



- Generally regarded as the most important ancient empire, Rome transmitted Greek culture and added its own to our cultural inheritance.

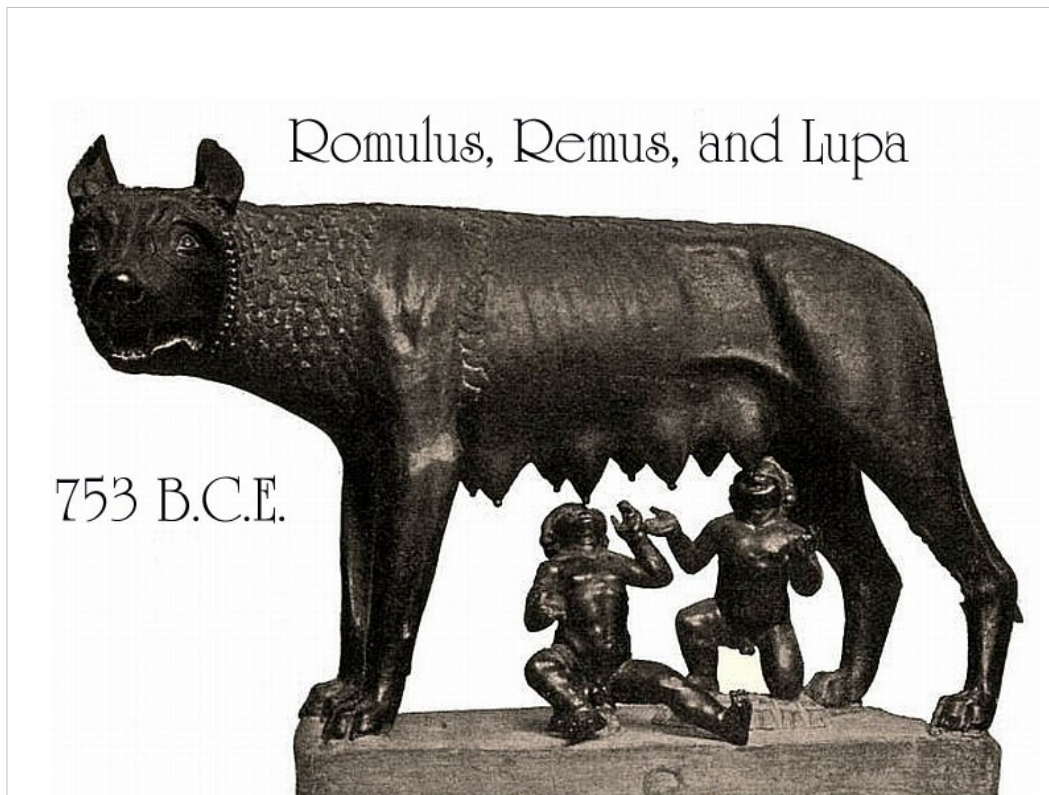
(NASA, <http://veimages.gsfc.nasa.gov/735/S2000171111403.png>)

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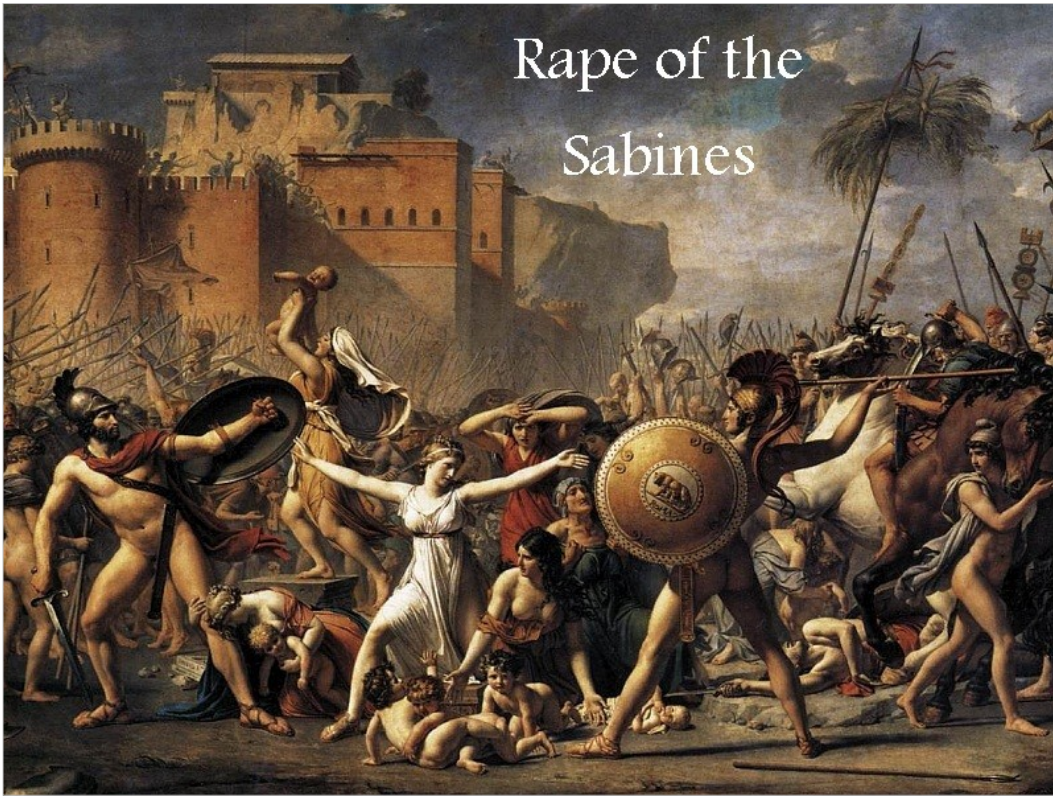
- As with most such cultures, the origins are shrouded in mystery, although we have mythic tales.
- And our coverage will only touch on the highlights; there's plenty more for anyone who is interested.
- According to Vergil in the *Aeneid*, the first of the Romans was Aeneas, a prince who fled Troy.

