

# The Roman Empire

ca. 30 BCE to 476 CE

# Rome After Caesar

The rise of Octavian Augustus.

# Early Empire

**I. Rise of the Empire** – Augustus Caesar (the first emperor)

**A. Principate System** – How Roman emperors became Emperors (precedent set with Augustus Caesar)

1. Current emperor selects his successor
  2. Senate and army give their approval
- \*. Failure to approve --> Civil war



Statue of Caesar Augustus,  
in the garb of Jupiter.

# Early Empire

**B. Pax Romana** (27 BCE – 180 CE) – Augustus Caesar’s policies eventually cause a period of about 200 years of “Roman Peace”

1. Building and beautification of Rome – “from a city of brick into a city of marble”
2. Encouraged trade throughout the Empire – increased **grain importation**
3. **Building of infrastructure** – roads, aqueducts, public works
4. Support of the arts







## II. Territories of the Empire

A. By the time that Rome became “an Empire” (ca. 30 BCE) Rome had already conquered all or most of what is now **Italy, Greece, France, Spain, Northern coast of Africa, Syria, Cyprus, Turkey, England and Wales.**

B. Under Augustus Caesar – Roman Legions conquered central Europe to the Danube River, central Nile River Valley, and what is now Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon

## Growth of Rome

500 B.C.-A.D. 107

- Original Roman Republic (500 B.C.)
- Imperial gains by 264 B.C.
- Imperial gains by 146 B.C.
- Imperial gains by 44 B.C.
- Extent of Roman Empire by A.D. 107

Germanic Tribes

ATLANTIC OCEAN

BRITAIN

GAUL

Rhone R.

Rhine River

Danube River

SPAIN

CORSICA

SARDINIA

Rome

MACEDONIA

Byzantium

Black Sea

Tigris R.

ASIA MINOR

GREECE

Athens

Antioch

SYRIA

Damascus

New Carthage

SICILY

Carthage

Zama

Mediterranean Sea

Euphrates R.

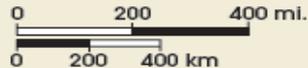
NUMIDIA

Cyrene

Alexandria

Nile R.

AFRICA



# III. Government System of the Roman Empire

## A. Basic Government Structure

1. Emperor – Head of government, army, and official religion (*pontifex maximus*)
2. Senate – Legislature (had fewer abilities than it did during the Roman Republic)
3. Legates – “royal governors” who ran the provinces in the name of the Emperor (appointed by the Emperor himself)

4. Bureaucracy – civil servants operate government departments handling day-to-day operation of imperial infrastructure

a. Imperial level – worked under the Emperor

b. Provincial level – worked under each Legate

B. Legal Systems – 2 law codes

1. *Jus Civile* – Law code for citizens

2. *Jus Gentium* – Law code for “non-citizens” (foreigners)

## IV. Culture/Society of the Empire

### A. Religion

#### 1. "Official" Religions

- a. Cult of the Emperor
- b. Greco-Roman Polytheism

#### 2. "Unofficial" Religions

- a. Tolerated – any religion that did not threaten the authority of the Emperor or dispute the gods - - 2 popular examples:
  - 1. Mithraism – Persian religion usually practiced by Soldiers
  - 2. Cult of Isis



b. Not Tolerated – challenged the Emperor or gods' authorities

1. Judaism

2. Christianity

## B. Family Structure

1. paterfamilias – father is dominant and is the “guardian” of the family

2. women – by law, all women must have a legal guardian

a. if unmarried – father (if father is dead, then this duty fell to the head of the household)

b. if married - husband

## C. Social Classes

1. Upper Class – usually military officers and politicians

a. had estates (villas) in the countryside/outskirts of cities

b. many owned *latifundia* – large plantations

2. Lower Classes

a. lived in *insulae* – apartment complexes within the city

b. urbanization was rampant – for more opportunities





c. Panem et Circensus: “bread and circuses:” the Roman government frequently dealt with the growth in poverty of the lower classes by:



1. staging gladiatorial games or races
2. giving out food (bread) at these events
3. Slaves – usually foreigners and criminals

