

## Roman History Empire Study Guide

### 27BC – AD 476 – Empire

**Empire begins** January 16, 27 BC when Octavian returns power to Senate, they name him Augustus, he is given provinces of Egypt, Gaul, Syria

#### **Julio-Claudian Emperors:**

1. **Augustus** – 27 BC to AD 14; married Scribonia (daughter Julia), then Livia; family values; set up good administration. Found Rome brick and left it marble. AD 9 Varus loses 3 legions in Germany (Teutoburg Forest vs. Arminius, also called Herman the German).
2. **Tiberius** – AD 14 to AD 37 –son of Livia, married to Augustus' daughter Julia, uncle of Germanicus; in exile first to Rhodes, then later in life, he retired to Capri
3. **Caligula** – AD 37 – 41; (Gaius – Caligula means little boots – he is son of Germanicus who kept him at army camp); killed by Praetorian guard
4. **Claudius** – AD 41 – 54; brother of Germanicus, had a limp and a tic and pretended to be stupid; chosen by Praetorian Guard; conquered Britain. Married to Messalina (mother of Britannicus and Octavia) and Agrippina the younger, his own niece (mother of Nero).
5. **Nero** – AD 54 – 68; real name – Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus; step son of Claudius (mom =Agrippina the younger); married Claudius' daughter Octavia; became emperor around age 16 – his tutors were Seneca (stoic philosopher) and Burrus (military man); great fire in AD 64 enabled him to build domus aurea (he blamed the Christians); revolt in Britain by Queen Boudicca; committed suicide

### **Civil War emperors:**

1. Galba – AD 68-69; Julius Vindex, governor of Gallia backed Galba vs. Nero
2. Otho – AD 69; named princeps by praetorian guard, Rome
3. Vitellius – AD 69; named princeps by armies in Lower Rhine (Germany); Vitellius defeated Otho at Cremona
4. Vespasian – AD 69 – 79; named princeps by armies in Near East

### **Flavian Emperors**

1. Vespasian – AD 69 – 79 – started building of Colosseum in AD 72; pay toilets
2. Titus – AD 79 – 81 – son of Vespasian (captured Jerusalem in AD 70 -- built a triumphal arch); Colosseum dedicated in AD 80; Mt. Vesuvius erupts – August 24, AD 79 – destroys Pompeii, Herculaneum, Stabiae.
3. Domitian – AD 81 – 96 – son of Vespasian – cruel; called “dominus et deus”

### **Five Good Emperors:**

- 1 Nerva – AD 96 – 98; elderly senator – adopted Trajan
- 2 Trajan – AD 98 – 117 – fought Dacia (built column to commemorate it), Empire at largest extent in 117. Born in Spain. Adopted Hadrian.
- 3 Hadrian – AD 117 – 138 – loved travel, architecture and Greek things. Reduced Italy to an imperial province. Built a wall between Britain and Scotland). Adopted Antoninus Pius.
- 4 Antoninus Pius – AD 138 – 161; 900<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rome; Adopted M. Aurelius and L. Verus to be co-emperors.
- 5 Marcus Aurelius – AD 161 – 180 – co-ruled with Verus from 161 to 169; stoic philosopher

- Commodus – AD 180 – 192 – son of Marcus Aurelius; dressed like Hercules; cruel
- Pertinax – AD 193
- Didius Julianus – AD 193 – bought Empire at auction – beat out Sulpicianus (the father-in-law of Pertinax).

### **Severan dynasty** AD 193 – 235

- Septimius Severus – AD 193 – 211 (born in Lepcis Magna = Libya) – marched on Rome from his post in Pannonia. Both Clodius Albinus and Pescennius Niger made claims to the title of emperor, but were defeated by 197. His wife was Julia Domna.
- Caracalla AD 211 -- 217 (killed brother Geta, co-emperor, in 212); *Constitutio Antoniana* 212 -- gave citizenship to all free men in Empire.
- Macrinus – AD 217-218 – Prefect of Praetorian Guard, killed Caracalla
- Elagabalus, named for a Syrian sun god (his real name was Bassianus) – AD 218 – 222
- Severus Alexander – AD 222 – 235 – emperor when he was 13, so grandmother Julia Maesa was his regent and then his mother Julia Mamaea (with a 16 member council to help him rule).

*The emperors of the next 50 or so years are referred to as the Barracks Emperors*

**Valerian** – captured by Shapur I (about AD 260)

**Zenobia** – becomes queen of Palmyra at death of her husband Odenathus (AD 268)

**Aurelian** – captures Zenobia and her son Vaballathus at Battle of Palmyra in AD 273; Aurelian is given the title – Restitutor Orbis – restorer of the world (clearly not one of the barracks emperors).

**Diocletian** – AD 284 – 305 – tetrarchy – 4 man rule = Diocletian and Maximianus were Augusti; Galerius and Constantius were Caesars. End of the Barracks Emperors.

**Constantine** – AD 312 – 337 – Beat Maxentius at Milvian Bridge AD 312 (he saw a vision – *in hoc signo vinces*); in AD 313, the Edict of Milan made Christianity legal; Constantine built and moved capital to Constantinople (Byzantium, now called Istanbul); became a Christian at his deathbed.

**Julian (called the Apostate)** – Edict of toleration in AD 362 ordered reopening of pagan temples and recalling of exiled Christian Bishops.

**Valens** defeated by Goths at Battle of Adrianople in AD 378

**Alaric** – Visigoth who sacked Rome in AD 410

**Aetius** – Roman general who stopped Atilla the Hun in AD 451 in the Battle of the Catalaunian Plains

**Romulus Augustulus** – AD 476 – last Emperor in west.

**Odoacer** – becomes king of Italy in AD 476