, when the crisis of the third century struck. The empire went through a plague and began facing many more foreign attacks. These two factors mixed in with the significant amount of civil wars and the immense number of usurpers created powerful and deep rooted instability in the empire that lasted until its fall.

From 235 CE to 308 CE there were nearly 40 usurpers across the empire, who's reigns were often short lived and brought civil wars as well as instability to the empire. Among these usurpers, significant leaders such as Dicoletian and Constantine were some of the few who had uninterrupted rules, allowing them to bring great political change such as the creation of the tetrarchy system by Diocletian and the Edict of Milan by Constantine.

In 395 CE the empire officially split, weakening the western part of the empire, leaving it in a less favourable position for the century to come wherein it would inevitably fall.

It is a complex mix of political decisions and actions by many emperor's that led to the empire's fall. Meaning that the solution will by no means be simple either, but with the freedom to completely reform the empire, and a forum mixing numerous different strategies and opinions, saving Rome has never been more possible.

Major Bloc Positions

Justinian I

Justinian is unique because he was a Byzantine emperor rather than Roman, ruling from 527 CE- 565 CE. His rule was one of great military success as well as a mixture of greco-roman and christian culture. He's relevant to avoiding the fall of the Roman Empire as his rule was characterised by his extensive efforts to return the state to its former glory, or to what the Western Roman Empire was before the fall. His rule was absolute, which in conjunction with the non-aristocratic council members he appointed led to great tensions with the nobles and the senate. Militariscally, Justnian was very aggressive, launching one of the most violent military attacks in Mediaeval history in a successful effort to retrieve the former western roman territories lost to Germanic tribes during their fall. Because of this, he grew the Byzantine empire to the largest it had ever been.

Justinian's religious views are orthodox Christian, so during his rule he made an effort to eradicate the last remains of greco-roman paganism as well as to fight against other types of religions and sects of christianity. He also revived some Roman laws, applying them in Italy and other areas which had been taken over. His fight to unify the Byzantine empire once again made him the last Roman emperor to rule both the west and east of the empire, showing just how close he came to reviving the former greatness of the Roman empire.

Nero

Emperor Nero's reign was erratic. It began with much promise as he was a popular figure with significant potential as he quickly took down his political rivals and cemented his power, but this popularity diminished as his reign became more and more unstable. Nero's step-father, Caligula, had already been known for his cruelty, but after killing all of his mother and wife Nero's legacy as cruel was confirmed just as well.

His reign was characterised by extravagant spending and lack of care for his people, Nero was a very clearly self-centred ruler to such an extent that when Rome was set ablaze in 64 CE Nero was blamed for it with the justification being that he wanted to build a new palace. The emperor denied this, instead blaming the Christians for this and beginning a massively harmful religious persecution. Nero's reign came to an end with Galba taking his power in 68 CE, when Nero chose to kill himself rather than be captured.

Caligula

Caligula was the third Roman emperor, ruling from 37 CE to 41 CE in a way that could be described as monstrous. He alienated the senate as well as the Roman army, ruthlessly murdered any people critical of him, and famously suggested his horse become a senate. His cruelty and poor rule ended with his personal guard assassinating him in 41 CE ending this dark period for the empire.

At the start of his reign, Caligula was openly welcomed, and proved himself to deserve this welcoming. By building a new amphitheatre, finishing many unfinished projects, ending the treason trials started by his predecessor Tiberius, beginning a new aqueduct, bringing back exiles, and giving well deserved and long ignored bonuses to the Praetorian guard (the emperor's personal guard). However six months into his reign, after a near death experience, everything changed. He brought back Tiberius's treason trials, raised taxes after having decreased them earlier, and called for many purges of his suspected enemies.

In essence, Caligula's reign was promising at first, but soon became a mess which was characterised by unnecessary actions and extreme behaviours. Most good he would do, he would quickly undo, and this erratic behaviour is what led to his assassination.

Constantine

Emperor Constantine, or Constantine the Great, came into power during the crisis of the third century when Rome was in complete chaos, ruling from 280 CE to 337 CE. His father, Constantius I, was one of the rulers during Diocletian's four-ruler tetrarchy, and when he died in 306 CE, Constantine came into power. He fought the three other emperors until 324 CE when he became the sole emperor. Constantine was famous predominantly for moving the capital to the eastern part of the empire and accepting Christianity which all made his reign a significant transition point historically. However, at the time of his coming into sole power, Rome was not too fond of him, because of his belief in Christianity which contrasted with the beliefs of the city's pagans. Due to this lack of popularity and religious acceptance as well as the military advantages that a capital in the eastern part of the empire would have, Constantine decided to move the capital away from Rome into the formerly known region of Byzantium.

Constantinople, his new capital, accepted Christianity openly, erecting churches to paint the skyline, and generally tolerated other religions, however, this new capital took the attention away from Rome, leaving it to crumble over time, and inevitably fall in 476 CE. Even still, Constantinople stayed strong for nearly a thousand years and is now known as Istanbul, in Turkey.