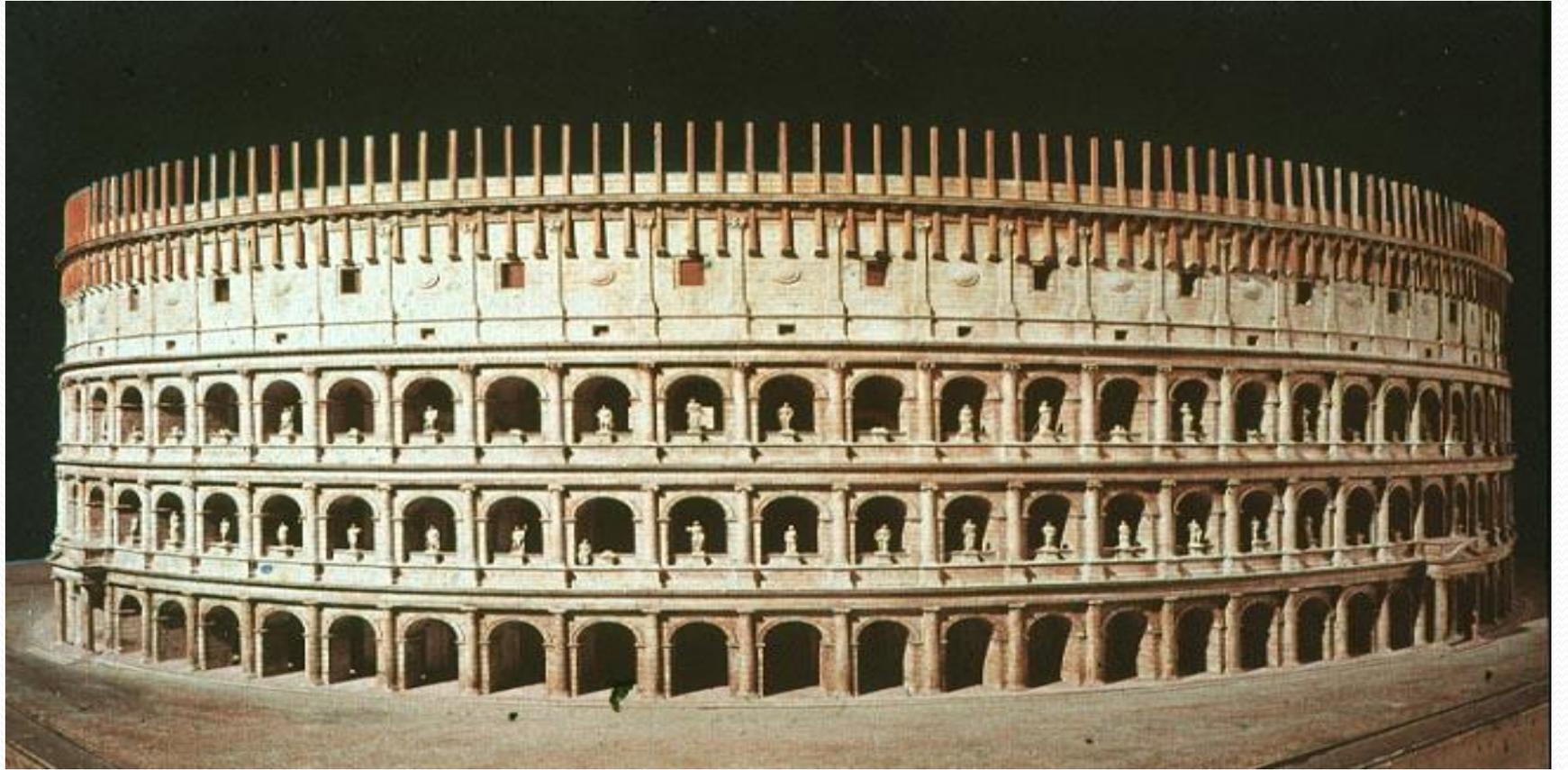
1. It’s not a coincidence that the country’s name is “Panem.”
2. Bread + Circuses? Could easily be translated as “Hunger Games.”

