

The roman
achievement. what
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The Roman achievement. What are some of the more significant aspects of the Roman Achievement? The greatest empire the earth has ever known is more than just a collection of facts and figures.

It represents both the glorious achievement and at times contemptible behaviour of mankind. Throughout this essay I will be assessing the Roman Achievement. Romans have a significant influence on today's modern western society and around the globe. They are responsible for developing and evolving through a period of prosperity and wealth. This period is known as the Pax Romana. In a matter of just a few centuries, Rome had expanded from a small village in central Italy to the absolute dominant power of the entire peninsula. The Romans conquered many countries and were one of the most advanced races in human history.

They had a formidable zest for power and they became the Powerhouse of Europe. Most importantly perhaps, the Romans possessed a sense of invincibility. The Roman historian Livy wrote: It is natural for Romans to win battles as for water to go downhill. This feeling of invincibility may have stemmed from the Roman belief, that the gods would support them completely as long as they performed the proper rituals. The Romans essentially I feel brought a more civilised order to the western world. Creating Laws, Governments, infrastructure and spreading it throughout their empire. The Roman empire and its civilization lasted for almost One thousand years.

The Romans are known for the culture and customs which were accumulated from conquered countries around them this is known as

Romanization. Romanization describes the processes by which indigenous peoples incorporated into the empire acquired cultural attributes which made them Roman. Romans had no single unitary culture but rather absorbed traits from others not a one way passing of ideas and styles from roman to indigene but rather an exchange which led to the metro-politan mix of styles which characterized the Roman world. 2 For example indigenous characteristics blended within the Roman society to create hybrids like Roman-Celtic religion or Gallo-Roman sculpture. Rome promoted aspects of her culture to integrate the provinces and facilitate government with least effort³. The Romans conquered other towns and cities and tended to extend their knowledge to them and learn from their captives, in turn creating this huge mix of customs, religions, literature and even gods.

Throughout this essay I will be focusing on the achievements of the Romans. In particular I will explore the rise of Christianity, their Government and Laws. Each of these areas have had huge effects on our western society and culture, two thousand years later. These aspects I feel are the more significant aspects of the Roman achievement.

Although one can not forget all of the other aspects in which the romans had achieved such as a forceful and powerfull military which was the backbone of their rise to power. Christianity began as a Jewish sect and changed its relationship with the Jewish community at a time when both groups were affected by later Hellenism. The first followers of Jesus inhabited a political system, the Roman empire.

Pontius Pilate, a Roman governor and judge had Jesus killed for treason because the emperor was to be treated as a god. However it was in Jesus death the religion grew slowly. In the first two centuries the Christians faced some opposition and were forced to keep their religion secretive. Under Emperor Diocletian(AD244-AD311), the persecutions of the Christians reached its peak.

Roman official policy towards Christianity was negative and at some points simply being Christian could have been punishable death. 4 The Romans may have been responsible for Jesus death but ironically the Romans will also have a huge significant part to play in the spreading of the actual religion Christianity. They spread Christianity throughout its vast empire , a standard version of a monotheistic religion that has survived to the present day. Word spread through disciples such as Paul. Christianity spread like wild fire through the highly connected system of roads and intermingled cultures of the western world. This road system which was created by the Romans would essentially paved the when for the spread of Christianity. Some early century emperors had growing concerns in relation to the monotheistic religion and felt it unacceptable to all the gods they paid homage to. They accused the Christians of being atheists and of incest and cannibalism.

The monotheistic exclusiveness of the Christians was believed to alienate the goodwill of the gods, to endanger what the Romans called pax deorum⁵. The peace of the gods was very important to the Romans Such negativity towards the religion may have even caused more interest to this new religion by many of the poorer civilians. Evoking an interest could be the platform which saw more and more conversion. Much later in the 3rd century <https://assignbuster.com/the-roman-achievement-what-are-some-of-the-more-significant-aspects-of-the-roman-achievement/>

Constantines(272AD-337AD) decision to favour the Christians gave a new twist to the social and political developments of the third century⁶. It was through his conversion which paved the way to producing a Christian empire.

The toleration of Christianity by the Roman State made it less necessary to compete with Judaism for the favour of the state and herald a sharp decline in Jewish -Christian relations. With the tolerance of Constantine viewed in the Edict of Milan, the Church was ready to take advantage of the law of state. Religion and politics became a powerful force, however unity was perhaps because of outside treats. Constantine supported the church financially, promoted Christians to high office and returned confiscated property⁷.

