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Her influence put her into conflict with the bishop of Alexandria, Cyril, who may have been implicated in her violent death in at the hands of a Christian mob. Literacy began to decline, perhaps dramatically, during the socio-political Crisis of the Third Century. With the total triumph of Christianity at the end of the fourth century, the Church might have reacted against Greek pagan learning in general, and Greek philosophy in particular, finding much in the latter that was unacceptable or perhaps even offensive. They might have launched a major effort to suppress pagan learning as a danger to the Church and its doctrines. Perhaps it was in the slow dissemination of Christianity. After four centuries as members of a distinct religion, Christians had learned to live with Greek secular learning and to utilize it for their own benefit.

Their education was heavily influenced by Latin and Greek pagan literature and philosophy. Although Christians found certain aspects of pagan culture and learning unacceptable, they did not view them as a cancer to be cut out of the Christian body. Julian, the only emperor after the conversion of Constantine to reject Christianity, banned Christians from teaching the Classical curriculum on the grounds that they might corrupt the minds of youth.

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Tertullian, a convert to Christianity from Roman Africa, was the contemporary of Apuleius and one of the earliest prose authors to establish a distinctly Christian voice. After the conversion of Constantine, Latin literature is dominated by the Christian perspective. In the late 4th century, Jerome produced the Latin translation of the Bible that became authoritative as the Vulgate.

Augustine, another of the Christian Fathers from the province of Africa, has been called "one of the most influential writers of western culture", and his Confessions is sometimes considered the first autobiography of Western literature. In The City of God against the Pagan, Augustine builds a vision of an eternal, spiritual Rome, a new irremediably fine line that will outlast the collapsing Empire. In contrast to the unity of Classical Latin, the literary esthetic of late antiquity has a tessellated quality that has been compared to the mosaics characteristic of the period.

Austrias d. The imperial panegyrist Claudius d. Prudentius d. His poetry and collected letters offer a unique view of life in late Roman Gaul from the perspective of a man who "survived the end of his world". Religion in the Roman Empire encompassed the practices and beliefs the Romans regarded as their own, as well as the many cults imported to Rome or practiced by peoples throughout the provinces. The Romans thought of themselves as highly religious, and attributed their success as a world power to their collective piety pietas in maintaining good relations with the gods pax deorum.
The archaic religion believed to have been handed down from the earliest kings of Rome was the foundation of the mos maiorum, "the way of the ancestors" or "tradition", viewed as central to Roman identity. There was no principle analogous to "separation of church and state". The priesthoods of the state religion were filled from the same social pool of men who held public office, and in the Imperial era, the Pontifex Maximus was the emperor. Roman religion was practical and contractual, based on the principle of do ut des, "I give that you might give.

For ordinary Romans, religion was a part of daily life. Neighbourhood shrines and sacred places such as springs and groves dotted the city. Apuleius 2nd century described the everyday quality of religion in observing how people who passed a cult place might make a vow or a fruit offering, or merely sit for a while. In the Imperial era, as many as days of the year were devoted to religious festivals and games ludii.

In the wake of the Republic's collapse, state religion had adapted to support the new regime of the emperors. As the first Roman emperor, Augustus justified the novelty of one-man rule with a vast programme of religious revivalism and reform. Public vows formerly made for the security of the republic now were directed at the wellbeing of the emperor. So-called "emperor worship" expanded on a grand scale the traditional Roman veneration of the ancestral dead and of the Genius, the divine tutelary of every individual.

Upon death, an emperor could be made a state divinity divus by vote of the Senate. Imperial cult, influenced by Hellenistic ruler cult, became one of the major ways Rome advertised its presence in the provinces and cultivated shared cultural identity and loyalty throughout the Empire. Cultural precedent in the Eastern provinces facilitated a rapid dissemination of Imperial cult, extending as far as the Augustan military settlement at Najran, in present-day Saudi Arabia. This was the context for Rome's conflict with Christianity, which Romans variously regarded as a form of atheism and novel superstition. The Romans are known for the great number of deities they honoured, a capacity that earned the mockery of early Christian polemists. Inscriptions throughout the Empire record the side-by-side worship of local and Roman deities, including dedications made by Romans to local gods. Because Romans had never been obligated to cultivate one god or one cult only, religious tolerance was not an issue in the sense that it is for competing monotheistic systems.

Mystery religions, which offered initiates salvation in the afterlife, were a matter of personal choice for an individual, practiced in addition to carrying on one's family rites and participating in public religion. The mysteries, however, involved exclusive oaths and secrecy, conditions that conservative Romans viewed with suspicion as characteristic of "magic", conspiracy coniuratio, and subversive activity. Sporadic and sometimes brutal attempts were made to suppress religions that seemed to threaten traditional morality and unity.

In Gaul, the power of the druids was checked, first by forbidding Roman citizens to belong to the order, and then by banning druidism altogether. At the same time, however, Celtic traditions were reinterpreted interpretatio romana within the context of Imperial theology, and a new Gallo-Roman religion coalesced, with its capital at the Sanctuary of the Three Gauls in Lugdunum present-day Lyon, France. The sanctuary established precedent for Western cult as a form of Roman-provincial identity.

The monotheistic rigour of Judaism posed difficulties for Roman policy that led at times to compromise and the granting of special exemptions. Tertullian noted that the Jewish religion, unlike that of the Christians, was considered a religio licita, "legitimate religion. When Caligula wanted to place a golden statue of his deified self in the Temple in Jerusalem, the potential sacrilege and likely war were prevented only by his timely death.

The religion gradually spread out of Jerusalem, initially establishing major bases in first Antioch, then Alexandria, and over time throughout the Empire as well as beyond. Imperially authorized persecutions were limited and sporadic, with martyrdoms occurring most often under the authority of local officials. The first persecution by an emperor occurred under Nero, and was confined to the city of Rome. Tacitus reports that after the Great Fire of Rome in AD 64, some among the population held Nero responsible and that the emperor attempted to deflect blame onto the Christians. A surviving letter from Pliny the Younger, governor of Bithynia, to the emperor Trajan describes his persecution and executions of Christians.

In the early 4th century, Constantine I became the first emperor to convert to Christianity. During the rest of the fourth century, Christianity became the dominant religion of the Empire. The emperor Julian, under the influence of his adviser Mardianus made a short-lived attempt to revive traditional and Hellenistic religion and to affirm the special status of Judaism, but in Edict of Thessalonica, under Theodosius I Christianity became the official state church of the Roman Empire, to the exclusion of all others. From the 2nd century onward, the Church Fathers had begun to condemn the diverse religions practiced throughout the Empire collectively as "pagan. Christian heretics as well as non-Christians were subject to exclusion from public life or persecution, but Rome's original religious hierarchy and many aspects of its ritual influenced Christian forms, [] [] and many pre-Christian beliefs and practices survived in Christian festivals and local traditions.

Several states claimed to be the Roman Empire's successors after the fall of the Western Roman Empire. After the fall of Constantinople, the Russian Tsardom, as inheritor of the Byzantine Empire's Orthodox Christian tradition, counted itself the Third Rome Constantinople having been the second. These concepts are known as Translatio imperii. When the Ottomans, who based their state on the Byzantine model, took Constantinople in, Mehmed II established his capital there and claimed to sit on the throne of the Roman Empire. In the medieval West, "Roma" came to mean the church and the Pope of Rome. The Greek form Romeos remained attached to the Greek-speaking Christian population of the Eastern Roman Empire and is still used by Greeks in addition to their common appellation.

The Roman Empire's territorial legacy of controlling the Italian peninsula would influence Italian nationalism and the unification of Italy Risorgimento in. In the United States, the founders were educated in the classical tradition, [] and used classical models for landmarks and buildings in Washington, D. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. For other uses, see Roman Empire disambiguation. See also: Latin culture. Vexillum with the imperial aquila. The Roman Empire in AD at its greatest extent, at the time of Trajan's death with its vassals in pink. Main article: History of the Roman Empire. See also: Campaign history of the Roman military and Roman Kingdom. Further information: Roman Republic. Main article: Pax Romana. The so-called Five Good Emperors. Nerva reigned 96— Trajan reigned 98— Hadrian reigned — Antoninus Pius reigned — Marcus Aurelius reigned — See also: Barbarian kingdoms and Byzantine Empire.

London: John Murray. University of North Carolina Press. Most government records that are preserved come from Roman Egypt, where the climate preserved the papyri. The exclusion of Egypt from the senatorial provinces dates to the rise of Octavian before he became Augustus: Egypt had been the stronghold of his last opposition, Mark Antony and his ally Cleopatra. Transaction Publishers. Valerius Flaccus as governor of Hispania in the 90s—80s BC. Cornell University Press. In Juliano, Annette L. Turnhout: Brepols Publishers.