(Federico Barocci, Aeneas Fleeing Troy, 1598, Galleria Borghese, Rome,
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:BarocciAeneas.jpg>, PD)



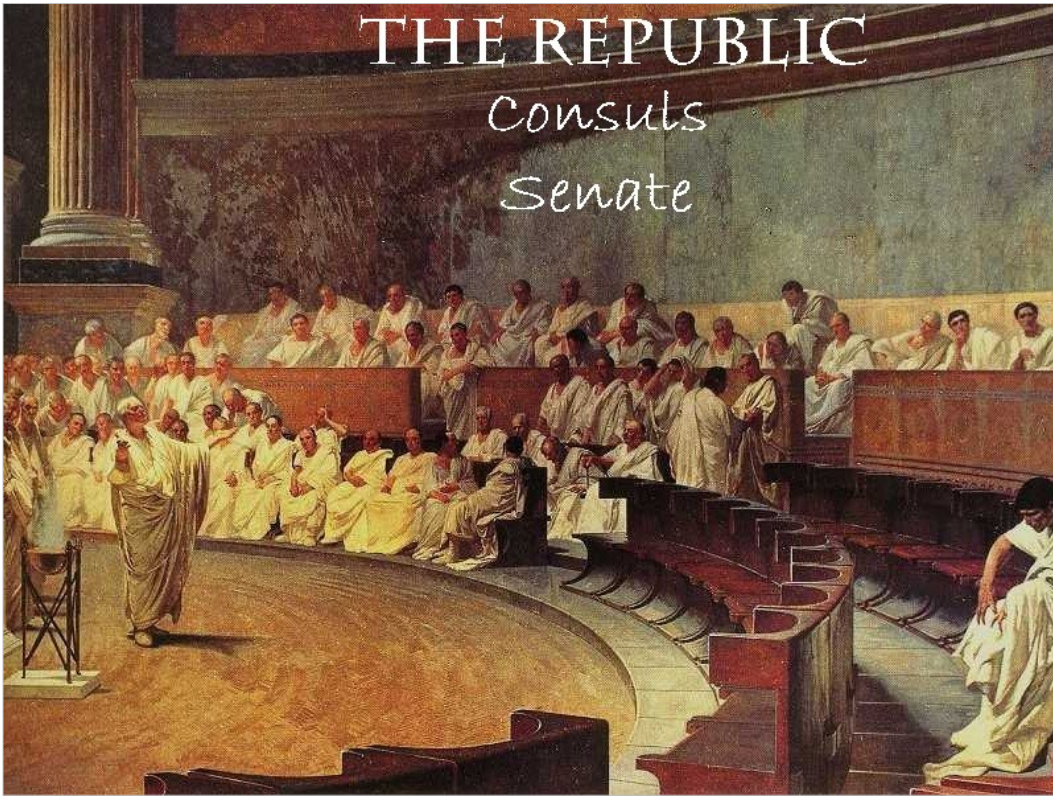
- Two of his descendants, the twin brothers Romulus and Remus, were ordered thrown into a river by king Amulius because of a prophecy that, being the sons of the rightful king, they would overthrow him.
- They were rescued, and raised by the wolf (Lupa).
- Romulus killed Remus and founded the city which he named after himself.
- Traditional date of April 21, 753 B.C.E. is the first day of the Roman calendar.

(Museo Nuovo, Rome)



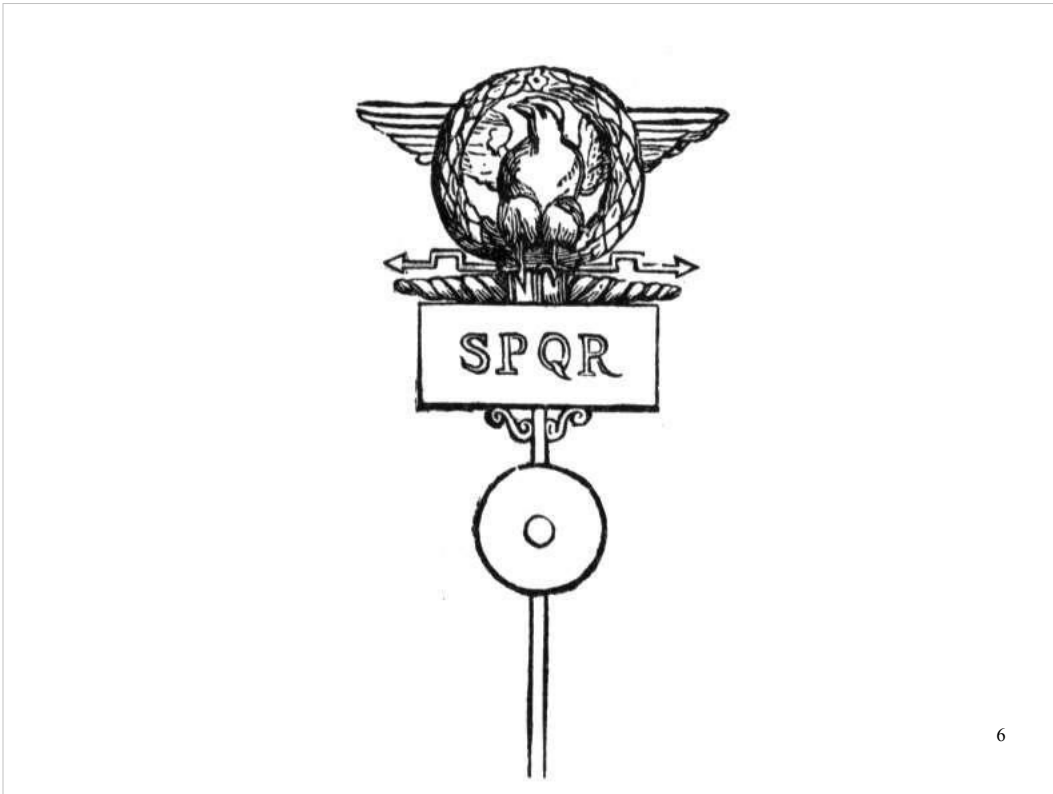
- The story also says that Romulus populated the city by inviting the neighboring Sabines to a feast and then taking the women.
- How much of this story is fact or not is debated.

