



MBMUN'25

# STUDY GUIDE

UNDER - SECRETARY - GENERAL:  
DENİZ NUR BERK

ACADEMIC ASSISTANT:  
ERALP ÖZSARI

ACADEMIC ASSISTANT:  
YAĞIZ GÜL

# THE ROMAN SENATE

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## **1. Letter from the Secretary General**

My name is Bersun Akkaya. As the Secretary-General, it is with great pride, immense joy, and a privilege that I welcome you to the long-anticipated revival of MBMUN, now with its new iteration. This conference is the revival of a conference rooted in tradition and now reconstructed for a new generation of thinkers and changemakers.

The preparation of this conference has been an odyssey. Alongside an exceptional team of organizational and academic teams, we have devoted countless hours fueled by passion and purpose to ensure that MBMUN'25 embodies not only excellence in diplomacy, but with a genuine commitment to dialogue, cooperation, and meaningful progress to be a platform for meaningful discourse, a forum where today's youth can engage with the complexities of a rapidly changing world.

It is our utmost pleasure to bring together young minds in a time defined by uncertainty, environmental collapse, contested sovereignties, technological upheaval, and a shifting global order not only to discuss but also to share and develop their ideas with the critical tools of diplomacy, ethics, and global citizenship in a collaborative atmosphere.

This year's theme draws inspiration from one of history's most noble civilizations: the Roman Empire. It invites participants to examine the durability of power and the fragility of institutions. Under the motto *Per Aspera Ad Astra* "Through Hardships to the Stars" we call upon you to rise above challenges and to reach intellectually and morally, toward something greater.

Each of our ten deliberately selected committees has been formed to combine academic depth with contemporary relevance ranging from historical reenactments to futuristic policy dilemmas, public health to international security, and from post-Soviet sovereignty to the legal dilemmas in orbital militarization. From historical simulation in the Roman Senate to the timeless ethical conflict of the 12 Angry Men, we aim to reflect the diversity of the United Nations and the multidisciplinary challenges that confront our period. Each agenda item was chosen not only to echo global urgency but also to foster intellectual relevance creating a space where rhetoric meets responsibility.

Model United Nations is not merely a conference, it is a living classroom, a training ground for leadership, a crucible where global awareness is tested, and a stage where youth diplomacy is celebrated. In this regard, whether your voice resonates through heated debate or takes shape in silent diplomacy, never forget that your presence here has meaning. I invite and encourage all my delegates to research boldly, question fearlessly, and above all, remain deeply committed to the principles of respect, empathy, and curiosity for the rest of their lives..

Aim to reach the moon even if you could not reach the moon, you will find your place among the stars, may the light of the stars be your beacon that enlightens your path to knowledge. On behalf of the entire MBMUN'25 Secretariat, I look forward to welcoming you to leave a mark far beyond its closing ceremony.

Cordially,  
Bersun AKKAYA  
The Secretary General of MBMUN'25

## **2. Letter from the Academic Team**

Esteemed Delegates,

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you all to MBMUN'25. We are overjoyed at the opportunity to be working with each and every one of you.

We are sure you are all aware of the fact that every action taken in this committee will have a consequence in the life of the Roman Empire. Every plan, every step, every diplomatic move will be moving you to your goals within the committee. Thus, preparation and planning are key to your success.

We are quite sure of the capabilities of our delegates that have been picked specifically for this committee and we are also quite sure that the key points have been understood for the smooth sailing of this committee. We wish everyone success and the best of luck.

Let the Discussion Begin!

Deniz, Eralp & Yağız.

### **3. Introduction to the Committee**

Rome, a city that has left an indelible mark on human history, started out as a humble settlement along the Tiber River in central Italy. As the years went by, it blossomed into the epicenter of a sprawling empire that reached across Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. Famous for its stunning architecture, military strength, and intricate political systems, ancient Rome set the stage for many elements of modern Western civilization. From its legendary founding in 753 BCE to the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 CE, the city's journey was a vibrant mix of tradition, innovation, and power.

A pivotal moment in Rome's political evolution was the creation of the Roman Republic in 509 BCE, which replaced the monarchy with a more intricate and participatory governance system. At the heart of this republic was the Roman Senate, which began as a group of aristocratic advisors and transformed into one of the most influential governing bodies in Roman politics. While its members weren't elected by the populace like today's parliaments, the Senate held considerable sway over laws, foreign affairs, and financial decisions. Typically composed of lifelong members from the patrician class, these senators often hailed from Rome's most esteemed families.

The Roman Senate became both a symbol and a tool of Rome's lasting power. It was essential in maintaining a balance of authority among the people, the consuls, and other magistrates. Over the years, its power fluctuated, especially during the shift from Republic to Empire. However, even as emperors began to dominate the political scene, the Senate kept a ceremonial and advisory role, representing the traditions and values of the Republic. Its influence can still be seen in many modern legislative systems, where senates operate as deliberative bodies grounded in historical legacy.

### **4. Foundation of Rome**

Legend states that Ancient Rome was established by the demigod brothers Romulus and Remus on 21 April 753 BCE. The tale asserts that during a dispute regarding the ruler of the city (or, in an alternate version, its location), Romulus murdered Remus and then named the city after himself. The narrative of Rome's origin is the most renowned, however it is not the sole account.

Some traditions suggest that the city was named after a woman, Roma, who accompanied Aeneas and the other survivors from Troy following the city's destruction. Upon arriving at the banks of the Tiber River, Roma and the other women protested as the men sought to proceed. She orchestrated the incineration of the Trojan vessels, therefore essentially marooning the surviving Trojans at the location that would ultimately evolve into Rome. Aeneas of Troy is

prominently depicted in this narrative and in Vergilius's Aeneis as a progenitor of Rome and the forebear of Romulus and Remus, so associating Rome with the splendor and might that characterized Troy.

Additional theories regarding the origin of the city's name propose that it is derived from Rumon, the ancient designation for the Tiber River, indicating a place name assigned to the small trading hub situated along its banks, or that it originates from an Etruscan term potentially referring to one of their settlements.

