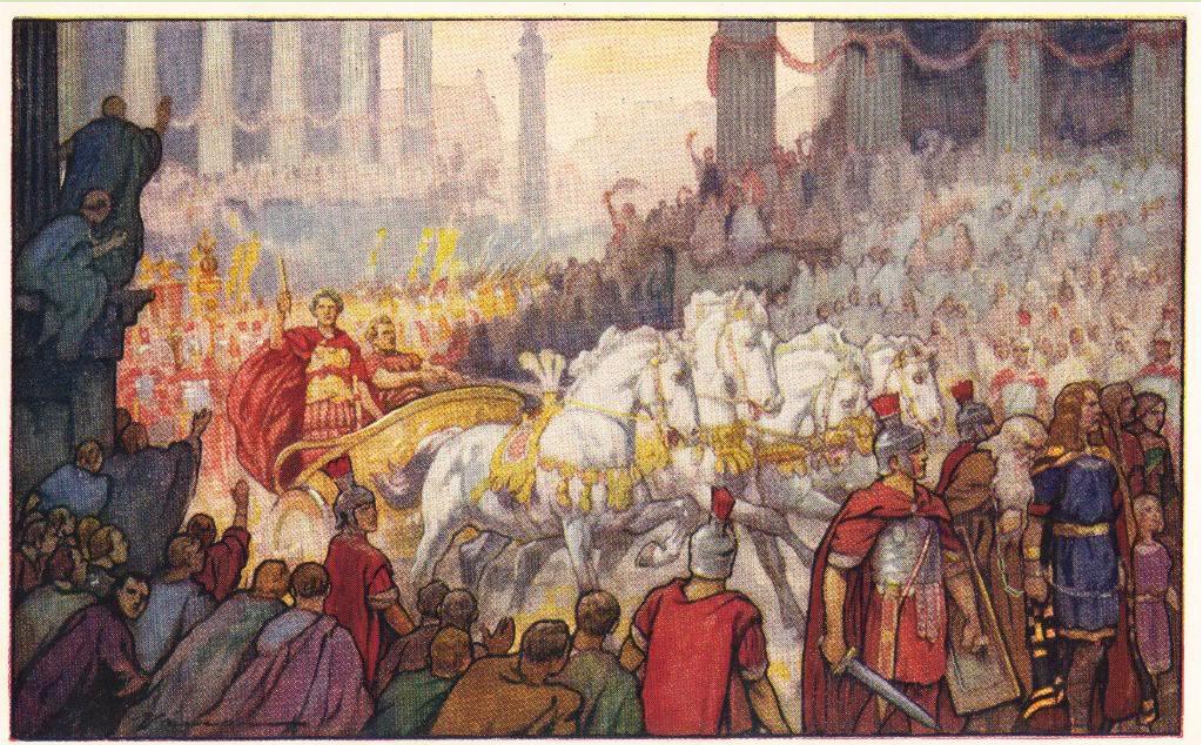
The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire



A Roman Triumph

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EXPANSION OF ROMAN POWER
Roman Dominions 264 B.C., before the First Punic War
Gains from 264 to 201 B.C., end of Second Punic War
Gains from 201 to 146 B.C., end of Third Punic War
Gains from 146 to 88 B.C.
Gains from 88 to 44 B.C., death of Julius Cæsar
States in alliance with Rome, 44 B.C.
ROMAN DOMINIONS
at the Death of Julius Cæsar
44 B.C.
Scale of Miles
0 100 200 300 400 500
Longitude West 0 Longitude 10 East from 20 Greenwich 30 40
ATLANTIC OCEAN
BRITAIN
GERMANY
Rhine R.
Teutoburg Forest
Elbe
Vistula R.
GAUL
Alesia
RAETIA
NORICUM
Danube R.
SCYTHIA
CASPIAN SEA
DACIA
Numantia
SPAIN
Pyrenees
Rhone R.
CISALPINE GAUL
Massilia
Rubicon R.
ILLYRICUM
ITALY
Rome
Tiber R.
BLACK SEA
Danube
THRACE
Byzantium
BITHYNIA and PONTUS
ARMENIA
Philippi
MACEDONIA
GALATIA
CAPPADOCIA
MINOR ASIA
Str. of Gibraltar
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
SARDINIA AND CORSICA
EPIRUS
THESSALY
Pharsalus
Actium
IONIAN SEA
ACHAIA
Athens
Corinth
Smyrna
ASIA
CILICIA
Tarsus
Tigris R.
PARTHIA
Euphrates R.
Utica
SICILY
Syracuse
Carthage
MAURETANIA
NUMIDIA
AFRICA
RHODES
CRETE
CYPRUS
SYRIA
Damascus
Jerusalem
JUDEA
CYRENAICA
Alexandria
ARABIA
EGYPT
Nile R.

