



**Augustus, Princeps, Imperator**  
 Civilizations of the Ancient World | Meeting #27

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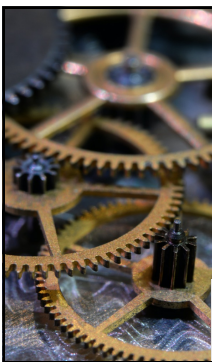
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**Upcoming Dates**

- Monday, May 18  
Images Essay Due
- Tuesday, May 26  
2:30 to 4:30 p.m.  
Final Exam
- Thursday, May 28  
**Ultimate Deadline**
  - No late papers or resubmissions for reversible deductions after this date
  - No exceptions
  - Incompletes owing to personal emergencies must be mutually agreed before this date

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**Four things today**

- Octavian and Antony
- Octavian becomes Augustus
- The Principate
- The Constituencies of Empire

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## Questions about whatever



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## Augustus and the Principate

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### Octavian takes charge

- After defeating Antony at Actium, Octavian is the last warlord standing
- Promises peace and the restoration of the Republic
  - Senate grateful for and end to the civil wars
  - People grateful to Octavian as a genuine reformer and the heir of Marius and Caesar

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### Augustus, Princeps, Imperator



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### First settlement (27 BCE)

- "Restoration of the Republic"
- Ten-year guardianship of provinces
- Titles of Augustus and Princeps
  - Augustus: "honored one"
  - Princeps: "first speaker"
  - Begins calling himself *Imperator Caesar divi filius*
- Right to hang the corona civica
  - corona civica: given to a Roman who saves the lives of other Romans
- Annual consulship

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### Second settlement (23 BCE)

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consular imperium           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commander of every army</li> <li>- Superior of every governor</li> <li>- Supreme authority over city of Rome</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Power of a tribune of the plebs           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Convene the Senate</li> <li>- Veto</li> <li>- Sacrosanctity</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Power of a censor           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supervision of morals and senate membership</li> <li>- Judicial review</li> <li>- Census</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | } | <p><b>The heart of the principate:</b></p> <p>The <i>powers</i> of the office<br/>without the <i>limits</i> of the office</p> |
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**The princeps**

- The principate embodies the populist goal: the people's faith and trust in a proven champion
- The princeps is a private citizen granted the powers needed to protect Rome and its empire

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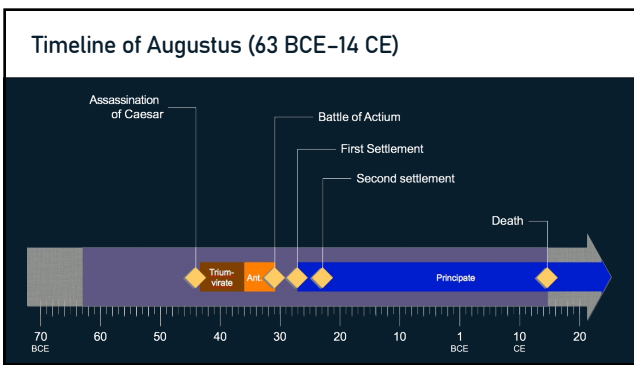
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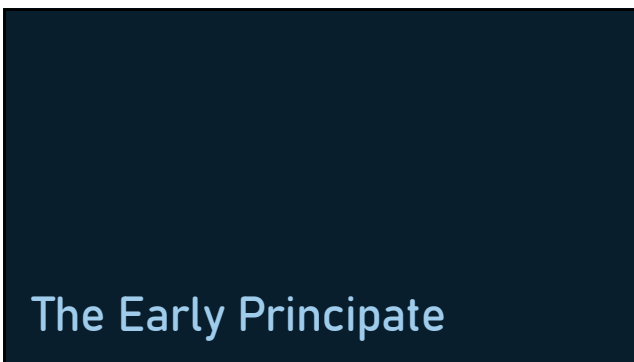
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**The Early Principate**

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**Establishing the principate**

- Learning from the mistakes of Caesar
- Rule on behalf of all Rome
- Allying with talented and respected Romans
- Ensuring a plan for the future of empire and principate

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**Establishing the principate: Talented allies**



Agrippa



Livia

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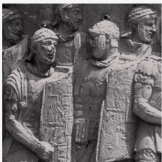
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**Establishing the principate: Constituencies**



