Mediterranean Society: The Roman Phase

Overview
This chapter traces the growth and development of Rome from its humble beginnings on the banks of the Tiber River through its republican phase and its transformation into a sprawling, cosmopolitan empire encompassing much of Europe and northern Africa. A tight administrative structure and organized trade network promoted the movement of people, goods, and ideas throughout the empire. The Romans had a significant impact on later Mediterranean, European, and southwest Asian cultures. These influences include, but are not limited to…

- The concept of a republican form of government governed by a constitution and a fixed body of law that guaranteed the rights of citizens.
- Elaborate transportation and communications networks with sophisticated roads, sea lanes linking port cities, and an imperial postal system.
- Economically specialized regions, either in the development of cash crops for export or in localized industries.
- New cities built throughout the empire with unprecedented levels of sanitation, comfort, and entertainment opportunities.
- Widespread dissemination of philosophical beliefs and values, like Stoicism, and religions of salvation, like Christianity.

Geography

- Geographically, Rome was relatively well-situated. The ______________________ to the north provided protection from an invasion by land (although, ultimately, not enough). The sea surrounding the Italian peninsula limited the possibility of a ______________________ attack unless a large armada floated across the sea.

- Yet, although somewhat isolated, Rome was also at a ______________________. It had easy access to northern Africa, Palestine, Greece, and the ______________________ Peninsula (modern-day Spain and Portugal), which meant easy access to the rest of the world.

From Kingdom to Republic

- Though Rome began as a small, agricultural ______________________, it soon developed into a monarchy, then a republic, and empire, and eventually, the ______________________ Mediterranean power.

The Etruscans and Rome

- According to ancient legend: _____________ and _____________, twins rescued by a she-wolf; founded Rome in 753 B.C.E.
  - Stories relate that they are the descendants of Aeneas, the surviving Trojan prince
  - The tales say they competed for the right to found the city; Romulus wins and builds his city on seven hills overlooking the Tiber River

- Modern thought: _____________ migrants crossed the Alps (c. 2000 BCE) because they were attracted by the warm weather, pasturelands, and agricultural valleys.
  - These invaders _____________ and _____________ with the indigenous neolithic farmers on the Italian peninsula
- The ____________ dominated Italy from the eighth to fifth centuries B.C.E. (probably migrated to Italy from Anatolia)
- Settled first in Tuscany and built thriving ____________ throughout the territory they controlled
- They produced fine bronze, iron, gold, and silver products to trade throughout the western Mediterranean.
- The kingdom of Rome was on the ____________ River – Etruscan rule brought paved streets, public buildings, defensive walls, and large temples; trade routes all ____________ on Rome

▶ The Roman republic and its constitution

- Establishment of the republic
  - Rome’s ____________ overthrew the last Etruscan king in 509 B.C.E. and replaced him with an aristocratic republic
  - Avoided destructive ____________ struggles by establishing a republican form of government
  - Wealthy aristocrats: ____________
  - Common Roman Citizens: ____________
- Built the Roman ____________ in the center of the city – political and civic center for government business
- Government Structure:
  - Two executives known as ____________ (elected by the assembly)
  - A Senate (dominated by the aristocrats) advised the consuls and ratified major decisions
  - Two assemblies – one for patricians and one for plebians
  - Office of ____________ – made up of ten men whose job it was to speak for the plebians
  - Office of ____________ – established to make executive decisions in times of crisis (limited to only _____ months in office)
- Provided a stable government for almost 500 years

[Diagram of Roman republic structure]
The expansion of the republic

- threats from the Etruscans to the north and the Gauls from the other side of the Alps
- Rome its position in Italy, fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E. – overtook the Etruscans and gained access to their iron industry
- Were able to seize the rest of the Italian peninsula because of a presence in the conquered colonies and a policy towards those they conquered (exempt from taxes and allowed to govern themselves)
  - Allowed them to trade freely throughout the republic
  - Could govern their own affairs as long as they remained militarily loyal to Rome
  - Could intermarry with Romans
  - Could sometimes gain Roman citizenship
- Conquered peoples provided political, military and diplomatic support for Rome
- Conflict soon arose with (dominant political power in north Africa) and Hellenistic realms