### ***Early Period of Rome***

Initially a modest settlement along the Tiber River, Rome expanded in both size and power mostly via commerce. The city's position afforded merchants a readily navigable stream for the transportation of their wares. The city was governed by seven monarchs, from Romulus to Tarquinius, as it expanded in size and influence. The early Romans derived a cultural model from Greek civilization, which was transmitted to Rome through southern Greek colonies. They acquired literacy, religion, and the principles of architecture from the Greeks.

The Etruscans to the north served as a paradigm for commerce and urban opulence. Etruria was strategically positioned for commerce, and the early Romans either acquired trading techniques from Etruscan models or received direct instruction from the Etruscans, who invaded the region surrounding Rome between 650 and 600 BCE, although their influence predates this period. The degree to which the Etruscan civilization influenced the evolution of Roman culture and society is contested, however there is considerable consensus regarding their substantial impact throughout the formative period. At the outset, the Romans showed an aptitude for assimilating and enhancing the talents and ideas of other civilizations. The Kingdom of Rome expanded swiftly from a trade settlement to a flourishing city during the 8th and 6th centuries BCE. In 509 BCE, the final king of Rome, Tarquinius the Proud, was ousted by his adversary, Lucius Junius Brutus, who restructured the governmental structure and instituted the Roman Republic.

## **5. The Roman Kingdom (753-509 B.C) and Seven Kings**

Known as the Roman Monarchy or the Regal Period, this era represents the oldest phase of Roman history, characterized by the fabled establishment of the city by Romulus on the Palatine Hill in 753 BC.

The Kingdom's history is mostly uncertain due to the absence of records and the scarcity of inscriptions from the era of the rulers. Accounts from this era, composed during the Republic and the Empire, are believed to be derived from oral tradition.



The Regal Period concluded with the deposition of the kings and the formation of the Roman Republic in 509 BC. Seven kings governed the city of Rome during the Roman Kingdom: Romulus, Numa Pompilius, Tullus Hostilius, Ancus Marcius, Tarquinius Priscus, Servius Tullius, and Tarquinius Superbus.

Except for Romulus, the kings were elected by the Roman populace to serve for life, without dependence on military might to attain or maintain the throne. The insignia of the Roman kings comprised twelve lictors brandishing fasces with axes, the privilege of occupying a Curule chair, the purple Toga Picta, scarlet footwear, and a white diadem encircling the head.

### ***Romulus***

Following the murder of his brother Remus, Romulus commenced the construction of the city on Palatine Hill. He implemented an inclusive policy, allowing persons of all classes, including slaves and freemen without difference, to attain citizenship in Rome. Romulus was instrumental in founding the city's religious, legal, and political institutions, thus contributing to the establishment of the Roman Kingdom. He summoned a council of citizens to organize the government, resulting in the formation of the senate as an advisory body composed of 100 esteemed individuals, referred to as patres, whose progeny became the patricians. In order to establish power, Romulus surrounded himself with attendants, particularly the twelve lictors.

He structured the population into three divisions of cavalry known as centuries: the Ramnes (Romans), the Tities (named for the Sabine monarch), and the Luceres (Etruscans). Furthermore, Romulus partitioned the populace into 30 curiae, called in honor of 30 Sabine ladies who had helped to resolve the conflict between Romulus and Tatius. The curiae constituted the voting units in the popular assembly, the Comitia Curiata. Romulus, a pivotal character in Roman history, planned the notorious event referred to as the Rape of the Sabine women. Romulus, in search of wives for his citizens, summoned the neighboring Sabine tribe to a festival in Rome, when Roman males snatched young women from the participants. This action precipitated war when Romulus declined to return the captives. Despite three failed efforts by the Sabines to conquer Rome, the battle reached a pivotal moment during the Battle of the Lacus Curtius, where the abducted women intervened to terminate the hostilities. Subsequently, Romulus and the Sabine monarch Titus Tatius co-reigned, consolidating their nations into a unified monarchy. Alongside the conflict with the Sabines, Romulus engaged in warfare against the Fidenates and Veientes, reinforcing his status as a warrior king in Roman mythology. Romulus, the mythical founder and inaugural monarch of Rome, reigned for thirty-seven years before his enigmatic vanishing at the age of fifty-four. According to legend, while inspecting his soldiers on the Campus Martius, Romulus disappeared in a whirlwind, climbing to

Mount Olympus where he was deified. Initially embraced by the populace, rumors

subsequently emerged, indicating potential malfeasance by the patricians, encompassing tales of homicide and dismemberment. Nevertheless, these doubts were alleviated when a distinguished nobleman attested to having experienced a vision from Romulus, confirming his divine identity as Quirinus.

Romulus emerged as one of the three principal deities of Rome and the personification of the city. A duplicate of Romulus' modest dwelling was retained in the center of Rome until the fall of the Roman Empire, representing the lasting legacy of its legendary founder.

### ***Numa Pompilius***

Subsequent to the interregnum following Romulus' demise, Rome was administered by ten consecutive intriguers selected from the senate for a duration of one year. Under public pressure, the Senate appointed Numa Pompilius, a Sabine renowned for his fairness and piety, to succeed Romulus. Numa's rule initiated a period of tranquility and spiritual transformation. He constructed a new temple to Janus and, having established peace with Rome's neighbors, ceremonially closed its doors to indicate an era of serenity, a condition that persisted throughout his reign. Numa founded various religious institutions, such as the Vestal Virgins, the Salii, and the flamines dedicated to Jupiter, Mars, and Quirinus. Furthermore, he institutionalized the position and responsibilities of the Pontifex Maximus.

### ***Tullus Hostilius***

Tullus Hostilius, in contrast to his predecessor Numa, was marked by his martial disposition and indifference towards religious affairs. He participated in multiple military campaigns against Alba Longa, Fidenae, Veii, and the Sabines. During his reign, Alba Longa was destroyed, and its residents were integrated into Rome. Tullus is attributed with the establishment of the Curia Hostilia, a new venue for the Senate, which persisted for 562 years after his demise. His rule endured for 31 years, characterized by military conquests and the consolidation of power in Rome.

