



God is present in History



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God is present in History 2

(Prophecy of Revelation - Rome, Roman Emperors from Caesar Augustus to the Crisis of the Third Century and to Diocletian's Tetrarchy)



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São Paulo - SP - Brazil - April 2016*

I thank you, Lord, for making me see that in you there is justice, and that your eyes are always attentive to your saints on earth.

I dedicate this book to all brothers in Christ who have a heart willing to obey and a bold mouth to proclaim His truth among men.

“Then he looked up at his disciples and said: ‘Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets. But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep. Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets’” (Lk. 6: 20-26).

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Notes:

- Words or phrases enclosed in brackets [] or parenthesis (), in italics, were placed by me, in most cases, to explain the biblical text, although some verses already contain them [not in italics].
- The version used here is the New Revised Standard Version, NRSV – 1989 (1995)
- NIV = New International Version (it will be used in brackets in some verses to make it easier for readers to understand).
- Source of research for texts and images: Wikipedia.org
- Source of research for images: crystalinks.com

Introduction

This book is the second in the series “God is present in history”, now talking about Rome and the Roman emperors. In the first book was commented on the Intertestamental Period and in sequence the Hellenistic period, which began with Alexander the Great of Macedonia, and the division of the empire after his death among his four generals. However, the two major empires and peoples that interest for our study and, of course, to the prophecy of Daniel, are the kings of the North and South (Ptolemaic and Seleucid dynasties), namely, Egyptians and Syrians, for the two empires had great dominion and influence over Israel. Knowing the story of the characters of that time, we are ready to understand the prophecy of Daniel 11: 1-45 and much more: what will happen to mankind in the end times, that is, in the coming of Antichrist, in the Great Tribulation period and in the Rapture of the church.

As I said in the introduction of the first book, it is, so to speak, a journey through time, starting in the Intertestamental Period until the end of the Western and Eastern Roman Empire, with a conclusion concerning the present days.

This work is the result of a series of biblical themes that I’ve put on the website and because the subject became so extensive, I decided to write it in a book so that people could read it in the correct sequence.

With the beginning of the Roman Empire under the reign of Caesar Augustus, not only Israel but the entire world of that time suffered a great transformation. It was during the reign of Caesar Augustus (29 BC-14 AD) that Jesus was born, bringing the light that humanity needed to be free from the spiritual bondage to which it was arrested.

Soon after reveling to me the prophecy of Daniel (Dan. 11: 1-45) and the visions of the apostle John in the book of Revelation, talking about the Great Tribulation, the Rapture and the Antichrist, the Lord took me to the part of the bible where it calls Rome a whore (‘Babylon the great, mother of whores and of earth’s abominations’ – Rev. 17: 5), but we do not have an idea of what this means until we study about its emperors and the idolatry that was there, still under Greek and Persian influence from past centuries and Rulers of darkness that influenced the birth of the Catholic Church and consequently the world, for it was its representatives who spread Christianity in latest years of Ancient times and the Middle Ages. The Protestant Reformation of Martin Luther only happened in the sixteenth century, and protestant churches only began to create their own doctrine much later. Despite having grown up in the last two centuries, the Evangelical Church is even less influential on people than the Catholic Church, since humanity still has it in regard as something solid and true, even if totally contaminated and corrupted by the idolatry that was present at the beginning of its foundation. When we read about the Roman Empire, we understand better the prophecies of Daniel, especially on the fourth beast (Dan. 7: 7; Dan. 7: 19; Dan. 7: 24).

As for the prophetic visions of the Apostle John in the book of Revelation, we can say: even though many biblical symbols and many revelations from this biblical book about the future of humanity are still hidden from us, the purpose of this work is not to sadden people, let alone to frighten them with the strong and inevitable events that are about to happen. On the contrary, the purpose is to show how important our intimacy with God is, and give us the hope that one day prepared by God (‘in the appointed time’, as the bible says), all the evil that we see and live in the world will be destroyed, and all unrighteousness will be avenged, for it is necessary that men repent of their sins and recognize that only in Jesus there is freedom, justice, judgment, and eternal life. In

the book of Revelation, the apostle John writes not only about future events; he also writes to the believers of that time (in the seven churches in Asia Minor, going through persecution) and mentions in a symbolic way the political circumstances in which he was inserted, involving the Roman emperors, for example, and showing that God was acting and doing justice in the present, the same way He will do in a much more comprehensive manner in the future.

Despite all these bad things we mentioned and that you'll read in some chapters, there is something good to be said: the patience of God exists. Who else would wait so many millennia for humanity to repent and return to the true light?

I hope you enjoy the reading and the Holy Spirit may reveal to you some secrets of the spiritual world.

May the light of the Lord be upon you.

Tânia Cristina

Volumes 1 and 3 of this book:

<https://www.searaagape.com.br/godispresentinhistory1.pdf>

<https://www.searaagape.com.br/godispresentinhistory3.pdf>

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Part 1 - Prophecy of Revelation - Rome

From now on we'll talk about the Apostle John's revelations in the book of Revelation, especially relating to Rome, whom the bible calls "Babylon the great, mother of whores and of earth's abominations" (Rev. 17: 5). I will talk about the Roman Emperors who came after Christ and their hostile behavior towards Christians, their idolatry, the sins of their flesh and their acts opposed to the true doctrine of Christ; hence, the Lord refers to all this (and much more) using the word 'abomination.' The Romans incorporated other gods and religions and customs from the Greeks and Persians in particular, and that's why the bible says Rome is Babylon, meaning 'confusion', 'mixture'; not only confusion, but also spiritual prostitution. In view of the idolatrous and hostile attitude of almost all emperors and their harmful influence on Rome and all the nations that have been incorporated into their empire, we can better understand why the bible refers to this city this way (as Babylon and whore) and why it (representing today a powerful anti-Christian force; the Church apostate and prostituted with the worldly abominations) will suffer a definitive downfall after the second coming of Christ, when the Lord will defeat the beast, the false prophet and the dragon. We should not underestimate the influence of Rulers and Authorities of the darkness, acting on corrupt humans and blind to the spiritual realities. We can realize what they did to others and how they died. As Jesus said, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Matt 26: 52).

In Rev. 13: 1-3 John describes the beast that rises out of the sea and its relation with the end times: "And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads; and on its horns were ten diadems, and on its heads were blasphemous names (cf. Dan. 7: 8; 11; 20; 24). And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And the dragon gave it his power and his throne and great authority. One of its heads seemed to have received a death-blow, but its mortal wound had been healed. In amazement the whole earth followed the beast."



The animal seen by John corresponds to the fourth animal seen by Daniel (Dan. 7: 7), where the ten horns are ten kings that will spring up from this kingdom (referring to Rome – in the vision of Daniel and John) and represent the last form of anti-Christian world power, represented by the Gentiles, an empire of ten confederate kings covering the sphere of authority of Ancient Rome. Its seven heads indicate that its authority will derive from the dragon (Rev. 12: 3; 17; Rev 13: 2).

Let's remember the appearance of the animals seen by Daniel (Dan. 7: 1-28): lion with eagle's wings (Daniel 7: 4 = symbolized Babylon), bear with three ribs in its mouth (symbolized the kingdoms of Media and Persia), leopard with four wings of a bird on its back and four heads (It symbolizes Greece), and the fourth animal with terrifying look, exceedingly strong and with great iron teeth (Dan. 7: 7), devouring everything around and presenting ten horns on its head (Dan. 7: 7; Dan. 7: 19; Dan. 7: 24 = it symbolizes Rome).

The three animals: leopard, bear and lion (found in Dan. 7: 4-6 as symbols of empires that preceded Rome) instilled all their features on the qualities of the Roman Empire: the swiftness of conquest of the Macedonians (Greeks), the strength and tenacity the purpose of the Persians and the Babylonian greediness. However, it was not only these qualities of characters that the Roman Empire absorbed from the previous realms. The Romans incorporated other gods and customs from the Greeks and Persians in particular, and that's why the bible says Rome is Babylon, meaning 'confusion', 'mixture'; not only confusion, but also spiritual prostitution.

Let's read the text from Revelation that matters for our study:

- Rev. 17: 1-18: "Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, 'Come, I will show you the judgment of the great whore who is seated on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication the inhabitants of the earth have become drunk.' So he carried me away in the spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her fornication; and on her forehead was written a name, a mystery: **'Babylon the great, mother of whores and of earth's abominations.'** And I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the witnesses to Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly amazed. But the angel said to me, 'Why are you so amazed? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her. The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to ascend from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the inhabitants of the earth, whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will be amazed when they see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come. This calls for a mind that has wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; also, they are seven kings, of whom five have fallen, one is living, and the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain only a little while. As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction. And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast. These are united in yielding their power and authority to the beast; they will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.' And he said to me, 'The waters that you saw, where the whore is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the whore;

they will make her desolate and naked; they will devour her flesh and burn her up with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled. The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”

The ten kings who have not yet received the crown are the ten contemporary kings (v.12: “And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom”), and the woman symbolizes Rome with its spiritual prostitution, with its violence, thirst for conquest, and full with greed and ostentation of power. The other symbols were seen in the previous book about Prophecies of Daniel and John – Apocalypse.

Based on this word, we will study about the Roman and Byzantine emperors, and then come to a conclusion of what we read, for we will see that everything was already described in the bible. Thus, we’ll be able to understand why God gets so angry with idolatry and rebellion of men to His will, being controlled and manipulated by demons, Rulers and Powers, which have a single goal: to oppress the innocent and corrupt, even more, those who are already in darkness so they lose salvation.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of all that is written about the Roman emperors in the following chapters will be placed at the end of the third book.

Part 2 - Roman Emperors 1

From this topic, I will talk about the Roman Emperors who came after Christ and their Dynasties. Before being an empire, Rome was a monarchy and a republic. The Kingdom of Rome or Roman monarchy existed from 753-509 BC, being founded in a legendary way, although the Etruscans were the original inhabitants of the Italian peninsula. Romulus and Remus, the twin children, sons of the god Mars with a mortal woman (Rhea Silvia) survived an attempt of death by his uncle and, by being thrown into the Tiber, both were created by a she-wolf. When they grew up, they disagreed about where they should establish the city and what name they should give to it. Romulus killed his brother Remus and founded the city of Rome, reigning for 38 years. From 716 to 509 BC the Roman Kingdom was ruled by kings, being Lucius Tarquinius Superbus the last of them. From 509 BC the Roman Republic began, where Rome and its domains were ruled by two consuls normally elected annually by the council of elders or the Roman Senate. The Roman Republic was succeeded by the Roman Empire ruled by an emperor supported by the Senate. There was a period of civil war during the transition from Republic to Roman Empire (44-31 BC), which began in 29 BC with Caesar Augustus.

In this chapter, you'll study about the following Dynasties:

- Julio-Claudian Dynasty (Caesar Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero)
- Year of the four Emperors (Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian – the founder of Flavian Dynasty).
- Flavian Dynasty (Vespasian, Titus and Domitian)
- Nerva-Antonine Dynasty (Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus and Commodus).
- Year of the five Emperors (Pertinax, Didius Julianus, Pescennius Niger, Clodius Albinus and Septimius Severus – who started the Severan Dynasty).

The end of Roman Republic



Gaius Julius Caesar

In the year 63 BC, the Roman general Pompey (Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus) or Pompey the Great, conquered Jerusalem, and the provinces of Palestine were subjugated to Roman rule. Pompey was slain in Egypt in 49 BC, and then Gaius Julius Caesar (49-

44 BC) rose to power of the Roman Republic and proclaimed himself dictator for life. He died assassinated due to a conspiracy led by Marcus Junius Brutus [political leader of Roman republican conservative orientation] and Gaius Cassius Longinus [a Roman senator and the principal agent in the conspiracy against Julius Caesar, along with his brother-in-law, Marcus Junius Brutus], and from then on there was a power struggle between Mark Antony (a soldier and a famous roman politician) and Gaius Octavian, great-nephew and successor of Julius Caesar. The Battle of Actium in 31 BC, near Actium in Greece, between Mark Antony and Octavian, was won by the latter and marked the date of the end of the Republic and the beginning of Roman Empire. Gaius Julius Caesar Octavian Augustus, known as Caesar Augustus reigned as emperor from 29 BC to 14 AD. The government of each region, part of the time, stayed in charge of princes, and in the rest, under the responsibility of procurators appointed by the emperor. Augustus appointed Herod the Great, governor of Palestine at the time of Christ's birth.

List of Roman emperors by Dynasties:

I) Julio-Claudian Dynasty (29 BC-69 AD): Caesar Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero.



1) Gaius Julius Caesar Octavian Augustus (Caesar Augustus) – r. 29 BC-14 AD (43 years)

Birth name: Gaius Octavius

Family: His biological father was Gaius Octavius; and his mother, Atia Balba Caesonia, from a humble family. Sister: Octavia.

His great-uncle, Julius Caesar, adopted him as son and he came to be his legal heir.

Wives:

- Clodia Pulchra (First wife) – he had no children by her.
- Scribonia (Second wife) – Julia the Elder, the only legal daughter of Augustus.

Julia married Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa and had five children: Gaius Caesar, Lucius Caesar, Julia, Agrippina and Agrippa Postumus (the latter born after the father's death, hence the name 'Postumus', according to the Roman custom).

- Livia Drusilla, also known as Julia Augusta (Augustus' third wife) – he had no children by her. She had two sons of her first marriage: Tiberius Claudius and Nero Claudius Drusus Germanicus, who married Antonia (daughter of Mark Antony and Octavia, Augustus' sister); Tiberius married Vipsania Agrippina, but separated from her to marry Julia the Elder, Augustus' daughter, with whom he had no children.

Lawful children: Julia the Elder

Adoptive children:

- Gaius Caesar, Lucius Caesar, Julia the Elder, Agrippina and Agrippa Postumus – children of Julia and Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa; therefore, grandchildren of Augustus, who sought to ensure his succession.

- Tiberius Claudius (adopted son) – son of Livia Drusilla, therefore, stepson of Augustus.

Events during his reign:

- He expanded the borders of the Empire: Octavian annexed to the Roman Empire: Egypt, Dalmatia, Pannonia, Noricum and Raetia, expanding the possessions in Africa and Germany, and completing the conquest of Hispania.

- Along with Mark Antony and Lepidus (Marcus Aemilius Lepidus), Octavian Augustus formed the second triumvirate and defeated the assassins of Julius Caesar. After the battle of Philippi, they divided the Roman Republic into three parts and began to rule it as military dictators. Then, Lepidus was exiled and removed from his post. Mark Antony committed suicide after the defeat to Octavian at the Battle of Actium in 31 BC.

- He made peace with the Parthian empire through diplomacy. The Parthian Empire (247 BC-224 AD) was one of the major Iranian political and cultural powers of ancient Persia. Parthia corresponds to the northeast of Iran.

- He reformed the army and politics; reformed the Roman system of taxation; he developed networks of roads with an official courier system; established a permanent army as well as the Praetorian Guard; he created official services of policemen and firemen and rebuilt great part of the city of Rome during his reign.

Death: He died at 77 years old, probably of natural causes. He was succeeded by his adopted son Tiberius (also stepson and son-in-law of Augustus, by his daughter Julia the Elder). Caesar Augustus was the ruler with the longest tenure in Rome – he reigned for 43 years (29 BC-14 AD).

2) Tiberius Claudius Nero Caesar (**Tiberius Caesar**) – r. 14-37 AD (23 years)

Birth name: Tiberius Claudius Nero

Biological father: Claudius Nero; mother, Livia Drusilla or Livia. Brother: Nero Claudius Drusus Germanicus.

Tiberius was adoptive son of Augustus Caesar (Gaius Julius Caesar Octavian Augustus). At 19 years old and six months pregnant, his mother Livia Drusilla divorced her husband Claudius Nero, the biological father of Tiberius and married Octavian, the future emperor Caesar Augustus. The younger brother of Tiberius, Nero Claudius Drusus Germanicus, was born three months later. Drusus married Antonia (the youngest daughter of Mark Antony and Octavia), also known as Antonia Minor or the Younger, and had one daughter (Livia Julia or Livilla) and 2 sons: Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus (the future Emperor Claudius) and Julius Caesar Germanicus, who later became one of the greatest Roman generals, and father of Caligula and his 3 sisters (Agrippina the Younger, Julia Livilla and Julia Drusilla). Tiberius began his career as a Roman tribune and organized the army creating new legions. Then he became Praetor and consul. He married Vipsania Agrippina and had a son named Julius Caesar Drusus, who married Livilla and had twins; one of them died in childhood, and the other was Tiberius Gemelo (Tiberius Julius Caesar Nero) the only legitimate grandson of Tiberius.

After a while, Tiberius was adopted by the emperor Augustus, and had to divorce Vipsania Agrippina, and marrying his daughter Julia, the Elder. Later, with the death of his brother Nero Claudius Drusus and of Augustus, Tiberius ascended the throne as emperor and was one of the greatest generals of Rome. Despite his military

achievements, he was reputed as a sad and gloomy ruler, a feature that was accentuated after the death of his son Julius Caesar Drusus in 23 AD. With Julia, Tiberius only had a son who died in infancy.

He had two adoptive children:

- Julius Caesar Germanicus (15 BC-19 AD), his nephew, son of his brother Nero Claudius Drusus Germanicus.

- Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus Germanicus (Caligula), his grand-nephew.

Unlike Caesar Augustus, Tiberius did not fully assume his place of ruler, often avoiding take strong decisions of an emperor and preferring to leave them in the hands of the Senate. According to historical sources, the timid character, cynical, embittered and suspicious of Tiberius caused many deaths not only in the Roman Senate but also among the poor people of the empire. He was self-exiled from Rome and went to Capri, leaving the government in the hands of two praetorian prefects (Lucius Aelius Sejanus and Quintus Naevius Cordus Sutorius Macro), but Sejanus was killed, accused of treason against the emperor.

Death: he was assassinated by Caligula and Macro. The emperor was 77 years old at the time.

He was succeeded as emperor by his adopted son and grand-nephew, Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, also known as Caligula.

Imperial cult:

It was custom of the Roman emperors consider themselves gods, so God condemned so much the imperial cult in the Epistles and in Revelation. Gaius Julius Caesar (49-44 BC), still alive, in the year 44 BC, consented in the construction of a statue of himself where the inscription *Deo invicto* ("To the Invincible God") could be read. In the same year he appointed himself dictator for life. After the political power struggle and the transition from Republic to Empire (44–31 BC), the heir of Julius Caesar, Caesar Augustus (Gaius Julius Caesar Octavian Augustus – 29 BC-14 AD), ordered that was built a temple in Rome dedicated to the "Divine Julius" (*Divus Iulius*). The adoptive son of Augustus was Tiberius (Tiberius Claudius Nero Caesar – 14-37 AD). Both allowed to be erected a single temple in their honor during their lifetimes. These temples contained not only the statues of the ruling emperor at the time and who could be worshiped in the manner of a god, but also were devoted to Rome (the city of Rome, in the case of Augustus, and to the senate, in the case of Tiberius). Both temples were located on the Asian side of the Roman Empire. The temple of Caesar Augustus was located in Pergamum, while Tiberius' was in Izmir (Smyrna) and he did not allow another temple or statue in his honor anywhere else. He assured before the Senate that he would rather be remembered more for his actions than by the stones. But he permitted the construction of a temple in honor of his predecessor and adoptive father, the "Divine Augustus", in Tarragona (current Catalonia, Spain), in 15 AD.

3) Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, also known as Gaius Caesar or Caligula – r. 37-41 AD (4 years)

Biological father: Julius Caesar Germanicus, nephew and adoptive son of Tiberius; mother: Agrippina, the Elder (grand-daughter of the Emperor Octavian Caesar Augustus). Siblings: Drusilla, Drusus Caesar (assassinated in exile at the behest of Tiberius), Nero Caesar (assassinated in exile by order of Tiberius), Julia Livilla and Agrippina the Younger (or Agrippina Minor).

The nickname 'Caligula' (meaning little boots, in English, is derived from 'caligae' military sandals) was given by the soldiers of the legions commanded by his father, Germanicus, who amused to see him dressed in military uniform with only three years old when accompanied him on his military campaigns in northern Germania.

Germanicus died poisoned in Egypt, probably on the orders of Tiberius, and his wife Agrippina, the Elder, returned to Rome and denounced Tiberius publicly as her husband's murder mastermind. As a result, she and her children were sent into exile. The two older boys were murdered and she died of starvation. Caligula's sisters went also into exile, but there is only news of Agrippina the Younger (Agrippina Minor), who returned to Rome in the reign of Claudius. Caligula went to live with her great-grandmother Livia (Tiberius's mother), and then stayed with his grandmother Antonia (Tiberius' sister-in-law) until he was assigned to work in the residence of the emperor in Capri. When he died, Tiberius ordered that the Empire was ruled jointly by his grandson Tiberius Gemellus (Tiberius Julius Caesar Nero, the son of his son Drusus and Livilla) and Caligula. However, Caligula ordered to kill Gemellus and became the sole emperor. He granted territories to Herod Agrippa I (nephew of Herod Antipas) and ordered that a statue in his honor was erected in the Temple of Jerusalem.

Historians talk too much about his sexual perversions. There are few surviving sources that describe his reign, none of which refers to him favorably; on the contrary, the sources focus on his cruelty, extravagance and sexual perversity, presenting him as a demented tyrant. He was the first emperor to present himself as a god before the people; not through statues, but openly in his own body.

Death: he was assassinated by the Praetorian guard in 41 AD, at 28 years old (almost to complete 29 years), along with his fourth and last wife Milonia Caesonia and his daughter Julia Drusilla, still a baby. On the same day of his murder, his uncle Claudius (Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus), nephew of Tiberius, was hailed emperor by the Praetorians. Numerous temples and statues dedicated to Caligula (by own order) were all they destroyed immediately after the violent death of this emperor.

4) Tiberius **Claudius** Caesar Augustus Germanicus – r. 41-54 AD (13 years).

For a while, Claudius remained separated from power by his physical disabilities such as lameness and stuttering until his nephew, the emperor Caligula, appointed him consul and senator. One of the first actions of Claudius as emperor was to order the execution of the killers of his nephew. He also allowed that the sister of Caligula, Agrippina the Younger, was brought from exile. Apparently, Claudius allowed the building of only one temple in his honor, continuing the example of Augustus and Tiberius.

Claudius had married twice before marrying Valeria Messalina. His previous marriages left him three children, among them his son Claudius Drusus, who died at an early age. By his second wife, Claudius had a daughter named Claudia Antonia. By Messalina he had two children: Claudia Octavia (born in 40 AD) and Britannicus (born in 41 AD). Valeria Messalina prostituted herself in a brothel to avenge the flippant attitudes of her husband with other women, so she was executed by Claudius in 48 AD. In 49 AD Claudius married for the fourth time to Nero's mother, that is, his niece Agrippina, Caligula's sister. Agrippina Minor (also known as Julia Agrippina Minor or Agrippina the Younger), after 50 DC called Julia Augusta Agrippina was one of the most powerful women of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. She was great-granddaughter of Emperor Augustus, great-niece and adoptive granddaughter of Tiberius, and Caligula's

sister. Historians describe her as ruthless, ambitious, violent and overbearing. Nevertheless, she was beautiful and had a good reputation.

We must also say that in the reign of Claudius the Christians were banished from Rome (46 AD). In 51 AD Claudius adopted Nero, changing his name to Nero Claudius Caesar Drusus Germanicus (his birth name was Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus). Nero was older than his step-brother Britannicus and thus became heir to the throne. Claudius died in 54 AD, probably poisoned by Agrippina.

5) Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus – r. 54-68 AD (14 years).

He ascended the throne after the death of his uncle Claudius, who had appointed him his successor.

Birth name: Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus. He was born in 37 AD.

Biological father: Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus (49 BC-25 AD, Roman consul in 16 BC).

Mother: Agrippina the Younger, sister of Emperor Caligula.

Nero was adopted by his uncle Claudius in 51 AD (at the age of 14 years), changing his name to Nero Claudius Caesar Drusus Germanicus. Even at the age of 14 years he was appointed proconsul, entered and addressed the Senate for the first time, appeared in public with Claudius several times, and his image was minted into coins. He ascended the throne at 17 years old, after the death of his uncle Claudius, who had appointed him his successor.

In 53 AD he married his half-sister Claudia Octavia (daughter of Messalina). Nero was married to Octavia for eight years, but had no children with her. Then he divorced her and sent her into exile. Without Octavia in his way, Nero married Poppaea Sabina, also called Poppaea Sabina, the Younger (30-65 AD), with whom he fell in love. Her first husband was Rufrius Crispinus, a commander of the Praetorian guard killed by Nero, as well as the child of this union (he was also called Rufrius Crispinus). Poppaea had a second marriage to Otho, who would become emperor after the death of Nero. Poppaea divorced him and married Nero in 62 AD. With the Emperor she had a daughter, Claudia Augusta, who seems to have died when she was a child. The circumstances of the death of Poppaea (35 years old) are obscure. Some say she died during the pregnancy of her second child, or during childbirth, or because of a miscarriage, in which the second child did not survive. History says that after her death, Nero became too mourner and didn't let her be cremated; she was embalmed and placed in the Mausoleum of Augustus.

