

1 The Romans Create a Republic

TERMS & NAMES

- republic
- patrician
- plebeian
- tribune
- consul
- senate
- dictator
- legion
- Hannibal
- Scipio

MAIN IDEA

The early Romans established a republic, which grew powerful and spread its influence.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Some of the most fundamental values and institutions of Western civilization began in the Roman Republic.

SETTING THE STAGE While the great civilization of Greece was in decline, a new civilization to the west was developing and increasing its power. The city of Rome grew from a small village to a mighty empire. It adopted and preserved much of Greek art, philosophy, religion, and drama. And it created a lasting legacy of its own.

The Beginnings of Rome

According to Roman legend, the city was founded in 753 B.C. by Romulus and Remus, twin sons of the god Mars and a Latin princess. The twins were abandoned on the Tiber River as infants and raised by a she-wolf. They decided to build a city near the spot. In reality, Rome developed because of its strategic location and its fertile soil. Rome was built on seven rolling hills at a curve on the Tiber River, near the center of the Italian peninsula. It was midway between the Alps and Italy's southern tip. Rome also was near the midpoint of the Mediterranean Sea. The historian Livy wrote about the city's site:

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

Not without reason did gods and men choose this spot for the site of our city—the [salubrious] hills, the river to bring us produce from the inland regions and sea-borne commerce from abroad, the sea itself, near enough for convenience yet not so near as to bring danger from foreign fleets, our situation in the very heart of Italy—all these advantages make it of all places in the world the best for a city destined to grow great.

LIVY, *The Early History of Rome*

THINK THROUGH HISTORY

A. Making Inferences Why was the geographical location of Rome an advantage?

The earliest settlers on the Italian peninsula arrived in prehistoric times. From about 1000 to 500 B.C., three groups inhabited the region and eventually battled for control. They were the Latins, the Greeks, and the Etruscans. The Latins were farmers and shepherds who wandered into Italy across the Alps around 1000 B.C. They settled on either side of the Tiber River in a region they called Latium. They built the original settlement at Rome, a cluster of wooden huts atop one of its seven hills, Palatine Hill. These settlers were the first Romans. (See the map on pages 138–139.)

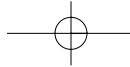
Between 750 and 600 B.C., Greek settlers established about 50 colonies on the coasts of southern Italy and Sicily. The cities became prosperous and commercially active. They brought all of Italy, including Rome, into closer contact with Greek civilization. The Greeks also taught the Romans how to grow grapes and olives.

The Etruscans were native to northern Italy. They were skilled metalworkers and engineers. The Etruscans strongly influenced the development of Roman civilization. They had a system of writing, and the Romans adopted their alphabet. They also influenced Rome's architecture, especially the use of the arch.

Romans borrowed religious ideas from both the Greeks and the Etruscans. The Romans adopted Etruscan rituals that they believed helped them to win the favor of the gods. Roman gods even took on the personalities and legends of the Greek gods. Romans, however, gave their gods different names. Thus Zeus, the king of the Greek gods, became Jupiter in Rome, and Hera, the queen of the gods, became Juno.

Background

The name *Rome* is Etruscan in origin.



The Early Republic

Around 600 B.C., an Etruscan became king. However, Rome was not controlled by the Etruscan cities. Under its Etruscan kings, Rome grew from a collection of hilltop villages to a city that covered nearly 500 square miles. Much of Rome was rich agricultural land. Various kings ordered the construction of Rome's first temples and public buildings. By royal order, the swampy valley below the Palatine Hill was drained, making a public meeting place. Later it became the Forum, the heart of Roman political life.

The last king of Rome was Tarquin the Proud. A harsh tyrant, he was driven from power in 509 B.C. Roman aristocrats, wealthy landowners who resented the Etruscan kings, overthrew him. The Romans declared they would never again be ruled by a king. They swore to put to death anyone who plotted to make himself king.

