

What the Romans knew

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- **Part II**

What the Romans knew

Archaic Roma

Capitolium



Forum



(Museo della Civiltà Romana, Roma)

What the Romans Knew

- Greek!
 - Wars against Carthage resulted in conquest of the Phoenician and Greek civilizations
 - Greek pantheon (Zeus=Jupiter, Juno = Hera, Minerva = Athena, Mars= Ares, Mercury =Hermes, Hercules = Heracles, Venus = Aphrodite,...)
 - Greek city plan (agora/forum, temples, theater, stadium/circus)
 - Beginning of Roman literature: the translation and adaptation of Greek epic and dramatic poetry (240 BC)
 - Beginning of Roman philosophy: adoption of Greek schools of philosophy (155 BC)
 - Roman sculpture: Greek sculpture

What the Romans Knew

- Greek!
 - Greeks: knowing over doing
 - Romans: doing over knowing (never translated Aristotle in Latin)
 - “The day will come when posterity will be amazed that we remained ignorant of things that will to them seem so plain” (Seneca, 1st c AD)
 - Impoverished mythology
 - Indifference to metaphysics
 - Pragmatic/social religion (expressing devotion to the state)

What the Romans Knew

- Greek!
 - Western civilization = the combined effect of Greece's construction of a new culture and Rome's destruction of all other cultures.

What the Romans Knew

- The Mediterranean Sea (Mare Nostrum)
 - Rome was mainly a sea power, an Etruscan legacy
 - Battle of Actium (31 BC) created the “mare nostrum”, a peaceful, safe sea for trade and communication
 - Disappearance of piracy
 - Sea routes were used by merchants, soldiers, migrants, slaves, craftsmen, politicians, philosophers...
 - Age of the maritime villas (instead of maritime fortifications)
 - Patterns of trade for major commodities in an annual cycle (just like annual patterns of agriculture)

What the Romans Knew

- The Mediterranean Sea (Mare Nostrum)
 - Massive amount of commodities (oil, grain, wine) required to support the lifestyle of Roma
 - Giant cargo ships
 - Infrastructure of ports (docks, warehouses, markets, living quarters), roads, ship building, ship sailing, credit exchange, etc
 - Circulation of people and ideas (e.g., Christianity)

What the Romans Knew

- The Mediterranean Sea (Mare Nostrum)
 - From northern border of the world (Egypt, Mesopotamia) to...
 - “the” world (Greece) to...
 - the center of the world (Rome, Franks-Arabs-Byzantium)

What the Romans Knew

- Remnants of indigenous religion
 - Quirinus, Janus, Vesta (no human-like personal histories and genealogies, and originally no faces), who originally are at the same level as Jupiter and Mars
 - Jupiter rules everything except war, which is ruled by Mars
 - Quirinus represents the Roman assembly
 - Janus is the “first” god, who ruled over gods and humans when they still lived together
 - Vesta symbolizes the fire of Rome (her temple is the only one to be round)

What the Romans Knew

- Remnants of indigenous religion
 - Private cult under the pater familias to honor the ancestors
 - Rites of passage (birth, marriage, death)
 - Festivals of the dead (Parentalia in feb and Lemuria in may)
 - Specialized priests that can perform only some rites
 - Priestly hierarchy:
 - The king (rex sacrorum)
 - The flamines (Jupiter, Mars, Quirinus)
 - The vestals (virgins who keep the fire alight)
 - Pontifex Maximus (and pontifical college) who chooses the flamines and the vestals

What the Romans Knew

- Astrology
 - Manilius' didactic poem "Astronomica" (1st c AD)
 - Julius Maternus' treatise "Mathesis" (4th c AD)

What the Romans Knew

- Assimilation of Greek deities
 - Dioscuri (499 BC)
 - Mercury (495 BC)
 - Apollo (431 BC)

What the Romans Knew

- Roman vs Greek religion
 - A religion for the protection of the state, not of the individual
 - Morality = patriotism
 - An amoral religion: gods reward not goodness but offerings; prayers are mostly for material goods and victory in wars
 - Roman gods did not quarrel
 - Roman gods did not mingle with humans
 - Priestly class

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the early Republic
 - Two magistrates share power for one year
 - They are kept responsible for their actions
 - Senators elected for life (4th BC): the only element of continuity
 - The Greeks did not have a body of law: the Romans (5th c BC) create what the Greeks had never created

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the early Republic
 - The patricians (descendants of the “patres”, political rights, the “populus”, people) and the “equites” (businessmen)
 - Senate: heads of the various clans (senator is an unpaid job: the poor cannot afford it anyway)
 - Most senators are great landowners
 - The senate controls foreign policy and most domestic policy
 - The plebeians (can acquire property and wealth, but initially no political rights)
 - The proletarii (plebeians with no property)
 - The slaves
 - The women

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the early Republic
 - Spoils of war: wealth to the patricians, land to the plebeians
 - The majority of Roman citizens owe farming land
 - Senate de facto controlled by an oligarchy (the “optimates”) that benefits most from the conquests
 - A family is a mini-state, with the paterfamilias as the absolute tyrant (all family’s property is owned by the paterfamilias, no matter how old the sons are)
 - Men’s names: praenomen (first name), nomen (clan’s name), cognomen (family name) eg Gaius Julius Caesar, Publius Cornelius Scipio, Marcus Tullius Cicero...

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the early Republic
 - Army
 - Landowning a prerequisite for military service (the farmer is the ideal citizen of Cato's "De Agri Cultura")
 - Personal wealth dictates one's position in the army
 - Each soldier is responsible for buying his own equipment
 - The richest form the cavalry
 - Strong loyalty to the Roman state by the higher ranks
 - The state acquires the conquered lands. The soldiers share the booty (they methodically pillage conquered cities)

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the early Republic
 - Plebeian progress
 - Law of the Twelve Tables (450 BC): plebeians obtain basic rights and law is secularized (previously only the priests could decide what is right and wrong)
 - In 367 BC a plebeian becomes consul
 - In 300 a plebeian becomes priest
 - Lex Hortensia (287 BC): laws can also be passed by the Assembly (dominated by plebeians)

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the early Republic
 - A very moral state
 - Mos maiorum (Cato): set of fundamental virtues
 - Virtus: moral virtue
 - Pietas: devotion and loyalty to the family
 - Fides: being trustworthy
 - Gravitas: dignity and self-discipline
 - Constantia: perseverance

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the early Republic
 - A very moral state
 - The person who can best rule himself is also the best to rule the nation
 - Wealthier citizens are expected to sacrifice more for the common good
 - Senators (aristocrats) are more likely to die in battle than the proletarii

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the early Republic
 - A very moral state
 - Praise for spartan habits of the aristocracy
 - Modest, frugal, law-abiding citizens
 - "Qui, non quid efficere posset in re publica, cogitavit, sed quid facere ipse deberet"
(Cicero: "ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country")

What the Romans Knew

- Republic (senatus, praetors, consuls, decemvirate, triumvirate)
- New aristocracy (running the senate) composed of patricians and wealthy plebeians
- High standards of morality and integrity
- Growing importance of the senate
 - defense
 - foreign affairs
 - finance
 - colonies
- Law: attempt to unify humankind within a common language of government



What the Romans Knew

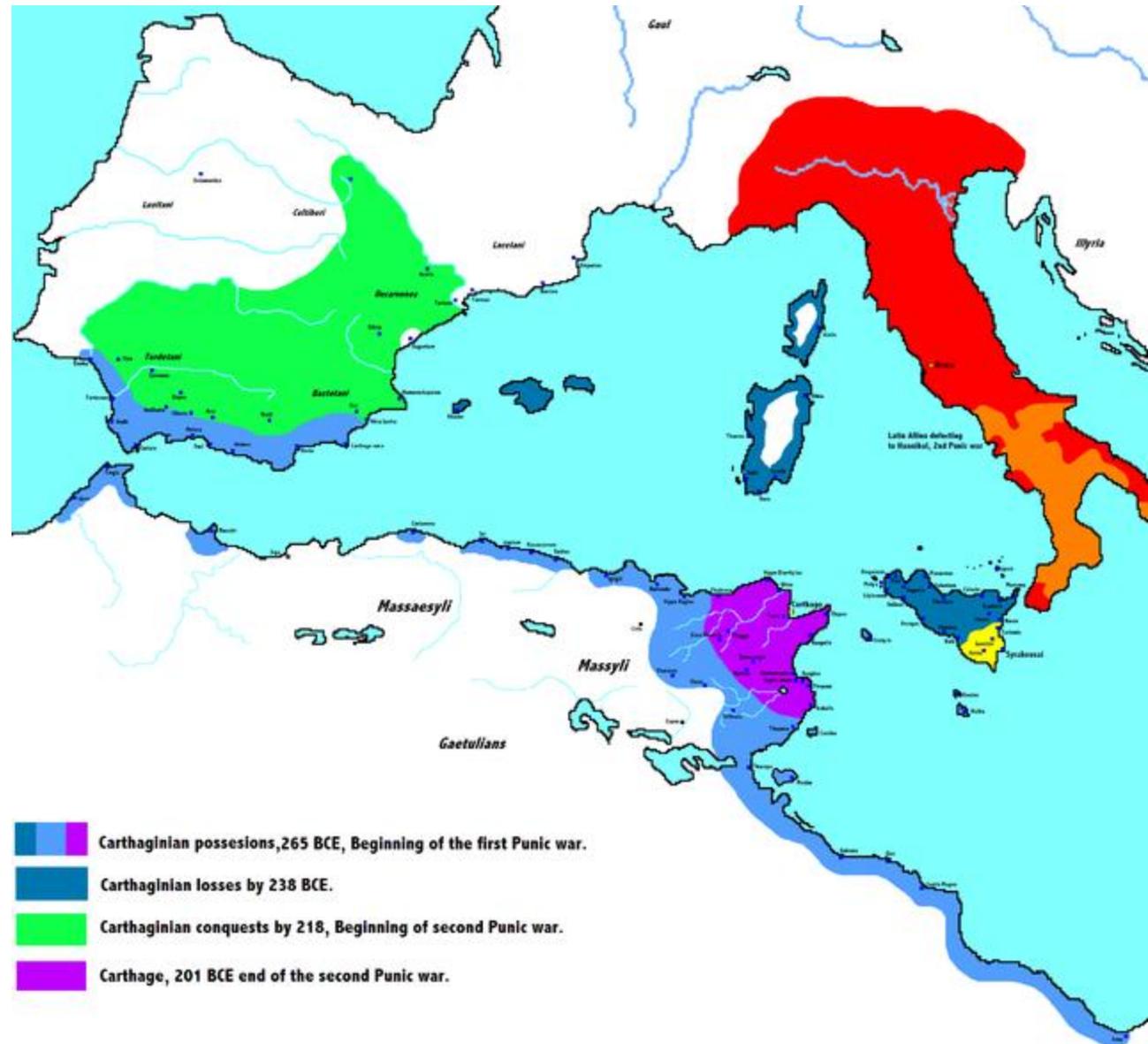
- Army
 - Roman army: the core is the heavy infantry (Greek model)
 - Military service is the privilege and duty of property owners (Greek model)
 - But the Roman army becomes a professional army (Greek soldiers were amateurs, busy with other occupations)
 - Rome's professional warriors are Roman citizens (in the Hellenic armies they were mostly mercenaries)
 - Ability to recruit massive numbers of soldiers (ie to absorb huge casualties)

