

= Roman Republic =

The Roman Republic (Latin : Res publica Romana ; Classical Latin : [ˈreːs ˈpuːb.lɪˈka roːˈmaː.na]) was the period of ancient Roman civilization beginning with the overthrow of the Roman Kingdom , traditionally dated to 509 BC , and ending in 27 BC with the establishment of the Roman Empire . It was during this period that Rome 's control expanded from the city 's immediate surroundings to hegemony over the entire Mediterranean world .

During the first two centuries of its existence , the Roman Republic expanded through a combination of conquest and alliance , from central Italy to the entire Italian peninsula . By the following century , it included North Africa , Spain , and what is now southern France . Two centuries after that , towards the end of the 1st century BC , it included the rest of modern France , Greece , and much of the eastern Mediterranean . By this time , internal tensions led to a series of civil wars , culminating with the assassination of Julius Caesar , which led to the transition from republic to empire . The exact date of transition can be a matter of interpretation . Historians have variously proposed Julius Caesar 's crossing of the Rubicon River in 49 BC , Caesar 's appointment as dictator for life in 44 BC , and the defeat of Mark Antony and Cleopatra at the Battle of Actium in 31 BC . However , most use the same date as did the ancient Romans themselves , the Roman Senate 's grant of extraordinary powers to Octavian and his adopting the title Augustus in 27 BC , as the defining event ending the Republic .

Roman government was headed by two consuls , elected annually by the citizens and advised by a senate composed of appointed magistrates . As Roman society was very hierarchical by modern standards , the evolution of the Roman government was heavily influenced by the struggle between the patricians , Rome 's land @-@ holding aristocracy , who traced their ancestry to the founding of Rome , and the plebeians , the far more numerous citizen @-@ commoners . Over time , the laws that gave patricians exclusive rights to Rome 's highest offices were repealed or weakened , and leading plebeian families became full members of the aristocracy . The leaders of the Republic developed a strong tradition and morality requiring public service and patronage in peace and war , making military and political success inextricably linked . Many of Rome 's legal and legislative structures (later codified into the Justinian Code , and again into the Napoleonic Code) can still be observed throughout Europe and much of the world in modern nation states and international organizations .

= = Military history = =

The exact causes and motivations for Rome 's military conflicts and expansions during the republic are subject to wide debate . While they can be seen as motivated by outright aggression and imperialism , historians typically take a much more nuanced view . They argue that Rome 's expansion was driven by short @-@ term defensive and inter @-@ state factors (that is , relations with city @-@ states and kingdoms outside Rome 's hegemony) , and the new contingencies that these decisions created . In its early history , as Rome successfully defended itself against foreign threats in central and then northern Italy , neighboring city @-@ states sought the protection a Roman alliance would bring . As such , early republican Rome was not an " empire " or " state " in the modern sense , but an alliance of independent city @-@ states (similar to the Greek hegemonies of the same period) with varying degrees of genuine independence (which itself changed over time) engaged in an alliance of mutual self @-@ protection , but led by Rome . With some important exceptions , successful wars in early republican Rome generally led not to annexation or military occupation , but to the restoration of the way things were . But the defeated city would be weakened (sometimes with outright land concessions) and thus less able to resist Romanizing influences , such as Roman settlers seeking land or trade with the growing Roman confederacy . It was also less able to defend itself against its non @-@ Roman enemies , which made attack by these enemies more likely . It was , therefore , more likely to seek an alliance of protection with Rome .

This growing coalition expanded the potential enemies that Rome might face , and moved Rome

closer to confrontation with major powers . The result was more alliance @-@ seeking , on the part of both the Roman confederacy and city @-@ states seeking membership (and protection) within that confederacy . While there were exceptions to this (such as military rule of Sicily after the First Punic War) , it was not until after the Second Punic War that these alliances started to harden into something more like an empire , at least in certain locations . This shift mainly took place in parts of the west , such as the southern Italian towns that sided with Hannibal .

In contrast , Roman expansion into Spain and Gaul occurred as a mix of alliance @-@ seeking and military occupation . In the 2nd century BC , Roman involvement in the Greek east remained a matter of alliance @-@ seeking , but this time in the face of major powers that could rival Rome . According to Polybius , who sought to trace how Rome came to dominate the Greek east in less than a century , this was mainly a matter of several Greek city @-@ states seeking Roman protection against the Macedonian kingdom and Seleucid Empire in the face of destabilisation created by the weakening of Ptolemaic Egypt . In contrast to the west , the Greek east had been dominated by major empires for centuries , and Roman influence and alliance @-@ seeking led to wars with these empires that further weakened them and therefore created an unstable power vacuum that only Rome could fill . This had some important similarities to (and important differences from) the events in Italy centuries earlier , but this time on a global scale .

Historians see the growing Roman influence over the east , as with the west , as not a matter of intentional empire @-@ building , but constant crisis management narrowly focused on short @-@ term goals within a highly unstable , unpredictable , and inter @-@ dependent network of alliances and dependencies . With some major exceptions of outright military rule , the Roman Republic remained an alliance of independent city @-@ states and kingdoms (with varying degrees of independence , both de jure and de facto) until it transitioned into the Roman Empire . It was not until the time of the Roman Empire that the entire Roman world was organized into provinces under explicit Roman control .

= = = Early Republic (458 ? 274 BC) = = =

= = = = Early Italian campaigns (458 ? 396 BC) = = = =

The first Roman republican wars were wars of both expansion and defence , aimed at protecting Rome itself from neighbouring cities and nations and establishing its territory in the region . Initially , Rome 's immediate neighbours were either Latin towns and villages , or else tribal Sabines from the Apennine hills beyond . One by one Rome defeated both the persistent Sabines and the local cities , both those under Etruscan control and those that had cast off their Etruscan rulers . Rome defeated Latin cities in the Battle of Lake Regillus in 496 BC , the Battle of Mons Algidus in 458 BC , the Battle of Corbione in 446 BC , the Battle of Aricia , and especially the Battle of the Cremera in 477 BC wherein it fought against the most important Etruscan city of Veii .

By the end of this period , Rome had effectively completed the conquest of their immediate Etruscan and Latin neighbours , and also secured their position against the immediate threat posed by the nearby Apennine hill tribes .

= = = = Celtic invasion of Italy (390 ? 387 BC) = = = =

By 390 BC , several Gallic tribes were invading Italy from the north as their culture expanded throughout Europe . The Romans were alerted to this when a particularly warlike tribe invaded two Etruscan towns close to Rome 's sphere of influence . These towns , overwhelmed by the enemy 's numbers and ferocity , called on Rome for help . The Romans met the Gauls in pitched battle at the Battle of Allia River around 390 ? 387 BC . The Gauls , led by chieftain Brennus , defeated the Roman army of approximately 15 @,@ 000 troops , pursued the fleeing Romans back to Rome , and sacked the city before being either driven off or bought off . Romans and Gauls continued to war intermittently in Italy for more than two centuries .

=== Roman expansion into Italy (343 ? 282 BC) ===

After recovering surprisingly fast from the sack of Rome , the Romans immediately resumed their expansion within Italy . The First Samnite War from 343 BC to 341 BC was relatively short : the Romans beat the Samnites in two battles , but were forced to withdraw before they could pursue the conflict further due to the revolt of several of their Latin allies in the Latin War . Rome beat the Latins in the Battle of Vesuvius and again in the Battle of Trifanum , after which the Latin cities were obliged to submit to Roman rule .

The Second Samnite War , from 327 BC to 304 BC , was much longer and more serious for both Romans and Samnites . The fortunes of the two sides fluctuated throughout its course . But the Romans won the Battle of Bovianum , and the tide turned strongly against the Samnites from 314 BC onwards , leading them to sue for peace with progressively less generous terms . By 304 BC , the Romans had effectively annexed the greater degree of the Samnite territory , founding several colonies .

Seven years after their defeat , with Roman dominance of the area looking assured , the Samnites rose again and defeated a Roman army in 298 BC , to open the Third Samnite War . Following this success they built a coalition of several previous enemies of Rome . At the Battle of Populonia in 282 BC Rome finished off the last vestiges of Etruscan power in the region .

=== Pyrrhic War (280 ? 275 BC) ===

By the beginning of the 3rd century , Rome had established itself as a major power on the Italian Peninsula , but had not yet come into conflict with the dominant military powers in the Mediterranean Basin at the time : Carthage and the Greek kingdoms .

