



Rome's Economic Revolution Thursday 15 January 2015, with Philip Kay

A timeline of late Republican Rome

BC	Event
323	Death of Alexander the Great: his empire fragments due to his warring generals. Eventually, significant dynastic Greek kingdoms established in Egypt (under the Ptolemies), Syria (Seleucids), Macedonia (Antigonids) and Pergamum (Attalids).
By 266	Rome fights a series of wars against its Italian neighbours with the result that it dominates all of central and much of southern Italy, mostly through a system of alliances. These Italian allies are theoretically independent, but in practice Rome has the right to collect tribute and to receive military support from them.
264 to 241	Rome fights First Punic War against Carthage (major western Mediterranean power based in modern Tunisia). Romans triumph and gain control of Corsica, Sardinia and part of Sicily (= Rome's first transmarine provinces).
230 to 219	Rome fights victorious wars in Illyria (Adriatic coast of Balkans) and Cisalpine Gaul (northern Italy).
218 to 201	Rome fights Second Punic War against Carthaginians (who are led by their general Hannibal). King Philip V of Macedon allies with Carthage and Romans fight inconclusive First Macedonian War against him.
201	Peace with Carthage after Roman general Scipio defeats Hannibal. Carthage surrenders the rest of Sicily to Rome, together with Spain which is organised into two Roman provinces (Hispania Citerior and Hispania Ulterior). Down to 133 BC, Rome fights periodic wars against various rebellious Spanish tribes.
c. 205-185	<i>Production of Plautus' comedies.</i>
200-194	Rome fights Second Macedonian War. Roman Consul Flaminius defeats Philip V and declares southern Greeks free from rule of Macedonian kings.
192 to 187	Rome fights war against King Antiochus III of Syria who has invaded Greece. Roman forces expel him from Greece and western Asia Minor. <i>In 187 BC, the victorious Roman commander, Manlius Vulso, returns to Rome with considerable booty.</i>
171 to 168	Rome wins Third Macedonian War against King Perseus of Macedon. As a result, Rome (1) abolishes Macedonian kingship and becomes the dominant power in the Aegean; (2) declares Aegean island of Delos to be a tax-free port; and (3) suspends collection of tribute from its own citizens.
c. 150	<i>Shift in type of transport amphorae from 'Graeco-Italic' to 'Dressel 1A'. Marcus Minatius on Delos- earliest known banker there from Italy.</i>

149 to 146	Rome fights Third Punic War against Carthaginians. Carthage destroyed and razed to the ground. Roman Province of Africa established in its territory.
147 to 146	War against Achaean League of southern Greek states. Corinth plundered and destroyed. Achaean League abolished. Creation of Roman province of Macedonia.
144	<i>Building of the Aqua Marcia aqueduct in Rome</i>
133	Kingdom of Pergamum (equivalent to modern-day western Turkey) bequeathed to Rome. Becomes the Roman Province of Asia.
Late 120s	Rome at war in southern Gaul. After Roman victory, the Province of Gallia Narbonensis is created in this region. <i>Building of the Aqua Tepula aqueduct in Rome.</i> <i>Invention of the bilge pump at about this time.</i>
91-89	The Social War: Rome's Italian allies, having been refused Roman citizenship, rebel. Roman citizenship eventually conceded to the allies. <i>Albenga shipwreck carrying c. 10,000 wine amphorae.</i>
89-88	Mithradates of Pontus (equivalent to modern-day northern Turkey) invades Province of Asia and massacres Roman citizens. Delos destroyed.
88-81	Civil war in Rome between rival generals, Sulla and Marius. Sulla becomes Dictator in 82 and again in 81.
73	Insurrection of foreign slaves in Italy under Spartacus.
67	Roman general, Pompey the Great, defeats the pirates who have become endemic in the eastern Mediterranean. The following year, Cicero writes his <i>De Imperio Cnaei Pompeii</i>.
63	Pompey defeats Mithradates and organises new provinces: Cilicia (equates to southern Turkey), Bithynia with Pontus, Syria and Crete.
59	Consulship of Julius Caesar who invades Gaul and then (in 55-54 BC) Britain.
49	Julius Caesar crosses the Rubicon and starts Civil War against Pompey. Caesar becomes Dictator in 46 BC, before being assassinated in 44 BC.
31	Octavian (Caesar's adoptive son) defeats Antony, one of Caesar's generals, and Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt (a Ptolemy), at Actium.
27	Octavian receives the title of Augustus and becomes the first Roman Emperor.