What the Romans Knew

- Army
 - The sword ("gladius") is the main weapon of the Roman soldier (Greece: the spear)
 - The sword ("piluk") is a javelin (to be thrown)
 - The shield is big enough to be used as a weapon of offense
 - Ferocious fighters, famous for brutality and mutilations
 - A solid career in the military is a requirement for a career in public life
 - The leaders fight with the soldiers (during the Second Punic War 12 out of 20 consuls died in battle)

What the Romans Knew

- Punic wars



What the Romans Knew

- Punic Wars
 - Battle of Cannae (216 BC)
 - Carthago: 28,000 soldiers (10,000 horsemen and 37 elephants)
 - Roma: 86,000 soldiers (6,000 horsemen)

 - Battle of Zama (202 BC)
 - Carthago: 36,000 + 4,000 and 80 elephants
 - Roma: 34,000 +6,000

 - Rome destroys Carthage.
 - Deification of Scipio

What the Romans Knew

- Macedonian wars
 - Battle of Kynoskephalai/ Cynoscephalae (197 BC)
 - Rome: 26,000 soldiers of which 2,000 are horsemen
 - Macedonia: 25,000 soldiers of which 2,000 horsemen
 - Battle of Pydna (168 BC)
 - Rome: 38,000 soldiers (4,200 horsemen)
 - Macedonia: 44,000 soldiers (4,000 horsemen)
 - The Roman legion destroys the Macedonian phalanx
 - The Roman soldiers is better armed in man-to-man fight

What the Romans Knew

- Second Macedonian war



What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - 181 BC: Subjugation of Northern Italian Celts
 - 175 BC: Subjugation of Spanish Celts
 - 167 BC: Rome conquers Macedonia (end of third Macedonian war)
 - 146 BC: Rome conquers Carthage (end of third Punic war) and Greece (Battle of Corinth)

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - 202-146 BC: Opulence for the landowning class
 - Indemnities paid by Carthage, Macedonia and Syria
 - Loot from Seleucid Asia
 - Precious metals from Gaul and Spain
 - Slaves from victorious campaigns
 - Increasing dependency on war by an economy that used to be agricultural

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - 220 BC: A law forbids senators from entering business...
 - ...hence they buy land
 - ...hence they need slaves
 - ...hence the wars are also meant to capture slaves
 - The slaves of the countryside are not part of the household like the slaves of the cities
 - Inhuman conditions in the countryside causes "servile wars"

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Growing inequality between the elite and the ordinary citizens
 - Gradual extinction of the peasant farmers (expansion of large estates, system of slave labor, devastation of wars)
 - Exponential growth of the wealth of the senatorial class

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Moral decadence
 - Removal of external enemies who kept the Romans unified
 - Importation from conquered Greece of individualism
 - Importation from conquered Greece of decadent lifestyle (both vices and luxuries, licentia and luxuria)

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Moral decadence
 - Cato castigates aristocratic vices imported from Greece
 - Gaius Sallustius Crispus: Romans used to be austere, frugal, virtuous and disciplined before conquering Greece and Carthage

But the appetite for sexual offenses, gluttony, and other refinements had advanced to an equal degree: men played the woman's role [*viri muliebria pati*, literally "men endured things done to women"], women made their chastity available

- Horace laments "*Our parents' age, than our grandparents' worse/ has brought us forth, who shall beget, who are worse than they were, and soon to give birth to offspring even more degenerate*" ("*aetas parentum, peior auis, tulit nos nequiores, mox daturos progeniem vitiosiore*")

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - End of internal peace
 - Slave revolts (139 BC – 104 BC)
 - Revolt of Spartacus' gladiators (73-71 BC)
 - Civil strife between Tiberius Gracchus' faction (that favors redistribution of land to the impoverished citizens) and the Optimates (133 BC – 121 BC)
 - Gracchi's reforms fail
 - Insurrection by Italian allies (91-87 BC)
 - Civil strife between the popularis Marius and the optimate Sulla (88 BC – 79 BC), the first time that a Roman army marches on Roma (both armies massacre thousands of Romans)

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - The surplus of slaves acquired from the wars lowers demand for free workers
 - Poor urban population (300,000 citizens supported by the state when Caesar becomes dictator)
 - Equites control mining and logging
 - Social conflicts between wealthy aristocracy and the poor
 - Growing wealth of the provinces (most trade is in the hands of the more experienced Eastern traders)

What the Romans Knew

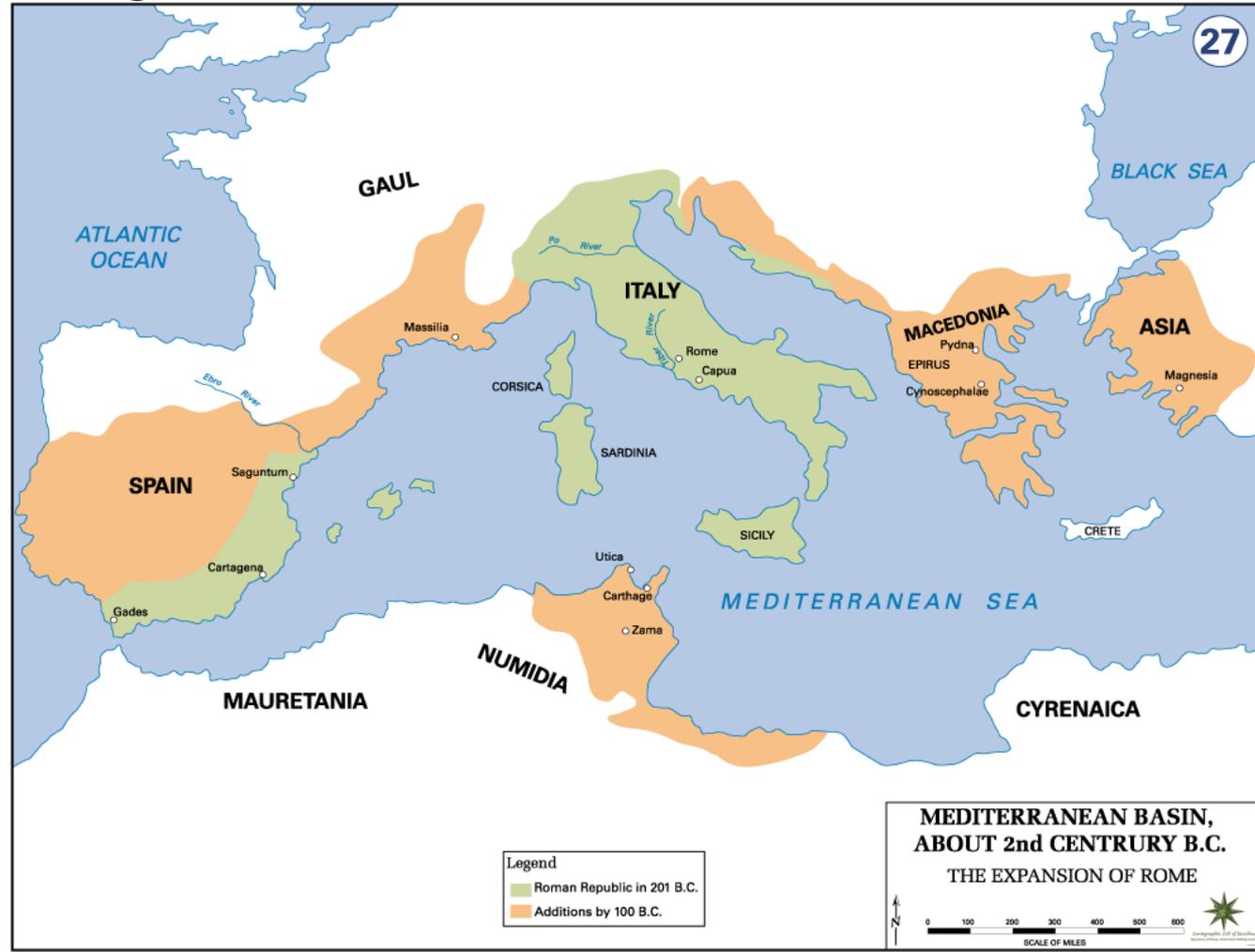
- Society of the late Republic
 - Citizenship
 - Legal and tax privileges (only citizens qualify for Roman law and are exempt from the poll tax)
 - Citizens cannot be tortured
 - Citizenship extended to conquered neighbors (and even freed slaves) to gain support
 - All Italians granted full citizenship (88BC)