When a diplomatic dispute between Rome and a Greek colony in Italy erupted into open warfare in a naval confrontation , the Greek colony appealed for military aid to Pyrrhus , ruler of the northwestern Greek kingdom of Epirus . Motivated by a personal desire for military accomplishment , Pyrrhus landed a Greek army of some 25 000 men on Italian soil in 280 BC .

Despite early victories , Pyrrhus found his position in Italy untenable . Rome steadfastly refused to negotiate with Pyrrhus as long as his army remained in Italy . Facing unacceptably heavy losses from each encounter with the Roman army , Pyrrhus withdrew from the peninsula (hence the term " Pyrrhic victory ") . In 275 BC , Pyrrhus again met the Roman army at the Battle of Beneventum . While Beneventum was indecisive , Pyrrhus realised his army had been exhausted and reduced by years of foreign campaigns . Seeing little hope for further gains , he withdrew completely from Italy .

The conflicts with Pyrrhus would have a great effect on Rome . Rome had shown it was capable of pitting its armies successfully against the dominant military powers of the Mediterranean , and that the Greek kingdoms were incapable of defending their colonies in Italy and abroad . Rome quickly moved into southern Italy , subjugating and dividing the Greek colonies . Now , Rome effectively dominated the Italian peninsula , and won an international military reputation .

=== Mid Roman Republic (264 ? 133 BC) ===

=== Punic Wars (264 ? 146 BC) ===

The First Punic War began in 264 BC when inhabitants of Sicily began to appeal to the two powers between which they lay ? Rome and Carthage ? to resolve internal conflicts . The war saw land battles in Sicily early on , but the theatre shifted to naval battles around Sicily and Africa . Before the First Punic War there was no Roman navy to speak of . The new war in Sicily against Carthage , a great naval power , forced Rome to quickly build a fleet and train sailors .

The first few naval battles were disasters for Rome . However , after training more sailors and inventing a grappling engine , a Roman naval force was able to defeat a Carthaginian fleet , and

further naval victories followed . The Carthaginians then hired Xanthippus of Carthage , a Spartan mercenary general , to reorganise and lead their army . He cut off the Roman army from its base by re @-@ establishing Carthaginian naval supremacy . The Romans then again defeated the Carthaginians in naval battle at the Battle of the Aegates Islands and left Carthage with neither a fleet nor sufficient financial means to raise one . For a maritime power the loss of their access to the Mediterranean stung financially and psychologically , and the Carthaginians sued for peace .

Continuing distrust led to the renewal of hostilities in the Second Punic War when Hannibal Barca attacked an Iberian town which had diplomatic ties to Rome . Hannibal then crossed the Italian Alps to invade Italy . Hannibal 's successes in Italy began immediately , and reached an early climax at the Battle of Cannae , where 70 @,@ 000 Romans were killed .

The Romans held off Hannibal in three battles , but then Hannibal smashed a succession of Roman consular armies . By this time Hannibal 's brother Hasdrubal Barca sought to cross the Alps into Italy and join his brother with a second army . Hasdrubal managed to break through into Italy only to be defeated decisively on the Metaurus River . Unable to defeat Hannibal on Italian soil , the Romans boldly sent an army to Africa under Scipio Africanus to threaten the Carthaginian capital . Hannibal was recalled to Africa , and defeated at the Battle of Zama .

Carthage never recovered militarily after the Second Punic War , but quickly did so economically and the Third Punic War that followed was in reality a simple punitive mission after the neighbouring Numidians allied to Rome robbed / attacked Carthaginian merchants . Treaties had forbidden any war with Roman allies , and defence against robbing / pirates was considered as " war action " : Rome decided to annihilate the city of Carthage . Carthage was almost defenceless , and submitted when besieged . However , the Romans demanded complete surrender and removal of the city into the (desert) inland far off any coastal or harbour region , and the Carthaginians refused . The city was besieged , stormed , and completely destroyed .

Ultimately , all of Carthage 's North African and Iberian territories were acquired by Rome . Note that " Carthage " was not an ' empire ' , but a league of Punic colonies (port cities in the western Mediterranean) like the 1st and 2nd Athenian (" Attic ") leagues , under leadership of Carthage . Punic Carthage was gone , but the other Punic cities in the western Mediterranean flourished under Roman rule .

= = = Kingdom of Macedonia , the Greek poleis , and Illyria (215 ? 148 BC) = = =

Rome 's preoccupation with its war with Carthage provided an opportunity for Philip V of the kingdom of Macedonia , located in the north of the Greek peninsula , to attempt to extend his power westward . Philip sent ambassadors to Hannibal 's camp in Italy , to negotiate an alliance as common enemies of Rome . However , Rome discovered the agreement when Philip 's emissaries were captured by a Roman fleet . The First Macedonian War saw the Romans involved directly in only limited land operations , but they ultimately achieved their objective of pre @-@ occupying Philip and preventing him from aiding Hannibal .

The past century had seen the Greek world dominated by the three primary successor kingdoms of Alexander the Great 's empire : Ptolemaic Egypt , Macedonia and the Seleucid Empire . In 202 BC , internal problems led to a weakening of Egypt 's position , thereby disrupting the power balance among the successor states . Macedonia and the Seleucid Empire agreed to an alliance to conquer and divide Egypt . Fearing this increasingly unstable situation , several small Greek kingdoms sent delegations to Rome to seek an alliance . The delegation succeeded , even though prior Greek attempts to involve Rome in Greek affairs had been met with Roman apathy . Our primary source about these events , the surviving works of Polybius , do not state Rome 's reason for getting involved . Rome gave Philip an ultimatum to cease his campaigns against Rome 's new Greek allies . Doubting Rome 's strength (a reasonable doubt , given Rome 's performance in the First Macedonian War) Philip ignored the request , and Rome sent an army of Romans and Greek allies , beginning the Second Macedonian War . Despite his recent successes against the Greeks and earlier successes against Rome , Philip 's army buckled under the pressure from the Roman @-@ Greek army . In 197 BC , the Romans decisively defeated Philip at the Battle of Cynoscephalae ,

and Philip was forced to give up his recent Greek conquests . The Romans declared the " Peace of the Greeks " , believing that Philip 's defeat now meant that Greece would be stable . They pulled out of Greece entirely , maintaining minimal contacts with their Greek allies .

With Egypt and Macedonia weakened , the Seleucid Empire made increasingly aggressive and successful attempts to conquer the entire Greek world . Now not only Rome 's allies against Philip , but even Philip himself , sought a Roman alliance against the Seleucids . The situation was made worse by the fact that Hannibal was now a chief military advisor to the Seleucid emperor , and the two were believed to be planning an outright conquest not just of Greece , but of Rome itself . The Seleucids were much stronger than the Macedonians had ever been , because they controlled much of the former Persian Empire , and by now had almost entirely reassembled Alexander the Great 's former empire .

Fearing the worst , the Romans began a major mobilization , all but pulling out of recently pacified Spain and Gaul . They even established a major garrison in Sicily in case the Seleucids ever got to Italy . This fear was shared by Rome 's Greek allies , who had largely ignored Rome in the years after the Second Macedonian War , but now followed Rome again for the first time since that war . A major Roman @-@ Greek force was mobilized under the command of the great hero of the Second Punic War , Scipio Africanus , and set out for Greece , beginning the Roman @-@ Syrian War . After initial fighting that revealed serious Seleucid weaknesses , the Seleucids tried to turn the Roman strength against them at the Battle of Thermopylae (as they believed the 300 Spartans had done centuries earlier) . Like the Spartans , the Seleucids lost the battle , and were forced to evacuate Greece . The Romans pursued the Seleucids by crossing the Hellespont , which marked the first time a Roman army had ever entered Asia . The decisive engagement was fought at the Battle of Magnesia , resulting in a complete Roman victory . The Seleucids sued for peace , and Rome forced them to give up their recent Greek conquests . Although they still controlled a great deal of territory , this defeat marked the decline of their empire , as they were to begin facing increasingly aggressive subjects in the east (the Parthians) and the west (the Greeks) . Their empire disintegrated into a rump over the course of the next century , when it was eclipsed by Pontus . Following Magnesia , Rome again withdrew from Greece , assuming (or hoping) that the lack of a major Greek power would ensure a stable peace . In fact , it did the opposite .

In 179 BC Philip died . His talented and ambitious son , Perseus , took the throne and showed a renewed interest in conquering Greece . With her Greek allies facing a major new threat , Rome declared war on Macedonia again , starting the Third Macedonian War . Perseus initially had some success against the Romans . However , Rome responded by sending a stronger army . This second consular army decisively defeated the Macedonians at the Battle of Pydna in 168 BC and the Macedonians duly capitulated , ending the war .