A line of Sabine, Latin and Etruscan earlier Italian civilizations kings followed in a non-hereditary succession. The power of the monarchy passed to two annually elected magistrates called consuls. They also served as commanders in chief of the army. The magistrates, though elected by the people, were drawn largely from the Senate, which was dominated by the patricians, or the descendants of the original senators from the time of Romulus.

Politics in the early republic was marked by the long struggle between patricians and plebeians the common people, who eventually attained some political power through years of concessions from patricians, including their own political bodies, the tribunes, which could initiate or veto legislation. The Roman forum was more than just home to their Senate. In B. These laws included issues of legal procedure, civil rights and property rights and provided the basis for all future Roman civil law. By around B. During the early republic, the Roman state grew exponentially in both size and power. Though the Gauls sacked and burned Rome in B. Rome then fought a series of wars known as the Punic Wars with Carthage, a powerful city-state in northern Africa.

In the Third Punic War — B. At the same time, Rome also spread its influence east, defeating King Philip V of Macedonia in the Macedonian Wars and turning his kingdom into another Roman province. The first Roman literature appeared around B. The gap between rich and poor widened as wealthy landowners drove small farmers from public land, while access to government was increasingly limited to the more privileged classes.

Attempts to address these social problems, such as the reform movements of Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus in B. Gaius Marius, a commoner whose military prowess elevated him to the position of consul for the first of six terms in B. By 91 B. After Sulla retired, one of his former supporters, Pompey, briefly served as consul before waging successful military campaigns against pirates in the Mediterranean and the forces of Mithridates in Asia. During this same period, Marcus Tullius Cicero, elected consul in 63 B. When the victorious Pompey returned to Rome, he formed an uneasy alliance known as the First Triumvirate with the wealthy Marcus Licinius Crassus who suppressed a slave rebellion led by Spartacus in 71 B.

After earning military glory in Spain, Caesar returned to Rome to vie for the consulship in 59 B. From his alliance with Pompey and Crassus, Caesar received the governorship of three wealthy provinces in Gaul beginning in 58 B. With old-style Roman politics in disorder, Pompey stepped in as sole consul in 53 B. In 49 B. With Octavian leading the western provinces, Antony the east, and Lepidus Africa, tensions developed by 36 B. In 31 B. In the wake of this devastating defeat, Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide. By 29 B. In 27 B. He had himself declared dictator for life and flirted with kingship.

This ran afoul of a deep taboo in Roman culture. So on March 15, 44 BC, in perhaps the most famous murder in world history, a group of disgruntled senators surrounded Caesar and stabbed him to death. Antony and Octavian initially fought side by side to avenge the death of Julius Caesar. But after Antony went east and became romantically involved with the Egyptian queen Cleopatra, he and Octavian had a falling-out, leading to war. Antony and Cleopatra died a year later, leaving Octavian the sole ruler of the Roman world. Octavian changed his name to Augustus in 27; historians treat this as the year when the Roman Republic became the Roman Empire.

One of our richest sources of information about ancient Rome comes from the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. It destroyed several Roman towns, most notably Pompeii and Herculaneum. The existence of these towns was forgotten for many centuries, but the thick layer of ash deposited by the eruption preserved them for modern archeologists. This has given us information about daily life in a Roman town that would have been difficult to obtain from other sources. Inscriptions, graffiti, and frescoes provide insight into how various buildings were used and what people did in the town. The site of Pompeii was first rediscovered in , but only a few artifacts were uncovered before interest in the site waned.

Excavation began in earnest after the site was discovered a second time in , and has continued to the present day. Some areas of the town have yet to be explored due to restrictions imposed by the authorities. In addition to archaeological teams, the site is visited by millions of tourists each year. There is a surprising amount of erotic artwork on the walls of Pompeian buildings, like this painting from a bedroom in the home of a wealthy Roman aristocrat.

Similar artwork was found in buildings that archeologists believe were brothels. Prostitution in the Roman empire was legal and widespread. Paintings in Pompeii suggest that Romans enjoyed lively and varied sex lives, with illustrations of cunnilingus and sex with multiple partners. Sex was a topic of political controversy in ancient times just as it is today, with the Emperor Augustus trying — without much success — to crack down on adultery.
Baths were an important part of Roman society, and all major towns and cities had at least one. Pompeii had three public baths, of which the Stabian bath, depicted here, was the oldest. Men and women bathed separately. In large facilities like this one, there were separate sections for men and women. In smaller facilities, men and women would use the same facilities at different times. The Roman baths included a number of facilities that would be familiar at a modern spa: changing rooms, pools with different water temperatures, and saunas. There was also an exercise yard where men but only men could play sports. Roman baths were communal spaces; Romans would talk business and share gossip as they washed themselves. Roman aristocrats would sometimes try to win favor with the masses by building more elaborate baths, and baths became larger and more elaborate as Rome became a wealthier and more sophisticated society.

For most of its history, Rome was a pagan society. From the early days of the republic, the Romans built temples and made sacrifices to the gods, and would consult religious leaders to determine which days were auspicious ones for a wedding, military offensive, or other major undertaking. This map shows the temples in Pompeii. Notice that in addition to temples to traditional pagan gods, the map shows a Temple of Vespasian. This is an unfinished structure that some historians speculate was intended to honor the emperor who was in power at the time Mount Vesuvius erupted, destroying the city. Religion and state were closely intertwined in Roman society, and subjects were encouraged to think of their rulers as semi-divine figures. And his epic poem The Aeneid became one of the most important works of Roman literature. After the fall of Troy, Aeneas leads a group of survivors Trojans around the Mediterranean looking for a new home.

And it continues to influence Western culture. For example, near the beginning of The Aeneid is the story of the Trojan horse, a subterfuge the Greeks used to take over Troy. Slavery was deeply woven into the fabric of Roman society. There are several ways that people in Roman society could fall into slavery. When the Romans prevailed on the battlefield, they would often take their defeated enemies captive and sell them into slavery. People could also become slaves due to failure to pay debts or as a punishment for crime. Roman slavery differed from American slavery in some important respects. Roman slaves could be of any race. And while American slaves generally performed manual labor, Roman slaves could sometimes be highly skilled.

Educated slaves captured from the Greek world were highly sought after for tutoring children and performing clerical work. Of course, many slaves resented their subservient status, and some revolted. This map shows a portion of the most famous slave revolt in Roman history, in which the gladiator Spartacus led an army that eventually grew to , freed slaves. When the rebellion was finally crushed, 6, surviving slaves were crucified along the Appian Way, a major road leading into Rome. As Rome expanded, the traditional homeland of the Jewish people at the eastern end of the Mediterranean came under Roman control. Not long after Herod died, the Romans created the province of Judea, which was under Roman control for centuries thereafter. The Jews had an uneasy place in the Roman Empire. Romans were suspicious of people who insisted on practicing minority religions, and between 63 AD and AD Jews staged three major revolts against Roman authority.

The third rebellion led to a brutal crackdown by Emperor Hadrian. One ancient historian estimates that the Romans killed , Jews to put down the rebellion, and many more were sold into slavery. As a result, Christianity emerged there and spread during the early Roman Empire, one of the most peaceful and prosperous eras of the ancient world. The early Christians, like the Jews, faced suspicion from Roman officials. To the Christian, this act was one of pagan worship; to the imperial bureaucrat, simply a profession of patriotism toward the figure who embodied the state.

Throughout the classical period, Britain was at the fringes of civilization. Conquest of Britain began in earnest under the emperor Claudius in 43 AD. Over the next four decades, Roman troops explored the entire island, including the northernmost parts of Scotland. But the Romans only conquered an area roughly corresponding to modern-day England and Wales. The Romans would govern this territory until , when the declining Western Roman Empire was forced to abandon the remote province. Most of his predecessors had sought glory by conquering new territory, steadily expanding the size of the empire. Hadrian had a different vision. He believed the empire was becoming overextended militarily, and immediately upon taking office he focused on consolidating Roman control of the territories that had already been conquered.

He withdrew from a few Eastern territories conquered by his predecessor, Trajan, and he negotiated peace agreements with rivals such as the Parthians. Over time, similar fortifications would be built all around the edges of the empire, transforming what had been a fluid frontier into a clearly defined border. The new wall was only manned for a few years before the Romans were forced to abandon the new territory and retreat to the border Hadrian had chosen. The Roman Empire provided its subjects with a reliable and standardized system of currency. Uniform money brings major economic benefits because cash transactions are a lot more efficient than those done by barter. This map, drawn from a database of amateur archeological finds, shows where Roman coins were found between and As Rome was rising in the West, the Han dynasty was consolidating power in China.