There is also reference to a freed slave called Acte who is said to have been Nero's lover between 55 and 68 AD but with whom he could not marry because of the opposition of Agrippina, who wanted to see him married to Octavia. According to the chroniclers of the time, Acte funded and organized the funerals of Nero, and was one of the few people who remained faithful to him.

The third wife of Nero was Statilia Messalina, the daughter of a consul of the Empire that seems to have been involved in the plot against Emperor Claudius. Her family was related to Valéria Messalina's. So that she could marry Nero, her first husband (the consul Marcus Julius Vestinus Atticus) was forced to commit suicide. She did not give children to Nero.

After that, in 67-68 AD, Nero ordered that a young freedman, Sporus, were castrated and then married him in a public wedding ceremony. Some historians of the time said the young man had a very big resemblance to Poppaea Sabina. Sporus, in Latin, is derived from the ancient Greek word σπορά spora, meaning 'seed', 'sowing', related to σπόρος sporos, 'sowing' (present continuous) and σπείρειν speirein, 'to sow.'

In all references to his story, he has always been called by Sporus, a male name. Sporus was a Catamite, i.e., one of the slave children chosen by his master as a toy and sometimes were castrated in the attempt to preserve their juvenile qualities. Catamite was the name given to the young fellow, preteen or teenager in a pederast relationship (relationship between a man and a boy) between two men in the ancient world, especially in ancient Rome. It usually refers to homosexual lovers young and passive. The word derives from the Latin 'catamitus', which in turn comes from the Etruscan 'catamite.'

The reign of Nero is usually associated with tyranny and extravagance. He is remembered by a series of systematic executions, including that of his own mother (Julia Agrippina Minor, also called Julia Augusta Agrippina), his wife Octavia (daughter of the emperor Claudius and his third wife, Valeria Messalina) and his half-brother Britannicus and, above all, by the widespread belief that while Rome burned (Nero set fire to Rome and blamed the Christians), he was composing with his lyre. Claudia Octavia was murdered in exile on his orders or committed suicide because of false accusations of adultery by the Empress Valeria Messalina. He was a relentless persecutor of the Christians.

Death: Nero committed suicide when Tigellinus (the commander of the Praetorian Guard) opened the gates of Rome to General Galba.

II) Year of the four Emperors (68-69 AD): Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian (the founder of Flavian Dynasty).



1) Lucius Livius Ocella Servius Sulpicius Galba (3 AC-69 AD) – r. 68-06-08 to 69-01-15 (seven months). No dynasty.

Birth name: Servius Sulpicius Galba

From birth to accession: Lucius Livius Ocella Sulpicius Galba

Name as emperor: Servius Sulpicius Galba Caesar Augustus

Imperial name: Emperor Servius Galba Caesar Augustus

Biological father: Servius Sulpicius Galba; mother: Mummia Achaica. She died soon after the birth of Galba. Wife: Aemilia Lepida

He ascended the throne at the age of 72 and ruled for seven months. He had a brilliant political career, and reached the position of consul in 33 AD, being then the governor of Germania and proconsul of Africa (45-60 AD). In 60 AD, seeing the course of the Empire in the hands of Nero, he began to lead a revolt against him, caused by Gaius Julius Vindex, a Roman general and senator in times of Claudius. He was proclaimed emperor and marched to Rome with the support of Otho, also a General of the Army. Galba won the approval of the Senate and the Praetorian Guard but soon lost

it because of his austerity in government, trying to take steps to restore the state funds, exhausted by Nero and the costs of campaigns in Armenia and Judea. He also refused to pay the Praetorian Guard the reward he had promised for having made him an emperor. In fact, because of his age and little physical energy, Galba left the government in the hands of his trusted men who unfortunately went unpunished for the atrocities they committed. These attitudes also generated hatred in the people and the army. Marcus Salvius Otho, disappointed for having not being named as successor, organized a plot against the emperor with the help of the Praetorian Guard and killed him at the Forum.

Death: murdered by Otho, at 72 years old.

2) Marcus Salvius Otho (32-69 AD) – r. 69-01-15–69-04-16 (3 months). No dynasty.

Biological father: Lucius Otho; mother: Terentia Albia. Wife: Poppaea Sabina (He was forced to divorce her by Nero).

He was more clement and skilled in politics than his predecessor to calm the fears of the most respectable citizens. He ruled only for 3 months. He was appointed governor of Lusitania by Nero in 58 AD. Lusitania was a province of Hispania, in the Iberian Peninsula. He remained in this post for ten years. He supported the accession of Galba to the throne, but came to promote the coup d'état that culminated in the murder of the old emperor. His youth and his effeminate appearance led the Roman rabble to remember Nero; so, they supported him. Nero's statues were erected again, his slaves were freed and his officers were reinstated to their posts (including Sporus whom Nero had married and with whom Otho also became intimate), and certain urban projects initiated during his reign were completed as for example, the Golden House (the great new palace of Nero, after the fire of Rome).

When reading a private letter of Galba, Otho was aware of the seriousness of the rebellion in Germania by some legions under the command of Vitellius, and that were marching to Italy. He tried a failed reconciliation, and then prepared for battle. Some legions were still at his side, and with them, he took control of the Italian seas. His advisers were divided: some in favor of waiting for the legions coming from Dalmatia; others, in favor of attacking Vitellius. The troops decided to advance to Cremona, a comune in northern Italy, but they encountered their enemies on the way there. Otho managed to escape to Calvatone (formerly called Bedriacum), but the troops of Vitellius reached them. In fact, the conflict did not lean to any side, neither to Vitellius nor for Otho, but the morale of soldiers and officers of Otho was affected. Otho, not knowing what to do, went to his campaign tent and committed suicide, driving a dagger in the chest. His successor was Vitellius.

Death: suicide, at 36 years old.

3) Aulus Vitellius Germanicus – r. 69-01-02–69-12-22 (10 months). No dynasty.

Name from birth to accession: Aulus Vitellius

Name as emperor: Aulus Vitellius Germanicus Augustus

Biological father: Lucius Vitellius; Brother, Lucius Vitellius the Younger.

Wives: Petronia and Galeria Fundana. With his first wife, Petronia, he had a crippled son, whom his mother had made heir; but the young man was killed later by Vitellius under charges of parricide. It is not known if the accusation was true or not. Then Vitellius married Galeria Fundana and had two children: Vitellius and Vitellia. The boy was killed during the Second Battle of Bedriacum along with his father.

Vitellius spent his childhood in Capri, among the favorites of the emperor Tiberius. He enjoyed the favor of the Emperor Caligula, whose cars he drove, and the favor of

Claudius and Nero with whom he played dice. In Germania he gained the affection of his soldiers thanks to his flexible discipline and his friendly way. Vitellius reigned only ten months but was famous for his appetite and his cruelty.

The Second Battle of Bedriacum (also called the second battle of Cremona) was fought in the same place where Otho was dead. Cremona (in Lombardy, northern Italy) is thirty-five kilometers away from Calvatone (formerly called Bedriacum), and the exact site of the battle is between these two cities. After the first battle, when Otho committed suicide, the Roman legions of Egypt, Judea and Syria acclaimed General Titus Flavius Sabinus Vespasian as emperor. He had received the command of Judea from Nero in 67 with the mission to end the revolt of the Jews. So when Vitellius proved unable as ruler, a new battle occurred, where he was defeated by Vespasian's army, ending the year of the four emperors. Vitellius was captured, naked, cruelly executed and thrown into the Tiber. He was the first emperor to add the honorific name of Germanicus to his name instead of Caesar.

Death: murdered by the troops of Vespasian.

III) Flavian Dynasty (69-96 AD): Vespasian, Titus and Domitian.



Vespasian



Titus



Domitian

1) Titus Flavius Sabinus Vespasianus or **Vespasian** – r. 69-79 AD (10 years).

Biological father: Titus Flavius Sabinus I; mother, Vespasia Polla; siblings: Titus Flavius Sabinus II and Flavia; wife: Flavia Domitilla (Domitilla Major or Domitilla the Elder); after the death of his wife he married his lover: Antonia Caenis

Children with Flavia Domitilla: Titus Flavius Sabinus Vespasianus; Titus Flavius Domitian; Domitilla Minor (Domitilla the Younger)

He was a senator during the Julio-Claudian dynasty and in 51 AD he was elected consul.

After the quick succession and death of Galba and Otho and the rise of Vitellius to power, the Roman legions of Egypt, Judea and Syria acclaimed Vespasian as Emperor. When Vitellius was defeated, in the following day Vespasian was proclaimed emperor by the Senate. He found no direct threat to his imperial power after the death of Vitellius, although other historical sources mention many conspiracies against him during his reign. As ruler, Vespasian was a hardworking man, economic and forceful. His economic administration was effective, with a significant increase in annual taxes, which improved state finances, raising money for the construction of the Colosseum in Rome and the construction of the temple dedicated to Jupiter Capitoline. The emperor let his allies spread the stories about his divinity, which began in Egypt, and made sure that they circulated throughout the Roman Empire.

One of the most significant events of Vespasian's reign was the First Jewish-Roman War (66–73 AD, sometimes called the Great Jewish Revolt), the first of three major rebellions by the Jews of Judea against the Roman Empire.

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It began in 66 AD, initially due to religious tensions between Greeks and Jews, with protests against taxation and attacks on Roman citizens. Later, Roman legions under the command of Titus (Titus Flavius Vespasianus Augustus, son of Titus Flavius Sabinus Vespasianus) besieged Jerusalem and destroyed the center of rebel resistance on 1st August, 67 AD, culminating in the destruction of the Temple, a date that Jews call Tisha B'Av (9th day of the month of Av).

Death: 69 years old. Vespasian died of an intestine inflammation in 79 AD.

He was succeeded successively by his two sons, Titus (79-81 AD) and Domitian (81-96 AD).

2) Titus Flavius Vespasianus Augustus – r. 79-81 AD (2 years).

Biological father: Titus Flavius Sabinus Vespasianus; mother: Flavia Domitilla (Domitilla Major or Domitilla the Elder); Siblings: Titus Flavius Domitianus and Domitilla Minor (Domitilla the Younger).

Wives: Arrecina Tertulla (1st wife; 62-63 DC) – died soon after without children; Marcia Furnilla (2nd wife, 63 DC). Titus divorced her because her family had links to Nero's opponents and, after a failed attempt by a senator against the emperor in 65 AD, the entire family of his wife fell into disgrace. He divorced her, but continued to care for her daughter Julia. It is not known what happened to Marcia Furnilla.

Children with Marcia: Julia Flavia (Flavia Julia Titi)



Colosseum or Coliseum

The most important of his reign was his public buildings construction program in Rome, for example, the completion of the Flavian Amphitheatre (Amphitheatrum Flavium), known commonly as the Colosseum or Coliseum. Titus was generous with the victims of disasters that the Empire suffered during his brief reign: the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD reaching the cities of Herculaneum, Pompeii, Oplontis and Stabiae, and the fire of Rome in 80 AD.

Death: 41 years old. After two years on the throne, Titus died suffering from 'brain fever' probably meningitis. Titus was succeeded by his younger brother, Domitian.

3) Titus Flavius Domitianus or Domitian – 81-96 AD (15 years).

Name from birth to 69: Titus Flavius Domitianus

Name from 69 to accession: Titus Flavius Caesar Domitianus

Name as emperor: Titus Flavius Caesar Domitianus Augustus

Imperial name: Imperator Caesar Domitianus Augustus Germanicus

Biological father: Titus Flavius Sabinus Vespasianus; mother: Flavia Domitilla (Domitilla Major or Domitilla the Elder); siblings: Flavius Vespasianus Augustus and Domitilla Minor (Domitilla the Younger).

Wives: Titus offered his daughter's hand, Flavia Julia Titi, still a child, to his brother, Domitian, but he refused because he was in love with Domitia Longina. In 80 AD, his child was born, the only child known of Domitia and Domitian. No one knows the name of the boy, who died at only three years old, in 83 AD. For unknown reasons, Domitian exiled Domitia for a brief period, but called her back soon after; perhaps, to stop the rumors that he was having an affair with his niece Julia Flavia. From what is known, Domitia lived in the palace until the end of her husband's reign.

Julia married her second cousin by his father, Titus Flavius Sabinus IV. At this time, Domitian had already seduced her. When Vespasian and the husband of Julia Flavia died, Domitian lived conjugally with her. Because of the appeals of the people, he reconciled with Domitia, but anyway he continued his relationship with Julia. Julia died at 27 years old during the childbirth of her son with Domitian.

Domitian was a good administrator at the beginning, becoming despotic and cruel at the end of his reign. The foreign religions were tolerated provided they didn't interfere in the public order and could be assimilated to the traditional Roman religion. During the reign of the Flavian Dynasty the cult to the different Egyptian gods grew in an unprecedented way. Among them Serapis and Isis stand out, identified with Jupiter and Minerva respectively. Domitian expelled the philosophers from Rome. The classical sources describe him as a cruel and paranoid tyrant, locating him among the most hated emperors, by comparing his vileness with Caligula's and Nero's. He was the responsible for the persecution of Christians in Asia Minor (including John the apostle, who was taken into exile on the island of Patmos). He also proclaimed himself a god openly.

Death: at 44 years old, Domitian was assassinated in a palace conspiracy involving members of the Praetorian Guard and several of his freedmen (former slaves).

IV) Nerva-Antonine Dynasty (96-192 AD): Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus and Commodus.

During the imperial administrations of Nerva (96-98), Trajan (98-117), Hadrian (117-138), Antoninus Pius (138-161) and Marcus Aurelius (161-180) Rome enjoyed relative peace and political prosperity, military and economic, and then reached its apex. This period was known as 'The age of the five good Emperors.' One of the factors that contributed to this was the succession method chosen by such emperors, who began to transfer power to a successor with administrative ability, not necessarily their direct descendants. Trajan, for example, was chosen by Nerva, who had no children, and became his successor. This succession policy that was giving good results was interrupted only by Marcus Aurelius. After his death (180 AD), his son Commodus replaced him. He was considered as one of the worst emperors that Rome ever had and

the responsible for the beginning of political instability that would shake the Roman Empire.



1) Marcus Cocceius Nerva – r. 96-98 AD (2 years and 10 months).

He was a senator of good reputation and was in the service of the Empire during the reign of Nero, Vespasian, Titus and Domitian. Nerva, as new monarch, swore to restore the rights that were abolished or simply neglected during the reign of Domitian. However, his administration was marked by financial problems and his inability to deal with the troops, especially the Praetorian Guard. He was succeeded by his adopted son Trajan. He is considered by ancient historians as a wise and moderate emperor interested in the economic well-being, seeking to reduce government spending. Old and of good temperament, Nerva sought to rule well.

Death: he died of natural death in 98 AD (67 years old).

Nerva did not persecute the Christians; on the contrary, he ceased to persecute Christians and Jews during his government. Besides Marcus Cocceius Nerva (96-98 AD), History mentions three emperors who were favorable to Christians:

- Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexandrus – 222-235 DC, commonly known as Alexander Severus was the last of the emperors of the Severan Dynasty. Well-meaning but without political and military support, he was killed during a riot of the Legio XXII Primigenia. He treated the Christians affably. Legio XXII Primigenia, ‘the fortunate twenty-second legion’, was a legion of the Roman imperial army dedicated to the Goddess Fortuna Primigenia. It was created in 39 AD by Emperor Caligula to be used in his campaigns in Germania (Germany).

- Flavius Iovianus (363-364 AD), a Christian who, unlike his apostate predecessor, Flavius Claudius Iulianus, who had promoted a return to paganism, led the Empire to Christianity again.

- Flavius Gratianus Augustus (367-383 AD), who clearly favored the Christian religion against paganism, refusing to repeat the pagan rituals of the previous emperors and taking out of the Senate the Altar of Victory in 382 AD. The Altar of Victory was a golden statue and had been placed in the Senate hall in honor of the goddess Victory (Victoria, in Latin) by the emperor Caesar Augustus in 29 BC to celebrate the defeat of Mark Antony and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium (Greece), for they opposed him. The Roman senators did not like the removal of the statue, since, for centuries, they swore solemnly before it and recited prayers and made libations of wine and burned incense.

2) Caesar Marcus Ulpius Nerva Traianus or **Trajan** – r. 98-117 AD (19 years).

Name from birth to adoption: Marcus Ulpius Traianus

Name from adoption to accession: Caesar Marcus Ulpius Nerva Traianus

Name as emperor: Imperator Caesar Nerva Traianus Divi Nervae filius Augustus (Emperor Caesar Nerva Traianus son of the divine Nerva Augustus)

Caesar Marcus Ulpius Nerva Traianus or Trajan was the son of Marcus Ulpius Traianus and Marcia; he had a sister called Ulpia Marciana, who came to marry a senator. His wife was Pompeia Plotina, and had no children by her. Pompeia Plotina was very interested in philosophy and was a woman of great virtue, dignity and simplicity. Plotina also influenced many aspects of Roman life of her time, from fairer taxes to charitable works for the poor, including improvements in education. The couple was guardian of the future emperor Hadrian, who was about 10 or 11 years old when he lost his father, who was a second cousin of Trajan. Plotina liked the boy and encouraged his adoption by Trajan, who was already on his deathbed. When Plotina died, she was deified. Hadrian built a temple in her honor in Nîmes, in Provence.

Trajan was an efficient administrator, reorganized the empire, with support of the Senate. He activated trade and agriculture again; he reduced taxes and undertook major public works programs: he built the new Roman Forum, roads (a new part of the Appian Way), bridges, aqueducts, ports, public baths and sanitary infrastructure. He also had great military and territorial conquests, for in his reign the Roman Empire reached its maximum territorial extension (from Portugal to Iran, from the current England to Egypt). He was born in Hispania Baetica, current region of Andalusia in Spain; therefore, he was the first emperor who was not born in Rome, thus opening the way for greater participation of Roman citizenship in high posts of the empire. For all he did, he had the loyalty of his subjects. He was one of the greatest Roman emperors. However, besides a good administrator, he was first of all a military leader. During the final phase of his reign, he devoted himself exclusively to the war and left much of the civil administration in third-party hands. His reputation lasted for nearly nineteen centuries.

One of the important events of his reign was the Second Jewish-Roman War or Diaspora Revolt (115-117 AD, called in Hebrew, מרד הגליות, mered ha'galoyot, 'rebellion of the exile' or 'rebellion of the diaspora').

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Death: at 63 years old, probably of a stroke (cerebrovascular accident) in the trip back from the Parthian campaign in Selinus, near the Black Sea (117 AD). His adoptive son, Hadrian, was his successor.

During his rule the apostle John died of a natural death at the age of 94 (98-100 AD), after being released from the mining Island of Patmos in the government of Nerva.

Although since 64 AD (when Nero ordered to torture Christians in Rome) there was persecution to Christianity, they were irregular. The organized persecutions against Christians emerged from Trajan on. Marcus Ulpius Nerva Trajan was a Roman Emperor from 98 to 117 AD. In 112 AD he established the procedures against the Christians. The Christians were accused of superstition and hatred to mankind. If they were Roman citizens they were beheaded; and if not, they could be thrown to wild beasts or sent to work in mines.

After him, the main persecutions were ordered by the emperors Publius Aelius Traianus Hadrianus (117-138 AD), Antoninus Pius (Titus Aurelius Fulvius Boionius Arrius Antoninus Pius – 138-161 AD), Marcus Aurelius (Caesar Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus – 161-180 AD), Commodus Antoninus (Marcus Aurelius Commodus Antoninus – 180-192 AD), Septimius Severus (Lucius Septimius Severus Pertinax – 193-211 AD), Geta (Publius Septimius Geta – 189-211 DC), Decius (Gaius Messius Quintus Trajan Decius – 249-251 AD), Valerian (Publius Licinius Valerian – 253-260 AD), Aurelian (Lucius Domitius Aurelianus – 270-275 DC), Diocletian (Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletian – 284-305 AD) and Maximianus (Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus Herculius Augustus – 285-305 AD, ruling along with Diocletian), a period known as the Great Persecution. In 284 AD, for administrative purposes, Diocletian divided the Roman Empire into two parts: East and West.



Roman Empire in its maximum extension in Trajan's reign

3) Caesar Publius Aelius Traianus Hadrianus or Hadrian – r. 117-138 AD (21 years).

Father: Publius Aelius Hadrianus Afer

Mother: Domitia Paulina

Name from birth to adoption and accession: Publius Aelius Hadrianus

Name as emperor: Caesar Publius Aelius Traianus Hadrianus Augustus

Sister: Aelia Domitia Paulina

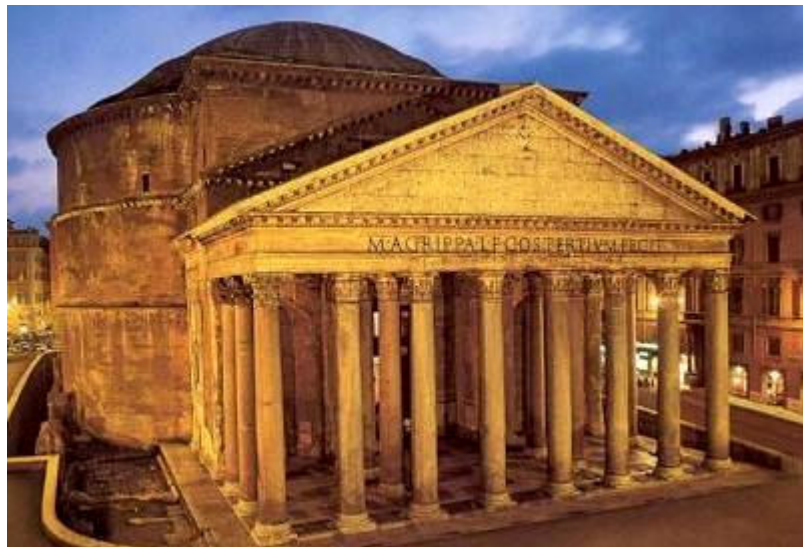
Wife: Vibia Sabina

Adoptive children: Lucius Aelius and Antoninus Pius

Hadrian was born in south of Spain; his parents were Roman colonists and he was second cousin of Trajan, being adopted by this and placed as his successor. He married Vibia Sabina, but had no children, because there were rumors that Hadrian preferred his male lovers (for example, his lover Antinous, to whom he erected a temple in Egypt after his death).



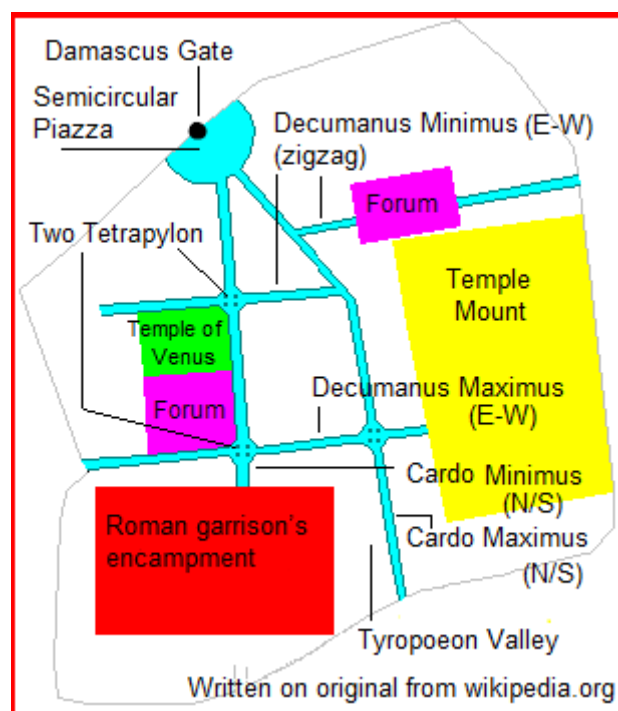
Hadrian's walls in Scotland



Roman Pantheon



Olympieion in Athens, Greece



Aelia Capitolina – Jerusalem rebuilt by Hadrian

Hadrian was the Roman governor of Syria in times of Trajan's war against the Parthians. In Rome, he rebuilt the Pantheon (a temple dedicated to the Roman gods) and built the Temple of Venus; he ordered to complete in Athens the construction of the Olympieion (The Temple of Olympian Zeus, also known as Columns of the Olympian Zeus) and made it the cultural capital of the Empire. He ordered the construction of many and sumptuous temples in the city. In Hadrian's time there was some enmity between him and the Senate because four important ex-consuls of the policy of military conquests of Trajan were executed by his order, without the senate knew. Seeing that the empire had exhausted its capacity of extension, Hadrian put aside the war and opted

for a diplomatic policy with neighboring peoples: Mesopotamia, Dacia (now Romania), the plain of the Lower Danube and the Carpathian region. In order to protect the remaining Roman borders against the barbarians, he built many fortifications in Germany and in England (in 122 AD, he built Hadrian's Wall, marking the border between England and Scotland for centuries).

Hadrian ordered the rebuilding of Jerusalem as a Greek city and called it Aelia Capitolina, and so, at the end of his reign, the Third Jewish Revolt against the Roman Empire, or the Third Jewish-Roman War (132-135 AD), also known as the 'war of extermination' or 'Bar Kokhba Revolt', broke out in the interior of Judea. It was a long war with bloody fighting, lasting more than 2 years and resulting in a victory for Rome.
<https://www.searaagape.com.br/asguerrasjudaicoromanas.html>

Hadrian also persecuted Christians. He died of heart failure at the age of 62.

