

### The Four Ancient Empires

In the first place, our study for this semester will tend to take up in the take up in the northern Mediterranean world and will move on from there to the modern world. You realize that the ancient world is a world centered on Egypt, the Tigris-Euphrates in the Middle East, with a sharp focus from the Bible on Palestine, and incidentally, material from India and China. And later on it ends up with the empire of Babylon and of Persia in the East.

With the demise of Persia we enter into a new world. This is a world in which a European power for the first time has completely taken over Asia—the story of Alexander's Empire! We can say that there was a long struggle between Europe and Asia that culminated in the Trojan War (1181), the victory of the Greeks that did not last; then another Greek victory at Troy (677); but still the power centered at Babylon (to 539), the power centered in Persia (to 331). And only with Alexander do we have a great shift of power.

From that time on, of course, still the major divisions of Alexander's Empire were Asiatic; and it was some time yet—roughly another century and a half—before we come to the dominance of Rome, that is a shift further into the Mediterranean.

If we look at it in the long, broad sense the shift tended, then, to center in Western Europe with an interplay between Western Europe of the Roman Empire and Persia or Parthia; and then the break-up of Rome in which you have a focus in the east on the Arab world, as we shall discover, after the time of Mohammed, struggling with the Western World divided into two parts: Byzantium in the east and Central Europe in the West, the two legs, you remember, of the image—the story of Babylon the head, Persia the chest, the area of the thighs was Greece, and then Rome with the two parts; there was Byzantium in the east and the Roman Empire in the west.

As time has gone on we have had even a change of focus. With the end of the Second World War Europe was finished, for practical purposes, in the West, and the power has been shifted again: Now it centers in two areas, Eurasia meaning Russia proper and the United States. So it has gradually moved from one area to another. And we will want to see what peoples have played a part in this movement over the course of history. (Class of 1-27-69, Monday afternoon section.)

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### Early Rome

We should have a few comments on "The History of Italy" in volume one of the Compendium, pages 411-414. The first list supplies us with the names of the rulers between the First Trojan War and the third founding of Rome (753 B.C.) A remnant from the city of Troy did establish at Alba Longa, which is the site today of the Papal summer palace, the royal line which led down to a female.

This female became pregnant. She was a virgin; her name was Rhea Silvia. According to the myth, she gave birth to Romulus and Remus. And these remarkable children, of course, were suckled by the wolf. I do recognize that as a myth! On the other hand, if you know the symbolism of a wolf I think you will understand a lot more. In the first place, their mother was a Vestal Virgin and thus she should not have contracted children—but she did! And this supernatural event led to these twins of supernatural origin! Now actually, a woman like that would generally be defined as a prostitute or a fornicatress—it's one of those accidents that happens. And the old Roman symbol, you know, it's not uncommon to use the word "wolf" even for a fellow who whistles at girls—things like this, we use the same symbol today!

Thus a female wolf was simply a symbol of a woman who was not of very great moral reputation. What the Romans are saying is that a "wolfess" brought up these two children. Probably what happened was that her children were turned over to somebody like this, and that woman was symbolized by this animal. This became the symbol. Most likely this event was kept secret as long as possible. (For more details, see the article "Romulus" in the Britannica.)

Then you have the rest of the story. The remainder of it is the story of the founding of Rome, the domination of the area by a series of kings—sometimes they were Etruscan kings from the north—the kicking out of the Roman kings, the establishment in 509 B.C. of the Republic (page 413); then the demise of the Republic ultimately in the person of Julius Caesar who would be emperor; and ultimately the struggle for control of the realm that ended in the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C. with the conquest of Antony by Octavian known as Augustus; and the rest of the story is the rise and fall of the Roman Empire thereafter.

I will wait till we take up volume two of the Compendium before we have a review of much more of the earlier Roman history before 1181 as we know it. Most historians today will go back to the founding of Rome in 753 as a possibility. A generation ago historians even junked everything of the early period all the way down maybe to the 300's B.C.; it was looked upon as mere myth! I think they are getting to be a bit more conservative today. You know, the scholarly world finally goes back to a little more conservatism because the former reaction is finally regarded as a little too extreme.

However, no modern historian would go back to the material of Troy because nobody wants to believe that there ever was such an event as a series of migrations from the region as a result of the fall of Troy that would lead to the founding of thrones in various parts of Europe. You must realize that the founding of a throne in Italy (1179) was not the only one; rather, you will discover it involved a number of countries elsewhere as well, and most all of them were in Israelite lands—almost all of them were: Denmark, in the areas of the Low Countries, in France, not to mention Britain, as well as in Italy.

This Italian line continued down to the story of Romulus and Remus (page 412). Remus died—Romulus killed him—and then there there was Romulus (referring to page 413); and then you have the line dying out at that point, the one year Interregnum of 716-715; and then you have Numa the priest (715-672). Thus actually the later kings were not even of this original royal line; it ceases basically in Italy though there were intermarriages on occasion, I think, with the old royal family.

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Note: The following statement on the background of Rome is from the Monday morning class of 2-24-69.

#### Early Rome's Historical Setting

I want you to get the concept that the Romans were actually a people living in a city. The Romans originally were basically ne'er do wells, renegades, others—people with big ideas but little hope of fulfilling them!—who fled to a little site called Alba Longa forming a colony of people that had come from Troy. The people of Alba Longa came from Troy and were basically Jewish in the original stock. They intermarried with the local princes of an Abrahamic line without doubt, that goes back to the time of Atlas or Italus; and this line is from Abraham through Keturah with

the children of Ephraim and Ephah who interplay in the story. All this is covered in Chapter VIII of volume two of the Compendium on "The History of Spain."

