

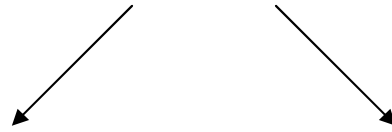
## HA! 33 The Rise of the Roman Republic

616 B.C.E. – 509 B.C.E. – Etruscans ruled Rome

Romans overthrew the Etruscans and created a republic around 509 B.C.E

Republic – “public good” a government good for everyone one with elected leaders.

Etruscan King



Patricians

Plebeians

Upper Class - Wealthy Landowners  
 “Patres” = Fathers  
 Have a say in government (advised the king)  
 Held military and religious positions

Low Class (workers) 95% of people  
 “Pleb” = Many  
 No say in government  
 Forced to serve in the army

Timeline of Development of the Roman Republic	
509 B.C.E.	Patricians resented king’s (“Rex”) rule and rebelled. They drove out the last Etruscan King Tarquinius who fled  Stared a republic of elected officials with the interests of the people. More democratic government yet only patricians able to participate.
Senate	Group of 300 elected patrician men who served for life. They appointed the officials (ex. judges) advised the consuls and made laws.
2 Consuls	Patricians elected to share command of the army.
Plebeians Rebel	Patricians held all power. Plebeians had to obey the laws that were constantly changing to favor the patricians.
Conflict of Orders	Plebeians struggle to gain more political rights. Tired of fighting in wars with no rights. 494 B.C.E. Plebeians went on strike and left the city. All work (and military campaigns/order) came to a halt. Patricians forced to compromise.
Tribunes of the Plebs	Patricians agreed to let them elect officials who spoke for the plebs to the Senate and the consuls. Later, they gained the power to veto. They started with 2 which eventually grew to 10.
Council of Plebs	Plebs elected a lawmaking body. They wrote only laws for the plebeians.
12 Tables	Demanded that laws be written down. “Rule of Law” Couldn’t be changed on a whim.
367 B.C.E	One of the 2 consuls had to be a plebeian. Plebeians could now be senators.
287 B.C.E.	Gained the right to pass laws for ALL Roman citizens and could form assemblies to nominate all positions in the Republic. It took 200 years to gain all of the rights and gain equality.

## Romans choose a Complex Government

- Based on “rule of law” written laws to protect themselves and their liberty
- Chose a “mixed government” combined strengths of all forms of governments
- Balanced government “separation of powers” no one group has all the power

### The Roman Republic – The System of Checks and Balances

The system was based on balance of interests

<b>Monarchical</b>	<b>Aristocratic</b>	<b>Democratic</b>
<i>2 Consuls + other magistrates</i>	<i>Senate</i>	<i>Assembly of Tribes  Tribune</i>
Directed government and army  Acted as judges  Could issue edicts  Acted as chief priest	Controlled state budget  Could pass laws	Approved/rejected laws  Decided on War  Tribune could veto actions of magistrate  Acted as final court
<b>Basis of power:</b>  possess <i>imperium</i> , the right to rule  need for leadership	<b>Basis of power:</b>  members were richest men in Rome.	<b>Basis of power:</b>  provided most of the soldiers
<b>Limits on power:</b>  one year term  each could veto	<b>Limits on power:</b>  could not control army  needed majority as soldiers.	<b>Limits on power:</b>  Could not suggest laws  often paid as clients by the elite

## Political Structure of the Roman Republic

### Magistrates:

**2 \*consuls**—chief magistrates who presided over the Senate and assemblies, administered legislation, served as generals in military campaigns, and represented Rome in foreign affairs. Consuls could appoint and/or serve as **\*dictator** for up to 6 months in times of emergency. When their term of office was completed, consuls usually governed a province as **\*proconsul**.

**8 \*praetors**—judges in law courts

**2 censors**—elected every 5 years for terms of 1½ years; revised lists of senators and equestrians; conducted census of citizens and property assessments for tax purposes; granted state contracts.