4) Titus Aurelius Fulvius Boionius Arrius Antoninus Pius, known as Antoninus Pius – r. 138-161 AD (23 years).

Name from birth to adoption by Hadrian: Titus Aurelius Fulvus Boionius Arrius Antoninus

Name from adoption to accession: Titus Aelius Caesar Antoninus

Name as emperor: Caesar Titus Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius

Father: Titus Aurelius Fulvus

Mother: Arria Fadilla. With the death of Titus Aurelius Fulvus, she married Publius Julius Lupus, and had a daughter with him: Julia Fadilla

Siblings of his mother's first marriage to Titus Aurelius Fulvus: none. Antoninus was only-child.

Wife: Around 110-115 AD, Antoninus Pius married Annia Galeria Faustina or Faustina I (Faustina Major). She was daughter of a consul and was a beautiful woman, known in Rome for her wisdom. She spent her whole life to the care of the less favored. Annia Galeria Faustina or Faustina I (Faustina Major) was deified after her death.

Natural children:

- Marcus Aurelius Fulvus Antoninus (died before 138)
- Marcus Galerius Aurelius Antoninus (died before 138)
- Aurelia Fadilla (died before 135); Marcus Aurelius Fulvius Antoninus; Marcus Galerius Aurelius Antoninus (died of natural causes before 138). Aurelia Fadilla married Aelius Lamia Silvanus or Syllanus, who became consul in 145 AD. She had no children with him.

- Annia Galeria Faustina Minor, Faustina Minor or Faustina the Younger, married the emperor Marcus Aurelius, maternal cousin. She was the only daughter to reach adult age. Their second daughter (Lucilla) married the emperor Lucius Verus.

Adoptive children:

- Marcus Aurelius (adopted) – Nephew of Antoninus Pius. When Marcus Aurelius was adopted by Antoninus Pius, he divorced his first wife Ceionia Fabia to marry Faustina Minor.

- Lucius Verus Commodus Ceionius, known as Lucius Verus, Hadrian's grandson, son of Lucius Aelius Caesar (or Lucius Ceionius Commodus) and his wife Avidia. Lucius Aelius Caesar was the son of the Emperor Hadrian. Lucius Verus married the daughter of Marcus Aurelius, Lucilla.

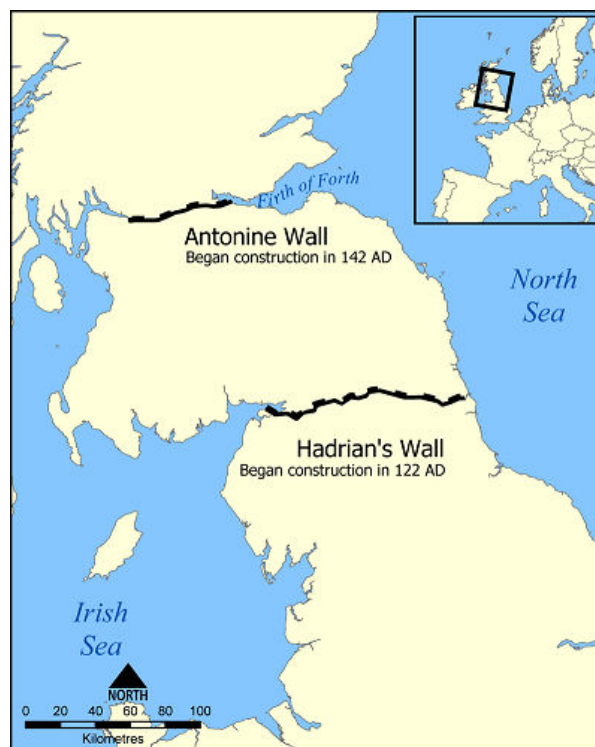
Death: 74 years old, of fever.

Antoninus Pius was called 'Pius' by the fact that he insisted on the deification of his adoptive father Hadrian. His government policy was austere, without big buildings or military conquests. The only one was the expansion of the frontier of Britannia

farther north, which led to the construction of a new wall (140-142 AD), the Antonine Wall, to the north of Hadrian's Wall, in the border between the current England and Scotland. During his reign some temples were built, theaters, mausoleums, not as opulent as those of his predecessors. He promoted the arts and sciences, favoring masters of rhetoric (oratory, eloquence) and philosophy.

His reign elapsed peacefully despite military unrest in Mauretania, in Judea and Britannia against the Brigants (a Celtic people), although none of these insurrections were considered of importance. He sought to solve the crises of his government without leaving Italy, dealing with war affairs in the provinces through the governors or through letters to the cities. For many, this was a good style of government. Antoninus Pius maintained good relations with the Senate, unlike Hadrian. Antoninus also persecuted Christians.

Death: Antoninus died of fever in Etruria, about twelve kilometers from Rome, at 74 years of age. His reign was the most lasting since Augustus', exceeding by two months of Tiberius.' His body was deposited in the Mausoleum of Hadrian (now Castle Sant' Angelo) and a column was erected in his honor in the Field of Mars (Campus Martius – the name of a public area in Rome dedicated to the god Mars), and the temple that he himself had dedicated to his wife Faustina in 141 was then deified in his name and Hadrian's.



Antonine's walls in Scotland

5) Lucius Ceionius Commodus Verus Armeniacus, known as **Lucius Verus** – r. 161-169 AD (8 years).

Birth name until adoption by Antoninus Pius: Lucius Ceionius Commodus

Name from adoption to accession: Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus

Name as emperor: Caesar Lucius Aurelius Verus Augustus

He was the son of Avidia Plautia and Lucius Aelius Caesar, also called Lucius Commodus (Lucius Ceionius Commodus), son of the emperor Hadrian. Verus had another brother, Gaius Avidius Ceionius Commodus, and two sisters, Ceionia Fabia and Ceionia Plautia. He was born and raised in Rome.

When Lucius Verus' father died in 138 AD, he was adopted by Hadrian. This one chose as successor, Antoninus Pius, his adoptive son, on the condition that he adopted Lucius Verus (who was then seven years old) and Marcus Aurelius (nephew of Antoninus Pius) seventeen years old. Lucius Verus married Lucilla, daughter of Marcus Aurelius, and had three children: Aurelia Lucilla, Lucilla Plautia and Lucius Verus (Aurelia Lucilla and Lucius Verus died in young age). Lucilla Plautia, in 182, conspired with her mother (Annia Aurelia Galeria Lucilla) to overthrow Commodus (the emperor and brother of Lucilla, but the two women were executed in Capri by his order). Annia Lucilla was 34 years old when she died.

Death: Lucius Verus died at 39 years old because of the plague (Smallpox) or poisoning.



Lucius Verus when he was a child

Lucius Verus was co-Emperor of the Roman Empire with Marcus Aurelius from 161 to 169 AD.

In 161 the senate gave him the power of tribune and the title of Augustus.

It was the first time that Rome was ruled by two emperors. Marcus Aurelius had been consul once and was Maximum Pontiff. Soon after the ascension of Marcus as emperor, his daughter Annia Lucilla, with 11 years old, was betrothed to Lucius Verus, even though he is formally her uncle.

During the winter of 161-162 there was a revolution in Syria and Lucius Verus was sent by Marcus Aurelius there in order to fight the Parthians. He was stronger and healthier than Marcus and more suitable for military activity. In fact, there were other intentions behind this choice, which was to restrain the debauchery of Lucius, to reform his morals and make him keep in touch to the horrors of war so he could realize that he was an emperor. The Senate was favorable and Lucius left. Marcus Aurelius remained in Rome, because the city needed his presence.

Lucius was stricken by a stroke in Canosa during the trip, which put him in bed. Eventually he recovered. Lucius spent most of his campaign in Antioch, although wintered in Laodicea and spent the summer in Daphne, a resort outside of Antioch.

In the midst of war, in the autumn of 163 or early 164 Lucius traveled to Ephesus to marry Lucilla, who was 13-14 years old. From 166 to 168 Lucius Verus spent in Rome with a lifestyle full of glamour and a troupe of actors and favorites with him. In the tavern of his own house, he celebrated parties with his friends until dawn. The circus games (Colosseum) also amused him, especially the chariot races. Despite all this, he continued to perform his official tasks efficiently. In 168 the Marcomanni invaded the Roman territory across the Danube (The Marcomanni were a Germanic tribe with close ties to the Suebi and inhabited the south of the Danube region). Returning to Rome, he began to show symptoms of food poisoning and died a few days later (169). Some scholars say he may have been suffering from an epidemic of smallpox, known as the 'Antoninus Plague.' The war lasted until 180. He was deified by the Roman Senate as the Divine Verus (Divus Verus).

6) Caesar Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus, known as **Marcus Aurelius – r. 161-180 AD (19 years).**

Birth name: Marcus Annius Catilius Severus

After marriage, he became to be known as: Marcus Annius Verus; in fact, he took the name of his biological father.

Name as imperial heir: Marcus Aelius Aurelius Verus Caesar.

Name as emperor: Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, adding the titles of Emperor, Caesar and Augustus. Aurelius means: 'golden'; and the reference to Antoninus is due to the fact of being adopted by the Emperor Antoninus Pius.

Biological father: Marcus Annius Verus; mother: Domitia Lucilla. Sister: Annia Cornificia Faustina also called Annia Cornificia Faustina Major or Annia Cornificia Faustina, the Elder.

Wife: Faustina, the younger, daughter of Antoninus Pius and the empress Faustina, the Elder. The marriage occurred around 145 AD and lasted 30 years. During these 30 years, Faustina begat 13 children, among them: Lucius Aurelius Commodus Antoninus, who would become emperor after Marcus Aurelius; and Lucilla (Annia Aurelia Galeria Lucilla), who married Lucius Verus to solidify his alliance with Marcus Aurelius.

Children:

Annia Aurelia Galeria Faustina

Gemellus Lucilla (a twin brother of Annia Aurelia Galeria Lucilla that died still a baby)

Annia Aurelia Galeria Lucilla (married Lucius Verus)

Titus Aelius Antoninus

Titus Aelius Aurelius

Hadrian

Domitia Faustina

Annia Aurelia Fadilla

Annia Cornificia Faustina Minor

Titus Aurelius Fulvius Antoninus – twin of Lucius Aurelius Commodus Antoninus, and died at 4 years of age

Lucius Aurelius **Commodus** Antoninus – the future emperor

Marcus Anius Verus Caesar

Vibia Aurelia Sabina

Death of Marcus Aurelius: 58 years old, during the war against the Marcomanni

Marcus Aurelius was the last of the five good emperors, and is remembered as a successful ruler and educated; He devoted himself to philosophy, especially Stoicism, so he became known as the philosopher emperor. Stoicism is a philosophical current founded by Cicero (340-264 BC), which taught the austerity of character, moral rigidity and impassibility in the face of pain or misfortune. It was contemporary of Epicureanism, founded by Epicurus (Greek philosopher – 341-270 BC), characterized by pleasure in the practice of virtue and culture of spirit, sensuality and lust, but in this detail, it is different from hedonism, which seeks immediate pleasure.

Marcus Aurelius also persecuted the Christians, cruelly. In his eyes they were superstitious and stubborn people. His reign was marked by wars in the eastern part of the Roman Empire against the Parthians, and the northern border against the German tribes. In central Europe, Aurelius fought against the Marcomanni, Quadi, and Sarmatians with success during the Marcomannic Wars. He solved the case sending the co-Emperor Lucius Verus as commander of the legions located in the east. Lucius Verus remained loyal until his death in campaign in the year 169 AD.



A few years before he died, he appointed his son Commodus as heir (adopting the name of Marcus Aurelius Commodus Antoninus), and also making him co-emperor in 177 AD. However, his son was egocentric and was not prepared for the exercise of power. That's why many historians refer to the beginning of the decline of Rome with the death of Marcus Aurelius and the reign of Commodus. In other words, the death of the 'Pax Romana' ('The Roman Peace') – an expression that fitted well in the first two centuries of the Roman Empire, having a sense of security, order and progress for all peoples dominated by Rome. In this period, the Roman population lived protected from barbarian invasions that lived on the borders of the empire. It began with Augustus in 27 BC, declaring an end to the civil wars through authoritarianism and weapons of the Roman legions.

Death: Marcus Aurelius died at the age of 58, during an expedition against the Marcomanni (180 AD), barbarians surrounding Vindobona (now Vienna, Austria). His ashes were brought to Rome and deposited in the Mausoleum of Hadrian, as well as those of his family.



Hadrian's Mausoleum, where the ashes of Marcus Aurelius, his children and Faustina were deposited. Today it is Castel Sant'Angelo

7) Marcus Aurelius Commodus Antoninus – r. 180-192 AD (12 years).

Birth name: Lucius Aurelius Commodus (Lucius Aurelius Commodus Antoninus)

Biological father: Marcus Aurelius; mother: Faustina the Younger. Brothers: Annia Aurelia Galeria Faustina, Gemellus Lucilla (a twin brother of Annia Aurelia Galeria Lucilla that died still a baby), Annia Aurelia Galeria Lucilla, Titus Aelius Antoninus, Titus Aelius Aurelius, Hadrian, Domitia Faustina, Annia Aurelia Fadilla, Annia Cornificia Faustina Minor, Titus Aurelius Fulvius Antoninus (twin of Lucius Aurelius Commodus Antoninus, and died at 4 years old), Marcus Annus Verus Caesar, Vibia Aurelia Sabina.

Wife: Bruttia Crispina. She married Commodus in 178, when she was sixteen years old. However, she had no children, and this created a problem in the succession of the empire. In fact, Crispina wedding was planned by her father and father-in-law. Commodus did not like the wife, probably by his temperament: she was beautiful and graceful, but also vain and arrogant. However, the ancient writers say that Commodus preferred male company. After ten years of marriage, Crispina ended up being falsely accused of adultery and was banished to the island of Capri in 188, where she was later executed (at the time, she was 27 years old).

Commodus was the first emperor in this series of five emperors, to ascend to power by blood and not by adoption. It is considered one of the worst Roman emperors, and his reign marked the end of the so-called 'age of the five good emperors' and the Antonine Dynasty. Commodus was educated in Greek literature, Latin and rhetoric.

In 177 AD, Marcus Aurelius appointed him co-Emperor, and until his death (180 AD) the two ruled together during the war against the Marcomanni. However, with the

death of his father, Commodus was against the opinion of his advisers and ended the war policy of Marcus Aurelius, trying to make a negotiated peace with the Germans (108-182 AD), although the Roman army to be involved in 'cleansing campaigns' in the Danubian region. Although with insufficient economic resources to maintain permanent Roman troops, the people of Rome still supported this form of government, and the renunciation to the conquests of territories was something that displeased the elite of the Roman government because this diminished the chances of a person to hold public offices. All this separated Commodus from the Senate, which accused him of being a bad emperor, in addition to his extravagance and sexual perversions. Commodus became famous for liking violent spectacles, even because this was a factor that contributed to his ascension to the throne. Historians say at the age of 12 this aspect of his character was already manifested. He wanted to see a slave being burned alive just because he prepared the bath water, which he thought was too hot. The servants took an animal and burned it alive in front of him.

At the beginning of his reign there was a conspiracy by the Senate against him, a conspiracy which was led by his own sister Lucilla, at the time, already a widow of Lucius Verus and married to an old general of Marcus Aurelius. Commodus removed the general from his post and sent Lucilla into exile, along with her daughter, where they were killed by his order. From then on, he relied on his praetorian prefects, one after the other, due intrigues and murders in the imperial court. Like Hadrian he gave lesser valor to the Senate and began to rule supported by a council of personal friends and administrative staff. This way, always in travels, he moved away from the Senate and got closer to the provincial elites, with good results. He no longer had interest in the everyday issues of government, coming to demonstrate a real annoyance and disregard to the position he occupied. He spent increasingly less time in Rome. In 189, under the influence of his praetorian prefect, he came to appoint 25 consuls often judging lawsuits because of bribery. However, Commodus had the good sense to choose for the provinces and the army individuals with management skills as well as the care to meet the demands of the oppressed, as the case of African colonists.

Faced with the opposition of the Senate, Commodus sought to rule based on religious charisma. He lent money to the Eastern religions and promoted the cult of Jupiter, the supreme god (Zeus to the Greeks), in a new Roman Pantheon in which the foreign gods would be represented. He also performed as a gladiator in the amphitheater (Colosseum), and due to his devotion to Hercules worship (Herakles or Heracles to the Greeks, famous for his strength), one of the mythological sons of Jupiter, Commodus named himself Hercules Romanus, requiring that people worshiped him as the reincarnation of Hercules. He issued a series of coins in which he was represented as Hercules with the club, the bow, arrows and a lion skin. Heracles, the Greek god, was recognized by a club (also known as a cudgel, truncheon or bludgeon) and the lion skin (because he had defeated the Nemean lion, an unknown location, probably the result of human imagination). The club was due to his strength in hand-to-hand combats (wrestling).

Being a big admirer of the fights between gladiators, in 192 AD he organized a show with two weeks of duration, where there was combat between gladiators, even coming to participate in them personally, wearing clothes and weapons similar to Hercules'. He appeared in the Senate wearing these clothes.

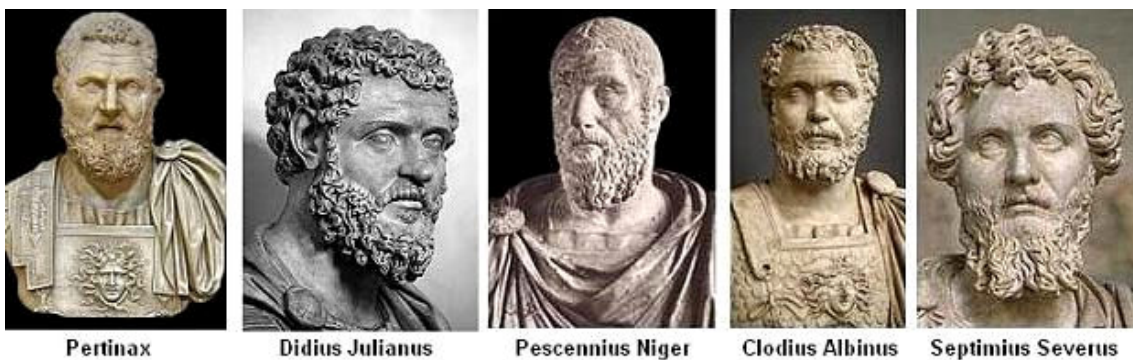


The Emperor Commodus Antoninus presenting himself like the god Hercules, with the lion skin and the club.

Although many sources say otherwise, in his government there was indeed a persecution of Christians.

Death: Commodus died at 31 years old by violent causes, but sources differ on whom and on how this occurred. His violent death marked the beginning of a period of great political instability in Rome. The group of close advisers of the emperor included the future emperor Septimius Severus and his brother Publius Septimius Geta. When Septimius Severus became emperor, Commodus was deified. His death was the end of Nerva-Antonine Dynasty.

V) Year of the five Emperors (193 AD): Pertinax, Didius Julianus, Pescennius Niger, Clodius Albinus and Septimius Severus (who started the Severan Dynasty).



The Year of the Five Emperors refers to the year 193 AD, in which there were five claimants to the title of Roman Emperor. The five were: Pertinax, Didius Julianus,

Pescennius Niger, Clodius Albinus and Septimius Severus (founder of the Severan Dynasty). It started with the assassination of Commodus on the last day of the year 192, and the proclamation of Pertinax as Emperor.

Publius Helvius Pertinax or Pertinax (31st December 192 – mid-193 AD) was a senator from a Greek family and bought the title of emperor, which was recognized by Septimius Severus. He was killed by soldiers of the Praetorian Guard in the Palatinus (one of the Seven Hills of Rome). Later on that very day, Didius Julianus won an auction for the title of emperor, winning Titus Flavius Claudius Sulpicianus (father-in-law of Pertinax, and new mayor of the city). Titus Flavius Claudius Sulpicianus offered the soldiers a large sum of money to buy their loyalty, as Marcus Aurelius had done in 161, offering the same amount of 20,000 sesterii. Didius Julianus offered 5,000 sesterii more (this amount was equivalent to more than eight times the annual salary of the soldiers). The Senate approved Marcus Didius Severus Julianus as Emperor (he stayed only two months and three days in power). Marcus Didius Severus Julianus was 60 years old at the time. He was married to Manlia Scantilla and had a daughter named Didia Clara. He was the son of Quintus Petronius Didius Severus and Aemilia Clara. His birth family was rich and important in Milan, but he was raised in the family of Domitia Lucilla (mother of the emperor Marcus Aurelius) and this circumstance led him to a strong administrative career in the empire, as Praetor in Belgium, proconsul, consul, governor of Illyria and Germania and chief of a social security system for orphans and for the less privileged. However, after the death of Commodus, he began to take unpopular measures, which caused rebellion in the people. The other three claimants to the throne challenged him: Pescennius Niger in Syria, Clodius Albinus in Britannia, and Septimius Severus in Pannonia. Severus, having as an ally Clodius Albinus (governor of Britannia) reached Ravenna, marched to Rome to overthrow Didius Julianus. Despite all the desperate measures of Didius Julianus, he was defeated by Septimius Severus. One version of the story says that Didius Julianus was killed by Praetorian soldiers in the Palatinus (one of the Seven Hills of Rome) at the behest of the Senate; another version of the facts says that Septimius Severus beheaded him. Anyway, Septimius Severus reached Rome, handed Didius Julianus' corpse to his wife and daughter, and spared their lives, but excluding them of the titles of Augusta and the heritage. Then he dismissed the Praetorian Guard and executed the soldiers who had killed Pertinax. Consolidating his power, Septimius Severus fought against Pescennius Niger at Cyzicus and Nicaea or Nicaea in 193, and then defeated him definitely in Issus in 194. Gaius Pescennius Niger (54 years old) was Roman emperor for a few months only. At the beginning Clodius Albinus supported Septimius Severus believing that he would succeed him. Clodius Albinus had already been proclaimed emperor by the British legions in Hispania after Pertinax murder in 193. When he realized that Severus had other intentions, Clodius Albinus declared himself emperor in 195, but was defeated at the Battle of Lugdunum in 197. He died at 47 years old.

Roman Emperors 2

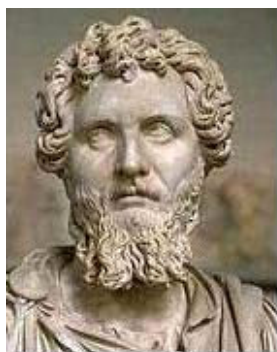
In this chapter will talk about the Crisis of the Third Century, which led to the decline of Rome and the division of the kingdom in the reign of Valerian into three parts: Rome, Gaul and Palmyra. 'The crisis of the third century' is the name given to a series of events in the Western Roman Empire during the third century, or more precisely from the year 235 to the year 284. During this period of fifty years, Rome faced a pandemic of smallpox or measles, which was called 'Plague of Cyprian', bishop of Carthage (now Tunisia) that identified it. The Roman Empire also faced many civil wars, foreign invasion, a collapse in the economy and usurpers of the throne besides unprepared and incompetent emperors, which proved to be quite weak in government, diminishing the power of the Senate, formerly so aristocratic, and becoming a military empire.

In short: nearly fifty years of civil wars, foreign invasion, and collapse of the economy; not to mention the religious abominations grounded in idolatry of Greek-Roman gods, also under the influence and inheritance of Persia, Egypt and the Seleucids. The last emperors of the third century were Carus, Numerian and Carinus (father and two sons), who were dead in battle or murdered, as in the case of Numerian, who was killed by his father-in-law who, in turn, succumbed to the deadly sword of Diocles, the chief of staff, who went down in history as Diocletian. We'll also talk about the Seven Hills of Rome.

In this chapter, you'll study about the following Dynasties:

- Severan Dynasty: Septimius Severus, Publius Septimus Geta, Lucius Septimius Bassianus (Caracalla), Marcus Opelius Macrinus, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (Elagabalus or Heliogabalus), Severus Alexander
- Crisis of the third century (235-284)
- Gordian Dynasty: Maximinus I Trax, Gordian I, Gordian II, Pupienus and Balbinus, Gordian III
- Four Emperors: Phillip the Arab, Decius, Trebonianus Gallus, Aemilian
- Valerian Dynasty: Valerian I; Gallienus
- Sequence of the decline of the Roman Empire: Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus, Aurelian, Tacitus, Florianus, Probus, Carus, Numerian, Carinus

VI) Severan Dynasty (193-235 AD): Septimius Severus, Publius Septimus Geta, Lucius Septimius Bassianus (Caracalla), Marcus Opelius Macrinus, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (Elagabalus or Heliogabalus), Severus Alexander.



