ROMAN CIVILIZATION
ROMAN QUOTES

“….they create a desert and call it peace”
Tacitus

“Remember Romans to rule the people under law and establish the way of peace.”
Virgil

“Love your neighbor as yourself”
“Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God”
Jesus Christ
Neolithic Inhabitants

Villanovan people:
- in contact with Neolithic peoples in Greece,
- traded along the Amber Road;
- cremated dead putting ashes in urns similar to East Europeans;
- brought iron to Italian peninsula;
- raided neighboring areas gaining territory, resources, and slaves;
- polytheistic believing all phenomena had deities which influenced the human world.
In early times several different groups of people migrated into the Italian peninsula and contributed to the cultural mix which became Roman civilization.
Indo-European Invasions and Migrations from 1700-1500 BCE meant male-ruled, warring, patriarchal peoples called Latins and Sabines came into the Italian peninsula
Image of Indo-European man
Etruscans
Etruscans

From at least 1500 BC on the Etruscans lived in Etruria on the northwestern coast of the Italian peninsula. There are four theories as to where they came from: the indigenous Villanovan culture, Egypt, Greek island of Lemnos, or Lydia in Asia Minor. Etruscan kings, influenced by Greek culture, ruled Rome in the 600’s BC when it grew from a village into a city. Around 500 BC, Latin military and political power increased, Etruscan influence waned, and the Latins founded a republic.
Rome

THE ETRUSCAN LEAGUE
530 BC

Map of Italy with Rome and the Etruscan League marked.
The European Amber Road
Etruscan Tomb Painting

This painting of a man playing the pipes and a woman dancing to his music came from a tomb unearthed by archaeologists near the modern city of Tarquinia (ancient Tarquinii). The Latins, who eventually merged the Etruscans, adopted many of their artistic techniques as well as the toga, the fasces, and mining and coining techniques.
This bronze disk with the head of Acheloos, an Etruscan river god, was made sometime in the early 5th century BC. The artifact came from an ancient burial ground in Tarquinia and illustrates the sophistication of Etruscan metalworkers.
Greeks
ROMAN REPUBLIC
509-31 BC
CITIZEN, SOLDIER, AND FARMER
REPRESENTS THE
PRIDE, PATRIOTISM, AND LOYALTY
OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

CICERO
REPRESENTS
THE GLORY OF THE REPUBLIC, AND THE
RULE OF THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY
He gave a famous speech advocating for
peace and proposing the essence of the just
war theory,
The Roman Republic

Citizen, soldier, farmer  Cicero
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROMAN GOVERNMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MONARCHIAL ELEMENTS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Consuls who ruled directing government and army. They could issue edicts and act as chief priests. Magistrates could act as judges.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ARISTOCRATIC ELEMENTS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Senate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisory to former Kings and then to 2 Consuls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Controlled budget</td>
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<td>Passed laws</td>
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<td><strong>DEMOCRATIC ELEMENTS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approved laws</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decided on war</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acted as court in legal matters</td>
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<td>Members called Tribunes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BASIS OF POWER</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Possessed Imperium, the right to rule</td>
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<tr>
<td>Members of Senate from Noble families</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provided soldiers for Roman Legions</td>
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<td><strong>LIMITS TO POWER</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>One year term</td>
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<td>Each consul could veto the other’s vote</td>
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<td>Couldn’t control army</td>
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<td>Needed soldiers to defend Rome</td>
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<td>Aristocrats paid them to comply with their policies. They were clients to aristocrats and beholden to them.</td>
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CONCEPT OF IMPERIUM

Imperium was a sacred concept which gave Consuls supreme authority over war and law. This authority included the power of execution.

The symbol of Imperium was the fasces which consisted of bundles of wooden rods bounded by a double axe with a red ribbon. The rods represented solidarity and the axe symbolized execution.
The Etruscans used a bundle of rods surrounding an ax to represent royal authority. The Romans adopted these symbols of power, called *fasces* in Latin, and used them on ceremonial occasions. The ax stood for the power of life and death, while the rods represented the power of punishment.
Romans believed in “Peace through Strength”. They said “If you want peace, prepare for war.” This is why they took such pride in the Roman Legions.