**4 aediles**—supervised public places, public games, and the grain supply in the city of Rome; 2 were required to be plebeians, and the other could come from either order.

**10 tribunes**—had to be plebeian. They could veto the act of any magistrate, convene the Senate and assemblies, and initiate legislation.

**20 quaestors**—administered finances of state treasury and served in various capacities in the provinces; when elected quaestor, a man automatically became eligible for membership in the Senate.

### Senate:

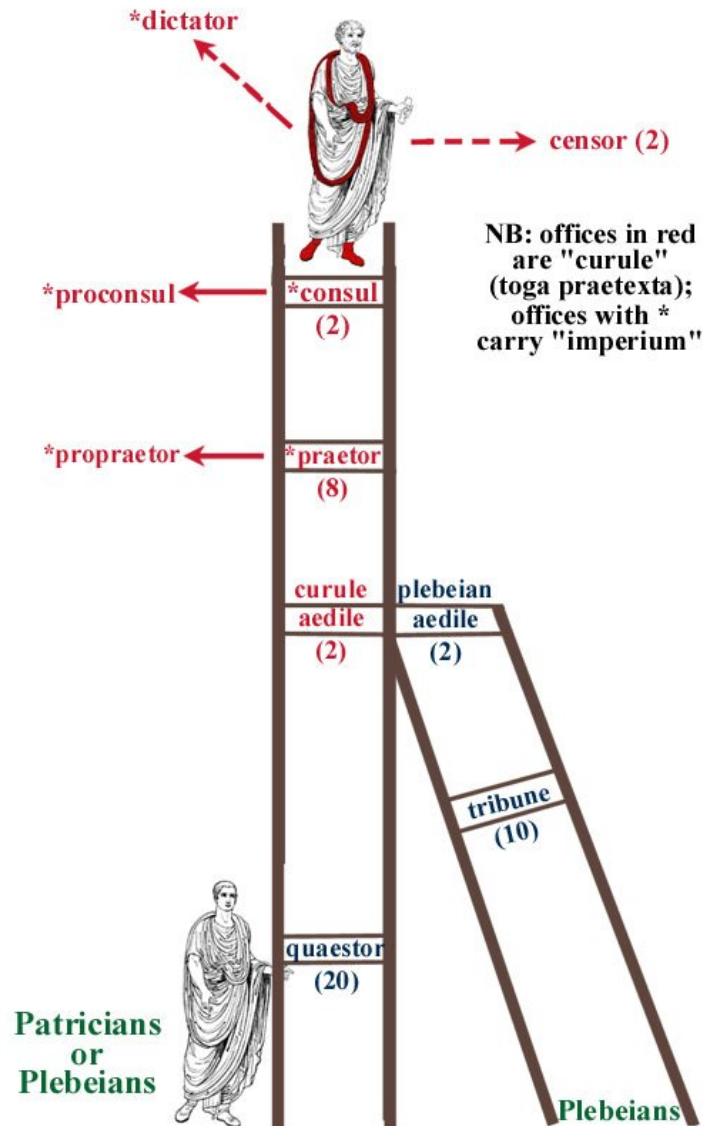
- Composed of 300 to 600 magistrates and ex-magistrates.
- Senate was the chief governmental body because it controlled public finances and foreign affairs, assigned military commands and provinces, and debated and passed decrees that would be submitted to the assemblies for final ratification
- the Republican government was symbolized by the letters **SPQR** (*senatus populus que Romanus*), meaning “the Senate and the Roman people”
- Only the high ranking magistrates had the right to sit on a special ivory folding stool - *sella curulis*. It was a symbol in Roman politics.
- These magistrates also had the right to wear the purple-bordered toga - *toga praetexta*.



### Assemblies:

- composed of all males who were full Roman citizens
- voted yes or no on laws
- opened only to plebeians

## ROMAN CURSUS HONORUM



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).