(Jacques-Louis David, Intervention of he Sabine Women, 1796-99).



- About 510 B.C.E., a republic was founded after a revolution against the king Tarquinius Superbus.
- *res-publica*, public business, a representative revision of democracy, inspired American system.
- Power was vested in the Senate (*senex*, old man), which gave day-to-day authority to two consuls, elected for one-year terms.

(Cesare Maccari, Cicero Denounces Catiline, fresco in Villa Madama, Rome, 1882-1888, PD)



- Under the banner of the “Senate and People of Rome” (Senatus Populusque Romanus), expansion began.
- As Rome became more powerful, there were several invasions.

(Charlotte Yonge, *Young Folks' History of Rome*, 1880, Project Gutenberg, PD)

Pyrrhus

Battle of Ausculum

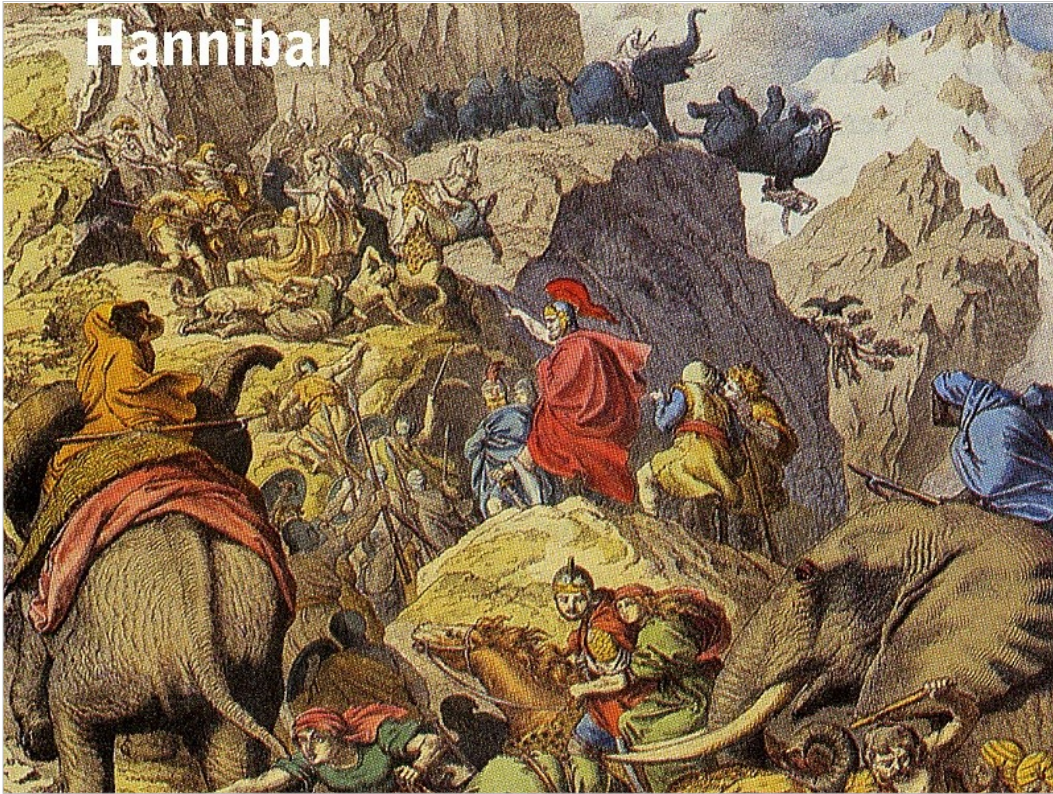


7

- One invader, Pyrrhus, 280 B.C.E., entered southern Italy with an army of 25K and 20 elephants, and, although he won at Ausculum, his losses were so heavy that it didn't matter (thus the Pyrrhic victory: he won the battle but lost the war).
- This left Rome as dominant in Italy and ready to move into other areas.

(Charlotte Yonge, *Young Folks' History of Rome*, 1880, Project Gutenberg, PD)

Hannibal



- Perhaps the most-celebrated event of ancient history was Hannibal's attack on Rome.
- To accomplish it, he took his army, along with some elephants, on a land route across Spain and the Alps in 218 B.C.E.
- Hannibal could not, however, take Rome, and in 203 returned to Carthage to defend against a counter-attack.
- He was defeated by Scipio "Africanus" in 202.

(Anon, Hannibal crossing the Alps, PD)



**Marcus
Tullius
Cicero**

106-43

**Catiline
Conspiracy**

9

- Traced by some as the cause of the end of the republic (and even the downfall of the empire), a series of generals began to struggle for power, leading to ongoing civil wars and growth of centralized power.
- Cicero emerged as a mirror of the times.
- Known for his oratory, looks for return to republican government.
- Cicero translated Greek philosophy into Latin, bringing it to more people.
- 63 B.C., as consul, exposes Catiline's effort to become a dictator.

(1638 engraving, <http://www.harpers.org/media/image/blogs/misc/cicero.jpg>)

Gaius Julius Caesar



“crossing the Rubicon”

10

- In 60 B.C.E., a “triumvirate” of three generals (Pompey, Marcus Licinius Crassus and Gaius Julius Caesar) took control of Rome (Cicero was offered a fourth position but refused).
- Caesar was assigned to Gaul, and after subduing it, returned to take Rome.
- In 49 B.C.E., he crossed the Rubicon River, the boundary between Rome and Gaul. This had been set as a boundary to prevent a military coup, so it was an effective declaration of war.
- On 6 June 48 B.C.E., he took control of the city.