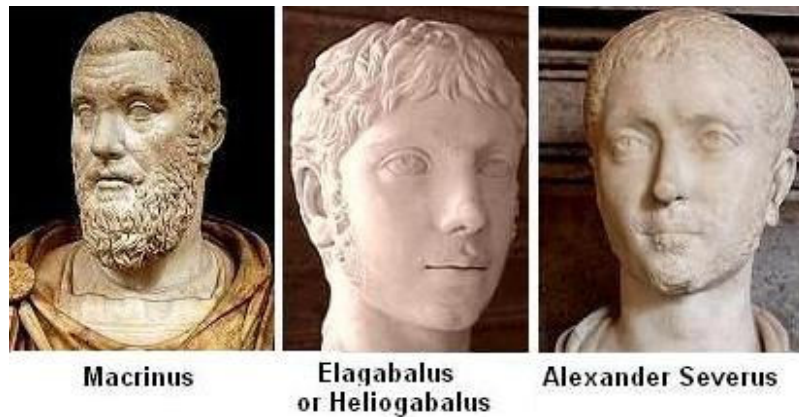
Septimius Severus



Caracalla



Geta



1) Lucius Septimius Severus or **Septimius Severus** – r. 193-211 AD (18 years)

Feb. 193-198 – He ruled as sole emperor

198-211 – ruled along with his eldest son: Caracalla

209-211 – ruled along with his sons: Caracalla and Geta

Birth name: Lucius Septimius Severus

Name as emperor: Caesar Lucius Septimius Severus Pertinax Augustus

Biological father: Publius Septimius Geta, who obtained the Roman citizenship in the first century

Mother: Fulvia Pia, descendant of Italian citizens and inhabitants of North Africa

Wife: Julia Domna, an Arab woman from Syria

Children: Lucius Septimius Bassianus (Caracalla) and Publius Septimius Geta. Geta was assassinated by his older brother, shortly after the death of his father.

Septimius Severus was the first citizen coming from the province without Roman ancestors, to reach the throne. Severus was of Berber origin (Peoples to the North of Africa, of African-Asian languages, therefore, not Greek, who called themselves ‘free men’) and Punic (related to the city of Carthage). The Romans called the Carthaginians ‘Punici’, originated from the name ‘Poenici’, i.e., of Phoenician ancestry, hence the adjective ‘Punic.’ The word ‘Berber’ seems to have arisen after the end of the Roman Empire. Its use in the previous period is not admitted by all historians of Antiquity.

Punic Wars was a series of three conflicts between the Roman Republic and the Republic of Carthage, a city-state of Phoenicia in the North of Africa (between 264-146 BC), disputing the lordship of the Mediterranean Sea. The Romans called the Carthaginians ‘Punici’, originated from the name ‘Poenici’, i.e., of Phoenician ancestry. The Punic Wars during the Roman Republic were restricted to the dominion of Rome on northern Africa, involving the Iberian Peninsula and some islands of the Western Mediterranean. The First Punic War was in 264-241 BC. The second, in 218-202 BC; and the third, in 149-146 BC.

In its origin, the term ‘barbarian’ – from Latin, ‘barbarus’, and derived from the ancient Greek: βάρβαρος, bárbaros = barbarians (‘foreign’) – was a word used by the Greeks to refer to other people, those whose language was incomprehensible to them, that is, non-Greeks. The word ‘barbarian’ had not, originally a pejorative connotation, meaning simply ‘not Greek’, i.e., a term applied to any person whose language was not understood by the Greeks or someone who expressed himself by onomatopoeia (‘bar-bar’), according to the perception of the Greeks.

Between 193 and 197, Severus competed for the throne with Pescennius Niger and Clodius Albinus. Therefore, he counted on the support of the Roman army, both the Navy and the ground troops and Praetorian soldiers.

In the war against the Parthian Empire, he was successful, and Mesopotamia returned to be under Roman rule. Upon returning to Rome, the people raised a Triumphal Arch to commemorate this victory.



Septimius Severus' arch

His relations with the Senate were never good, because he had become unpopular among senators by demarcating his power with the support of the army. He gave orders to have dozens of senators executed under charges of corruption and conspiracy, and replaced them by men loyal to his cause. He dissolved the Praetorian Guard and replaced it by his own bodyguard (Legionaries of Pannonia) in order to have full political control and personal security. Although his eagerness for power having made of Rome a military dictatorship, Septimius Severus was very popular among the Roman people to have restored morality after the decadent years of government of Commodus and to manage to restrain corruption.

Concerned about the mental instability of Caracalla, Septimius Severus made Geta (209) Caesar, the second post of command after the emperor.

In his later years he had to defend the borders from the barbarian attacks against the Roman Empire, especially the revolutions in Britannia; hence, Severus ordered to strengthen Hadrian's Wall.

According to History, he was a good emperor to the Roman interests, although he also persecuted Christians, actively promoting religious syncretism. Christians who did not abandon their faith to accept the Roman gods and those of other people were killed.

In 211 AD, he died at the age of 64 of natural causes, weakened by the gout, as it seems. When he died he was proclaimed Divus (divine) by the Senate.

At his death He received the name: Imperator Caesar Lucius Septimius Severus Pius Pertinax Augustus Arabicus Adiabenicus, Parthicus Maximus, Britannicus Maximus, Pontifex Maximus, Tribuniciae potestatis XIX, Imperator XV, Consul IV, Pater Patriae.

- He adopted the nickname Pius in 195
- Arabicus Adiabenicus – because of the victory over the city of Adiabene and about the people of Arabia in 195
- Parthicus Maximus – because of the victory over the Parthian Empire in 198

- Britannicus Maximus – because of the victory in 209 over the Caledonians (a group of Celtic tribes; peoples of the Western Europe) in Scotland.
- Tribuniciae potestatis, in Latin, is written in Italian as ‘tribunicia potestas’ or ‘tribunicia potestate’, which means the power given to the tribunes of the people in ancient Rome. Since the time of Augustus Caesar, the title was also given to all the Roman emperors, and this was based on the sacrosanct implications of the office of tribune. This title assured to the emperor the inviolability of his office and gave him the opportunity to legislate freely.



Celtic people

Women of Severan Dynasty, beginning with the wife of Septimius Severus, Julia Domna, were very active in advancing of the careers of their male relatives. Other notable women who exercised power behind the scenes in this period include Julia Maesa, sister of Julia Domna, and the two daughters of Julia Maesa, Julia Soaemias, mother of Elagabalus or Heliogabalus, and Julia Avita Mamaea, Alexander Severus' mother.

2) Publius Septimius Geta or **Geta** – r. 209-211 AD (2 years)

Birth name: Publius Septimius Geta

Biological father: Lucius Septimius Severus

Mother: Julia Domna

Wife: he didn't have

Children: he didn't have

Brother: Caracalla (Lucius Septimius Bassianus)

Death: 22 years old, assassinated by Caracalla, his older brother

Geta shared the power with his father Septimius Severus and his older brother Caracalla from 209.

During his empire Geta ordered the construction of many pagan temples, and he persecuted the Christians intensely, punishing them with death. He had no children.

He was murdered at 22 years old, at the behest of his brother Caracalla. History tells that Caracalla tried to murder Geta during the Saturnalia festival without success.

Later, he arranged a meeting with his brother in his mother's apartment, and he died in her arms, killed by centurions.

As for the Saturnalia, we know that in Rome, December 25th was the date on which the Romans celebrated the beginning of winter or the winter solstice, the Roman festival dedicated to the birth of the sun god invincible (Dies Natalis Solis Invicti, 'Birthday of the Unconquerable Sun'), the god worshiped by soldiers. Saturnalia festival in honor of the god Saturn was celebrated from 17th to 22nd December. It was a time of joy and gift exchange. The title 'Invictus' was also applied to other three deities: El Gabal (the sun god of Heliogabalus our Elagabalus, in Syria); the Persian God Mithra and also Mars. The 25th of December was regarded also as the birth of the mysterious Persian god, Mithra, the Sun of Virtue, probably also known by the Romans as Mithras, the god who was present in the meat and the blood of a bull, and when consumed, it granted salvation those who partook of the sacrificial meal. The only problem with it, for us Christians, is that after the acceptance of Christianity by the Roman emperors that followed, this date began to be linked to the birth of Christ, being corrupted and established as a Christian celebration in the fourth century by the Western Church (the first celebration of Christmas in Rome occurred, probably, in the year 336 AD) and since the fifth century, by the Eastern Church.

3) Marcus Aurelius Severus Antoninus Augustus (Lucius Septimius Bassianus) or Caracalla – r. 198-211 AD (13 years), in co-regency with the father, and 211-217 (r. 6 years) as sole ruler.

From birth to 195: Lucius Septimius Bassianus. He was born in Lugdunum in Gaul (now Lyon, France) in 188 AD

From 195 to 198: Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Caesar

From 198 to 211: Caesar Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus

From 211 to death (217): Caesar Marcus Aurelius Severus Antoninus Pius Augustus

Name by which he was known (official name): Marcus Aurelius Severus Antoninus Augustus

Nickname: 'Caracalla' was a nickname referring to a long Gallic hooded cloak he usually wore

Biological father, Lucius Septimius Severus

Mother: Julia Domna

Wife: Publia Fulvia Plautilla (Fulvia Plautilla or Plautilla)

Children: A daughter whose name was unknown

Brother: Geta

Death: 29 years old, stabbed in the back by Macrinus, prefect of the Praetorian Guard.

At the age of 7 years, his name was changed to Marcus Aurelius Septimius Severus Antoninus to make a connection to the family of Emperor Marcus Aurelius. This was a fictitious adoption by Septimius Severus, because he was the first citizen coming from the province without Roman ancestors to reach the throne. Caracalla changed his name several times between 195 and 217 but his best-known name is Marcus Aurelius Severus Antoninus Augustus. After 211 AD, when he began to reign as sole ruler, he received the full name of Caesar Marcus Aurelius Severus Antoninus Pius Augustus, and used it until his death.

In 202, Caracalla married Publia Fulvia Plautilla, daughter of the prefect of the Praetorian Guard, Gaius Fulvius Plautianus, but he did not like her or his father-in-law. After the fall of Plautianus in 205 AD, Caracalla sent her to exile.

A few years later, his mental instability intensified and he almost stabbed his father in the back before the whole army. He liked to be seen as a warrior, making war against neighboring countries. However, his popularity decreased due to his aggressive military policy, the raising of the salaries of soldiers and a building policy that demanded more taxes from the subjects, as for example, the construction of the 'Baths of Caracalla' in Rome. He granted Roman citizenship ('Edict of Caracalla' – 212 AD) to all free subjects of the empire, thus to collect more taxes. He also promoted some changes in the monetary area, with the introduction of the new currency, the antoninianus. These actions and others as his mental instability, his various perversions and the brutal treatment of his opponents (as the slaughter that he promoted among members of the Greek aristocracy of Alexandria during a festival of celebration to Alexander the Great) caused him to become hated, especially by the old aristocracy of the Roman senate, comparing him to a monster like Nero and other bad emperors. In 217 he was stabbed in the back by Macrinus, his Praetorian Prefect. Macrinus was not a member of Severan Dynasty, but succeeded him in the government.

4) Marcus Opellius Macrinus – r. 217-218 (14 months).

Name from birth to accession: Marcus Opellius Macrinus

Name as emperor: Caesar Marcus Opellius Severus Macrinus Augustus

Wife: Nonia Celsa

Son: Marcus Opellius Antoninus Diadumenianus Augustus or Diadumenian (born in 208; lived only 10 years)

Death: 53 years old, executed by Elagabalus (or Heliogabalus), who became emperor.

Macrinus proclaimed himself emperor after murdering Caracalla during the campaign against the Parthians, with whom he made a little honorable peace. He was a native of Mauretania Caesariensis, a province located in northern Africa where is now Algeria). His capital was Caesarea (hence the name Caesariensis), modern Cherchel. Macrinus was an excellent lawyer and this favored his position as prefect of the Praetorian Guard (the personal guard of the Emperor) of Caracalla, but he had more and more administrative and judicial responsibilities. Macrinus didn't belong to the Senate but to the equestrian order, i.e., the order of knights, an aristocratic position that emerged after the extinction of the Roman army's cavalry troop. Macrinus ruled from Antioch in the province of Syria, for he was unpopular with the Roman plebs, especially during the races in the Circus Maximus (where the chariot races occurred), and where he was booed to cheer the imperial family, the same way he was hated by the equestrian class and members of the senate. These races were offered in honor of the birthday of the emperor's son, Diadumenian (Marcus Opellius Antoninus Diadumenianus Augustus), who had been associated by his father Macrinus to the empire. When he reduced the pay of recruit soldiers to compensate the attitude of Caracalla, he became even more unpopular. After a military coup the Third Legion, instigated by maternal great-aunt of Caracalla (Julia Maesa), Macrinus and Diadumenianus his son tried to escape, but were executed (218 AD), when Bassianus (Heliogabalus) was enthroned as emperor.

5) Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, also known as **Elagabalus** or Heliogabalus – r. 218-222 AD (4 years).

Birth name: Sextus Varius Avitus Bassianus. He was born in Syria and kept this name until his coronation.

Name as emperor: Caesar Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus.

He only received the name Elagabalus (or Heliogabalus) after his death.

Biological father: Sextus Varius Marcellus, of the equestrian class, then made a senator.

Mother: Julia Soaemias Bassiana (Julia Soaemias). Her younger sister was Julia Avita Mamaea. The mother of Julia Soaemias Bassiana (Julia Maesa) was the sister of Julia Domna, wife of Emperor Septimius Severus

Wives:

1) Julia Cornelia Paula, daughter of Julius Cornelius Paulus, Praetorian Governor in Rome. One year after the wedding, Elagabalus divorced her to marry Aquilia Severa, a vestal virgin, what was considered a scandal.

2) Julia Aquilia Severa (Julia Aquilia Severa), a vestal virgin. The Vestals (in Latin, Virgo Vestalis), in ancient Rome, were priestesses who worshiped the Roman goddess Vesta (she corresponds to the Greek goddess Hestia – in Greek mythology – the Greek virgin goddess of hearth and home, architecture, domestic life, family and state). This is an exclusively female priesthood of six women chosen between six and ten years old, who served for thirty years. During this period, the vestal virgins were required to preserve their virginity and chastity, for any violation of these symbols of purity would mean a sacrilege to the Roman gods and therefore to the Roman society too. The punishment for breaking the vow of chastity of thirty years was death, being buried alive. As the emperor was a follower of Eastern religion of the sun god El-Gabal, when she married Severa he also carried out a symbolic wedding of his god with Vesta. But the marriage was revoked by Julia Maesa, grandmother of Elagabalus. He then married the third wife:

3) Annia Aurelia Faustina, a descendant of Nerva-Antonine dynasty. She was already married (206) to the consul Pomponius Basso, and had a couple of children. Two years later, when her parents died, Annia inherited their properties and fortune. Elagabalus married her in 221 granting her the title of Augusta, and adding the name of Julia to hers. He wanted her to give him an heir so that his maternal cousin (Alexander Severus) was not the successor. But as she did not get pregnant in the same year he divorced her and returned to his former wife, the vestal virgin Julia Aquilia Severa, who remained with him until his death. They had no children. After the divorce, Annia returned to her lands in Pisidia, a region of Anatolia (Turkey), and died there at 21 years old.

Adoptive son: Alexander Severus

Death at the age of 19, murdered.

Sextus Varius Avitus Bassianus (Caesar Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus, or Heliogabalus), at an early age (2 years old) has been appointed to be a priest of El-Gabal (Elagabalus in Latin, or Heliogabalus in Greek, which was the Syrian Sun-God, called El-Gabal, in Aramaic) in his hometown, Emesa (a city of Syria near Damascus and Aleppo). El-Gabal was represented by a penis (symbol of fertility and power), so the nickname 'Elagabalus.'

He became emperor at the age of 14-15 years, and started a reign characterized mainly by sexual scandals and religious controversies. According to ancient historians, Elagabalus also maintained relations with several men and they claim he had a much more stable relationship with his charioteer (Hierocles) than with any of his wives. Probably he showed disregard for Roman religious traditions and sexual taboos. He replaced Jupiter (the Roman god of the day, identified with the Greek god Zeus) in the Roman Pantheon, by El-Gabal, forcing the important members of the government in Rome to participate in rituals celebrating this deity, led by him. This kept him away from the Praetorian Guard, the senate and the citizens. As many stories were invented in

relation to Elagabalus, the new historians try to separate the real facts from fiction, preserving the view of this character and his reign with more caution.

When Elagabalus married Julia Aquilia Severa again, he tried to kill his cousin Alexander. In this conflict, his grandmother Julia Maesa and the Senate supported Alexander, and Elagabalus with his mother Julia Soaemias Bassiana were taken from the palace, dragged through the streets, murdered and thrown into the Tiber by the Praetorian Guard, who then acclaimed Alexander Severus as Augustus. Both received the *damnatio memoriae*. *Damnatio Memoriae*, in Latin, means ‘damnation of memory’ in the sense of removing from memory. It was a form of dishonor that could be passed by the Senate to the traitors or others who brought shame to the Roman state.

6) Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexander Augustus (Alexander Severus) – r. 222-235 AD (13 years).

Name from birth to adoption by Elagabalus: Marcus Julius Gessius Bassianus Alexianus

Name from adoption to accession: Caesar Marcus Aurelius Alexander

Name as emperor: Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexander Augustus

Biological father: Marcus Julius Gessius Marcianus

Mother: Julia Avita Mamaea

Wives:

1) Seia Herennia Sallustia Barbia Orbiana Augusta, also known as Sallustia Orbiana or only Orbiana. She was the daughter of the influential Roman Senator Seius Sallustius. She was empress for only two years, and because of jealousy on the part of her mother-in-law, who treated her with cruelty, her father was murdered by false accusation of high treason for trying to kill the emperor, and she was exiled to Africa. Alexander Severus could stop this, but he did not. Orbiana died at 18 years of age.

2) Sulpicia Memmia, a member of one of the most ancient Patrician families in Rome. There is no other information about her.

3) The third wife no one knows the name.

Children: none.

Alexander Severus was the last of the emperors of the Severan dynasty.

His grandmother Julia Maesa arranged his acclamation as emperor by the Third Gallic Legion, in addition to a rumor spread through the city that he had been killed. This contributed to his rise to power. Ruling from the age of fourteen under the influence of his mother, Julia Avita Mamaea, Alexander restored to some extent, the moderation that characterized the government of Septimius Severus. He did much to improve the moral and condition of the people, and he employed lawyers to oversee the administration of justice in the State. The excessive luxury and extravagance at the imperial court were diminished. He also restored the Baths of Nero in 227 or 229 AD.

He also restored the right of the soldiers, giving them the freedom to appoint their legal heirs and the right to free their slaves in their wills. When the soldiers were campaigning, Alexander secured the protection of their property and their right to them lest to be taken by anyone.

In religious matters, Alexander was open-minded. It is said that he was willing to erect a temple to Jesus, but he was dissuaded by the pagan priests. He allowed a synagogue to be built in Rome and gave as gift to this synagogue a scroll of the Torah. He treated the Christians gently.

The increasing strength of the Sassanian Empire (226-651) was already announcing the biggest external challenge that Rome has ever faced in the third century. The

subsequent war against the German invasion of Gaul led to his overthrow by the troops he was leading there.

Well-meaning but without political and military support, he was killed at the age of 27 years during a riot of XXII Primigenia Legion that supported Maximinus Thrax. The XXII Legion Primigenia (Legio Seconda Vigesima Primigenia or Legio XXII Primigenia, ‘the twenty-second fortunate legion’) was a legion of Roman imperial army dedicated to the goddess Fortuna Primigenia. It was established in 39 AD by Emperor Caligula for use in his campaigns in Germania (Germany). The twenty-second legion spent most of its life in Moguntiaco (modern Mainz, Germany), at the time, part of the Upper Germania. Its symbols were the Capricorn and the demigod Hercules. Alexander Severus was succeeded by Maximinus Thrax. Alexander Severus’ mother was killed during the riot.

THE CRISIS OF THE THIRD CENTURY (235-284):

Crisis of the third century is the name given to a series of events in the Western Roman Empire during the third century, or more precisely from the year 235 to the year 284. During this period, the empire was ruled successively by about eighteen legitimate emperors (although their exact number is unclear), most of them generals (‘soldier emperors’) that ended up losing the throne due to defeat in combat, murder or natural deaths, and reigning only two or three years. Their number is inaccurate because the list does not take into account the emperors appointed along with parents and peers, as well as it disregards the claimants and usurpers (individuals who wished to assume the title of Roman Emperor against the legitimate occupants of that office).

In the late second century, there was a civil war of succession, which shook the empire deeply. In the first half of the next century, the empire remained prosperous and extensive, until the powerful Sassanian Empire (or Neo-Persian Empire; it was the last pre-Islamic Persian Empire, ruled by Sassanian dynasty – 224-651 DC, and succeeded the Parthian Empire, lasting for almost 400 years), in the east, began to attack the Roman Empire. The emperor Valerian and his whole army of 70,000 men were captured in 260 AD, and the eastern provinces were devastated.



Parthian Empire



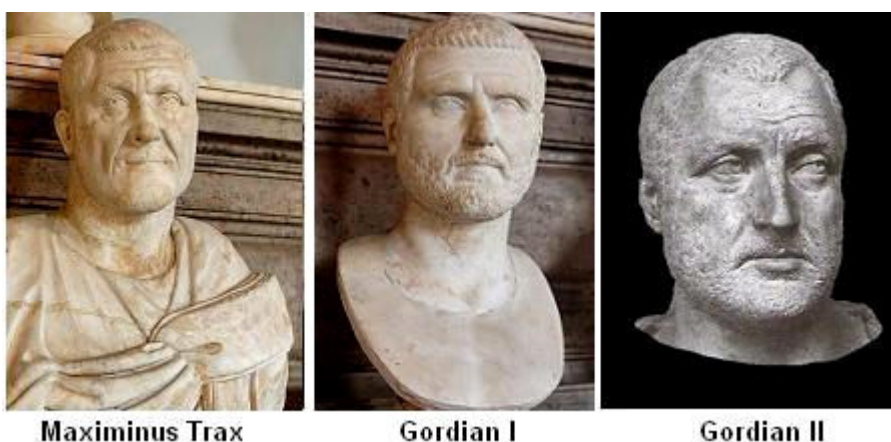
Sassanian Empire

For fifty years of the crisis of the third century, Rome faced a pandemic of smallpox or measles, which also hit Ethiopia and Alexandria (Egypt), and was called 'Plague of Cyprian', Bishop of Carthage (now Tunisia) that identified it. The Roman Empire also faced the invasion of the Goths, to the north of the Empire. In this period, the emperors proved quite weak in government, diminishing the power of the Senate, formerly so aristocratic, and becoming a military empire. The Roman legions, now with more power, influenced more easily the choice of the emperors to meet their immediate needs, but unfortunately, they were unprepared and incompetent emperors.

The crisis of the third century caused changes that, a little over a century later, put an end in the period known as Antiquity and initiated the Middle Ages. With the ascension of the Emperor Diocletian (284-305) the crisis of the third century ended.

In short: nearly fifty years of civil wars, foreign invasion, and collapse in the economy.

VII) 'Barracks Emperors' ('soldier emperors') – The year of the six emperors – Gordian Dynasty (238-244 AD):



Maximinus Trax

Gordian I

Gordian II

1) Caesar Gaius Iulius Verus Maximinus Augustus, known as Maximinus Trax or Maximinus I – r. 235-238 (3 years).

Birth name: Gaius Iulius Verus Maximinus

Name as emperor: Caesar Gaius Iulius Verus Maximinus Augustus

Birthplace: Thrace (Northeast of Greece, near Turkey)

Biological father: probably a Goth (The Goths were a Germanic people originating in the regions south of Scandinavia: Denmark, Sweden and Norway that invaded the Roman Empire from the east between the 3rd and 5th centuries).

Mother: probably an Alan [The Alans (or Alani) were an Iranian nomadic pastoral people of Ancient times. The name Alan is an Iranian dialectical form of Aryan, a common self-designation of the Indo-Iranians]

Wife: Diva Caecilia Paulina Pia Augusta, because she was deified after her death

Son: Gaius Julius Verus Maximus (he lived until 18 or 21 years old)

Death: 65 years old (assassinated)

Maximinus Thrax or Maximinus I was the first barbarian who wore the imperial purple and the first emperor who never set foot in Rome. He was also the first of the soldiers Emperors of the third century. His government is often considered as the beginning of the crisis of the third century. His only son was Gaius Julius Verus Maximus, appointed Caesar with about 16 years of age by his father. Maximinus Thrax was in the Danube frontier in 238 when the Roman senate condemned him as traitor of the State and appointed Pupienus and Balbinus as emperors, after the death of Gordian I and Gordian II, elected earlier as emperors in Africa.

Maximinus Thrax and his son returned to Italy, but their entry was blocked in the district of Aquileia, and leading the troops of Maximinus to hunger, thirst and consequently to diseases. The soldiers of the Second Legio Parthica (Legio II Parthica or Second Legion Parthian), a legion mobilized by the emperor Septimius Severus to the war against the Parthians, became hostile. They had as a symbol, the bull and the centaur (a being of Greek mythology with the head, arm and back of man, but body and legs of a horse, which symbolized strength). The soldiers of this legion tore the insignia of the military images of Maximinus troops, declaring, this way, his deposition of power, and they killed father and son. Their heads were taken to Rome at the tip of a spear, and their bodies were mutilated and given to dogs. The Senate elected Gordian III Emperor and ordered the 'damnatio memoriae' of Maximinus Thrax and Gaius Julius Verus Maximus. Damnatio Memoriae, in Latin, means 'damnation of memory' in the sense of removing from memory. It was a form of dishonor that could be passed by the Senate to the traitors or others who brought shame to the Roman state. The grandfather and uncle of Gordian III (Gordian I and Gordian II were proclaimed Emperors in Africa while Maximinus Thrax was still alive). The governor of Numidia, who was allied with Maximinus Thrax, killed Gordian II. So the Senate, elected Pupienus and Balbinus as emperors, but they were also killed by the Praetorian Guard.

