AIM: WHAT WERE THE SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF ANCIENT ROME?
How is the geographic location of Rome imperative to its development?
“Not without reason did gods and men choose this spot for the site of our city—the hills, the river to bring us produce from the inland regions and seaborne commerce from abroad, the sea itself, near enough for convenience yet not so near as to bring danger from foreign fleets, our situation in the very heart of Italy—all these advantages make it of all places in the world the best for a city destined to grow great.”

Livy

1. What did Livy mean when he wrote that Rome's location was chosen by "gods and men"?

2. Why did Livy believe that the Tiber River & Mediterranean Sea were beneficial to Rome?

3. How can geography impact the growth of a civilization?
HOW DID GEOGRAPHY HELP DEVELOP ROME?
I. GEOGRAPHY

A. HILLS AND RIVER
1. Mild climate and good farmland, City was built on seven hills.
2. Close to Mediterranean Sea and its trade routes. Lay next to Tiber River- aided trade and provided protection.

B. ITALIAN PENINSULA
1. Roman ships could sail to other Mediterranean lands. Helped in conquering new territories, developing trade routes.
2. Alps, Apennines mountains protected Rome, but didn’t isolate it. Italy’s large plains made farming easier.
THE HILLS OF ROME
II. FOUNDATIONS OF ROME

a. Rome's people were *Indo-European migrants* who assimilated agriculture and interacted with indigenous peoples and Greek colonists. They were ruled for a time by *Etruscans*, securing independence around 510 B.C.E. The Romans created a republic to avoid tyrannical control. They adapted the *Greek alphabet* to form their *Latin* version.
One reason Rome flourished was its sheltered location some 15 miles of the Mediterranean coast. In addition, it lay at one of the major crossing points on the Tiber River. In the excerpt below from On the Commonwealth, Marcus Tullius Cicero, the first-century B.C. orator and philosopher, explains the importance of the city's geographic location. As you read the excerpt, note the advantages of Rome's location mentioned by Cicero.

The location [Romulus] chose for the city... was unbelievably favorable. For he did not move his city down the coast, a step very easy for him to take with the forces at his command, either by invading the territory of the Rutuli or of the Aborigines, or by himself founding a city at the mouth of the Tiber... But with singular foresight Romulus saw and divined that a location upon the seaboard was not the most advantageous for cities intended to enjoy permanence and imperial sway, chiefly because maritime cities are exposed to dangers both numerous and impossible to foresee. A city surrounded on all sides by land receives many warnings of an enemy's approach... such as the crashing [of the forest] and even the noise [of marching troops]. No enemy, in fact, can arrive by land without enabling us to know both his hostile intent and who he is and whence he comes. On the contrary, an enemy who comes by ships over the sea may arrive before anyone can suspect his coming; and indeed, when he appears, he does not show by any signs who he is, whence he comes, or even what he wants...

In addition, cities located on the sea are subject to certain corrupting influences and to moral decline, for they are affected by alien forms of speech and by alien standards of conduct. Not only foreign merchandise is imported but also foreign codes of morals, with the result that nothing in the ancestral customs of a maritime people can remain unchanged. The inhabitants of the seaboard do not remain at home but are tempted far from their cities by the hope and dream of swiftly gained wealth; and even when they remain at home in body, they are exiles and wanderers in spirit....

How, then, could Romulus with a more divine insight have made use of the advantages of a situation on the sea, while avoiding its disadvantages, than by placing his city on the banks of a river that flows throughout the year with an even current and empties into the sea through a wide mouth? Thus, the city could receive by sea the products it needed and also dispose of its superfluous commodities. By the river the city could bring up from the sea the necessaries of a civilized life as well as bring them down from the interior. Accordingly, it seems to me that even then Romulus foresaw that this city would sometime be the seat and home of supreme dominion. For practically no city situated in any other part of Italy could have been better able to command such economic advantages.