These two great empires were too far apart to have a direct relationship. But they became linked together indirectly through trade networks. This map, based on geographical data recorded by a Greek writer in the early years of the Roman Empire, shows the trade route from Rome to India. Elites in India and China prized Roman-made glass and rugs, while Roman aristocrats enjoyed purchasing silks made in the Far East.

For the first two centuries after Augustus became emperor in 27 BC, the Roman Empire experienced a period of unprecedented political stability and economic prosperity. But the situation deteriorated rapidly in the third century AD.

The Roman Republic (article) | Rise of Rome | Khan Academy

The circumstances under which Seneca's tragedies were performed are however unclear; scholarly conjectures range from minimally staged readings to full production pageants. Female roles were performed by women, not by men. Pantomimus combined expressive dancing, instrumental music and a sung libretto, often mythological, that could be either tragic or comic. Although sometimes regarded as foreign elements in Roman culture, music and dance had existed in Rome from earliest times. Music was thought to reflect the orderliness of the cosmos, and was associated particularly with mathematics and knowledge. Various woodwinds and "brass" instruments were played, as were stringed instruments such as the cithara, and percussion. Instruments are widely depicted in Roman art. The hydraulic pipe organ hydraulis was "one of the most
significant technical and musical achievements of antiquity", and accompanied gladiator games and events in the amphitheatre, as well as stage performances.

It was among the instruments that the emperor Nero played. Although certain forms of dance were disapproved of at times as non-Roman or unmanly, dancing was embedded in religious rituals of archaic Rome, such as those of the dancing armed Salian priests and of the Arval Brothers, priesthoods which underwent a revival during the Principate. In the secular realm, dancing girls from Syria and Cadiz were extremely popular. Like gladiators, entertainers were infames in the eyes of the law, little better than slaves even if they were technically free. Augustine is supposed to have said that bringing clowns, actors, and dancers into a house was like inviting in a gang of unclean spirits.

Illiterate Roman subjects would have someone such as a government scribe scriba read or write their official documents for them. Books were expensive, since each copy had to be written out individually on a roll of papyrus volumen by scribes who had apprenticed to the trade. Collectors amassed personal libraries, [] such as that of the Villa of the Papyri in Herculaneum, and a fine library was part of the cultivated leisure otium associated with the villa lifestyle. Literary texts were often shared aloud at meals or with reading groups. Traditional Roman education was moral and practical.

Stories about great men and women, or cautionary tales about individual failures, were meant to instil Roman values mores maiorum. Parents and family members were expected to act as role models, and parents who worked for a living passed their skills on to their children, who might also enter apprenticeships for more advanced training in crafts or trades. Young children were attended by a pedagogus, or less frequently a female pedagoga, usually a Greek slave or former slave. Usually, however, pedagogues received little respect. Primary education in reading, writing, and arithmetic might take place at home for privileged children whose parents hired or bought a teacher. Boys and girls received primary education generally from ages 7 to 12, but classes were not segregated by grade or age. Quintilian provides the most extensive theory of primary education in Latin literature. According to Quintilian, each child has in-born ingenium, a talent for learning or linguistic intelligence that is ready to be cultivated and sharpened, as evidenced by the young child's ability to memorize and imitate.

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From the 2nd to the 4th centuries, the Christian authors who would become the Latin Church Fathers were in active dialogue with the Classical tradition, within which they had been educated. Tertullian, a convert to Christianity from Roman Africa, was the contemporary of Apuleius and one of the earliest prose authors to establish a distinctly Christian voice. After the conversion of Constantine, Latin literature is dominated by the Christian perspective. In the late 4th century, Jerome produced the Latin translation of the Bible that became authoritative as the Vulgate. Augustine, another of the Church Fathers from the province of Africa, has been called "one of the most influential writers of western culture," and his Confessions is sometimes considered the first autobiography of Western literature.

In The City of God against the Pagans, Augustine builds a vision of an eternal, spiritual Rome, a new imperium sine fine that will outlast the collapsing Empire. In contrast to the unity of Classical Latin, the literary esthetic of late antiquity has a tessellated quality that has been compared to the mosaics characteristic of the period. Ausonius d. The imperial panegyrist Claudian d. Prudentius d. His poetry and collected letters offer a unique view of life in late Roman Gaul from the perspective of a man who "survived the end of his world." Religion in the Roman Empire encompassed the practices and beliefs the Romans regarded as their own, as well as the many cults imported to Rome or practiced by peoples throughout the provinces.

The Romans thought of themselves as highly religious, and attributed their success as a world power to their collective piety pietas in maintaining good relations with the gods pax deorum. The archaic religion believed to have been handed down from the earliest kings of Rome was the foundation of the mos maiorum, "the way of the ancestors" or "tradition", viewed as central to Roman identity. There was no principle analogous to "separation of church and state." The priesthoods of the state religion were filled from the same social pool of men who held public office, and in the Imperial era, the Pontifex Maximus was the emperor. Roman religion was practical and contractual, based on the principle of do ut des, "I give that you might give. For ordinary Romans, religion was a part of daily life. Neighbourhood shrines and sacred places such as springs and groves dotted the city. Apuleius 2nd century described the everyday quality of religion in observing how people who passed a cult place might make a vow or a fruit offering, or merely sit for a while.

In the Imperial era, as many as days of the year were devoted to religious festivals and games ludi. In the wake of the Republic's collapse, state religion had adapted to support the new regime of the emperors. As the first Roman emperor, Augustus justified the novelty of one-man rule with a vast programme of religious revivalism and reform. Public vows formerly made for the security of the republic were directed at the wellbeing of the emperor. So-called "emperor worship" expanded on a grand scale the traditional Roman veneration of the ancestral dead and of the Genius, the divine tutelary of every individual.

Upon death, an emperor could be made a state divinity divus by vote of the Senate. Imperial cult, influenced by Hellenistic ruler cult, became one of the major ways Rome advertised its presence in the provinces and cultivated shared cultural identity and loyalty throughout the Empire. Cultural precedent in the Eastern provinces facilitated a rapid dissemination of Imperial cult, extending as far as the Augustan military settlement at Najran, in present-day Saudi Arabia. This was the context for Rome's conflict with Christianity, which Romans variously regarded as a form of atheism and novel superstition. The Romans are known for the great number of deities they honoured, a capacity that earned the mockery of early Christian polemics. Inscriptions throughout the Empire record the side-by-side worship of local and Roman deities, including dedications made by Romans to local gods. Because Romans had never been obligated to cultivate one god or one cult only, religious tolerance was not an issue in the sense that it is for competing monotheistic systems.

Mystery religions, which offered initiates salvation in the afterlife, were a matter of personal choice for an individual, practiced in addition to carrying on one's family rites and participating in public religion. The mysteries, however, involved exclusive oaths and secrecy, conditions that conservative Romans viewed with suspicion as characteristic of "magic," conspiracy coniuratio, and subversive activity. Sporadic and sometimes brutal attempts were made to suppress religions that seemed to threaten traditional morality and unity.

In Gaul, the power of the druids was checked, first by forbidding Roman citizens to belong to the order, and then by banning druidism altogether. At the same time, however, Celtic traditions were reinterpreted interpretatio romana within the context of Imperial theology, and a new Gallo-Roman religion coalesced, with its capital at the Sanctuary of the Three Gauls in Lugdunum present-day Lyon, France.

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letter from Pliny the Younger, governor of Bithynia, to the emperor Trajan describes his persecution and executions of Christians. In the early 4th century, Constantine I became the first emperor to convert to Christianity. During the rest of the fourth century, Christianity became the dominant religion of the Empire. The emperor Julian, under the influence of his adviser Mardonius, made a short-lived attempt to revive traditional and Hellenistic religion and to affirm the special status of Judaism, but in Edict of Thessalonica, under Theodosius I Christianity became the official state church of the Roman Empire, to the exclusion of all others.

From the 2nd century onward, the Church Fathers had begun to condemn the diverse religions practiced throughout the Empire collectively as "pagan. Christian heretics as well as non-Christians were subject to exclusion from public life or persecution, but Rome's original religious hierarchy and many aspects of its ritual influenced Christian forms, [1] and many pre-Christian beliefs and practices survived in Christian festivals and local traditions.