Having deposed the monarch, the Romans established a new government. They called it a republic, from the Latin phrase *res publica*, which means "public affairs." A **republic** is a form of government in which power rests with citizens who have the right to vote to select their leaders. In Rome, citizenship with voting rights was granted only to free-born male citizens.

Patricians and Plebeians In the early republic, different groups of Romans struggled for power. One group was the **patricians**, the aristocratic landowners who held most of the power. The other important group was the **plebeians**, the common farmers, artisans, and merchants who made up the majority of the population.

The patricians inherited their power and social status. They claimed that their ancestry gave them the authority to make laws for Rome and its people. The plebeians were citizens of Rome with the right to vote. They, however, were barred by law from holding most important government positions. In time, the Senate allowed them to form their own assembly and elect representatives called **tribunes**. Tribunes protected the rights of the plebeians from unfair acts of patrician officials. Eventually, plebeian pressure on the patricians gained them additional political power.

Twelve Tables An important victory for the plebeians was to force the creation of a written law code. With laws unwritten, patrician officials often interpreted the law to suit themselves. In 451 B.C., a group of ten officials began writing down Rome's laws. The laws were carved on twelve tablets, or tables, and hung in the Forum. They became the basis for later Roman law. The Twelve Tables established the idea that all free citizens, patricians and plebeians, had a right to the protection of the law.

Government Under the Republic In the first century B.C., Roman writers boasted that Rome had achieved a balanced government. What they meant was that their government had taken the best features of a monarchy (government by a king), an aristocracy (government by nobles), and a democracy (government by the people). In place of a king, Rome had two officials called **consuls**. Like kings, they commanded the army and directed the government. However, their power was limited. First, a consul's

Background

Rome was never a democracy, a government by and for all the people. In Rome only upper-class or wealthy men had power. Women did not vote.

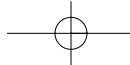
THINK THROUGH HISTORY

B. Making

Inferences Why did patricians want to prevent plebeians from holding important positions?

Once the center of political power and intrigue, the Forum now lies in ruin in the center of modern Rome.





Comparing Republican Governments

	Rome	United States of America
Executive	Two consuls, elected by the assembly for one year—chief executives of the government and commanders-in-chief of the army.	A president, elected by the people for four years—chief executive of the government and commander-in-chief of the army.
Legislative	Senate of 300 members, chosen from aristocracy for life—controls foreign and financial policies, advises consuls. Centuriate Assembly, all citizen-soldiers are members for life—selects consuls, makes laws. Tribal Assembly, citizens grouped according to where they live are members for life—elects tribunes and makes laws.	Senate of 100 members, elected by the people for six-year terms—makes laws, advises president on foreign policy. House of Representatives of 435 members, elected by the people for two years—makes laws, originates revenue bills.
Judicial	Praetors, eight judges chosen for one year by Centuriate Assembly—two oversee civil and criminal courts (the others govern provinces).	Supreme Court, nine justices appointed for life by president—highest court, hears civil and criminal appeals cases.
Legal Code	Twelve Tables—a list of rules that were the basis of Roman legal system	U.S. Constitution—basic law of the United States
Citizenship	All adult male landowners	All native-born or naturalized persons

SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Charts

1. What similarities do you see in the governments of the Roman Republic and the United States?
2. Which government seems more democratic? Why?

Vocabulary

veto: comes from the Latin for "I forbid."

term was only one year long. The same person could not be elected consul again for ten years. Second, one consul could always overrule, or veto, the other's decisions.

The **senate** was the aristocratic branch of Rome's government. It had both legislative and administrative functions in the republic. By tradition, there were 300 members, chosen from the upper class of Roman society. Later, plebeians were allowed in the senate. Because membership was for life, the senate provided continuity. It also exercised enormous influence over both foreign and domestic policy.