### ***Ancus Marcius***

Following the reign of Tullus Hostilius, known for his military exploits, the Romans turned to a more peaceful and religious leader in the form of Ancus Marcius, the grandson of Numa Pompilius. Ancus, like his grandfather, prioritized defense over expansion and engaged in wars only to protect Rome's territory. He notably erected Rome's first prison on the Capitoline Hill and fortified the Janiculum Hill on the western bank, enhancing Rome's defensive capabilities. Ancus also undertook infrastructure projects, including the construction of Rome's first bridge across the Tiber River and the establishment of the port of Ostia on the Tyrrhenian Sea, along with Rome's first salt works near the port. After a reign of 25 years, marked by peace



and development, Ancus Marcius died a natural death, bringing an end to the era of Rome's Latin-Sabine kings.

### ***Tarquinius Priscus***

L. Tarquinius Priscus, the fifth king of Rome and the first of Etruscan origin, arrived in Rome as an immigrant and rose to prominence, earning the favor of Ancus Marcius, who adopted him as his son. Upon ascending the throne, Tarquinius waged successful wars against the Sabines and Etruscans, expanding the territory of Rome and bringing substantial wealth to the city. To accommodate the growing population, he initiated the settlement of the Aventine and Caelian hills. One of his significant reforms was the expansion of the Senate by adding one hundred new members from the conquered Etruscan tribes, doubling the total number of senators to two hundred. Utilizing the acquired treasures, Tarquinius embarked on ambitious construction projects, including the renowned Cloaca Maxima, Rome's great sewer system, which drained the marshy terrain between the Seven Hills, and the initial development of the Roman Forum, laying the foundation for the city's central hub of political, social, and commercial activity.

Priscus embarked on numerous monumental building projects, leaving a lasting legacy in Rome's architectural landscape. Among these ventures was the construction of the city's inaugural bridge, the Pons Sublicius, which facilitated communication and commerce across the Tiber River. Notably, he commissioned the iconic Circus Maximus, an immense stadium renowned for hosting exhilarating chariot races and other grand spectacles that captivated the Roman populace.

Additionally, Priscus initiated the ambitious endeavor of erecting the temple dedicated to Jupiter Optimus Maximus atop the Capitoline Hill, symbolizing Rome's devotion to its principal deity. Regrettably, before the completion of these endeavors, his reign was cut short by his untimely demise, allegedly at the hands of a son of Ancus Marcius, marking the end of his thirty-eight-year reign as king.

### ***Servius Tullius***

Priscus's son-in-law, Servius Tullius, assumed the throne following his predecessor's demise, heralding a new era in Rome's monarchy. Despite his humble origins as the son of a slave, Servius demonstrated formidable leadership qualities and military prowess akin to his illustrious predecessor. He continued the legacy of expansion and conquest, achieving notable victories against the Etruscans and leveraging the spoils of war to fortify Rome's defenses. Notably, Servius embarked on a groundbreaking architectural project by erecting the first

defensive wall encircling the Seven Hills of Rome, known as the pomerium, thereby enhancing the city's security and laying the foundation for its future growth and prosperity.

Servius Tullius implemented groundbreaking reforms that reshaped the socio-political landscape of Rome, marking a significant departure from traditional governance practices. His introduction of the first census revolutionized the classification of citizens based on economic status, laying the groundwork for a more structured and inclusive political system. By organizing the population into distinct classes and assemblies, such as the Centuriate Assembly and the Tribal Assembly, Servius Tullius aimed to streamline governance and ensure broader representation across societal strata. However, his reforms stirred both admiration and controversy, as they shifted the balance of power towards the elite while also appealing to the plebeian class through populist measures. Despite his initial support from the patricians, Servius's overtures to the plebeians ultimately led to resentment and dissent among the aristocracy. His reign, characterized by socio-political upheaval and class tensions, came to a tumultuous end with his assassination orchestrated by his own daughter Tullia and her husband L. Tarquinius Superbus, signaling the onset of a turbulent period in Roman history.

### ***Tarquinius Superbus***

The reign of L. Tarquinius Superbus, the seventh and final king of Rome, was marked by a combination of military conquests and ambitious public projects. Despite his efforts to expand Rome's territory through wars against neighboring peoples and securing its leadership among the Latin cities, his rule was marred by a heavy-handed approach to governance characterized by violence and intimidation. While Tarquinius Superbus oversaw significant infrastructure developments, including the completion of the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus and enhancements to the Cloaca Maxima and Circus Maximus, his disregard for Roman customs and the authority of the Senate earned him a reputation for tyranny and despotism. His actions alienated both the patrician and plebeian classes, leading to widespread discontent and unrest within Rome.

Ultimately, Tarquinius Superbus's oppressive rule and disdain for traditional governance norms precipitated his downfall, culminating in a popular uprising that resulted in his expulsion from Rome and the establishment of the Roman Republic in 509 BC. Despite his ambitious projects and military achievements, his legacy is overshadowed by his autocratic tendencies and the pivotal role he played in the transition from monarchy to republicanism in ancient Rome. The rape of Lucretia by Sextus Tarquinius served as the catalyst for the downfall of the Tarquinius dynasty and the establishment of the Roman Republic in 509 BC. Lucretia's tragic fate galvanized public outrage and led to a popular uprising led by figures such as L. Junius Brutus, L. Tarquinius Collatinus, P. Valerius Poplicola, and Sp. Lucretius Tricipitinus. Their efforts culminated in the expulsion of Tarquinius and his family

from Rome, symbolizing the rejection of monarchical rule and the oppressive reign of the Tarquiniusii.

The revulsion towards Tarquinius's tyrannical regime was so profound that the very title of king, *rex*, acquired a negative connotation in the Latin language, persisting until the decline of the Roman Empire. Julius Caesar, cognizant of the public's aversion to kingship, notably eschewed the title of *rex*, and fears of his potential aspirations for kingship contributed to the conspiratorial atmosphere surrounding his assassination. With the ascension of Brutus and Collatinus as Rome's first consuls, the Roman Republic was born, ushering in a new era of governance characterized by shared authority and representation. Over the next five centuries, the Roman Republic would experience remarkable expansion and influence, shaping the course of Western civilization and establishing Rome as a dominant power in the Mediterranean Basin.