What was the Roman Empire?

- There were two periods of Roman government.
  - **Roman Republic**
    - 509 BCE-30 BCE
  - **Roman Empire**
    - 30 BCE-476 CE
- Rome technically had an “empire” under the Roman Republic.
  - But the term “**Roman Empire**” refers to the time period, beginning with Augustus, when Rome was ruled by **emperors**.

Octavian Becomes Augustus

- **Octavian** was sole ruler of Rome after his forces defeated Antony and Cleopatra at the Battle of Actium
- The Senate gave him the name "**Augustus**," meaning "most high"
- 23 BCE – Octavian, now referred to as Augustus, was made **consul for life** by the Senate
  - Also made "**Princeps**," meaning "first citizen"
    - Origin of the word "prince"
  - Also made "**Imperator**," meaning "successful general"
    - Origin of the word "emperor"
  - Also made "**Pontifex Maximus**," or "chief religious leader
    - Origin of the word "pontiff" (used to describe the pope today)
  - Also made a **tribune**
  - He had the power to call the Senate, veto the Senate's laws, and make laws himself

Primus inter pares

- “First among equals”
- Augustus and later emperors tried to maintain the façade that they were elected officials rather than dictators
- Being “first among equals” gave the illusion that an emperor was the most prestigious and important member of the Roman Senate, but that each senator was simultaneously equally important
- In reality, the Roman emperors ruled with little input from anyone else

Rome under Augustus: A Golden Age

Attempted to reform public morals by promoting family life (largely unsuccessful).	**Began the practice of declaring emperors gods, and of picking their own successors. (He called Haley's Comet the spirit of Caesar.)**	**Built and maintained the empire's infrastructure (e.g., roads).**
Encouraged the growth of business.	**Established fire and police departments for Rome.**	**Established a strong money system.**
Extended citizenship to more and more provincials.	**Said he "found Rome a city of bricks and left it a city of marble."**	**Jesus, the founder of Christianity, was born in the Roman province of Judea during the reign of Augustus.**

Pax Romana – Roman Peace

- Rome controlled the entire Mediterranean region and beyond
  - Complete control = almost no warfare
- This peace lasted nearly 200 years
- More and more provincials were granted official Roman citizenship

Roman Emperors after Augustus

- Great variety in the quality of those emperors who succeeded Augustus
- The office of emperor was initially designed to be hereditary
  - But from the start, there was confusion as to which family member would inherit the throne
  - Some emperors proved to be cutthroats, or insane, or both
  - The military came to play an enormous role in selecting who would become emperor

Tiberius (14-37 CE)

- Stepson of Augustus
- Abolished the Assembly
- Capable general who extended the frontier in the north
- Strengthened the empire
- Appeared to dislike ruling, and gradually retired to the island of Capri

Caligula (37 CE-41 CE)