The assemblies were the more democratic side of the government. All citizen-soldiers were members of the Centuriate Assembly. In the early days of the republic, this patrician-controlled assembly appointed the consuls and made laws. It had less power than the senate. An assembly organized by the plebeians, the Tribal Assembly, elected the tribunes and made laws for the common people. Later, it won the right to make laws for the republic.

In times of crisis, the republic could appoint a **dictator**—a leader who had absolute power to make laws and command the army. A dictator's power lasted for only six months. Dictators were chosen by the consuls and then elected by the senate.

The Roman Army All citizens who owned land were required to serve in the army. To secure certain public offices, ten years of military service were required. Roman soldiers were organized into large military units called legions. The Roman **legion** was made up of some 5,000 heavily armed foot soldiers (infantry). A

Vocabulary

legion: also means a multitude.

SPOTLIGHT ON

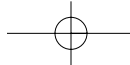
Roman Legions

The legions were the fighting force that spread Rome's power around the Mediterranean. Each legion had a nickname and a flag, called its eagle. Losing the eagle in battle was a disgrace.

Legions were self-sufficient and could live off the land. They did their own construction and even built roads and bridges.

Each soldier had armor, a helmet, a shield, a sword, and a dagger. He also carried tools for digging and stakes that became part of a wall around the camp. In addition, each soldier brought a cooking pot, clothing, and any other items he needed.





group of soldiers on horseback (cavalry) supported each legion. Legions were divided into smaller groups of 80 men, each of which was called a century. In battle, the strength of the legion was its flexibility. Each century in a legion could act independently. The military organization and fighting skill of the Roman army were key factors in Rome's rise to greatness.

Rome Spreads Its Power

For hundreds of years after the founding of the republic, Rome sought to expand its territories through conquest and trade.

Rome Conquers Italy Roman power grew slowly but steadily as the legions battled for control of the Italian peninsula. By the fourth century B.C., Rome dominated central Italy. Then it suffered a major defeat. In 390 B.C., the Gauls, a Celtic people from the Po River Valley, north of the Apennines, sacked Rome. However, the Romans quickly recovered and rebuilt the city. They reestablished control by subduing one rival after another. They defeated the Etruscans to the north and the Greek city-states to the south. By 265 B.C., the Romans were masters of all Italy except the Po Valley.

Rome had different laws and treatment for different parts of its conquered territory. The neighboring Latins on the Tiber became full citizens of Rome. In territories farther from Rome, conquered peoples were given all the rights of Roman citizenship

except the vote. All other conquered groups fell into a third category, allies of Rome. Rome did not interfere with its allies, as long as they sent troops to the Roman army and did not make treaties of friendship with any other state. The new citizens and allies became partners in Rome's growth. This lenient policy toward defeated enemies helped Rome to succeed in building a long-lasting empire. For the 250 years after 265 B.C., Roman power spread far beyond Italy.

Rome's Commercial Network Rome's location gave it easy access to the riches of the lands ringing the Mediterranean Sea. Roman merchants moved by land and sea. They traded Roman wine and olive oil for a variety of foods, raw materials, and manufactured goods from other lands. However, other large and powerful cities interfered with Roman access to the Mediterranean. The dominant city on the Mediterranean was Carthage, once a colony of Phoenicia. Carthage was located on a peninsula on the North African coast. Eventually Rome and Carthage fought bitterly for control of the Mediterranean.

War with Carthage In 264 B.C., Rome and Carthage went to war. This was the beginning of the long struggle known as the Punic Wars.

Between 264 and 146 B.C., Rome and Carthage fought three wars. The first, for control of Sicily and the western Mediterranean, lasted 23 years (264–241 B.C.). It ended in the defeat of Carthage. Rome took the rich, grain-growing island of Sicily as the chief prize of victory. It thus gained its first province, or administrative unit, overseas. An uneasy peace followed. The Second Punic War began in 218 B.C. The mastermind behind the war was a 29-year-old Carthaginian general named **Hannibal**. Hannibal was a brilliant military strategist who wanted to avenge Carthage's earlier defeat.

