

How has the Roman Empire influenced modern Italy?

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3-HN Writing

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Letter to the Reader

Dear Reader,

I have always been fascinated with history. For as long as I can remember I have always enjoyed studying history and making connections between different historical entities, such as here with the Roman Empire and modern Italy. Italian history is intriguing since they stay relevant through almost all of history.

In this multi-genre research project I will discuss how the Roman Empire impacted modern Italy, I chose this because I have always enjoyed learning about Italian history. Many people assume that modern Italy and Rome have somewhat of a weak relationship, and that after almost two millenniums their can't be a strong relationship between the two. But this is not true, as my research paper will prove that Italian politics and culture were directly impacted by their Roman predecessors. From the the reunification of Italy to Mussolini's fascism all of this was influenced by the Roman Empire.

Many historians believe that the rise of Italian nationalism in the 19th and 20th centuries was directly impacted by their ancestor's (Roman) conquests. Though the modern state of Italy was inspired by Rome, they were not able to accomplish the same feats as the Roman Empire had achieved. So, while the Italians had many aspirations to reconsider the Roman Empire, these were but dreams and never came to reality.

I chose my specific genres because they all show a strong relationship between the Roman Empire and Italy. These include a Roman recipe, a timeline, a biography, and a magazine article. All of these genres show the strong connection between the Roman Empire and modern Italy.

While researching my topic I learned much about how strong of an impact Rome had on modern Italy. Through cultural similarities and military conquests Rome strongly influenced modern Italy.

Please enjoy,

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The Impact of Rome

When the Roman Empire was at its climax its lands stretched from Britain to Egypt. Many historians have argued that no other empire has had a stronger impact on the world than Rome. But more specifically Rome most strongly impacted the Italian peninsula and the modern state of Italy, with there conquests as well as culturally. But many come to believe that after almost two millenniums the ancient Roman Empire couldn't have made a strong impact on modern Italy, but this is a misconception. The Roman Empire strongly influenced the modern state of Italy in many ways.

Rome is notorious for their military conquests in which all of Western Europe was under their domain ("Ancient Italy"). Rome conquered swathes of land for protection of their borders as well as for glory and wealth. Rome also acquired millions of slaves from these conquests (Basta). Rome's conquests defined their legacy. So, it is only natural for their Italian successors to strive to mimic this. When Benito Mussolini took power in 1923 he promised to reconquer the lands previously controlled by Rome. These promises were never able to come to fruition since Italy did not have the military mite or production strength to reconstruct the Roman Empire. Mussolini wanted to reconstruct a Roman Empire which would fully surround the Mediterranean Sea and which would once again become "Rome's lake." He also wanted to exert Rome's influence on it's previous colonies, such as Greece ("Italy During the Roman Republic"). But unlike their Roman ancestors, the Italians were unable to conquer Greece and even required Germany's help conquering Greece. Another example of Italy being influenced by the Romans can be seen in the

Italian conquest of Ethiopia. Even though Ethiopia was never apart of the Roman Empire, nevertheless, the Italians sought after this sovereign nation in two separate wars. The Italians still wanted to be conquerors like Rome even when the land was never apart of the Roman Empire. These conquests prove that modern Italy was strongly influenced by the Roman Empire, specifically in their military conquests.

The Roman Empire didn't just influence modern Italy militarily, but also culturally and politically. Roman culture included many recipes which have influenced the recipes of today. One specific recipe which originated from Rome is the cheesecake. The Roman cheesecake was called Libum and was given as a sacrifice to household spirits (Raimer). This basic cheesecake is an outline recipe which is very similar to the recipe for modern Italian cheesecake. Other recipes which originated in Rome was a sausage which has evolved to the spicy Italian sausage of today.

Rome is also the founder of the idea of modern liberalism, which says that citizens should strive to make society as a whole better (Lewis). Liberalism originated in Rome and can be seen in modern Italy when the people of Italy overthrew Mussolini's fascist government since it was unjust and was worse for society. The people of Italy liberated themselves from the oppressive fascist rule, similar to how the ancient Romans liberated themselves from the oppressive rule of the Etruscan kings. Both of these uprisings were done in the liberal spirit to improve society (Lewis). This shows a strong connection between the Roman Empire and modern Italian politics, since both strove to improve their societies.

Other examples of Rome's influence on Italian politics can be seen in the reunification of Italy. Through this was a conquest which had multiple wars involved, it was powered by strong Italian nationalism. When King Victor Emanuel II unified Italy, he did so by promising that Italy would unify and be a great power of Europe ("Encyclopædia Britannica/Victor Emmanuel II").