Americans even today inherit militaristic values from the Romans. At West Point the motto is “Duty, Honor, Country.” This comes from the ideals of the Roman Republic.
Roman Legions

• Formed in 300’s BCE as the city-state of Rome sought to unify the peninsula
• Consisted of landed citizens able to pay for swords, javelins, helmets, shields, and armor and small landowners who made up the infantry.
• Made up of divisions of 3,000-6,000 men mostly infantry supported by light mobile infantry
• Opened to landless men in 100’s BCE who received land in conquered territories in exchange for their service
Roman legionnaire
The Roman empire was built through a piecemeal process in which the Romans continually sought to defend themselves. Each additional new territory brought new vulnerabilities which could only be assuaged through more conquests. The wealthy gained plantations and estates, slaves, promotions, public acclaim, and high political office. Others just wanted a modest salary to lift their families out of poverty.
POMPEII
Mount Vesuvius

Mount Vesuvius looms above the ruins of Pompeii.
SITUATION FOR WOMEN IN ROMAN CIVILIZATION
Reflected in the 12 Tables of Roman Law (450 BC) women were under male custody, were considered weak and frivolous, and subject to control by men. The father had absolute authority over wife, children, and slaves. The term *paterfamilias* conferred on a father nearly absolute control.

Fertility, chastity, thrift, courage, and discipline were admired feminine virtues.
SOME QUOTES ABOUT WOMEN

"Egnatius Metellus ... took a cudgel and beat his wife to death because she had drunk some wine. Not only did no one charge him with a crime, but no one even blamed him. Everyone considered this an excellent example of one who had justly paid the penalty for violating the laws of sobriety. Indeed, any woman who immoderately seeks the use of wine closes the door on all virtues and opens it to vices.

There was also the harsh marital severity of Gaius Gallus. He divorced his wife because he had caught her outdoors with her head uncovered: a stiff penalty, but not without a certain logic. 'The law,' he said, 'prescribes for you my eyes alone to which you may prove your beauty. For these eyes you should provide the ornaments of beauty, for these be lovely: entrust yourself to their more certain knowledge. If you, with needless provocation, invite the look of anyone else, you must be suspected of wrongdoing.'

Valarius Maximum, Memorable Deeds and Sayings, 6.3.9-12
"What kind of behavior is this? Running around in public, blocking streets, and speaking to other women’s husbands? Could you not have asked your own husbands the same thing at home? Are you more charming in public with others' husbands than at home with your own? And yet, it is not fitting even at home...for you to concern yourselves with what laws are passed or repealed here."

Roman women were protesting a law which limited the amount of gold a woman could possess and restricted their dress and use of carriages.

Livy, quoting Cato the Censor regarding the repeal of the Oppian Law (c. 190 BC) for which many women demonstrated. Quoted in Women's Life in Greece & Rome, Lefkowitz and Fant,
"If you should take your wife in adultery, you may with impunity put her to death without a trial; but if you should commit adultery or indecency, she must not presume to lay a finger on you, nor does the law allow it."

Livy, quoting Cato the Elder, History of Rome, 34.3.9
VESTIAL VIRGINS

Vestal virgins were a special class of women in ancient Rome. They sacrificed their fertile years to guard the eternal flame of the Goddess Vesta’s shrine. This flame symbolized Rome’s renewal, regeneration, and well-being. Vestal virgins were chosen from upper-class families and served from the age of puberty for 30 years. After 30 years they could marry.

Vestal virgins had many privileges such as special seats at the theater and coliseum and dining with the Imperial Family. But if a virgin broke her chastity, she would be buried alive, and if the flame went out when she was guarding it, she would be scourged.
During the time of Roman Republic an aristocracy of wealthy landowners called patricians dominated the affairs of state, produced military leaders, and monopolized knowledge of law. But a second class of people, the plebian who were poor artisans, small farmers and urban dwellers felt a stake in their country and valued hard work, discipline, patriotism, and loyalty. The third class of people were slaves. During the 500 years of the Republic before Rome grew into a large empire, Patricians had protégés and help and support were fostered in a network of relationships.

In conquering the Empire, which included the entire Mediterranean basin, Romans’ ethical values deteriorated, people became self-centered, and aristocrats took advantage of plebeians. Small farmers, who dutifully went off to join the Roman legions, returned to find their farms confiscated. Aristocrats had stolen their land and built for themselves large plantations called latifundia. Farmers were told to go to Rome, but, once there, they found no work. They lived in small crowded tenement apartments, obtained food from the government, and spent their days at the Coliseum watching violent animal fights and gladiator shows.
Soldiers' Needs: Wars kept soldiers away from Rome for years at a time. Many of these soldiers developed a greater loyalty to the men they were serving than they did to Rome.