Hannibal assembled an army of 50,000 infantry, 9,000 cavalry, and 60 elephants with the intent of capturing Rome. To surprise the Romans, he led his army on a long trek from Spain across France and through the Alps. Although he had lost more than half his men and most of his elephants, Hannibal invaded northern Italy. For more than a decade, he marched his forces up and down the Italian peninsula at

HISTORY MAKERS



Hannibal
247–183 B.C.

When Hannibal was only a boy of nine, his father, Hamilcar Barca, a general in Carthage's army, made him swear that he would always hate Rome and seek to destroy it. Hannibal became a lifelong foe of Rome. His war cry was "conquer or die!"

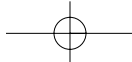
After his defeat at the battle of Zama and Carthage's loss in the Second Punic War, Hannibal took refuge among Rome's enemies. He fought against Roman forces as an ally of the kings of Syria and Bithynia. When Roman agents came for him in Bithynia on the Black Sea in Anatolia in 183 B.C., he committed suicide rather than submit to Rome.

THINK THROUGH HISTORY

C. Recognizing Effects How did its treatment of conquered people affect Rome's expansion?

Vocabulary

Punic: comes from the Latin word for Phoenician.



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

- 1. Movement** How many miles did Hannibal's forces march to reach Cannae?
- 2. Region** What territory did Rome add between 264 B.C. and 146 B.C.?

Vocabulary

pillaged: took goods by force in wartime.

will. His soldiers lived off the land. They seized crops and cattle and pillaged farmhouses. Hannibal won his greatest victory at Cannae, in 216 B.C. There his army inflicted enormous losses on the Romans. However, the Romans regrouped and with the aid of many allies stood firm. They prevented Hannibal from capturing Rome.

Finally the Romans found a daring military leader to match Hannibal's boldness. A general named **Scipio** (SIHP-ee-oh) devised a plan to attack Carthage. This strategy forced Hannibal to return to defend his native city. In 202 B.C., at Zama near Carthage, the Romans finally defeated Hannibal.

By the time of the Third Punic War (149–146 B.C.), Carthage was no longer a threat to Rome. Yet some Romans remembered the devastation Carthage had brought to Italy and were angered by its return to prosperity. An aged and influential senator named Cato ended all his speeches with the same message: "Carthage must be destroyed." In 149 B.C., Rome laid siege to Carthage. In 146 B.C., the city was set afire and its 50,000 inhabitants sold into slavery. Its territory was made the new province of Africa.

THINK THROUGH HISTORY

D. Recognizing Effects Why were the Punic Wars important?

Rome Controls the Mediterranean Rome's victories in the Punic Wars gave it domination over the western Mediterranean. The Romans went on to conquer the eastern half. Rome took control of Macedonia, Greece, and parts of Anatolia. By about 70 B.C., Rome's Mediterranean empire stretched from Anatolia on the east to Spain on the west.

Section 1 Assessment

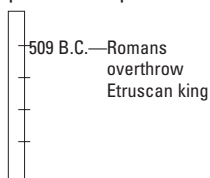
1. TERMS & NAMES

Identify

- republic
- patrician
- plebeian
- tribune
- consul
- senate
- dictator
- legion
- Hannibal
- Scipio

2. TAKING NOTES

Using a time line like the one below, show the main events that mark the growth of Rome into a powerful republic.



What was the most important event, and why do you think so?

3. FORMING OPINIONS

Do you think the Roman Republic owed its success more to its form of government or to its army? Why?

THINK ABOUT

- the structure of the republic
- how citizenship spread
- Rome's policies toward conquered peoples

4. ANALYZING THEMES

Power and Authority How did the office of dictator contribute to the balance and stability of the Roman Republic?

THINK ABOUT

- the role of the dictator
- the power of consuls
- the need for speedy decisions in a crisis