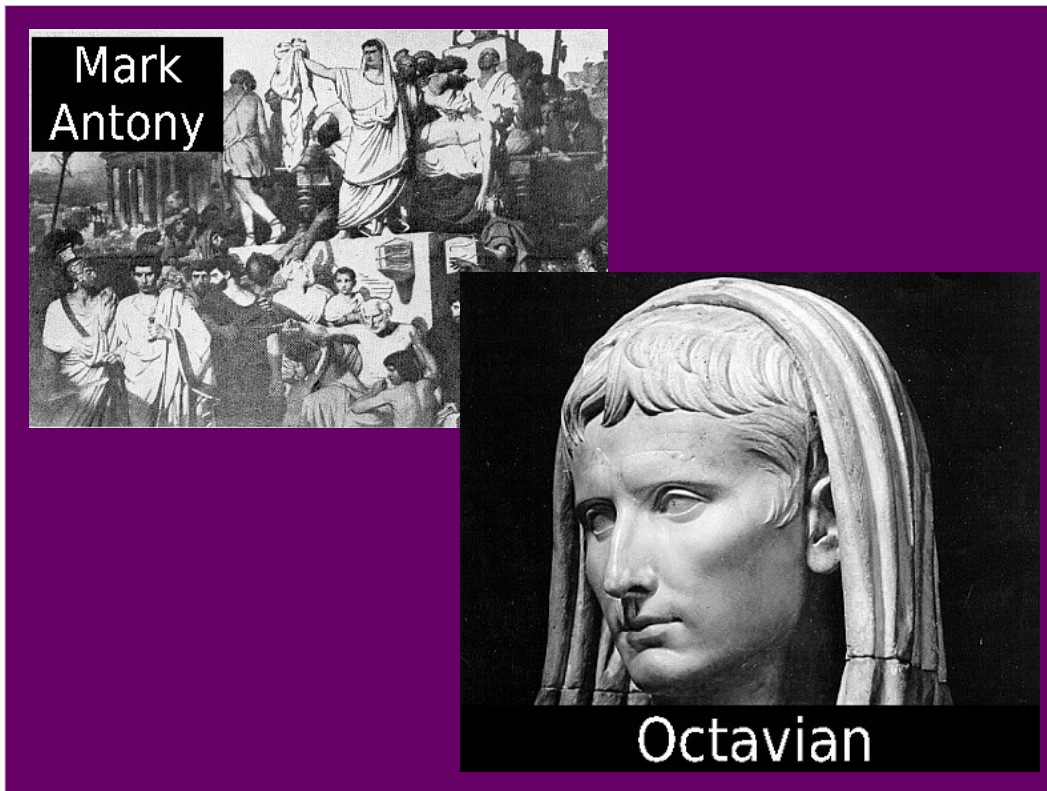
(http://www.suite101.com/view_image.cfm/319491, PD)

“cave idem Martius”
44 B.C.



- On the Ides (15) of March in 44 B.C.E., Julius Caesar was assassinated by the Senate.
- According to Suetonius, this was done in hope of restoring the Republic.

(Jean-Leon Gerome, Assassination of Julius Caesar, 1867)

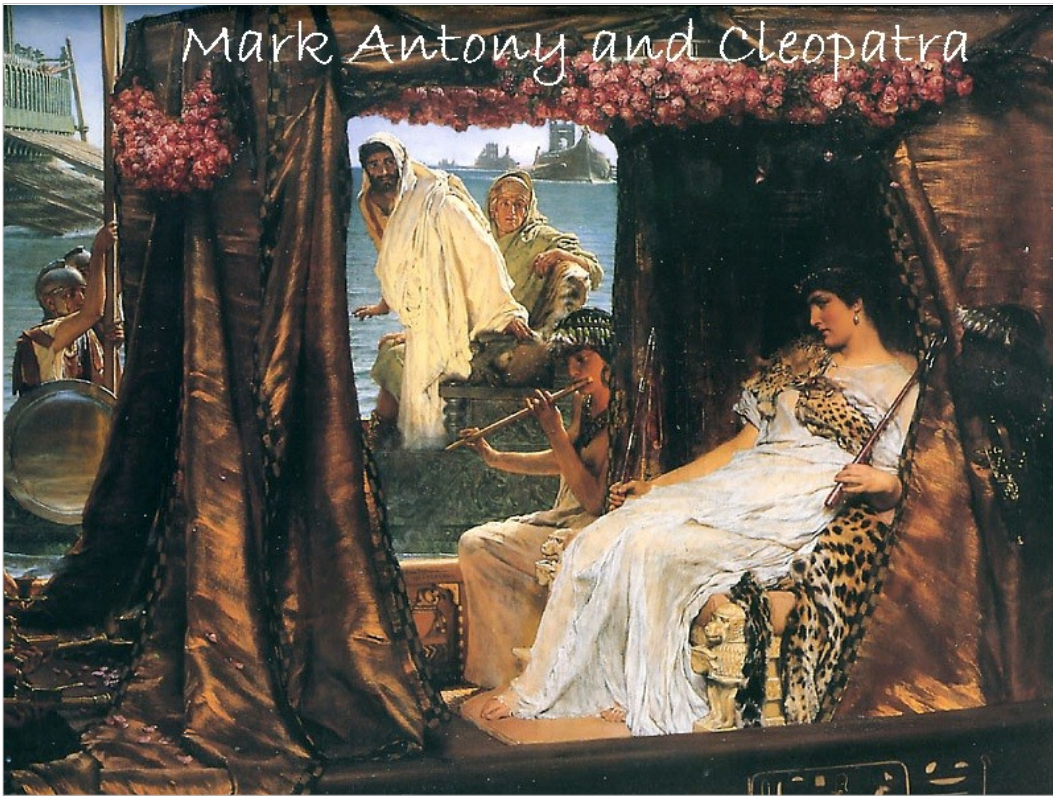


- Result was civil war. Mark Antony, Caesar's second in command, escaped, and then gave the eulogy at the funeral, reading the will that left Caesar's property to the citizens, and accused the assassins of murder.
- At first, he worked with Octavian, adopted son of Caesar, defeating the army of the assassins.