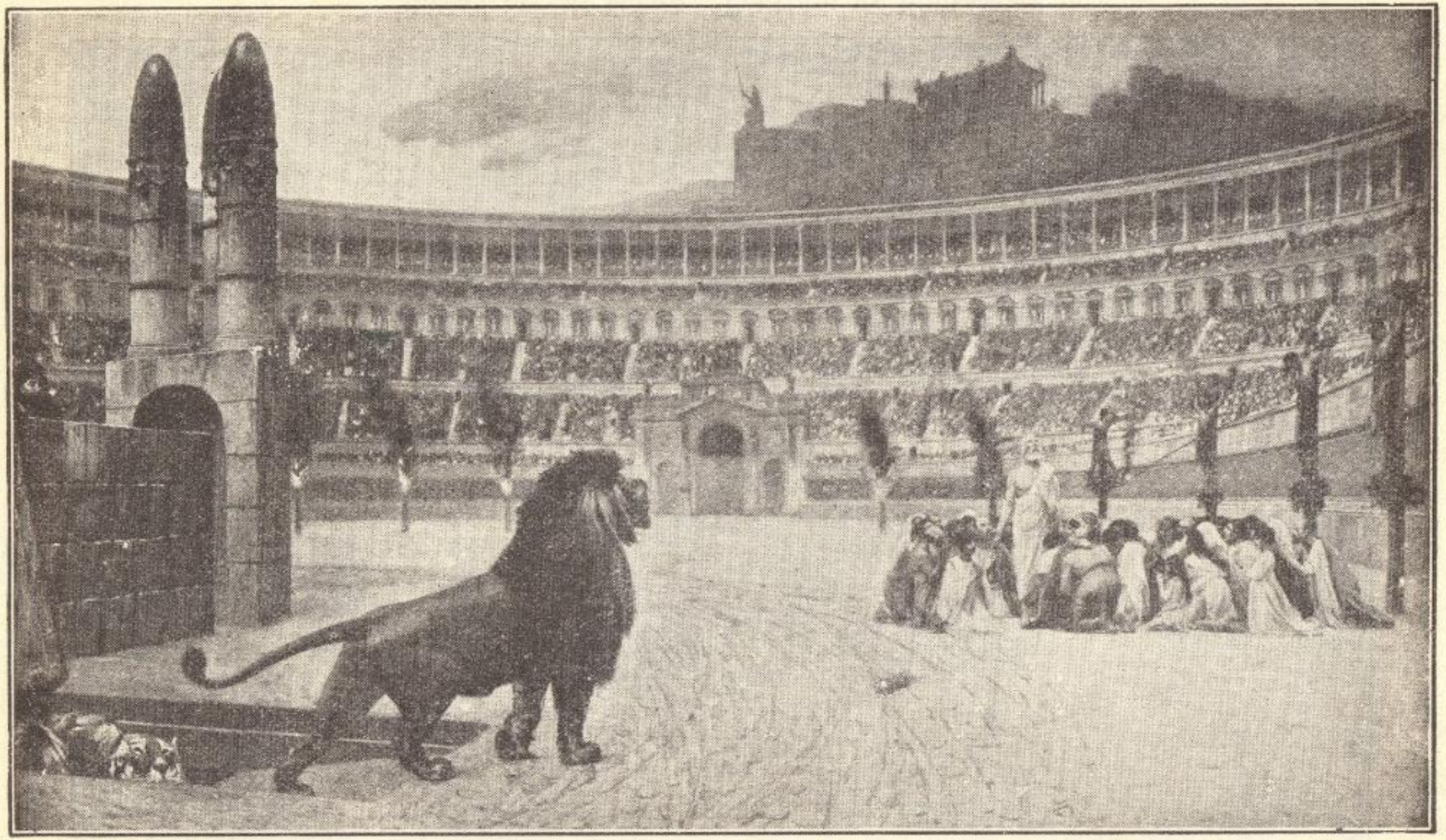
- Son of famed military leader Germanicus, the nephew and adopted son of Tiberius
- Earned his name “Caligula,” meaning “little boots,” by the Roman army as a child (he was dressed like a soldier)
- Two years of good, effective rule, interrupted by a severe illness, and followed by two years of horrible rule
- Members of family and perceived enemies
  - Exiled some, killed some, and forced others to commit suicide
- Assassinated in 41 CE by members of the Praetorian Guard

Claudius (41-54 CE)

- Brought southern Britannia (what later became Great Britain) under Roman control, as well as several kingdoms in the East
- Opened the Senate up to provincials
- Became emperor because he was the last adult male of his family (brother of Germanicus and uncle of Caligula)
- Conducted a census of the empire in 48 CE

Nero (54-68 CE)

- Considered a tyrant
- Came to power after his mother allegedly poisoned his predecessor, Claudius
- Murdered his mother, his stepbrother, and two of his wives
- Also killed his teacher, the famous philosopher Seneca
- Fire in Rome (64 CE)
  - Nero was accused of setting the fire, and of fiddling while the city burned
  - Nero blamed the fire on the new religious group known as “Christians”
- Forced to commit suicide