Though they did unify they did not become a dominant power in Europe as they had hoped. These examples show that though Italy was strongly influenced by Rome culturally as well as politically.

Modern Italy was strongly influenced by Rome, militarily, culturally, and politically. As can be seen through their conquests, foods, and politics. Though the modern Italian state strove to be as close to the Roman Empire as possible, they were not able to achieve this due to lack of military strength and other factors. When Italy attempted to reconquer the Roman Empire they were unable to do so since their military wasn't unmatched, like the Romans had been when they conquered their lands. But nevertheless, modern Italy was strongly influenced by their Roman predecessors.

FROM ROMAN CONQUESTS TO MUSOLINI
FASCSIM

THE HISTORY OF THE ITALIAN PENINSULA



ROME OVERTHROWS ETRUSCAN KINGS

509 B.C., E.

Rome overthrows their rulers to the north. They then established their Republic... since they hated kings because the Etruscans had one.

ROME CONQUERS ITALIAN PENINSULA

200 B.C.E.

The Roman Republic conquers the entire Italian Peninsula, establishing themselves as an important nation in the Mediterranean Sea, alongside the Greeks - who strongly influence them.

ROME BECOMES AN EMPIRE

44 B.C.E.

General Julius Caesar expanded the Republic's land from Britain to Egypt. He returns to Rome with glory and the people wanting to crown him emperor. He was then murdered by the Senators and a series of civil wars broke out which turned the Republic into an empire.

WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE FALLS

476 C.E.

After the empire is split between the West and East, the Western half was eventually overthrown by their barbarian counterparts, the Visigoths. Europe would never be as unified as it was under Rome. Europe would remain in a fractured and backwards state, known as the Dark Ages.

ITALIAN REUNIFICATION

1871 C.E.

Over the course of over 50 years and through numerous wars, modern Italy is finally united under King Victor Emmanuel II. From the island of Sardinia, the nationalists fought wars against all the different factions to unite modern Italy.

MUSSOLINI TAKES POWER IN ITALY

1925 C.E.

Benito Mussolini takes power in Italy. Originally a socialist revolutionary, he soon finds favor with the new fascist nationalism growing in Europe (and Italy). Mussolini promises a new Roman Empire and a return to when the Mediterranean Sea was the Italian lake. He is only overthrown 20 years later, when in 1945 he was executed by Italian partisans and his corpse was dragged through the streets of Rome.

Biography of King Victor Emanuel II of Italy



Victor Emanuel II, better known as the founder of modern Italy, was born in Turin, Italy on March 14, 1820. In 1848 Victor fought in the First Italian War of Independence to establish himself as king of Sardinia after his father abdicated. Victor was extremely skilled in politics and sent forces to aid the French and British in the Crimean War, in order to establish allies. The French then aided him in 1859 in the Second Italian War of Independence, which defeated the Austrians and liberated the region of Lombardy. In the same year he fought the Papal army, which led him to be excommunicated from the Catholic Church. The remaining Italian regions then sided with Victor and his army and defeated the Papal forces. He was then crowned King of Italy by the united Italian parliament. The rest of his reign was very quiet and he later died in 1878, after meeting the pope who reversed his excommunication. Victor made the best of his situation and through strategic alliances he united modern Italy. For the first time in modern history Italy was united once again, the last time being under the Roman Empire. Today in Italy many building are named in his honor, such as the Victor Emanuel Square in Rome. Victor Emanuel is considered one of the founders of modern Italy and through him Italy was united under a wave of nationalism.

LIBUM CHEESE CAKE

4 Servings | 10 Minutes Prep | 50 Minutes Total

INGREDIENTS

1c / All Purpose Flour

8 oz / Ricotta Cheese

1 Egg / Beaten

4 Bay Leaves / Fresh

½ c / Honey

INSTRUCTIONS

First, sift the flour into a bowl, beat the cheese until soft, and mix the cheese with the beaten egg and flour (Preheat Oven to 425 F).

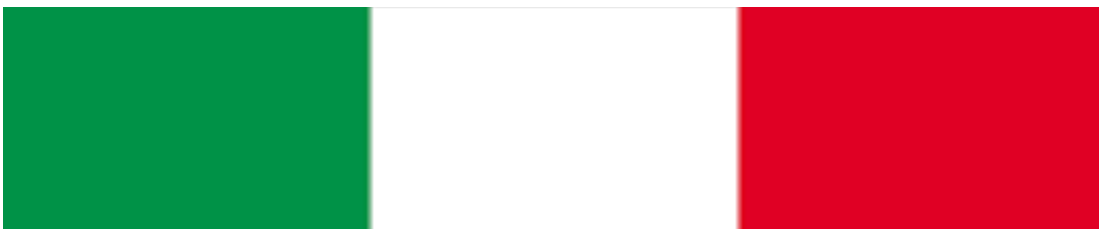
Second, Mix the dough until soft, divide it into 4 bun shaped pieces, lay the pieces onto an oiled baking tray on top of the bay leaves.