(Mark Antony at Funeral, <http://www.heritage-history.com/books/morris/roman/zpage224.gif>, PD)

(Anon, Augustus c. 20 B.C.E., National Museum of Rome,

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/3b/Augustus_as_pontifex_maximus.jpg, PD)



- In 32 B.C., Octavian began a campaign to oust Antony, who had allied with Cleopatra.
(Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Antony and Cleopatra, 1885).

Battle of Actium



- Battle of Actium, 2 September 31 B.C.E., was a decisive victory for Octavian.
- Antony and Cleopatra fled and then committed suicide.

(Lorenzo Castro, The Battle of Actium, 1672,
http://www.nmm.ac.uk/mag/images/700/BHC0251_700.jpg)

Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus “Augustus” 63 B.C. - A.D. 14



15

- Octavian became emperor, and dispelled all notions of democracy.
- He reigned over a period of peace, and was given the title Augustus (distinguished) by the Senate.

(Coins, Augustus Aureus)

Pax Romana



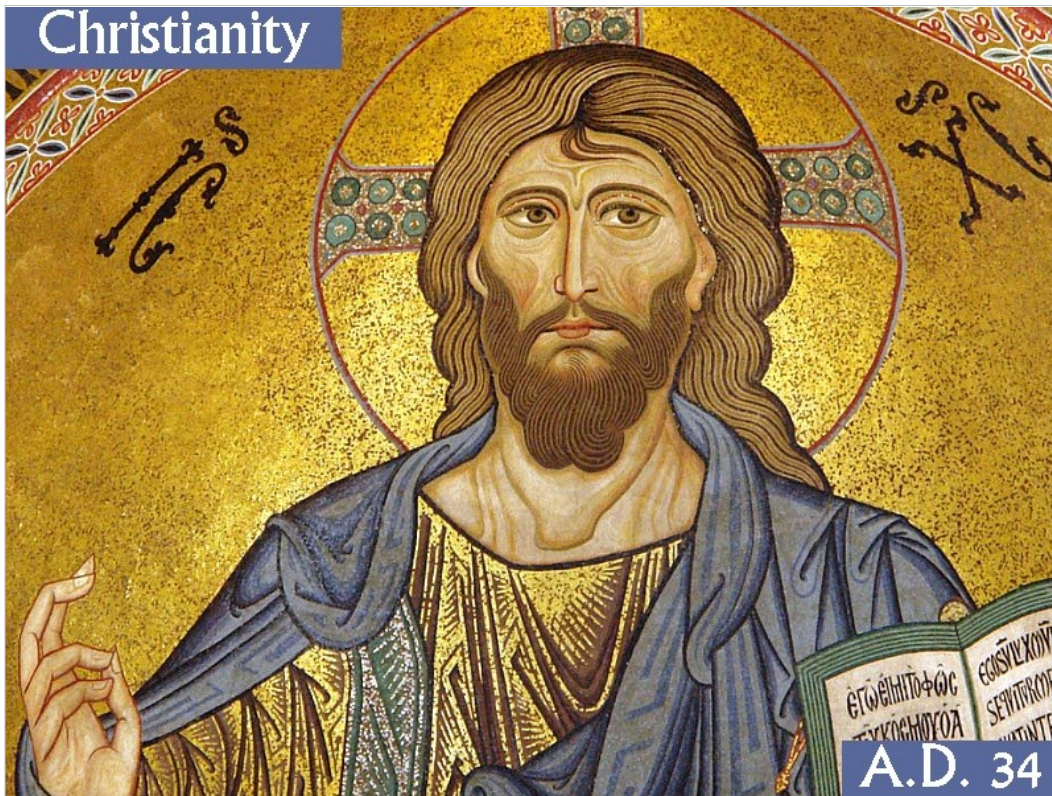
- This time of peace is known as the Pax Romana.
- Although Augustus made no show of restoring a republic, there was little complaint because of the time of peace and prosperity.
- 2115 years later, a man named Thomas Jefferson struggled with these questions as he led a group formulating first a declaration of independence, and, after justifying a revolution, the framework of government for a new democracy.
- QUESTION: which way would you like it?

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<http://www.unc.edu/awmc/awmcmmap39.html>).



- Augustus and his successors sponsored art and construction projects as part of their duty as leaders.
- Augustus said that he found a city of brick and left a city of marble (Suetonius 28).

(Pont du Gard: Chris O, GFDL; Colosseum: David Iliff, CC-SA)



- As part of his consolidation of power, Augustus ordered a census. The census, we are told by the author of gospel of Luke, marked the birth of Jesus of Nazareth.
- Jesus followed the life-style of a Greek philosopher-teacher: wandering the countryside, working closely with a small group of followers, sometimes teaching in public, and healing illnesses.
- He also criticized the religious leaders of his day. In return, they plotted to kill him. The leaders succeeded after bullying a weak-willed local governor and inciting a mob that threatened to decry him as a traitor to Rome.
- It was not, at the time, a newsworthy incident. Rebellions were common and were put down brutally.

(Andreas Wahra, Christus Pantocrator, Cefalu Cathedral, 2008,
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cefalu_Christus_Pantokrator_cropped.jpg, GFDL)



- But some of those followers reported having seen Jesus returned to life, or experiences such as visions of his appearance. Thus started a movement, at first entirely within Judaism.
- By 50 C.E., there were communities in most cities, including Rome. There were also fierce fights about the inclusion of non-Jews.
- Early Christians went through cycles of persecution because they were thought to pose a political threat: they refused to offer sacrifices to the emperor, who was head of the religious system, thereby threatening the state.