Convinced now that the Greeks (and therefore the rest of the region) would not have peace if left alone , Rome decided to establish its first permanent foothold in the Greek world , and divided the Kingdom of Macedonia into four client republics . Yet , Macedonian agitation continued . The Fourth Macedonian War , 150 to 148 BC , was fought against a Macedonian pretender to the throne who was again destabilizing Greece by trying to re @-@ establish the old kingdom . The Romans swiftly defeated the Macedonians at the Second battle of Pydna .

The Achaean League chose this moment to fight Rome but was swiftly defeated . In 146 BC (the same year as the destruction of Carthage) , Corinth was besieged and destroyed , which led to the league 's surrender . After nearly a century of constant crisis management in Greece , which always led back to internal instability and war when she withdrew , Rome decided to divide Macedonia into two new Roman provinces , Achaëa and Epirus .

= = = Late Republic (147 ? 30 BC) = = =

= = = = Jugurthine War (111 ? 104 BC) = = = =

The Jugurthine War of 111 ? 104 BC was fought between Rome and Jugurtha of the North African

kingdom of Numidia . It constituted the final Roman pacification of Northern Africa , after which Rome largely ceased expansion on the continent after reaching natural barriers of desert and mountain . Following Jugurtha 's usurpation of the throne of Numidia , a loyal ally of Rome since the Punic Wars , Rome felt compelled to intervene . Jugurtha impudently bribed the Romans into accepting his usurpation . Jugurtha was finally captured not in battle but by treachery .

= = = Celtic threat (121 BC) and Germanic threat (113 ? 101 BC) = = =

In 121 BC , Rome came into contact with two Celtic tribes (from a region in modern France) , both of which they defeated with apparent ease . The Cimbrian War (113 ? 101 BC) was a far more serious affair than the earlier clashes of 121 BC . The Germanic tribes of the Cimbri and the Teutons migrated from northern Europe into Rome 's northern territories , and clashed with Rome and her allies . At the Battle of Aquae Sextiae and the Battle of Vercellae both tribes were virtually annihilated , which ended the threat .

= = = Internal unrest (135 ? 71 BC) = = =

The extensive campaigning abroad by Roman generals , and the rewarding of soldiers with plunder on these campaigns , led to a general trend of soldiers becoming increasingly loyal to their generals rather than to the state . Rome was also plagued by several slave uprisings during this period , in part because vast tracts of land had been given over to slave farming in which the slaves greatly outnumbered their Roman masters . In the 1st century BC at least twelve civil wars and rebellions occurred . This pattern continued until 27 BC , when Octavian (later Augustus) successfully challenged the Senate 's authority , and was made princeps (first citizen) .

Between 135 BC and 71 BC there were three " Servile Wars " involving slave uprisings against the Roman state . The third and final uprising was the most serious , involving ultimately between 120 @, @ 000 and 150 @, @ 000 slaves under the command of the gladiator Spartacus . In 91 BC the Social War broke out between Rome and its former allies in Italy when the allies complained that they shared the risk of Rome 's military campaigns , but not its rewards . Although they lost militarily , the allies achieved their objectives with legal proclamations which granted citizenship to more than 500 @, @ 000 Italians .

The internal unrest reached its most serious state , however , in the two civil wars that were caused by the clash between generals Gaius Marius and Lucius Cornelius Sulla starting from 88 BC . In the Battle of the Colline Gate at the very door of the city of Rome , a Roman army under Sulla bested an army of the Marius supporters and entered the city . Sulla 's actions marked a watershed in the willingness of Roman troops to wage war against one another that was to pave the way for the wars which ultimately overthrew the Republic , and caused the founding of the Roman Empire .

= = = Conflicts with Mithridates (89 ? 63 BC) and the Cilician pirates (67 BC) = = =

Mithridates the Great was the ruler of Pontus , a large kingdom in Asia Minor (modern Turkey) , from 120 to 63 BC . Mithridates antagonised Rome by seeking to expand his kingdom , and Rome for her part seemed equally eager for war and the spoils and prestige that it might bring . In 88 BC , Mithridates ordered the killing of a majority of the 80 @, @ 000 Romans living in his kingdom . The massacre was the official reason given for the commencement of hostilities in the First Mithridatic War . The Roman general Lucius Cornelius Sulla forced Mithridates out of Greece proper , but then had to return to Italy to answer the internal threat posed by his rival , Gaius Marius . A peace was made between Rome and Pontus , but this proved only a temporary lull .

The Second Mithridatic War began when Rome tried to annex a province that Mithridates claimed as his own . In the Third Mithridatic War , first Lucius Licinius Lucullus and then Pompey the Great were sent against Mithridates and his Armenian ally Tigranes the Great . Mithridates was finally defeated by Pompey in the night @-@ time Battle of the Lycus .

The Mediterranean had at this time fallen into the hands of pirates , largely from Cilicia . The pirates

not only strangled shipping lanes but also plundered many cities on the coasts of Greece and Asia . Pompey was nominated as commander of a special naval task force to campaign against the pirates . It took Pompey just forty days to clear the western portion of the sea of pirates and restore communication between Iberia (Spain) , Africa , and Italy .

=== Caesar 's early campaigns (59 ? 50 BC) ===

During his term as praetor in the Iberian Peninsula (modern Portugal and Spain) , Pompey 's contemporary Julius Caesar defeated two local tribes in battle . After his term as consul in 59 BC , he was appointed to a five @-@ year term as the proconsular Governor of Cisalpine Gaul (part of current northern Italy) , Transalpine Gaul (current southern France) and Illyria (part of the modern Balkans) . Not content with an idle governorship , Caesar strove to find reason to invade Gaul (modern France and Belgium) , which would give him the dramatic military success he sought . When two local tribes began to migrate on a route that would take them near (not into) the Roman province of Transalpine Gaul , Caesar had the barely sufficient excuse he needed for his Gallic Wars , fought between 58 BC and 49 BC .

Caesar defeated large armies at major battles 58 and 57 BC . In 55 and 54 BC he made two expeditions into Britain , the first Roman to do so . Caesar then defeated a union of Gauls at the Battle of Alesia , completing the Roman conquest of Transalpine Gaul . By 50 BC , all of Gaul lay in Roman hands . Gaul never regained its Celtic identity , never attempted another rebellion , and , except for the Crisis of the Third Century , remained loyal to Rome until the fall of the empire in 476 .

=== Triumvirates and Caesarian ascension (53 ? 30 BC) ===

By 59 BC an unofficial political alliance known as the First Triumvirate was formed between Gaius Julius Caesar , Marcus Licinius Crassus , and Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (" Pompey the Great ") to share power and influence . In 53 BC , Crassus launched a Roman invasion of the Parthian Empire (modern Iraq and Iran) . After initial successes , he marched his army deep into the desert ; but here his army was cut off deep in enemy territory , surrounded and slaughtered at the Battle of Carrhae in which Crassus himself perished . The death of Crassus removed some of the balance in the Triumvirate and , consequently , Caesar and Pompey began to move apart . While Caesar was fighting in Gaul , Pompey proceeded with a legislative agenda for Rome that revealed that he was at best ambivalent towards Caesar and perhaps now covertly allied with Caesar 's political enemies . In 51 BC , some Roman senators demanded that Caesar not be permitted to stand for consul unless he turned over control of his armies to the state , which would have left Caesar defenceless before his enemies . Caesar chose civil war over laying down his command and facing trial .

By the spring of 49 BC , the hardened legions of Caesar crossed the river Rubicon , the legal boundary of Roman Italy beyond which no commander might bring his army , and swept down the Italian peninsula towards Rome , while Pompey ordered the abandonment of Rome . Afterwards Caesar turned his attention to the Pompeian stronghold of Hispania (modern Spain) but decided to tackle Pompey himself in Greece . Pompey initially defeated Caesar , but failed to follow up on the victory , and was decisively defeated at the Battle of Pharsalus in 48 BC , despite outnumbering Caesar 's forces two to one , albeit with inferior quality troops . Pompey fled again , this time to Egypt , where he was murdered .

Pompey 's death did not end the civil war , as Caesar 's many enemies fought on . In 46 BC Caesar lost perhaps as much as a third of his army , but ultimately came back to defeat the Pompeian army of Metellus Scipio in the Battle of Thapsus , after which the Pompeians retreated yet again to Hispania . Caesar then defeated the combined Pompeian forces at the Battle of Munda .