Military Needs: Large standing armies lead to the emergence of powerful generals.

Massive New Wealth: The wealth that Roman conquests attained became concentrated in the hands of the senatorial class.
SOCIAL CLASSES AT THE END OF THE REPUBLIC WHEN THE EMPIRE HAD BEEN CONQUERED

Patricians constituted 2-7% of the population and plebeians and slaves constituted the rest. There was a steep social pyramid with a huge number of poor living at the subsistence level at the bottom with a small minority of prominent, land-owning rich at the top. A sense of hierarchy ruled upper-class behavior. They asserted their superiority in cruel ways, used the system for their own benefit, and drained lower class people. Plebeians were seldom able to revolt or reform the system. The Gracchus Brothers, Tiberius and Gaius, advocated for distribution of public lands to the poor and unemployed in Rome around 130 BC, but they were both assassinated by Senators who opposed these policies. A slave revolt among gladiators led by Spartacus in 73 BC was crushed.
Lower Classes

Called Humilores
Consisted of three groups:

• Poor tradesmen, rural poor farmers
• Freed slaves
• Slaves (35% of the population)
Slavery on a Mass Scale

- Upper classes possessed thousands of slaves and even poor had 2 or 3
- Most were prisoners captured in wars
- Pirates captured people at sea and sold them on the famous slave island of Delos
- Roman merchants purchased them through long distance slave networks. The southern route connected to Alexandria, the Red Sea, Arabia, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. The northern route connected to the Black Sea.
Slaves worked in all lowly jobs – as farmers on latifundia, as butlers and maids, as miners in silver mines in Spain, as traders and cargo loaders, as animal handlers in procurement for the colosseums, and even as entertainers and actors.

When freed, slaves could become citizens of Rome.
Roman Philosophy of Slavery

Slavery was deeply embedded in the social outlook and religious thinking of the Roman upper class. They looked down on slaves, and thought they were slaves by nature and should be enslaved for their own good and for the good of society. Augustine, bishop of Alexandria, said slavery was God’s punishment for sins.
Spartacus

• Born in Thrace (Macedonia), Plutarch said “of nomadic stock”
• Became a mercenary in a Roman legion
• Defected, but was captured, enslaved, and trained to be a gladiator
• From 73-71 CE led one of the largest slave rebellions in world history with an estimated 70,000 – 120,000 slaves joining him.
• After 2 years Roman legionnaires quelled the rebellion, with 6,000 slaves nailed to the cross.
Transition from Roman Republic to Roman Empire
The Republic suited Rome when she was a small city-state, but when all of the newly-acquired lands of the Empire were conquered, the Empire turned out to be polyglot and multi-cultural, and under those conditions Romans were unable to maintain a representative democracy. Romans ruled over a vast empire, but couldn’t change their thinking to meet the needs of their new situation.
ROMAN EMPIRE
27 BC – 476 AD
Caesar Augustus

First ruler of Roman Empire
The success of Roman imperialism led to even more profound changes in social relations, with a small dominant upper class and, in contrast, masses of powerless poor. There was hardly any middle class and the masses of people no longer had a stake in the country or the government.
How did they Govern the Empire?

Romans did not intervene directly in the internal affairs of their captured lands (Spain, Greece, Italy, England, North Africa, Asia Minor)- they made many of them full or partial partners in the Roman world. They allowed them considerable self-government.

Rome expected support in the form of taxes (in kind or a fixed sum of money) and troops.

Romans administered captured lands through provinces. Each province was assigned to a magistrate. It was his duty to administer government policy quickly, effectively, and efficiently.

These policies were called Pax Romana – the Peace of Rome.
Roman God Jupiter
Roman God Bacchus
Goddess of the Hunt Diana
TRAJAN’S COLUMN

A pillar of relief carvings at Trajan’s forum in Rome. Carvings tell the story of Trajan’s campaign against Dacia, a Kingdom near the Danube River in what is today Romania.
Emperor Trajan
Ruins of Baths of Caracalla
Marine Mosaic from Baths of Caracalla
Concentric Vine Pattern and Domino Squares from Exercise Room at the Baths of Caracalla
CULT OF MITHRAS
• Came to Rome from Persia where Mithras had been an Indo-European Sun God and where Zoroastrians had a god of light

• Mithras fought evil, promoted good and redeemed humanity for everlasting life

• Mithras kills a sacred bull to release its life force for the benefit of humanity

