

KEEPING STUDENTS WELL INFORMED AT HOME WHILE THEY'RE DISTANCE LEARNING.



WORLD OF WONDER

Exploring the realms of history, science, nature and technology

GREAT ROMAN EMPERORS

Civil war, unrest and the death of Julius Caesar paved the way for Rome's transformation from a voting republic to an empire ruled by an emperor. For the next 449 years, about 70 men held the title of emperor of Rome. Some ruled well, others disastrously.

Take a look at some of the great emperors.

Julius Caesar was murdered by Gaius Cassius and Marcus Brutus because he was acting too much like a king.



The republic

In 509 B.C., after overthrowing **Tarquin the Proud**, the last king of Rome, the Romans established a form of government called a **republic** and vowed never to have another king. The Latin word *res publica* meant "a matter for the people."

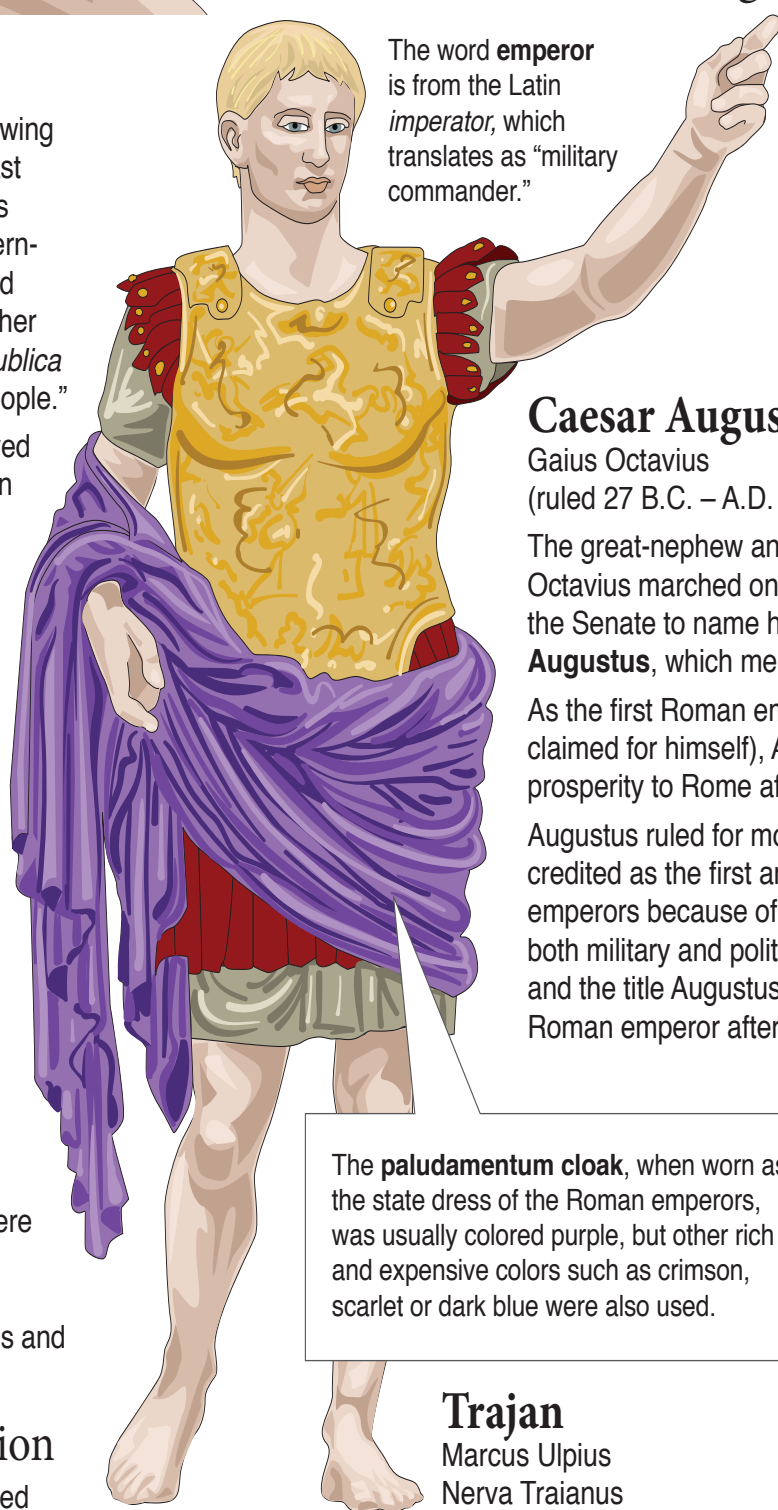
The Roman republic allowed citizens to vote in their own rulers and officials. The republic's government consisted of two elected consuls (who usually held power for one or two years) and the Senate. The Senate was a lawmaking body that advised the consuls on matters of state. All free citizens of the republic could vote.

The social ladder

There were three basic class distinctions in ancient Rome. **Patricians** were the old families who owned land, **plebeians** were laborers and the **equites** represented the rich business class. Women, slaves and children could not vote.