Caesar was now the primary figure of the Roman state , enforcing and entrenching his powers . His enemies feared that he had ambitions to become an autocratic ruler . Arguing that the Roman Republic was in danger , a group of senators hatched a conspiracy and assassinated Caesar at a meeting of the Senate in March 44 BC . Mark Antony , Caesar 's lieutenant , condemned Caesar 's

assassination , and war broke out between the two factions . Antony was denounced as a public enemy , and Caesar 's adopted son and chosen heir , Gaius Octavianus , was entrusted with the command of the war against him . At the Battle of Mutina Mark Antony was defeated by the consuls Hirtius and Pansa , who were both killed .

Octavian came to terms with Caesarians Antony and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus in 43 BC when the Second Triumvirate was formed . In 42 BC Mark Antony and Octavian fought the Battle of Philippi against Caesar 's assassins Brutus and Cassius . Although Brutus defeated Octavian , Antony defeated Cassius , who committed suicide . Brutus did likewise soon afterwards .

However , civil war flared again when the Second Triumvirate of Octavian , Lepidus and Mark Antony failed . The ambitious Octavian built a power base of patronage and then launched a campaign against Mark Antony . At the naval Battle of Actium off the coast of Greece , Octavian decisively defeated Antony and Cleopatra . Octavian was granted a series of special powers including sole " imperium " within the city of Rome , permanent consular powers and credit for every Roman military victory , since all future generals were assumed to be acting under his command . In 27 BC Octavian was granted the use of the names " Augustus " and " Princeps " , indicating his primary status above all other Romans , and he adopted the title " Imperator Caesar " making him the first Roman Emperor .

= = Political history = =

The constitutional history of the Roman Republic can be divided into five phases . The first phase began with the revolution which overthrew the monarchy in 509 BC . The final phase ended with the transition that transformed the Republic into what would effectively be the Roman Empire , in 27 BC . Throughout the history of the Republic , the constitutional evolution was driven by the conflict of the orders between the aristocracy and the ordinary citizens .

= = = Patrician era (509 ? 367 BC) = = =

The last king of the Roman Kingdom , Lucius Tarquinius Superbus , was overthrown in 509 BC by a group of noblemen led by Lucius Junius Brutus . Tarquin made a number of attempts to retake the throne , including the Tarquinian conspiracy , the war with Veii and Tarquinii and finally the war between Rome and Clusium , all of which failed to achieve Tarquin 's objectives . The most important constitutional change during the transition from kingdom to republic involved a new form of chief magistrate . Before the revolution , a king would be elected by the senators for a life term . Now , two consuls were elected by the citizens for an annual term . Each consul would check his colleague , and their limited term in office would open them up to prosecution if they abused the powers of their office . Consular political powers , when exercised conjointly with a consular colleague , were no different from those of the old king .

In 494 BC , the city was at war with two neighboring tribes . The plebeian soldiers refused to march against the enemy , and instead seceded to the Aventine Hill . The plebeians demanded the right to elect their own officials . The patricians agreed , and the plebeians returned to the battlefield . The plebeians called these new officials " plebeian tribunes " . The tribunes would have two assistants , called " plebeian aediles " . During the 5th century BC , a series of reforms were passed . The result of these reforms was that any law passed by the plebeian would have the full force of law . In 443 BC , the censorship was created . From 375 BC to 371 BC , the republic experienced a constitutional crisis during which the tribunes used their vetoes to prevent the election of senior magistrates .

= = = Conflict of the Orders (367 ? 287 BC) = = =

In 367 BC a law was passed which required the election of at least one plebeian aedile each year . Also in 366 BC , the praetorship and curule aedileship were created . Shortly after the founding of the Republic , the Comitia Centuriata (" Assembly of the Centuries ") became the principal

legislative assembly . In this assembly , magistrates were elected and laws were passed .

After the consulship had been opened to the plebeians , the plebeians were able to hold both the dictatorship and the censorship . Plebiscites of 342 BC placed limits on political offices ; an individual could hold only one office at a time , and ten years must elapse between the end of his official term and his re @-@ election . Further laws attempted to relieve the burden of debt from plebeians by banning interest on loans . In 337 BC , the first plebeian praetor was elected . During these years , the tribunes and the senators grew increasingly close . The senate realised the need to use plebeian officials to accomplish desired goals . To win over the tribunes , the senators gave the tribunes a great deal of power and the tribunes began to feel obligated to the senate . As the tribunes and the senators grew closer , plebeian senators were often able to secure the tribunate for members of their own families . In time , the tribunate became a stepping stone to higher office .

Shortly before 312 BC , the Plebeian Council enacted the Plebiscitum Ovinium . During the early republic , only consuls could appoint new senators . This initiative , however , transferred this power to the censors . It also required the censor to appoint any newly elected magistrate to the senate . By this point , plebeians were already holding a significant number of magisterial offices . Thus , the number of plebeian senators probably increased quickly . However , it remained difficult for a plebeian to enter the senate if he was not from a well @-@ known political family , as a new patrician @-@ like plebeian aristocracy emerged . The old nobility existed through the force of law , because only patricians were allowed to stand for high office . The new nobility existed due to the organization of society . As such , only a revolution could overthrow this new structure .

By 287 BC , the economic condition of the average plebeian had become poor . The problem appears to have centered around widespread indebtedness . The plebeians demanded relief , but the senators refused to address their situation . The result was the final plebeian secession . The plebeians seceded to the Janiculum hill . To end the secession , a dictator was appointed . The dictator passed a law (the Lex Hortensia) , which ended the requirement that the patrician senators must agree before any bill could be considered by the Plebeian Council . This was not the first law to require that an act of the Plebeian Council have the full force of law . The Plebeian Council acquired this power during a modification to the original Valerian law in 449 BC . The significance of this law was in the fact that it robbed the patricians of their final weapon over the plebeians . The result was that control over the state fell , not onto the shoulders of voters , but to the new plebeian nobility .

The plebeians had finally achieved political equality with the patricians . However , the plight of the average plebeian had not changed . A small number of plebeian families achieved the same standing that the old aristocratic patrician families had always had , but the new plebeian aristocrats became as uninterested in the plight of the average plebeian as the old patrician aristocrats had always been . The plebeians rebelled by leaving Rome and refusing to return until they had more rights . The patricians then noticed how much they needed the plebeians and accepted their terms . The plebeians then returned to Rome and continued their work .

= = = Supremacy of the New Nobility (287 ? 133 BC) = = =

The Hortensian Law deprived the patricians of their last weapon against the plebeians , and thus resolved the last great political question of the era . No such important political changes occurred between 287 BC and 133 BC . The important laws of this era were still enacted by the senate . In effect , the plebeians were satisfied with the possession of power , but did not care to use it . The senate was supreme during this era because the era was dominated by questions of foreign and military policy . This was the most militarily active era of the Roman Republic .

In the final decades of this era many plebeians grew poorer . The long military campaigns had forced citizens to leave their farms to fight , while their farms fell into disrepair . The landed aristocracy began buying bankrupted farms at discounted prices . As commodity prices fell , many farmers could no longer operate their farms at a profit . The result was the ultimate bankruptcy of countless farmers . Masses of unemployed plebeians soon began to flood into Rome , and thus into the ranks of the legislative assemblies . Their poverty usually led them to vote for the candidate who offered them the most . A new culture of dependency was emerging , in which citizens would look to

any populist leader for relief .

= = = From the Gracchi to Caesar (133 ? 49 BC) = = =

The prior era saw great military successes , and great economic failures . The patriotism of the plebeians had kept them from seeking any new reforms . Now , the military situation had stabilised , and fewer soldiers were needed . This , in conjunction with the new slaves that were being imported from abroad , inflamed the unemployment situation further . The flood of unemployed citizens to Rome had made the assemblies quite populist .

= = = The Gracchi = = =

Tiberius Gracchus was elected tribune in 133 BC . He attempted to enact a law which would have limited the amount of land that any individual could own . The aristocrats , who stood to lose an enormous amount of money , were bitterly opposed to this proposal . Tiberius submitted this law to the Plebeian Council , but the law was vetoed by a tribune named Marcus Octavius . Tiberius then used the Plebeian Council to impeach Octavius . The theory , that a representative of the people ceases to be one when he acts against the wishes of the people , was counter to Roman constitutional theory . If carried to its logical end , this theory would remove all constitutional restraints on the popular will , and put the state under the absolute control of a temporary popular majority . His law was enacted , but Tiberius was murdered with 300 of his associates when he stood for reelection to the tribunate .