Is there, moreover, anyone so unobservant as not to have marked and clearly appraised the natural defenses of our city? Romulus and the other kings planned the extent and location of the city's wall with such wisdom that it followed everywhere the brink of the high steep hills; that the only access... was blocked by a great rampart and girt with a deep ditch; and that the citadel, thus fortified, rose from an ascent steep on every side and above a precipitous cliff. As a result, even at the terrible time when the Gauls attacked us, the citadel remained safe and uncaptured. In addition, the location which he chose is plentifully watered with streams; and although in an unhealthful region, the site is healthful because of hills, which are themselves cooled by the breezes and which also give shade to the valleys.

**READING REVIEW**

1. According to Cicero what led Romulus to choose this particular location for the city of Rome?
2. What three advantages of Rome's location does Cicero mention?
3. Why do you think geography is such an important factor in the development of cities?
AIM: HOW DID ROME METAMORPHOSE INTO A REPUBLIC?
Before 509 B.C., a king ruled Rome. Then, the city established the Roman Republic with power divided among 3 branches of government. Why do you think the Romans wanted to govern themselves in this way?
1. The Romans created a **republic** to avoid tyrannical control. They adapted the Greek alphabet to form their **Latin** version. The **early constitution** allowed aristocrats to control the most important offices. Lower-class citizens had political and economic rights; they elected tribunes to voice their interests.

2. The **Senate** was the center of political life & the strongest government organization with two annually-elected consuls as chief executives. The senate made **laws**, **controlled money**, and chose a **DICTATOR** (a ruler with complete control of government) that only ruled for six months during emergencies.
The Constitution of the Republic

The republican system of government underwent several changes from the time of its inception in 509 B.C. The monarchy was replaced by two chief magistrates, the consuls, who held supreme power, or imperium. In times of emergency, the consuls could appoint a dictator with total power for six months. Assisting the consuls were: praetors to look after legal cases; censors to guide public morals and invest in property; curule aediles to supervise markets, festivals, and temples; and quaestors to take charge of public finance. The old advisory council, the Senate, was drawn from the heads of clans (patres) and former consuls and served to advise the magistrates and authorize popular decisions.

The magistrates and Senate were complemented by four public assemblies, with different functions, whose members voted in groups and spoke at the invitation of the presiding magistrate. These assemblies were: the comitia curiata, the original assembly dating from the regal period which became less important later; the concilium plebis, the assembly of the plebeians who elected tribunes as their representatives and whose decrees came to be binding on all; the comitia tributa, which was virtually the same as the plebeian assembly, but with the addition of a small number of patricians; and the comitia centuriata, whose members met in army units, with the better armed, namely the wealthy, voting first.

The fasces consisted of a bundle of rods enclosing an ax and symbolized the power of the consul. The rods suggested the consul's right to beat a person, and the ax his right to award the death penalty. The fasces were carried by minor officials known as lictors.
3. Aristocrats (Patricians) controlled large estates, while smaller holdings belonged to free, citizen, farmers (Plebeians). Social strife was minimized by written laws, popular participation in government, & patron-client relationships. Rome, without important city-state rivals, and with fewer societal tensions, went on a different military and diplomatic path than the Greeks.
This diagram shows the ladder of political advancement – *Cursus Honorum*.

The straight ladder shows the typical path of advancement (theoretically open to all freeborn male citizens), beginning with election to *quaestor*, the lowest office, and proceeding to *consul*, the highest (very few men made it that far).
4. Rome’s first code of laws was the **TWELVE TABLES**—450 BCE. From the Twelve Tables, the Romans developed a more sophisticated system of laws. **This system only applied to Roman citizens, however.** As legal questions arose that involved both Romans and non-Romans, special rules were often needed. These rules formed the basis for a new set of laws, known as the **Law of Nations**. These laws established standards of justice that applied to all people. A person was considered innocent until proven guilty. People who were accused of crimes were allowed to defend themselves before a judge. The judge was expected to weigh the evidence carefully before making a decision.
THE TWELVE TABLES OF LAW (EXCERPTS)

DIRECTIONS: Read the following primary source documents using the critical reading skills. As you read, remember to circle words you do not understand, underline sections that are unclear, and make notations in the margins. Then, answer the review questions that follow.