Power and ambition

By 50 B.C., Rome controlled most of the Mediterranean. Civil wars and unrest paved the way for the famous general **Julius Caesar**. Caesar was elected consul in 59 B.C., and in 49 B.C. he declared himself dictator of Rome. This power grab upset many people, and on March 15, 44 B.C., Julius Caesar was assassinated for his kingly ambitions. The civil wars that followed Caesar's death marked the end of the republic, which was replaced by the rule of an all-powerful emperor.



The word **emperor** is from the Latin *imperator*, which translates as "military commander."

The Five Good Emperors: These men ruled during a time of relative peace and prosperity and went down in history as the Five Good Emperors:

Nerva (ruled 96–98), Trajan (98–117), Hadrian (117–138), Antoninus Pius (138–161) and Marcus Aurelius (161–180).

Caesar Augustus

Gaius Octavius (ruled 27 B.C. – A.D. 14)

The great-nephew and heir of Julius Caesar, Octavius marched on Rome in 27 B.C. and forced the Senate to name him consul. He took the title **Augustus**, which means "exalted" or "revered."

As the first Roman emperor (a title he never claimed for himself), Augustus brought peace and prosperity to Rome after 100 years of civil war.

Augustus ruled for more than 40 years and is credited as the first and the greatest of the Roman emperors because of his many accomplishments, both military and political. His surname, Caesar, and the title Augustus would be adopted by every Roman emperor after him.

The **paludamentum cloak**, when worn as the state dress of the Roman emperors, was usually colored purple, but other rich and expensive colors such as crimson, scarlet or dark blue were also used.

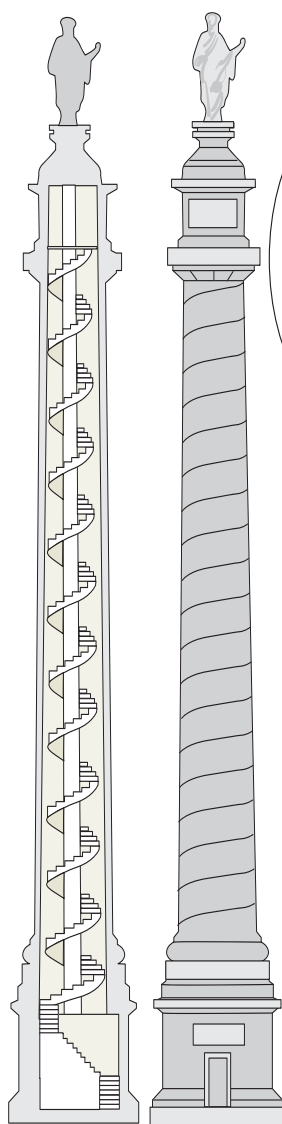
Trajan

Marcus Ulpius Nerva Traianus (ruled 98 – 117)

Trajan (TRAY-jun), the second in a group that is now known as the Five Good Emperors, was the first non-Italian to rule as emperor.

Many historians consider Trajan to be the greatest of Rome's emperors. He enjoyed many military conquests, and the Roman Empire grew under his leadership.

The Column of Trajan in Rome is a monument to his achievements and just one of his many public works.



Constantine

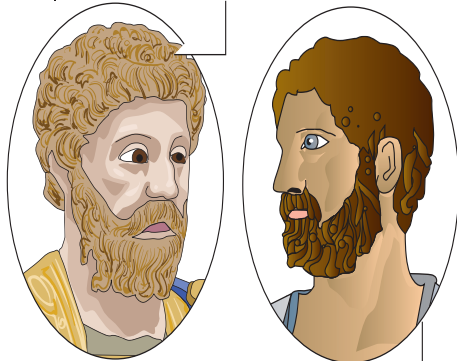
Gaius Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus (ruled 306 – 337)

Constantine is best known for being the first Christian emperor. During his reign, he supported and encouraged Christianity throughout the land. He is also famous for moving the empire's capital from Rome to Constantinople (now Istanbul, Turkey). He was said to be a talented general with boundless energy and determination. Constantine passed many severe laws and created many harsh taxation reforms.

Marcus Aurelius

(ruled 161 – 180)

The last of the rulers known as the Five Good Emperors, Aurelius ruled over the most majestic days of the Roman Empire. Also known as the Philosopher-King, Aurelius belonged to the Stoic school of philosophy.



Hadrian

Aelius Traianus Hadrianus (ruled 117 – 138)

Hadrian (HAY-dree-un), a distant relative of Trajan, was born in Spain. It was rumored that Trajan's wife was fond of Hadrian and was largely responsible for his becoming emperor.

A great patron of the arts, Hadrian also was a gifted speaker and a student of philosophy.

SOURCES: *World Book Encyclopedia*, World Book Inc.; <http://www.roman-emperors.org/>; <https://www.pbs.org/>; <https://www.ducksters.com/>;

© 2021 Triefeldt Studios, Inc. Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication

LEARN ABOUT PERU IN THE NEXT INSTALLMENT OF WORLD OF WONDER

CASA GRANDE
Dispatch
Serving Pinal County For More Than A Century

Newspapers
in Education

OUR WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION PAGE CAN BE A FUN LEARNING TOOL FOR YOUR KIDS. CHECK BACK EACH THURSDAY FOR A NEW, EXCITING TOPIC!

CASA GRANDE
Dispatch

TO SUBSCRIBE:
(520) 423-8685