Tiberius ' brother Gaius was elected tribune in 123 BC . Gaius Gracchus ' ultimate goal was to weaken the senate and to strengthen the democratic forces . In the past , for example , the senate would eliminate political rivals either by establishing special judicial commissions or by passing a *senatus consultum ultimum* (" ultimate decree of the senate ") . Both devices would allow the Senate to bypass the ordinary due process rights that all citizens had . Gaius outlawed the judicial commissions , and declared the *senatus consultum ultimum* to be unconstitutional . Gaius then proposed a law which would grant citizenship rights to Rome 's Italian allies . This last proposal was not popular with the plebeians and he lost much of his support . He stood for election to a third term in 121 BC , but was defeated and then murdered by representatives of the senate with 3 @, @ 000 of his supporters on Capitoline Hill in Rome . Though the senate retained control , the Gracchi had strengthened the political influence of the plebeians .

= = = The populares and the optimates = = =

In 118 BC , King Micipsa of Numidia (current @-@ day Algeria and Tunisia) died . He was succeeded by two legitimate sons , Adherbal and Hiempsal , and an illegitimate son , Jugurtha . Micipsa divided his kingdom between these three sons . Jugurtha , however , turned on his brothers , killing Hiempsal and driving Adherbal out of Numidia . Adherbal fled to Rome for assistance , and initially Rome mediated a division of the country between the two brothers . Eventually , Jugurtha renewed his offensive , leading to a long and inconclusive war with Rome . He also bribed several Roman commanders , and at least two tribunes , before and during the war . His nemesis , Gaius Marius , a legate from a virtually unknown provincial family , returned from the war in Numidia and was elected consul in 107 BC over the objections of the aristocratic senators . Marius invaded Numidia and brought the war to a quick end , capturing Jugurtha in the process . The apparent incompetence of the Senate , and the brilliance of Marius , had been put on full display . The populares party took full advantage of this opportunity by allying itself with Marius .

Several years later , in 88 BC , a Roman army was sent to put down an emerging Asian power , king Mithridates of Pontus . The army , however , was defeated . One of Marius ' old quaestors , Lucius Cornelius Sulla , had been elected consul for the year , and was ordered by the senate to assume command of the war against Mithridates . Marius , a member of the " populares " party , had a tribune revoke Sulla 's command of the war against Mithridates . Sulla , a member of the

aristocratic (" optimates ") party , brought his army back to Italy and marched on Rome . Sulla was so angry at Marius ' tribune that he passed a law intended to permanently weaken the tribunate . He then returned to his war against Mithridates . With Sulla gone , the populares under Marius and Lucius Cornelius Cinna soon took control of the city .

During the period in which the populares party controlled the city , they flouted convention by re-@-@ electing Marius consul several times without observing the customary ten @-@ year interval between offices . They also transgressed the established oligarchy by advancing unelected individuals to magisterial office , and by substituting magisterial edicts for popular legislation . Sulla soon made peace with Mithridates . In 83 BC , he returned to Rome , overcame all resistance , and recaptured the city . Sulla and his supporters then slaughtered most of Marius ' supporters . Sulla , having observed the violent results of radical popular reforms , was naturally conservative . As such , he sought to strengthen the aristocracy , and by extension the senate . Sulla made himself dictator , passed a series of constitutional reforms , resigned the dictatorship , and served one last term as consul . He died in 78 BC .

= = = = Pompey , Crassus and the Catilinarian Conspiracy = = = =

In 77 BC , the senate sent one of Sulla 's former lieutenants , Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (" Pompey the Great ") , to put down an uprising in Hispania . By 71 BC , Pompey returned to Rome after having completed his mission . Around the same time , another of Sulla 's former lieutenants , Marcus Licinius Crassus , had just put down the Spartacus @-@ led gladiator / slave revolt in Italy . Upon their return , Pompey and Crassus found the populares party fiercely attacking Sulla 's constitution . They attempted to forge an agreement with the populares party . If both Pompey and Crassus were elected consul in 70 BC , they would dismantle the more obnoxious components of Sulla 's constitution . The two were soon elected , and quickly dismantled most of Sulla 's constitution .

Around 66 BC , a movement to use constitutional , or at least peaceful , means to address the plight of various classes began . After several failures , the movement 's leaders decided to use any means that were necessary to accomplish their goals . The movement coalesced under an aristocrat named Lucius Sergius Catilina . The movement was based in the town of Faesulae , which was a natural hotbed of agrarian agitation . The rural malcontents were to advance on Rome , and be aided by an uprising within the city . After assassinating the consuls and most of the senators , Catiline would be free to enact his reforms . The conspiracy was set in motion in 63 BC . The consul for the year , Marcus Tullius Cicero , intercepted messages that Catiline had sent in an attempt to recruit more members . As a result , the top conspirators in Rome (including at least one former consul) were executed by authorisation (of dubious constitutionality) of the senate , and the planned uprising was disrupted . Cicero then sent an army , which cut Catiline 's forces to pieces .

The most important result of the Catilinarian conspiracy was that the populares party became discredited . The prior 70 years had witnessed a gradual erosion in senatorial powers . The violent nature of the conspiracy , in conjunction with the senate 's skill in disrupting it , did a great deal to repair the senate 's image .

= = = = First Triumvirate = = = =

In 62 BC , Pompey returned victorious from Asia . The Senate , elated by its successes against Catiline , refused to ratify the arrangements that Pompey had made . Pompey , in effect , became powerless . Thus , when Julius Caesar returned from a governorship in Spain in 61 BC , he found it easy to make an arrangement with Pompey . Caesar and Pompey , along with Crassus , established a private agreement , now known as the First Triumvirate . Under the agreement , Pompey 's arrangements would be ratified . Caesar would be elected consul in 59 BC , and would then serve as governor of Gaul for five years . Crassus was promised a future consulship .

Caesar became consul in 59 BC . His colleague , Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus , was an extreme aristocrat . Caesar submitted the laws that he had promised Pompey to the assemblies . Bibulus

attempted to obstruct the enactment of these laws , and so Caesar used violent means to ensure their passage . Caesar was then made governor of three provinces . He facilitated the election of the former patrician Publius Clodius Pulcher to the tribunate for 58 BC . Clodius set about depriving Caesar 's senatorial enemies of two of their more obstinate leaders in Cato and Cicero . Clodius was a bitter opponent of Cicero because Cicero had testified against him in a sacrilege case . Clodius attempted to try Cicero for executing citizens without a trial during the Catiline conspiracy , resulting in Cicero going into self @-@ imposed exile and his house in Rome being burnt down . Clodius also passed a bill that forced Cato to lead the invasion of Cyprus which would keep him away from Rome for some years . Clodius also passed a law to expand the previous partial grain subsidy to a fully free grain dole for citizens .

= = = = The end of the First Triumvirate = = = =

Clodius formed armed gangs that terrorised the city and eventually began to attack Pompey 's followers , who in response funded counter @-@ gangs formed by Titus Annius Milo . The political alliance of the triumvirate was crumbling . Domitius Ahenobarbus ran for the consulship in 55 BC promising to take Caesar 's command from him . Eventually , the triumvirate was renewed at Lucca . Pompey and Crassus were promised the consulship in 55 BC , and Caesar 's term as governor was extended for five years . Crassus led an ill @-@ fated expedition with legions led by his son , Caesar 's lieutenant , against the Kingdom of Parthia . This resulted in his defeat and death at the Battle of Carrhae . Finally , Pompey 's wife , Julia , who was Caesar 's daughter , died in childbirth . This event severed the last remaining bond between Pompey and Caesar .

Beginning in the summer of 54 BC , a wave of political corruption and violence swept Rome . This chaos reached a climax in January of 52 BC , when Clodius was murdered in a gang war by Milo . On 1 January 49 BC , an agent of Caesar presented an ultimatum to the senate . The ultimatum was rejected , and the senate then passed a resolution which declared that if Caesar did not lay down his arms by July of that year , he would be considered an enemy of the Republic . Meanwhile , the senators adopted Pompey as their new champion against Caesar . On 7 January of 49 BC , the senate passed a *senatus consultum ultimum* , which vested Pompey with dictatorial powers . Pompey 's army , however , was composed largely of untested conscripts . On 10 January , Caesar crossed the Rubicon with his veteran army (in violation of Roman laws) and marched towards Rome . Caesar 's rapid advance forced Pompey , the consuls and the senate to abandon Rome for Greece . Caesar entered the city unopposed .

= = = The period of transition (49 ? 29 BC) = = =

A period of reform occurred between 49 BC , when Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon , and 29 BC , when Octavian returned to Rome after Actium . During this period the previous century 's gradual unravelling of republican institutions accelerated rapidly . By 29 BC , Rome had completed its transition from a city @-@ state with a network of dependencies to the capital of a world empire .