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Empire building (as opposed to Greece's city states)
 - Citizenship granted to aliens, who then (having become Romans themselves) share in the next spoils of war
 - Romans take loot, land and citizens from defeated enemies
 - Provinces after the first Punic war

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Empire building



What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Slaves
 - The “nobiles” acquire land and their slaves farm it (few independent farmers left)
 - Economy dependent on slavery: all of the nation’s food supply and most of the industry
 - 30% of population (1st c BC)
 - Gladiators: professional slave fighters for amusement

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Women
 - Women are not allowed to hold any office
 - Women are usually known only by their clan's name (Cornelia, Julia, Claudia...)
 - Marriage is a simple agreement (no love)
 - Age of consent is 12 (14 for men)
 - The woman can retain her belongings
 - A woman can divorce
 - Women become patrons and investors
 - The wife of a citizen rarely works: she manages the slaves

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Women
 - A paterfamilias is any man, married or unmarried, with or without children, who does not owe obedience to a paterfamilias of his own (ie., a father, grandfather, etc.)
 - A mater familias is any married or widowed woman (with or without children)
 - At marriage, a woman in the Republic goes from the authority of her father, or his paterfamilias, to the authority of her husband, or his paterfamilias
 - But a father has more rights than a husband over a woman
 - In practice, **due to continuous warfare, women enjoy greater prominence**

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Women
 - Women virtually absent from religious life
 - Women forbidden to participate in sacrificial rituals
 - Vestal Virgins: strictly celibate priestesses of goddess Vesta for 30 years
 - Female slaves were at the mercy of masters
 - It was a very serious crime for a woman to have a sexual relationship with a slave, even if he was her own

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Women
 - Clodia (b. 94BC)
 - Defender of women's rights
 - Adulteress
 - Fluent in Greek and Philosophy

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Sex
 - A free man can have sex with his male slaves and male prostitutes
 - ... but having sex with another male citizen is a vice, and having sex with a young citizen is a grave offence, just like sex with (free) unmarried women (“stuprum”)
 - Unlike Greek pederasty (between older man and boy) Roman homoerotic sex is purely sex (and is equally practiced with young and old men)
 - Emphasis on virility

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Sex
 - However, lyric poetry is mostly un-viril: the male poet is subjected to the power of the woman (Cornelius Gallus/ Lycoris, Catullus/Clodia, Propertius/Cynthia, Tibullus/Delia)
 - Poetess: Sulpicia

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Agricultural society
 - Status symbols: land and slaves (not machines)
 - No liquid capital for investment

What the Romans Knew

- Society of the late Republic
 - Age of the palaces (Lucullus, 1st c BC)
 - Eating becomes the main occupation of the aristocracy
 - Colossal games (Caesar's games boast 10,000 gladiators and 400 lions)
 - Silks from India and China, perfumes and jewelry from the Middle East
 - More freedom and education for women

What the Romans Knew

- The Roman army
 - Engineering
 - Fortified camps
 - Bridges (Julius Caesar's 100m bridge over the Rhine completed in ten days)
 - Siege machines
 - Each legionnaire carries a gladius (sword), a pila (spear), a scutum (shield) and... a shovel
 - Logistics
 - Careful planning of supplies of provisions and men
 - Roads (to allow swift reinforcement and re-supply)

What the Romans Knew

- The Roman army
 - Battle of Cynoscephalae (198 BC)
 - Titus Quinctius Flaminius vs Philip V
 - 700 Romans were killed, 13000 Macedonians were either killed or taken prisoner
 - Triumph of the Roman legionary method over the Macedonian phalanx method
 - Open formation of small units armed with throwing spears and short swords
 - Elephants

What the Romans Knew

- The Roman army
 - Decline of the army
 - The wealthy booty of Phoenicia, Greece, Africa had motivated Roman citizens to fight in the army
 - Except for Persia, the new enemies required great military effort for scant economic rewards
 - Campaigns in faraway regions cost more to the soldiers because they had to neglect their farms for longer periods of time

What the Romans Knew

- The Roman army
 - Corruption
 - Numidian king Jugurtha bribes his way to the throne of Numidia

What the Romans Knew

- The Roman army
 - Marius' military reform (107 BC)
 - Opens the army to all Roman citizens, regardless of wealth
 - Proletarii are armed by the state
 - The legions become a professional force drawing from the poorest classes
 - Goal: to increase the number of soldiers for the growing needs of an expanding empire
 - Goal: to provide employment for the masses of jobless and landless citizens

What the Romans Knew

- The Roman army
 - Marius' military reform: consequences
 - Soldiers become **loyal to their general** (Sulla, Pompey, Julius, Octavian, Vespasian, Trajan, Septimius Severus) rather than Rome itself
 - Constant civil war and fall of the Republic
 - The army becomes armies (plural) of pillagers
 - Generals have to fight each other in order to rise to power
 - The enemy is no longer external but internal (Romans against Romans)
 - Soldiers become professionals alienated (and feared/despised by) the civilians

What the Romans Knew

- The Roman army
 - Marius' military reform: consequences
 - Julius Caesar
 - he makes the decision to go to war, not the Senate
 - he allows mass plundering to reward the troops
 - the troops are loyal to him not to Rome

What the Romans Knew

- Political assassinations
 - Tiberius Gracchus 133 BC
 - Gaius Gracchus 121 BC
 - Gaius Julius "Caesar" 44 BC
 - Cicero 43 BC

What the Romans Knew

- Civil Wars
 - Sulla I 88 BC
 - Sulla II 82 BC
 - Catilina 63 BC
 - Gaius Julius "Caesar" 49 BC
 - Antony, Brutus, Cassius 44 BC
 - Octavian 32 BC
 - Vespasian 68 AD
 - Septimius Severus 193 AD
 - and countless failed ones

What the Romans Knew

- Julius Caesar



What the Romans Knew

- Empire
 - Octavian/Augustus
 - Julius Caesar's nephew and adopted son
 - End of the civil wars (defeat of Marcus Antonius and Cleopatra, 31 BC)
 - Ends the Republic and proclaims the empire (27 BC)
 - Rome's population: one million people (4 times the population of Han's capital Xian)

What the Romans Knew

- Empire (27 BC – 476 AD)
 - Octavian/Augustus
 - Control of the army and their resources away from the Senate
 - The army is no longer the army of the Roman people (“populi Romani exercitus”) but the army of the emperor that enforces his political power at home
 - The Praetorian Guard becomes the emperor’s personal guard (and later the maker of the emperors)
 - Army assigned with the main task of defending the borders

What the Romans Knew

- Empire (27 BC – 476 AD)
 - Octavian/Augustus
 - Puritanical reforms (“Lex Iulia”, 18 BC): criminalization of sexual misbehavior and restoration of moral values (esp family):
 - compulsory marriage,
 - punishment of adultery,
 - children as the main motivation for a family
 - Slaves, prostitutes and foreigners are exempt
 - Men can have sex with slaves, prostitutes and foreigners without committing stuprum
 - Indirectly ends up creating a caste of prostitutes (prostitutes must register as such with the state)

What the Romans Knew

- Empire (27 BC – 476 AD)
 - Octavian/Augustus
 - Religious revival (vs Caesar's agnosticism) as a way to restore order after the chaos of the civil wars
 - Cult of personality: son of Apollo (extension of Greek passion for deifying heroes)
 - Imperial patriotism becomes a religion

What the Romans Knew

- Empire (27 BC – 476 AD)
 - Octavian/Augustus

Families with children on the Ara Pacis



What the Romans Knew

- Early empire (27 BC – 180 AD)
 - The republic had been unable to administer the conquests
 - Exploitation of provinces
 - Corruption of Roman citizens
 - The empire turns a city-state into the capital of an empire
 - The senate comes to represent the entire state not just Roma
 - The empire provides political and economic unity to conqueror and conquered
 - Centralized administration
 - Universal laws

What the Romans Knew

- Early empire (27 BC – 180 AD)
 - Two centuries of peace
 - All ancient (Western) civilizations under one emperor
 - Network of roads built originally for the legions but then used by traders
 - Globalized free trade
 - Traders do not need to cross a frontier
 - Same laws, same language, same coins
 - Safety of roads, rivers and sea
 - Boom of commerce and industry
 - Most people still live off agriculture, but urban development turns the empire into a federation of wealthy self-governing cities

What the Romans Knew

- Early empire (27 BC – 180 AD)
 - Most trade is internal (manufactured goods and agricultural goods)
 - External trade is mostly luxury items
 - Asia: perfumes, spices, gems, silk
 - Africa: gold, ivory
 - Central and Eastern Europe: furs, wax, slaves
 - Fortunes of merchants mostly invested in land

What the Romans Knew

- Early empire (27 BC – 180 AD)
 - 30 BC: Rome conquers Egypt and trade to the Red Sea and India increases
 - Rome has to pay gold and silver for spices
 - Pliny the Elder (1st c AD) complains about Rome's trade deficit with India

What the Romans Knew

- Early empire (27 BC – 180 AD)
 - "Periplus of the Erythraean Sea" (1st c AD)
 - a direct sailing route from the Red Sea to India was discovered by Hippalus in 1st c BC
 - trade with the Indian kingdom of Barygaza
 - trade extends to the Chera kingdom of south India
 - annual fair in Northeast India

What the Romans Knew

- Empire (27 BC – 476 AD)
 - Decline of the Senate
 - No succession rule
 - Increase in moral decadence