## **6. The Roman Republic (509-27 B.C)**

Following Tarquinius's departure, Rome experienced both external and internal strife. A significant portion of the 5th century BCE was characterized by struggle rather than prosperity. Between 510 BCE and 275 BCE, as the government contended with many internal political challenges, the city emerged as the dominant force over the Italian peninsula. From the Battle of Regillus (496 BCE), in which Rome triumphed against the Latins, until the Pyrrhic Wars (280 – 275 BCE) against Pyrrhus of Epirus, Rome ascended as a preeminent military superpower in the west. The Republic's social and political structure steadily evolved via this expansion. From this modest inception, the city would establish a new administration, one that would eventually exert control over a region extending from the North Sea southward to Gaul and Germania, westward to Hispania, and eastward to Greece, Syria, and North Africa.

The vast Mediterranean transformed into a Roman dominion. These territories would remain under Roman rule throughout the Republic and into the early years of the Roman Empire. Before it could emerge as a dominating military power, the city required a stable administration, and it was essential to prevent any one from monopolizing control. Ultimately, they would establish a system demonstrating a genuine equilibrium of power. Subsequently, following the collapse of the monarchy, the Republic became dominated by the prominent families - the patricians, derived from the term *patres* or fathers. Only these prominent families were permitted to occupy governmental or religious positions. The remaining citizens, or plebeians, possessed no political power, despite many being as affluent as the patricians.

Nevertheless, much to the chagrin of the patricians, this arrangement was not sustainable nor enduring. Strains between the two classes intensified, particularly as the impoverished inhabitants of the city constituted the majority of the military force. They questioned the rationale for participating in a conflict if the profits solely benefit the affluent. In 494 BCE, the

plebeians staged a strike, assembling outside Rome and refusing to disperse until they were afforded representation; this event is known as the Conflict of Orders or the First Succession of the Plebs. The strike succeeded, resulting in the plebeians being granted their own assembly - the Concilium Plebis or Council of the Plebs.

The plebeians, through their insurrection, had engaged in a system where authority resided in multiple magistrates (the *cursus honorum*) and assorted assemblies. The executive authority or *imperium* was vested in two consuls. A consul, elected by the *Comitia Centuriata*, served a term of one year, overseeing the Senate, proposing legislation, and commanding military forces. Each consul possessed the distinct ability to veto the other's choice. Upon the completion of his term, he could assume the role of pro-consul, administering one of the republic's numerous territories, an appointment that could render him significantly affluent. Several subordinate magistrates existed: a praetor, the sole other official possessing *imperium* authority, acted as a judicial officer with civic and provincial jurisdiction; a quaestor served as the financial administrator; and an aedile oversaw urban maintenance, including roads, water and food supplies, as well as the annual games and festivals. Finally, there was the esteemed job of censor, which was held for a little 18 months. He was elected every five years as the census taker, responsible for checking the list of citizens and their properties. He could also expel members of the Senate for misconduct. Nonetheless, there remained one ultimate position - the exclusive office of dictator. He was bestowed with absolute authority and was appointed solely during emergencies, typically serving for a duration of six months. The most renowned individual, perhaps, was Julius Caesar, who was appointed dictator for life. In addition to the magistrates, there existed several assemblies. These assemblies represented the voice of the populace (male citizens exclusively), thereby permitting the thoughts of a select few to be articulated. The primary assembly was the Roman Senate, a vestige of the ancient monarchy. Senators, albeit unpaid, served for life until dismissed by a censor due to public or private wrongdoing. Although this group possessed no genuine legislative power, functioning solely as counselors to the consul and then the emperor, they yet exerted significant authority. They might propose legislation and supervise foreign policy, civic administration, and financial matters. Authority to legislate, however, was conferred upon several popular assemblies. All Senate initiatives required approval from one of two popular assemblies: the *Comitia Centuriata*, which enacted laws, elected consuls, and declared war, and the Concilium Plebis, which represented the plebeians through their elected tribunes. The assemblies were segmented into blocks, with each block voting as a collective entity. In addition to these two principal legislative organizations, several minor tribe assemblies also existed. The Concilium Plebis was established due to the Conflict of Orders, a struggle for political dominance between plebeians and patricians. Within the Concilium Plebis, in addition to enacting legislation aligned with the desires of the plebeians, the members chose several tribunes to represent their interests. While the "Council of the Plebs" initially afforded the plebeians a degree of representation in governance, it ultimately proved inadequate. In 450 BCE, the Twelve Tables were instituted to address various plebeian

grievances. It constituted the inaugural documented Roman legal code. The Tables addressed domestic issues, focusing on family life and private property.

Plebeians were not only exempt from jail for debt but also conferred the ability to appeal a magistrate's ruling. Subsequently, plebeians were permitted to marry patricians and attain the position of consuls. The privileges of the plebeians progressively expanded throughout time. In 287 BCE, the Lex Hortensia established that all laws enacted by the Concilium Plebis were obligatory for both plebeians and patricians. This remarkable government enabled the Republic to expand well beyond the city's boundaries. The triumph in the three Punic Wars (264 – 146 BCE) fought against Carthage marked the initial phase of Rome expanding beyond the limits of the peninsula. Following years of conflict and the humiliation of being bested by Hannibal, the Senate ultimately heeded the counsel of the vocal Cato the Elder, who proclaimed, “Carthago delenda est!” or “Carthage must be destroyed!” The annihilation of the city by Rome following the Battle of Zama in 146 BCE, along with the Greeks' defeat in the four Macedonian Wars, solidified the Republic's status as a formidable Mediterranean force. The arrival of the Greeks introduced the opulent Hellenistic culture to Rome, encompassing its art, philosophy, and literature. Regrettably, even with the expansion of the Republic, the Roman government was inherently ill-suited for managing an empire. Historian Tom Holland notes in his *Rubicon* that the Republic appeared perpetually on the verge of political collapse. The traditional agrarian economy was unable to transition effectively, only serving to widen the divide between the affluent and the impoverished.