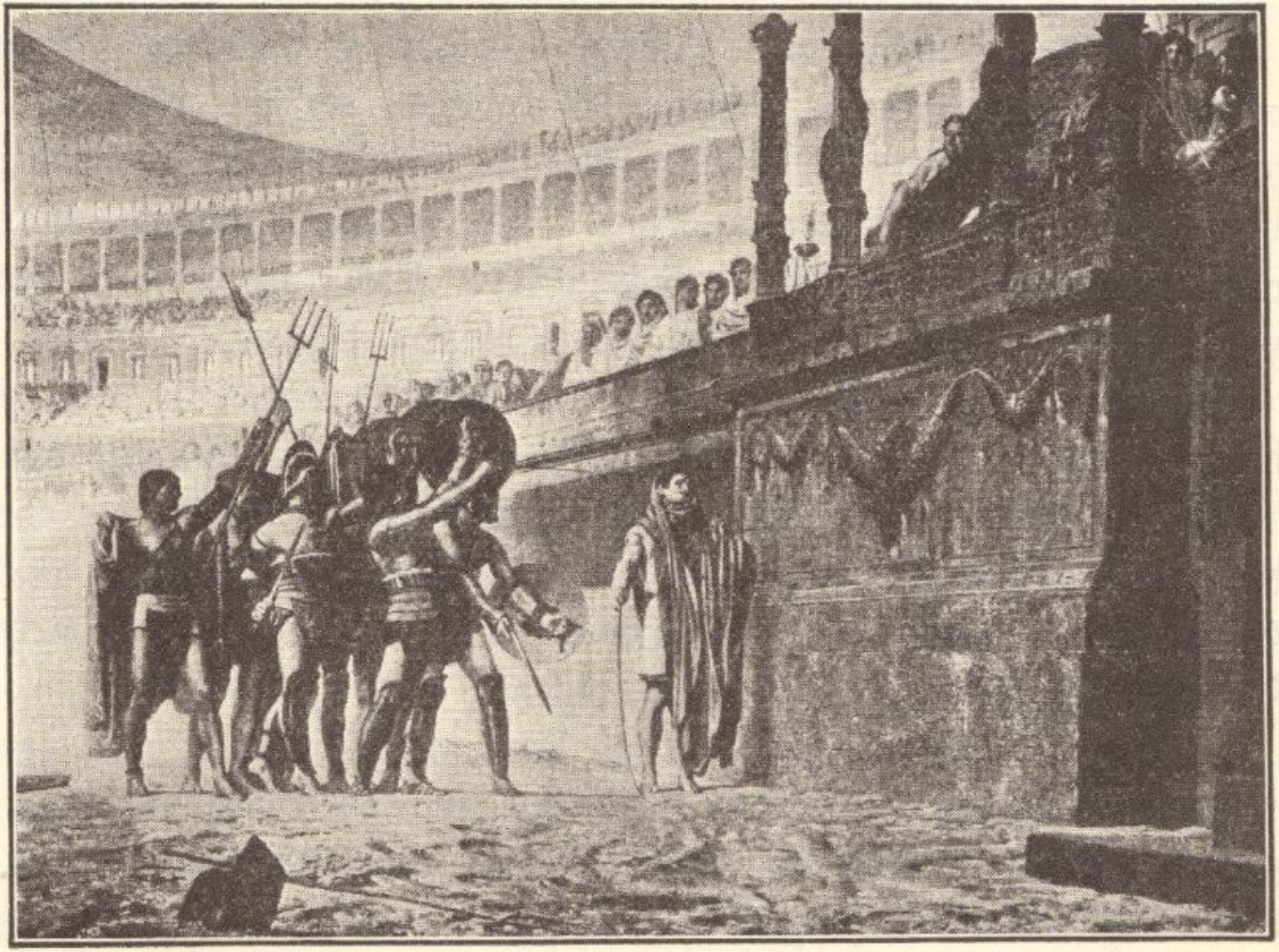
CHRISTIAN MARTYRS IN THE ARENA — PAINTING BY GÉROME

Year of the Four Emperors (69 CE)

- Brief period of civil war after the death of Emperor Nero
- Four emperors ruled in quick succession
  - Galba
  - Otho
  - Vitellius
  - Vespasian
- Illustrated the problems of imperial succession

Vespasian (69-79 CE)

- Built the Colosseum in Rome
  - Place where gladiatorial combats were held
- First Jewish Revolt (66-70 CE)
  - Destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, in the Roman province of Judea
  - Carried out by Vespasian's son, Titus
  - This was the Second Temple (516 BCE-70 CE)
    - First Temple (built by King Solomon ca. 960 BCE) had been destroyed in 586 BCE when the Babylonians conquered the Jews and embarked on what became known as the Babylonian Captivity
- Succeeded by son Titus, then son Domitian



GLADIATORS BEFORE THE EMPEROR

In the group of combatants in the arena are several holding trident and net. They have overcome their opponents in full armor by entangling them in the net, then attacking them with the trident.