• Cult had rituals such as 7 stages of knowledge in cult’s mysteries for 7 known planets, people dressed according to stage they were in with stars on cape

• Cult had underground temples, baptism with water, fasting, communion

• The poor, slaves, and eventually legionnaires were followers of the cult which lasted from 100’s-400’s CE
CULT OF CYBELE
• Came to Rome in 205 CE from Anatolia
• Cybele is a Great Queen Mother Goddess known for fertility and unrestrained sexuality
• Her lover was her son, Attis, who she drives mad. He kills himself, but is later reborn
• Her priesthood were castrated males who wore women’s clothes and danced wildly
• She is depicted beating a drum which is the ancient symbol of the moon
• She is guarded by lions, and, as the Mother of Beasts, protects wild animals
Christianity
Emperor Theodosius I
Why did Christianity Prevail in Roman Empire and later Spread to nearly all of Europe?

1. Jesus’ Personal Example
2. Jesus’ Social Reforms
3. Jesus’ Beliefs
4. Jesus’ Miracles
5. Christianity as a text-based faith with a powerful, coherent structure
6. Personal Example of Christian Martyrs
7. Endorsement of Emperors Constantine and Theodosius
8. Christians formulated their identity in distrust of Roman materialism and militarism
9. People at this time sought higher ethical standards due to debasement of Roman society
REASONS FOR THE FALL OF ROMAN EMPIRE

• Disparity in wealth between aristocrats and masses, use of violence for entertainment, unemployment, loss of pride, patriotism and work ethic.

• Failure of leadership, low quality of emperors.

• No viable system of succession of emperors, competing armies fought to have their general selected as emperor.

• German invasions which fragmented empire into separate states which didn’t want to be subordinated to Rome.

• Imperial overreach - Romans could no longer afford to secure the borders of the Empire.

• Christianity offered people a new worldview and gave them a way to deepen their spirituality and turn toward humanitarian endeavors.

• Lead pipes from lead as a byproduct of silver mines in southwestern Spain may have poisoned people. Lead was also used to preserve food and to stop fermentation of wine.

• Lack of productivity, trade imbalance, financial exhaustion.
Environmental Degradation in Roman Times

- Warfare meant cutting trees down to have room for encampments on the frontiers and to procure lumber for ship building.

- Urbanization and economic expansion meant increasing consumption of natural resources – tin, lead, silver, gold, wild animals, silk, spices, slaves, and building materials. To build roads, bridges, baths, gardens, coliseums, aqueducts, and palaces, nothing was spared.
• For public baths, heating furnaces were fueled with wood
• For grandiose temples, palaces and amphitheaters, statues and mosaics, stone, marble and granite was mined by thousands of slaves
• Legionnaires cut down forests when constructing garrison forts, walls, and watch towers. Towns sprang up around their forts which transformed the landscape
• Rome was a manufacturing center for pipes, tubes, glass, and coins products requiring many natural resources
• Smoke from mines and furnaces caused air pollution. Ice core samples from Greenland revealed high levels of lead and copper particulates
The economy benefited the upper class....
....whose tastes were for exotic goods from India and China. An example of this could be seen when they found a statue of the Indian goddess Lakshmi at Pompeii. Wealthy Romans supplied venture capital for merchant fleets which crisscrossed the Mediterranean sea, the Black sea, the Red sea and the Indian Ocean. The volume and velocity of trade steadily accelerated. Rome sent gold, silver, silver coins, silver plate and bars, mirrors and pottery, in exchange for pearls, silk, slaves, parrots and cockatoos.
Quality of City life

- Lead used in water pipes and in silverware for eating utensils was a neurotoxin
- Arsenic in pottery glazes and medicines was poison
- Mercury in metal ores, pottery, leather, and textiles was a harmful neurotoxin
- Air pollution from furnaces burning tons of wood and charcoal, smoke from lamps and torches which provided light
- Sewage emptied in Tiber river, filth favored plague germs
- Environmental changes hampered health, depleted resources, and weakened society by 300 CE
- Over-exploitation of nature took place all across the Mediterranean region
- By the 100’s CE Rome was dependent on imports of food, grain, cloves, cinnamon, and ginger
Measures taken by Romans to Conserve

• Glass was recycled
• Cooking time reduced by adding fig stalks to beef
• Buildings were aligned with southern exposures to maximize the sun’s heat
• Glass windows were placed in villas which also heated homes