2) Gordian I and Gordian II (Marcus Antonius Gordianus Sempronianus Romanus) – father and son – r. 238 (36 days).

Gordian I:

Name before the accession to the throne: Marcus Antonius Gordianus Sempronianus Romanus Africanus

Name as emperor: Caesar Marcus Antonius Gordianus Sempronianus Romanus Africanus Augustus

Birthplace: probably in Phrygia (Anatolia, now Turkey)

Biological father: Unknown, possibly Maecius Marullus or Marcus Antonius

Mother: Unknown, possibly Ulpia Gordiana or Sempronia Romana

Wife: Unknown, possibly Fabia Orestilla

Children: Marcus Antonius Gordianus (Gordian II) and Antonia Gordiana, the mother of Gordian III.

Death: at the age of 79 (He hanged himself when he learned of the death of his son Gordian II).

Gordian II:

Name before the accession to the throne: Marcus Antonius Gordianus Sempronianus Romanus

Name as emperor: Caesar Marcus Antonius Gordianus Augustus Sempronianus

Biological father: Marcus Antonius Gordianus Sempronianus Romanus (Gordian I)

Mother: Unknown, possibly Fabia Orestilla

Death: at the age of 46, killed in battle by the African governor of Numidia, who was allied with Maximinus Thrax

In 216 Gordian I was governor of Britannia, and consul in the reign of Elagabalus. Both he and his son were lovers of literature. He became popular among the Roman rabble when he was an 'edil', and favored magnificent games and shows. There were two pairs of aediles: the first were the plebeian aediles (Latin: aediles plebis) and possession of this office was limited to plebeians; the other two were 'curule aediles' (Latin: aediles curules), open to both plebeians and patricians, in alternating years. An aedilis curulis was classified as a magister curulis.

'Aedilis curulis' in ancient Rome were two persons in charge of the preservation of the city, police, markets and correlated criminal actions as well as the contentious civil jurisdiction on issues that occurred there. Gordian's personality was kind and he had a good reputation for this. He disliked intrigue, especially those that arose in government in the times of some emperors of the Severan Dynasty. He preserved his private life from curiosity and intrigues of people. Gordian I was a descendant of Trajan. As a military man, Gordian I occupied the Roman province of Syria. In the reign of Alexander Severus Gordian I had over seventy years and granted honors to the governments of Africa, being appointed emperor by the Africans during a revolt against Maximinus Thrax (so, he assumed the title of Africanus). Concerned about his advanced age, he shared the throne with his son, Marcus Antonius Gordianus Sempronianus Romanus or Gordian II, who in a few days later invaded and took control of the city of Carthage (in Tunisia), emerging victorious and winning the approval of the people and local political leaders. Thus, the senate confirmed him as new emperor, and most of the provinces were glad. The governor of Numidia, however, that was ally of Maximinus Thrax, invaded the province of Africa with only one legion and other veteran units. Gordian II led an inexperienced troop. Losing the battle of Carthage, he was killed. His father, knowing of his son's death, hanged himself with a belt.

Gordian II was born around 192. He was governor of Achaia (south of Macedonia, in Greece) and later, consul. Gordian I had given him a power exactly like his, except for the religious title of maximum Pontiff. Gordian II was raised in the palace and got used to the pomp, luxury and ostentation of imperial life. Gordian II enjoyed the gardens, the baths, the woods, and like his father, he enjoyed literature. He had 22 official concubines, and two to four children by each one of them. In his library, he had sixty thousand volumes, a legacy left by his teacher. By appointment of his father, he was emperor in co-regency with him, and soon after he invaded and took control of the city of Carthage (Tunisia), emerging victorious and winning the approval of the population and local political leaders. Thus, the Senate also confirmed him as the new emperor. However, the governor of Numidia, who was allied of Maximinus Thrax, invaded the province of Africa with only one legion and other veteran units. Gordian II led a troop with a greater number of soldiers, but inexperienced in combat and many of them without effective weapons. Historians of the time (as Herodian) said the soldiers

had to go to their homes to pick up swords, axes or even a spear to be able to fight with something, and even the shields for protection were made by themselves. On the day of battle, even before the attack of the Numidians, the army was afraid and left the battlefield, running, frightened. During the escape, many were trampled by their own companions and more soldiers died, trampled by each other, than by the hands of the enemy. By losing the battle of Carthage, Gordian II was killed, but his body was never found. His father, knowing of his son's death, hanged himself with a belt. After their death, both were honored by the Senate.

Note:

'Maximum Pontiff' (Latin: 'Pontifex maximus' means literally 'maximum' or 'supreme builder of bridges'), in Ancient Rome, designated the supreme priest of the college of priests, the highest dignity in the Roman religion. Initially only the patricians (citizens of the Roman aristocracy or of hereditary noble lineage) could occupy this office. It was a religious office of the Roman Republic until 254 BC, when a plebeian has been appointed king of Rome. Thus, from a religious position during the Republic, it was gradually being politicized until be incorporated by the emperor, beginning with Caesar Augustus. Gratian, Roman emperor (375-383) seems to have been the last emperor to use this title. Literally, the term 'pontifex' means: 'builder of bridges' (pons + facere); 'Maximus' means: bigger, higher, maximum, supreme. Perhaps the title was first used in its literal sense, that is, the position of bridge builder was really important in Rome, where the bridges along the sacred river Tiber were adorned with statues of deities, and only the authorities who held the sacred functions could pass by them. In a symbolic sense, it was always understood that the pontiffs would be the builders of the bridge between gods and men.



Pupienus

Balbinus

Gordian III

3) Caesar Marcus Clodius Pupienus Maximus Augustus and Caesar Decimus Caelius Calvinus Balbinus Pius Augustus – r. 238 (96 days).

Marcus Clodius **Pupienus** Maximus (from birth to accession), or Caesar Marcus Clodius Pupienus Maximus Augustus (as emperor), was a Roman emperor who died 96–99 days after rising to power in 238. He was acclaimed emperor, along with Balbinus (Decimus Caelius Calvinus Balbinus) by the Senate of Rome, after the death of Gordian I and Gordian II. The Senate met in closed session at the Temple of Jupiter Capitoline and voted in two members of the commission to be enthroned as co-emperors – Pupienus and Balbinus. The two emperors were appointed as maximum pontiffs (pontifices maximi), high priests of the official services.

Pupienus was of humble origins, without any patrician connection to Roman tradition. However, he was very successful in his career of administration of the Roman province: he was proconsul in Germania, and in Asia Minor and urban prefect, being considered administrative positions of great appointment in the Roman Empire. He was one of the oldest senators, rich and well related. He ruled jointly with Balbinus (Decimus Caelius Calvinus Balbinus Pius) for a very short time (3 months of reign: April-July 238), in the time when the teenager Gordian III was promoted to Caesar, and Maximinus Thrax or Maximinus I was murdered.

Decimus Caelius Calvinus **Balbinus** was a patrician from birth, and son of Caelius Calvinus, who was commissioner of the Roman Senate to oversee the administration of Cappadocia in 184. He was one of the Salii priests of Mars. Salii – called the ‘leaping priests’ (from the verb salio, to leap, jump) – were 12 patrician youths dressed in warrior clothes and priestly headbands, who served the Greek god Mars, the god of war, and walked through Rome carrying the shields, dancing and singing. One of the 12 shields, according to legend, had fallen from heaven, and where it was preserved, people would be the dominant of the land. Later in his career, he was Consul. While Pupienus marched to Ravenna (province to the northeast of Italy) to oversee the campaign against Maximinus Thrax, Balbinus remained in Rome, but failed to maintain public order. After the victorious return of Pupienus, Balbinus suspected that his colleague wanted to supplant him, and they began to live in different parts of the imperial palace, where, later, they were murdered brutally by the Praetorian Guard, who took offense by the Senate and wished to have someone in power chosen and controlled by the Praetorians. Balbinus was 73 years old when he died. Pupienus was about 68–73 years old at that time.

4) Marcus Antonius Gordianus Pius or **Gordian III** – r. 238-244 (6 years).

Name from birth to accession: Marcus Antonius Gordianus Pius

Name as emperor: Caesar Marcus Antonius Gordianus Pius Augustus

Biological father: the name of his father is unknown; it's only known that he was a Roman senator

Mother: Antonia Gordiana, daughter of Gordian I and sister of Gordian II

Wife: Furia Sabina Tranquilina

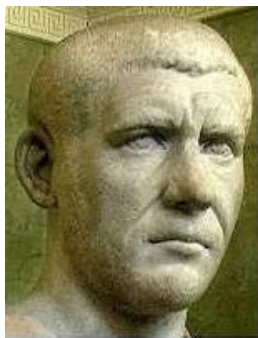
Daughter: Furia

Death: at the age of 19 to 20 years, during the war against the Sassanian Empire.

Gordian III became Caesar (= junior) and, shortly after, Augustus (= senior) when he was thirteen years old, in the year 238. Even young, in his reign the empire knew certain stability and a period of victory, mainly in the first three years (238-241), for both the emperor and his advisers continued the policy of Gordian I. Afterwards, there was a change. Gaius Furius Sabinus Aquila Timesitheus, Roman public administrator and expert in finance, was also a successful and efficient military officer, being appointed by the emperor as Praetorian Prefect. In this same year (241), Gordian III married Tranquilina, daughter of Timesitheus. The only daughter of this union was called Furia. Still in 241 AD, Gordian III and Timesitheus undertook a campaign against the Sassanian army and won. Gordian, supported in Timesitheus, reinforced the African borders of the empire and recovered Syria, besides regain Carras (now Haran, south of Turkey) and even managed to reoccupy the entire Mesopotamia. But in 243 Timesitheus contracted malaria and died by the disease. Then an ambitious character as Philip the Arab appeared for the post of prefect of the Praetorian Guard. Gordian, weakened by the death of his father-in-law and ally, no longer met the tranquility in his

government. Gordian III was defeated and killed in the Battle of Misiche against the Sassanian Empire (244 AD). Some quote Philip the Arab as his killer, but nothing has been proven about it. Gordian III died at 20 years old.

VIII) 'Barracks Emperors' ('soldier emperors') – Four Emperors followed, until the Valerian Dynasty with Publius Licinius Valerianus (253-260) and the division of the Empire in three kingdoms: Rome, Gaul and Palmyra.



Phillip the Arab



Trajanus Decius



Trebonianus Gallus



Aemilianus (Aemilian)

1) Marcus Julius Philippus (Marcus Iulius Philippus), known as **Phillip the Arab – r. 244-249 AD (5 years).**

Name from birth to accession: Marcus Julius Philippus (Marcus Iulius Philippus)

Name as emperor: Caesar Marcus Julius Philippus Augustus

Biological father: Julius Marinus

Brother: Gaius Julius Priscus

Wife: Marcia Octacilia Severa

Children: Marcus Julius Severus Philippus (Philip II), Julia Severa or Severina and Quintus Philippus Severus (the last two not confirmed by historians). Marcus Julius Severus Philippus (Philip II) was killed in Rome in the government of Decius.

Death: 45 years, probably war in the Danubian provinces, under the command of Decius.

Marcus Julius Philippus, known as Philip the Arab (due to the origin of his family), was appointed emperor as Caesar Marcus Iulius Philippus Augustus. Little is known about the way of life and Philip's career. He lived in Shahba (now, an unknown location), to the south-southeast of Damascus, in Syria. He was the son of Julius Marinus, a local Roman citizen, a descendant of an aristocratic family of Arab origin. Many historians believe that in spite of Arab ancestry, he won Roman citizenship thanks to his father, a man of considerable influence. History says that he had a brother, Gaius Julius Priscus. Philip married Marcia Octacilia Severa, and in 238 DC had a son by her, named Marcus Julius Severus Philippus, the future Philip II. Other children are mentioned: Julia Severa or Severina and Quintus Philippus Severus, which historians do not confirm. He signed peace with the Persian army, but was defeated by the armies of the Danubian provinces, under the command of Decius, who succeeded him.

2) Caesar Gaius Messius Quintus Traianus Decius Augustus or Trajanus **Decius – r. 249-251 AD (2 years).**

Birth name: Gaius Messius Quintus Decius

Name as emperor: Caesar Gaius Messius Quintus Traianus Decius Augustus

Wife: Herennia Etruscilla (Annia Cupressenia Herennia Etruscilla)

Children: Hostilian and Herennius Etruscus, considered the heir, but who died in battle in 251 AD

Death: at 50 years old, in the battle against the Goths.

Decius was a very traditional general and who believed in the Roman traditions. Philip, the Arab was always absent from the battles and this left the border armies quite dissatisfied. Decius defeated the armies of Philip the Arab in battle to the north of Italy, near Verona. His son, Marcus Julius Severus Philippus, the future Philip II, was killed in Rome. Decius noted the growing power of Christians and was determined to suppress them; he built pagan temples, reinforced the cults and sacrifices of the past throughout the empire. Seeing the Christian churches full with disciples and pagan temples emptied, he undertook the eighth persecution against Christianity. The cruelty undertaken in this persecution gave him a place comparable to the emperor Nero. He married Herennia Etruscilla, and had two children: Hostilian and Herennius Etruscus considered his heir, but he died at the Battle of Abrittus against the Goths in 251 AD, in Lower Moesia (now Bulgaria). Decius also died in the battle. Hostilian, his youngest son, died in an epidemic of plague in the same year, the first emperor in 40 years to die of natural causes. Decius was the first emperor to be killed by a barbarian army. His successor was Trebonianus Gallus, who ruled together with his son Volusianus.

3) Gaius Vibius Afinius Trebonianus Gallus Augustus – r. 251-253 AD (2 years).

Wife: Afinia Gemina Baebiana

Children: Volusian (Gaius Vibius Volusianus) and Vibia Galla

Death: at 47 years old, murdered by his own soldiers.

Trebonianus Gallus ruled Moesia (Bulgaria). He was Roman Emperor in 251 after the death of Decius by the Goths. He ruled with his son Volusian, who was sent to the Goths by his father, sometimes, successfully. Volusian was awarded with the title of co-august, but was recognized by the troops only in 253, when he was proclaimed emperor by them. At the same time, Volusian had to fight against the rebel General Aemilian, who was proclaimed emperor by the troops of the Danube. He and his father left Rome and marched north ahead of the army. When they reached Interamna (a district of the province of Terni, in central Italy), they were told that Aemilian troops had invaded Italy and would approach them very quickly. For a moment, they were not sure what to do in face of a greater army and this irritated the troops and caused a revolt. They ended up being killed by their own soldiers. His successor was Aemilian (253). At that time of anarchy, emperors lasted at most two or three years.

4) Aemilian (Caesar Marcus Aemilius Aemilianus Augustus) – r. 253 AD (3 months).

Name from birth to accession: Marcus Aemilius Aemilianus

Name as emperor: Caesar Marcus Aemilius Aemilianus Augustus

Wife: Gaia Cornelia Supera

Children: he didn't have

Death: at 40 or 46 years old, murdered by his own soldiers

Aemilian was Roman emperor for a brief period in 253 AD. Aemilian was born in Africa and was governor of Moesia. Trebonianus Gallus had promised the Goths to pay them tribute, but Aemilian refused to pay them. He defeated his enemies and counterattacked, crossing the Danube and invading the enemy territory in a surprise attack. This unexpected victory restored the morale and confidence of the troops, demoralized after successive disasters, so they decided to proclaim their commander as emperor. Aemilian invaded Italy in order to combat Trebonianus Gallus, but he and his

son Volusian were murdered by his own soldiers, fearful of the opposing forces before the decisive battle. While this fact occurred in Italy, Valerianus, governor of the Upper Rhine provinces, went there with a mighty army in order to provide relief to Trebonianus, and with the news of the death of this one, his soldiers proclaimed him emperor. Aware of the superiority of the forces of Valerianus, Aemilian's soldiers decided to kill him, the same way as the fate of his predecessor.

From this date **the decline of the Roman Empire** begins, with the division of the Empire in three kingdoms: Rome, Gaul and Palmyra.

IX) 'Barracks Emperors' ('soldier emperors') – Valerian Dynasty (253-260 AD):



Valerian



Gallienus

1) Publius Licinius Valerianus Augustus or Valerian I or Valerian the Elder – r. 253-260 AD (7 years) in co-regency with the son, Gallienus.

Name from birth to accession: Publius Licinius Valerianus

Name as emperor: Caesar Publius Licinius Valerianus Augustus

Wife: Egnatia Mariniana

Children: Publius Licinius Egnatius Gallienus and Valerianus Minor

Death: at the age of 60, in a shameful captivity among the Parthians (In fact, it was already Sassanian Empire – 224-651)

His full title was: IMPERATOR · CAESAR · PVBLIVS · LICINIVS · VALERIANVS · PIVS · FELIX · INVICTVS · AVGVSTVS, Imperator Caesar Publius Licinius Valerianus, Pious, Fortunate, Unbeaten, Augustus.

Unlike other usurpers during the crisis of the third century, Valerian belonged to the Roman patriciate. Let us remember that 'patrician' was the name given to the citizens of the Roman aristocracy, or hereditary noble lineage. He was of a noble and traditional senatorial family. He participated in the reign of Gordian I, Decius, Trebonianus Gallus and Aemilian, occupying high posts in the government. Valerian divided the military defense of the empire with his son Gallienus, taking charge of the East, while his son was in charge of the problems in the West. In 257, Valerian recovered Antioch, and Syria came to be under the Roman Empire. In 259 the Goths ravaged Asia Minor and Valerian went to Edesa, but the plague (smallpox) broke out among the soldiers, killing many of them, and the city was besieged by the Persians. In the beginning of 260 AD he was finally defeated by the Sassanians.

Trying to negotiate a peace agreement, Valerian was defeated and captured alive by his enemy, the Sassanian Persian king Shapur I, dying in captivity (260 AD). While fighting the Persians, Valerian sent two letters to the Senate, ordering measures against the Christians. The 1st in 257 ordered the clergy to sacrifice to the Roman gods;

otherwise, they would be banished (exiled). The following year, the 2nd letter ordered that the Christian leaders were executed, that senators and Roman knights who were Christians should worship the Roman gods, or would lose their titles and properties and would be executed; he also ordered that the civil servants or members of the imperial family who didn't worship the Roman gods were reduced to the status of slaves and sent to work in the imperial farms. This shows that Christians prevailed in high offices, and among those who refused to worship the Roman gods was Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, and Sixtus II, the Bishop of Rome, along with six deacons. When his son Gallienus came to power this order was revoked. The older brother of Gallienus, Valerianus Minor, was appointed consul between 253 and 264, but died shortly after his brother's death in 268, assassinated by his enemies, along with his nephew Marinianus (third son of Gallienus).



Sassanian warriors

In the reign of Valerian, around 258 AD, the conflicts and attacks began to emerge within the Roman Empire and it was divided into three independent states competing against each other, being the first, the kingdom of Palmyra. The provinces in Gaul, Britannia and Hispania also separated to form the Gallic Empire in the following year (259-260). The three independent states were: Gallia, Palmyra and the Roman Empire (which included the Illyrian region, and that came to be separated later, around 268).

The Palmyrene Empire was a territory that separated from the Roman Empire during the crisis of the third century (during the reign of Valerian in 258 AD). He encompassed the provinces of Syria Palestine (Israel and Syria), Lebanon, Egypt, great part of Asia Minor and the region of Arabia Petraea (corresponding to the ancient Nabataean kingdom, including the peninsula of Sinai and the north of the Arabian Peninsula, and whose capital was Petra). After the murder of its founder, the governor of Syria, Septimius Odaenathus in 267, it was ruled by Queen Zenobia, on behalf of his son (Vaballathus), acclaimed king, Consul, Emperor and Duke of the Romans – ‘rex consul imperator dux romanorum’ – and governor of the whole east. The capital of this ephemeral empire was the city of Palmyra (a city in central Syria, located in an oasis).

The Empire was known for its philosophical and religious freedom, and Odaenathus tried not to get involved in the chaos of the Roman Empire, so his separatist attitude.

The Gallic Empire or Empire of Gaul (*Imperium Galliarum*) is the modern name of the territory that also broke apart from the Roman Empire between the years 260 and 274, during the crisis of the third century. At its peak, it covered the territories of Germania, Gaul, Britannia, and for a time, Hispania. After the murder of Postumus (its founder) in 268, much of this territory was lost, but the empire continued to exist, governed by several emperors and some usurpers. The whole region was finally re-conquered by the Romans by the Emperor Aurelian after the Battle of Châlons in 274. Illyria (268-282), in Albanian, means 'land of the free' and is the region to northwest of the Balkans. Today, it houses the following countries: Serbia, Montenegro, northern Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. The Illyrians were a group of several different tribes that inhabited the western Balkans (since 1000 BC) and parts of southern Italy in the early Christian era.



2) Publius Licinius Egnatius Gallienus, known as Gallienus – r. 253-260 AD (7 years) in co-regency with the father, Valerian, and as sole ruler: 260-268 (total: 15 years of reign).

Name as emperor: Caesar Publius Licinius Egnatius Gallienus Augustus

Wife: Cornelia Salonina

Children:

- Valerian II (Publius Licinius Cornelius Valerianus) – lived 17 years
- Publius Licinius Cornelius Saloninus Valerianus – lived 17 years
- Marinianus – died in 268 along with his uncle Valerian Minor, by the enemies of Gallienus

Gallienus

Death: assassinated in 268 (at 50 years old), probably by one of his generals

As sole ruler, Gallienus began to reign in 260 over an empire that went through great difficulties. It had already lost much of its domains. The emperors of the third century were unable to maintain control over the empire for several consecutive years.

Gallienus, at least, reigned for 15 years in total, a much longer time than his predecessors. Reigning with his father, they exercised authority over a smaller territory, also facilitating greater flexibility in the way of governing. Gallienus made himself noticed by Rome. Although he knew that his father was captured alive (the only emperor to suffer this fate) and it was said that he was flayed and made into a footstool, Gallienus only made public the death of Valerian one year later. The people believed that his luck depended on the father's, which, in turn, depended on his demonstration of devotion to the gods and to obtain their favors. His life and his success was a sign of the favor of the gods.

Gallienus conquered the people of West Germany, the Alemanni (meaning, 'People of all men') and, later, the Goths (people in northern Norway) and Sarmatians (Iranian people) in Illyrian (a Roman province to the east of the Adriatic Sea and now encompasses Serbia, Montenegro, northern Albania, Italy, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia, that is, most of the Balkans).

However, he failed to maintain his authority in Gaul, in Hispania and Britannia, in part because of the Gallic General Marcus Cassianus Latinius Postumus, who proclaimed himself emperor in the West of the current Germany (the region of Cologne at the time) and killed Saloninus, the son of Gallienus. Publius Licinius Cornelius Saloninus Valerianus, son of Gallienus, and Valerian's grandson, reigned jointly with his father and grandfather from 253, when he received the title of Caesar, at 10 years old. He was sent to Gaul after a while under the protection of the praetorian prefect Silvanus. In 260 he received the title of Augustus, but did not live long to enjoy it. General Postumus (who founded the empire of the Gauls in 260) disagreed with Saloninus about spoils of a military victory against the barbarian invaders of Gaul, and the general's soldiers attacked the boy and his companions and butchered them. Saloninus died at the age of 17.

The same way that his younger brother, Saloninus, Valerian II (Publius Licinius Cornelius Valerianus – who died in 257 or 258, about 17 years old) received the title of Caesar in 256. This was part of the dynastic policy of Valerian I. The young Caesar represented the royal family in Illyria, while his father, Gallienus, was paying attention in Germany to deal with barbarian incursions in Gaul, where his brother Saloninus was. Valerian II (had no more than 15 years old at the time) stayed under the tutelage of Ingenuus, who exercised an excellent command as governor of the provinces of Illyria region, especially in Pannonia and Moesia. However, the boy's mother and wife of Gallienus (Cornelia Salonina) was not very happy about it, because she was suspicious of the motives of Ingenuus and asked an officer named Valentinus to keep an eye on him. Despite this caution, Valerian II died at the end of 257 and beginning of 258 in circumstances sufficiently suspicious for Gallienus to demote Ingenuus from his post. This attitude of Gallienus caused the attempted usurpation of the empire on the part of that one, who had broad support among the garrisons of Illyria and the provincial government.

Marinianus, the third son of Gallienus died in 268 along with his uncle Valerian Minor, in a 'cleansing' of Gallienus' supporters, on the part of his enemies.