Christianity could have been a state within a state but it did not aspire to political power. What Constantine did was to weld the exceptionally stable religious community onto the Roman state and then use it to develop a new conception of imperial office. Christianity, therefore, signalled the abandonment of the religion of culture for what I would like to suggest became a new culture of religion⁸ The appeal to convert to Christianity may perhaps have been, the sense of community, fellowship and people may have been intrigued by the amount of people who were willing to die for this religion during past persecutions by the Romans. Constantines decision to support Christianity was perhaps the single most influential turning point in Roman history, if not the history of the world. Some sources suggest that there are about 2.

1 billion Christians in the world today. That is one third of our population, however it is unclear how many actually practice their religion actively. So

the roman influence of the spread of Christianity has key relevance within todays society.

The modern world also inherited legal thinking from the Roman laws.

Creating an extensive civil service and formalised methods of tax collection.

Law signifies order and is to be regarded as valid and binding by members of the group in which it prevails⁹.

Their idea that law could be based on just and rational principles could apply to all people regardless of nationality was a major contribution. Laws were adjusted to life, to develop through precedence and experience, a heritage for modern times. Romans had indeed a great rational institution . Romans developed many ideas of injustice which we today take for granted. In 451BC, the Plebeians demanded a written code of laws , so that the consuls could no longer interpret Romes customary Law to suit their own interests. Drafted by ten aristocrats they created a basic structure laying down what one could and could not do. They wrote them down on twelve tablets.

These were the first examples of written law. Much later a great Roman Emperor of Constantinople, Justinian, refined many of the Laws of the day and collected them all into one work. This known as the Justinian Code and it was completed in 529AD.

Justinian wrote laws that were fair for everyone because he thought about the needs of all the people. He did such a good job way back in 500AD that new and existing governments still refer to his laws as guides when creating laws for their own countries today! Law was run by members of a financially independent upper class in the interstices of pursuing political careers of just <https://assignbuster.com/the-roman-achievement-what-are-some-of-the-more-significant-aspects-of-the-roman-achievement/>

managing their estates. 10 However it was through Democracy that the citizens got to voice their opinions and have a right to a trial. Actual legislation remained throughout the Principate at least nominally in the hands republican organs and was only indirectly controlled by the princeps. 11 In ideals Romans were responsible for republics, the senate, Roman citizenship, which allowed many freedoms and rights such as the right to sue, vote, and right to a legal hearing. Innocent till proven guilty a famous law imposed in their hearings which is still used in our modern western society. However one can not ignore the booming economy that aided this civilization into wealth, that was the grim and harsh reality of slavery. Slavery existed throughout the history of antiquity side by side with free labour as a constant factor of the changing social and economic order.

12 Rome was essentially a slave society. Slavery was the only possible way of centralizing the means of production on a large scale in a pretechnological society. 13 Perhaps the Roman achievements were off the backs of the enslaved people from battle. However grim and terrible as the process of Roman conquest it brought happiness and prosperity in its train.

14 Besides this dark side of the economy the Romans were constantly renewing and developing and enriching their civilization. Romans were people whose own self discipline, combined with their power to mobilize the labour of others, imposed a rational order much of their known world. 15 This brought about great achievements and discoveries that would affect the western world till this present day.

Although the harsh reality of the lives the Romans had consumed of other enslaved people, morally they checked out, from a humanistic view on of life.

Rome was not built in a day but just who did all the building and hard work Throughout this essay I have looked the rise of Christianity throughout the empire despite the fact Christians faced much opposition they overcame the most strongest force known to man at that time, the Romans.

Christianity is practiced throughout the world in todays society. The laws of the Romans are studied and implemented within our western society.

Obviously a few amendments have changed and our own society has evolved to new heights, but the Roman foundations are what makes us what we are today. The heavy influence of the Romans can be felt and seen around most of the world through their architectural advancements, medical provisions, literature, language laws, government and roads. They were a small city and rose to power and kept stability for a very long time. Their achievements are our delights.

Although we can celebrate their achievements we must also remember at what cost did the romans flourish Through the hellish reality of slavery. This human trafficking of enslaved people is what made the Romans so great and wealthy. But this economy would not last forever and neither would the Roman empire. A civilization that grew to great heights, but the fall of Rome saw Europe enter into the Dark ages and maybe it was the fall of the Great empire that brought about the devastation of the Dark ages to its peak. One can only speculate as the Romans did fall for many reasons and none of their achievements could save them from that unfortunate fall from power and wealth.

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