In 451 B.C.E., plebian pressure led to the creation of a special committee of ten men who were responsible for codifying Rome’s laws and making them public. In so doing, the plebeians hoped that they could restrict the arbitrary power of the patrician magistrates who alone had access to the laws. The Twelve Tables represent the first formal codification of Roman laws and customs. The laws dealt with litigation procedures, debt, family relations, property and other matters of public and sacred law. Considered a landmark in the development of Roman law, the Twelve Tables remained one of the fundamental texts memorized by Roman schoolboys until the time of Ciceron. The code was inscribed in bronze plaques, which eventually were destroyed. These selections are taken from reconstructions of the code preserved in later writings.

**Table I.**
1. If anyone summons a man before the magistrate, he must go. If the man summoned does not go, let the one summoning him call the bystanders to witness and then take him by force.

**Table III.**
1. One who has confessed a debt, or against whom judgment has been pronounced, shall have thirty days to pay it in. After that forcible seizure of his person is allowed. The creditor shall bring him before the magistrate. Unless he pays the amount of the judgment or some one in the presence of the magistrate interferes in his behalf as protector the creditor so shall take him home and fasten him in stocks or fetters. He shall fasten him with not less than fifteen pounds of weight or, if he chooses, with more. If the prisoner chooses, he may furnish his own food. If he does not, the creditor must give him a pound of meal daily. If he chooses he may give him more.

**Table IV.**
1. A dreadfully deformed child shall be quickly killed.
2. If a father sells his son three times, the son shall be free from his father.
3. A child born after ten months since the father’s death will not be admitted into a legal inheritance.

**Table V.**
3. As a man has provided in his will in regard to his money and the care of his property, so let it be binding. If he has no heir and dies, let the nearest male kinsmen have the inheritance. If there is no male kinsman, let the members of his extended family have the inheritance.
4. If one is mad but has no guardian, the power over him and his money shall belong to his male kinsmen and the members of his extended family.

**Table VI.**
6. Any woman who does not wish to be subjected in this manner to the hand of her husband should be absent three nights in succession every year, and so interrupt and end the marriage.

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NOTES

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1 stocks and fetters: shackles or restraints
2 kinsmen: relative
3 subjected to the hand: beaten

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2. If a slave shall have committed theft or done damage with his master's knowledge, the action for damages is in the slave's name.

Tarpeian Rock: a large rock at the top of a cliff in Rome

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did Roman law protect the rights of individuals?

2. Which laws restricted the freedoms of individuals?

3. How did Roman law maintain order and provide security for the entire society?

4. How does this list of laws compare to those of our society today?

5. Which laws seem unfair or tyrannical? Explain why.
Directions: In groups of three, read the following document, thoroughly read and answer the following questions. Be prepared to discuss them in class!

FEDERALIST NO. 70: THE ANCIENT CONNECTION

We have discussed several times in this course similarities between our government today and the government of the ancient Greeks and Romans. How exactly did these Ancient elements originally become part of our constitution?

One of the best examples of Roman influence was the writing of the Federalist papers. When the Federalist papers were written during the time when the country was debating passing the Constitution, John Adams, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay wrote 85 documents to convince Americans to support a strong federal government. They drew much of their evidence from the lives of the Ancients. In particular, Federalist No. 70 by Hamilton draws many comparisons between the proposed role of the American president and the role of the consuls and tribunes in Ancient Rome.

Directions:
A. Read Federalist No. 70 and highlight/underline all references to Ancient Greece and Rome.
B. Answer the following question on a separate piece of paper in a complete paragraph each:
   1. According to Hamilton, how does Roman history prove the need for a strong executive branch?
   2. What was the role of the Ancients’ president?
   3. Why do you think the founding fathers used so much evidence from Ancient Times, rather than more recent events? Why do you think this is not done today?

The Executive Department Further Considered

To the People of the State of New York:

THERE is an idea, which is not without its advocates, that a vigorous Executive is inconsistent with the genius of republican government. The enlightened wisdom which has established the constitution of the United States is a proof that a strong executive is essential to the preservation of the Union. In the Federalist papers, Alexander Hamilton argues that the ancient Roman Republic had a strong executive, and that this was necessary for the survival of the state.