In the East, Gallienus defeated the usurpers of the throne: Macrianus Major (Fulvius Macrianus) and their children, Macrianus Minor and Quietus, still in the year 262. The Emperor of Palmyra controlled the Persians and took Mesopotamia to the Empire of Palmyra. That was the price Gallienus had to pay: to give another piece of his territory. Gallienus was an aristocrat and intellectual, lover of the Greek culture and philosophy and a great warrior. He contributed to the recovery of the Roman Empire through military and political reforms: after 260 AD there was no longer any legion

commander who was a senator, so he made way to the ascension of a series of soldiers of humble origins. He also organized a large body of cavalry to prevent the invasion of Italy by Postumus, with barbarian allies as Claudius II, Aurelian and Probus, usurpers of the throne. His place of residence varied between Milan and Pannonia (A territory where today are Hungary, the eastern part of Austria, northern Croatia, northwest of Serbia, Slovenia, western part of Slovakia and north of Bosnia and Herzegovina) because of his military activities. He inaugurated a functional imperial capital, next to the battle front, for the central location of Rome prevented him from following closely and directly the military operations. Gallienus was killed in 268 AD, probably by a general of his troops, who should be interested in seeing Claudius II (known as Gothicus) as his successor. But there is no concrete evidence about this. He was, indeed, succeeded by Claudius Gothicus.

X) 'Barracks Emperors' ('soldier emperors') – Sequence of the decline of the Roman Empire (till 284 AD):



Claudius Gothicus



Quintillus



Aurelian

1) Marcus Aurelius Valerius Claudius Augustus or Claudius II, also known as Claudius Gothicus – r. 268-270 (2 years)

Name from birth to accession: Marcus Aurelius Valerius Claudius

Name as emperor: Marcus Aurelius Valerius Claudius Augustus

Full title: Imperator Caesar Marcus Aurelius Valerius Claudius Pius Felix Invictus Augustus Pontifex Maximus Germanicus Maximus Gothicus Maximus (Emperor Caesar Marcus Aurelius Valerius Claudius, Pious, Fortunate, Unbeaten, Augustus, Maximum Pontiff, Germanicus Maximus, Gothicus Maximus).

Brother: Marcus Aurelius Claudius Quintillus

Death: he died of the plague (probably smallpox), 60 years old, in a province of Serbia.

He was a soldier of Illyrian origin (a Roman province to the east of the Adriatic Sea and which today comprises Serbia, Montenegro, northern Albania, Italy, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia, that is, most of the Balkan region). The province ended up by being divided into two others: the Pannonia in the north (corresponding to Hungary, the eastern part of Austria, northern Croatia, northwestern Serbia, Slovenia, western part of Slovakia and northern Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Dalmatia in the south.

Marcus Aurelius Valerius Claudius (Claudius Gothicus) was military tribune in the reign of Emperor Decius (249-251), then reaching the rank of high commander of the

legions in the Balkans under Valerian (253). He was proclaimed emperor by the army, succeeding Gallienus. He restored the political unity, an agreement made by him with other generals. Claudius II had a successful campaign against the Alamanni (Germans). Despite this success, he didn't manage to win the Gallic emperors, Postumus and Victorinus, nor establish with them any peace agreement. The Palmyrene Empire in the East was occupying territories of the Roman provinces. In the northern borders of the Empire, Claudius concentrated his forces defeating the Goths. This gave him the title of Gothicus Maximus, a battle where he was greatly helped by his cavalry commander, the future Emperor Aurelian.

Claudius II built walls, encouraged the monotheistic cult of the sun-god (Sol Invictus, the god of soldiers) to oppose Christianity and sought to restore the prestige of the monarchy. However, after his military victories, he died of plague in 270 AD, in a province of Serbia.



Illyricum: Noricum, Dalmatia, Pannonia, Moesia, Dacia,
and the Greek Illyricum (Macedonia, Epirus, Thrace)

2) Marcus Aurelius Claudius **Quintillus** – r. 270 AD (few months)

Name from birth to accession: Marcus Aurelius Claudius Quintillus

Name as emperor: Marcus Aurelius Claudius Quintillus Augustus

Brother: Marcus Aurelius Valerius Claudius or Claudius II, also known as Claudius Gothicus

Children: two sons (unknown names)

Death: 58-69 years old (there is controversy about the cause of his death)

Marcus Aurelius Claudius Quintillus was born in Lower Pannonia, a low-class family, and was Roman emperor in the year 270 AD (some sources say that he reigned for 17 days, others for 117 days). He was the brother of the Roman Emperor Claudius II. Nothing is known about him. He appeared in the year 270, after the death of Claudius II because of an epidemic of plague, and was appointed emperor (some say that by the soldiers, others say it was by the Senate). Anyway, he was accepted by both the Senate and by the provinces that were under imperial control. Probably, he was

procurator of Sardinia, during the reign of his brother. When ascended the throne, he went directly to the district of Aquileia, in Italy, which he used as a basis for their defensive forces of the northern Italian peninsula. Aurelian, the old collaborator of Claudius Gothicus, also aspired to the throne and was commander of the troops in the Balkan provinces. There, he had to face the repeated invasions of Germanic tribes that tried to cross the Danube. Due to an important victory, he was proclaimed emperor by his troops in Pannonia (Hungary, the eastern part of Austria, northern Croatia, northwestern Serbia, Slovenia, western part of Slovakia and northern Bosnia and Herzegovina) and marched to dethrone Quintillus. Some sources say that Quintillus, by knowing this, committed suicide by cutting the veins. Other historical books say he was killed by his own soldiers because of his strict military discipline. Still others say that he died in dispute with Aurelian by the throne.

3) Lucius Domitius Aurelianus Augustus or **Aurelian – r. 270-275 AD (5 years)**

Name from birth to accession: Lucius Domitius Aurelianus

Name as emperor: Lucius Domitius Aurelianus Augustus

Wife: Ulpia Severina

Children: one daughter

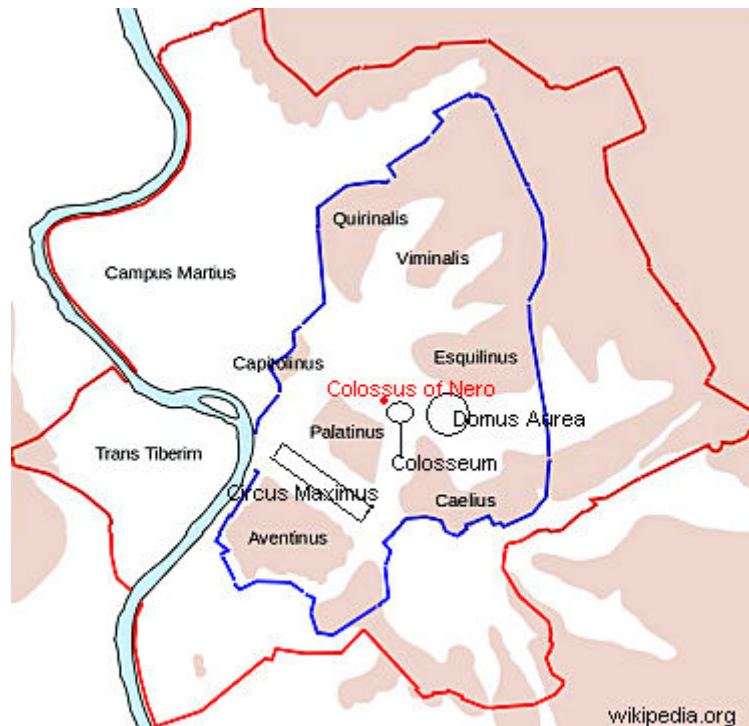
Death: at the age of 60-61, by officers of the Praetorian Guard

Lucius Domitius Aurelianus was born in a humble family of Roman colonists of Dacia, in the Illyrian region. By the origin of his family with military tradition, Aurelian possibly enlisted at 20 years old (235 AD) in the cavalry. He was an excellent soldier, known as ‘manum ad ferrum’ (‘hand on the sword’). He helped the Emperor Claudius II in his campaigns; he was commander of Gallienus’ Cavalry Army, and was hailed emperor by his troops. He won the barbarians to the north of the Italian Peninsula and by those victories he received the title Germanicus Maximus. Aurelian managed to recover Palmyra (in Syria) in 271 and conquered the other Syrian territories of Asia Minor and Egypt. From 272 to 274 he won the Gothic tribes, conquered Gaul again, defeated the Franks, the Alamanni (in Germania) and the Goths (in Lower Moesia), which made him live up to the title of ‘restorer’ of the Empire (Restitutor Orbis).

Aurelian admitted devaluation of Roman money and minted new coins with 5% of the amount of silver from the old ones, and that were called ‘the new denarius of Aurelian.’ Thus, he increased the number of minting workshops in the provinces, facilitating the payment of wages to the troops. During his reign, Aurelian tried to keep the loyalty of the legions; this currency (the new denarius of Aurelian) celebrated the CONCORDIA MILITVM, ‘harmony among the military.’



Aurelian denarius



Map of Ancient Rome with Aurelian wall in red
(in blue, the Servian walls, fourth century BC)



Aurelian's walls

Soon after, he began to fortify Rome with new walls. The Walls of Aurelian are a line of walls built between 271 AD and 276 AD in Rome, Italy, during the reign of the Roman emperors Aurelian and Probus. They encompassed all the Seven Hills of Rome, in addition to the Field of Mars (Campus Martius) and the right bank of the Tiber, in the Trastevere district. The banks of the river within the limits of the city seem to have been left without fortification; only along the Campus Martius. The size of the entire enclosed area is 14,000 square kilometers.

Aurelian had proclaimed the Sun-god as the main patron of the empire and dedicated a new temple to him, built in 274 AD in the Campus Martius (the name of a public area of ancient Rome). Like many of his predecessors, Aurelian let himself be deified still alive. At this time the cult of the sun was particularly strong in Rome. During Aurelian's reign there was also an organized persecution against Christians.

He was killed in 275 AD by high-ranking officers of the Praetorian Guard because of a lie by one of his servants.

CURIOSITIES ABOUT THE SEVEN HILLS OF ROME:

Rome was founded in 753 BC on Palatine, one of the Seven Hills: Capitol (or Capitoline Hill), Quirinal, Viminal, Esquiline, Caelian, Aventine and Palatine that surrounded the primitive community. Other hills of Rome are the Pincian Hill and Janiculum Hill (Center of worship of the god Janus), not counted among the most important.

Capitol or Capitoline Hill (Capitolinus, Campidoglio)

It is the lowest hill. In ancient times, in the Capitol the temples of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva were built. Today, there are many palaces and museums on that hill.

On the north-eastern side of the Capitoline Hill, near the Roman Forum, was the **Mamertine Prison** (Latin: Carcere Mamertino) or Tullianum. This name may have an archaic Latin form, 'tullius' (or 'tullus' meaning: 'a jet of water', referring to the cistern that was in the prison). 'Mamertine' was the medieval name given to a prison built around 640–616 BC, during the period of the Roman monarchy. The prison was situated opposite the Curia Hostilia and the forums of Nerva, Vespasian and Augustus. Initially, it was intended only for prisoners of high status, usually foreign commanders (such as Vercingetorix, the Gallic chieftain defeated by Julius Caesar and who was held there for five years until his strangulation in 46 BC).

The site consists of two superimposed floors. The deepest level, called the 'Tullianum', is the oldest, resembling a cistern. The upper floor was called the 'Carcere' and was built a century later (in the 6th century BC), but was renovated several times during the Republican period and the early Empire. At that time, a large façade was built to make the site more visible to the city.

Despite what tradition says, it is not known exactly whether the Apostle Peter was imprisoned there. Today, the church of San Giuseppe dei Falegnami (built in the 16th century) stands above the Mamertine prison where, according to reports, Peter converted and baptized prisoners and his jailers, Martinian and Processus, who were later also executed. Paul awaited his trial by Nero in a house south of the Campus Martius (Acts 28:30-31) and was beheaded on the Via Laurentina, southwards from Rome.

Quirinal Hill (Quirinalis, Quirinale)

Currently, there are the official residence of the President of the Italian Republic and the palace of the same name.

The Quirinal Hill for centuries protected the site where the city was founded. Before the Roman Empire existed, one of the ancient kings of the Roman Republic was established there, after achieving peace between the Romans and the Sabines. The Sabines raised in that hill a temple to the mythological god Quirinus (the god who represented the Roman State). Quirinus was also the other name given to the god Janus,

the Roman god of changes and transitions. The figure of Janus is associated with doors (entry and exit), and the transitions. Its double face also symbolizes the past and the future. Janus is the god of beginnings, decisions and choices. The largest monument in his glory is in Rome and has the name of Janus Geminus (Jano twins). Therefore, the first month of the year is named January, which begins the year. In this Hill there were the Baths of Constantine.

Viminal (Latin: Collins Viminalis; in Italian, Viminale)

It is the smallest of the famous Seven Hills of Rome. There is today the Viminal Palace, headquarters of the Ministry of the Interior of Italy. Currently the term 'il Viminale' is used to refer to this ministry (il Viminale = Ministry of the Interior). A finger-shape cusp points toward central Rome between the Quirinal Hill to the northwest and the Esquiline Hill to the southeast. There, it is also the Teatro dell'Opera (Opera Theatre) and the Terminal of Railway Station.

According to legend, it was on the Palatine that Romulus founded the city. The name derives from Pales, the god of the shepherds. It is on this hill that the palaces of Augustus, Tiberius and Domitian once were, now in ruins. The term 'palace' comes from Palatium. In ancient times, there was in this place the temple of Apollo Palatinus, the temple of Cybele and other pagan gods, besides the Circus Maximus (In Italian, Circo Massimo). The Circus Maximus is an ancient stadium of chariot races and a place of entertainment of citizens situated in the valley between the hills of Aventine and Palatine. It was the first and largest stadium in ancient Rome and the Empire. It measured 2,037 feet in length and 387 feet in width and could accommodate over 150,000 spectators. It became the model for circuses throughout the Roman Empire. The site is now a public park.



Palatine Hill (Palatinus, Palatino) – Today, this is the place of Circus Maximus in Ancient Rome, where chariot races occurred

Esquiline Hill

It consists of three other hills: Oppian (Oppius) – south, Fagutal (Fagutalis) – west, and Cispius (Cispus) – north. No one knows for sure the origin of the name. Esquiline was a fashionable residential district. Further to the south, on the site of Oppian hill, Nero built his extravagant Golden House (built after the fire of Rome) and, later, the baths of Trajan were built. In the same place it was found a variety of sculptures in Venus style, among which stands out the Venus Esquiline (the statue of the woman without both arms).

In a flat area between the Caelian, Esquiline and Palatine hills, Nero built his palace, called the Golden House (Latin: 'Domus Aurea' – 64-68 AD), actually a 'villa' for parties where he squandered the wealth of the Roman Empire.

The Golden House was covered with gold leaves, had vaulted ceiling with semi-precious stones and ivory veneer; the walls were painted (mosaics) with many designs, each painting with different themes in each of the main room groups. The Golden House covered the slopes of the Palatine, Esquiline and Caelian hills, and had a large artificial lake dug in marshy lands, with an estimated size of 100 to 300 acres (0.40–1.2 kilometers square), where galleys could sail. The whole complex included: fields, vineyards, meadows for grazing of sheep and rams, and woods for deer and other wild animals. Nero ordered a colossal bronze statue after his own image, from 30.3 to 35.5 meters high, called 'the Colossus of Nero' be brought and that was placed in the courtyard, at the entrance, separating the city from this private villa. Although during his life Nero has not been identified as the Sun-god (Helios, in Greek), the statue represented the emperor like this god, dressed in the robes of the Roman sun-god Apollo. Knowing a little of Nero's personality, focused on music and art, and needing of true awareness of his sins and of balance and reason, it is more likely that he had, yes, affinity with the sun-god Apollo and even rendered him worship, although he had not taken his identity publicly.

It's a little difficult to relate the Greek god Helios with the sun-god Apollo. To the Romans, Apollo was identified as the sun and the light of truth. It was him who brought to men the awareness of their sins and he himself purified them. He was the patron of religion and buildings of cities, symbol of prophetic and artistic inspiration, being the patron of the Oracle of Delphi, where people brought him their causes and consulted him through priestesses that went into a trance. He was also the leader of the Muses, that is, entities capable of inspiring artistic or scientific creation. Paradoxically, Apollo was the god of sudden death, pests and diseases, but also the god of healing and protection against evil forces. He was also the god of beauty, perfection, harmony, balance and reason. He was related to nature, the herbs and the flocks, and was protector of the shepherds, sailors and archers. Apollo was usually depicted as a young man, naked and beardless, at the height of his vigor, sometimes with a robe, a bow and a quiver of arrows, or a lyre, and with symbolic animals: snake, raven or griffin (griffon, or gryphon, a legendary animal that had head and wings of an eagle and a lion's body).

After the death of Nero, the face of the statue was modified to become a real statue of the Sun-god, and its name was changed from the 'Colossus of Nero' to 'Colossus of the Sun' (Latin: Colossus Solis). In the reign of Hadrian, the statue was removed with the help of twenty elephants, and placed next to the Flavian Amphitheatre (now called the Colosseum), in the center of Rome.



Images above:

1st – The Domus Aurea still lies under the ruins of the Baths of Trajan (shown here) and the surrounding park. The Bath once housed one of the two libraries (Greek and Latin).

2nd – The entrance of the Golden House.

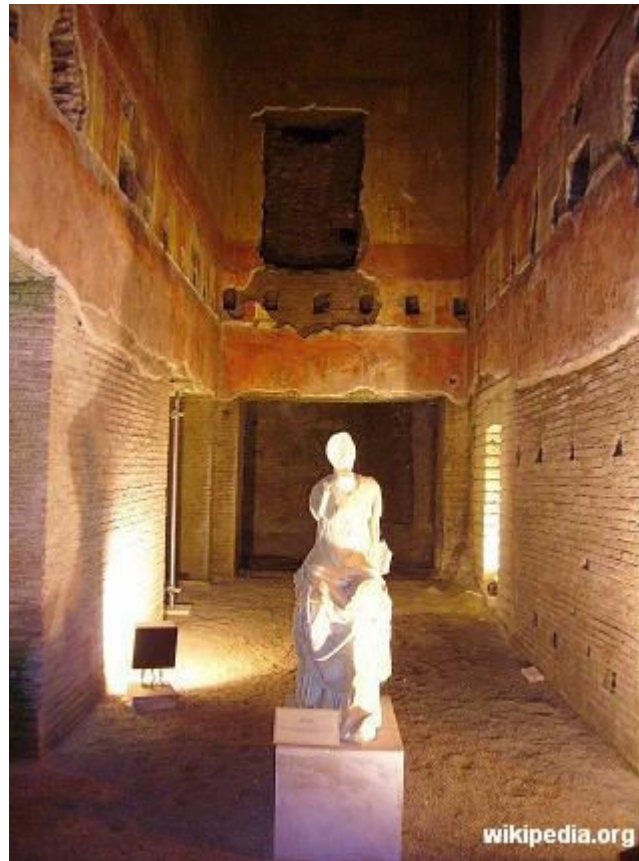


Another division of the Golden House

Images below:

- 1st – One of the divisions of the Domus Aurea
- 2nd – The statue of a muse in the newly reopened Domus Aurea
- 3rd – Sala della Sfinge (Sphinx Room) discovered in 2019
- 4th – Fresco of centaurs in the Sala della Sfinge, Domus Aurea





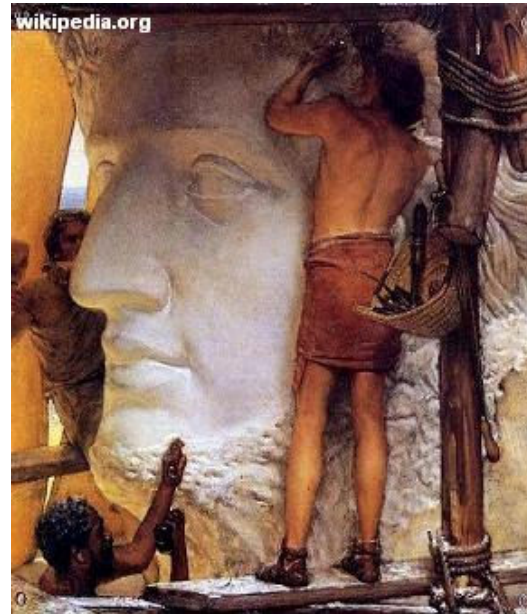


Image above: Colossus of Nero / ‘Sculptors in Ancient Rome’ (by Lawrence Alma-Tadema – 1877). The picture shows workers carving the Colossus of Nero

The Roman Colosseum

The original name of the Colosseum in Rome was or Flavian Amphitheater, and was built between 70 and 90 AD, initiated by Vespasian (68-79 AD), and later inaugurated by Titus (79-81 AD), although it has only been finalized a few years later. In the Colosseum several entertainments were performed with various games, for example, fighting between gladiators (the combats were called ‘muneras’). From the eighth century, Flavian Amphitheater began to be designated by the name of ‘Colosseum’, probably due to a large statue of Nero, which was close to the building, popularly known as the Colossus of Nero. Another type of spectacle was the hunting of animals (‘venatio’), where wild animals imported from Africa were used: lions, leopards and panthers, rhinos, hippos, elephants, giraffes, crocodiles and ostriches, in a

dramatization of mythological events of the past. Although the Colosseum is related in the human mind to martyrdom of Christians, it was not used for martyrdoms. There were many coliseums or amphitheaters in Rome, where this happened, such as the 'Circus of Nero' or 'Circus of Caligula' in the Campus Vaticanus. The Circus of Nero is also known as the Circus Vaticanus or simply the Vaticanum.



Caelian Hill (Latin: mons Caelius)

Origin of name: unknown. Originally the name should be 'Querquetulanus mons' due to the wealth of oak trees on the site. To the Romans, the oak was the sacred tree of the god Jupiter. In this hill there were the Baths of Caracalla.

Aventine Hill (Latin, Aventinus; Italian, Aventino)

It is now a residential area of Rome. It was an important site during the 2nd world war, as a refuge of some Italian politicians. According to mythology, it was on the Aventine Hill that Hercules (the Greek god of strength) killed Cacus, son of Vulcan, the god of fire. In this hill there were temples consecrated to many Greek-Roman gods, among them, Diana (Artemis).

Vatican Hill

The Vatican Hill (in Latin, 'Mons Vaticanus') is the highest point in the territory of Vatican City, to the west of the traditional Seven Hills of Rome, of which it is not part. Vatican is the name given, long before the beginning of Christianity, to one of the hills located to the west of the Tiber. It may be the site of an Etruscan village (a people who lived in the Italian Peninsula – 1200-700 BC) called Vaticum. The Vatican Hill it is the location of St. Peter's Basilica and the Circus of Nero. Vaticanum or Campus Vaticanus was originally a level area between the Vatican Hill and the Tiber. During the Republican era, it was an unwholesome place frequented by the poor. Caligula and Nero used the area for chariot exercises, and its renewal was encouraged by the construction of the Circus of Nero, also known as the Circus Vaticanus or simply the Vaticanum.

Some ancient sources mention a great number of tombs in that site. The Circus of Nero or Circus of Caligula was the site of the first martyrdoms of Christians in 65 sponsored by the State. It's accepted as a tradition that the apostle Peter was crucified there, two years later, as well as many other Christians were killed in that circus.



Tacitus



Florianus (Florian)



Probus

4) Caesar Marcus Claudius Tacitus Augustus – r. 275-276 (10 months)

Name from birth to accession: Marcus Claudius Tacitus

Name as emperor: Caesar Marcus Claudius Tacitus Augustus

Maternal Half-brother: Marcus Annius Florianus

Death: at the age of 76 because of fever; or by the Praetorian Guard or the legionaries who hailed him (no one knows)

Marcus Claudius Tacitus (275-276 AD) was born in Italy and reigned at the time of the Illyrian emperors. He was appointed emperor by the Senate as required by the army after the death of Aurelian and was the last time the Senate elected an emperor. Between the death of Aurelian and Tacitus' reign there was a period where Aurelian's wife (Ulpia Severina) ruled. Tacitus was an elderly senator, whose previous career is not well known. One of his measures was the appointment of his brother, Marcus Annius Florianus as praetorian prefect. He made war against the Heruli and the Goths and defeated them; therefore, he received the title of Gothicus Maximus. According to some sources, he died of fever, probably during his return from a campaign against the Franks and Alamanni who tried to invade Gaul. Other sources say he was killed by the Praetorian Guard or by the legionnaires that hailed him after appointing one of his relatives to an important post in Syria. It stayed only ten months in government.

5) Caesar Marcus Annius Florianus Augustus – r. 276 (88 days)

Name from birth to accession: Marcus Annius Florianus

Name as emperor: Caesar Marcus Annius Florianus Augustus

Maternal Half-brother: Marcus Claudius Tacitus

Death: assassinated by his own soldiers

Florianus was maternal stepbrother of Marcus Claudius Tacitus, and was appointed praetorian prefect in Tacitus' army in his campaign against the Goths. He was chosen by the army in the West to succeed his brother, without the consent of the Senate. He was fighting the Heruli when the army in the East acclaimed Probus as emperor. Florianus had the support of the provinces of Italy, Gaul, Hispania, Britannia, Africa Proconsularis and Mauretania. Florianus and Probus met in Cilicia. Florianus' army was

greater than that of his opponent, while Probus, as an experienced general, saw that his was smaller and avoided a direct confrontation. Then, when it became clear that Probus was superior, Florianus was assassinated by his own soldiers, in September 276, having been emperor for only 88 days.

