

## The Roman Empire - Historical outline

**C. 500 BCE:** Rome becomes a city state after overthrow of Etruscan king – the Republic.

The City centre of a fertile plain shielded by mountains and given access to the sea by means of a navigable river, the Tiber.

A region with margin advantage, far from the main centres of Mediterranean power in the East.

**Fifth-fourth centuries BCE:** City state in conflict with comparable city states.

1. Latium and the Latin cities
2. (North) Tuscany and the Etruscan cities
3. (South) Samnium (warrior tribes) and Campania

**Third century BCE:** Hegemony in South Italy (Magna Graecia). Encroachments with Greeks in Italy and the Punic state governed from the city of Carthage (actual Tunis).

The Punic wars (First and Second) Start of Rome's provincial administration (Sicily and Sardinia) The second Punic war (the famous war against Hannibal) ends in 201 BCE.

**Second century BCE:** Large scale conquests. Subjection of the Greek East.

**First century BCE.** Civil wars in Rome. End of the Republic and introduction of Imperial rule (in essence a "monarchy" with a chosen leader). Conquest for competition (Caesar). Augustus – the first "emperor" of Rome. First attempts to create a state controlled administration of empire.

**First and second centuries CE:** Conquest for marking power (Claudius, Trajan). Increasing internal homogenisation. Powerful elites cooperate with the state.

**Third century:** The territorial state. Military emperors - warlordism. Temporary fragmentation.

**Fourth century:** Restoration. The bureaucratic empire. The Christian empire (Diocletian, Constantine the Great)

**Fifth century:** Barbarian conquests. Conquerors merge with local elites. Transcendent religion claims autonomy from state. "Fall" of W. Rome (476). Rump states.