(Fresco at Catacomb of Saints Marcellinus and Peter, Rome, PD)

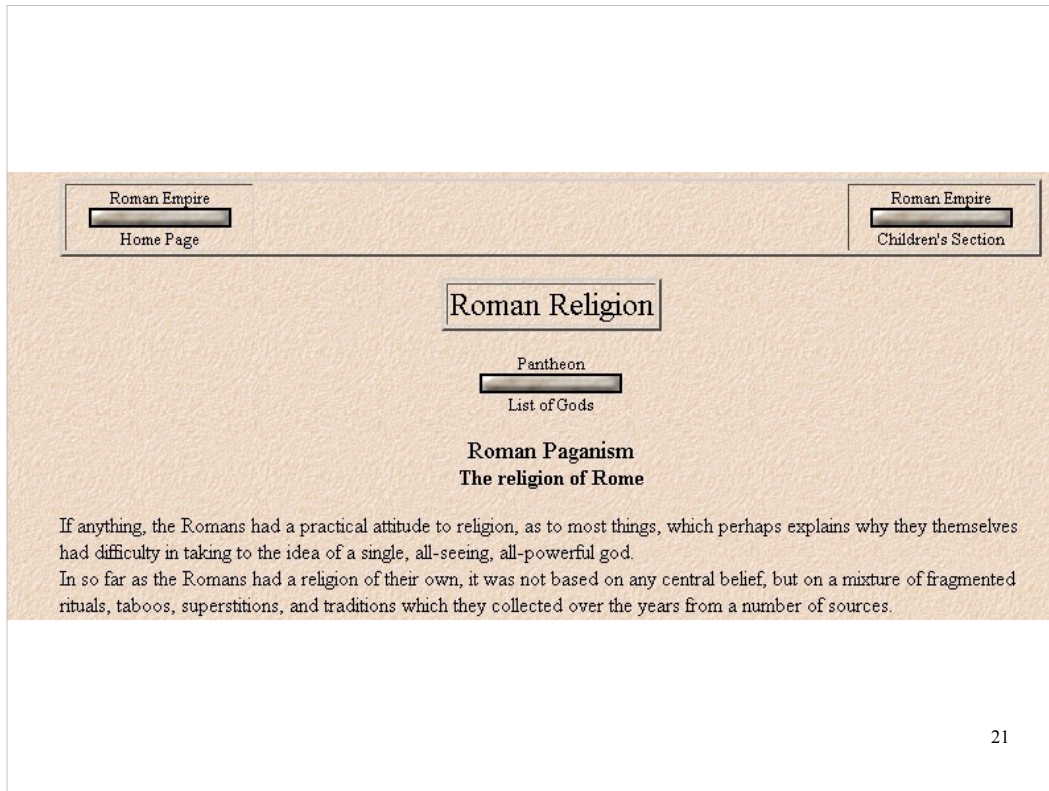
(Annemarie Luijendijk, "Papyri from the Great Persecution: Roman and Christian Perspectives"
Journal of Early Christian Studies 16 (3, 2008): 341-369)



*Religion
in
ancient
Rome*

- To understand why the Romans thought Christianity (and some groups within Judaism) were so dangerous, we need to look at Roman religion.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Vindobona_Hoher_Markt-142.JPG, CC-SA)



Here is a good introduction to how ancient ideas of religion differ from today's:

<http://abacus.bates.edu/~mimber/Rciv/religion.htm>

Some other sources need to be used carefully. The first one along these lines is

<http://www.roman-empire.net/religion/religion.html>

It is compiled from a number of sources, but no critical reading has been applied, the sources are not credited, and there is no information about who operates the site.

The Wikipedia entries on Roman religion are often confused (and confusing), with unsupported statements. I, among others, have attempted to clean them up, but they are soon re-written (vandalized?) by the confusers.

UNRV HISTORY **ROMAN EMPIRE**

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Roman Religion Domestic Cult Festivals Legions Cults Pontifex Maximus Vestal Virgins Popes of Rome Christianity

Roman Religion

The origins of the Roman pantheon began with the small farming community that made up the ancient village of Rome. The foundations of the mythology included nameless and faceless deities that lended support to the community while inhabiting all objects and living things. Numen, as the belief in a pantheistic inhabitation of all things is called, would later take root in more clearly defined system of gods, but early on this belief that everything was inhabited by numina was the prevalent system.

Even though the early Romans were not very concerned with the distinct personalities of each god within their pantheon, there was a rigid clarification of what each particular deity was responsible for. All aspects of life within Rome were guided not only by the pantheon of familiar names we are accustomed to, but to the household cult of the Dii Familiaris as well. With this belief set, every family or household was believed to be assigned a guardian spirit known as the Lar Familiaris

Did you know?

Some of the deities and spirits (known individually as numen or collectively as numina) who populated the imagination and religion of the native Latin people were extremely important to the extent that they had rites dedicated to them, others are merely names, with little (or limited) function even in Roman times.

22

Here is a better site. Its operators are not “professional” historians, but they have had historical training. It also appears to be one of the main sources of the Roman Empire site. It also has a bibliography.

<http://www.unrv.com/culture/religion-of-rome.php>
<http://www.unrv.com/culture/roman-religion.php>

You won't find a new theses or historical research here, but the authors strive to present competent narratives of historical material.

The History Guide

Lectures on Ancient and Medieval European History

Lecture 15

Christianity as a Cultural Revolution

When Christianity came to the Roman Empire it performed perhaps one of the most significant cultural revolutions in the history of the West. In general, Christian values stood directly opposed to those values of classical thought, that is, of the Greco-Roman tradition. This tradition taught that man ought to seek the good life today, here in this world, in the present world, and for the Romans, that meant the Empire. Christianity taught that our earthly existence was merely a preparation for life after death. Our life on earth was temporary, a stopping off point before the journey into eternal life. The visible world was a world of exile. We are all held as prisoners in Plato's Cave.

<http://www.historyguide.org/ancient/lecture15b.html>

This is an excellent piece about why Christianity came into conflict with the empire, and also offers some ideas on why it spread so rapidly, and how it changed through its early years.