Roman 'Empire' c. 218 BC



ASIA PROVINCIA AND PONTUS c. 90 BC



Cicero, *De Imperio Cnaei Pompeii* 19:

Nam tum, cum in Asia res magnas permulti amiserant, scimus Romae solutione impedita fidem concidisse. Non enim possunt una in civitate multi rem ac fortunas amittere, ut non plures secum in eandem trahant calamitatem. A quo periculo prohibete rem publicam, et mihi credite, id quod ipsi videtis: haec fides atque haec ratio pecuniarum, quae Romae, quae in foro versatur, implicata est cum illis pecuniis Asiaticis et cohaeret; ruere illa non possunt, ut haec non eodem labefacta motu concidant.

For then, when very many people lost large fortunes in Asia, we know that there was a collapse of credit at Rome, because repayments were interrupted. It is indeed impossible for many individuals in a single state to lose their property and fortunes without involving still greater numbers in their ruin. Defend the Republic from this danger; and believe me when I tell you -what you see for yourselves—that this credit and this system of monies (*pecuniae*), which operates at Rome in the Forum, is bound up in, and is linked with,

those Asian monies (*pecuniae Asiaticae*); the loss of the one inevitably undermines the other and causes its collapse.

Indemnities & Booty

Indemnities Received by the Romans & Booty

- Indemnities: third century BC = 5,000 talents
- Indemnities: 201–152 BC = 27,280 talents
- Booty: 200–157 BC = 18,250 talents (+?)

Monetary Equivalences

- 4 sestertii (HS) = 1 denarius
- 6,000 denarii = 1 talent

Purchasing Power

- 1 slave = 400 denarii
- 1 legion's pay for one year = 100 talents
- 1 aqueduct (Aqua Marcia) = 7,500 talents

Polybius 9. 10. 11:

τὸ μὲν οὖν τὸν χρυσὸν καὶ τὸν ἄργυρον ἀθροίζειν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἴσως ἔχει τινὰ λόγον· οὐ γὰρ οἶον τε τῶν καθόλου πραγμάτων ἀντιποιησάσθαι μὴ οὐ τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις ἀδυναμίαν ἐνεργασαμένους, σφίσι δὲ τὴν τοιαύτην δύναμιν ἐτοιμάσαντας.

There was, therefore, perhaps a certain logic in appropriating all the gold and silver for themselves; for it was impossible for them to aim at world domination unless they deprived other peoples of such resources and acquired them for themselves.

Plautus, *Persa* 433-6:

*Mirum quin tibi ego crederem, ut idem mihi
facere quod partim faciunt argentarii:
ubi quid credideris, citius extemplo a foro
fugiunt quam ex porta ludis cum emissust lepus.*

Are you surprised that I wouldn't trust you to do the same to me as some bankers do? If you entrust them with anything, they are out of the forum faster than a hare from its cage door at the games.

Plautus, *Curculio* 371-4:

*Beatus videor. Subduxi ratiunculam,
quantum aeris mihi sit quantumque alieni siet.
Dives sum, si non reddo eis quibus debeo.
Si reddo illis quibus debeo, plus alieni est.*

I seem to be blessed. I've drawn up a little account to work out how much money I have and how much I've borrowed. I'm rich, as long as I don't repay those who I owe. If I do repay my creditors, there's more around to borrow.