Rome, nonetheless, transcended the definition of a mere warfare state. Romans at home esteemed the significance of family and the worth of religion. They also contended that citizenship or *civitas* delineated the essence of true civilization. This notion of citizenship would soon be scrutinized when the Roman territories started to contest Roman power. This perpetual state of battle has not only enriched the Republic but has also shaped its civilization. Following the Macedonian Wars, Greek influence significantly impacted Roman culture and religion. The old Roman deities underwent transformation due to Greek influence. In Rome, personal expressions of conviction were deemed insignificant; only strict compliance with a rigid system of rituals was valued, in order to circumvent the perils of religious zealotry. Temples dedicated to these deities would be constructed across the empire. This ongoing conflict between the affluent and the impoverished would persist until the Republic ultimately disintegrated. Nonetheless, individuals in authority sought to address the prevailing issues. In the 2nd century BCE, two brothers, both serving as tribunes, attempted but were unsuccessful in enacting the requisite reforms. Tiberius Gracchus proposed allocating land to the unemployed and smallholders among several reform initiatives. The Senate, composed largely of substantial landowners, strongly opposed. The Concilium Plebis also dismissed the proposal. Despite his proposal ultimately being enacted, it could not be implemented. Subsequent riots resulted in the deaths of 300 individuals, including Tiberius. Regrettably, a like fate befell his sibling. Although Gaius

Gracchus advocated for land redistribution, his demise was assured when he suggested granting citizenship to all Roman supporters. Similar to his elder sibling, his initiatives encountered significant opposition. Upon the death of 3,000 of his supporters, he opted for suicide. The brothers' inability to establish equilibrium in Rome would serve as one of the warnings that the Republic was destined to collapse. Subsequently, another Roman would emerge to commence a sequence of reforms. Sulla and his forces advanced on Rome and usurped power, vanquishing his adversary Gaius Marius. Upon assuming power in 88 BCE, Sulla swiftly vanquished King Mithridates of Pontus in the East, subdued the Samnites with the assistance of generals Pompeius and Crassus, purged the Roman Senate (resulting in the deaths or exile of 80 members), restructured the judicial system, and implemented several reforms.

He retired tranquilly in 79 BCE. Contrary to the Empire, the Republic would not fall because of any foreign danger; rather, it would fall because of a threat that originated within the Republic itself. It was the result of the Republic's incapacity to adapt to the ever-expanding empire that was coming into being. Even the ancient Sibylline predictions prophesied that failure would come from inside, rather than from someone or something that had invaded from without. These internal warnings were issued in a number of different ways. During the so-called Social Wars that occurred in the first century BCE (90–88 BCE), one of the signs of this dissatisfaction was the demand for citizenship that was shown by the Roman allies. Despite the fact that they had paid tribute and given warriors for the Roman army for many years, the Roman allies were not considered citizens. They want representation, just like their fellow plebeian peers had done many years previously. An uprising was necessary in order for things to change. In spite of the fact that the Senate had cautioned the

Roman citizens that granting citizenship to these individuals would be risky, full citizenship was eventually conferred to all persons (with the exception of slaves) over the whole Italian peninsula. Over time, Julius Caesar would extend the concept of citizenship beyond the borders of Italy, granting it to the people of Spain and Gaul. It was during this time when Marcus Tullius Cicero, a Roman statesman and poet, discovered a plot to destroy the Roman government that was being directed by Lucius Sergius Catiline, a Roman senator. This plot posed a significant threat to the city's very existence. Moreover, Cicero was of the opinion that the decline of the Republic was attributable to a decline in morality. Julius Caesar, Gnaeus Pompeius, and Marcus Licinius Crassus were the three individuals who, in the year 60 BCE, were aware of issues along with dread and discontent. These issues included problems such as this one. In the year 71 BCE, Crassus achieved greater prominence as a result of his victory against Spartacus and his companions. Pompeius had made a name for himself not just in Spain but also during his time in the East. Caesar had demonstrated that he was capable of leading his troops. The three men came together to establish what history has referred to as the First Triumvirate or in other cases as the Gang of Three. They established and maintained authority over military commanders and consulships for about a decade. Following his resignation from the

position of consul in the year 59 BCE, Caesar and his army traveled northward into the regions of Gaul and Germania. While Pompeius became the governor of Spain (although he controlled from Rome), Crassus pursued renown in the east. Unfortunately for him, he was ultimately defeated and slain at the Battle of Carrhae. Pompeius was able to achieve his goal of becoming a famous figure. As Pompeius and Caesar's tension continued to rise, it became more intense. While Caesar desired to return to politics, Pompeius was envious of Caesar's success and renown. Pompeius wanted to return to politics. The disagreements between them eventually led to a conflict, and in the year 48 BCE, they fought each other in Pharsalus. As a result of his loss, Pompeius fled to Egypt, where he was ultimately put to death by Ptolemy XIII. Caesar was able to complete his destiny by capturing both the eastern provinces and northern Africa. He returned to Rome as a hero, only to be named a dictator for life. Despite the fact that a number of popular reforms were implemented, the Republic was brought to its knees by his death on the Ides of March in 44 BCE. This occurred despite the fact that his new position was seen as a significant threat to the foundation of the Republic by a number of his adversaries as well as numerous different friends. As the first Emperor of Rome, Augustus, his heir and step-son Octavian was able to defeat Mark Antony and finally become the first Emperor of Rome. The Roman Republic had been destroyed, and the Roman Empire had emerged from its ashes.