Aurelian

Aurelian ruled briefly, from 270 CE to 275 CE, but the brevity of his rule in no way took away from the significance of his actions. In just five years he balanced the Danube frontier by getting rid of the barbarians who were threats to the empire, and encircled Rome in a gargantuan wall which can still be seen today. In this, Aurelian was shown to be a knowledgeable soldier, but he was also a reformer.

Throughout his reign he brought in significant reforms to currency, religion, and administration. He laid the footwork for the aristocratic emperor ship which was so apparent in the later parts of the empire, but more importantly than anything else, he brought unity back to the empire during a time where it was on the brink of collapse. Because of this, Aurelian was known as the "Restorer of the World", and through his

great effort and skill prevented a possible collapse of the empire.

Timeline of Events

27 BC	Establishment of the principate Octavian (later known as Augustus) becomes the first Roman Emperor, marking the end of the Roman Republic and the beginning of the Imperial period.
Romanization Policies	Romanization Policies Roman culture, language, and legal system are promoted throughout the empire to unify and assimilate the diverse regions.
96–180 AD	The Five Good Emperors Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius rule with relative stability and effective governance.
284 CE	Constitutional Reforms of Diocletian Diocletian divided the empire into the Eastern and Western Roman Empires, establishing the Tetrarchy (rule by four co-emperors) to manage the vast territory.
313 CE	Edict of Milan Emperor Constantine issues this edict, granting religious tolerance to Christians and effectively ending the persecution of Christians in the empire.
438 CE	Codification of Roman Law The Eastern Roman Emperor Theodosius II publishes the Theodosian Code, consolidating existing Roman laws and legal principles.
395 CE	Division of the Roman Empire The Roman Empire permanently splits into the Eastern Roman

Empire (Byzantine Empire) and the Western Roman Empire, due to territorial and political challenges.

476 CE

Fall of the Western Roman Empire

Odoacer, a Germanic chieftain, deposes the last Roman Emperor Romulus Augustulus, leading to the official end of the Western Roman Empire.

Definition of Key Terms

❖ **Codification**

The action or process of arranging laws or rules according to a system or plan.

❖ **Edict**

An edict is an official order or proclamation issued by a person in authority, like a ruler or government, that carries the weight of law.

❖ **Romanization**

The process of assimilating different peoples into the culture of the Roman Empire

❖ **Principate**

A principate refers to a form of government, particularly in ancient Rome, where a single ruler (the princeps) held the central power. It is often associated with the early Roman Empire.

❖ **Usurper**

A usurper is a person who wrongfully takes or seizes a position of power, authority, or property, often by force or through illegitimate means.

❖ **Caesar**

The title "Caesar" became a name used by subsequent Roman emperors as part of their official title. It symbolized their authority and position as rulers of the Roman Empire.

❖ **Assimilate**

Assimilate means to absorb, understand, and integrate new information, ideas, or culture into one's existing knowledge or beliefs. It can also refer to the process of adapting to a new culture or environment.

Further Research

1. This website provides a wealth of information about the Roman Empire, including sections on its political history, emperors, and the development of Roman institutions:

<https://www.roman-empire.net/>

2. Livius.org covers a wide range of topics related to Roman history, including political changes. You can find detailed articles and resources on the Roman Republic, the transition to the Roman Empire, and more:

<https://www.livius.org/>

3. This resource offers a comprehensive overview of Roman history, including the political developments and changes that occurred during different periods:

<https://www.worldhistory.org/search/?q=Roman+History>

Guiding Questions

- ❖ How may we learn from previous rulers' mistakes?
- ❖ How can I guarantee myself power while still accepting the people?
- ❖ Who are my allies?
- ❖ What are some beneficial projects to complete/begin?
- ❖ To what extent can I condemn negative behaviour to gain a political advantage?
- ❖ Could changing the system by establishing a tetrarchy, republic, etc... be beneficial?
- ❖ How can I avoid corruption or power struggles?
- ❖ How would you analyze the underlying causes of the decline and fall of the Western Roman Empire? What were the major internal and external challenges faced during this period?
- ❖ Before your reign, what were the policies and actions of the previous emperors that might have contributed to the empire's decline? How do you plan to address or correct those mistakes?
- ❖ What specific political, economic, and social reforms would you implement to stabilize the empire and improve its chances of survival? How do you plan to manage the diverse regions and cultures within the empire?
- ❖ How would you strike a balance between centralizing power in your hands to make swift decisions and granting some autonomy to local authorities to address regional issues effectively?
- ❖ How will you measure the success of your efforts to save the Western Roman Empire? What indicators or benchmarks will you use to evaluate the effectiveness of your policies?

- ❖ How would you promote a sense of unity and loyalty among the diverse peoples of the empire, especially in the face of rising religious and cultural divisions?

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