Army



People



Nobility

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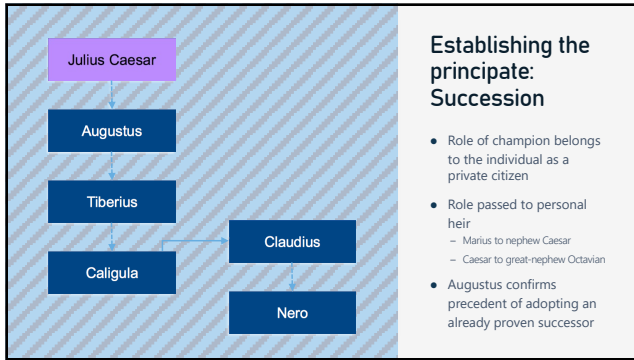
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### Establishing the principate: Succession

- Role of champion belongs to the individual as a private citizen
- Role passed to personal heir
  - Marius to nephew Caesar
  - Caesar to great-nephew Octavian
- Augustus confirms precedent of adopting an already proven successor

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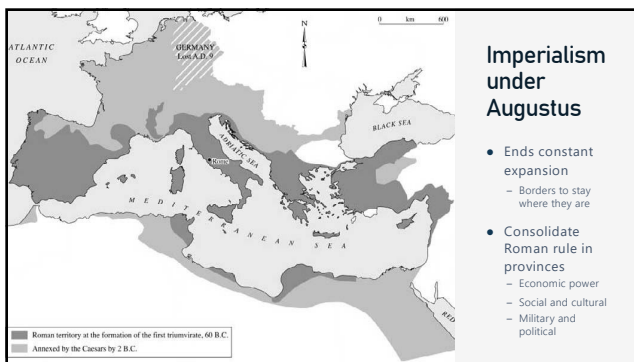
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### Imperialism under Augustus

- Ends constant expansion
  - Borders to stay where they are
- Consolidate Roman rule in provinces
  - Economic power
  - Social and cultural
  - Military and political

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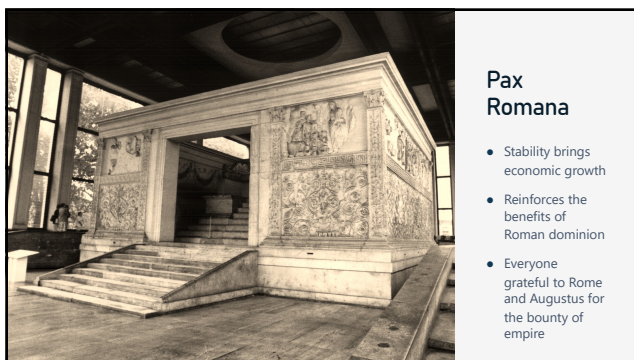
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### Pax Romana

- Stability brings economic growth
- Reinforces the benefits of Roman dominion
- Everyone grateful to Rome and Augustus for the bounty of empire

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### Death and Deification

- Augustus remains popular over 40+ years as princeps
  - Outlives many potential successors
  - Outlives memories of the Republic (and those memories are of civil war)
- On his death he is named a god
  - Joins Romulus and Caesar as Roman leaders considered divine after death

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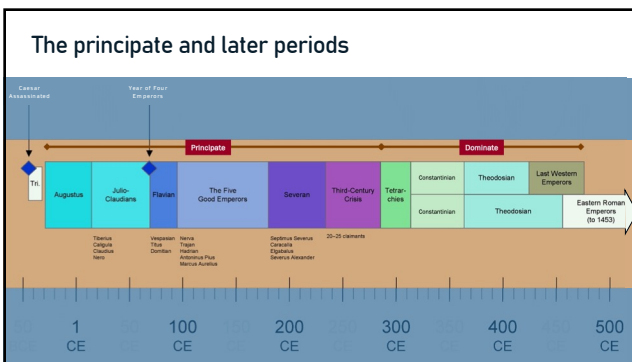
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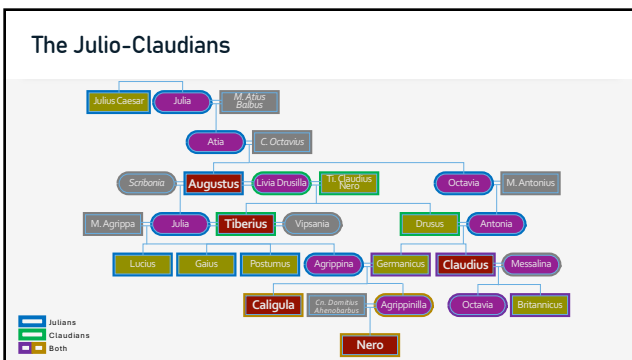
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### The Year of Four Emperors (69 CE)