Several states claimed to be the Roman Empire's successors after the fall of the Western Roman Empire. After the fall of Constantinople, the Russian Tsardom, as inheritor of the Byzantine Empire's Orthodox Christian tradition, counted itself the Third Rome Constantinople having been the second. These concepts are known as Translatio imperii. When the Ottomans, who based their state on the Byzantine model, took Constantinople in, Mehmed II established his capital there and claimed to sit on the throne of the Roman Empire. In the medieval West, "Roman" came to mean the church and the Pope of Rome.

The Greek form Romioi remained attached to the Greek-speaking Christian population of the Eastern Roman Empire and is still used by Greeks in addition to their common appellation. The Roman Empire's territorial legacy of controlling the Italian peninsula would influence Italian nationalism and the unification of Italy Risorgimento in the United States, the founders were educated in the classical tradition, [1] and used classical models for landmarks and buildings in Washington, D. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. For other uses, see Roman Empire disambiguation. See also: Latin culture. Vesillum with the imperial aquila.

The Roman Empire in AD at its greatest extent, at the time of Trajan's death with its vassals in pink [3]. Main article: History of the Roman Empire. See also: Campaign history of the Roman military and Roman Kingdom. Further information: Roman Republic. Main article: Pax Romana. The so-called Five Good Emperors. Nerva reigned 96—Trajan reigned 98—Hadrian reigned — Antoninus Pius reigned — Marcus Aurelius reigned — See also: Barbarian kingdoms and Byzantine Empire. Further information: Classical demography. See also: Antonine plague and Plague of Cyprian. This section may contain misleading parts. Please help clarify this article according to any suggestions provided on the talk page. September Main article: Languages of the Roman Empire. Dendera, Egypt. Further information: Ancient Roman society. Main articles: Status in Roman law system and Roman citizenship.

Main article: Women in ancient Rome. Main article: Slavery in ancient Rome. Main article: Constitution of the Roman Empire. See also: Roman emperor and Senate of the Roman Empire. Main articles: Imperial Roman army and Structural history of the Roman military. Main article: Roman law. Roman portraiture frescos from Pompeii, 1st century AD, depicting two different men wearing laurel wreaths, one holding the rotulus blodnish figure, left, the other a volume of a brown figure, right, both made of papyrus.

Main article: Roman economy. See also: Roman currency and Roman finance. Main article: Roman metallurgy. See also: Mining in Roman Britain. See also: Cursus publicus. Main articles: Ancient Roman architecture, Roman engineering, and Roman technology. Main articles: Culture of ancient Rome and Agriculture in ancient Rome. Main article: Food and dining in the Roman Empire. See also: Grain supply to the city of Rome and Ancient Rome and wine. See also: Ludii, Chariot racing, and Gladiator. Main article: Clothing in ancient Rome. Main article: Roman art. Main article: Roman portraiture. Two portraits circa AD: the empress Vibia Sabina left; and the Antonius Mondragone, one of the abundant likenesses of Hadrian's famously beautiful male companion Antinous. Main article: Roman sculpture. Main article: Ancient Roman sarcophagi. Main article: Roman mosaic. See also: Ancient Roman pottery and Roman glass.

Glass cage cup from the Rhineland, 4th century. Main articles: Theatre of ancient Rome and Music of ancient Rome. This article is missing information about the use of papyrus or parchment scrolls, which were very common before the invention of the codex. Please expand the article to include this information. Further details may exist on the talk page. April Main article: Education in ancient Rome. Main article: Latin literature. See also: Roman historiography, Church Fathers, and Latin poetry. Main articles: Religion in ancient Rome and Imperial cult ancient Rome. Main article: Legacy of the Roman Empire.

Ancient Rome portal History portal Europe portal. Res publica means Roman "commonwealth" and can refer to both the Republican and the Imperial eras. Imperium Romanum or "Romanorum" refers to the territorial extent of Roman authority. The term Romanus, initially a colloquial term for the empire's territory as well as a collective name for its inhabitants, appears in Greek and Latin sources from the 4th century onward and was eventually carried over to the Eastern Roman Empire see R. The Empire of Nicea is considered [by whom? Prices and values are usually expressed in sesterces; see Currency and banking for currency denominations by period.

In this sense, it could be argued that a "Roman" Empire survived until the early 20th century. See the following: Roy, Kaushik Bloomsbury Studies in Military History. London: Bloomsbury Publishing. ISBN Retrieved 4 January After the capture of Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire became the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Augustine, however, distinguished between the secular and eternal "Rome" in The City of God. See also J. Sherwin-White Roman Citizenship. Oxford University Press. In the form of legal marriage called conubium, the father's legal status determined the child's, but conubium required that both spouses be free citizens. A soldier, for instance, was banned from marrying while in service, but if he formed a long-term union with a local woman while stationed in the provinces, he could marry her legally after he was discharged, and any children they had would have been considered the offspring of citizens—in effect granting the woman retroactive citizenship.

The ban was in place from the time of Augustus until it was rescinded by Septimius Severus in AD. See McGinn, Thomas A. Transactions of the American Philological Association. JSTOR University of Chicago Press. Senators could not possess the "public horse. Strabo 3. The college of centurioni is an elusive topic in scholarship, since they are also widely attested as urban firefighters; see Jinyu Liu Colleget Centonarioiurum The
Guilds of Textile Dealers in the Roman West.


Oxford: Oxford University Press. Princeton University Press. The Roman Empire at Bay. History of the Later Roman Empire. Dover Books. Transcultural approaches to the concept of imperial rule in the Middle Ages. Peter Lang AG. JSTOR J. Odoacer, who dethroned the last Roman emperor Romulus Augustulus in , neither used the imperial insignia nor the colour purple, which was used by the emperor in Byzantium only. Retrieved 11 February In Wilger, David ed. the patrician Orestes had married the daughter of Count Rokulas, of Petovio in Noricum the name of Augustus, notwithstanding the jealousy of power, was known at Aquilia as a familiar surname; and the appellations of the two great founders, of the city and of the monarchy, were thus strangely united in the last of their successors.

The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. England: Project Gutenberg. The republic they repeat that name without a blush might safely confide in the civil and military virtues of Odoacer; and they humbly request, that the emperor would invest him with the title of Patrician, and the administration of the diocese of Italy. Retrieved 3 April World History Encyclopedia. World History Encyclopedia Limited. Walter de Gruyter.


Attila and his brutal Huns invaded Gaul and Italy around 496, further shaking the foundations of the empire. With old-style Roman politics in disorder, Pompey stepped in as sole consul in 53 B.C. In 49 B.C., with Octavian leading the western provinces, Antony the east, and Lepidus Africa, tensions developed by 36 B.C. In 31 B.C., in the wake of this devastating defeat, Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide. By 29 B.C., in 27 B.C., he instituted various social reforms, won numerous military victories and allowed Roman literature, art, architecture and religion to flourish. Augustus ruled for 56 years, supported by his great army and by a growing cult of devotion to the emperor. When he died, the Senate elevated Augustus to the status of a god, beginning a long-running tradition of deification for popular emperors.

The line ended with Nero, whose excesses drained the Roman treasury and led to his downfall and eventual suicide. The reign of Nerva, who was selected by the Senate to succeed Domitian, began another golden age in Roman history, during which four emperors—Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius—took the throne peacefully, succeeding one another by adoption, as opposed to hereditary succession.

Under Antoninus Pius, Rome continued in peace and prosperity, but the reign of Marcus Aurelius—dominated by conflict, including war against Parthia and Armenia and the invasion of Germanic tribes from the north. When Marcus fell ill and died near the battlefield at Vindobona Vienna, he broke with the tradition of non-hereditary succession and named his year-old son Commodus as his successor. The decadence and incompetence of Commodus brought the golden age of the Roman emperors to a disappointing end. His death at the hands of his own ministers sparked another period of civil war, from which Lucius Septimius Severus emerged victorious.

During the third century Rome suffered from a cycle of near-constant conflict. A total of 22 emperors took the throne, many of them meeting violent ends at the hands of the same soldiers who had propelled them to power. Meanwhile, threats from outside plagued the empire and depleted its riches, including continuing aggression from Germans and Parthians and raids by the Goths over the Aegean Sea. The reign of Diocletian temporarily restored peace and prosperity in Rome, but at a high cost to the unity of the empire. Diocletian divided power into the so-called tetrarchy rule of four, sharing his title of Augustus emperor with Maximian. A pair of generals, Galerius and Constantius, were appointed as the assistants and chosen successors of Diocletian and Maximian; Diocletian and Galerius ruled the eastern Roman Empire, while Maximian and Constantius took power in the west.

