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Rome's actions in its earliest stages of its founding paved the way for hundreds of years of success

When Rome was founded by brothers Remus and Romulus, neither could have imagined the republic and then empire it would later become in the years following their deaths. At its founding, Rome was much like its surrounding neighbors, small city states with little power over its neighbor. Made up of Etruscans, Sabines, and others, the land surrounding Rome was ripe for the taking. After every battle and conquest, Rome's population and influence over modern-day Italy grew tremendously. Eventually crossing the Mediterranean Sea to expand even further. Most of what I am detailing is from Livy found in the Anthology of Sources textbook.

In its beginning, Rome had the somewhat unusual problem of having almost no women in its walls¹. A kingdom with no children being born will not be a kingdom for much longer. To solve this problem, the romans devised a plan to capture women from the surrounding states. Rome planned to hold a festival which Romulus called the Consualia. Here people from the surrounding states were invited and came in droves to participate in the festival and see Rome's rapid growth for themselves. During the night of the festival, it was arranged that

¹ Livy. The Romans Abduct the Sabine Women, "The History of Rome from Its Foundation." In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, *Ancient Rome*. (Hackett 2014) 151-152.

Romans would seize the women and drive out the others. In turn, the seized women were given Roman citizenship, a share in their possessions, and what Rome needed most, Children. The states of the stolen women would later try to invade Roman territory to steal their women back but ended up losing handily by Romulus' Army.

Later, Veii, an ally of a state conquered by Rome rose and began marauding and terrorizing the Roman controlled land between the two states. This produced a reaction from the Roman army, who crossed the Tiber and set up camp near the Veii. The Veientes met the Romans in battle and were soundly defeated by the sheer battle experience of the Romans. The Romans then decided to not invade the city and rather waited for Veii to send envoys to Rome signaling their surrender. As a compromise, Rome took some of their land and gave their word not to attack them for the next 100 years.²

Rome had a rather large area of conquered land surrounding it at this time. It was at this time where Rome had to choose a new king. The senators chose Numa Pompilius, a man born in territory previously occupied by the Sabines. While king, Numa focused on establishing Roman religion and new priesthoods. During Numa's forty-three-year rule, not much land was conquered and thus, a sort of peace time was at hand for those many years.³

² Livy. War with Veii, "The History of Rome from Its Foundation." In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, *Ancient Rome*. (Hackett 2014) 156.

³ Livy. The Sabine Numa Pompilius becomes King, "The History of Rome from Its Foundation." In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, *Ancient Rome*. (Hackett 2014) 158-161.

The next two kings were relatively unremarkable, both ruling for shorter times and achieving few tasks over their rule. Livy's account of these two kings were omitted from our textbook and continue with Livy's account of the fifth king, Tarquinius Priscus.

Tarquinius also was born outside of Rome in a surrounding city. He was almost universally more liked than his competitors of the kingship and was chosen to be the people to rule Rome next with a huge consensus. He would later expand the kingdom by taking the city of Apiole by storm and returning with more spoils than were originally expected. Later he established the Circus Maximus, a large circus in Rome that is still able to visit today. A failed invasion by the Sabines led to the Roman army to march on Sabine territory and made the Sabines sue for peace. As a result of this, the town of Collatia was taken into Roman custody. The king would later wage war against the Latins and lead troops to each town on the way. This would force the Latins to bargain for peace.⁴

Tarquinius would later build a stone wall around Rome and drained the swamps in addition to making sewers to carry the water into the Tiber. He also laid foundation for a temple to Jupiter.⁵

Tarquinius would later be assassinated by at the behest of former king Ancus' grandchildren. This led to a new successor being chosen in son-in-law and former slave Servius Tullius by Tarquinius' final words. Servius would be known for organizational changes of Rome, constitutional reforms, conducting a census, expanding Rome, and building a temple to Diana.

⁴ Livy. Tarquinius Moves from Tarquinii to Rome, "The History of Rome from Its Foundation." In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, *Ancient Rome*. (Hackett 2014) 162-164.

⁵ Livy. The Town of Collatia Surrenders; Tarquin Builds in Rome, "The History of Rome from Its Foundation." In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, *Ancient Rome*. (Hackett 2014) 165.

Servius would also be assassinated with help from his daughter and Tarquinius Suberbus, referred to as Tarquin by Livy.⁶

Tarquin would later be named king and would rule a twenty-five years that in which he battled the Latins, Volscains and Gabii. His kingship would come to a disastrous end when it was found that his son, Sextus raped a woman from the neighboring city of Collatia. Lucius Tarquinius would be the last king of Rome and from then on, two consuls would be chosen to rule for a year.⁷

This series of events marked the end of the Roman Kingdom and the start of the Roman Republic. The republic was the most just Rome would ever become and because of the actions of the previous kings before, the republic had a large amount of land surrounding it under its rule and a now stable government for the next 500 years.

What was now in place was government where one person could not have all the power and almost anyone from any standing could rise through the ranks of government. Much of what many modern governments function on is evolved variations of the Roman Republic. The most powerful government and country in the world for the past century has been using a form a republic since its founding nearly 250 years ago and will for decades to come.

Roman's and Latini's native language of Latin has also had a tremendous impact on the rest of the world in many ways. Most modern-day languages spoken in Europe are evolutions of

⁶ Livy, Tarquin is Murdered, "The History of Rome from Its Foundation." In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, *Ancient Rome*. (Hackett 2014) 166-167.

⁷ Livy. The Reign of Tarquinius Superbus, "The History of Rome from Its Foundation." In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, *Ancient Rome*. (Hackett 2014) 174-183.

Latin. Architecture today across the world also mimics many Roman designs and practices. Not so much for original and early Roman religion though.