

Rome

REORGANIZING HUMAN SOCIETIES (600 B.C.E. – 600 C.E.)



- The history of ancient Rome is perhaps best understood by dividing it in two:
 - The Republic, 509 – 27 B.C.E.
 - The Empire, 27 B.C.E. – 476 C.E.



- “Rome’s central location contributed to its success in unifying Italy and then all the lands ringing the Mediterranean Sea.”



- Combined with a mild climate the Italian peninsula is well suited for the farming of a variety of crops. (It is often written that about 90% of Romans were farmers).
- The region is also rich in timber and metals.
- Land ownership was a sign of wealth (the more you owned . . .)



- In its earliest days the Roman state had a king, but after the harsh rule of Tarquinius Superbus, the Romans decided to institute a republic (a form of government where the people elect representatives to serve as lawmakers).
- The Republic also had two consuls (acted like executives) who served one year terms.

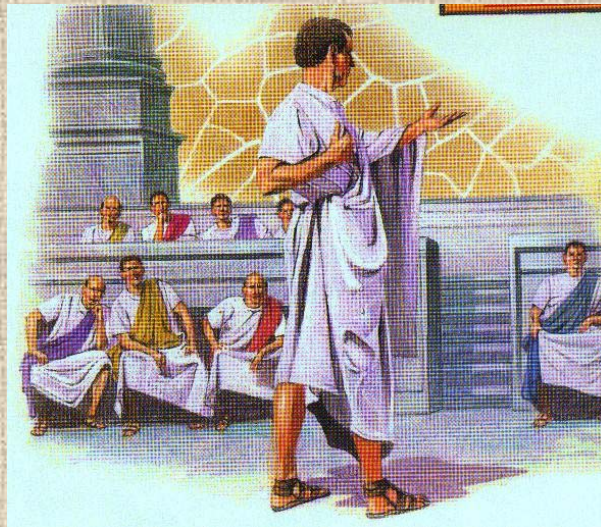


- However, the Roman Republic was not a genuine democracy, the votes of the wealthy classes counted more than that of the poor, and Senators would serve for life.
- These social inequalities led to periodic conflict between the patricians (elite, wealthy) and the plebeians (poor, the majority of citizens).