The stability of this system suffered greatly after Diocletian and Maximian retired from office. Constantine the son of Constantius emerged from the ensuing power struggles as sole emperor of a reunited Rome in 312, moving the Roman capital to the Greek city of Byzantium, which he renamed Constantinople. Roman unity under Constantine proved illusory, and 30 years after his death the eastern and western empires were again divided. Despite its continuing battle against Persian forces, the eastern Roman Empire—later known as the Byzantine Empire—would remain largely intact for centuries to come. Rome eventually collapsed under the weight of its own bloated empire, losing its provinces one by one: Britain around 410; Spain and northern Africa by Attila and his brutal Huns invaded Gaul and Italy around 496, further shaking the foundations of the empire.

The fall of the Roman Empire was complete. Roman architecture and engineering innovations have had a lasting impact on the modern world. Roman aqueducts, first developed in B.C., Some Roman aqueducts transported water up to 60 miles from its source and the Fountain of Trevi in Rome still relies on an updated version of an original Roman aqueduct. Roman cement and concrete are part of the reason ancient buildings like the Colosseum and Roman Forum are still standing strong today.

Ancient Rome - Wikipedia

The first style of Roman painting was practiced from the early 2nd century BC to the early- or mid-1st century BC. It was mainly composed of imitations of marble and masonry, though sometimes including depictions of mythological characters. The second style of Roman painting began during the early 1st century BC, and attempted to depict realistically three-dimensional architectural features and landscapes. The third style occurred during the reign of Augustus 27 BC — 14 AD, and rejected the realism of the second style in favor of simple ornamentation.
A small architectural scene, landscape, or abstract design was placed in the center with a monochrome background. The fourth style, which began in the 1st century AD, depicted scenes from mythology; while retaining architectural details and abstract patterns. Portrait sculpture during the period [which?] During the Antonine and Severan periods, ornate hair and beardings, with deep cutting and drilling, became popular. Advancements were also made in relief sculptures, usually depicting Roman victories. Latin literature was, from its start, influenced heavily by Greek authors. Some of the earliest extant works are of historical epics telling the early military history of Rome. As the Republic expanded, authors began to produce poetry, comedy, history, and tragedy.

Roman music was largely based on Greek music, and played an important part in many aspects of Roman life. Most religious rituals featured musical performances, with tibia double pipes at sacrifices, cymbals and Tambourines at orgiastic cults, and rattles and hymns across the spectrum. The graffiti, brothels, paintings, and sculptures found in Pompeii and Herculaneum suggest that the Romans had a sex-saturated culture. Ancient Roman cuisine changed over the long duration of this ancient civilization. Dietary habits were affected by the influence of Greek culture, the political changes from kingdom to republic to empire, and empire's enormous expansion, which exposed Romans to many new, provincial culinary habits and cooking techniques.

In the beginning the differences between social classes were relatively small, but disparities evolved with the empire's growth. Men and women drank wine with their meals, a tradition that has been carried through to the present day. The ancient Roman diet included many items that are staples of modern Italian cooking. Pliny the Elder discussed more than 30 varieties of olive, 40 kinds of pear, figs native and imported from Africa and the eastern provinces, and a wide variety of vegetables, including carrots of different colors, but not orange, as well as celery, garlic, some flower bulbs, cabbage and other brassicas such as kale and broccoli, lettuce, endive, onion, leek, asparagus, radishes, turnips, parsnips, beets, green peas, chard, cardoons, olives, and cucumber.

However, some foods now considered characteristic of modern Italian cuisine were not used. There were also few citrus fruits. Butcher's meat such as beef was an uncommon luxury. The most popular meat was pork, especially sausages. The Romans also engaged in snail farming and oak grub farming. Some fish were greatly esteemed and fetched high prices, such as mullet raised in the fishery at Cosa, and "elaborate means were invented to assure its freshness". Traditionally, a breakfast called ientaculum served at dawn. At mid-day to early afternoon, Romans ate cena, the main meal of the day, and at nightfall a light supper called vespers. Thus, it gradually shifted to the evening, while the vespers was abandoned completely over the course of the years. The mid-day meal prandium became a light meal to hold one over until cena. The youth of Rome had several forms of athletic play and exercise, such as jumping, wrestling, boxing, and racing.

For the wealthy, dinner parties presented an opportunity for entertainment, sometimes featuring music, dancing, and poetry readings. Public games were sponsored by leading Romans who wished to advertise their generosity and court popular approval; in the Imperial era, this usually meant the emperor. Several venues were developed specifically for public games. The Colisseum was built in the Imperial era to host, among other events, gladiatorial combats.

These combats had begun as funeral games around the 4th century BC, and became popular spectator events in the late Republic and Empire. Gladiators had an exotic and inventive variety of arms and armour. They sometimes fought to the death, but more often to an adjudicated victory, dependent on a referee's decision. The outcome was usually in keeping with the mood of the watching crowd. Shows of exotic animals were popular in their own right; but sometimes animals were pitted against human beings, either armed professionals or unarmed criminals who had been condemned to a spectacular and theatrical public death in the arena. Some of these encounters were based on episodes from Roman or Greek mythology. Chariot racing was extremely popular among all classes. In Rome, these races were usually held at the Circus Maximus, which had been purpose-built for chariot and horse-racing and, as Rome's largest public place, was also used for festivals and animal shows.

The track was divided lengthwise by a barrier that contained obelisks, temples, statues and lap-counters. The best seats were at the track-side, close to the action; they were reserved for Senators. Behind them sat the equites knights, and behind the knights were the plebs commoners and non-citizens. The donor of the games sat on a high platform in the stands alongside images of the gods, visible to all. Large sums were bet on the outcomes of races.

Some Romans offered prayers and sacrifices on behalf of their favourites, or laid curses on the opposing teams, and some aficionados were members of extremely, even violently partisan circus factions. Ancient Rome boasted impressive technological feats, using many advancements that were lost in the Middle Ages and not rivaled again until the 19th and 20th centuries. An example of this is insulated glazing, which was not invented again until the s. Many practical Roman innovations were adopted from earlier Greek designs. Advancements were often divided and based on craft. Artisans guarded technologies as trade secrets.

Roman civil engineering and military engineering constituted a large part of Rome's technological superiority and legacy, and contributed to the construction of hundreds of roads, bridges, aqueducts, baths, theaters and arenas. Many monuments, such as the Colosseum, Pont du Gard, and Pantheon, remain as testaments to Roman engineering and culture. The Romans were renowned for their architecture, which is grouped with Greek traditions into "Classical architecture". Although there were many differences from Greek architecture, Rome borrowed heavily from Greece in adhering to strict, formulaic building designs and proportions. Aside from two new orders of columns, composite and Tuscan, and from the dome, which was derived from the Etruscan arch, Rome had relatively few architectural innovations until the end of the Republic.

In the 1st century BC, Romans started to use concrete widely. Concrete was invented in the late 3rd century BC. It was a powerful cement derived from pozzolana, and soon supplanted marble as the chief Roman building material and allowed many daring architectural forms. Mosaics took the Empire by storm after samples were retrieved during Lucius Cornelius Sulla's campaigns in Greece. The Romans also largely built using timber, causing a rapid decline of the woodlands surrounding Rome and in much of the Apennine Mountains due to the demand for wood for construction, shipbuilding and fire. The first evidence of long-distance wood trading came from the discovery of wood planks, felled between A. With solid foundations and good drainage, Romm roads were known for their durability and many segments of the Roman road system were still in use a thousand years after the fall of Rome. The construction of a vast and efficient travel network throughout the Empire dramatically
increased Rome's power and influence.

They allowed Roman legions to be deployed rapidly, with predictable marching times between key points of the empire, no matter the season. The Roman government maintained a system of way stations, known as the cursus publicus, that provided refreshments to couriers at regular intervals along the roads and established a system of horse relays allowing a dispatch to travel up to 80 km 50 mi a day. The Romans constructed numerous aqueducts to supply water to cities and industrial sites and to aid in their agriculture. By the third century, the city of Rome was supplied by 11 aqueducts with a combined length of km mi. Most aqueducts were constructed below the surface, with only small portions above ground supported by arches.

The Romans also made major advancements in sanitation. Romans were particularly famous for their public baths, called thermae, which were used for both hygienic and social purposes. Many Roman houses came to have flush toilets and indoor plumbing, and a complex sewer system, the Cloaca Maxima, was used to drain the local marshes and carry waste into the Tiber river. Some historians have speculated that lead pipes in the sewer and plumbing systems led to widespread lead poisoning, which contributed to the decline in birth rate and general decay of Roman society leading up to the fall of Rome. However, lead content would have been minimized because the flow of water from aqueducts could not be shut off; it ran continuously through public and private outlets into the drains, and only a few taps were in use. Ancient Rome is the progenitor of Western civilization.