The Punic Wars

- three devastating conflicts with Carthage resulted in Roman victory (burned the city, enslaved 50,000 survivors, gained control of rich grain, oil, wine, silver and gold regions)
  - First Punic War (263-241 B.C.E.) - fought to gain control of the island of (Rome won)
  - Second Punic War (218 B.C.E.) - Carthaginian general, (considered one of the greatest military geniuses of all time), attacked from the north in a surprise move; was on the verge of destroying Rome when a Roman army landed in Carthage and he was forced to return home to defend his city
  - Third Punic War (149 B.C.E.) - Rome invaded and burned the city to the ground
- In addition to Carthage, Rome also defeated the in Greece, the to the north and the to the west. Rome became preeminent power in eastern and western Mediterranean by the second century B.C.E.
From Republic to Empire

- Imperial expansion and domestic problems
  - Imperial expansion brought wealth and power but also _______ tensions (unequal distribution of wealth and strained governmental capacity)
  - Lands conquered by Rome often fell into the hands of wealthy families who established ______, enormous plantations which used the large land size and slave labor to produce products at a much cheaper cost than could the traditional, smaller Roman landowners.
  - _______ families used this economic edge to push smaller landowners out of business and gobble up their lands as well.
  - This displaced many small farmers, who moved to the cities, causing _______ among the plebeians and not enough jobs to support them.
  - The Roman _______ was devalued causing a high rate of _______. This meant that the plebeians did not have enough money to buy the things they could previously afford.
  - Political leaders began _______ amongst themselves.

- During the next two hundred years, the republican constitution was _______ and a centralized imperial form of government was imposed

- The _______ brothers supported land redistribution; both were _______.

- For the next 100 years, dissatisfied Roman citizens sought leadership from politicians and generals who promised _______ and _______.

- Policies often reflected the interests of the ruling _______ and their class rather than concerns for the empire as a whole

- With tension rising, politicians and generals jockeyed for _______ and _______.

- Years of terror and civil war resulted as poor Romans joined the personal armies of ambitious generals.

- The Foundation of Empire

  - Julius Caesar: very _______ social reformer and conqueror (brought _______ under Roman control)

    - Seized Rome in 49 B.C.E.
    - Claimed the title "___________," 46 B.C.E.
    - Social reforms and centralized control
    - Large-scale _______ projects and entertainment to employ the urban poor and keep them happy; Roman citizenship to imperial provinces
    - Confiscated land from his opponents and redistributed it among his army’s veterans
    - Ruling elite was _______ by him so they organized his assassination in 44 B.C.E.
      (stabbed him to death)
    - His death only brought more _______ for 13 years
• ______________ brought civil conflict to an end (nephew and protégé of Julius Caesar)
  • Defeated his rival __________________ (and Cleopatra) and used the victory to consolidate his rule
  • Senate bestowed title "__________________", 27 B.C.E. (title suggested divine or semidivine status)
  • Monarchy ______________ as a republic – preserved republican offices and included members of the elite in his government while still giving most power to himself (the republic was essential over and Rome was now an empire led by a single emperor)
  • Created a new _________ army under his control
  • Ruled for 45 years unopposed and allowed the institutions of empire to take root

➤ Continuing Expansion and Integration of the Empire
• Roman expansion into Mediterranean basin, western Europe, down Nile to Kush
• _________ (Roman Peace), for two and a half centuries, which facilitated trade and communication throughout the empire
• Well-engineered Roman ______________: postal system
• Roman law–tradition: __________________ (450 B.C.E.) – basic law code for citizens
  • Defendants were ______________ until proven guilty
  • Defendants had a right to ______________ their accusers before a judge (trials)