6) Marcus Aurelius Probus – r. 276-282 (6 years)

Name from birth to accession: Marcus Aurelius Probus

Name as emperor: Caesar Marcus Aurelius Probus Augustus

Father: Dalmatius

Death: 50 years, assassinated

Marcus Aurelius Probus was born in the province of Serbia, and like various emperors of the third century, he came to power through a remarkable military career. He was proclaimed Augustus after the death of Tacitus (276 AD) and became absolute emperor when Florianus was betrayed by his troops, a few months later. In his reign there was constant military unrest in the provinces, motivated by invaders or usurpers, besides clashes with the Senate as to the limitations of his power. After he managed to control the adverse situations in the East, Probus turned his attention to the West.

He defeated the Goths in Illyria, the Alamanni, the Franks, Lygians (Lugii, Lugiones or Ligians; a great confederation of tribes in Central Europe – 100 BC-300 AD – covering great part of the south of modern Poland. Although under Celtic influence, the Lygians were considered Germanic tribe until the late first century), the Burgundians and the Vandals. The Vandals were an East Germanic tribe that invaded the Roman Empire in the fifth century, creating a state in the North of Africa by occupying the city of Carthage (now Tunisia) which, in turn, was ancient Phoenician city (Philistines) occupied by the Romans since the end of the Punic Wars (they were wars in the times of the Roman Republic, between 264 and 146 BC). The adjective ‘Punic’ – in Latin, ‘punici’ – comes from ‘Poenici’, i.e., of Phoenician ancestry, was given by the Romans to the Carthaginians. In the third century BC, Carthage dominated trade in the Mediterranean, for its wealthy merchants had several colonies: Sardinia, Corsica and western Sicily (islands rich in production of cereals) in the south of the Iberian Peninsula (where they exploited minerals such as silver) and the whole northern coast of Africa. Thus, the location of Carthage was a strategic point to the Vandals. There, they centered their state and, when felt established and secure, they sacked Rome in 455 AD, destroying many masterpieces of art that have been lost forever.

As to the civil administration Probus invested especially in the repair and construction of irrigation canals and attempts to stimulate the production of grapes. According to some sources, he was killed by discontented soldiers who rebelled against his orders to be used for civil purposes, such as drainage of swamps. Other sources say that the prefect of the Praetorian Guard, Marcus Aurelius Carus, was reluctantly proclaimed emperor by his army. Probus had sent troops against the new usurper, but when they started to support Carus, the remaining soldiers assassinated Probus.



Carus



Numerianus



Carinus

7) Marcus Aurelius **Carus** – r. 282-283 DC (1 year)

Name from birth to accession: Marcus Numerius Carus

Name as emperor: Caesar Marcus Aurelius Carus Augustus

Title: Persicus Maximus, by having defeated the Sassanians, taking Seleucia and the Sassanian capital, Ctesiphon

Children: Marcus Aurelius Carinus, Marcus Aurelius Numerius Numerianus and Aurelia Paulina

Death: 61 years old, of natural causes (disease, an injury of war, or stricken by lightning during a great storm).

Before his appointment, his name was Marcus Numerius Carus, born in Gaul, but educated in Rome. He was a senator and then appointed as prefect of the Praetorian Guard by the emperor Probus in 282. He was unjustly accused of having participated in the murder of the emperor, passing thus the title of Caesar to his children, Carinus and Numerian. He fought the Germanic tribes and the Sarmatians (members of Iranian tribes). He left Carinus in charge of the western part of the empire and took Numerian with him on an expedition against the Persians. By winning the war against the Sassanians, he received the title of Persicus Maximus.

Soon after, he crossed Thrace and Asia Minor, annexing Mesopotamia to the Roman Empire; then marched against Seleucia and Ctesiphon, the capital, leading his soldiers beyond the Tigris. Seleucia was a great Mesopotamian city of the Seleucid Empire, Parthian and Sassanian. It was located on the west bank of the Tigris, opposite to Ctesiphon, inside Babylon, the current Iraq. Ctesiphon (near modern Al-Mada'in, Iraq) was the capital of the Parthian Empire (247 BC-224 AD) and Sassanian Empire (224-651 AD). It was one of the great cities of ancient Mesopotamia, in its last days. The city was situated on the eastern bank of the Tigris, opposite the place where was the ancient Greek city of Seleucia, and northeast of the ancient city of Babylon. Today, the city ruins are found in the province of Baghdad, Iraq. Carus died soon after, and his death was announced after a violent storm. His death was attributed to the disease, the effects of lightning during the storm or an injury received in the campaign against the Persians. His son Numerian succeeded him.



Ctesiphon



Ruins of the city, with the Arch of Ctesiphon

8) Marcus Aurelius Numerius Numerianus, also known as **Numerian** – r. 282-283 (as Caesar, in co-regency with his father); July 283-November 284 AD, he reigned along with Carinus (total of 2 years)

Name from birth to the title of Caesar: Marcus Aurelius Numerius Numerianus

Name as Caesar: Caesar Marcus Aurelius Numerius Numerianus

Name as Emperor: Caesar Marcus Aurelius Numerius Numerianus Augustus

Title: Persicus Maximus, for having defeated the Sassanians, taking Seleucia and the Sassanian capital of Ctesiphon

Siblings: Marcus Aurelius Carinus and Aurelia Paulina

Death: murdered.

Marcus Aurelius Numerius Numerianus was appointed Caesar after his brother, but it was he and not Carinus who accompanied Carus in the campaign against the Persians.

Despite the victory achieved, after the death of his father, he decided to devote himself more to literature than to the government. Numerian no longer managed to maintain his authority in the east. Only managed to reach Emesa (Homs), in Syria, and in November 284, only Asia Minor. He was assassinated by the praetorian prefect, Arrius Aper (probably his father-in-law), in Asia Minor. It is said that Numerian suffered from problems in the eyes because of the long sleepless nights. His death was hidden from the soldiers for a long time, but when the corpse was already rotting, the army passed the crown to Diocles, the chief of staff, because they wouldn't like to see Carinus as emperor. Diocles murdered Arrius Aper personally and went down in History as Diocletian.

9) Marcus Aurelius Carinus – r. 282-283 (as Caesar, in co-regency with his father Carus); 283-284 AD he reigned along with Numerianus; 284-285 in competition with Diocletian (total of 3 years)

Name from birth to the title of Caesar: Marcus Aurelius Carinus

Name as Caesar: Caesar Marcus Aurelius Carinus

Name as Emperor: Caesar Marcus Aurelius Carinus Augustus

Siblings: Marcus Aurelius Numerius Numerianus and Aurelia Paulina

Death: murdered.

Carinus (Marcus Aurelius Carinus – 283-285 AD) was the eldest son of Carus who upon taking over the empire raised Carinus and his younger brother Numerian to the position of Caesars. After the death of Carus, Carinus was in charge of the western part of the empire and Numerian, the eastern part. He fought successfully against the Germanic tribes, but soon left the defense of the Upper Rhine to his subordinates and returned to Rome. Some reports claim that in this city he gave in to all kinds of debauchery and excess. When Carinus learned of the death of his brother Numerian at Chalcedon, he left Rome immediately and went to the east to meet with Diocletian, who had already proclaimed himself emperor. On his way through Pannonia he defeated the usurper Sabinus Iulianus and in July 285, he found the Diocletian's army at the Battle of the Margus River in Moesia. No one knows what happened after that, just that Carinus was killed, probably by Diocletian.

Roman Emperors 3

The year of 284, with the ascension of the Emperor Diocletian (284-305 AD) and the Tetrarchy, marked the end of the crisis of the third century and started the system of government called **Dominate**, a despotic and military monarchy in Greek style. The Dominate is the period of the Roman Empire from 285 DC (initiated by Diocletian) to 565 AD (with the death of Justinian). But the reforms he carried out and the emperors that followed were, so to speak, only a transitional period towards the beginning of a new era for humanity known as the Middle Ages.

In the counting of historical eras of humanity, the Ancient times or Antiquity is the period extending from the invention of writing (4000-3500 BC) until the fall of the Western Roman Empire (476 AD). The Classical Antiquity (also called the Classical Era, Classical Period or Classical Age; from the 8th BC to the 5th Century AD) is centered on the civilizations of the Mediterranean Sea, such as ancient Greece and ancient Rome, that is, the Greco-Roman world.

The Middle Ages (or Medieval) is a period of European History between the centuries V and XV. It begins with the fall of the Western Roman Empire (476 AD) and ends with the fall of Constantinople (1453 AD = the end of the Eastern Roman Empire) and the period after the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492; for practical purposes: 476-1499 AD. The Middle Ages can be divided into two minor periods: High Middle Ages (476-999 AD) and Low Middle Ages (1000-1499 AD). The medieval period is a strictly European event.

From there, the Modern Age begins. The Contemporary Age is the current period in Western history that began with the French Revolution (1789) and the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte.

The Dark Ages

The Dark Ages is a historical periodization that emphasizes the demographic, cultural and economic deterioration that occurred in Europe as a result of the decline of the Western Roman Empire (476). The term 'Dark' is used because in this period of History there was a scarcity of historical records and other writings, at least for some areas of Europe, thus making it obscure to historians. The term 'Dark Ages' derives from the Latin 'saeculum obscurum' and was applied by Caesar Baronius (Cesare Baronio, life: 1538-1607, an Italian cardinal, historian and orator of the Catholic Church) in 1602 to this tumultuous time between the 5th and 9th centuries (High Middle Ages).

In Diocletian's time the division of the Roman Empire (Eastern and Western) has already started. With the end of Diocletian's Tetrarchy, Constantine I became the sole emperor.

In this chapter you'll study about the **Tetrarchy of Diocletian** (284-311 AD):

Diocletian, Maximian, Constantius Chlorus, Galerius

Other emperors of the Tetrarchy (305-324 AD):

Flavius Severus, Maxentius, Maximinus Daja or Maximinus II, Licinius

X) The Tetrarchy of Diocletian (284-311 AD): Diocletian (285-305), Maximian (285-305), Constantius Chlorus (305–306), Galerius (305-311).



In the period of 284–285 AD Diocletian ruled alone. In 285 AD, for administrative purposes, Diocletian divided the Roman Empire into two parts: East and West, between him (Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus) – who won the East – and Maximian (Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus Herculeus Augustus), which received the West. In this period, there was an event known as ‘the Great Persecution of Christians.’ Diocletian abdicated in 305 and forced Maximian to abdicate too.

1) Diocletian (Caesar Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus Augustus) – r. 284-285 – he ruled alone; 285-305 AD, as emperor of the East (total 21 years)

Name from birth to accession: Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus

Name as emperor: Caesar Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus Augustus

Wife: Prisca, a Christian

Children: Galeria Valeria, a Christian. Later, she married the emperor Galerius (Gaius Galerius Valerius Maximianus)

Death: 66 years old, probably, suicide

Diocletian was born in Dalmatia (now Croatia). With his rise to power, Diocletian ended the crisis of the third century. In 285 AD he chose another military, Maximian (Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus Herculeus Augustus) to the position of Augustus, as co-emperor. And in 293 AD Diocletian appointed Galerius Maximian (Gaius Valerius Galerius Maximianus) as his successor, while Maximian, in turn, appointed Gaius Flavius Valerius Constantius or Constantius Chlorus or Constantius I. The latter were co-emperors of smaller stature and took the title of Caesar, instead of Augustus, which belonged to Diocletian and Maximian. The Caesars were co-emperors of a smaller stature, usually military leaders who ruled and protected the empire, adopted as children by the Augustus. They would succeed them in case of death or old age, or after twenty years of their governments. The Caesars also had their own capital, army and administration. To this organization one gives the name of Tetrarchy, because there are two Augustus and two Caesars. Thus, each emperor ruled a quarter of the Empire, although it was a joint government.

Diocletian exchanged Rome as his capital by the Greek city of Nicomedia in Asia Minor (modern İzmit, Turkey), where he had been hailed emperor. From there he would exercise his government.

Maximianus chose the city of Mediolanum (now Milan) for his residence, closer to the border of the Danube.

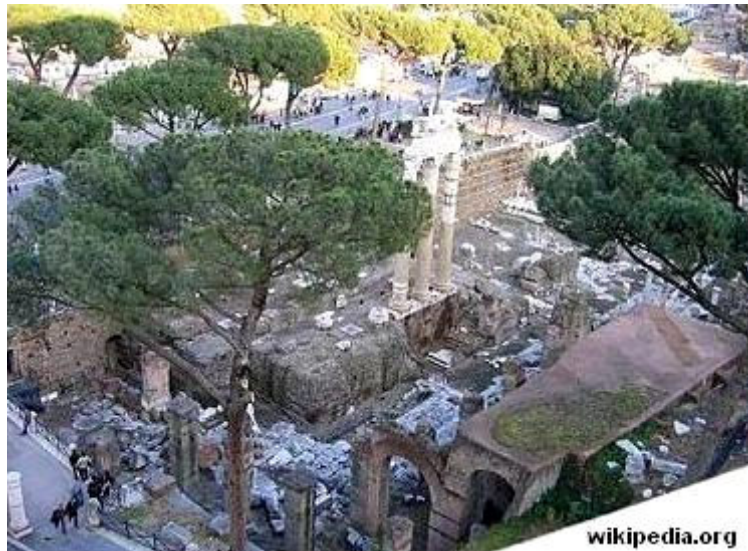
As for the Caesars, Constantius Chlorus kept his imperial residence in Augusta of Treveri (Augusta Treverorum, City of Augustus in the land of the Treveri), also called Trier (German, modern Treves, on the border of the Rhine River), and Galerius, in Dacia, in the city of Sirmium (now Sremska Mitrovica in the province of Serbia Vojvodina).

Diocletian defended the borders of the Empire against the Sarmatians (Iranian peoples) and tribes of the Danube (285-290 AD), the Alemanni (Germany – 288 AD) and usurpers in Egypt (297-298 AD). With the Sassanians, the traditional enemy of the Empire in the East, he led the negotiations in 299 DC obtaining lasting peace and favorable to the Romans. Diocletian founded several administrative centers closer to the borders.

There was a need for tax reform during his government due to the expenses caused by constant military campaigns and many construction and reconstruction projects: the Baths of Diocletian to commemorate 20 years of reign, the restoration of the Curia Julia ('Curia Iulia' is an old building where the assemblies of the senate were held in ancient Rome, built in 44 BC by Julius Caesar) and the Forum of Caesar (built in 54-46 BC by Julius Caesar; it was formed by a elongated rectangular square, where there was an equestrian statue of Julius Caesar, porticoes on three sides; and in the bottom, the temple of Venus Genetrix, goddess of motherhood), the construction or reconstruction of a triumphal arch (the triumphal arch of the Tetrarchy) making the connection between the Curia and the Forum, being the arch decorated with reused parts of monuments to Trajan and Marcus Aurelius. Diocletian created the silver *argenteus*, replacing Caracalla's *antoninianus*, which in turn had replaced the silver *denarius*. Diocletian also created the *follis*, a bronze coin with a light silver coating.



Curia Iulia and The temple of Venus Genetrix, the goddess of motherhood,
in the Forum of Caesar



Panoramic view of the Forum of Caesar



Triumphal arch of the Tetrarchy

The Senate, although still considered by the people, has become simply a municipal council of the city of Rome. Diocletian was called an autocrat taking on himself the power in all state levels, establishing as sole ruler. Thus, taxes were controlled by him more and more, reducing the freedom of citizens, who began to serve only the State and a despot. He separated the civil public office from military posts, and Italy became divided into provinces also paid him taxes (like all the other provinces of the Empire). The only exception was the city of Rome. The problem of devaluation of the Roman currency continued because his tax policy failed.

The persecution of Diocletian or '**The Great Persecution**' was the last and perhaps the bloodiest persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire, also known as 'the era of the martyrs.' In 303 AD, Diocletian and his colleagues Maximian, Galerius and Constantius issued a series of edicts demanding that Christians complied with the traditional religious practices of the Roman Empire, that is, the performance of sacrifices to its deities. The first imperial edict of 303 AD ordered the general

destruction of churches, Christian worship objects, and dismissal of employees who were supporters of the 'new religion'; a second edict ordered the general prison of the clergy. A third edict granted the release of Christians in case of apostasy, and the fourth and last, of 304 AD, ordered the entire population of the empire to sacrifice to the gods on pain of death or forced labor in mines. His wife and daughter suffered with the persecution of Christians, but were killed only in the government of Licinius. Both were canonized as Christian saints.

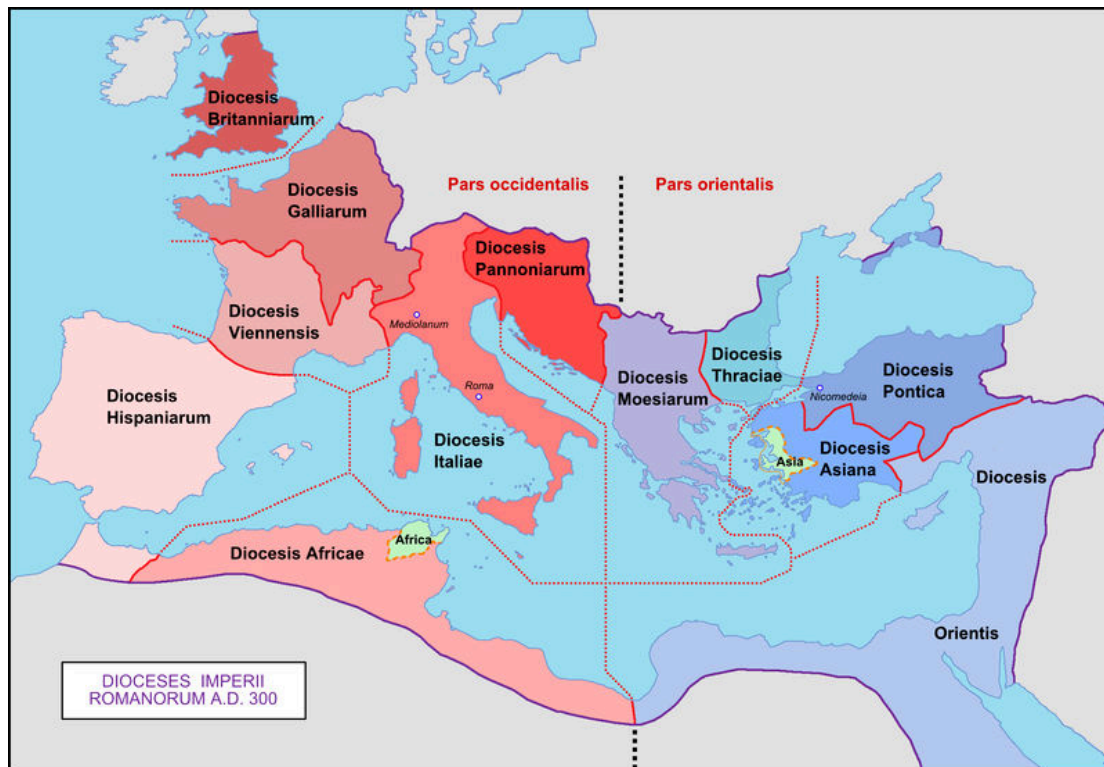
Despite this persecution the Christian community was strengthened, becoming religion accepted by the Empire after 313 AD, with the Edict of Milan. According to historical information such persecutions began to decrease when Galerius, the main instigator of them, became sick in 311 AD, and issued a decree, along with his Caesar Licinius, dispelling the discrimination against Christians, asking them to pray for his recovery. Five days after signing the edict, he died. **The Edict of Toleration by Galerius** paved the way for the **Edict of Milan** in 313 (edited by Licinius and Constantine I), decreeing not only toleration to Christianity but also recognized it as one of the official religions, and finally, the only religion of the Empire (through the **Edict of Thessalonica** in 380 AD by Theodosius I, Christianity was declared as the only religion of the Roman empire, excluding all the other gods).

We can summarize the government of Diocletian this way: despite being called a Tetrarchy, Diocletian instituted the **Dominate***, i.e. a despotic and military monarchy in Greek style. The prince, in this oriental vision, became lord ('dominus' to the Romans), i.e., master or absolute ruler ahead of a large bureaucracy. The emperor became 'lord and god', wore crowns, purples and other imperial ornaments, and all who were admitted to his presence were forced to kneel and kiss the tip of the royal robe. This extinguished the civil government, and the Senate was subject to bureaucratic nobility. The Dominate is the period of the Roman Empire from 285 DC (initiated by Diocletian) to 565 AD, with the death of Justinian. With this, the roman Principate became extinct. Civilians had been defeated by the military.

*** Dominate x Principate:**

The Principate is the first period of the Roman Empire from 27 BC when the senate invested Octavian – the future Augustus – with the supreme power under the denomination of prince (princeps) [in Latin, 'chief' or 'first', 'the one which begins' (something)] and extends until 285 AD when the Dominate by Diocletian began. The Principate was an attempt by the emperors to maintain an illusion of Republic. The name gave the impression that the emperors were 'the first among the citizens', 'the first among equals.' Anyway it was a form of enlightened absolutism, and the emperors tended not to flaunt their power, usually respecting the rights of citizens. From Diocletian the Dominate began, and it was a despotic and military monarchy in Greek style. It started in 285 and ended with the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 AD or in the reign of Justinian I (527–565). During this period, the true nature of the regime was hidden behind Republican concepts, and the emperors were often reluctant by false modesty to assume themselves as dictators. In the Eastern half of the Empire, and especially from the time of Justinian I, the system of the Dominate evolved into autocratic absolutism. The term 'dominate' derives from the Latin, 'dominus', meaning, 'lord or master.' Diocletian abandoned the previous titles of 'Imperator Caesar' for the new ones of 'Dominus Noster', 'our lord.' The style of Government in which the emperor sought to show himself as a model of correct aristocratic behavior (like Caesar Augustus) had given way to a style in which the emperor was seen to be distinct from all other mortals. Even his residence had to be different.

Diocletian imposed the use of Latin as an administrative language of the Greek-speaking provinces of the East. He honored the Roman laws. He divided the empire into 101 provinces, grouped into twelve dioceses gathered in four prefectures.



Location of historical complex of Split with the palace of Diocletian in Croatia.

In 305 AD, weakened because of illness, Diocletian abdicated his post. He withdrew to a palace that was built for his retirement phase, located in Split, Dalmatia, current Croatia, on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea. He died at 66 years (it is unclear if he

committed suicide). After his abdication, Maximian also abdicated and the empire was transferred to Constantius Chlorus and Galerius as Augustus.



This is a reconstruction of **Diocletian's palace** in its original appearance after completion in 305. The model is a work of Ernest Hébrard (1877-1933), a French architect, archaeologist and urban planner (source: wikipedia.org)

Diocletian's palace is nowadays the core of the city of Split. Today, the whole complex encompasses half of the center of the old town and the modern city of Split in Croatia. Although, people refer to the building as a palace because of Diocletian's intention to use it as his residence during his retirement period, one can see that the structure is enormous and more resembles a fortress. Half of it was for personal use of the emperor, and the rest housed a military garrison.

2) Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus Herculus Augustus or Maximian – r. 285-305 AD and 306-307, as emperor of the West (total 21 years)

Name from birth to accession: Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus

Name as Caesar under Diocletian (285-286): Caesar Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximian

Name as emperor (as Augustus in the West, with Diocletian as Augustus in the East): Caesar Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus Herculus Augustus (286-305)

Wife: Eutropia, from Syria

Children:

- Maxentius and Fausta. Maxentius was emperor between 306 and 312. Fausta married Constantine I and had six children with him, including the Augustus Constantine II, Constantius II and Constans. Fausta was murdered by Constantine I, on suspicion of adultery with one of his sons (Crispus) by his first wife.

- Flavia Maximiana Theodora. She married Constantius Chlorus and was daughter of Eutropia and Aphranus Hannibalianus (senator and roman consul); therefore, step-daughter of Maximian.

Death: at the age of 60 (310 AD); he hanged himself by order of his son-in-law Constantine I (married to Fausta, Maximian's daughter).

The relationship between Diocletian and Maximian was quickly expressed in religious terms. Around 287, Diocletian assumed the title of Jupiter [also Jove (Latin: Iuppiter, Iovis)], and Maximian assumed the title Herculus.

Hercules is the Roman name for the Greek divine hero Heracles, who was the son of Zeus (Roman equivalent Jupiter) and the mortal Alcmene. In classical mythology, Hercules is famous for his strength. He was represented with the club (a cudgel), the bow, the arrows and a lion skin. Heracles (Herakles), the Greek god, was recognized by the club (cudgel) and by the lion skin (by the fact of having defeated the Nemean Lion; Nemea was an unknown place, probably a result of human imagination). The club (cudgel) was due to his strength in hand-to-hand combats (wrestling).

Jove or Jupiter:

Consort – Juno

Father – Saturn

Symbol – lightning and eagle (that's why we can see an eagle, holding in its claws a thunderbolt, both in the Roman standards and the shields)

Siblings – Pluto and Neptune

Children – Mars, Vulcan, Minerva, Hercules (Heracles to the Greeks)

Greek equivalent – Zeus

Jupiter, also Jove (Latin: Iuppiter, Iovis), is the god of sky and thunder and king of the gods in Ancient Roman religion and mythology. Jupiter was the main deity of Roman state religion throughout Republican and Imperial eras, until Christianity became the dominant religion of the Empire. Jupiter is usually thought to have originated as a sky god. His symbol is the thunderbolt and his primary sacred animal is the eagle, which held the place of precedence over other birds in the taking of auspices and became one of the most common symbols of the Roman army. A statue of Jupiter – take a look in the eagle.