What the Romans Knew

- Imperialism
 - Late Republic and early empire: surround Rome with client states that control satellite tribes (two lines of defense)
 - Empire (after 60AD): incorporate client states and satellite tribes
 - Aggression and expansion (not just defense of the borders) remains the main principle of foreign affairs
 - Late empire (3rd century): defense of borders prevails over expansion

What the Romans Knew

- Imperialism
 - Motivation for imperial expansion
 - Military glory (the only factor that legitimizes political power)
 - Loot

What the Romans Knew

- Imperialism
 - Borders
 - The Roman empire assimilated ethnic groups that had already developed a viable economy and a stable society (absorbing vs enslaving)
 - Little or no technological gap between Romans and their “barbaric” neighbors
 - Small military force for such a long border
 - 300,000 men in the army and navy (year 23 AD) of which 250,000 guarding the borders
 - Divide et Impera
 - Desire by the client states and satellites to become Roman (law, stability, wealth)
 - Myth of one universal civilization under one universal emperor

What the Romans Knew

- Politics
 - Indians
 - Subject: Mysticism
 - Object: Cosmos
 - Greeks
 - Subject: Philosophy
 - Object: Humankind
 - Romans
 - Subject: Politics
 - Object: Nation

What the Romans Knew

- A fluid society
 - Aristocracy: senators and equites
 - Aristocratic families do not last many generations
 - Merchants can acquire power through land acquisition
 - Low birth rates in aristocratic families
 - Slaves can easily buy their freedom and many former slaves become wealthy and powerful

What the Romans Knew

- Women in the empire
 - Powerful women
 - Portraits of powerful women as goddesses (1st/2nd c AD)
 - Nude portraits of women are mostly former slaves

Empress Faustina, deified (2nd c AD)
(Getty Villa)



What the Romans Knew

- Powerful women
 - Cleopatra
 - Queen of Egypt under Roman occupation (69-30 BC)
 - Highly educated
 - Julius Caesar's lover (one child)
 - Mark Anthony's lover (three children)
 - Livia Drusilla (b. 58 BC)
 - Wife of Augustus and mother of Tiberius

What the Romans Knew

- Women in the empire
 - Julia Augusti Filia (b. 39 BC)
 - Daughter of Augustus (his only child)
 - First married at 14
 - Wife of wealthy Agrippa (second marriage) and then of Tiberius (Augustus' stepson)
 - Many affairs
 - Banished by Augustus to an island
 - Julia Agrippina (b. 16 AD)
 - Wealthy great-granddaughter of Augustus
 - Niece and wife of Claudius and mother of Nero (not Claudius' son)
 - Killed by Nero after she helped him become emperor

What the Romans Knew

- Women in the empire
 - Julia Domna (b.170 AD)
 - Daughter of a high priest of the temple of Baal in Syria
 - Wife of emperor Septimius Severus
 - Mother of Lucius Septimius Bassianus (Caracalla)
 - Ruled the empire while her husband was at war
 - Created a literary salon and patronized the arts
 - Introduced Eastern elements into Roman life

What the Romans Knew

- Women in the empire
 - Blandina
 - Slave girl tortured to death for being a Christian (177 AD)
 - Julia Maesa
 - De facto ruler of the Roman Empire during the reign of her grandson Elagabalus (219 AD)
 - Zenobia
 - Ruled over Roman Syria (266-74) and conquered Anatolia from the Persians and Egypt from Rome itself before being defeated by Rome

What the Romans Knew

- Women in the empire
 - Hypatia (4th c AD, Greek-language Egyptian of the Roman Empire): mathematician, philosopher and astronomer



What the Romans Knew

- Women in the empire
 - During the empire, due to continuous warfare, women enjoy greater prominence
 - Domestic chores increasingly delegated to slaves
 - Increasing education for women
 - Women are allowed to go out alone and to socialize
 - The shrine of goddess Vesta is open only to women, and the Vestal Virgins (in charge of the eternal sacred flame) wields influence over public life (maintains the last wills of emperors and all citizens)
 - Eventually, the first women's liberation movement

What the Romans Knew

- Sex
 - The phallus is popular furniture (good-luck charm in Pompeii, Herculaneum, Ostia) and the phallic god Priapus is very popular
 - Homosexuality rarely depicted

(Casa dei Vettii, Pompei, owned by former slaves who became very rich)

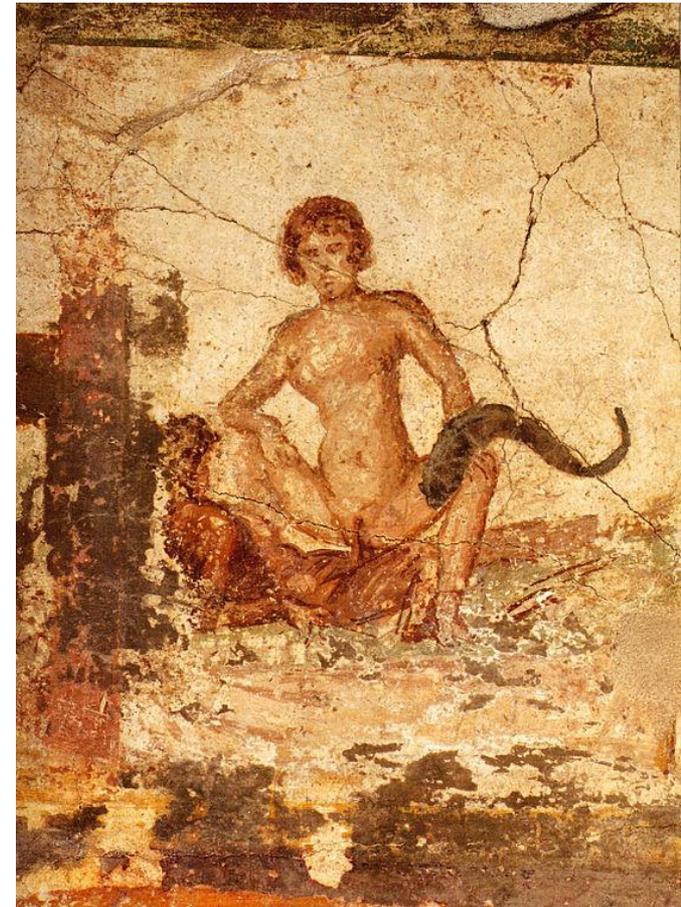


What the Romans Knew

- Sex

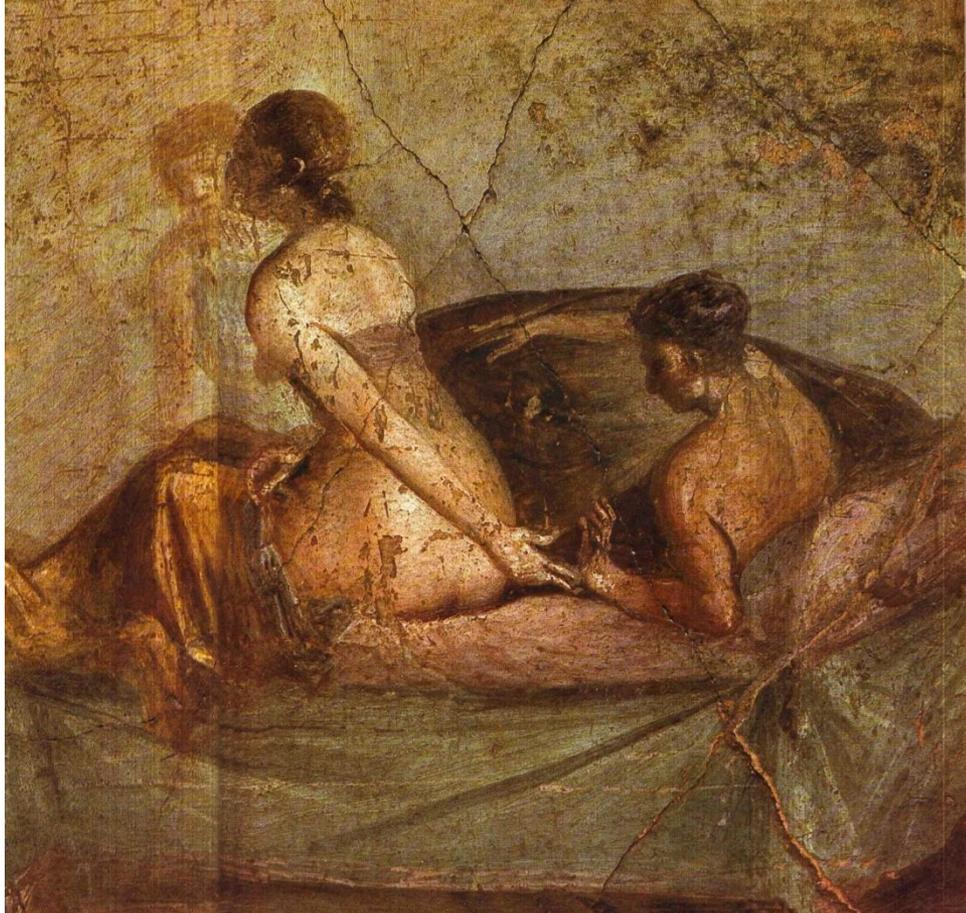


(Apodyterium, Pompeii)



What the Romans Knew

- Sex



(Pompeii house owned by former slave Lucius Caecilius Lucundus, now a banker, now at the Museo Archeologico in Napoli)

What the Romans Knew

- Sex

Warren Cup, 1st c AD
(British Museum)