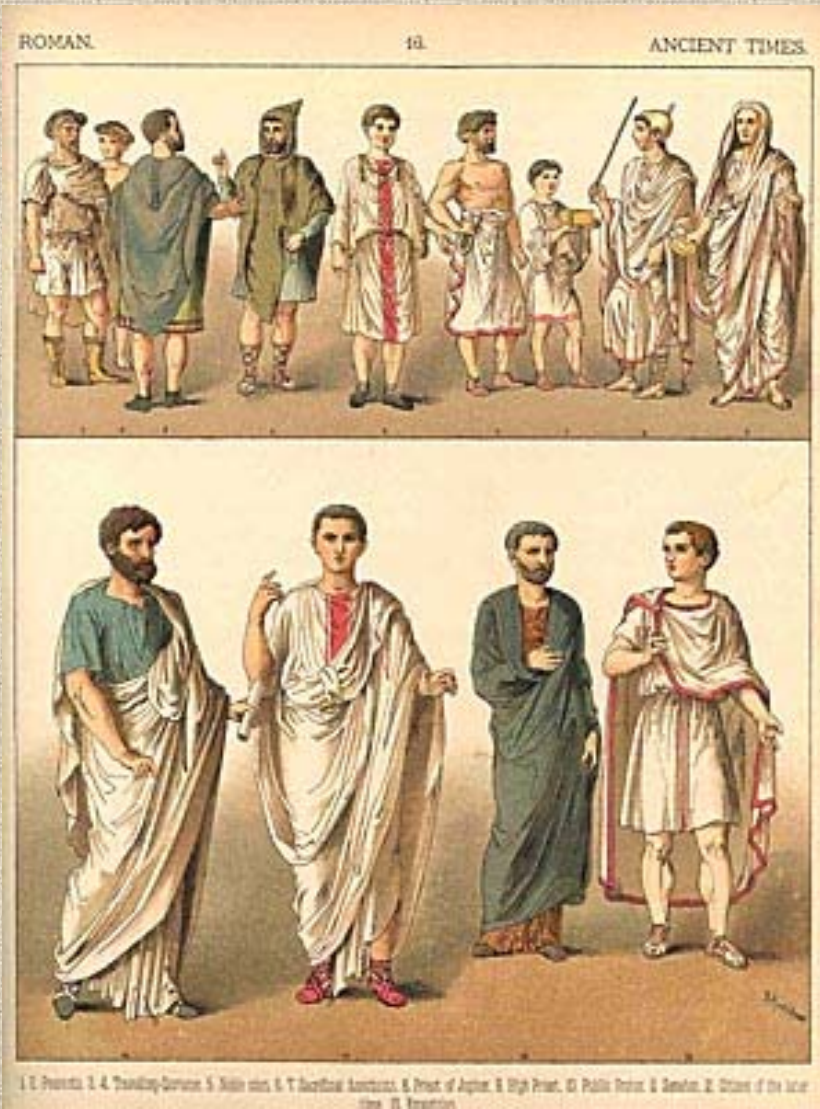


- The plebeian's gained influence by . . .
 - Refusing to work or fight (*similarity with workers during the Industrial Revolution?*)
 - The eventual publication / writing down of laws (the patricians had used unwritten laws for which they changed to fit their preferences, but now that it was written there was a sense of fairness for everyone).
 - Creation of the “tribunes,” officials elected by the lower classes had the power to “veto” or block actions taken by the government.

- Roman society reflected a patron / client relationship. A Senator would often provide representation, protection, loans, and legal advice to “clients” (think poorer citizens).
- In return clients would work his land and support him in battle and in the political arena.



- During the days of the Republic women were still viewed as children with few rights (ex: they could not own property).
- The Romans were polytheistic (gods were similar to those of the Greeks).



1. C. Praetor. 2. A. Praetor. 3. A. Praetor. 4. Praetor. 5. A. Praetor. 6. A. Praetor. 7. A. Praetor. 8. A. Praetor. 9. A. Praetor. 10. A. Praetor.

- Slowly Rome began to expand in size because consuls felt their need to achieve military glory during their one year terms, and the ever growing need to create a “buffer” from attacks.
- However in contrast to the Greeks, conquered subjects enjoyed the privileges of full citizenship.



- Rome fought a series of wars against Carthage known as the Punic Wars 264 – 202 B.C.E.
 - First: fought for the control of Sicily.
 - Second: Carthage's general Hannibal took elephants through the alps to invade Rome, he loses.
 - Third: Rome invaded Carthage and burned the city to the ground, they also salted the earth.

Main effect: Rome is now unchallenged in the Mediterranean.



- As Rome grew and acquired distant colonies it often dispatched a “governor” to oversee the colony *(similar to the 19th century British Empire?)*



- The Republic failed due to growing economic inequality (the wealthy began using slaves, thus driving poor farmers out of work), and military upheaval as soldiers became more loyal to generals than to the Republic.
- General Julius Caesar was able to take over Rome, ushering in the Empire.



- Octavian or Augustus (same person) is often credited with being Rome's greatest emperor.
- During his 45 year reign, he was popular (led a frugal life / one of the people), expanded the empire in size (Central Europe, Mid East), created an efficient government for 80 million people, and ruled during a time known as Pax Romana (The Roman Peace).



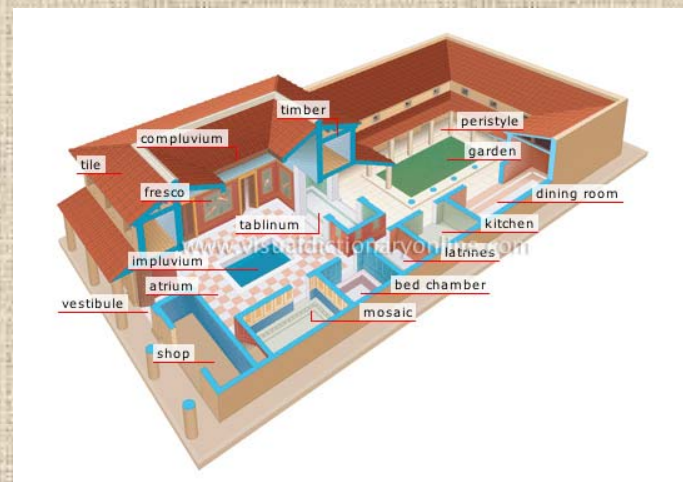


- Emperors in general were not of the same family, individuals were (in theory) chosen by the Senate and (in reality) by the army.



