

# CHRONOLOGICAL REASONING

## EMPIRE COMES TO ROME

For centuries since the end of the Roman Kingdom in 509 BCE, the Roman government was a republic.

Romans were opposed to the idea of a king, and were governed instead by a senate and other government officials. However, conflicts between the

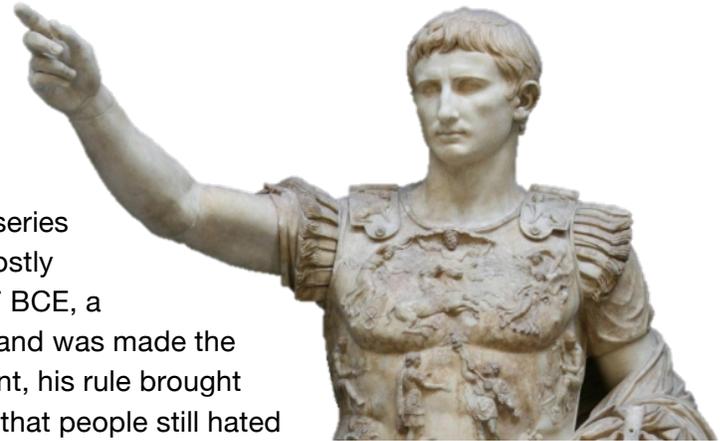
wealthy upper class and the poor lower class led to a series of civil wars that weakened the republic, which was mostly

controlled by the wealthy upper class. Ultimately, in 27 BCE, a

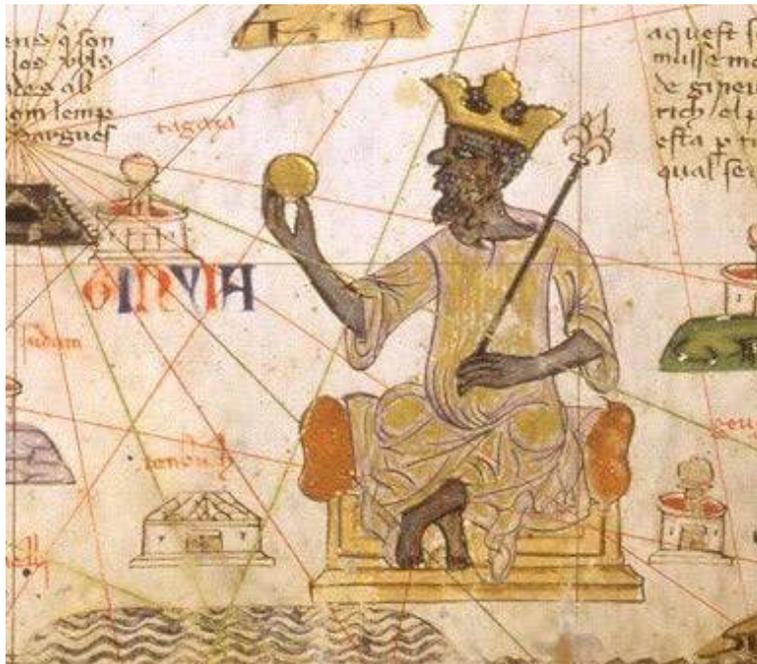
popular leader named Augustus took power in Rome, and was made the Emperor. Since he had total power over the government, his rule brought

peace and stability to the Romans. However, he knew that people still hated

the idea of kings, so he called himself the "first citizen" instead. He even kept the senate around, as well as the rest of the republican government, but it was just for appearances. They no longer had any real power.



## kingdoms of gold



Western Africa is a fertile, forested region that was able to produce abundant grain through farming.

In contrast, farther to the North lay the Sahara Desert, where farming was nearly impossible and life was very difficult. However, the introduction of

the camel to North Africa around 300 CE made it possible for people to travel long distances across

the desert to trade for needed goods. North Africans were able to get grain from West Africans

in exchange for salt, which was easy to mine in the desert but very rare in the forests of West

Africa. Since humans need salt to survive, it was extremely valuable, and West Africans wanted

more of it. Luckily for them, they also lived in a region rich in a natural resource. In their case, that

was gold, which could be found in the rivers of West Africa. Eventually, the exchange of these two

valuable substances attracted people from far and wide, and developed into a massive Trans-Saharan Trade

Network, connecting West and North Africa to other parts of the continent as well as to Europe and the Middle East. The wealth generated from the gold trade led to the growth of a series of powerful Empires in

West Africa. It also had an impact on the culture in these empires. West Africans had a variety of local religions, usually believing in many gods and spirits, the connection by trade allowed Islam to spread from

North Africa, and the new faith slowly spread, first to the rulers and then to the common people. However, although they adopted the Islamic beliefs of one God, daily prayer, and fasting, many of the old beliefs and

practices were often mixed in as well.

# Conquests Of The Mongols

During the 1200s, the nomadic Mongol people living in the grasslands of Northeastern Asia were struggling to survive. Decreases in temperature caused less grass to grow, which meant less food for their animals, and the nearby Chinese had refused to trade with the Mongols for food and items they needed to survive. Desperate and frustrated, the Mongols began to conquer neighboring lands to acquire the resources they needed. Their skill at quickly shooting arrows while riding a horse with their feet in stirrups made it possible to conquer enormous amounts of territory. The Mongols developed a reputation as fierce and brutal conquerors, often terrorizing towns and cities to make them surrender. However, as rulers, they maintained control by being surprisingly tolerant. They allowed people to practice their religions and keep their culture, and they even allowed many local rulers to stay in power, just as long as they pledged allegiance to the Mongols and gave them regular tribute payments.



# The Printing Revolution

Since writing was invented around 3300 BCE, creating and copying written documents could only be done by hand. This was a difficult and time-consuming process, so throughout most of history, books were rare and very expensive. For common people, this meant that the skills of reading and writing were not just very difficult to learn but also not even really worth learning. Access to the information preserved in writing was usually only available to a special class of educated elites. However, this all began to change with the invention of the Printing Press by a German man named Johannes Gutenberg in 1440 CE.

simple Latin

complicated Chinese characters. The printing press made it possible to print many copies of a book in much less time and for much less money. As a result, literacy, the ability to read and write, increased rapidly as regular people finally had easy access to books. This led to people becoming more educated, but it also threatened the educated elites, who worried they would lose their power and special status. For example, the Catholic Church had long dominated religious education in Western Europe. Since people were illiterate, they relied on their priests to teach them about the Bible. However, the printing press made it possible for people to read the Bible themselves, which led some groups of people to disagree with the Catholic Church about the right understanding of Christianity. Printing also allowed these groups to publish and spread their new religious ideas to others. Eventually, this led to different groups breaking away from the Catholic Church and forming their own denominations, or versions, of Christianity on their own.



Although printing technology had already been developed in China, the letters used in European languages were much better suited for printing than