The rediscovery of Roman culture revitalized Western civilization, playing a role in the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment. A genetic study published in Science in November examined the genetic history of Rome from the Mesolithic up to modern times. In addition, one out of four individuals from Etruscan burials, a female, was found to be a mixture of local Iron Age ancestry and a North African population.

Overall, the genetic differentiation between the Latins, Etruscans and the preceding proto-villanovan population of Italy was found to be insignificant. Repeated invasions of barbarians brought European ancestry back into Rome, resulting in the loss of genetic link to the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East. Although there has been a diversity of works on ancient Roman history, many of them are lost. As a result of this loss, there are gaps in Roman history, which are filled by unreliable works, such as the Historia Augusta and other books from obscure authors.

However, there remains a number of reliable accounts of Roman history. The first historians used their works for the leading of Roman culture and customs. By the end of Republic, some historians distorted their histories to flatter their patrons—especially at the time of Marius’s and Sulla’s clash. In the Empire, the biographies of famous men and early emperors flourished, examples being The Twelve Caesars of Suetonius, and Plutarch’s Parallel Lives. Other major works of Imperial times were that of Livy and Tacitus. Interest in studying, and even idealizing, ancient Rome became prevalent during the Italian Renaissance, and continues until the present day. The first major work was The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire by Edward Gibbon, which encompassed the Roman civilization from the end of the 2nd century to the fall of the Byzantine Empire in Barthold Georg Niebuhr was a founder of the examination of ancient Roman history and wrote The Roman History, tracing the period until the First Punic War.

Niebuhr tried to determine the way the Roman tradition evolved. According to him, Romans, like other people, had an historical ethos preserved mainly in the noble families. It highlighted the Caesarean period popular at the time. History of Rome, Roman constitutional law and Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, all by Theodor Mommsen, became very important milestones. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. History of Rome from the 8th-century BC to the 5th-century.

This article is about the history of Roman civilisation in antiquity. For the history of the city of Rome, see Rome. For other uses, see Ancient Rome disambiguation. Senatus Populusque Romanus. Territories of the Roman civilization: Roman Republic. Roman Empire. Western Roman Empire. Eastern Roman Empire. Politics of ancient Rome. Centuriae Curiae Plebeian Tribal. Other countries. main article: Founding of Rome. Main article: Roman Kingdom. Main article: Roman Republic. Main article: Punic Wars. See also: Roman conquest of the Iberian Peninsula. This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources.

Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. September Learn how and when to remove this template message. Carthaginian possessions. Roman possessions. Main article: Roman Empire. Main article: Crisis of the Third Century. Main article: Fall of the Western Roman Empire. Ending invasions on Roman Empire between AD — Visigoths entering Athens. Main article: Roman law. Main articles: Social class in ancient Rome and Status in Roman legal system.


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For ordinary Romans, religion was a part of daily life. Neighbourhood shrines and sacred places such as springs and groves dotted the city. Apuleius 2nd century described the everyday quality of religion in observing how people who passed a cult place might make a vow or a fruit offering, or merely sit for a while. In the Imperial era, as many as days of the year were devoted to religious festivals and games ludi. In the wake of the Republic's collapse, state religion had adapted to support the new regime of the emperors. As the first Roman emperor, Augustus justified the novelty of one-man rule with a vast programme of religious revivalism and reform. Public vows formerly made for the security of the republic were now directed at the wellbeing of the emperor.

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The Roman religion gradually spread out of Jerusalem, initially establishing major bases in first Antioch, then Alexandria, and over time throughout the Empire as well as beyond. Imperially authorized persecutions were limited and sporadic, with martyrdoms occurring most often under the authority of local officials. The first persecution by an emperor occurred under Nero, and was confined to the city of Rome. Tacitus reports that after the Great Fire of Rome in AD 64, some among the population held Nero responsible and that the emperor attempted to deflect blame onto the Christians. A surviving letter from Pliny the Younger, governor of Bithynia, to the emperor Trajan describes his persecution and executions of Christians. In the early 4th century, Constantine I became the first emperor to convert to Christianity. During the rest of the fourth century, Christianity became the dominant religion of the Empire. The emperor Julian, under the influence of his adviser Mardonius made a short-lived attempt to revive traditional and Hellenistic religion and to affirm the special status of Judaism, but in Edict of Thessalonica, under Theodosius I Christianity became the official state church of the Roman Empire, to the exclusion of all others.

From the 2nd century onward, the Church Fathers had begun to condemn the diverse religions practiced throughout the Empire collectively as "pagan. Christian heretics as well as non-Christians were subject to exclusion from public life or persecution, but Rome's original religious hierarchy and many aspects of its ritual influenced Christian forms, and many pre-Christian beliefs and practices survived in Christian festivals and local traditions.

Several states claimed to be the Roman Empire's successors after the fall of the Western Roman Empire. After the fall of Constantinople, the Russian Tsardom, as inheritor of the Byzantine Empire's Orthodox Christian tradition, counted itself the Third Rome. Constantinople having been the second. These concepts are known as Translatio imperii. When the Ottomans, who based their state on the Byzantine model, took Constantinople in, Mehmed II established his capital there and claimed to sit on the throne of the Roman Empire.

In the medieval West, "Roman" came to mean the church and the Pope of Rome. The Greek form Romaioi remained attached to the Greek-speaking Christian population of the Eastern Roman Empire and is still used by Greeks in addition to their common appellation. The Roman Empire's territorial legacy of controlling the Italian peninsula would influence Italian nationalism and the unification of Italy Risorgimento in the United States, the founders were educated in the classical tradition, and used classical models for landmarks and buildings in Washington, D. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. For other uses, see Roman Empire disambiguation. See also: Latin culture. Vexillum with the imperial aquila. The Roman Empire in AD at its greatest extent, at the time of Trajan's death with its vassals in pink. Main article: History of the Roman Empire. See also: Campaign history of the Roman military and Roman Kingdom.

Further information: Roman Republic. Main article: Pax Romana. The so-called Five Good Emperors. Nerva reigned 96—Trajan reigned 98—Hadrian reigned — Antoninus Pius reigned — Marcus Aurelius reigned — See also: Barbarian kingdoms and Byzantine Empire. Further information: Classical demography. See also: Antonine plague and Plague of Cyprian. This section may contain misleading parts. Please help clarify this article according to any suggestions provided on the talk page.

September Main article: Languages of the Roman Empire. Dendera, Egypt. Further information: Ancient Roman society. Main articles: Status in Roman legal system and Roman citizenship. Main article: Women in ancient Rome. Main article: Slavery in ancient Rome. Main article: Constitution of the Roman Empire. See also: Roman emperor and Senate of the Roman Empire. Main articles: Imperial Roman army and Structural history of the Roman military. Main article: Roman law. Roman portraiture frescos from Pompeii, 1st century AD, depicting two different men wearing laurel wreaths, one holding the rotulus blondish figure, left, the other a volumen brunet figure, right, both made of papyrus. Main article: Roman economy. See also: Roman currency and Roman finance. Main article: Roman metallurgy.

See also: Mining in Roman Britain. See also: Cursus publicus. Main articles: Ancient Roman architecture, Roman engineering, and Roman technology. Main articles: Culture of ancient Rome and Agriculture in ancient Rome. Main article: Food and dining in the Roman Empire. See also: Grain supply to the city of Rome and Ancient Rome and wine. See also: Ludi, Chariot racing, and Gladiator. Main article: Clothing in ancient Rome. Main article: Roman art. Main article: Roman portraiture. Two portraits circa AD: the empress Vibia Sabina left; and the Antinous Mondragon one of the abundant likenesses of Hadrian's famously beautiful male companion Antinous. Main article: Roman sculpture. Main article: Ancient Roman sarcophagi.

Main article: Roman mosaic. See also: Ancient Roman pottery and Roman glass. Glass cage cup from the Rhineland, 4th century. Main articles: Theatre of ancient Rome and Music of ancient Rome. This article is missing information about the use of papyrus or parchment scrolls, which were very common before the invention of the codex. Please expand the article to include this information.