In the Federalist No. 70, Hamilton writes:

"...in the administration of the public affairs, we are in danger of being too much guided by antiquity. We are too much inclined to adopt the forms of government of the Romans, without considering the nature of their constitution, the spirit of the times, and the circumstances of their country. We have too little regard for the differences between our circumstances and theirs. We are too much disposed to copy the forms of government of the Romans, without considering the nature of their constitution, the spirit of the times, and the circumstances of their country. We have too little regard for the differences between our circumstances and theirs. We are too much disposed to copy the forms of government of the Romans..."

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B. FAMILY AND SOCIETY IN ROMAN TIMES

1) The *pater familias*—eldest male of the family ruled.
   a. Women wielded considerable influence w/in their families
   b. Many women supervised family business & wealthy estates.

2) Wealth & social change
   a. Newly rich classes built palatial houses, threw lavish banquets.
   b. Cultivators & urban masses lived at subsistence level.
   c. Poor classes became a serious problem in Rome & other cities
   d. No urban policy developed, only “bread & circuses”.
Wealthy Romans often lived in spacious houses with central courtyards. The houses had high brick walls without windows. Many of the rooms opened into the courtyard to allow in light and fresh air. How is a Roman home similar to homes in your neighborhood? How is it different?

Rainwater from the gutters collected in the pool below.

Guests and business associates were entertained in the living room/study.

Some homes had shops or workshops that opened onto the street.

In the dining room, family members ate while reclining on couches.
3) SLAVERY—1/3 OF THE POPULATION
a. Spartacus’ uprising in 73 BCE
b. Urban slaves saw better conditions & possible manumission.
In groups of three, read the following document, thoroughly read and answer the following questions. Be prepared to discuss them in class!

1. Why would a successful slave revolt have been a “calamity” to the people?

   Plutarch, Life of Crassus, viii-xi:

   The insurrection of the gladiators and the devastation of Italy, commonly called the war of Spartacus, began upon this occasion. One Lentulus Batiales trained up a great many gladiators in Capua, most of them Gauls and Thracians, who, not for any fault by them committed, but simply through the cruelty of their master, were kept in confinement for the object of fighting one with another. Two hundred of these formed a plan to escape, but their plot being discovered, those of them who became aware of it in time to anticipate their master, being seventy-eight, got out of a cook’s shop chopping knives and spits, and made their way through the city, and lighting by the way on several wagons that were carrying gladiators’ arms to another city, they seized upon them and armed themselves. And seizing upon a defensible place, they chose three captains, of whom Spartacus was chief, a Thracian of one of the nomad tribes, and a man not only of high spirit and valiant, but in understanding, also, and in gentleness, superior to his condition, and more of a Grecian than the people of his country usually are. Large scale war ensues...

   ... This success, however, ruined Spartacus, because it encouraged the slaves, who now disdained any longer to avoid fighting, or to obey their officers, but as they were upon their march, they came to them with their swords in their hand, and compelled them to lead them back again through Lucania, against the Romans, the very thing which Crassus was eager for. For news was already brought that Pompey [Davis: Crassus’ rival for military glory] was at hand; and people began to talk openly that the honor of this war was reserved for him, who would come and at once oblige the enemy to fight and put an end to the war. Crassus, therefore, eager to fight a decisive battle, encamped very near the enemy, and began to make lines of circumvallation; but the slaves made a sally, and attacked the pioress. As fresh supplies came in on either side, Spartacus, seeing there was no avoiding it, set all his army in array, and when his horse was brought him, he drew out his sword and killed him, saying, if he got the day, he should have a great many better horses of the enemies, and if he lost it, he should have no need of this. And so making directly towards Crassus himself, through the midst of arms and wounds, he missed him, but slew two centurions that fell upon him together. At last, being deserted by those that were about him, he himself stood his ground, and, surrounded by the enemy, bravely defending himself, was cut to pieces.

1. Who was Spartacus?
2. Who was Crassus?
3. Who was Pompey?
4. What was Spartacus’ challenge in leading his army?
5. How did this slave revolt establish a historical precedent for future revolutions? Based on this Roman slave revolt, what implications can you draw about the social hierarchy of society past and present?
6. In the long term, how successful was the Roman slave revolt?