## **7. Roman Empire**

Augustus governed the empire from 27 BCE until his death in 14 CE. During that period, as he stated, he "discovered Rome as a city of clay but departed it as a city of marble." The Pax Romana, or Roman Peace, often referred to as the Pax Augusta, established by him, was an unprecedented era of peace and prosperity that endured for almost 200 years. After Augustus' demise, authority transferred to his successor, Tiberius (r. 14-37), who perpetuated several imperial initiatives but lacked the fortitude and foresight that characterized Augustus. This pattern would persist, somewhat consistently, with the subsequent emperors: Caligula (r. 37-41), Claudius (r. 41-54), and Nero (r. 54-68). The initial five rulers of the empire are designated as the Julio-Claudian Dynasty, named after the two familial lineages from which they sprang, either by birth or adoption: Julius and Claudius. Despite Caligula's infamy for his debauchery and perceived madness, his initial governance was praiseworthy, as was that of his successor, Claudius, who augmented Rome's influence and dominion in Britain; Nero's reign, however, was less respectable. Caligula and Claudius were both murdered while in government, with Caligula being killed by his Praetorian Guard and Claudius, seemingly, by his wife. Nero's suicide concluded the Julio-Claudian Dynasty and commenced the era of societal turmoil referred to as The Year of the Four Emperors. The four monarchs were Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian. After Nero's suicide in 68, Galba ascended to power in 69 and quickly shown his inadequacy for the role. He was murdered by the Praetorian Guard. Otho promptly replaced him on the day of his demise, and historical accounts suggest he was anticipated to be an effective emperor. General Vitellius, however, pursued personal power, instigating a brief civil war that culminated



in Otho's suicide and Vitellius' ascension to the throne. Vitellius shown no greater aptitude for governance than Galba, as he promptly indulged in opulent festivities and banquets, neglecting his responsibilities. The legions proclaimed General Vespasian as emperor and advanced towards Rome. Vitellius was assassinated by Vespasian's forces, and Vespasian (r. 69-79) assumed power precisely one year after Galba's first accession to the throne. Vespasian established the Flavian Dynasty, noted for extensive construction initiatives, economic affluence, and imperial expansion. Vespasian's reign was marked by prosperity, as demonstrated by his construction initiatives, including the foundational work on the Flavian Amphitheatre (the renowned Coliseum of Rome), which his son Titus (r. 79-81) would finish. Titus' first rule witnessed the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79, which entombed the towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Ancient records uniformly commend his management of this catastrophe and the catastrophic fire in Rome in 80. Titus succumbed to an illness in 81 and was replaced by his brother Domitian, who reigned from 81 to 96. Domitian extended and fortified Rome's borders, restored the city following the extensive fire, advanced the construction initiatives begun by his brother, and enhanced the empire's economy. Nonetheless, his authoritarian ways and policies rendered him unpopular with the Roman Senate, leading to his assassination in 96.

### ***The Five Virtuous Emperors***

Nerva, Domitian's adviser, succeeded him and established the Nervan-Antonin Dynasty, which governed Rome from 96 to 192. This era is characterized by heightened wealth due to the reign of The Five Good Emperors of Rome. From 96 to 180, five remarkable emperors governed consecutively, elevating the Roman Empire to its zenith:

- Nerva's reign occurred from 96 to 98 AD.
- Trajan (reigned 98-117)
- Hadrian (reigned 117-138)
- Antoninus Pius (reigned 138-161)
- Marcus Aurelius (reigned 161-180)

Under their guidance, the Roman Empire became more robust, stable, and expanded in both size and breadth. Lucius Verus and Commodus are the final two emperors of the Nervan-Antonin Dynasty. Verus served as co-emperor alongside Marcus Aurelius until his demise in 169 and appears to have been somewhat ineffectual. Commodus (r. 180-192), the son and successor of Aurelius, is regarded as one of the most ignominious emperors in Roman history, consistently portrayed as prioritizing his own indulgences and whims over the welfare of the empire. In 192, he was strangled by his wrestling partner in the bath, culminating the Nervan-Antonin Dynasty and elevating the perfect Pertinax, who likely orchestrated Commodus' death, to power.

## 8. Roman Senate

The Roman Senate served as an advisory entity to Rome's magistrates, including the city's most seasoned public officials and societal elite. Its rulings held significant influence, but they were not always enacted as laws in practice. The Senate maintained its power over the government during the imperial period, but to a diminished extent. Over time, the Senate experienced an escalation in military involvement in politics and endured manipulation of its membership and sessions by succeeding emperors. The institution endured beyond all emperors, with senators retaining their status as Rome's most formidable political actors, occupying essential public positions, shaping public sentiment, commanding armies, and administering provinces. The Romans referred to their principal governing body as the *senatus*, a term derived from *senex*, meaning 'old,' which signified 'assembly of elderly men' and implied wisdom and experience. Members were occasionally designated as 'fathers' or *patres*, therefore demonstrating that the Senate was an institution intended to offer rational and equitable counsel to the Roman state and its populace. Traditionally, Romulus, the founder of Rome, established the inaugural 100-member Senate as an advisory entity to the monarch; however, less information exists on its true function during Rome's early monarchical period. During the early Republic, the body presumably originated as an advisory council to magistrates and then gained influence when retired magistrates became members, as evidenced by the *lex Ovinia* (established after 339 BCE but before 318 BCE), which stipulated that members should be selected from the 'most distinguished individuals.' The censors prepared a new list of members every five years, however senators often retained their positions for life unless they committed dishonorable conduct. In 70 BCE, at least 64 senators were excluded from the new list due to undignified behavior. The system was established, thereby forming a new and formidable political elite that would control Rome for generations. Beginning in the 3rd century BCE, the Senate included 300 members, and following Sulla's reforms in 81 BCE, the number likely increased to around 500 senators. Subsequently, there appears to have been no defined minimum or maximum membership count. Julius Caesar initiated changes in the mid-1st century BCE, granted membership to his friends, and expanded it to encompass significant figures from communities beyond Rome, resulting in a total of 900 senators. Augustus later diminished the membership to around 600. The senators were guided by the *princeps senatus*, who consistently addressed the assembly first during discussions. The role diminished in significance during the Republic's closing years, however regained prominence under Augustus. Evidence indicates that the Senate was not entirely comprised of individuals from the aristocratic patrician class, despite their dominant presence. Certain non-senators, including magistrates like as tribunes, aediles, and later quaestors, were permitted to attend and address sessions of the Senate. Such members were consistently elevated to full senators in the subsequent censorship. Not all members actively engaged in the proceedings; many only listened to the talks and cast their votes. The senatorial rank conferred specific privileges, including the right to don a toga adorned with a Tyrian purple stripe (*latus clavus*), a senatorial ring, distinctive footwear, an epithet (later categorized into three ranks:

clarissimi, spectabiles, illustres), various fiscal advantages, and preferential seating at public festivals and games. Restrictions were imposed, prohibiting senators from departing Italy without Senate consent, owning big vessels, or competing for public contracts. The Senate convened in many locations in Rome or its vicinity, within a mile of the city limits, provided that the site was sacred, namely an *atemplum*. The apparent candidate was a temple; yet, the Senate predominantly convened at the Curia, a public edifice in Rome. The initial structure was the Curia Hostilia, utilized throughout the early kingdom, followed by the Curia Cornelia, constructed by Sulla, and ultimately the Curia Julia, erected by Caesar, completed by Augustus, and employed afterward. The meetings were accessible to the public, with an open-door policy that let individuals to sit outside and listen if they want. The Senate's official role was to counsel the magistrates (consuls, censors, quaestors, aediles, etc.) through decrees and resolutions. The judgments were bolstered by the presence of several senators who were former magistrates with actual governing experience, resulting in infrequent vetoes, although they did occur, notably by the tribunes of the popular assembly, the *tribuni plebis*. Magistrates were required to acknowledge that they will return to the Senate following their one-year term in office. Upon enactment, the decrees were codified into law. During the crises resulting from the collapse of the Republic, the Senate was able to issue emergency decrees (*senatus consultum ultimum*) that it considered essential for the protection of the state. Beginning in the 4th century BCE, the Senate's influence on public affairs grew as the authority of the common assemblies and magistrates diminished. The Senate addressed issues related to domestic policy, encompassing financial and religious domains, by first proposing suggestions that were subsequently debated by the public assemblies. Foreign policy was also addressed, including the reception of foreign ambassadors, the allocation of legions, the establishment of provinces, and the determination of their borders. The inadequacies of current legislation may likewise be subject to discussion. Furthermore, the Senate possessed the authority to confer reputation onto Rome's most influential individuals, particularly through the granting of triumphs for victorious military endeavors. A record of the proceedings (*senatus consulta*) was maintained and made available for public consultation in the Tabularium. The practice was terminated by Augustus. Senators consistently had access to these data, and authors, predominantly senators, frequently cited them in their writings.

### ***Imperial Period of Roman Senate***

The Senate remained a significant institution even after Augustus ascended to the role of emperor. Senators persisted in debating and occasionally opposing the emperor's actions. The Senate retained its esteemed status, possessing significant ceremonial and symbolic authority, with membership still sought after by Rome's aristocratic citizens, now attainable for new members solely by election to the quaestorship (20 annually). Augustus established a minimum property requirement for membership and subsequently instituted a senatorial order permitting only the sons of senators or anyone granted status by the emperor to attain senatorial rank.

Throughout the years, as the empire grew, the geographical origins of the senators diversified, resulting in the 3rd century CE, where up to 50% of senators were from outside Italy. In reality, although their importance and reputation persisted, the powers of the senators had significantly waned compared to their apex under the Republic. A select committee of senators was selected by the emperor (consilium) to determine the specific topics for debate in the whole Senate, which Augustus occasionally presided over personally. Tiberius (r. 14-37 CE) was an avid participant, although he abolished the consilium, although many later emperors established a comparable informal advisory council including certain senators. Although real political authority resided with the emperors, the Senate still persisted in enacting a substantial volume of legislation under the Principate. The speeches delivered by senators were another significant effect; however, when emperors began to deliver these orations themselves, they were later cited by jurists, indicating that they may have possessed, in practical terms, the authority of law. Augustus imposed a time constraint on speeches delivered by anybody other than the emperor. Although the Senate may have diminished in influence, emperors continued to get their nominal authority from it, ensuring their legitimacy to govern. The Senate might ultimately determine an emperor's rule by proclaiming them a public enemy or formally enacting *damnatio memoriae*.

## **9. Timeline of Rome**

753 BC: Establishment of Rome.

650 BC: The Etruscan monarchy commenced their reign over Rome.

509 BC: Tarquinius Superbus, the final monarch of Rome, is deposed, resulting in the formation of the Roman Republic characterized by elected authorities.

496 BC: Battle of Lake Regillus — Romans vanquish the Latins, culminating in a peace.

450 BC: The Twelve Tables, the inaugural codification of laws under the Roman Republic, are released.

440 BC: The Lex Canuleia is enacted, permitting marrying between patricians and plebeians, therefore advancing legal equality.

425 BC: Subjugation of Fidenae, a tributary city of Veii.

396 BC: Capture of Veii following an extended siege, signifying a notable enlargement of Roman territory.

390 BC: The Gauls besiege Rome, necessitating extensive reconstruction initiatives.

378 BC: Erection of the Servian Walls encircling Rome to avert subsequent invasions.

343–341 BC: First Samnite War — Rome confronts and vanquishes the Samnites.

338 BC: Rome vanquishes the Latin League and disbands the confederation, thereby centralizing authority in the region.

326–304 BC: Second Samnite War, characterized by notable battles and Roman territorial expansion.

321 BC: Battle of the Caudine Forks — Romans endure a catastrophic defeat to the Samnites.

312 BC: Construction of the Via Appia and Aqua Appia, improving Rome's infrastructure.

298–290 BC: Third Samnite War.

295 BC: Battle of Sentinum — Rome triumphs against the Samnites, redressing the prior disgrace at Caudine Forks.

287 BC: The Lex Hortensia is enacted, conferring legal authority to plebiscites and diminishing patrician supremacy.

283 BC: Formation of the province of Cisalpine Gaul, enhancing Roman hegemony.

280–275 BC: Pyrrhic War — Rome confronts Pyrrhus of Epirus, ultimately achieving victory despite substantial casualties.

272 BC: Tarentum capitulates to Rome, resulting in the subjugation of Magna Graecia under Roman authority.

264–241 BC: First Punic War waged against Carthage.

260 BC: Formation of the Roman navy to counter Carthaginian maritime dominance.

259 BC: Battle of Mylae - The Roman navy secures a win against Carthage.

256–255 BC: Roman incursion into Africa commanded by Regulus, culminating in defeat.

