

## **Essay Questions Chapters 5-6**

### **The Roman Republic and Roman Empire**

*Review your course syllabus and previous essay assignments for specific requirements.*

1. What was the impact of the Etruscans and Greeks on the early development of Roman civilization? How did Rome's contact with the Hellenistic world affect Roman civilization in the second and first centuries B.C.? In answering the latter questions, explain what the poet Horace meant when he wrote that "captive Greece took her barbarian conqueror captive."
2. In the struggle of the orders, what did the plebeians want and what did they succeed in getting? Can it be said that Rome became a democracy because of this struggle? Why or why not? Compare the Republic after the struggle of the orders to classical Greek democracy and modern democratic governments.
3. Compare and contrast the Roman religion with the religions of its conquered peoples, paying special attention to the religion of the Greeks. How did its religion help Rome become such an important state in the eyes of Romans? In the eyes of historians?
4. Compare and contrast the Roman family of the Republic with the Greek family of Periclean Athens and the Greek family of the Hellenistic era. Can it be said that women had more rights and freedom in one of these societies than the others? Why or why not?
5. Discuss Rome's rise to empire with regards to the Roman army, its organization, strategy, and tactics. Make reference to Roman military campaigns to support your arguments, especially the Punic Wars and the resulting destruction of Carthage.
6. Discuss the role of the Senate, popular assemblies, powerful generals, and politicians from all orders in the decline and fall of the Roman Republic. What had happened to the political structure and the political values of the Republic? To what does the historian Sallust attribute Rome's decline? How realistic was his assessment?
7. Augustus Caesar has been called the first Roman Emperor. Why? Why have historians not granted Julius Caesar that title instead? How did Augustus achieve control over the Roman world? What were his achievements as emperor?
8. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each of the emperors who followed Augustus, paying special attention to Nero, Caligula, the "five good emperors" and Constantine.
9. It has been said of the Romans that two of their major contributions to Western Civilization were in the areas of Law and Engineering. Identify Roman achievements in these two areas giving concrete examples to support your arguments.
10. Explain the factors involved in the spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire both before and after the conversion of Constantine. One historian has said that "Romans became Christians and Christianity became Roman." How did both Christianity and Rome change as it became the official religion of the state?