

Rome and its Expanding Empire

The Life and Times of Caesar and
Cicero (HPAH5046/6046)



How did the Republican empire develop?

Conscious or accidental imperialism?

- Series of defensive campaigns on behalf of allies?
 - Romans themselves had the concept of “just war”.
- Ambition and desire for wealth of individual politicians?
 - Corrupt government and opportunism in the later Republic.
- Are social and political structures a better means of attempting to assess Roman imperialism?
- **Problem of modern scholars inferring motives.**



Structure of Roman politics and patronage

- Proconsular or propraeatorial commands usually only a year or two long.
 - Short time for military glory and conclusion of treaties.
 - Desire for triumphs (and booty).
- Roman leadership of Italy manifested through military service (not taxes).
 - Italians also benefiting from service (e.g., booty).
- “Trickle down” imperialism – not just elite commanders, but *publicani* (often equestrians), traders, soldiers and booty.

Compare the conquest of Spain with the conquest of Gaul. Why was the latter undertaken more rapidly?

Change in politics and the rise of pre-eminent men, like Pompey and Caesar, with extended commands.





Impact on the provinces

Periods (notably 2nd century BC) of some suzerainty rather than direct annexation.

Use of client kings.

Growth of an economic unit through taxation and trade?

Spread of Italian businessmen and *publicani*.