Middle-aged man
Penetrating a very
young boy



Man and younger
lover

What the Romans Knew

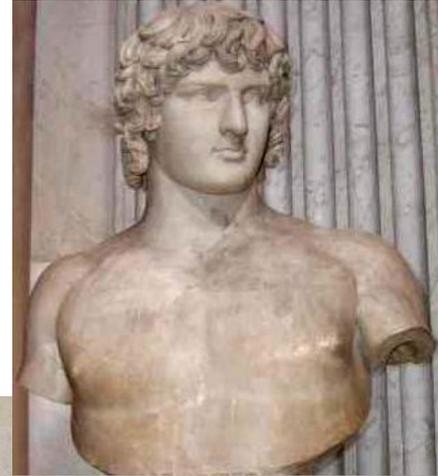
- Decadence
 - Prostitution
 - Homosexuality
 - Bloody entertainment (gladiator games, first held in 264 BC, usually followed by mass executions of criminals as a form of entertainment)

What the Romans Knew

- The five good emperors (96-180)
 - Nerva (96-98)
 - Trajan (98-117)
 - Hadrian (117-138)
 - Antoninus Pius (138-161)
 - Marcus Aurelius (161-180)

What the Romans Knew

- The cult of Antinous
 - Hadrian's younger companion who died in Egypt (130 AD)
 - Hadrian builds a city in Egypt, Antinoopolis, that becomes a holy city with oracles and healers
 - Antinous deified, especially in the eastern half of the empire: Antinous sacrifices himself and is reborn (just like Jesus)
 - More than 100 sculptures of Antinous survive



What the Romans knew

- Julio-Claudian empire:
 - Augustus/ Octavian/ Gaius Octavius
 - His wife Livia has a son Tiberius from a member of the Claudia family; when Augustus adopts him, the two families are joined
 - Tiberius (14 AD)
 - Claudius (41-54 AD)
 - Empowers former slaves (Narcissus and Pallas), that become very rich, and family members

What the Romans knew

- Julio-Claudian empire:
 - Torture
 - Roman Republic and Greece:
 - Only slaves can be tortured
 - Freeborn citizens cannot be tortured
 - (Eg, the centurion cannot flog St Paul because he is a citizen)
 - Empire:
 - Octavian tortures the praetor Quintus Gallus
 - Nero tortures Christians

What the Romans knew

- Septimius Severus (193 AD)
 - Pretorian guard drawn from legionnaires of the border legions, no longer exclusive of Italians (and soon no Italians will be part of it)
 - Between Septimius Severus' death (211) and Diocletian (284) most emperors will be murdered by the guard or the soldiers, lasting an average of three years each
 - Barbarization of the armed forces

What the Romans knew

- Caracalla, 212 AD: citizenship extended to all free individuals of the empire
- Foreign-born emperors:
 - Claudius (Gaul/France, 41 AD)
 - Trajan (Spain, 98 AD)
 - Hadrian (Spain?, 117 AD)
 - Septimius Severus (Africa/Libya, 193 AD)
 - Caracalla (Gaul/France, 211 AD)
 - Philippus I “the Arab” (Arabia/Syria, 244 AD)
- Germanic generals
 - Stilicho

What the Romans Knew

- Civil wars (193-285)



What the Romans Knew

- Civil wars (193-285)
 - The emperor becomes a puppet of his soldiers, particularly of the Praetorian Guard (often the real emperor makers)
 - No more Italians in the Praetorian Guard
 - Emperor Maximus (235) never visits Rome
 - The Praetorian Guard assassinates the emperor chosen by the Senate and appoints the ten-year old Gordian III (238)
 - Gallienus (261) forbids aristocrats from entering the army, further marginalizing Rome

What the Romans Knew

- Economic regression
 - Civil wars
 - Incompetent emperors
 - Decline of agricultural output
 - Scarcity of slave labor makes it less profitable for landlords to invest in agriculture
 - Soil exhaustion
 - Great estates produce mainly for their own consumption
 - Productivity does not keep up with population growth (no invention of machines)
 - Taxation on land
 - Backward shift from the cities to the countryside

What the Romans Knew

- The Illyrians
 - Diocletian (reunites the empire in 294 but creates two “augusti” for East and West and shifts foreign policy from offensive to defensive)
 - Constantine (moves the capital to Byzantium in 350)
 - Loss of power and prestige by the city of Roma

What the Romans Knew

- **Latin alphabet**

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>L</u>
<u>M</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>Q</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>V</u>	<u>X</u>	

- C stood for both *g* and *k*.
- The first I (between *F* and *H*) is the Greek *zeta*.
- The second I stood for both *i* and *j*.
- For a long time, R was written *P*.
- V stood for *u*, *v*, and *w*.

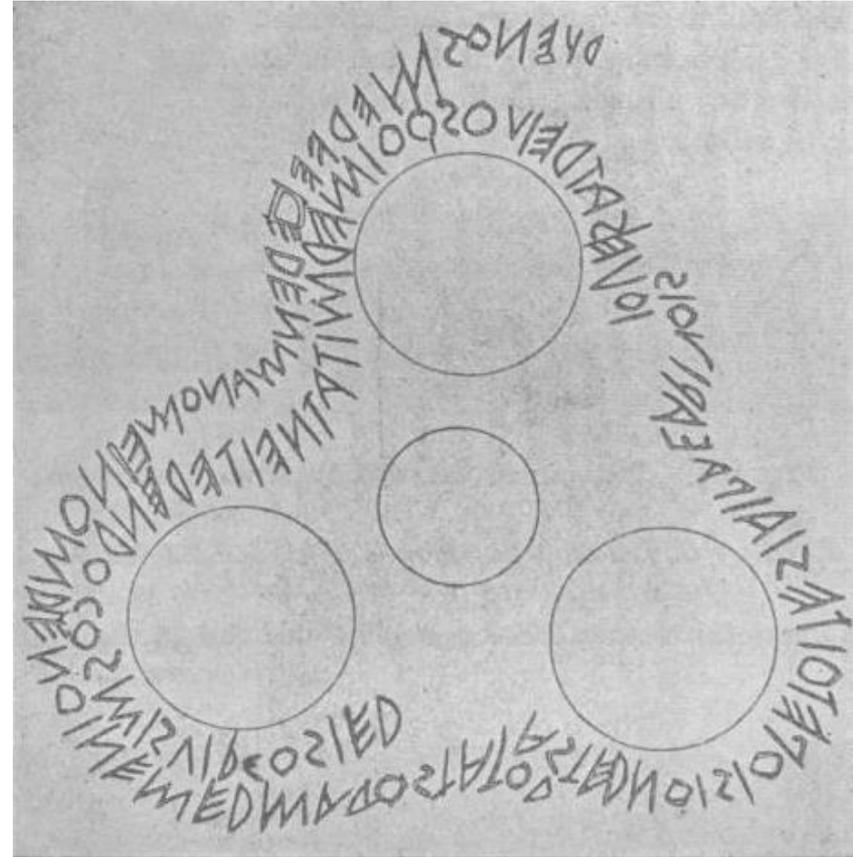
- **Latin was written left-to-right**

What the Romans Knew

- **Roman numerals**
 - **I (1), V (5), X (10), L (50), C (100), D (500), M (1000)**
 - **No zero**
 - **1999 = MCMXCIX**

What the Romans Knew

- **Latin alphabet**



Duenos inscription of 6th c,
oldest Latin inscription

What the Romans Knew

- **Roman units of measurement**
 - **League (leuga): the distance a person can walk in one hour**
 - **Mile: the distance a Roman legion can march in 1000 paces (2000 steps)**
 - **Foot: divided into 16 inches, not 12**
 - **Pound (libra): divided into 12 ounces**

What the Romans Knew

- **Julian Calendar (Julius Caesar, 45 BC)**
 - **Motivation: fight corruption of time-keeping bureaucrats**
 - **Greek astronomer Sosigenes from the Egyptian calendar of 365 days**
 - **Solar calendar of 365 days (but 46 BC lasted 445 days)**
 - **Leap year every fourth year**
 - **753 BC was year 1 AUC (ab urbe condita)**
 - **11 min and 14 sec longer than the solar year**
 - **Week of seven days (first human division of time not related to natural cycles)**

What the Romans Knew

- **Julian Calendar (Julius Caesar, 45 BC)**
 - **12 months**
 - **Month of Janus**
 - **Month of februa (the festivals of purification)**
 - **Month of Mars (originally, the first month of the year)**
 - **Month of opening**
 - **Month of Maia (or of maiores, festivals of old age)**
 - **Month of Juno (or of iuniores, festivals of youth)**
 - **Quintilis = Julius (July)**
 - **Sextilis = Augustus (August)**
 - **Eight-day week (market day, market day-7, etc)**
 - **Days within a month identified by distance to**
 - **Kalendae (first day in the month)**
 - **Nonae (the 7th day in 31 day months or the 5th day in other months)**
 - **Idus (the 15th day in 31 day months or the 13th in other months)**

What the Romans Knew

- **Saturnalia**
 - celebrated for seven days, from December 17 to 23
 - business holiday
 - gifts
- **Lupercalia**
 - honoring Lupercus, a pastoral god, but basically the founding of Rome
 - celebrated on February 15
- **Equiria**
 - honoring Mars
 - celebrated on February 27 and March 14
 - Horse races in the Campus Martius

What the Romans Knew

- **Bacchus (Dyonisos)**



Sarcophagus of 220 AD with Bacchus scenes (Getty Villa)

What the Romans Knew

- **Popularity of Oriental cults during the empire**
 - **Cybele**
 - **Isis (185 AD)**
 - **Sol Invictus (211 AD)**
 - **Mithra (urban lower classes)**
 - **Christianity (urban lower classes)**

Sculpture of Isis
(Villa Adriana, 2nd c AD)



Mithra

(Weisbaden Museum, 2nd c AD)



Isis Procession

(Weisbaden Museum, 1st c AD)



What the Romans Knew

- **Roman Social Economy**
 - **Wealthiest province: Africa**
 - **Cultural province: Eastern empire (Greek)**
 - **Maritime traders: Syrians**
 - **Merchants and lenders: Jews**
 - **Most trafficked route: Alexandria to Rome (grain route)**