With Pompey defeated and order restored , Caesar wanted to achieve undisputed control over the government . The powers which he gave himself were later assumed by his imperial successors . His assumption of these powers decreased the authority of Rome 's other political institutions .

Caesar held both the dictatorship and the tribunate , and alternated between the consulship and the proconsulship . In 48 BC , Caesar was given permanent tribunician powers . This made his person sacrosanct , gave him the power to veto the senate , and allowed him to dominate the Plebeian Council . In 46 BC , Caesar was given censorial powers , which he used to fill the senate with his own partisans . Caesar then raised the membership of the Senate to 900 . This robbed the senatorial aristocracy of its prestige , and made it increasingly subservient to him . While the assemblies continued to meet , he submitted all candidates to the assemblies for election , and all bills to the assemblies for enactment . Thus , the assemblies became powerless and were unable to oppose him .

Near the end of his life , Caesar began to prepare for a war against the Parthian Empire . Since his

absence from Rome would limit his ability to install his own consuls , he passed a law which allowed him to appoint all magistrates in 43 BC , and all consuls and tribunes in 42 BC . This transformed the magistrates from representatives of the people to representatives of the dictator .

= = = Caesar 's assassination and the Second Triumvirate = = =

Caesar was assassinated on March 15 , 44 BC . The assassination was led by Gaius Cassius and Marcus Brutus . Most of the conspirators were senators , who had a variety of economic , political , or personal motivations for carrying out the assassination . Many were afraid that Caesar would soon resurrect the monarchy and declare himself king . Others feared loss of property or prestige as Caesar carried out his land reforms in favor of the landless classes . Virtually all the conspirators fled the city after Caesar 's death in fear of retaliation . The civil war that followed destroyed what was left of the Republic .

After the assassination , Mark Antony formed an alliance with Caesar 's adopted son and great @-@ nephew , Gaius Octavian . Along with Marcus Lepidus , they formed an alliance known as the Second Triumvirate . They held powers that were nearly identical to the powers that Caesar had held under his constitution . As such , the Senate and assemblies remained powerless , even after Caesar had been assassinated . The conspirators were then defeated at the Battle of Philippi in 42 BC . Eventually , however , Antony and Octavian fought against each other in one last battle . Antony was defeated in the naval Battle of Actium in 31 BC , and he committed suicide with his lover , Cleopatra . In 29 BC , Octavian returned to Rome as the unchallenged master of the Empire and later accepted the title of Augustus (" Exalted One ") . He was convinced that only a single strong ruler could restore order in Rome .

= = Military = =

The structural history of the Roman military describes the major chronological transformations in the organisation and constitution of the Roman armed forces . The Roman military was split into the Roman army and the Roman navy , although these two branches were less distinct than they tend to be in modern defence forces . Within the top @-@ level branches of army and navy , structural changes occurred both as a result of positive military reform and through organic structural evolution .

As with most ancient civilizations , Rome 's military served the triple purposes of securing its borders , exploiting peripheral areas through measures such as imposing tribute on conquered peoples , and maintaining internal order . From the outset , Rome 's military typified this pattern and the majority of Rome 's wars were characterized by one of two types . The first is the foreign war , normally begun as a counter @-@ offensive or defense of an ally . The second is the civil war , which plagued the Roman Republic in its final century . Roman armies were not invincible , despite their formidable reputation and host of victories . Over the centuries the Romans " produced their share of incompetents " who led Roman armies into catastrophic defeats . Nevertheless , it was generally the fate of the greatest of Rome 's enemies , such as Pyrrhus and Hannibal , to win early battles but lose the war . The history of Rome 's campaigning is , if nothing else , a history of obstinate persistence overcoming appalling losses .

= = = Hoplite armies (509 ? c . 315 BC) = = =

During this period , Roman soldiers seem to have been modelled after those of the Etruscans to the north , who themselves seem to have copied their style of warfare from the Greeks . Traditionally , the introduction of the phalanx formation into the Roman army is ascribed to the city 's penultimate king , Servius Tullius (ruled 578 to 534 BC) . According to Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus , the front rank was composed of the wealthiest citizens , who were able to purchase the best equipment . Each subsequent rank consisted of those with less wealth and poorer equipment than the one before it .

One disadvantage of the phalanx was that it was only effective when fighting in large , open spaces , which left the Romans at a disadvantage when fighting in the hilly terrain of central Italian peninsula . In the 4th century BC , the Romans abandoned the phalanx in favour of the more flexible manipular formation . This change is sometimes attributed to Marcus Furius Camillus and placed shortly after the Gallic invasion of 390 BC ; it is more likely , however , that they were copied from Rome 's Samnite enemies to the south , possibly as a result of Samnite victories during the Second Samnite War (326 to 304 BC) .

= = = Manipular legion (c . 315 ? 107 BC) = = =

During this period , an army formation of around 5 @, @ 000 men (of both heavy and light infantry) was known as a legion . The manipular army was based upon social class , age and military experience . Maniples were units of 120 men each drawn from a single infantry class .

The maniples were typically deployed into three discrete lines based on the three heavy infantry types :

1 . Each first line maniple were leather @-@ armoured infantry soldiers who wore a bronze breastplate and a bronze helmet adorned with 3 feathers approximately 30 cm (12 in) in height and carried an iron @-@ clad wooden shield . They were armed with a sword and two throwing spears .

2 . The second infantry line was armed and armoured in the same manner as was the first infantry line . The second infantry line , however , wore a lighter coat of mail rather than a solid brass breastplate .

3 . The third infantry line was the last remnant of the hoplite @-@ style (the Greek @-@ style formation used occasionally during the early Republic) troops in the Roman army . They were armed and armoured in the same manner as were the soldiers in the second line , with the exception that they carried a lighter spear .

The three infantry classes may have retained some slight parallel to social divisions within Roman society , but at least officially the three lines were based upon age and experience rather than social class . Young , unproven men would serve in the first line , older men with some military experience would serve in the second line , and veteran troops of advanced age and experience would serve in the third line .

The heavy infantry of the maniples were supported by a number of light infantry and cavalry troops , typically 300 horsemen per manipular legion . The cavalry was drawn primarily from the richest class of equestrians . There was an additional class of troops who followed the army without specific martial roles and were deployed to the rear of the third line . Their role in accompanying the army was primarily to supply any vacancies that might occur in the maniples . The light infantry consisted of 1 @, @ 200 unarmoured skirmishing troops drawn from the youngest and lower social classes . They were armed with a sword and a small shield , as well as several light javelins .

Rome 's military confederation with the other peoples of the Italian peninsula meant that half of Rome 's army was provided by the Socii , such as the Etruscans , Umbrians , Apulians , Campanians , Samnites , Lucani , Bruttii , and the various southern Greek cities . Polybius states that Rome could draw on 770 @, @ 000 men at the beginning of the Second Punic War , of which 700 @, @ 000 were infantry and 70 @, @ 000 met the requirements for cavalry . Rome 's Italian allies would be organized in alae , or wings , roughly equal in manpower to the Roman legions , though with 900 cavalry instead of 300 .

A small navy had operated at a fairly low level after about 300 BC , but it was massively upgraded about forty years later , during the First Punic War . After a period of frenetic construction , the navy mushroomed to a size of more than 400 ships on the Carthaginian (" Punic ") pattern . Once completed , it could accommodate up to 100 @, @ 000 sailors and embarked troops for battle . The navy thereafter declined in size .

The extraordinary demands of the Punic Wars , in addition to a shortage of manpower , exposed the tactical weaknesses of the manipular legion , at least in the short term . In 217 BC , near the beginning of the Second Punic War , Rome was forced to effectively ignore its long @-@ standing principle that its soldiers must be both citizens and property owners . During the 2nd century BC ,

Roman territory saw an overall decline in population , partially due to the huge losses incurred during various wars . This was accompanied by severe social stresses and the greater collapse of the middle classes . As a result , the Roman state was forced to arm its soldiers at the expense of the state , which it had not had to do in the past .

The distinction between the heavy infantry types began to blur , perhaps because the state was now assuming the responsibility of providing standard @-@ issue equipment . In addition , the shortage of available manpower led to a greater burden being placed upon Rome 's allies for the provision of allied troops . Eventually , the Romans were forced to begin hiring mercenaries to fight alongside the legions .

