



ROME, RULER OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

01 PERIODS IN THE HISTORY OF ROME

The origins of Rome

The city of Rome was founded in the 8th century BC on the banks of the Tiber River, on the Italian Peninsula.

- The region was called Latium.
- Its inhabitants were called Latins.

In the 6th century BC, the area was conquered by the Etruscans.

- They organised the territory into city-states.
- One of these was Rome itself. Its main economic activity was maritime trade.



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The monarchy

From its foundation until the year 509 BC, Rome had seven kings:

- the first four were Latins and
- the final three were Etruscans.

The king ruled with the help of the Senate, an advisory assembly. This institution had no decision-making powers.

There were two main social groups during the monarchy:

- Patricians, a minority group that controlled the land and were the only people with citizenship rights.
- Plebeians, who were peasants, traders and artisans, made up the rest of society. This social group had no political power.



01 PERIODS IN THE HISTORY OF ROME

The Republic

In 509 BC, the Republic was established after the Etruscan kings were expelled. A series of representative institutions were formed in the new system of government.

- The Roman Assemblies, which were citizen assemblies.
 - They elected people for public office.
 - They passed legislation.
 - They made decisions on war and peace.
- The Senate, which was formed by 300 patricians, and was formerly an advisory body.
 - It dealt with foreign policy.
 - It ratified the decisions of the Assemblies.
- The magistrates, who were two people elected annually by the Assemblies.



01 PERIODS IN THE HISTORY OF ROME

The Republic

At the beginning, the patricians monopolised power.

- The plebeians demanded political rights.
- They achieved the right to be elected magistrates through the figure of the tribune of the plebeians.

The basis for the Roman Republic was the Law of the Twelve Tables, from 451 BC. The rights and obligations of plebeians were enshrined in it. The most important rights included:

- voting in the Assemblies
- electing and being elected as magistrates
- serving in the army and paying taxes



01 PERIODS IN THE HISTORY OF ROME

The crisis of the Republic

From the 3rd century BC, Rome expanded throughout the Mediterranean. This expansion allowed Rome to acquire wealth.

1. A period of instability arose in the 1st century BC for several reasons:
 - difficulty of controlling the large conquered territories
 - social unrest caused by unequal distribution of the acquired wealth.
2. To solve this, a triumvirate was formed (the command was given to three military leaders): Crassus, Pompey and Julius Caesar.
3. After facing each other in a civil war, Julius Caesar defeated his rivals and became the sole magistrate (he held all the powers).
4. Julius Caesar's government was the beginning of a new political system: the Empire.



01 PERIODS IN THE HISTORY OF ROME

The Roman Empire

The representative republican institutions lost power during this period.

1. Octavian, Mark Antony and Lepidus formed a new triumvirate after the death of Julius Caesar in 44 BC.
2. A war started between the three leaders and ended in 27 BC with the victory of Octavian.
3. Octavian was proclaimed emperor, and a new stage in the history of Rome began: the Empire, which lasted until AD 476.

The emperor gathered all the powers of Rome in his person throughout his whole life.



Octavian



01 PERIODS IN THE HISTORY OF ROME

The *Pax Romana*

After the proclamation of the Empire, a long period of peace began. It was known as the *Pax Romana* and lasted two centuries.

High Empire (1st and 2nd centuries AD)	Lower Empire (3rd century AD)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• great power• territory organised into provinces:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Senatorial, governed by proconsuls- Imperials, governed by legates• extension of the right to Roman citizenship<ul style="list-style-type: none">- granted to all the freemen of the Empire- helped Roman culture to spread to all the territories of the Empire	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• deep crisis, which led to the disappearance of the Roman Empire in AD 476



02 THE EXPANSION OF ROME THROUGHOUT THE MEDITERRANEAN

The Romans were the most powerful people in Ancient History due to two factors:

- the economic and cultural power of the Roman Empire
- their conquest of all the territories surrounding the Mediterranean Sea

The success of this conquest was based on:

- the political unity of all peoples under their command
- Romanisation (they exported their language, laws and culture)
- commercial strength
- the assimilation of the cultural elements of conquered peoples
- the importance of slave labour
- the effectiveness of the Roman army



02 THE EXPANSION OF ROME THROUGHOUT THE MEDITERRANEAN

Rome was at the height of its territorial expansion during the Empire. This period began in the 3rd century BC with the Punic Wars. Rome went to war against Carthage, an old Phoenician colony in the north of Africa, which was building an empire in the western Mediterranean.

1. Rome took control of all the territory on the Italian Peninsula around 270 BC.
2. First Punic War (264 – 241 BC): Rome fought against the Carthaginians to conquer Sicily.
3. Second Punic War (218 – 201 BC): Rome began its conquest of Hispania.
4. Third Punic War (146 BC): Carthage was conquered and became part of the Roman Empire.
5. In the 2nd century BC, Rome took control of the western Mediterranean.
6. From the 1st century BC onwards, Rome took control of all of the Iberian Peninsula, the south of Britain and parts of Central Europe.
7. In the 2nd century AD, Emperor Trajan expanded the Empire to its maximum extent, adding territories in Asia and Dacia.

03 THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

The crisis of the 3rd century AD

A crisis began in the Roman Empire in the 3rd century AD:

- Territorial conquests came to an end.
- The military became less effective (insecure borders and the start of incursions from foreign peoples).
- The economy weakened (lower income, fewer slaves, fewer precious metals, etc.).
- Trade was affected (food shortages in the cities).
- Society in the Empire became more rural.
- Taxes were increased to finance the defence of the territory.

Emperor Diocletian tried to resolve the crisis by establishing a tetrarchy in AD 284 (the Empire was divided up between four rulers). This system of government lasted until AD 305.



03 THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Rome and Christianity

Christianity originated in Judea in the 1st century AD.

- It was prohibited in the Roman Empire because it endangered the stability of the official religion of the state.
- Therefore, Christians were persecuted.

Christianity began to be accepted in the 4th century AD after the end of the imperial cult.

Christianity was promoted due to measures taken by two emperors:

- Emperor Constantine permitted freedom of worship through the Edict of Milan in AD 313.
- Emperor Theodosius I made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire through the Edict of Thessalonica in AD 380.



03 THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

The division of the Empire and great invasions

Emperor Theodosius died in AD 392, and due to pressure from the Germanic peoples the Empire was divided among his sons: the western half for Honorius and the eastern half for Arcadius.

The Germanic tribes stayed for centuries near the borders of the Roman Empire. They began to move into the territory of the Empire during the 3rd and 4th centuries, taking advantage of the weak borders to settle there.

1. In AD 406, some of them invaded the Western Roman Empire.
2. In AD 476, a Germanic military leader, Odoacer, deposed the last emperor of Rome, Romulus Augustus. From that year, important kingdoms were established, like those of the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the Franks and the Burgundians.