Further details may exist on the talk page. April Main article: Education in ancient Rome. Main article: Latin literature. See also: Roman historiography, Church Fathers, and Latin poetry. Main articles: Religion in ancient Rome and Imperial cult ancient Rome. Main article: Legacy of the Roman Empire. Ancient Rome portal History portal Europe portal. Res publica means Roman "commonswealth" and can refer to both the Republican and the Imperial eras. Imperium Romanum or "Romanum" refers to the territorial extent of Roman authority. The term Romania, initially a colloquial term for the empire's territory as well as a collective name for its inhabitants, appears in Greek and Latin sources from the 4th
century onward and was eventually carried over to the Eastern Roman Empire see R. The Empire of Nicaea is considered [ by whom?]

Prices and values are usually expressed in sesterces; see Currency and banking for currency denominations by period. In this sense, it could be argued that a "Roman" Empire survived until the early 20th century. See the following: Roy, Kaushik. Bloomsbury Studies in Military History. London: Bloomsbury Publishing. ISBN Retrieved 4 January After the capture of Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire became the capital of the Ottoman Empire.

Augustine, however, distinguished between the secular and eternal "Rome" in The City of God. See also J. Sherwin-White Roman Citizenship. Oxford University Press. In the form of legal marriage called comitum, the father's legal status determined the child's, but comitum required that both spouses be free citizens. A soldier, for instance, was banned from marrying while in service, but if he formed a long-term union with a local woman while stationed in the provinces, he could marry her legally after he was discharged, and any children they had would be considered the offspring of citizens—in effect granting the woman retroactive citizenship.

The ban was in place from the time of Augustus until it was rescinded by Septimius Severus in AD. See McGinn, Thomas A. Transactions of the American Philological Association. JSTOR University of Chicago Press. Senators could not possess the "public horse. Strabo 3. The college of centurarii is an elusive topic in scholarship, since they are also widely attested as urban firefighters; see Jinyu Liu Collegia Centurariarum: The Guilds of Textile Dealers in the Roman West. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab. Cambridge University Press, , , p. Rizza Catana, , p. Soldiers sometimes inscribed sling bullets with aggressive messages: Phang, "Military Documents, Languages, and Literacy," p. Quintilian uses the metaphor acuere ingenium, "to sharpen talent," as well as agricultural metaphors. The Roman Empire: Roots of Imperialism. Trajan: Optimus Princeps : a Life and Times. Regions east of the Euphrates river were held only in the years — Science Social History.

Duke University Press. Journal of World-Systems Research. ISSN X. Retrieved 6 February Population and Development Review. Corey The Patricians in the Roman Republic. Preface to Frontiers in the Roman World. University of California Press. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Princeton University Press. The Roman Empire at Bay. History of the Later Roman Empire. Dover Books. Transcultural approaches to the concept of imperial rule in the Middle Ages. Peter Lang AG. JSTOR J. Odoacer, who dethroned the last Roman emperor Romulus Augustus in, neither used the imperial insignia nor the colour purple, which was used by the emperor in Byzantium only. Retrieved 11 February In Wdiger, David ed. The patrician Orestes had married the daughter of Count Romulus, of Petrovio in Noricum the name of Augustus, notwithstanding the jealousy of power, was known at Aquileia as a familiar surname; and the appellations of the two great founders, of the city and of the monarchy, were thus strangely united in the last of their successors.

The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. England: Project Gutenberg. The republic they repeat that name without a blush might safely confide in the civil and military virtues of Odoacer; and they humbly request, that the emperor would invest him with the title of Patrician, and the administration of the diocese of Italy. Retrieved 3 April World History Encyclopedia. World History Encyclopedia Limited. Walter de Gruyter. The Roman Empire from Severus to Constantine.


The decadence and incompetence of Commodus brought the golden age of the Roman emperors to a disappointing end. His death at the hands of his own ministers sparked another period of civil war, from which Lucius Septimius Severus emerged victorious. During the third century Rome suffered from a cycle of near-constant conflict. A total of 22 emperors took the throne, many of them meeting violent ends at the hands of the same soldiers who had propelled them to power. Meanwhile, threats from outside plagued the empire and depleted its riches, including continuing aggression from Germans and Parthians and raids by the Goths over the Aegean Sea. The reign of Diocletian temporarily restored peace and prosperity to Rome, but at a high cost to the unity of the empire. Diocletian divided power into the so-called tetrarchy rule of four, sharing his title of Augustus emperor with Maximian.

A pair of generals, Galerius and Constantius, were appointed as the assistants and chosen successors of Diocletian and Maximian; Diocletian and Galerius ruled the eastern Roman Empire, while Maximian and Constantius took power in the west. The stability of this system suffered greatly after Diocletian and Maximian retired from office. Constantine the son of Constantius emerged from the ensuing power struggles as sole emperor of a reunified Rome in He moved the Roman capital to the Greek city of Byzantium, which he renamed Constantinople. Roman unity under Constantine proved illusory, and 30 years after his death the eastern and western empires were again divided.

Despite its continuing battle against Persian forces, the eastern Roman Empire—later known as the Byzantine Empire—would remain largely intact for centuries to come. Rome eventually collapsed under the weight of its own bloated empire, losing its provinces one by one: Britain around ; Spain and northern Africa by Attila and his brutal Huns invaded Gaul and Italy around, further shaking the foundations of the empire.

The fall of the Roman Empire was complete. Roman architecture and engineering innovations have had a lasting impact on the modern world. Roman aqueducts, first developed in B. Some Roman aqueducts transported water up to 60 miles from its source and the Fountain of Trevi in Rome still relies on an updated version of an original Roman aqueduct. Roman cement and concrete are part of the reason ancient buildings like the Colosseum and Roman Forum are still standing strong today.

Roman arches, or segmented arches, improved upon earlier arches to build strong bridges and buildings, evenly distributing weight throughout the structure. Roman roads, the most advanced roads in the ancient world, enabled the Roman Empire—which was over 1. They included such modern-seeming innovations as mile markers and drainage. Over 50, miles of road were built by B. But if you see something that doesn't look right, click here to contact us! Subscribe for fascinating stories connecting the past to the present. Over the next eight and a half centuries, it grew from a small town of pig farmers into a vast empire that stretched from England to Egypt and completely For almost 30 centuries—from its unification around B. From the great pyramids of the Old Kingdom through the military conquests of the New Aqueducts The Romans enjoyed many amenities for their day, including public toilets, underground sewage systems, fountains and ornate public baths.

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Rome, the years B. Archaic Greece saw advances in art, poetry and technology, but is known as the age in which the polis, or city-state, was The Roman Forum, known as Forum Romanum in Latin, was a site located at the center of the ancient city of Rome and the location of important religious,
political and social activities.

Historians believe people first began publicly meeting in the open-air Forum around B. From then on, road What had begun some 50 years earlier as a territorial dispute had devolved into an existential duel, with both powers Live TV. This Day In History. History Vault. Origins of Rome. As legend has it, Rome was founded in B. The Early Republic. The power of the monarch passed to two annually elected magistrates called consuls. Recommended for you. Roman Leaders and Emperors. Ancient Rome. Ancient Pleasure Palaces. The Visigoths Sack Rome.

Ancient Egypt For almost 30 centuries—from its unification around B. Roman Forum. The Roman Forum, known as Forum Romanum in Latin, was a site located at the center of the ancient city of Rome and the location of important religious, political and social activities. See More. He had himself declared dictator for life and flattered with kingship.

This ran afoot of a deep taboo in Roman culture. So on March 15, 44 BC, in perhaps the most famous murder in world history, a group of disgruntled senators surrounded Caesar and stabbed him to death. Antony and Octavian initially fought side by side to avenge the death of Julius Caesar. But after Antony went east and became romantically involved with the Egyptian queen Cleopatra, he and Octavian had a falling-out, leading to war. Antony and Cleopatra died a year later, leaving Octavian the sole ruler of the Roman world. Octavian changed his name to Augustus in 27; historians treat this as the year when the Roman Republic became the Roman Empire. One of our richest sources of information about ancient Rome comes from the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. It destroyed several Roman towns, most notably Pompeii and Herculaneum. The existence of these towns was forgotten for many centuries, but the thick layer of ash deposited by the eruption preserved them for modern archeologists. This has given us information about daily life in a Roman town that would have been difficult to obtain from other sources.

Inscriptions, graffiti, and frescoes provide insight into how various buildings were used and what people did in the town. The site of Pompeii was first rediscovered in , but only a few artifacts were uncovered before interest in the site waned. Excavation began in earnest after the site was discovered a second time in , and has continued to the present day. Some areas of the town have yet to be explored due to restrictions imposed by the authorities. In addition to archaeological teams, the site is visited by millions of tourists each year. There is a surprising amount of erotic artwork on the walls of Pompeian buildings, like this painting from a bedroom in the home of a wealthy Roman aristocrat. Similar artwork was found in buildings that archeologists believe were brothels. Prostitution in the Roman empire was legal and widespread. Paintings in Pompeii suggest that Romans enjoyed lively and varied sex lives, with illustrations of cunnilingus and sex with multiple partners.

