

Roman and he
became the
undisputed emperor
after



Roman Empire, political system established by Rome that lasted for nearly five centuries. Historians usually date the beginning of the Roman Empire from 27 bc when the Roman Senate gave Gaius Octavius the name Augustus and he became the undisputed emperor after years of bitter civil war.

At its peak the empire included lands throughout the Mediterranean world. Rome had first expanded into other parts of Italy and neighboring territories during the Roman Republic (509-27 bc), but made wider conquests and solidified political control of these lands during the empire. The empire lasted until Germanic invasions, economic decline, and internal unrest in the 4th and 5th centuries ad ended Rome's ability to dominate such a huge territory.

The Romans and their empire gave cultural and political shape to the subsequent history of Europe from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance to the present day. In 44 bc Gaius Julius Caesar, the Roman leader who ruled the Roman Republic as a dictator, was assassinated. Rome descended into more than ten years of civil war and political upheaval. After Caesar's heir Gaius Octavius (also known as Octavian) defeated his last rivals, the Senate in 27 bc proclaimed him Augustus, meaning the exalted or holy one. In this way Augustus established the monarchy that became known as the Roman Empire. The Roman Republic, which had lasted nearly 500 years, was dead, never to be revived. The empire would endure for another 500 years until ad 476 (See Ancient Rome).

The emperor Augustus reigned from 27 bc to ad 14 and ruled with absolute power. He reestablished political and social stability and launched two centuries of prosperity called the Roman Peace (Pax Romana). Under his rule

the Roman state began its transformation into the greatest and most influential political institution in European history. During the first two centuries ad the empire flourished and added new territories, notably ancient Britain, Arabia, and Dacia (present-day Romania). People from the Roman provinces streamed to Rome, where they became soldiers, bureaucrats, senators, and even emperors. Rome developed into the social, economic, and cultural capital of the Mediterranean world.

Despite the attention given to tyrannical and often vicious leaders like the emperors Caligula and Nero, most emperors ruled sensibly and competently until military and economic disasters brought on the political instability of the 3rd century ad. The Roman Empire encompassed a huge amount of territory, but also allowed people of many different cultures to retain their heritage into modern times. The empire helped to perpetuate the art, literature, and philosophy of the Greeks, the religious and ethical system of the Jews, the new religion of the Christians, Babylonian astronomy and astrology, and cultural elements from Persia, Egypt, and other eastern civilizations.

The Romans supplied their own peculiar talents for government, law, and architecture and also spread their Latin language. In this way they created the Greco-Roman synthesis, the rich combination of cultural elements that for two millennia has shaped what we call the Western tradition. The Romans formed that synthesis during the longest continuous period of peaceful prosperity that the Mediterranean world has ever known. Even after a German invader in ad 476 deposed Romulus Augustulus, the last emperor residing in Rome, emperors who called themselves “Roman” (although they <https://assignbuster.com/roman-and-he-became-the-undisputed-emperor-after/>

are known historically as Byzantine) continued to rule in Constantinople until ad 1453 (See Byzantine Empire). The impact of the Roman people endures until the present day. After the founding of Rome in 753 bc, powerful kings ruled until, according to patriotic legend, the Romans expelled the last foreign monarch in 509 bc and established a more representative form of government known as the Roman Republic. In the five centuries the republic existed, Rome expanded from a small community on the hills beside the Tiber River into the major power of the Mediterranean world. After centuries of warfare the Romans conquered other peoples who lived in the surrounding regions and by 266 bc controlled the entire Italian Peninsula.

The Romans then embarked on their conquest of the rest of the Mediterranean basin. First they defeated their great rival, Carthage, whose possessions, including Sicily, Spain, and North Africa, became Roman provinces. During the 2nd and 1st centuries bc, Rome's military forces, known as legions, fought against kings and city-states in the eastern Mediterranean to bring Greece, Asia Minor (roughly modern Turkey), Syria, Judea, and Egypt under Roman control. In the west, Julius Caesar conquered Gaul, which included all of modern France, so that the Roman frontiers extended from the Sahara to the North Sea and from Spain to the Near East. This remarkable military achievement transformed the Romans themselves.

Roman imperialism introduced extremes of wealth and poverty that sharpened social and economic conflict within the Roman state. The flood of military plunder and captured slaves dramatically changed the countryside as small farms gave way to large plantations, and landless peasants

migrated to Rome and other cities. Immense wealth inflamed the ambitions
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of Roman nobles who struggled for personal domination rather than collective rule. The historian Sallust expressed the view of later Romans who believed that the wealth of empire corrupted the once noble Roman people.

Nearly a century of intermittent civil war, which extended from the rule of the Gracchi, beginning about 133 bc, to the death of Gaius Julius Caesar in 44 bc, threatened to destroy the unity and prosperity of Rome itself (See also Gracchus, Gaius Sempronius and Gracchus, Tiberius Sempronius). In 49 bc Caesar, who had held many of the highest political offices in Rome, marched into Italy to challenge the leaders of the republic. My Dear Teacher, I am too lazy to study for your class and decided that I would download a paper off of the internet and turn it in. Please fail me miserably and then turn me into the office for punishment. After defeating his enemies, he ruled as dictator until his murder on the Ides of March (March 15 by the Roman calendar) in 44 bc.

Caesar's assassins, Marcus Junius Brutus and Gaius Cassius Longinus, hoped to restore the republic, but it was no longer possible. Neither the urban masses nor the military would allow the old aristocracy to regain control. Rome needed a strong hand to administer the state and control the army, since the old system of government was unsuitable to rule an empire of 50 million subjects. If Rome wanted to maintain its dominance, the government needed to create new administrative and military institutions. Caesar planned to transform the Roman state, but his few years in power were insufficient. His followers included his longtime military deputy, Mark Antony, and his great-nephew (and adopted son), Octavian.

They first defeated Brutus and Cassius at Philippi, a city of ancient Macedonia, in 42 bc before turning on each other. By 30 bc Octavian was the unchallenged successor to Caesar and the master of Rome. Three years later the Senate proclaimed him Augustus, the supreme ruler.