Map 4-4
 Ways of the World, First Edition
 © 2009 Bedford/St.Martin's

- Daily life in the empire varied upon social class (upper: homes with atriums, baths, frescoes) (lower: dark, crowded slums with few furnishings).
- Nevertheless, extensive trade did increase overall standard of living.
- Furthermore, in 212 C.E. citizenship was granted to all male inhabitants of the empire.

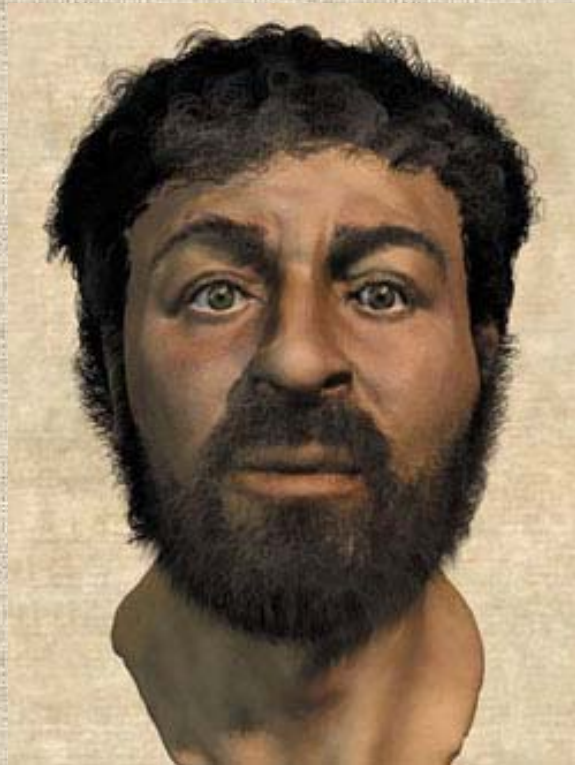


GROWTH OF ROMAN DOMINIANS UNDER THE EMPIRE

- AT THE DEATH OF CAESAR, 44 BC
- TO DEATH OF AUGUSTUS, 14 AD
- TO DEATH OF MARCUS AURELIUS, 180 AD



- In the distant land of Judaea, Roman governors clashed with the monotheistic Jews. (Many of the Jews were hoping a messiah would come to liberate them, preferably a general).
- It is in climate that a man named Jesus was born.



- It is believed Jesus was a teacher / rabbi who disapproved of the Jewish political leaders of the time (their excessive concern for money) and perhaps also the downtrodden condition of peasants.
- His teachings attracted a large following, therefore Jewish officials (who began to see his charisma and influence as troublesome) turned him over to the Romans to be crucified.



- The expansion of the Roman Empire called for a network of roads to be built. Aqueducts carried water from a source to urban centers.




- During the “third century crisis” (235 – 284 C.E.) the empire suffered political, military, and economic problems.
- In response some emperors implemented radical reforms (Diocletian set prices to curb inflation and froze people in their professions).



- Slowly Christianity was spreading throughout the empire (it was considered a cult, Christians were fed to the lions in the Coliseum).
- Under the rule of Emperor Constantine, the Edict of Milan in 312 C.E. ended the persecution of Christians.





