

The Rise of Ancient Rome

Chapter 8

Section 1

THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

Introduction

- Romulus and Remus- the twin kids of a princess and Mars
- Jealous king wanted them drowned
- Gods protected them- they were rescued by a female wolf
- Then a shepherd found and raised them
- When they grew up, they went and killed the king and founded their own city where the seven hills rise above the Tiber River- aka Rome

Rome's Geography and Early Settlement

- Geographical Advantages
 - Rome's first settlers picked the location bc it seemed perfect
 - Hills made it easy to defend
 - Soil was fertile and there was a river (flowed into Tyrrhenian Sea)
 - Rome was the center of the Italian Peninsula which juts into the Mediterranean, the center of the ancient Western world



Rome's Geography and Early Settlement

- Etruscans
 - Rome began around 900bc- people fought with their neighbors for land
 - 600bc- Etruscans ruled Rome- different language from Latin (Roman Language) and other Italian languages
 - ANCIENT ROMAN HISTORIANS- 509bc- Romans revolted against king Tarquinius Superbus and removed Etruscans
 - No one really knows how or when Etruscans were removed
 - Borrowed ideas from Etruscans: gods, alphabet (Greek), and toga

Romans Form a Republic

- The Roman Senate
 - By 264bc Romans controlled all of Italian peninsula
 - set up a republic (citizens who have the right to vote and select their leaders who rule in the name of the people)
 - Senate- most powerful part of republic (like our Congress)- creates new laws
 - At 1st- 300 upper class men called patricians
 - Ordinary citizens called plebeians- in early days couldn't hold office

Romans Form a Republic

- The Roman Consuls
 - 2 chief officials- similar to US presidents
 - Enforce the laws of the Republic
 - Before 367bc- plebeians couldn't be consuls
 - Senate advised consuls on foreign affairs, laws, finances, etc
 - 1 year of office
 - Almost always did what senate said to, both had to agree
 - If one said “veto” (rejection of any planned action by a person in power) it was dropped

Romans Form a Republic

- Other Important Officials
 - In an emergency- a dictator (a Roman official who had all power of a king but only served 6 months) was put in place
 - *Praetors*- were junior consuls at first, then became judges in civil law trials (about money, business, etc)

Romans Form a Republic

- Patricians Versus Plebeians
 - Patricians felt they were leaders
 - Plebeians thought they deserved rights- didn't trust patricians
 - Plebeians formed their own group
 - Patricians got wealthy from wars- bought huge farms and forced slaves to work them- took land from plebians
 - Plebeians then refused to fight wars- patricians had to give in
 - Twelve Tables- laid out laws and rights in writing

Romans Form a Republic

- Master of the Mediterranean
 - Romans were expanding empire- invaded Carthage in North Africa
 - Series of wars- by 146bc Rome had destroyed Carthage
 - Romans then took Greece, Spain, and Gaul (France)

The Decline of the Republic

- 120bc- Rome has some issues
- Leaders tried to give rights to plebeians
- Patricians fought back, killed plebeian leaders
- Generals had private armies, consuls didn't listen to each other
- Rome in civil war

The Decline of the Republic

- The Rise of Julius Caesar
 - 58-51bc- led army that conquered Gaul
 - Troops loved him- would follow him anywhere
 - 49bc- violated assignment- crossed into Italy
 - War- Caesar vs. Pompey (backed by Senate)
 - 48bc- Caesar became dictator- for life, not 6 months- took most of the power from the republic

The Decline of the Republic

- The Death of a Dictator
 - Civil war last 4 years, Caesar continued to dictate
 - 45bc- he became the only consul
 - 44bc- dictator for life- he did a lot of good, but the Senate didn't like it
 - March 15, 44bc- Caesar went to a senators meeting- they surrounded and killed him

The Decline of the Republic

- From Republic to Empire
 - 13 years of civil war after Caesar's death
 - Octavian then took power in 27bc (Caesar's son)
 - Given title Augustus- first emperor- beginning of Roman Empire
 - Republic had last 500 years- greedy people ended it