Trajan (98-117 CE)

- Born into a non-patrician family in what is now Spain
- Massive public works program in Rome
  - Trajan's Column, Trajan's Forum, Trajan's Market
- Oversaw the expansion of the empire to its greatest extent
- Considered to have been a great emperor


CALEDONIA
BRITAIN
London
NORTH SEA
BALTIC SEA
GERMANY
Lugdunensis
Aquitania
GAUL
Narbonensis
Tarraconensis
SPAIN
Baetica
Tarraco
Narbo
Rome
ITALY
ILLYRICUM
(DALMATIA)
ADRIATIC SEA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
MAURETANIA
Tingis
Gades
Str. of Gibraltar
BALEARIC IS.
SARDINIA & CORSICA
Syracuse
Carthage
Pompeii
NUMIDIA
SAHARA
ROMAN DOMINIONS
IN THE
TIME OF TRAJAN
98-117 A.D.
SCALE OF MILES
0 100 200 300 400 500
Longitude West 0
Longitude 10 East from 20


Volga R.
Dniepr R.
Volga R.
CASPIAN SEA
Superior DACIA
Inferior DACIA
MOESIA Superior
MOESIA Inferior
THRACE
Adrianople
Byzantium
BLACK SEA
Caucasus Mts.
BITHYNIA AND PONTUS
ARMENIA
GALATIA
CAPPADOCIA
ASIA MINOR
CILICIA
ASSYRIA
MESOPOTAMIA
PARTHIA
(PERSIA)
ACHAIA
Athens
Ephesus
CYPRUS
Antioch
Euphrates R.
Palmyra
Damascus
SYRIA
PHOENICIA
JUDEA
Jerusalem
Alexandria
ARABIA
EGYPT
Nile R.
RED SEA
ARABIA
L.L. POATES CO., N.Y.
Greenwich

Hadrian (117-138 CE)

- Strengthened the empire's defenses
  - Hadrian's Wall separated Roman territory in Britannia from the Picts (in what is roughly now Scotland)
- Under Hadrian, the Romans put down the Second Jewish Revolt (Bar Kokhba Revolt), 132-136 CE
  - Also known as the Second Jewish-Roman War
  - Led by Simon Bar Kokhba, a man many believed to be the messiah
  - Jews forced to leave Jerusalem after defeat
    - Many historians date this as the official start of the Jewish Diaspora

Review Questions

1. **What are the dates for the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire?**
2. **Explain the meaning of the Latin phrase *primus inter pares*.**
3. **Describe the accomplishments of Augustus.**
4. **What was the *Pax Romana*?**
5. **How do Caligula and Nero represent the problems of hereditary succession?**
6. **Describe the First and Second Jewish Revolts, including their causes and effects.**

Marcus Aurelius (161-180 CE)

- Stoic philosopher
  - Wrote book *Meditations*
- Succeeded by his son, Commodus (180-192 CE)
  - The characters in the Russell Crowe film "Gladiator" are very loosely based on Marcus Aurelius and Commodus
- The end of the reign of Marcus Aurelius was the end of the Pax Romana (27 BCE-180 CE)

Diocletian (284-305 CE)

- Rome had a century of chaos following the death of Marcus Aurelius
  - The “Crisis of the Third Century”
  - Diocletian was the first emperor in 100 years to properly restore order and end the violence
- Absolute ruler who ended all personal liberties
- Administration
  - Increased the bureaucracy for more effective administration
  - Divided the empire into two administrative realms (east and west) in 285 CE
    - This was the first step in the creation of what would become two separate empires
      - **Roman (Western) Empire**
      - **Byzantine (Eastern) Empire**

Constantine (312-337 CE)

- Moved the capital from Rome to Byzantium
  - Renamed the city Constantinople
    - Today the city is Istanbul (in modern Turkey)
- Constantine and Christianity
  - His mother, Helena, had converted to Christianity
  - Edict of Milan (313 CE)
    - Christianity legalized (religious toleration)
  - Converted to Christianity on his deathbed

