

2. Caesar's Victory

- a) Because Pompey's forces were in the eastern parts of the empire, he was not able to resist Caesar's advance on Rome. He fled Italy to join his army in Greece.
- b) Caesar was able to march into Rome unimpeded.
- c) Many Romans feared that proscriptions would follow, but Caesar decided to try to win allies by not ruling harshly.
- d) When he felt his position in Rome was secure, he crossed over to Greece in 48 BC and defeated Pompey in the Battle of Pharsalus.

6. Caesar in the East

- a) Pompey fled to Egypt, but Pharaoh Ptolemy XIII ordered Pompey killed and had his head sent to Caesar as a gift.
- b) Unexpectedly, this gesture actually angered Caesar, and he decided to punish Ptolemy by meddling in the Egyptian succession.
- c) The Pharaoh's sister, Cleopatra, snuck into Caesar's room and won Caesar over to her side in the succession dispute.
- d) Cleopatra was named pharaoh, and Caesar and Cleopatra had a child, named Caesarion.
- e) Caesar then left Egypt for Pontus (in Turkey) where the son of Mithradates was in rebellion.
- f) Caesar quickly dealt with this threat and sent an equally brief report back to Rome: "Veni, vidi, vici." ("I came, I saw, I conquered.")

7. Perpetual Dictator

- a) Upon returning to Rome, Caesar was in a position of absolute power. No one dared oppose him because he had the support of the Roman army.
- b) Caesar's plan from the outset had been to become king of Rome, but despite having a statue erected of himself along an avenue of sculptures of the legendary kings, and clothing himself in royal purple, he never was able to become king.
- c) On occasion, Caesar's friend Marc Antony would offer Caesar a crown in public, but the reaction of the people was always negative, still did Roman tradition hold monarchy in such poor regard, so Caesar refused.
- d) Instead, Caesar was appointed "perpetual dictator" in 46 BC.

8. Death of Caesar

- a) On the "Ides of March" (March 15th) 44 BC, conspirators wishing to restore the republic assassinated Caesar in an assembly hall near the forum.
- b) Caesar's own friend, Marcus Brutus (directly descended from Lucius Junius Brutus) was among the attackers, and as the group thrust its daggers at the

dictator, Shakespeare captured the recognition of his friend with the famous line “Et tu, Brute?” (“And you too, Brutus?”)

D. The Second Triumvirate

1. Marcus Brutus and his co-conspirators believed that their actions would be well received by the people, but when Marc Antony delivered a stirring funeral oration in honor of the dead dictator, Brutus and his supporters were forced to flee Rome because the people were roused to seek revenge.
2. Two of Caesar's closest supporters, Marc Antony and Marcus Lepidus, formed a new alliance with Caesar's nephew Gaius Octavius (a.k.a. “Octavian”) to create a new triarchy, known in history as the “Second Triumvirate.”
3. As a sign of their commitment to the alliance the three men agreed to proscribe anyone the others wished eliminated. This new round of proscriptions resulted in the assassination of Cicero, as well as some 2300 others.
4. The triumvirate next eliminated Marcus Brutus and his allies at the Battle of Philippi in 42 BC.
5. Believing that Lepidus was now a disposable member of their alliance, Octavius and Antony expelled him from the triumvirate and divided the empire between them – Octavius taking the west, and Antony the east.
6. Like Caesar before him, Antony went to Egypt and was seduced by Cleopatra, and rumors circulated in Rome that he planned to make Alexandria the new capital of the empire. These rumors served Octavius well, who was able to pose as the champion of Italy in the coming struggle between the two men for ultimate supremacy.
7. The Battle of Actium of 31 BC decided the fate of Rome and Egypt. Antony and Cleopatra's combined forces were defeated, allowing Octavius to become sole ruler of Rome.
8. Dejected, Antony fled to Egypt, and, being led to believe that Cleopatra was dead, took his own life. Fearing being dragged back to Rome by Octavius, Cleopatra also committed suicide.
9. Cleopatra was the last pharaoh of Egypt. In 30 BC, Egypt officially became a province of the Roman Empire, and its distinctive culture gradually disappeared.

VI. The Roman Empire

A. The Importance of the Roman Empire

1. The Roman Empire (27 BC – AD 476) occupies a uniquely important place in the history of the world.
2. It covered a huge geographical extent and it lasted 500 years, and thus affected the lives of many people over time.

3. Its ultimate importance, however, lies in the fact that it passed on two sets of ideas and beliefs that have been at the core of Western civilization (including America).
 - a) The first of these groups of ideas historians refer to as “Greco-Roman Civilization.”
 - i) The Romans, as we know, conquered the Greeks in 146 BC.
 - ii) The Romans greatly admired the Greeks and copied those original aspects of Greek culture that impressed them the most including science, art, literature, history and philosophy.
 - iii) Along the way, the Romans also created their own contributions in these fields. They passed on the sum to those that followed.
 - b) The Roman Empire is the setting for the rise of Christianity.
 - i) Jesus Christ, the key figure in Christianity, was born, and died, in the Roman Empire (in the province of Judea).
 - ii) Jesus's followers promoted his teachings in the far corners of the empire, despite early Roman resistance and persecutions.
 - iii) Eventually, Christianity even became the official religion of the Roman Empire.
 - iv) When the empire fell, Christianity survived and was adopted by the Empire's successors, who themselves planted the seeds of European culture through the founding of new barbarian kingdoms.

B. What do historians mean by “The Roman Empire”?

1. Historians say that the period of the Roman Empire begins in 27 BC.
2. Of course, this does not mean that Rome all of a sudden became an empire in 27 BC. Rome already had extensive imperial possessions, stretching from Spain to Turkey, from Egypt to Gaul.
3. Nor does it mean that there was an individual referred to as the “emperor” or “king” by the Romans themselves.
4. What changed in 27 BC was that a single ruler established himself in control of all the government's main functions, was able to maintain himself in that role for the remainder of his life, and then he passed on this power to others. (*Evidently, this was the reversal of all the developments we have seen from 509 to 367 BC.*)

C. Rome's First Princeps

1. In 27 BC, Octavian, who had served as consul for many years continuously, and who still retained control of Rome's armies in the East, officially relinquished all his powers to the Senate.
2. This was a pre-arranged performance, meant to create the illusion that the Roman Republic still existed, and that Octavian was merely fulfilling his functions within that Republic.

3. In return for giving up power Octavian was granted back all of his powers – and many more – by the Senate.
4. From this point onward Octavian exercised the powers of a consul, a tribune, a censor, and a proconsul all at once – effectively making him a monarch.
5. In addition, Octavian was granted the honorary name of “Augustus,” i.e. “illustrious one.” He was honored with the title “Imperator,” meaning “great conqueror.” And, finally, he was titled “Princeps” (“first citizen”).

D. The Age of Augustus (27 BC – AD 14)

1. Augustus's firm control over the Roman government brought an end to a long period of anarchy.
2. In its place, Augustus brought stability and peace.
3. During this period of peace, there was a cultural flourishing not unlike the Athenian Golden Age (and in some ways based on it).
 - a) Roman poets Virgil, Horace, and Ovid created works of literature modeled after those of Homer and other Greek writers.
 - b) Some time later, a generation of Roman historians, including Pliny, Tacitus, and Plutarch, made their contributions to the continuation of the the science of history adopted from the Greeks.
 - c) Augustus boasted, “I found Rome a city of brick; I left it a city of marble.”
4. So popular did Augustus become that when he died, the Romans deified him and created a “cult of the emperor” as a part of the Roman religion.