Third, Place the tray into the oven and cover the pieces with clay (in order to cook them thoroughly).

Fourth, After 40 minutes make sure the cakes are golden brown and drizzle with warm honey.

NOTES

This ancient Roman cake was used in ceremonies offered to household spirits. This cheesecake eventually evolved into many different forms of Italian desserts, including: Italian ricotta cheesecake, New York Italian Cheesecake, and Limoncello cake.



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STATE MAGAZINE | JANUARY 1941



THE CONQUEST OF NORTH AFRICA

BY JOSEPI GINDALI

As our Roman ancestors conquered all land surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. We are now fulfilling our duty by reconquering this land from the British oppressors. We must all do our part just as our Roman ancestors had done. Women should join the workforce and all able bodied should find the nearest recruitment office. Africa will once again be in the hands of Rome, just as we had defeated the Carthaginians we will overcome the British. Il Duce will lead us to victory and once again will the Mediterranean become Rome's lake.

RITORNEREMO!

Works Cited

“Ancient Italy.” *A Companion to Ancient History*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2013. Ancient and Medieval History, online.infobase.com/Auth/Index?aid=18689&itemid=WE49&articleId=369150.

Accessed 24 Oct. 2019.

In this article the author discusses how complex the different groups within Italy are. He explains that even within Italy itself the different regions developed Separate languages and even dialects. He also discusses how the conquests of Rome exposed the previously distinct cultures of the Italy to Greco-Roman culture.

Basta, Hannah. "Slaves, Coloni, and status confusion in the Late Roman Empire." *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2017, p. 45+. Gale Academic Onefile, https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A503273297/AONE?u=nysl_me_yeshivah&sid=AONE&xid=cf1dbf81. Accessed 28 Oct. 2019.

In this peer reviewed article the author discusses how even during the late Roman Empire slaves were still apart of the cultural and societal pyramid. Even though the poor masses were almost slaves, there was still a strong distinction between the slaves and free poor. Slaves also took many jobs which would have been given to the poor. The debate still goes on for how many slaves were around during the late Roman Empire.

“Encyclopædia Britannica/Victor Emmanuel II.” 1911 *Encyclopædia Britannica/Victor Emmanuel II*. - Wikisource, the Free Online Library, 5 Nov. 2015,

en.wikisource.org/wiki/1911_Encyclop%C3%A6dia_Britannica/Victor_Emanuel_II

This encyclopedia article describes the life of Victor Emanuel II, the father of modern Italy.

The author describes how Victor Emanuel was able to unite the different factions of Italy.

“Italy during the Roman Republic.” *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2006.

Ancient and Medieval History,

online.infobase.com/Auth/Index?aid=18689&itemid=WE49&articleId=369501. Accessed 24 Oct. 2019.

In this history of Rome's republic the author gives a detailed history of Rome's Republic and how its colonies had strong influences on the surrounding areas. He also explains what nations influenced Rome, such as the Greeks and Etruscans. The author also explain's Italy's consequences by expanding too quickly, which eventually led to its downfall. This article also discusses how many slaves were taken during their many wars.

Lewis, V. Bradley. "ROSENBLATT, Helena. The Lost History of Liberalism: From Ancient Rome to the Twenty-First Century." *The Review of Metaphysics*, vol. 73, no. 1, 2019, p. 148+. Gale Academic Onefile, https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A601325404/AONE?u=nysl_me_yeshivah&sid=AONE&xid=fe0c416b. Accessed 27 Oct. 2019.

This peer reviewed article discusses how the idea of modern liberalism was originally developed in Rome. Lewis Bradley, the author, explains how the idea of liberalism was originally a political idea for the qualities of an ideal citizen. This later evolved to influence the idea of liberal thinking and government striving for change for equality.

Raimer, Carla. "Ancient Roman Recipes." PBS, Public Broadcasting Service, 1 Nov. 2000, www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/article/roman-recipes/.

In this article Carla Raimer describes traditional Roman recipes, many of which strongly influence modern recipes. She gives the recipes for many Roman recipes such as, cheesecake and sausage.