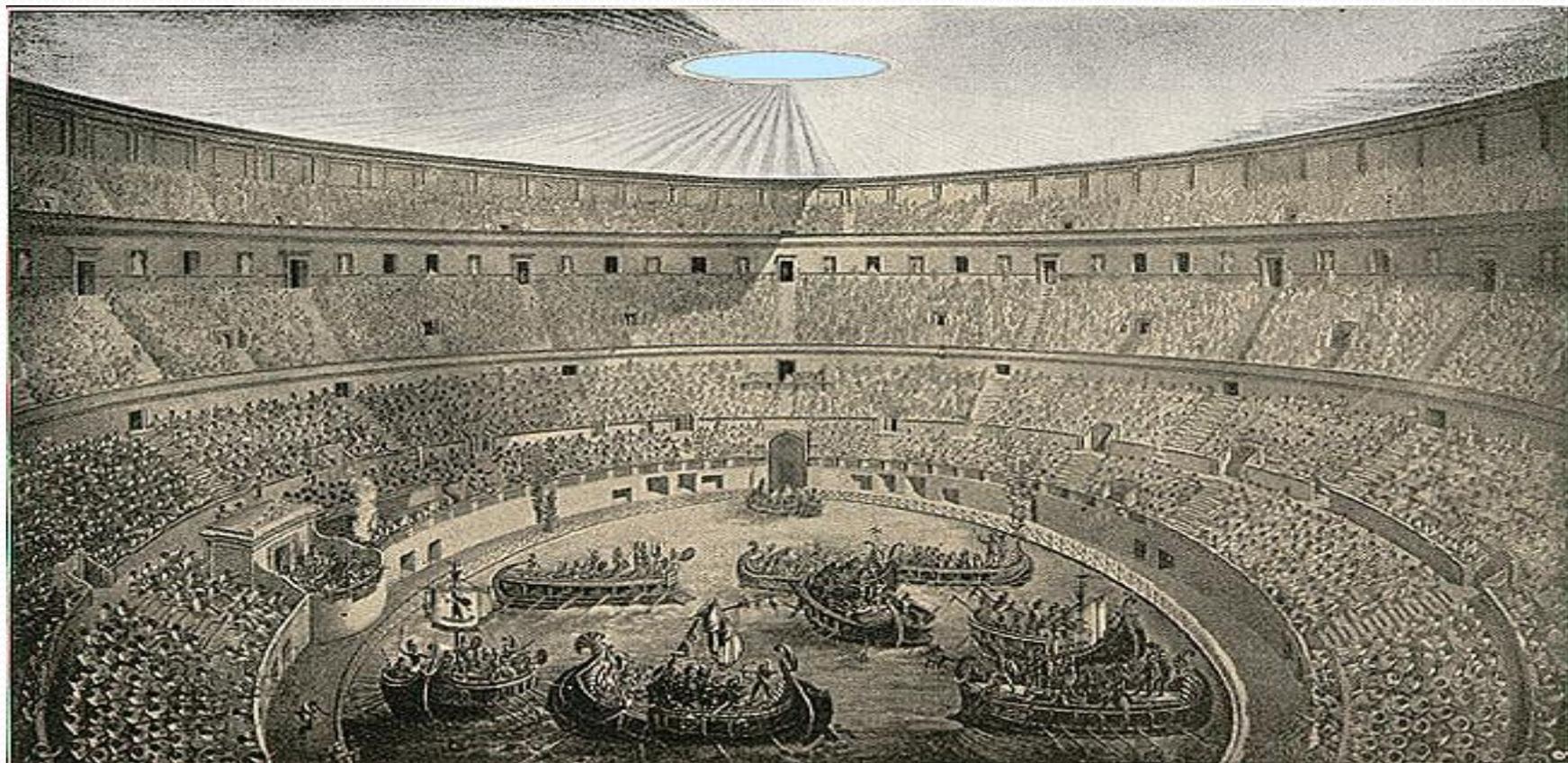


## v. Economics of the Empire

### A. Agricultural Systems

1. *Latifundia*
2. Small Farms-- disappearing throughout the course of the empire (richer people buy them up, forming *latifundia*)







## B. Craft and Raw Material Production Systems

1. Rome – pottery, cloth, blown glass, jewelry
2. Provinces – luxury goods, raw materials

## C. Trade Systems

### 1. Major Overland Routes

- a. Silk Road – Through central Asia to China
- b. Linking cities in Western Europe
- c. Linking cities in Northern Africa