249 BC: Battle of Drepana — Carthage triumphs over Rome.

241 BC: Battle of the Aegates Islands - The Roman navy achieves victory, resulting in Roman dominion over Sicily as a province.

238 BC: Annexation of Corsica and Sardinia, so augmenting Roman holdings.

218–201 BC: Second Punic War waged against Carthage.

218 BC: Hannibal traverses the Alps to attack Italy.

218 BC: Battle of the Trebia - Hannibal vanquishes Roman soldiers.

217 BC: Battle of Lake Trasimene – a further triumph for Hannibal against Rome.

216 BC: Battle of Cannae - Hannibal inflicts a catastrophic defeat upon Rome.

214–205 BC: First Macedonian War — Rome confronts Macedon to obstruct partnerships with Carthage.

211–206 BC: Scipio Africanus conducts military operations in Spain, seizing Carthago Nova.

203 BC: Scipio invades Africa, vanquishing Carthaginian forces at the Battle of the Great Plains.

202 BC: Battle of Zama - Scipio decisively vanquishes Hannibal, concluding the war.

200–196 BC: Second Macedonian War – Rome triumphs over Philip V, establishing dominance in Greece.

195 BC: Laconian War - Rome intervenes in the affairs of Sparta.

192–188 BC: Seleucid War — Rome vanquishes Antiochus III, acquiring dominion over Greece and segments of Asia Minor.

181–179 BC: The inaugural Celtiberian War in Hispania.

179 BC: The Pons Aemilius, Rome's inaugural stone bridge spanning the Tiber, was constructed.

172–168 BC: Third Macedonian War — Rome vanquishes Perseus of Macedon, resulting in the dissolution of the Macedonian kingdom.

149–146 BC: Third Punic War - Rome annihilates Carthage, thereby establishing Africa as a Roman province.

133 BC: Tiberius Gracchus serves as tribune, promoting land reforms; his killing signifies the onset of internal conflict.

### ***Continuing the timeline of the Roman Republic***

121 BC: Assassination of Gaius Gracchus, Tiberius's brother, who continued advocating for social reforms. His death signifies rising political violence.

112–105 BC: Jugurthine War – Rome fights King Jugurtha of Numidia, highlighting corruption in the Republic but ending in victory under Gaius Marius.

104–100 BC: Cimbrian War – Rome defeats migrating Germanic tribes (Cimbri and Teutones), consolidating northern territories.

91–88 BC: Social War – Rome's Italian allies rebel, demanding citizenship. Rome ultimately grants citizenship to the allies, unifying Italy under Roman control.

88–82 BC: First Civil War – Rivalry between Marius and Sulla escalates into open conflict. Sulla eventually marches on Rome and declares himself dictator.

73–71 BC: Spartacus Revolt – A massive slave uprising led by the gladiator Spartacus is suppressed by Crassus.

63 BC: Catiline Conspiracy – A plot led by Lucius Sergius Catilina to overthrow the Republic is foiled by Cicero, the consul at the time.

60 BC: First Triumvirate – Julius Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus form an unofficial alliance to control Roman politics.

58–50 BC: Gallic Wars – Julius Caesar leads campaigns to conquer Gaul, expanding Roman territory significantly.

49–45 BC: Caesar's Civil War – Julius Caesar crosses the Rubicon River in 49 BC, sparking a civil war against Pompey and the Senate. Caesar emerges as the sole ruler of Rome.

44 BC: Assassination of Julius Caesar – On the Ides of March, Caesar is assassinated by senators, including Brutus and Cassius, who fear his growing power.



43 BC: Second Triumvirate – Formed by Octavian (later Augustus), Mark Antony, and Lepidus to defeat Caesar’s assassins.

42 BC: Battle of Philippi – Octavian and Mark Antony defeat Brutus and Cassius, consolidating their control.

31 BC: Battle of Actium – Octavian defeats Mark Antony and Cleopatra, leading to the end of the Roman Republic.

27 BC: Foundation of the Roman Empire – Octavian takes the title “Augustus,” marking the beginning of imperial rule.

14 CE: Death of Augustus; Tiberius becomes the second emperor.

37 CE: Caligula becomes emperor, known for his controversial rule.

41 CE: Claudius becomes emperor after Caligula’s assassination.

43 CE: Roman conquest of Britain begins under Claudius.

54 CE: Nero becomes emperor, remembered for the Great Fire of Rome in 64 CE.

68 CE: Nero commits suicide, leading to the “Year of the Four Emperors.”

69 CE: Vespasian becomes emperor, founding the Flavian Dynasty.

70 CE: Roman forces destroy Jerusalem during the First Jewish–Roman War.

79 CE: Eruption of Mount Vesuvius destroys Pompeii and Herculaneum. Titus becomes emperor.

96 CE: Nerva becomes emperor, beginning the era of the “Five Good Emperors.”

98 CE: Trajan becomes emperor, leading Rome to its largest territorial extent.

117 CE: Hadrian succeeds Trajan and consolidates the empire’s borders.

161 CE: Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus become co-emperors.

180 CE: Death of Marcus Aurelius; Commodus becomes emperor. •

193 CE: The Year of the Five Emperors, marked by political instability.

212 CE: Caracalla grants Roman citizenship to almost all free inhabitants of the empire.

235–284 CE: Crisis of the Third Century with frequent changes in rulers and internal turmoil.

284 CE: Diocletian becomes emperor and establishes the Tetrarchy.

313 CE: Constantine issued the Edict of Milan, legalizing Christianity.

324 CE: Constantine reunites the empire and establishes Constantinople as the capital.

337 CE: Death of Constantine; the empire is divided among his sons.

395 CE: Theodosius I dies, permanently dividing the empire into Eastern and Western Roman Empires.

410 CE: Rome is sacked by the Visigoths under Alaric.

476 CE: Fall of the Western Roman Empire; Romulus Augustulus is deposed by Odoacer.

527–565 CE: Reign of Justinian I in the Eastern Roman Empire, noted for legal reforms and architectural achievements.

1453 CE: Fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Empire, marking the end of the Eastern Roman Empire.

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