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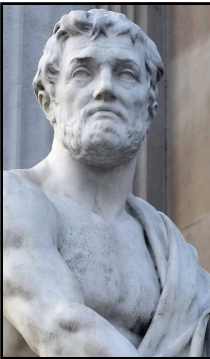
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### The "Secret of the Empire"



- "Welcome as the death of Nero had been in the first burst of joy, yet it had not only roused various emotions in Rome, among the Senators, the people, or the soldiery of the capital, it had also excited all the legions and their generals; for now had been divulged that secret of the empire, that emperors could be made elsewhere than at Rome."

— TACITUS

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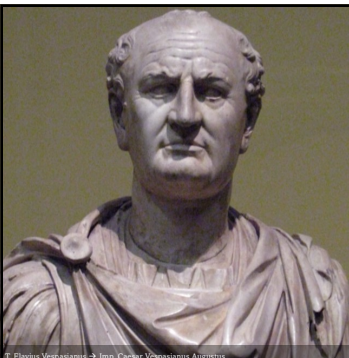
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### The Flavians: Vespasian



- Support of Danube and Syrian legions allows him to march on Rome and defeat Vitellius
- Law passed defining the principate as the actions of Augustus
- Tone: modesty, simplicity, strict adherence to old ways
  - Sees imperial office as counterweight to armies
  - Replaces role of weak senate
  - Reconnects with city of Rome – civil service, building program

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### The "Five Good Emperors"



Nerva      Trajan      Hadrian      Antoninus Pius      Marcus Aurelius

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### Third Century Crisis

- Perpetual political chaos
- Increasing economic dislocation
- Invasions across Euphrates and Danube
- Religious disunity feeds cultural fragmentation

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## Christianity and the Romans

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### Religious Diversity

- Rome did not export or impose its state religion on provinces
  - Jupiter us the patron god of Rome
  - Pagan gods represent local natural forces
- Roman empire religiously diverse

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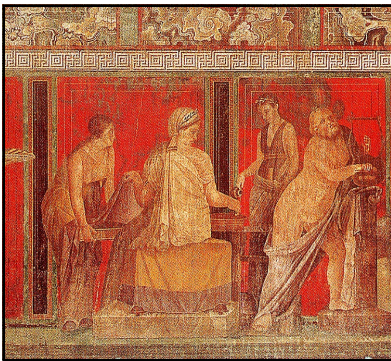
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### Mystery Cults

- Secret rituals around local gods and traditions
- Begin to grow in the eastern provinces
- Means of creating a sense of identity apart from being Roman

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### Sun-worship

- Sol Invictus, Mithraism
- Effort to create a unifying universal religion

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### Emperor Worship

- Temples raised to the god Augustus in some distant provinces
  - Represents the emperors collectively
- Romans feel discomfort with the idea
- Too many stories about the emperors

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### Growth of Christianity

- Broad appeal of Christianity
  - Monotheism creates personal bond with god
  - Open to gentiles
  - Promise of afterlife
  - Personal rebellion against Rome by creating an alternate identity
- Draws those who benefit less from Roman rule
  - Women, slaves, poor farmers, unpropertied artisans, etc.
- Steady spread through empire leads to persecution by emperors
  - Organize into councils and bishoprics to protect members and priests
  - Stories spread of martyrs to Roman tyranny

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### Third Century Crisis

- Century of disaster for the Roman state
  - Perpetual political chaos
  - Increasing economic dislocation
  - Invasions across Euphrates and Danube
- Christian church provides aid and services where empire cannot
  - Connects with people at the grass-roots level throughout empire
- Becomes a rival force when the Roman government is at its weakest

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### Christianity as a state religion

- Constantine
  - Orders tolerance for Christianity
  - Convenes and presides over Christian councils
  - Converts to Christianity on his deathbed
- Christian doctrine unified
  - What Christians believe ("creed") now spelled out and enforced
  - Anyone who does not follow the official creed is a heretic
- Christianity become the state religion
  - Unifying in the emperor's hands control over this life and the next

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