### 2. Sea Lanes

- a. Mediterranean (*mare nostrum*)
- b. Red Sea
- c. Indian Ocean

## **VI. Factors Causing the End of the Empire**

### **A. Problems within the Roman Empire itself**

1. Class and wealth divisions continued to widen between elites and commoners
2. High costs to maintain military force to preserve and protect the empire
3. Overextension of the Empire – just became too big to control effectively

#### 4. Succession of bad Emperors

a. No more lines of emperors--  
assassinations, power plays, etc.

b. Poor leadership/Bad decisions

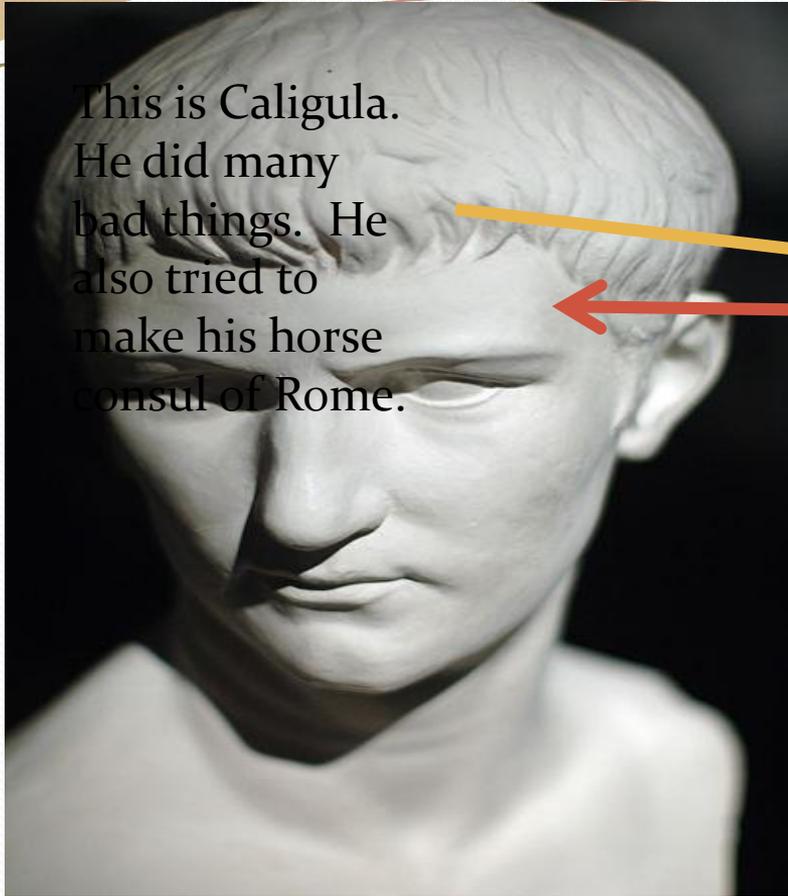
#### 5. Agricultural problems

#### 6. Plagues

### B. “Barbarian” Migrations and Invasion –

1. Germanic Peoples – Goths, Visigoths,  
Vandals, Ostragoths, Franks, and other

2. Huns (Central Asian Peoples)



This is Caligula.  
He did many  
bad things. He  
also tried to  
make his horse  
consul of Rome.

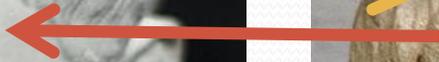


This is Nero. He  
wanted to be:

- A musician
- A chariot racer
- A poet

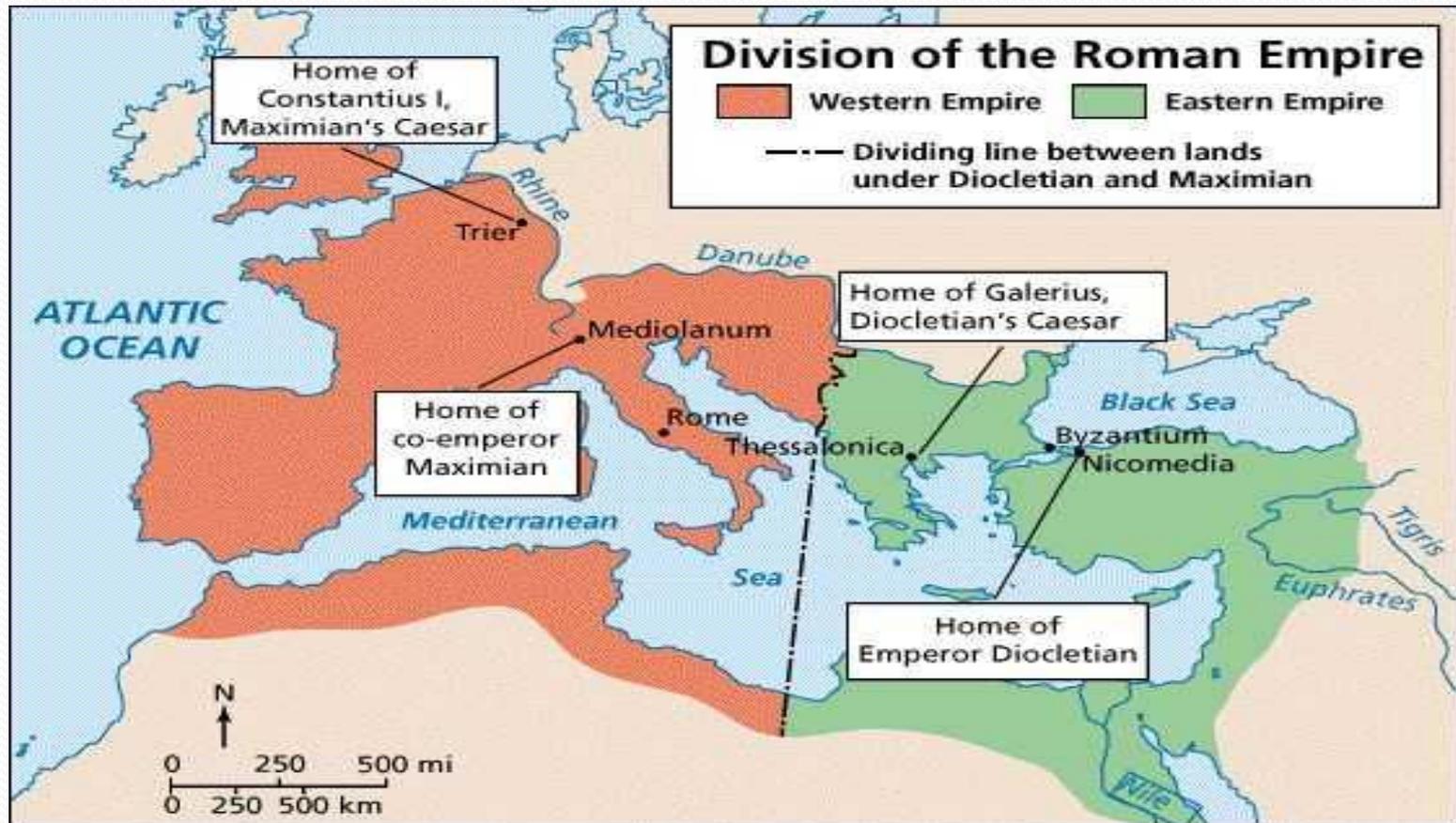
Did not want to be:

- Emperor



## C. Division of the Empire

1. 330 CE – Constantine created a co-capital at what is now Istanbul, Turkey (Constantinople)
2. 395 CE – Empire now split into two parts (each with its own Emperor)
  - a. Western Empire – Rome was the capital
  - b. Eastern Empire – Constantinople was the capital



## VII. The End. Maybe.

A. 476 CE – Rome is taken over by Odoaster, “king of the Germans.” The “Western Empire” is finished.

B. The Eastern Empire remains independent and becomes known as the “Byzantine Empire” from 600 - 1453 CE

### \*. Continuation of the Eastern Empire – Important Points

#### 1. Government System

a. Capital – Constantinople

b. Structure/Organization – Basically the same as the Roman Empire

#### 2. Culture

a. Greek in culture and language

b. Christianity



## **VII. Legacies of the Roman Empire – overall spread of Greco-Roman Culture**

- A. Language – Latin → Romance Languages & English influences
- B. Christianity
- C. Art & Architecture
- D. Western Idea of Empire
- E. Many More!