Justinian (527-565 CE)

- Powerful emperor of the Eastern (Byzantine) empire headquartered at Constantinople
  - Married **Theodora**, an intelligent courtesan
- Managed to reunite the Eastern and Western empires for a time, but this did not last
- Rewrote Roman law (Corpus Juris Civilis, or the **Justinian Code**)
  - Still the basis for civil law in several countries
- **Plague of Justinian** (541-542 CE)
  - Bubonic plague severely hurt the Byzantine empire
  - Emperor Justinian became sick, but recovered
  - Recovery for the Byzantine empire took hundreds of years

The Two Empires

- Emperor Diocletian had believed that dividing the empire for administrative purposes would strengthen the empire
  - He was wrong
  - Once Constantine set up Constantinople as a capital city, the east/west split deepened
- **Western (Roman) Empire**
  - Ended officially in 476 CE when the last emperor, Romulus Augustus, was deposed by a barbarian, Odoacer
- **Eastern (Byzantine) Empire**
  - Lasted until 1453 when the empire was conquered by the Ottoman Turks

Why did Rome fall?

Economic Reasons

- Gap between rich and poor
- Impoverished workers became tied to the land as *coloni* (sold as the land was sold)
- As fewer members of the lower classes could afford to buy goods (no purchasing power), manufacturing and trade declined
- Large estates became self-sufficient, further hurting manufacturing and trade

Military Reasons

- Roman Republic
  - Armies were servants of Rome
- Roman Empire
  - Armies made and unmade emperors
- Reliance on barbarian troops
  - Not ultimately loyal to Rome
  - Could not be counted on to fight their fellow barbarians
  - Interested in obtaining booty, not defending Rome or furthering Rome's interests

Why did Rome fall?

Political Reasons

- Decline in patriotism
  - Democracy did not exist in reality
  - Citizens lost their tie (voting rights) to the state
  - Patriotism became based on loyalty to an emperor, not to Rome
    - Most emperors did not inspire respect or loyalty
- East/West split
  - Two empires created problems regarding loyalty
- No orderly succession
  - Murders, forced suicides, and civil wars frequently accompanied the transition from one emperor to the next

Social Reasons

- Population decline
  - Hunger
  - Plagues
  - War
- Decline in intellectual culture
  - People did not dedicate themselves to public service and intellectual pursuits
  - People instead spent their leisure time watching chariot races and gladiatorial contests
- Religious divisions
  - Eastern and Egyptian cults took away the popularity and status of traditional Roman religion
  - New faiths like Christianity directly questioned and challenged concepts such as imperial divinity

Why is ancient Rome so important to world history?

- Administration of a vast empire
- Christianity
- Architecture
- Engineering
- Historians
- Jewish Diaspora
- Literature
- Roman law
- Romance languages
- Transmission of Greek (Hellenistic) culture

The Romans did not necessarily create and invent everything that they are commonly given credit for. What the Romans were best at was taking something (like the Etruscan arch), adapting it, and putting it to great use (such as in the construction of aqueducts).