What the Romans Knew

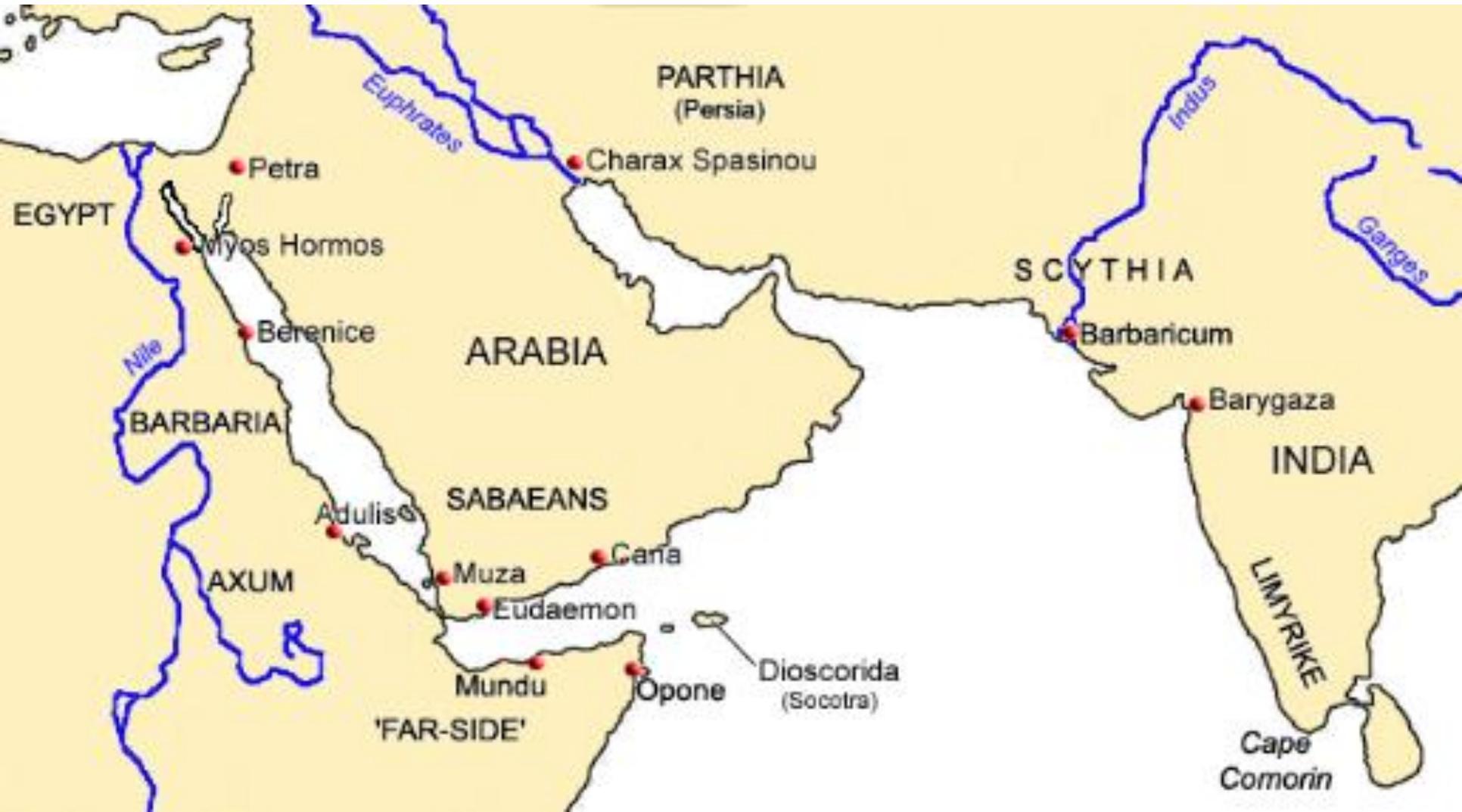
- **Contacts with the Far East**
 - **97 AD: Chinese general Pan Chao sends an embassy to the Roman Empire**
 - **107 AD: The Roman Empire sends an embassy to India**
 - **Roman trading posts on the eastern coast of India and in Siam**
 - **Andhra ivory discovered in Pompei**
 - **Zhou bronze discovered in Roma**

What the Romans Knew

- **The “Periplus Maris Erythraei” (1st c AD, written in Greek)**
 - **A pilot’s guide to sailing from the Red Sea (Egypt) to India**
 - **120 ships set off annually for the year-long trip to India**
 - **Goal: spices (mainly pepper)**
 - **Destination: the “borrea piperataria” (built 92 AD in the forum)**

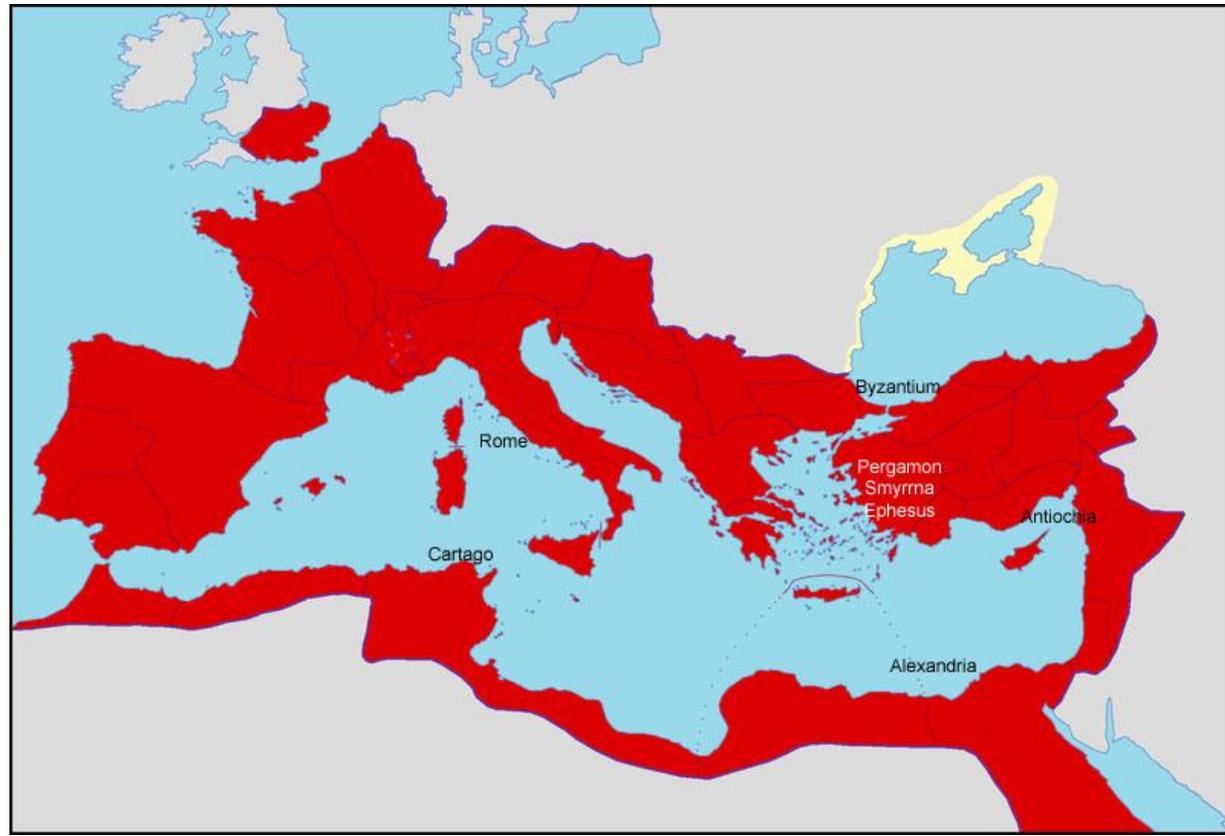
What the Romans Knew

- The “Periplus”



What the Romans Knew

- Cities
 - Roma (600,000 in 1 AD, 1million in 100AD)
 - Alexandria (500,000 in 100AD)
 - Ephesus (400K)
 - Cartago (350K)
 - Antiochia (350K)
 - Smyrna (250K)
 - Pergamum (150K)
 - ...
 - Byzantium (30K)
 - ...
 - Athens



What the Romans Knew

- West vs East
 - West: Roma
 - East: Alexandria, Ephesus, Antiochia, Smyrna, Pergamum, Byzantium, Athens
 - West: poor, rural, new civilization, Latin
 - East: rich, urban, old civilizations, Greek

What the Romans Knew

- Population (circa 350)
 - Western Roman Empire
 - Britain: 0.75M
 - Gaul & Rhineland (France): 5M
 - Spain: 4M
 - Italy: 6M
 - Sicily, Sardinia & Corsica: 0.25M
 - Africa, Numidia, Mauretania (African coast): 3M
 - Rhaetia, Noricum, Pannonia & Dalmatia (Eastern Europe): 3M
 - Total Western Empire: 22M

What the Romans Knew

- Population (circa 350)
 - Eastern Roman Empire
 - Moesia & Thrace (Balkans): 2.5M
 - Greece & Macedonia: 3.5M
 - Asia Minor (Turkey): 15M
 - Syria, Palestine & Mesopotamia: 6.5M
 - Egypt: 6.5M
 - Cyrenaica: 0.5M
 - Total Eastern Empire: 34M
 - Total Roman Empire: 56M

What the Romans knew

- Epictetus (Phrygia, 100 AD)
 - Stoicism
 - The human reason is limited: there are many things that humans cannot know
 - God/Nature/Universe is pure/perfect reason
 - Because they don't know, it is pointless for humans to follow their intellect and strive for earthly things
 - Humans must accept fate, which comes from God's perfect intellect
 - Humans must be tolerant of the faults of other humans
 - Live according to nature

What the Romans knew

- Epictetus (100 AD)
 - Control thy passions, lest they take vengeance on thee.
 - First learn the meaning of what you say, and then speak.
 - Make the best use of what is in your power, and take the rest as it happens.
 - The good or ill of a man lies within his own will.
 - Let only what is necessary be said, and in a few words.