From Troy, then, there was a founding of the city of Rome (see pages 411-412 again). This Jewish line from Troy ended with a daughter (Rhea Silvia) who had connections with some man, and since we do not know the father of the children that resulted the explanation given was that it was the god Mars! Anyway, she was supposed to be one of the virgins—but she became pregnant. So at this point there were family problems! As a result of this pregnancy Romulus and Remus came on the scene, Remus being the older of the two. Finally, as the two brothers were struggling over which one was going to control and direct Rome, Romulus clobbered Remus and so only Romulus was left!

The site itself was just a little town—that's all it was! But people streamed into it much like people streamed to David who didn't like what was going on under Saul. This is no nation, this is no tribe! These are just people from various areas. However, it was a group of people who were ambitious and, gradually, this little city of Rome survived and grew—had its own petty kings—and tended to draw other people in the near vicinity to it. This included others of Latin stock—the children of Latinus, or of the tribe from which Latinus came (see page 411—the Greek spelling is Lateinos). Some of these people were undoubtedly mixed stock, children of Kittim and others. So ultimately you have a little town which dominates the plain of Latium, enters into the Samnite Wars (pp. 85-86 in Langer) and expands more and more by bringing other nations in and giving other nations citizenship—that is, surrounding tribes or cities. But if you were to look at a map of the history of Italy, you would say that what was going on for hundreds of years didn't amount to more than what might be today called "greater Rome"—extremely small! Their kings we might rather call mayors of a city. The Mayor of Los Angeles today controls more territory and supervises more people than any of the kings whom Joshua expelled from Canaan. That's just how the human population has grown!

Gradually Rome and its allies, eventually forming a united Italy, began to struggle for control of the sea with the Cathaginians—after the Samnite Wars they fought on the sea with the Carthaginians primarily. That is, this phase was for control of the sea, and then they drove the Germans and the Bavarians out of north Italy. So there was a gradual expansion of the Italic people throughout the whole peninsula until they had expanded into this head of the "boot," you see. If you know what the map of Italy looks like, you will see to what extent there is a very large piece of territory that borders on France-Switzerland-Austria-Yugoslavia that is well into the continental mass of Europe over and above just the "boot" part.

So this is a brief outline and gives you an idea to what extent we are dealing with a city as a focal point. It's like Babylon. In fact, Persia was different. Persia was a group of tribes made up, apparently, of more than one people, but a group of tribes. The Greeks were a union of city-states gotten together in an empire. But Babylon was just a city that ruled everything! It got control of an area, and gradually all within the area were organized by those who controlled the city. In this sense, Rome and Babylon are parallels while the Greeks and the Persians are not. Although Alexander or the king of Persia might have come from a city, Alexander had all of Macedonia behind him—and then all Greece. I mean it was a different situation. It wasn't a city that finally got control, it was the whole nation that merely had its capital here. Rome started as a city just like Babylon. For a long, long time Babylon was just a city before it finally got control of the whole area and spread.

While Rome was thus gradually spreading in the West, there was no power in the West capable of nullifying it because it was too separate. Though one would have said that Italy was in a very precarious situation being out there on a peninsula capable of being cut off, the problem was that the land is so rugged that it is not easy to do this task of cutting the whole peninsula off. You have no way of controlling it by land, you have to control it by the sea. Alexander certainly would have, he just never got around to it! The Carthaginians tried to but they felt the best way would be to come down via the Alps—and you know it's mighty hard to get to Italy from the north! Just think of the terrible struggle the Americans had in World War II to get control of Italy. It's not an easy land to fight in because it is so hilly and rugged. Therefore, while it may be exposed on a peninsula, Rome was itself rather isolated. Hence it rose over such a long period of time separated from the normal impact of the East.

Let me explain further: Since Rome started in 753 B.C., this was even before the date 747 when we have the commencement of continuous Babylonian history (page 288). So that Rome, in fact, was founded before the correct chronological sequence of Babylon begins with 747. Rome was founded before Nebuchadnezzar was king; it was founded before the Persians overthrew the Babylonians. You have to put this in a right setting. That's why the traditional historical pattern is unfortunate: You finish with Persia, and then you study Greece, and now you go to Rome without realizing where you are in time! The story of early Rome, if we can explain it in these terms, goes back before Nebuchadnezzar. You have to think of it in those terms. The control of Rome by the Gauls for months (and all of northern Italy) took place while Persia was in control of the world—390 B.C. (page 85 in Langer). This is, in fact, while Egypt was still depend and before the Egyptians under Ramesses III (381-350) became independent for a half century. This is probably still at the close of the life of a man like Nehemiah. That's where we are in time! You want to get the setting.

Nothing from any external source was happening to Italy. It was having its long series of ups and downs for these four centuries between the 700's and the 300's. Gradually Rome spread so that we are at the time of the Samnite Wars (and the Latin War as it is called here, the revolt of the Latin cities—page 85 in Langer) while Alexander is trying to take over all of the East. He never got to the West, you see. Italy has been united now by about the time that Alexander's Empire split into its primary parts of north and south.

On page 86 in Langer we read that the Third Samnite War (298-290 B.C.) was the "final effort of the Samnites, aided by the Lucanians, Gauls and Etruscans, to break the power of Rome." You may read the story here in detail.

In A Survey of European Civilization by Ferguson and Bruun, page 51, we have this summary statement: "By 290 B.C., Rome dominated all of Italy south of the Po Valley, with the exception of the Greek cities scattered about the southern tip of the peninsula. And these she conquered within the next two decades."