Administration of a Vast Empire

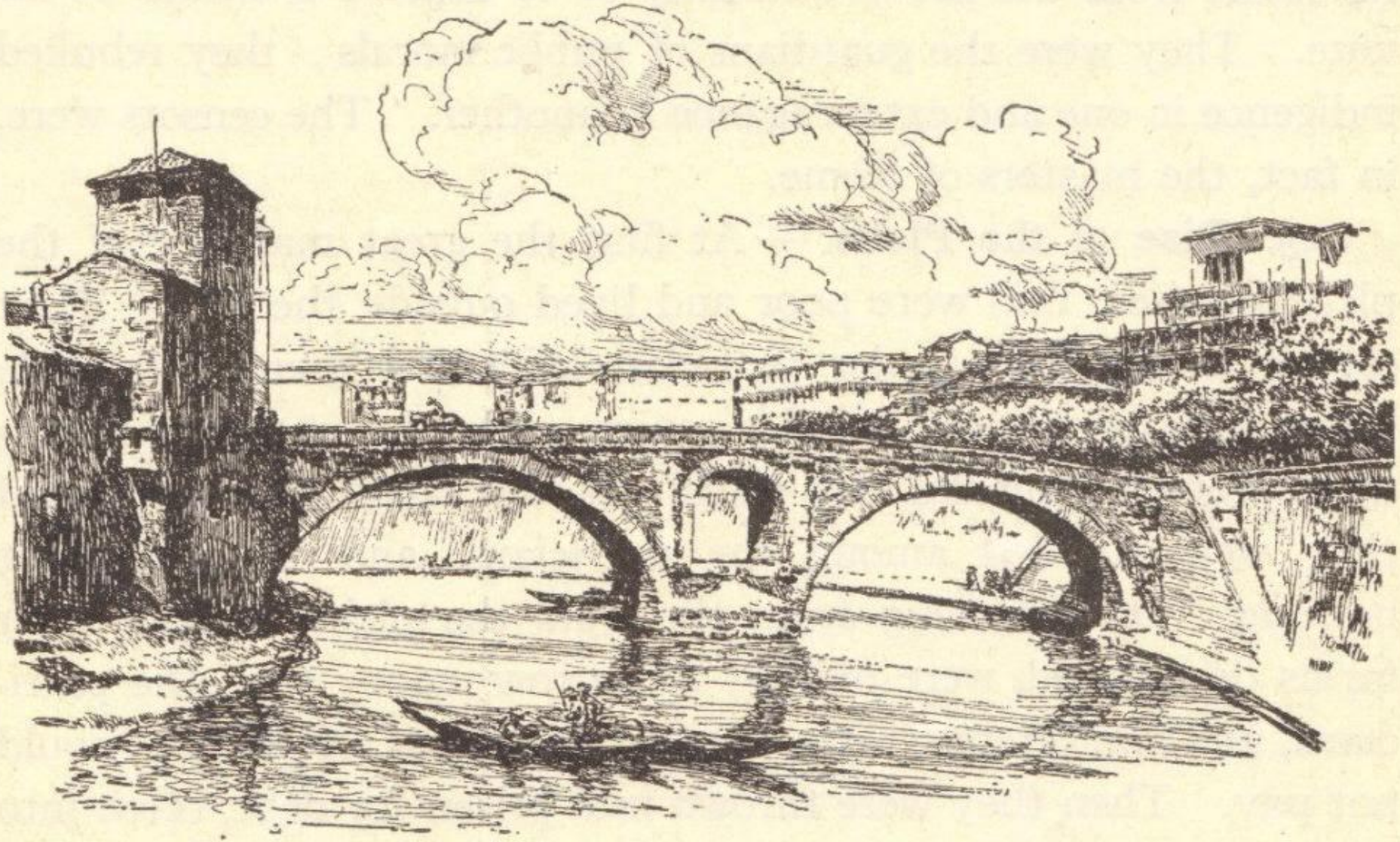
- Empire included over 100,000,000 people of diverse backgrounds, cultures, and places
  - Rome learned to adapt its policies on a local level to fit the people of a given area
  - Citizenship gradually extended to all free men of the empire
- Solid, strong bureaucracy that kept things running smoothly the majority of the time
  - Empire's administration run by countless proconsuls, procurators, governors, and minor officials
  - Four prefectures, further divided into dioceses, then into provinces
- Strong infrastructure
  - Facilitated movement by officials, soldiers, traders, travelers, etc.

Christianity

- Christianity started in the Roman province of Judea
- Pax Romana and Roman infrastructure
  - Early Christians, as citizens of the Roman Empire, could travel freely throughout the empire
  - There was a significant number of Christians in Rome by 64 CE, the year Nero blamed them for the fire (ca. 30 years after Jesus died)
  - According to tradition, Paul of Tarsus (St. Paul) used his Roman citizenship to have his criminal trial relocated to Rome from Caesarea (in Judea-Palestine) in the 60s CE
- Christianity finally gained acceptance with the Edict of Milan (313 CE) and Constantine's conversion
  - Future Roman emperors were Christians
  - As the Western Roman Empire fell apart, the city became the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church
    - The Pope used the imperial title "Pontiff"
    - The Church ended up ruling the city of Rome and surrounding areas
    - Church used Roman administrative districts, such as dioceses, in its administration

Architecture & Engineering

- A large part of Rome's success was due to the importance Rome placed on building and maintaining the empire's infrastructure
  - Aqueducts, bridges, dams, harbors, roads
- Public buildings
  - Amphitheaters (e.g., Colosseum), basilicas (oblong halls), government offices, palaces, public baths, theaters, etc.
- Architecture
  - Basic style was copied from the Greeks
  - Arch copied from the Etruscans
  - Dome
  - Vault



FABRICIAN BRIDGE OVER THE TIBER

The first bridge across the Tiber at Rome, built of wood, was the one defended by Horatius. Many bridges were built later, but the Fabrician, which unites the city with an island in the Tiber, is the oldest stone bridge in the world still in use.