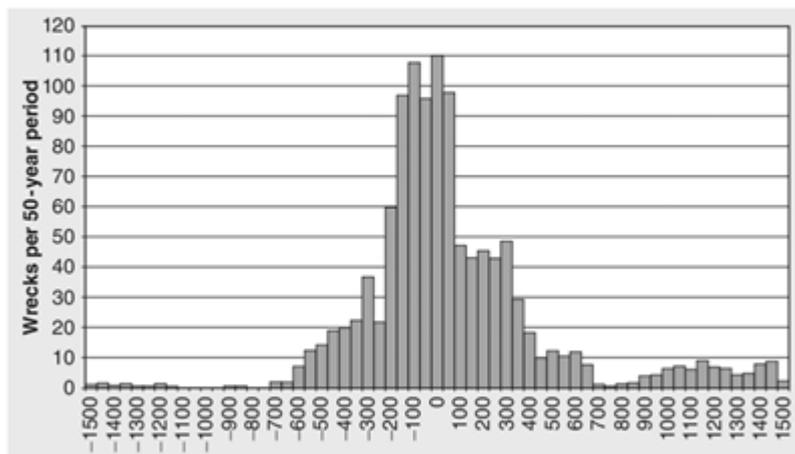
 Pliny, *Historia Naturalis* 33. 138 :

Populus Romanus stipem spargere coepit Sp. Postumio Q. Marcio cos.; tanta abundantia pecuniae erat.

The Roman people began to spray their cash around in the consulship of Spurius Postumus and Quintus Marcus. So great was the abundance of money.

Mediterranean Shipwrecks

- By half century using probability per annum



Data from Parker, A.J. (1992). *Ancient Shipwrecks of the Mediterranean and the Roman Provinces*. London. Reproduced from Wilson, A.I. (2002). *Approaches to quantifying Roman trade*, in Bowman, A.K. and Wilson, A.I. (eds.) *Quantifying the Roman Economy*. Oxford.

Types of Amphorae

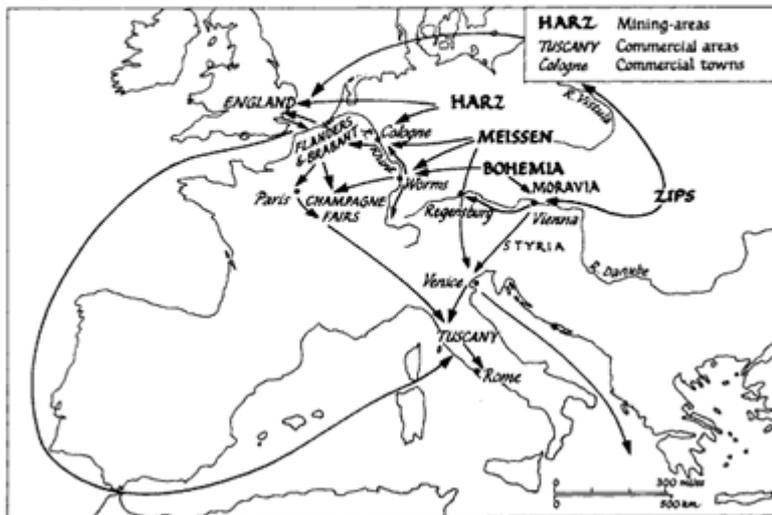


Graeco-Italic amphora.



Dressel 1A amphora.

Movement of European Silver in C13 AD



Italian population breakdown (estimated)

	200 BC	150 BC	100 BC	50 BC
Slaves	190,000	490,000	800,000	1,200,000
Free population				
Urban	450,000	700,000	825,000	1,200,000
Rural	2,552,000	3,833,000	4,285,000	3,445,000
Total	3,192,000	5,023,000	5,910,000	5,845,000

	200 BC	150 BC	100 BC	50 BC
Slaves	6%	10%	14%	21%
Free population				
Urban	14%	14%	14%	20%
Rural	80%	76%	72%	59%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%