 *The Spread of Christianity. Christian churches appeared first in the major cities of the Empire and spread only gradually into the countryside, in part due to the establishment of monasteries.*

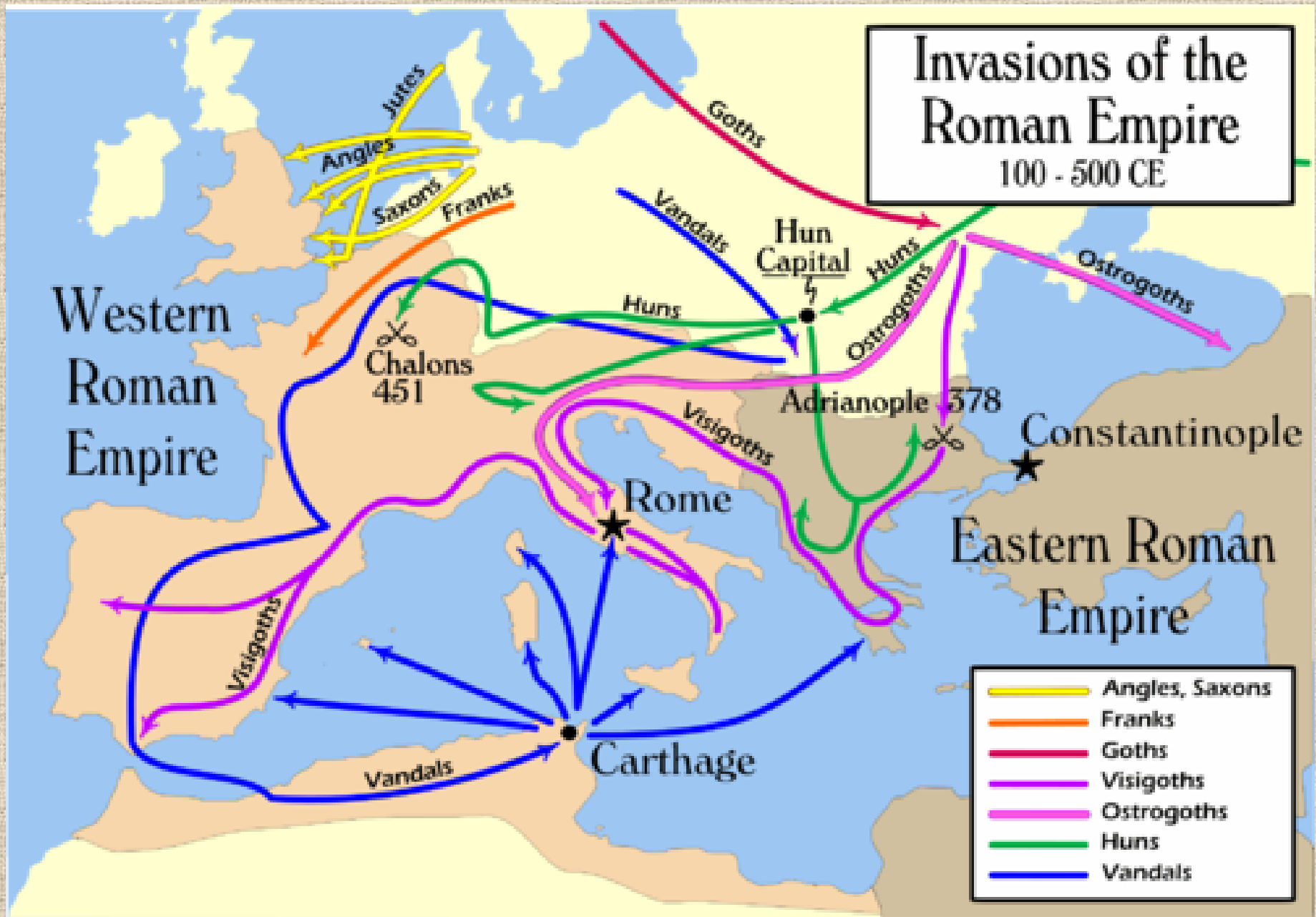
- In 324, Constantine moved the capital of the Empire from Rome to Byzantium (Constantinople, Istanbul in Turkey).
- The move reflected the shifting importance of the empire. More people were living in the east, and the region had weathered the third century crisis better.



- The western portion of the empire, now neglected could be overrun. By 410 Visigoths and other Germanic barbarians sacked the city of Rome, and the last Roman emperor was deposed in 476.
- The empire in the east became known as the Byzantine Empire.



Invasions of the Roman Empire 100 - 500 CE



Western Roman Empire

Eastern Roman Empire

- Angles, Saxons
- Franks
- Goths
- Visigoths
- Ostrogoths
- Huns
- Vandals