Historians and Historical Writings

- **Julius Caesar** (100-44 BCE)
  - Commentaries *on the Gallic Wars*
- **Cicero** (106-43 BCE)
  - Letters and orations
  - Called the “Father of Latin prose”
- **Livy** (59 BCE-17 CE)
  - *Annals*, history of Rome from beginnings to Augustus
- **Plutarch** (46-120 CE)
  - *Parallel Lives*, comparison of Greek and Roman heroes
  - *Moralia*, a collection of essays, etc., on customs and mores
- **Tacitus** (ca. 56-ca. 117 CE)
  - *Germania*, about the Germanic tribes of Europe
  - *Annals* and *Histories*, about the emperors of his time

Literature

- Playwrights
  - Plautus and Terence
  - Mostly a copy of the Greek style
    - But Greek plays were designed to instruct
    - Roman plays were designed merely to entertain
- Poets
  - Virgil (70-19 BCE)
    - *Aeneid*, epic poem based on Homer's *Iliad*
  - Horace (58-8 BCE)
    - *Odes*
    - Lyric poetry praising an idyllic, simple time in early Roman history

Jewish Diaspora

- Judea-Palestina (roughly modern Palestine or Israel) was a Roman province
- The Romans put down a series of uprisings
- The future Emperor Titus destroyed the Second Temple of Jerusalem and carried its spoils to Rome (70 CE)
- After the Bar Kokhba Revolt (132-136 BCE), the Jews were forced to migrate from the area around Jerusalem
  - Jews were never again a large presence in Israel-Palestine until the 20th century

Roman Law

- Started with the Twelve Tables (450 BCE)
- Developed over a thousand years
  - Included decisions of judges, ideas of the Republic and Empire, and rulings of emperors
  - Public law
    - Relationship of citizen to state
  - Private (civil) law
    - Relationships between people
  - Peoples law (*jus gentium*)
    - Rights of foreigners
- Justinian Code (6th century CE)
  - Encapsulated the previous 1000+ years of Roman law
  - Still used as the basis of civil law in many parts of Europe

Romance Languages

- “Romance” meaning “Roman”
- Romance languages developed from Latin
  - French
  - Italian
  - Portuguese
  - Romanian
  - Spanish
- English
  - Old English was a Germanic language
  - William the Conqueror, of Normandy (in France), brought French (a Romance language) to England in 1066
  - Middle English (the forerunner of the English spoken today) is a mixture of these old Germanic and French languages
  - About half of modern English can be traced to Latin
- Law, medicine, and science
  - Scientists have traditionally used Latin as a “universal language”
  - Our scientific names, and most legal and medical terminology, is Latin
- Religion
  - The Catholic Church preserved the Latin language
  - Catholic masses were said in Latin until the 1960s

Roman Science

- The Romans were not great scientists like the Greeks had been
  - Little original thought
- Pliny the Elder (23-79 CE)
  - *Natural History*, a collection of all known botanical, geographical, medical, physiological, and zoological information available
  - But Pliny never verified his information
- Galen (131-201 CE)
  - Summarized all Greek medical knowledge
  - His work was almost the entire basis for anatomy and physiology studies for centuries to come
- In science, as in all else, the Romans were practical
  - Public health and sanitation were important
  - Aqueducts brought fresh water and sewers took away dirty water
  - Hospitals served soldiers (triage), etc.

Transmission of Greek (Hellenistic) Culture

- Preserved and transmitted Greek culture to the West
- Greek texts, etc., were popular in Rome
- When Rome fell, the Catholic Church (monks) continued to preserve and transmit Greek texts and ideas

Review Questions

1. Who split the empire into two halves, and why?
2. Explain the relationship between Emperor Constantine and Christianity.
3. Describe the accomplishments of Emperor Justinian.
4. When did the Western (Roman) and Eastern (Byzantine) empires officially end, and why?
5. Explain the economic, military, political, and social reasons for the fall of the Western Roman Empire.
6. Name and describe at least three contributions of Roman civilization to world history.