Let's see an interesting thing about the Roman army and the eagle on the standards and shields, and then, the divisions of the Roman army. An 'aquila', or eagle, was a prominent symbol used in ancient Rome, especially as the standard of a Roman legion. Signifer was a standard-bearer. A legionary known as an aquilifer, or eagle-bearer, carried this standard. An aquilifer was a senior signifer bearing the eagle standard of a Roman legion. Each legion carried one eagle. The eagle was extremely important to the Roman soldier, beyond merely being a symbol of a legion. A lost standard was considered an extremely grave occurrence, and the Roman soldier often travelled great distances to protect a standard or to recover it if had been lost. A number of other Roman eagles were discovered by archaeologists, either symbolizing imperial rule or used as funeral emblems. The two emblems (the eagle and the thunderbolt) were also seen on coins. Along with Juno and Minerva (The Capitoline Triad), Jupiter was the central guardian of the state. His sacred tree was the oak. Jupiter was the brother of Neptune and Pluto. Each presided over one of the three realms of the universe: the sky (Jupiter), the waters (Neptune), and the underworld (Pluto).

A centurion was a Roman soldier who commanded eighty to one hundred soldiers of the army, the 'centuries.' They gathered in groups of three to ten (numbered I to X) to form the cohorts (300 to 1000 soldiers). Each cohort had for its own ensign the serpent or dragon, which was woven on a square piece of cloth (textilis anguis), elevated on a golden staff, to which a cross-bar was adapted for this purpose, and carried by the 'draconarius.' The cohorts gathered and formed the legions. The Roman legion was the fundamental division of the Roman army. The legions ranged between 1,000 and 8,000 men. During his campaigns in Gaul, the Julius Caesar's legions were composed of not more than 3,000 soldiers.



The eagles on the shields and the aquilifer



Draconarius

Maximianus chose the city of Mediolanum (now Milan) for his residence, closer to the border of the Danube. Diocletian made his capital in the Greek city of Nicomedia in Asia Minor (modern İzmit, Turkey). As for the Caesars, Constantius Chlorus kept his imperial residence in Augusta of Treveri, and Galerius, in Dacia, in the city of Sirmium (now Sremska Mitrovica in the province of Serbia Vojvodina). Most of his life Maximianus spent in military campaigns: Gaul (285 AD), Germanic tribes (285-288) and the Alemanni or Alamanni (along with Diocletian) in 288. In 286 AD, with the revolt of one of his men who was assigned to patrol the English Channel (an arm of the sea that is part of the Atlantic ocean and separates the north of Great Britain from France), there was a division in Britannia (center-south of the island of Great Britain) and the Northwestern of Gaul (now France). There were great naval battles to regain the power of these territories 289-290 DC. When the rebel leader was defeated in 296 AD, Maximianus led his troops to the south, in order to combat pirates in Hispania and incursions from other northern barbarians of Africa in Mauretania.

In 298 AD, after all these campaigns, Maximianus left for Italy, where he abdicated in 305 AD. He passed the title of Augustus to Constantius, and settled in southern Italy. At the end of 306 AD Maximianus assumed the title of Augustus again and supported the rebellion led by his son, Maxentius (a usurper), in Italy, to take power. For this, he made an alliance with Constantine, giving him his daughter Fausta as wife. Failing in negotiations with Galerius (Maxentius was the son-in-law of Galerius), he tried to depose his son in 307 AD, but without success; then fled to the court of Constantius (adoptive grandson and son-in-law of Maximianus) in Augusta of Treveri. In 308 AD, Diocletian and his successor Galerius forced Maximianus to renounce the title of emperor again. In early 310 AD, Maximianus still made an attempt to get hold of the title of Constantine, who was in military campaign in Rhine. He ended up being arrested by Constantine (for betrayal of his own daughter Fausta) and committed suicide, hanging himself, in 310 AD, on the orders of this one. Soon after, Fausta was also murdered by Constantine, on suspicion of adultery with one of his sons by his first wife (Crispus). Maximianus was deified after death.

3) Gaius **Galerius** Valerius Maximianus – r. 305-311 AD (6 years)

Name from birth to accession: Gaius Galerius Valerius Maximianus

Name as Caesar: Caesar Gaius Galerius Valerius Maximianus

Name as Emperor: Caesar Gaius Galerius Valerius Maximianus Augustus

Wife: Galeria Valeria, a Christian, Diocletian's daughter, and that had no children. She died in 315 along with her mother Prisca. Both were beheaded, and their bodies were thrown in the sea.

Children: Valeria Maximilla and Candidianus (Galerius' children by another wife, whose name is unknown). Valeria Maximilla married Maxentius, son of Maximian. According to rumors at the time, Candidianus was killed by Licinius.

Death: at the age of 51, 'eaten by worms' (possibly some form of bowel cancer or Fournier gangrene – a type of gangrene, commonly called necrotizing fasciitis, usually affecting the perineum, occurring in elderly men, with diabetes, alcoholics, or those with low immunity).

Galerius was appointed Caesar, with the assignment to manage the Balkan provinces of Dacia, with its capital in Sirmium (now Sremska Mitrovica in the province of Serbia Vojvodina). With the abdication of Diocletian and Maximian, Constantius Chlorus and Galerius were elevated to the position of Augustus. They appointed Flavius Valerius Severus (305-307) and Maximinus II (also known as Maximinus Daia or Maximinus Daza – 305-313 AD) as new Caesars. Constantius Chlorus died 15 months after his accession to the throne and his son Constantine was appointed Augustus and emperor by the army in York. But Galerius gave him the title of Caesar and named Severus as Augustus and Emperor of the province of Italia. With the revolt of Maxentius, son of Maximianus, trying to usurp the throne, Severus took refuge in Ravenna, where he was forced to commit suicide. So Maximianus arranged the marriage of his daughter Fausta with Constantine, and legitimized his title of Augustus given by the army. Galerius appointed Licinius as Augustus over the province of Illyria.

Maximinus II (or Maximinus Daia, adoptive son of Galerius – his mother was the sister of Galerius) the last Caesar also demanded the title of Augustus to the provinces of Syria and Egypt. With Maxentius proclaiming himself Emperor in Italia, and forcing the father Maximianus to assume again, there were six emperors ruling the Empire at the same time. Maximianus was killed soon after by his son-in-law, Constantine, with the support of his daughter Fausta, who has chosen to be on her husband's side.

Galerius issued the so-called '**Edict of toleration by Galerius**' or '**Edict of toleration of Nicomedia**' towards the Christians in 311 AD, issued by the Tetrarchy of Galerius, Constantine I and Licinius, putting an end to the persecutions decreed by Diocletian and Maximian, although he has participated in all of them. He acknowledged that this type of policy to eradicate Christianity had failed, in addition to make clear in the Edict the legal existence of it and give Christians the freedom to assembly and build temples for themselves. In fact, he was already sick when he issued the decree dissipating the discrimination against Christians, along with his Caesar Licinius, and asked the Christians to pray for his recovery. Five days after signing the edict, he died ('eaten by worms', as they said at that time). The 'Edict of toleration by Galerius' paved the way for the **Edict of Milan**, in 313 (by Licinius and Constantine I), decreeing not only toleration to Christianity but also recognizing it as one of the official religions.

Christianity was officially legalized later, on 27th February 380 AD by Theodosius I, through the **Edict of Thessalonica** when it was established that the Nicene Christianity would become exclusively the state religion in the Roman Empire, and abolishing all polytheistic practices and shutting the temples.

After the death of Galerius, four emperors remained: Maximinus II (or Maximinus Daia) in Asia and Egypt, Licinius in the European East, Constantine in the West, and

Maxentius as tyrant of Italy and North Africa. After several fights, in 324, Constantine became the sole emperor.

4) Gaius Flavius Valerius Constantius Herculus Augustus or Constantius Chlorus or Constantius I – r. 305–306 AD (1 year)

Birth name: Gaius Flavius Valerius Constantius

Name as Caesar: Caesar Gaius Flavius Valerius Constantius

Name as Emperor: Caesar Gaius Flavius Valerius Constantius Herculus Augustus

Wives: Helena of Constantinople (repudiated in 289) and Flavia Maximiana Theodora, daughter of Eutropia and Aphranius Hannibalianus (senator and roman consul), step-daughter of Emperor Maximian.

Children:

- Constantine I or Constantine the Great, son of Helena of Constantinople

With Flavia he had five children:

- Flavius Dalmatius. His son Flavius Hannibalianus (also Hannibalianus) the nephew of Constantine, probably died before the purge of the imperial family that followed Constantine's death. The massacre was ordered by Constantius II in 337 AD. Hannibalianus' brother also called Flavius Dalmatius died there. Hannibalianus married Constantine's daughter, Constantina.

- Julius Constantius (father of the emperor Julianus (Flavius Claudius Iulianus) and the first wife of Constantius II, whose name is unknown)

- Anastasia

- Flavia Julia Constantia (wife of the emperor Licinius)

- Eutropia (wife of Virius Nepotianus and mother of Nepotianus, a short-lived roman usurper, ruling in the city of Rome for only twenty-eight days when Marcellinus, the general of another usurper, Maxentius, killed him).

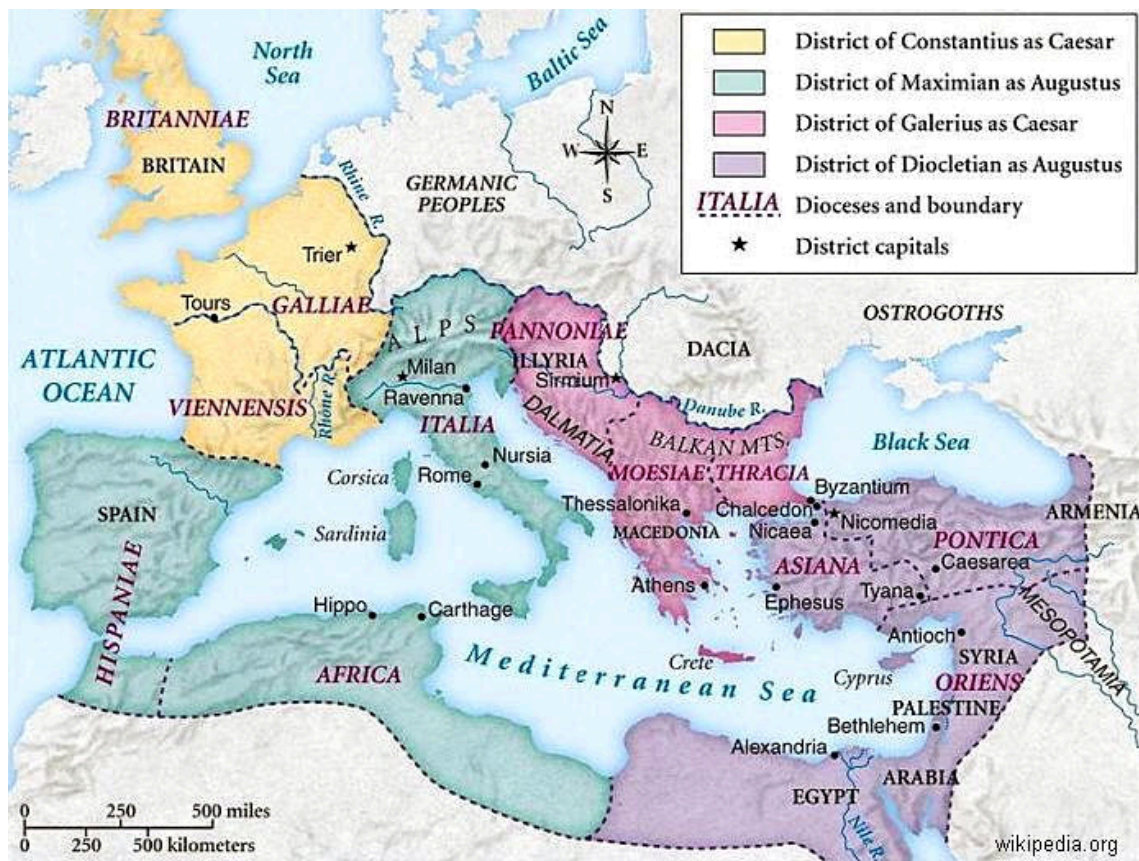
Death: at the age of 56.

Gaius Flavius Valerius Constantius received the nickname, Chlorus (in Greek: Khlōrós, Χλωρός, the pale) by Byzantine historians. He married Helena of Constantinople, who he repudiated in 289 AD to marry Flavia Maximiana Theodora, daughter of the emperor Maximian, by whom he was adopted and appointed Caesar. By Helena, he had one son and successor Constantine I or Constantine the Great.

Constantius' career was basically focused on defense of the Northwestern border of Roman Empire. From 293 to 296 he fought for the re-conquest of Britannia and north of Gaul, under threat of another usurper, Carausius, and still in 296 he defeated the Alemanni in Gaul and Vindonissa (now Windisch, Switzerland).

In 305 AD he was proclaimed Augustus, and died fifteen months after being crowned Emperor (306 AD) in Britannia, during a military campaign. His son Constantine (later nicknamed the Great) was hailed by Army in York as Augustus and Emperor. Galerius, however, gave Constantine the title of Caesar, and raised Flavius Valerius Severus as Augustus, with control of the province of Italia.

He demonstrated his humanity toward Christians in 303 during the persecution of Diocletian. It is said that Constantius Chlorus was a Christian who pretended to be pagan and therefore did not take part in the persecutions of Diocletian. However, it is more likely that he was, in fact, like all emperors from Aurelian to Constantine – this one, before his conversion to Christianity – a follower of the cult of Sun Invictus, the god of the Roman soldiers.



XI) Other emperors of the Tetrarchy (305-324 AD):



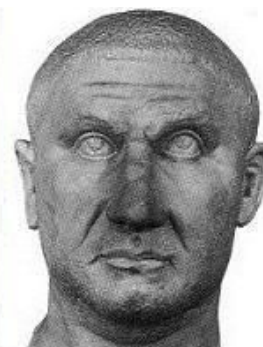
Flavius Severus



Maxentius



Maximinus II



Licinius

1) Flavius Valerius Severus Augustus – r. 305-307 AD, in competition with Constantine, Maxentius, and Maximian

Name from birth to Caesar: Flavius Valerius Severus

Name as Caesar (in the West, under Constantius Chlorus): Caesar Flavius Valerius Severus

Name as Emperor: Caesar Flavius Valerius Severus Augustus

Son: Flavius Severianus, which according to the comments of that time, was killed by Licinius

Death: forced to commit suicide

Of humble origin, Flavius Valerius Severus joined the Roman army reaching high posts. Galerius appointed him Caesar and granted him the governments of Pannonia, Africa and Italia. In 305, with the death of Constantius Chlorus, Severus was appointed Augustus by Galerius, who granted the title of Caesar to Constantine I, who had been hailed Augustus by the troops. Also ruling Hispania, Severus left Mediolanum (now Milan) towards Rome to restrain a conspiracy of Maxentius (Usurper, son of Maximian). Upon arriving, most of his troops turned against him, forcing him to flee to Ravenna. Later, after surrendering to Maxentius, Severus was taken prisoner. Some Historians say he was forced to commit suicide; others, that he was executed. He was succeeded by Maxentius and Licinius.

2) Marcus Aurelius Valerius **Maxentius** Augustus or Maxentius – r. 306-312 AD

Name from birth to accession: Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maxentius

Name as Emperor: Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maxentius Augustus

Father: Emperor Maximian (Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximianus Herculus Augustus)

Mother: Eutropia

Wife: Valeria Maximilla, daughter of Galerius

Children: Valerius Romulus (Marcus Aurelius Romulus) a usurper; and another son of unknown name

Sister: Fausta, who married Constantine I and had six children by him, including the Augustus Constantine II, Constantius II and Constans. Fausta was murdered by Constantine I, accused of adultery with a son of his first marriage.

Death: at the age of 34, in battle.

Maxentius (Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maxentius Augustus) was a usurper and Roman Emperor. He was the son of Eutropia and the Emperor Maximian (Marcus Aurelius Valerius Maximian Herculus Augustus) and Galerius' son-in-law. Maxentius resisted Flavius Severus and Galerius' attacks (his father-in-law), but succumbed to Constantine at the Battle of Milvian Bridge, after reigning six years as emperor (306-312 AD). **The Battle of Milvian Bridge** or Pons Milvius (Latin) in October 312 AD was the last confrontation between Constantine and Maxentius near the Milvian bridge, one of several on the River Tiber in Rome. Constantine won the battle and, from that day, he started to desire the position of sole ruler, knowing that there was only Licinius in his way. Maxentius drowned in the river during the combat. Maxentius' body was fished out from the river and beheaded. His head was sent to Carthage, because Africa Proconsularis belonged to his territories. The Arch of Constantine dedicated by the Senate was erected to celebrate this victory.

3) Gaius Valerius Galerius Maximinus, also known as Maximinus Daia or **Maximinus Daja** or **Maximinus II** – r. 308-313 AD

Name from birth to adoption: Gaius Valerius Daia Maximinus

Name from adoption to Caesar: Gaius Valerius Galerius Maximinus

Name as Caesar of the East, under Galerius: Caesar Gaius Valerius Galerius Maximinus (305-308)

Name as Emperor (Augustus) in the East: Gaius Valerius Galerius Maximinus Daia Augustus

Adoptive Father: Galerius (Gaius Galerius Valerius Maximianus)

Mother: daughter of a half-sister of the emperor Galerius, of peasant origin

Death: at the age of 42.

Maximinus II, also known as Maximinus Daia or Maximinus Daza, was born into a peasant family and became Caesar in the government of Galerius (he was proclaimed Augustus in the east). As the last Caesar, during the civil wars of the Tetrarchy, he also demanded the title of Augustus to the provinces of Syria and Egypt. After the death of Galerius in 311, Maximinus divided the east of the empire between him and Licinius. He summoned an army of 70,000 men against the other competitor to the throne, but suffered a great defeat at the Battle of Tzirallum. It was one of the civil wars of the Tetrarchy, fought on 30th April 313 between the armies of Licinius and Maximinus (this one with 70,000 men). The site of the battle was Campus Serenus, near Tzirallum (the modern town of Çorlu) in Eastern Thrace, Turkey. Sources put the battle from a distance of 18 or 36 roman miles from Heraclea Perinthus, the modern city of Marmara Ereğlisi. A Roman mile is equivalent to 1,490 meters; therefore, the location described above corresponds to about 27–54 kilometers from Marmara Ereğlisi. When defeated, he fled, first to Nicomedia and then to Tarsus, where he died four months later. His death has been attributed to a variety of reasons: to despair, poison and divine justice.

Maximinus II also participated in one of the last persecution of Christians. He renewed his persecutions after the issue of the Edict of Toleration by Galerius, in response to the requirements of various urban authorities asking to expel the Christians. However, he accepted the edict again on the eve of his battle against Licinius. After being defeated, shortly before his death in Tarsus, he issued an edict of toleration on his own, granting the Christians the rights of meeting, of building churches, and the restoration of their confiscated properties.

No one knows if he was married and if he left children. The only thing commented by historians, especially by the Christian writer, Eusebius, is that Maximinus II was superstitious and greedy, and had a very dissolute life. Sometimes his behavior came close to madness, especially after drunkenness when he gave certain orders of which he regretted later, when he was sober again. He did not like to see anyone that surpassed him in debauchery and licentiousness; on the contrary, he preferred to teach others as a trainer of wickedness, both rulers and subjects. He urged the army to behave in a cruel and violent manner (irresponsible, actually), in every kind of intemperance and revelry, as well as he taught the rulers to act in a covetous way in respect of taxes collected from their subjects. Eusebius (265-339 – bishop of Caesarea and writer) says that Maximinus II was accustomed to the practice of adultery, corrupting women and raping virgins. According to Eusebius, only the Christians resisted him, even suffering mutilations, torture or starving in the mines, preferring to suffer all this rather than deny their God. Even the women acted courageously in the teaching of the Word of God, enduring trials and conflict with men, paying the same price for virtue. And when they were forced to leave the virtuous Christian life to serve to corrupt purposes, they preferred death to surrender their bodies to impurity. Eusebius says that there was a Christian woman of noble parents who rejected his advances. Maximinus II sent her to exile and seized all of her wealth and assets. No one knows her name, let alone her fate. Rumors say she was called Dorothea or Catherine of Alexandria.

4) Licinius (Gaius Valerius Licinianus Licinius) – r. 308-324 AD (16 years)

Birth name: Gaius Valerius Licinianus Licinius

Name as Emperor: Gaius Valerius Licinianus Licinius Augustus

Mother: Licinius was son of Galerius with a concubine

Wife: Flavia Julia Constantia, half-sister of Constantine and daughter of Constantius Chlorus

Children: Valerius Licinianus Licinius (or Licinius the Younger)

Death: at the age of 57-60. Licinius was hanged on Constantine's orders.

Licinius was a military of humble origin (a family of peasants of Upper Moesia, in Dacia), and appointed Augustus of the Western Roman Empire in 308 by Galerius over the province of Illyricum, Thrace and Pannonia. In 310 AD he led the war against the Sarmatians (a confederation of Iranian peoples to the east of the Empire). Thus, in 313 AD Licinius married Flavia Julia Constantia, Constantine's half-sister in Mediolanum (now Milan); they had a son, Licinius, the Younger, in 315. Their marriage was the occasion for the 'Edict of Milan' made in 313 and reissued the previous Edict of toleration by Galerius, allowing Christianity was professed in the Empire, besides to restore the Christian congregations their confiscated properties and exempt the Christian clergy of municipal civic duties. The Edict of Milan gave Christianity a legal status, but did not make it the official religion of the Roman Empire. It was officially legalized later, on 27th February 380 AD by Theodosius I, through the Edict of Thessalonica.

In the same year (313 AD), Licinius defeated Maximinus II in the Battle of Tzirallum in the region of Eastern Thrace in Turkey, and butchered his family after his death. Licinius and Constantine decided to divide the Roman world among them: Licinius became sole Augustus in the East, while his brother-in-law, Constantine, was Augustus in the West. In 313 Licinius unified all the Eastern Roman Empire. From 314 to 323 he got involved in other wars against the Sarmatians. But the truce made between Licinius and his brother-in-law was not peaceful, because the latter used the Goths as an excuse to invade the territory of Licinius. This confrontation ended up in other naval wars in which Constantine prevailed. Licinius survived until 324, when Constantine defeated him after the military Battle of Chrysopolis. The battle of Chrysopolis was fought on 18th September 324 AD in Chrysopolis (modern Üsküdar), near Chalcedon (modern Kadıköy) between Constantine and Licinius, the last between the two emperors. Before it, Constantine had already defeated Licinius' navy in Hellespont. In this last battle, there was no hope for him. He was hanged on the orders of Constantine I and accused of conspiracy for trying to raise troops among the barbarians to defeat him. Constantine managed at last what he wanted: to become the supreme commander of the entire Roman Empire. Thus, the period of the Tetrarchy ended.

Constantine made every effort to sully the reputation of Licinius, allowing certain rumors about his cruelty were spread, for example, those who accused him of being responsible for the death of Flavius Severianus (the son of Emperor Severus) and Candidianus (the son of Galerius), in addition to the execution of the wife and daughter of the emperor Diocletian (Prisca and Galeria Valeria), who have fled from Licinius' court before being discovered in Thessalonica, beheaded, and their bodies were thrown into the sea. Much of this can be considered imperial advertising by Constantine, who even said that Licinius supported paganism in the detriment of Christianity. On the contrary, historians tend to suggest that he was at least a supporter of Christians, since he was the co-author of the Edict of Milan, reaffirming the rights of the people of God in his half of the empire. They even say that his wife, Flavia Julia Constantia, Constantine's half-sister and daughter of Constantius Chlorus, was a Christian. Furthermore, Licinius added the Christian symbol (the fish) to his armies. The truth is that there is no evidence of any of these facts, either to one side or to the other.

About the fact of Constantine make his imperial advertising, this is not surprising, since it is clear through everything that has been said so far, the ambition of his character passing over anything to be the ruler of the empire above any other man. His attitude towards his own family confirms this: he killed his father-in-law, Maximian, after the attempt of usurpation of the throne by Maxentius, his brother-in-law. This one

was drowned in the river during the fight against Constantine's army. Then, his body was fished out from the river and beheaded. His head, on the orders of Constantine, was sent to Carthage, since Africa Proconsularis belonged to his territories. The Arch of Constantine dedicated by the Senate was erected to celebrate this victory. It brought him the title of Augustus of the West and it was recognized by Licinius, the only remaining Augustus in the East, after the death of Maximinus II (r. 305-313). Fausta, Maxentius' sister and daughter of Maximian, married Constantine I and was killed by him on suspicion of adultery with a son of his (Crispus) by his first wife, and he was also murdered on his father's order.

Let's continue talking about him in the next volume (3).

Volumes 1 and 3 of this book:

<https://www.searaagape.com.br/godispresentinhistory1.pdf>

<https://www.searaagape.com.br/godispresentinhistory3.pdf>