- As in many societies, Roman religion had an official practice and a different, but related, popular practice.
- Roman religious mythology adopted the gods of Greece.
- Doing the right things to honor the gods became the guiding principle of daily life.
- This included an official cult as the emperor came to be regarded as divine—generally the formal declaration was made after his death, but the living emperor was a representative.
- It extended to household gods and making offerings to the spirits of the dead.

(Bibi Saint-Pol, Roman relief of sacrifice, 1^o century C.E., Glyptothek, Munich,
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Relief_sacrifice_Glyptothek_Munich.jpg, PD)



- Later religion reflected the growth of mystery cults (Cybele, Isis, Mithras).
- These came from the East or Africa.
- They required initiation, offered a sense of belonging, growth through ranks of adepts, and promised immortality.
- No written records, so just what was believed is often uncertain, but it seems to revolve an heroic act by a supernaturally-endowed person which saved the earth.
- Mithras was the biggest competitor to early Christianity.

(PHG, Mithraic relief, 2-3^o century C.E., Musée du Louvre MA3441,
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mithras_banquet_Louvre_Ma3441.jpg, GFDL)

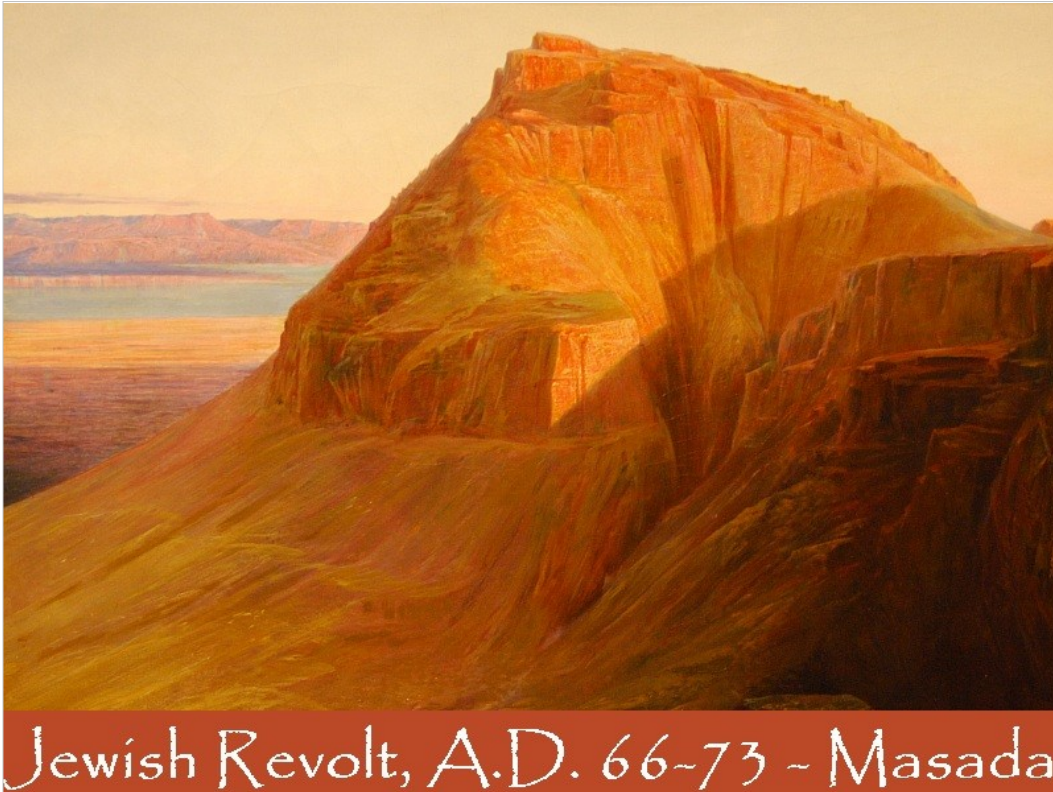
Lucius Domitius “Nero” Ahenobarbus



- Nero ruled 54-68 C.E.
- In 64, Rome burned. There has long been suspicion that Nero was behind it, although he blamed the Christians.
- Nero was obsessed with being popular, and built several theatres and sponsored games.
- He was the last emperor of the dynasty from Julius Caesar.
- After him, a string of emperors in rapid succession and increasing personal and political instability.

(Robert Hubert, The Fire of Rome, Musee des Beaux-Arts Andre Mairaux)

(Cohen 29, CNG Coins, www.cngcoins.com, GFDL)



Jewish Revolt, A.D. 66-73 ~ Masada

- There were increasing revolts within the empire and incursions from outside.
- There was increasing discontent among the Jews, who held the status of a “licensed” or “permitted” religion. They had revolted before, and the gospels tell us that many people were eager to see another revolution during the time of Jesus.
- The final Jewish Revolt ran from 66-73, at the end, a small group held off in Masada.

(Edward Lear, Masada on the Dead Sea, 1858, California Legion of Honor).



- In response, the Romans leveled the city of Jerusalem.
- The Wailing Wall, part of the foundation of the Jewish Temple, is all that remains.

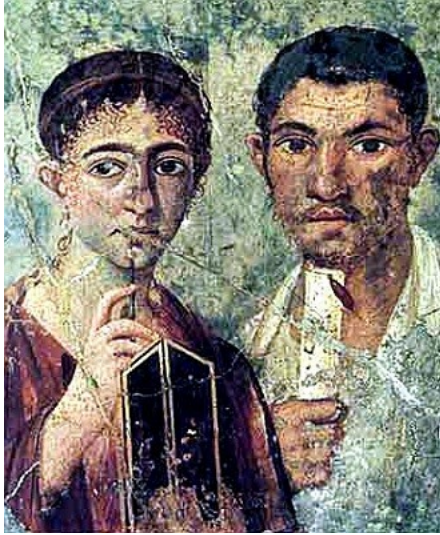
(Wayne McLean, 2005,
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/40/Western_wall_jerusalem_night.jpg, CC-A)



- This marked the end of a Jewish homeland until 1948.
- It also marks the beginning of rabbinic Judaism. This included settling the canon of the sacred book, the “Tanakh,” an acronym for the three divisions: Teaching, Prophets, and Writings.
- With no temple, the synagogue arose as a meeting place [for the more knowledgeable, synagogues first appeared during the Babylonian exile].
- Christianity was firmly established as a separate religion: it had often considered itself (and was also looked upon) as a renewal group within Judaism.