= = = The legion after the reforms of Gaius Marius (107 ? 27 BC) = = =

In process known as the Marian reforms , Roman consul Gaius Marius carried out a programme of reform of the Roman military . In 107 BC , all citizens , regardless of their wealth or social class , were made eligible for entry into the Roman army . This move formalised and concluded a gradual process that had been growing for centuries , of removing property requirements for military service . The distinction between the three heavy infantry classes , which had already become blurred , had collapsed into a single class of heavy legionary infantry . The heavy infantry legionaries were drawn from citizen stock , while non @-@ citizens came to dominate the ranks of the light infantry . The army 's higher @-@ level officers and commanders were still drawn exclusively from the Roman aristocracy .

Unlike earlier in the Republic , legionaries were no longer fighting on a seasonal basis to protect their land . Instead , they received standard pay , and were employed by the state on a fixed @-@ term basis . As a consequence , military duty began to appeal most to the poorest sections of society , to whom a salaried pay was attractive . A destabilising consequence of this development was that the proletariat " acquired a stronger and more elevated position " within the state .

The legions of the late Republic were , structurally , almost entirely heavy infantry . The legion 's main sub @-@ unit was called a cohort and consisted of approximately 480 infantrymen . The cohort was therefore a much larger unit than the earlier maniples sub @-@ unit , and was divided into six centuries of 80 men each . Each century was separated further into 10 " tent groups " of 8 men each . The cavalry troops were used as scouts and dispatch riders rather than battlefield cavalry . Legions also contained a dedicated group of artillery crew of perhaps 60 men . Each legion was normally partnered with an approximately equal number of allied (non @-@ Roman) troops .

However , the most obvious deficiency of the Roman army remained its shortage of cavalry , especially heavy cavalry . As Rome 's borders expanded and its adversaries changed from largely infantry @-@ based to largely cavalry @-@ based troops , the infantry @-@ based Roman army began to find itself at a tactical disadvantage , particularly in the East .

After having declined in size following the subjugation of the Mediterranean , the Roman navy underwent short @-@ term upgrading and revitalisation in the late Republic to meet several new demands . Under Caesar , an invasion fleet was assembled in the English Channel to allow the invasion of Britannia ; under Pompey , a large fleet was raised in the Mediterranean Sea to clear the sea of Cilician pirates . During the civil war that followed , as many as a thousand ships were either constructed or pressed into service from Greek cities .

= = Politics = =

The Constitution of the Roman Republic was an unwritten set of guidelines and principles passed down mainly through precedent . The Roman constitution was not formal or even official . It was largely unwritten , uncodified , and constantly evolving .

= = = Senate of the Roman Republic = = =

The senate 's ultimate authority derived from the esteem and prestige of the senators . This esteem

and prestige was based on both precedent and custom , as well as the caliber and reputation of the senators . The senate passed decrees , which were called *senatus consulta* . These were officially " advice " from the senate to a magistrate . In practice , however , they were usually followed by the magistrates . The focus of the Roman senate was usually directed towards foreign policy . Though it technically had no official role in the management of military conflict , the senate ultimately was the force that oversaw such affairs . The power of the senate expanded over time as the power of the legislative assemblies declined , and the senate took a greater role in ordinary law making . Its members were usually appointed by Roman Censors , who ordinarily selected newly elected magistrates for membership in the senate , making the senate a partially elected body . During times of military emergency , such as the civil wars of the 1st century BC , this practice became less prevalent , as the Roman Dictator , Triumvir or the senate itself would select its members .

== Legislative Assemblies ==

The legal status of Roman citizenship was limited and was a vital prerequisite to possessing many important legal rights such as the right to trial and appeal , to marry , to vote , to hold office , to enter binding contracts , and to special tax exemptions . An adult male citizen with the full complement of legal and political rights was called " *optimo jure* . " The *optimo jure* elected their assemblies , whereupon the assemblies elected magistrates , enacted legislation , presided over trials in capital cases , declared war and peace , and forged or dissolved treaties . There were two types of legislative assemblies . The first was the *comitia* (" committees ") , which were assemblies of all *optimo jure* . The second was the *concilia* (" councils ") , which were assemblies of specific groups of *optimo jure* .

Citizens were organized on the basis of centuries and tribes , which would each gather into their own assemblies . The *Comitia Centuriata* (" Centuriate Assembly ") was the assembly of the centuries (i.e. soldiers) . The president of the *Comitia Centuriata* was usually a consul . The centuries would vote , one at a time , until a measure received support from a majority of the centuries . The *Comitia Centuriata* would elect magistrates who had *imperium* powers (consuls and praetors) . It also elected censors . Only the *Comitia Centuriata* could declare war , and ratify the results of a census . It also served as the highest court of appeal in certain judicial cases .

The assembly of the tribes (i.e. the citizens of Rome) , the *Comitia Tributa* , was presided over by a consul , and was composed of 35 tribes . The tribes were not ethnic or kinship groups , but rather geographical subdivisions . The order that the thirty @-@ five tribes would vote in was selected randomly by lot . Once a measure received support from a majority of the tribes , the voting would end . While it did not pass many laws , the *Comitia Tributa* did elect quaestors , curule aediles , and military tribunes . The Plebeian Council was identical to the assembly of the tribes , but excluded the patricians (the elite who could trace their ancestry to the founding of Rome) . They elected their own officers , plebeian tribunes and plebeian aediles . Usually a plebeian tribune would preside over the assembly . This assembly passed most laws , and could also act as a court of appeal .

== Executive Magistrates ==

Each republican magistrate held certain constitutional powers . Only the People of Rome (both plebeians and patricians) had the right to confer these powers on any individual magistrate . The most powerful constitutional power was *imperium* . *Imperium* was held by both consuls and praetors . *Imperium* gave a magistrate the authority to command a military force . All magistrates also had the power of coercion . This was used by magistrates to maintain public order . While in Rome , all citizens had a judgement against coercion . This protection was called *provocatio* (see below) . Magistrates also had both the power and the duty to look for omens . This power would often be used to obstruct political opponents .

One check on a magistrate 's power was his collegiality . Each magisterial office would be held concurrently by at least two people . Another such check was *provocatio* . *Provocatio* was a primordial form of due process . It was a precursor to *habeas corpus* . If any magistrate tried to use

the powers of the state against a citizen , that citizen could appeal the decision of the magistrate to a tribune . In addition , once a magistrate 's one @-@ year term of office expired , he would have to wait ten years before serving in that office again . This created problems for some consuls and praetors , and these magistrates would occasionally have their imperium extended . In effect , they would retain the powers of the office (as a promagistrate) , without officially holding that office .

The consuls of the Roman Republic were the highest ranking ordinary magistrates ; each consul served for one year . Consuls had supreme power in both civil and military matters . While in the city of Rome , the consuls were the head of the Roman government . They would preside over the senate and the assemblies . While abroad , each consul would command an army . His authority abroad would be nearly absolute . Praetors administered civil law and commanded provincial armies . Every five years , two censors were elected for an 18 @-@ month term , during which they would conduct a census . During the census , they could enroll citizens in the senate , or purge them from the senate . Aediles were officers elected to conduct domestic affairs in Rome , such as managing public games and shows . The quaestors would usually assist the consuls in Rome , and the governors in the provinces . Their duties were often financial .

Since the tribunes were considered to be the embodiment of the plebeians , they were sacrosanct . Their sacrosanctity was enforced by a pledge , taken by the plebeians , to kill any person who harmed or interfered with a tribune during his term of office . All of the powers of the tribune derived from their sacrosanctity . One consequence was that it was considered a capital offense to harm a tribune , to disregard his veto , or to interfere with a tribune . In times of military emergency , a dictator would be appointed for a term of six months . Constitutional government would be dissolved , and the dictator would be the absolute master of the state . When the dictator 's term ended , constitutional government would be restored .

= = Culture = =

Life in the Roman Republic revolved around the city of Rome , and its famed seven hills . The city also had several theatres , gymnasiums , and many taverns , baths and brothels . Throughout the territory under Rome 's control , residential architecture ranged from very modest houses to country villas , and in the capital city of Rome , to the residences on the elegant Palatine Hill , from which the word " palace " is derived . The vast majority of the population lived in the city center , packed into apartment blocks .

Most Roman towns and cities had a forum and temples , as did the city of Rome itself . Aqueducts brought water to urban centers and wine and cooking oil were imported from abroad . Landlords generally resided in cities and left their estates in the care of farm managers . To stimulate a higher labor productivity , many landlords freed large numbers of slaves .