What the Romans knew

- Theater: Plautus (b254BC), first major Latin literature (imitation of Greek comedies)
- Golden Age of Rome's literature
 - Ciceronian period (70 - 43 BC)
 - Prose: Cicero (b106 BC), Julius Caesar (100 BC)
 - Science/philosophy: Terentius Varro (b116 BC)
 - Poetry: Catullus (b87 BC), Lucretius (b99 BC)

What the Romans knew

- Cicero (b106 BC)
 - Stoicism
 - Virtue and justice
 - “To philosophize is to learn how to die”

What the Romans knew

- Golden Age of Rome's literature
 - Augustan period (43 BC - 14 AD)
 - Roman art emancipates itself from the Greek model
 - Architecture: temples, basilicas, marble
 - Statues (instead of making copies of looted Hellenistic statues)

What the Romans knew

- Golden Age of Rome's literature
 - Augustan period (43 BC - 14 AD)
 - Satire: invented by Lucilius (2nd c BC)
 - Poetry:
 - Horatius/Horace (b65 BC): pleasure, condition of the poet
 - Ovidius/Ovid (b43 BC): eros, satire
 - Theater: Seneca (b4 BC)
 - History: Livius/Livy (b59 BC)

What the Romans knew

- Golden Age of Rome's literature
 - Augustan period (43 BC - 14 AD)
 - Seneca
 - The human being consists of a soul and a body, and death separates the two (stoicism)
 - The individual soul is an expression of the universal soul
 - “The problem is not that we have a short time to live, but that we waste a lot of it”

What the Romans knew

- Golden Age of Rome's literature
 - Augustan period (43 BC - 14 AD)
 - Poetry:
 - Vergilius/Virgil (b70 BC): epic glorification of Rome's greatness
 - » Modeled after Homer
 - » Aeneas goes to Hades
 - » Moral poem: the dead are divided by ethical category
 - » Civic poem: Aeneas comes back to see the glory of Rome
 - » Arcadia: golden age of simple country pleasures, dream of rural tranquility

What the Romans knew

- Art of Memory
 - "Ad Herennium" (85 BC): artificial memory by means of places (e.g., the sequence of rooms in a familiar building) and images (symbols of the concepts to be remembered)
 - Cicero's "De Oratore" (55 BC)
 - Marcus Fabius Quintilianus' "Institutio Oratoria" (95 AD)

What the Romans knew

- Lucretius (b. 99 BC)
 - Epicureanism
 - Materialism: the world is made of atoms
 - Conservation of matter and motion (“ex nihilo nihil fit”)
 - Life is material and is due to moving atoms
 - Free will is inherent in atoms too
 - Life’s evolution by natural selection of all possible combinations of atoms
 - Human evolution from uncivilized to civilized society

What the Romans knew

- Marcus Manilius (b. ## BC)
 - Didactic poem "Astronomica"

What the Romans knew

- Plutarch (b. 46 AD)
 - Theseus' ship: over the years the ship is rebuilt piece by piece with new wood as the old one rots. Is it still the same ship?

What the Romans knew

- Lucretius (b99 BC)
 - Mind (“animus”) is an organ like others
 - Consciousness (“anima”) is distributed throughout the body
 - Mind and consciousness die with the body
 - Religion is evil
 - Both hell and heaven are on Earth: respectively, ignorance and knowledge
 - Virtue is not about serving the gods but about living in harmony with reason
 - “Death is nothing to us... it is only the natural fulfillment of life”

What the Romans knew

- History: Tacitus (b56 AD)
- Biography: Plutarch (b46 AD)
- Philosophy: Epictetus (b55 AD), stoicism, universal brotherhood of humankind, identity of nature and destiny, happiness by acceptance
- Novels

What the Romans knew

- Picaresque novel:
 - Petronius Arbiter's "Satyricon" (~60 AD)
 - The promiscuous Encolpius is in love with the boy Giton, who abandons him for Encolpius' former lover Asciltus
 - The vulgar slave Trimalchio climbs to the top of society

What the Romans knew

- Picaresque novel:
 - Lucius Apuleius' "Metamorphoses/ Golden Ass" (~160)
 - The inept Lucius is saved by the goddess Isis, converts to her cult and becomes a celibate minister of it
 - Tales of witchcraft
 - Cupid & Psyche (a fairy tale)
 - Realistic tales of brutality and depravity caused by evil wives

What the Romans knew

- The Afterlife
 - Romans not interested in individual immortality
 - Immortality via the state: the Roman Empire is eternal

What the Romans knew

- The Afterlife in Plutarch's time
 - The soul of good people goes to the heavens
 - The soul of bad people goes to the underworld

What the Romans knew

- **Warfare**

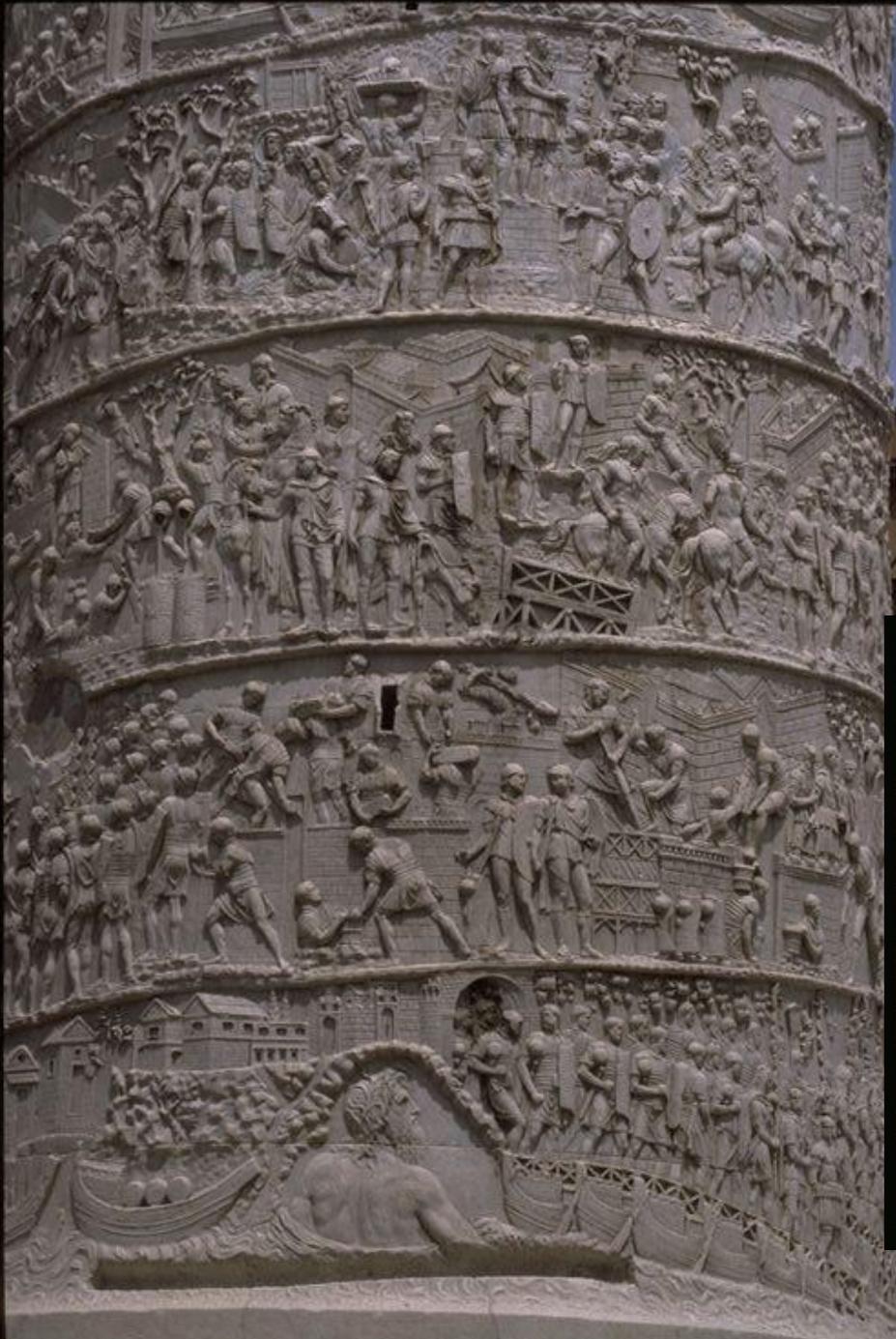


What the Romans knew

- **Warfare**

- Trajan's column (113 AD)

- Marcus Aurelius column (193 AD)





Impaled enemies

What the Romans knew



Barbarians attacking a Roman fort

What the Romans knew



War machines

Decapitation of prisoners



German prisoners 139

What the Romans knew

- Science
 - Plinius' "Historia Naturalis" (77 AD)
 - "The Natural History is a lasting monument to Roman ignorance" (William Durant)

What the Romans knew

- **Science**

- Galen (b 129AD)

- Dissection of animals (dissection of humans prohibited by Roman law)
 - The brain is the center of control (not the heart as Aristotle believed)
 - Life is due to animal spirits
 - The heart continuously injects animal spirits into new blood
 - The brain's three ventricles are used by spirits to travel through the body
 - Galen's medicine remained the dogma for 1300 years