Sex was a topic of political controversy in ancient times just as it is today, with the Emperor Augustus trying — without much success — to crack down on adultery. Baths were an important part of Roman society, and all major towns and cities had at least one. Pompeii had three public baths, of which the Stabian bath, depicted here, was the oldest.

Men and women bathed separately. In large facilities like this one, there were separate sections for men and women. In smaller facilities, men and women would use the same facilities at different times. The Roman baths included a number of facilities that would be familiar at a modern spa: changing rooms, pools with different water temperatures, and saunas. There was also an exercise yard where men but only men could play sports.

Roman baths were communal spaces; Romans would talk business and share gossip as they washed themselves. Roman aristocrats would sometimes try to win favor with the masses by building more elaborate baths, and baths became larger and more elaborate as Rome became a wealthier and more sophisticated society. For most of its history, Rome was a pagan society. From the early days of the republic, the Romans built temples and made sacrifices to the gods, and would consult religious leaders to determine which days were auspicious ones for a wedding, military offensive, or other major undertaking.

This map shows the temples in Pompeii. Notice that in addition to temples to traditional pagan gods, the map shows a Temple of Vespasian. This is an unfinished structure that some historians speculate was intended to honor the emperor who was in power at the time Mount Vesuvius erupted, destroying the city. Religion and state were closely intertwined in Roman society, and subjects were encouraged to think of their rulers as semi-divine figures. And his epic poem The Aeneid became one of the most important works of Roman literature. After the fall of Troy, Aeneas leads a group of surviving Trojans around the Mediterranean looking for a new home. And it continues to influence Western culture. For example, near the beginning of The Aeneid is the story of the Trojan horse, a subterfuge the Greeks used to take over Troy. Slavery was deeply woven into the fabric of Roman society.

There are several ways that people in Roman society could fall into slavery. When the Romans prevailed on the battlefield, they would often take their defeated enemies captive and sell them into slavery. People could also become slaves due to failure to pay debts or as a punishment for crime. Roman slavery differed from American slavery in some important respects. Roman slaves could be of any race. And while American slaves generally performed manual labor, Roman slaves could sometimes be highly skilled.

Educated slaves captured from the Greek world were highly sought after for tutoring children and performing clerical work. Of course, many slaves resented their subservient status, and some revolted. This map shows a portion of the most famous slave revolt in Roman history, in which the gladiator Spartacus led an army that eventually grew to , freed slaves. When the rebellion was finally crushed, surviving slaves were crucified along the Appian Way, a major road leading into Rome. As Rome expanded, the traditional homeland of the Jewish people at the eastern end of the Mediterranean came under Roman control.

Not long after Herod died, the Romans created the province of Judea, which was under Roman control for centuries thereafter. The Jews had an uneasy place in the Roman Empire. Romans were suspicious of people who insisted on practicing minority religions, and between AD and AD Jews staged three major revolts against Roman authority. The third rebellion led to a brutal crackdown by Emperor Hadrian. One ancient historian estimates that the Romans killed , Jews to put down the rebellion, and many more were sold into slavery. As a result, Christianity emerged there
The early Christians, like the Jews, faced suspicion from Roman officials. To the Christian, this act was one of pagan worship; to the imperial bureaucrat, simply a profession of patriotism toward the figure who embodied the state. Throughout the classical period, Britain was at the fringes of civilization. Conquest of Britain began in earnest under the emperor Claudius in 43 AD. Over the next four decades, Roman troops explored the entire island, including the northernmost parts of Scotland.

But the Romans only conquered an area roughly corresponding to modern-day England and Wales. The Romans would govern this territory until, when the declining Western Roman Empire was forced to abandon the remote province. Most of his predecessors had sought glory by conquering new territory, steadily expanding the size of the empire. Hadrian had a different vision. He believed the empire was becoming overextended militarily, and immediately upon taking office he focused on consolidating Roman control of the territories that had already been conquered. He withdrew from a few Eastern territories conquered by his predecessor, Trajan, and he negotiated peace agreements with rivals such as the Parthians. Over time, similar fortifications would be built all around the edges of the empire, transforming what had been a fluid frontier into a clearly defined border.

The new wall was only manned for a few years before the Romans were forced to abandon the new territory and retreat to the border Hadrian had chosen. The Roman empire provided its subjects with a reliable and standardized system of currency. Uniform money brings major economic benefits because cash transactions are a lot more efficient than those done by barter. This map, drawn from a database of amateur archeological finds, shows where Roman coins were found between and As Rome was rising in the West, the Han dynasty was consolidating power in China. These two great empires were too far apart to have a direct relationship. But they became linked together indirectly through trade networks.

This map, based on geographical data recorded by a Greek writer in the early years of the Roman Empire, shows the trade route from Rome to India. Elites in India and China prized Roman-made glass and rugs, while Roman aristocrats enjoyed purchasing silks made in the Far East. For the first two centuries after Augustus became emperor in 27 BC, the Roman Empire experienced a period of unprecedented political stability and economic prosperity. But the situation deteriorated rapidly in the third century AD. Between and , Rome had more than 20 emperors, and as this map shows, most died violent deaths.

Some were murdered by their own armies. Others died in civil wars against rival claimants to the throne. One died in battle against foreign foe; another was captured in battle and died in captivity. But in , Emperor Diocletian took power and managed to get the empire out of its tailspin. In a year reign, he temporarily ended the cycle of bloodshed and instituted reforms that allowed the empire to endure until the late s.

He wanted to provide more localized leadership for an empire that had become too sprawling and complex for any one man to manage. He created a new imperial capital at Byzantium and renamed it Constantinople, laying the foundations for an Eastern Roman Empire that would endure long after the West fell. When he took the throne, he began the transformation of Rome into a Christian empire. While some of his subjects resisted Christianity, the change ultimately stuck. As a result, Christianity became the dominant religion of Europe for the next 1, years. Constantine ruled over a unified Roman empire, but this would be increasingly rare. This cycle would repeat itself several times over the next half-century. It became clear that the empire was too big for any one man to rule.

The last emperor to rule a united empire, Theodosius, died in This map shows the result: an empire permanently divided between east and west. Why had the empire become too big to govern? The empire never fully recovered from the political crisis of the third century, or from a plague that began in and killed millions of people. As its financial health deteriorated, the empire became increasingly vulnerable to invasion. That started a vicious cycle. Frustrated provincials began fortifying their towns and organizing their own local militias for self-defense. People were increasingly forced to stay close to fortified towns for safety, making them less productive and more dependent on local lords.

And so the Roman army grew weaker, and the empire as a whole became more vulnerable to barbarian attack. A symbolic turning point came in , when Aetoc, king of the barbarian Visigoth tribe, sacked Rome for the first time in years. It was a psychological blow from which the Western Empire would never really recover. Probably the most famous of the barbarian invaders was Attila the Hun, who built an empire in Eastern Europe between and . Their style of warfare centered on mounted archers, who could fire arrows with deadly accuracy while on horseback. They prized speed and the advantage of surprise. The Romans proved unable to defeat Attila on the battlefield, and the Huns even forced the Romans to pay them tribute for several years. However, the Huns were unable to sustain prolonged sieges, which made them incapable of taking large cities such as Constantinople or Rome. Nor could they consolidate their gains and build a long-lived empire.

When Attila died in , his sons squabbled over how to divide his empire, which quickly disintegrated. Historians generally date the end of the Western Empire to AD. The last few emperors before Romuald Augustus were increasingly emperors in name only. Starved of the tax revenues they needed to raise a serious military, their control over nominally Roman territory was increasingly tenuous. When Odocacer and other barbarian generals carved the Roman Empire up into kingdoms, they were largely just formalizing the de facto reality that the emperors had little actual power over their distant domains. This map looks dramatically different from the map of the Western Roman Empire as it existed a few decades earlier.

Western Europe was populated by largely the same ethnic groups in as they had been a century earlier. Long before it finally collapsed, manpower shortages had forced the empire to incorporate barbarian peoples into the legions. So the barbarian tribes who carved up the old empire — the Franks, Visigoths, Ostrogoths, the Vandals, and so forth — were much more Romanized than the tribes that had menaced Rome centuries earlier. The rulers of these new kingdoms generally sought to co-opt Roman elites that still held significant wealth and power across the former Western Empire.
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