Beginning in the middle of the 2nd century BC , Greek culture was increasingly ascendant , in spite of tirades against the " softening " effects of Hellenised culture . By the time of Augustus , cultured Greek household slaves taught the Roman young (sometimes even the girls) . Greek sculptures adorned Hellenistic landscape gardening on the Palatine or in the villas , and much of ancient Roman cuisine was essentially Greek . Roman writers disdained Latin for a cultured Greek style .

= = = Social structure = = =

Many aspects of Roman culture were borrowed from the Greeks . In architecture and sculpture , the difference between Greek models and Roman paintings are apparent . The chief Roman contributions to architecture were the arch and the dome . Rome has also had a tremendous impact on European cultures following it . Its significance is perhaps best reflected in its endurance and influence , as is seen in the longevity and lasting importance of works of Virgil and Ovid . Latin , the Republic 's primary language , remains used for liturgical purposes by the Roman Catholic Church , and up to the 19th century was used extensively in scholarly writings in , for example , science and mathematics . Roman law laid the foundations for the laws of many European countries and their colonies .

The center of the early social structure was the family , which was not only marked by blood relations but also by the legally constructed relation of patria potestas . The Pater familias was the absolute head of the family ; he was the master over his wife , his children , the wives of his sons , the nephews , the slaves and the freedmen , disposing of them and of their goods at will , even putting them to death . Roman law recognised only patrician families as legal entities .

Slavery and slaves were part of the social order ; there were slave markets where they could be bought and sold . Many slaves were freed by the masters for services rendered ; some slaves could save money to buy their freedom . Generally , mutilation and murder of slaves was prohibited by legislation . However , Rome did not have a law enforcement arm . All actions were treated as " torts , " which were brought by an accuser who was forced to prove the entire case himself . If the accused were a noble and the victim , not a noble , the likelihood of finding for the accused was small . At most , the accused might have to pay a fine for killing a slave . It is estimated that over 25 % of the Roman population was enslaved .

= = = Clothing = = =

Men typically wore a toga , and women a stola . The woman 's stola differed in looks from a toga , and was usually brightly coloured . The cloth and the dress distinguished one class of people from the other class . The tunic worn by plebeians , or common people , like shepherds and slaves , was made from coarse and dark material , whereas the tunic worn by patricians was of linen or white wool . A knight or magistrate would wear an augusticlavus , a tunic bearing small purple studs . Senators wore tunics with broad red stripes , called tunica laticlavia . Military tunics were shorter than the ones worn by civilians . Boys , up until the festival of Liberalia , wore the toga praetexta , which was a toga with a crimson or purple border . The toga virilis , (or toga pura) was worn by men over the age of 16 to signify their citizenship in Rome . The toga picta was worn by triumphant generals and had embroidery of their skill on the battlefield . The toga pulla was worn when in mourning .

Even footwear indicated a person 's social status . Patricians wore red and orange sandals , senators had brown footwear , consuls had white shoes , and soldiers wore heavy boots . The Romans also invented socks for those soldiers required to fight on the northern frontiers , sometimes worn in sandals .

= = = Dining = = =

The staple foods were generally consumed around 11 o 'clock , and consisted of bread , lettuce , cheese , fruits , nuts , and cold meat left over from the dinner the night before . The Roman poet Horace mentions another Roman favorite , the olive , in reference to his own diet , which he describes as very simple : " As for me , olives , endives , and smooth mallows provide sustenance . " The family ate together , sitting on stools around a table . Fingers were used to eat solid foods and spoons were used for soups .

Wine was considered the basic drink , consumed at all meals and occasions by all classes and was quite inexpensive . Cato the Elder once advised cutting his rations in half to conserve wine for the workforce . Many types of drinks involving grapes and honey were consumed as well . Drinking on an empty stomach was regarded as boorish and a sure sign for alcoholism , the debilitating physical and psychological effects of which were known to the Romans . An accurate accusation of being an alcoholic was an effective way to discredit political rivals . Prominent Roman alcoholics included Mark Antony , and Cicero 's own son Marcus (Cicero Minor) . Even Cato the Younger was known to be a heavy drinker .

= = = Education and language = = =

Following various military conquests in the Greek East , Romans adapted a number of Greek educational precepts to their own fledgling system . They began physical training to prepare the

boys to grow as Roman citizens and for eventual recruitment into the army . Conforming to discipline was a point of great emphasis . Girls generally received instruction from their mothers in the art of spinning , weaving , and sewing . Schooling in a more formal sense was begun around 200 BC . Education began at the age of around six , and in the next six to seven years , boys and girls were expected to learn the basics of reading , writing and counting . By the age of twelve , they would be learning Latin , Greek , grammar and literature , followed by training for public speaking . Oratory was an art to be practiced and learnt , and good orators commanded respect .

The native language of the Romans was Latin . Although surviving Latin literature consists almost entirely of Classical Latin , an artificial and highly stylised and polished literary language from the 1st century BC , the actual spoken language was Vulgar Latin , which significantly differed from Classical Latin in grammar , vocabulary , and eventually pronunciation . Rome 's expansion spread Latin throughout Europe , and over time Vulgar Latin evolved and dialectised in different locations , gradually shifting into a number of distinct Romance languages . Many of these languages , including French , Italian , Portuguese , Romanian and Spanish , flourished , the differences between them growing greater over time . Although English is Germanic rather than Roman in origin , English borrows heavily from Latin and Latin @-@ derived words .

= = = The arts = = =

Roman literature was from its very inception influenced heavily by Greek authors . Some of the earliest works we possess are of historical epics telling the early military history of Rome . As the republic expanded , authors began to produce poetry , comedy , history , and tragedy . Virgil represents the pinnacle of Roman epic poetry . His Aeneid tells the story of flight of Aeneas from Troy and his settlement of the city that would become Rome . Lucretius , in his On the Nature of Things , attempted to explicate science in an epic poem . The genre of satire was common in Rome , and satires were written by , among others , Juvenal and Persius . The rhetorical works of Cicero are considered to be some of the best bodies of correspondence recorded in antiquity .

In the 3rd century BC , Greek art taken as booty from wars became popular , and many Roman homes were decorated with landscapes by Greek artists . Portrait sculpture during the period utilised youthful and classical proportions , evolving later into a mixture of realism and idealism . Advancements were also made in relief sculptures , often depicting Roman victories .

Music was a major part of everyday life . The word itself derives from Greek ???????? (mousike) , " (art) of the Muses " . Many private and public events were accompanied by music , ranging from nightly dining to military parades and manoeuvres . In a discussion of any ancient music , however , non @-@ specialists and even many musicians have to be reminded that much of what makes our modern music familiar to us is the result of developments only within the last 1 @,@ 000 years ; thus , our ideas of melody , scales , harmony , and even the instruments we use may not have been familiar to Romans who made and listened to music many centuries earlier .

Over time , Roman architecture was modified as their urban requirements changed , and the civil engineering and building construction technology became developed and refined . The Roman concrete has remained a riddle , and even after more than 2 @,@ 000 years some Roman structures still stand magnificently . The architectural style of the capital city was emulated by other urban centers under Roman control and influence . Roman cities were well planned , efficiently managed and neatly maintained .

= = = Sports and entertainment = = =

The city of Rome had a place called the Campus Martius (" Field of Mars ") , which was a sort of drill ground for Roman soldiers . Later , the Campus became Rome 's track and field playground . In the campus , the youth assembled to play and exercise , which included jumping , wrestling , boxing and racing . Equestrian sports , throwing , and swimming were also preferred physical activities . In the countryside , pastimes included fishing and hunting . Board games played in Rome included dice (Tesserae or Tali) , Roman Chess (Latrunculi) , Roman Checkers (Calculi) , Tic @-@ tac

@-@ toe (Terni Lapilli) , and Ludus duodecim scriptorum and Tabula , predecessors of backgammon . Other activities included chariot races , and musical and theatrical performances .

= = = Religion = = =

Roman religious beliefs date back to the founding of Rome , around 800 BC . However , the Roman religion commonly associated with the republic and early empire did not begin until around 500 BC , when Romans came in contact with Greek culture , and adopted many of the Greek religious beliefs . Private and personal worship was an important aspect of religious practices . In a sense , each household was a temple to the gods . Each household had an altar (lararium) , at which the family members would offer prayers , perform rites , and interact with the household gods . Many of the gods that Romans worshiped came from the Proto @-@ Indo @-@ European pantheon , others were based on Greek gods . The two most famous deities were Jupiter (the king God) and Mars (the god of war) . With its cultural influence spreading over most of the Mediterranean , Romans began accepting foreign gods into their own culture , as well as other philosophical traditions such as Cynicism and Stoicism .