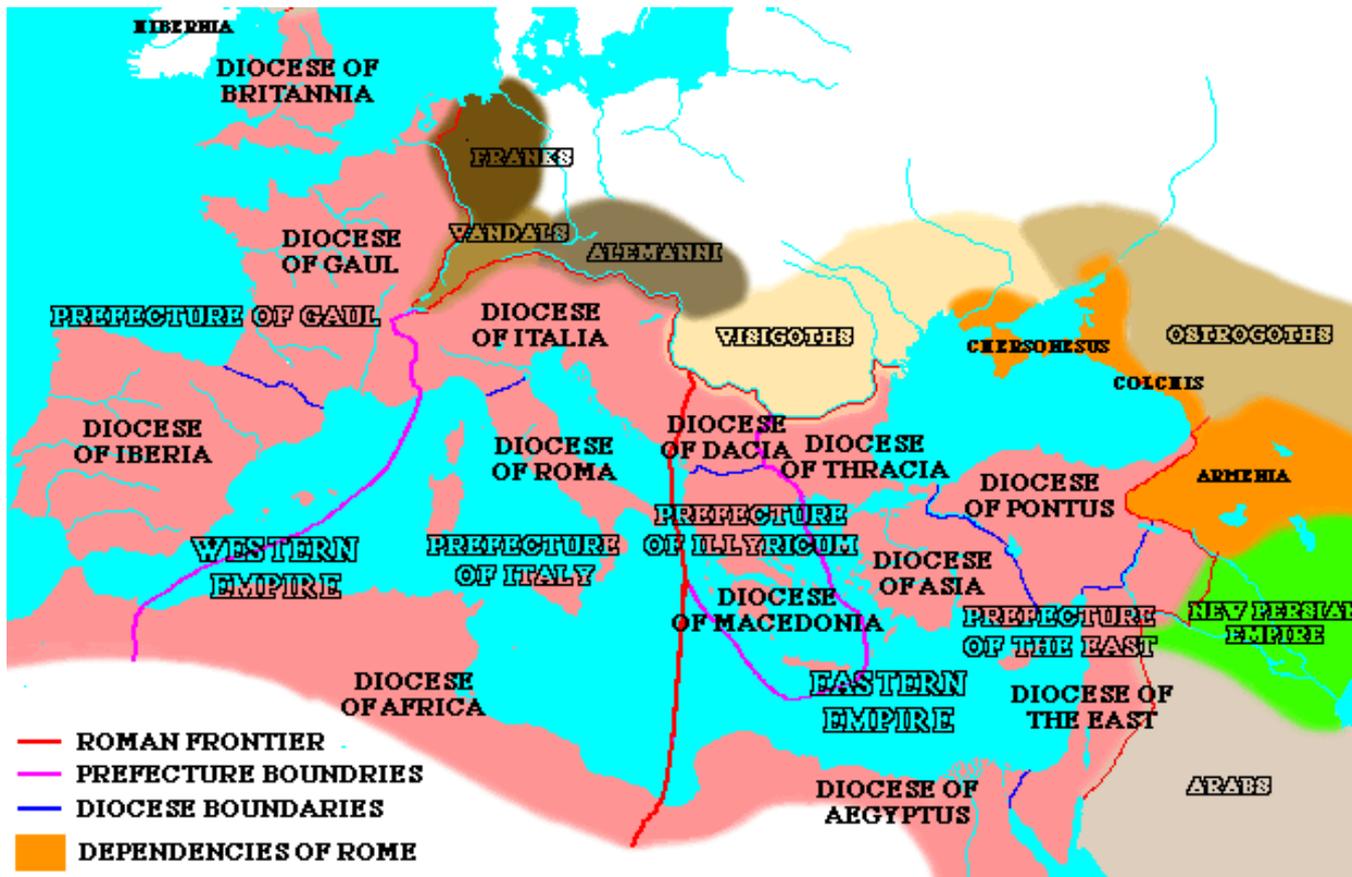
What the Romans knew

- **Constantine, emperor from 306 to 337**
 - **Arch of Constantine**
 - **Basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano**
 - **Basilica of San Pietro**
 - **Basilica of San Sebastiano on the Appian Way**
 - **Basilica of Santi Marcellino e Pietro on the Via Labicana (includes Tor Pignattara)**
 - **Council of Nicaea**
 - **Constantinople (West and East)**



What the Romans knew

- Constantine, emperor from 306 to 337



Western and Eastern Roman Empire in 330

What the Romans knew

- **Western and Eastern empire (324 AD)**
 - **State bureaucracy moves to Constantinople**
 - **The Church remains in Rome**
 - **De-facto separation of Church and State**
 - **The Church inherits the bureaucratic structure of the State (emperor=pope, senate=cardinals, etc)**
 - **Western Europe is Latin, Eastern Europe is Greek**
 - **Western Europe is dominated by the Church, Eastern Europe by the State**
 - **The East is richer and more productive**

What the Romans knew

- **Western and Eastern empire (324 AD)**
 - **Disintegration of Western society**
 - **Exodus from cities towards the countryside**
 - **Aristocrats live on lands worked by peasants (“coloni”) and slaves**
 - **Disappearance of artisan and merchant classes**
 - **Disappearance of the urban middle class**
 - **Agrarian society instead of trade and manufacturing society**
 - **Western Europe becomes a federation of large estates**
 - **Towards a manorial society**
 - **Huge taxation to maintain the army**

What the Romans knew

- **Western and Eastern empire (324 AD)**
 - **Disintegration of Western society**
 - **Antiquity (Near East, Greece, Phoenicians, early Roman): political, religious and economic power emanate from urban settlements**
 - **Frontier colonization and massive deforestation create large estates with slave and peasant labor and indirectly distributes power from the cities to the countryside**
 - **The disintegration of the empire reflects the change in the traditional balance of power between urban and rural settlements**

What the Romans knew

- Western and Eastern empire (324 AD)
 - Disintegration of Western society: what will happen next
 - Decline of town life
 - Decentralized society
 - The town is reborn as a commercial center for dispersed rural settlements
 - Two societies (and two legal systems) coexist: the rural world (feudal) and the urban world (e.g. city states)

What the Romans knew

- The economic effect of Christianity
 - When Jesus was born, half of the population of the western world were slaves
 - Christianity marked the first major ideological opposition against slavery.
 - Massive emancipation of slaves by early Christians
 - St Augustine proclaimed slavery a sin
 - Slavery all but disappeared from Christian Europe
 - Revival of slavery under the Arabs

What the Romans knew

- The Persian wars
 - 44 BC: Julius Caesar's plan to invade Persia is cut short by his assassination
 - Persia controls the trade of Chinese silk and Indian spices
 - Alternative route 1: the Asian steppes of the Turks
 - Alternative route 2: Arabia to Indian Ocean
 - 116 AD: Rome tries to conquer Mesopotamia
 - Rome and Persia establish satellite kingdoms in both Central Asia and Arabia
 - Roman-controlled kingdoms at the border with Arabia: Petra (annexed in 106), Palmyra (annexed in 194)

What the Romans knew

- The army
 - 600,000 soldiers in 425 (352,000 in the east)
 - One cavalryman for every three foot soldiers
 - Wide assortment of short-distance and long-distance weapons (slingers, archers)
 - But in the West most of the soldiers are foederati
 - A typical “barbarian”: Alaric, a Goth raised in Constantinople who spoke Latin and Greek and who had served in the Roman army
 - A typical general: Stilicho, the son of a Vandal

What the Romans knew

- The end of Italy
 - 476: Deposition of the last western Roman emperor
 - 493: Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, is the most enlightened ruler of Italy in centuries
 - 536-552: Eastern Roman emperor Justinian causes the devastation of Italy in trying to reconquer it (the Barbar wars)
 - 554: Rome is reduced to a village of 30,000 people (Constantinople had one million people)
 - 568-774: Lombards rule Italy
 - Economic decline of Italy causes economic decline of Europe

What the Romans knew

- The Persian wars
 - 225: The Sasanids take over the Parthians in Persia
 - 244-384: Continuous warfare between Sasanids and Rome
 - Trade boom in Arabia during the Perso-Roman wars
 - 384-502: Long peace (mostly) between Roman Empire and Sasanid Empire
 - 384-502: Decadence of Arabia, or “jahiliyya” (trade can take place directly between Rome and Persia)
 - 395: Division of Eastern and Western Empires
 - Western empire invaded by Barbarians
 - Eastern (Byzantine) empire = Greek (but they called themselves “rhomaioi”, “romans” in Greek)

What the Romans knew

- The Persian wars
 - 502-628: Continuous warfare between Sasanids and Byzantine Empire
 - Trade boom in Arabia
 - Ethiopia (Christian ally of Byzantium) attacks Yemen (Jewish ally of Sasanids) but the Sasanids prevail
 - 552: Nestorian monks smuggle silkworm eggs from China to Byzantium: local production of silk makes Arabia less strategic
 - Anarchy in Arabia
 - Many Christian and Jewish communities left in Arabia

Why the Roman Empire Fell

- Did not fall, merely evolved
- It had already been falling for two centuries
- Geopolitics
 - The Roman empire indirectly trained, funded and armed the Barbarian kingdoms until they became a superior military force
 - Pressure of Asiatic people on the Germanic people (exodus of Gothic tribes)
 - Persian wars
 - Too big, long borders
- Economics
 - Huge trade deficit of Italy with the provinces
 - Breakup of Western economy and urban life

Why the Roman Empire Fell

- Social issues
 - Orientalization (philosophy of personal immortality instead of state immortality)
 - Christians
 - Slavery
 - Entertainment
 - Plague
 - Mass immigration of foreigners
 - Democratization of the army

Why the Roman Empire Fell

- Political fragility
 - No succession rule
 - Incompetent emperors
 - Gap between management and technology
 - Roman leaders considered their internal rivals more dangerous than the barbarians crossing the borders

Why the Roman Empire Fell

- After the fall



Why the Roman Empire Fell

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