(“Merlin,” Synagogue Museum, Wlodawa, Poland, GFDL)

Pompeii



- Pompeii, buried in the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 C.E., provides unprecedented view of daily life.
- It also helps us understand references from other sources.

(Pompeii House 7:2,6; Pompeii Region 6, National Archaeological Museum, Naples)



- The baths were a prominent feature of Roman life.
- First was a changing room, then a cold or warm bath was available, along with massage.

(Al Mare, Changing Room, Stabian Bath, Pompeii, CC-SA)



- The rooms were often decorated.
- There were separate areas for men and women.
- Baths may have reduced the effects of lead poisoning (from pipes and cookware) by leaching the lead out.

(Andrew Dunn, Bath, England, CC-SA)

Toga and stola



- Clothes were an indication of social status.
- Adult men wore togas, those in public office had a purple stripe or trim.
- Women wore stolas.
- Tunics were worn by plebians (commoners).



- The best-known Roman sports are the gladiator contests, but they also engaged in wrestling, boxing, racing, board games, and ball games.

(Jean-Léon Gérôme, Pollice Verso, 1872)



- Roman army was a professional force that built roads, forts, bridges, and conducted communication systems (post).
- Used an organization system that remains effective: legion of 5000, divided into cohorts of 500-600, further divided into centuries.
- A soldier's term of service was 20 years, and he was to remain unmarried.

(Matthias Kabel, Re-enactment by Legio XV, GFDL)



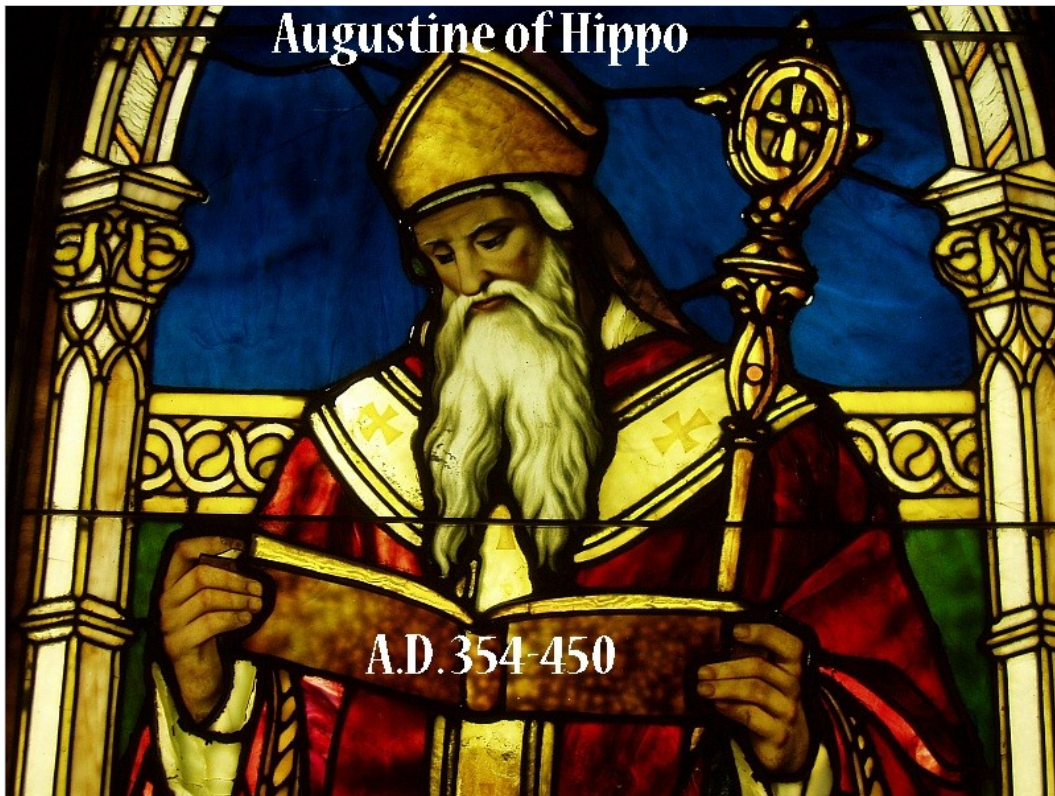
- Under the emperor Trajan, r. 98-117, the empire expanded to its greatest extent.
- He was the first in several decades to add territory (Dacians = Romania, Parthia = Armenia and some of Mesopotamia), but was forced to withdraw from Mesopotamia.

(Trajan, Mesopotamian Museum, GFDL)
 (Andrei Nacu, 2008, CC-SA)



- Christianity became the (maybe an, depending on your point of view) official religion of the Roman Empire after the emperor Constantine's conversion. He also began to try and influence the church's theological positions.
- The church also adopted many Roman practices at this time, ranging from holidays to architecture to dress.
- It also became part of the structure of the state, a status which survived the fall of the empire.
- A question to think about: how did the transition from “threat” to “official religion” change the religion?

(Mosaic in Hagia Sophia)



- Augustine (an African) organized a large body of Christian thought, and in the process, told us much about everyday life in and outside the church. His life spans the end of the Roman Empire. His book *The City of God* argues that the fall of the empire was not the result of Rome's turning from the old gods to Christianity.

(Daderot, L. C. Tiffany, Augustine, Lightner Museum, GFDL).

**THE
END**



(http://etc.usf.edu/clipart/18800/18849/bow_18849.htm)