

# Ancient Rome

## Beginnings

# Founding



- The Latins, an Indo-European-speaking Italic people from central Europe, crossed the Alps about 1500 B.C. and invaded Italy.
- Attracted by the **warm climate and fertile land**, the Latins conquered the native peoples and settled in central Italy.
- On the seven hills overlooking the Tiber River, they founded the city of Rome.
- (According to Roman legend, the city was founded in 753 B.C. by two descendants of the gods – the twin brothers Romulus and Remus)



# Life Among the Early Latins

The early Latins, a simple, hardy people,

- worked chiefly at farming and cattle-raising;
- maintained close family ties, with the father exercising absolute authority;
- worshipped tribal gods (Jupiter, the chief god; Mars, god of war; Neptune, god of the sea; and Venus, goddess of love), and
- defended Rome against frequent attacks



# Etruscan Territory

- **Etruscan architecture** was created between about 700 BC and 200 BC, when the expanding civilization of ancient Rome finally absorbed Etruscan civilization. **The Etruscans were considerable builders in stone, wood and other materials of temples, houses, tombs and city walls, as well as bridges and roads.** The only structures remaining in quantity in anything like their original condition are tombs and walls, but through archaeology and other sources we have a good deal of information on what once existed.

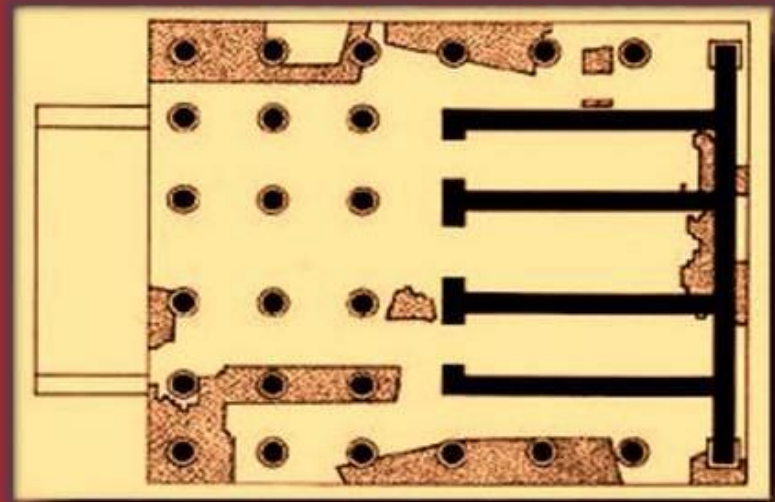
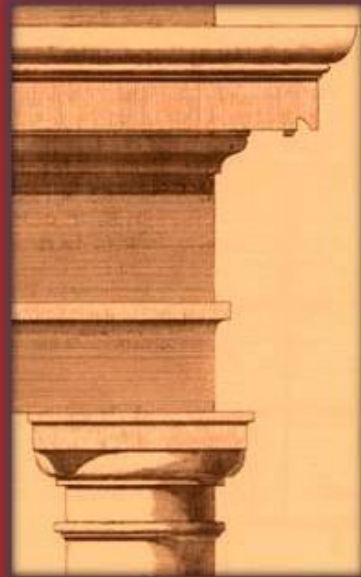
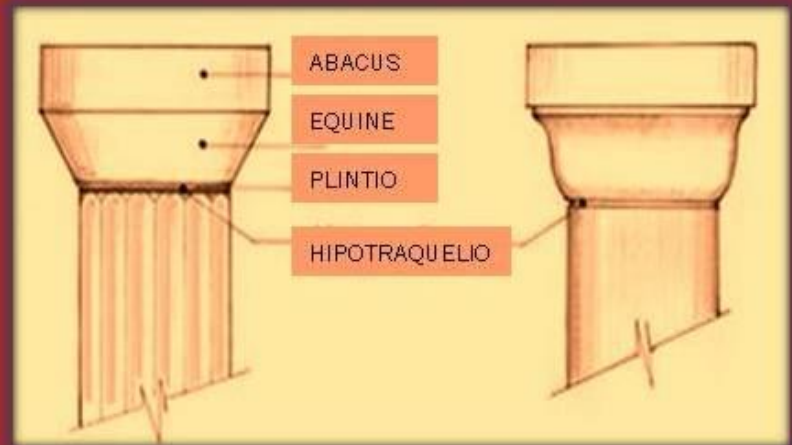
# Etruscan Architecture



ETRUSCAN CITIES WERE FORTIFIED WITH HIGH AND WIDE WALLS, ACCESSING THE CITY THROUGH LARGE DOORS SUCH AS THE "GATE OF DIANA" AND THE "GATE OF THE ARC".



The Etruscan Temple is rectangular and has in-antis columns only at the front and side. Never have rear columns. Smooth shafts in the columns covered with polychrome terracotta.





# Etruscan Funeral Urns



Etruscan urns made to contain ashes of human remains.



# From Etruscan Rule to Independence

Rome was captured about 750 B.C. by its northern neighbors, the Etruscans.

From these more advanced people, the Latins, or Romans, learned to

- construct buildings, roads and city walls,
- make metal weapons, and
- Apply new military tactics;

The Romans in 500 B.C. drove out the Etruscans and established an independent republic.

# Greeks in Southern Italy



# The Greeks and the Romans

The Greeks had much influence on Rome.

They cultivated **olives and grapes**, passed on their **alphabet**, and provided **artistic and cultural models** through sculpture, architecture and literature.

By 267 B.C. the Romans had completed the conquest of southern Italy by defeating the Greek cities.

# Roman Diplomacy

- superb diplomats
- extended different levels of **citizenship** to conquered peoples across the peninsula;
- allowed autonomy in domestic affairs;
- extensive system of fortified towns and roads;

# The Early Republic: An Aristocracy

The Roman Republic at first was an aristocracy, with power in the hands of the wealthy landowning nobles, the **patricians**. Only they could serve

- as **consuls** (heads of state) and
- As members of the hereditary **Senate**, which passed laws, approved appointments and controlled foreign affairs.

Largely excluded from government were the rest of the Roman people, mainly small farmers and city workers, known as **plebeians**.

# The Roman State

- A **republican** form of government;
- **Consuls** and **Praetors** were chief executive officers;
- **two consuls** chosen annually administered government and led army in battle;
- Praetor in charge of civil law; governed Rome when Consuls away;
- **Senate**-select group of about 300; served for life; eventually Senatorial decisions had force of law;

# The Roman State cont.

- Several popular assemblies; most important the **centuriate assembly**; organized by classes based on wealth; wealthiest always had a majority; adult males;

So, the early Roman state was **an aristocratic republic controlled by a relatively small group of privileged people.**



# The Roman Republic Becomes More Democratic (5<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries B.C.)

A struggle for political and social equality;

The plebeians clamored for democratic reforms.

Over the course of two centuries, they gained the right to

- elect tribunes empowered to veto (forbid) actions of the consuls and the Senate,
- enact laws in the people's assemblies, and
- hold all government offices, including those of consul and senator.

# More Democratic

The plebeians' demands also resulted in **codification** (arranging and writing down) of Roman law into the **Twelve Tables**. This prevented judges – who were nobles – from twisting unwritten laws to favor their own class.

# More Democratic

Romans achieved these reforms rather harmoniously, because both the patricians and the plebeians **willingly compromised their differences for the good of the Republic.**

Later, when willingness to compromise disappeared, civil wars destroyed the Republic.