

Characterization of Political Transitions: Lessons from the Collapse of the Roman Dynasty, Republic, Roman Empire

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Abstract

Political transitions generally refer to political change from one order of leadership or type of government to another. A political transition is the act or process of changing and evolving of one form of government to a different type of government². The focus of the transition usually is to present a different order in politics. Most of the time transitions are chaotic and seek to empower people to ensure their choices, voice and will is heard and responded to appropriately by the government of the day. The background idea is that the Roman Republic has been projected by several historians and scholars as a stable and organized institution. One would then automatically expect that the transitions were equally orderly. Rome went through several transitions from a Monarchy to Republic and later Empire. These transitional periods are the focus of this paper. This paper seeks to show the true character of these transitions. This paper seeks to examine the character of the political transitions in Roman republic and establish whether the transitions had anything to do with the decline of the Roman Empire. The paper attempts to consider whether these transitions were unstable or seamless. The period under inquiry in this paper encompasses the Roman Kingdom (753 BCE–509 BCE), Roman Republic (509 BCE–27 BCE) and Roman Empire (27 BCE–476 CE) until the fall of the western empire.

Introduction

Scholars and historians alike are not in agreement on the exact character of the transformation of Rome. This calls for adopting different theoretical and conceptual framework for the study of Rome. This paper will adopt the following conceptual ideas. First, some scholars who study Rome take a revisionist view. Revisionists consider the emergence of new facts on what is commonly known as a historical event and suggest an alteration of the view to that event³. Their theory begins by questioning historical records which may

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² Definition of “transition” from the **Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus** © Cambridge University Press

³ Guy Middleton, *The Fall of the Western Roman Empire: What led to the collapse of Rome: Ancient History of Modern Myths* (2017 Cambridge University Press). pp 182-212.

including the validity of an event. In regard to Rome, some question its rise and fall while others theorize the radical break between periods of the Roman Empire in the history of the Modern east and West⁴. Even with the elaborate work of Edward Gibbon (1946)⁵ historians still disagree on the rise of Roman Republic as well as the causes of the collapse of the Roman Empire. Gibbon is one of the leading scholars who has contributed greatly to the narration of the decline of Roman Empire. Gibbon⁶ argues that Rome's progressive loss of civil and military capacity was taken over by the Barbarian mercenaries who were recruited to fill a vacuum left by the failure of Rome to defend itself. Since nothing lasts forever, the question should be why Rome's dominance lasted as long as it did.

The second argument is that the decline of the Roman Republic and Empire was inevitable. The declinist argument consists of different recognizable rhetoric⁷. To begin with the declinist view considers a phenomenon or group of phenomena as illustrative of the seriousness of contemporary decline. Another view is that it is important to identify an agent a causal role that spurred the observed decay, in addition to explaining what was wrong in the decline narratives. Yet other declinist view suggests that there must be a proposed time period in which the agent of decline appeared and became entrenched to cause the deterioration however gradual⁸. The idea is to trace the decline by presenting unfavorable contrast between contemporary narratives and the world as it existed prior to appearance of decline. In sum, there is always an agent in any transition whether internal or external. In this paper the agent of the rise or and decline will be contextualized to offer better understanding of the transitions.

⁴ *Ibid* pp. 182-212

⁵ Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J.B. Bury with an Introduction by W.E.H. Lecky (New York: Fred de Fau and Co., 1946), Vol. 1 &2.

⁶ *Ibid*

⁷ Andrew Murphy, "Augustine and the Rhetoric of Roman Decline". *History of Political Thought*, Volume 26 Issue No 4. (2005) pp 586-606.

⁸ *Ibid*

Many factors that led to the transitions from one political order to the other. There are four themes that can be considered as central to the rise and decline of the Roman Empire⁹. In the context of the Empire they include barbarian invasion, poor performance of the Roman armies, Christianization leading to the growth of the Church and lastly the failure to accommodate or adjust political order of governance in the growing empire¹⁰. These relate to the decline of the empire. This paper will focus on the failure to accommodate or adjust the political order while also acknowledging that all the other factors did contribute to the eventual collapse of the Roman State.

Transition from Monarchy to Republic

Rome's era as a monarchy ended in 509 BCE with the overthrow of its seventh and final King, Lucius Tarquinius Superbus¹¹. It was as a result of internal revolution that Rome underwent regime change¹². The change from monarchy to republic was gradual and based on a series of events¹³. First, it all began with the structure that a king, or at least a sole ruler of some sort, was replaced by a governmental system in which power was distributed amongst a wider aristocratic group¹⁴. This was not easy since what the aristocratic group and the institutional reality complicated the order that was established under the monarchy system and was to be repeated in the Republic¹⁵. The composition of the aristocratic group at that point in time remains open to question. Second, the rape of Lucretius by the King was one of the reasons for the decline of the

⁹ Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J.B. Bury with an Introduction by

W.E.H. Lecky (New York: Fred de Fau and Co., 1946), pp 112-114

¹⁰ *Ibid* pp 122-130

¹¹ Oakley, S. P. "Early Rome - T. J. Cornell: *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars.*" *The Classical Review* 47, no. 2 (1997): pp 359

¹² Glinister, Fay. "Politics, Power, and the Divine: The Rex Sacrorum and the Transition from Monarchy to

Republic at Rome." *Antichthon* 51 (2017): pp 61-69

¹³ Anthony Kamm, *The Romans: An Introduction* 2nd Ed (New York, 2008). pp. 12-16

¹⁴ *Ibid* p. 17

¹⁵ *Ibid*

rule of Tarquinius Superbus and his son Sextus¹⁶. Following this ordeal there was the rise of ‘noble’ men such as Lucius Junius Brutus who strongly opposed kingship and exceeded his constitutional brief of being an Interrex.

The behavior by Brutus displeased the people in Rome and therefore he could not be trusted with the power of a King¹⁷. The scenario that presented itself was on the one hand a dislike for Kings and on the other hand an interrex who could not be trusted. This gave the basis for the idea that power should be in the hands of more than one person of the aristocratic group later known as the plebeians and patricians¹⁸.

Third, it has been argued that there was a belief that the King was more vulnerable when the poor and needy were idle¹⁹. This gave rise to several ideas on how to keep the people busy. For instance, the idea for planning of the great temple to Jupiter on the Capitoline hill are attributed to Tarquinius Priscus is one of such initiatives. Also, the King would isolate those from the loyal lineage and those fit for military service. He would then direct to carry out free public works²⁰. The idea of insisting on forced work by the poor was seen as an encroachment into the liberty of the Romans. It definitely did not sit well with all of them and contributed to the negative view of Kings³⁷. Fourth, the fall of Kings is attributed to Religion which was at play in the decline of the monarchy system toward formation of the Republic²¹. The place of religion cannot be ignored as a factor for these transitions. Fifth, there was a conspiracy to bring back the dethroned King to power which was called the Tarquinian Conspiracy. This led to the use of “the Republic” as the name for the on-

¹⁶ *Ibid* p. 33

¹⁷ *Ibid* p 34

¹⁸ Oakley, S. P. “Early Rome - T. J. Cornell: The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars.” *The Classical Review* 47, no. 2 (1997): pp 361

¹⁹ Richard W. Mass “Political Society and Cicero’s Ideal Stat” *Scholarly Incursion, Historical Methods, Volume 45, No 2, (2012). Routledge Taylor & Francis Group* pp 79

²⁰ *Ibid* pp 81-83

²¹ Glinister, Fay. “Politics, Power, and the Divine: The Rex Sacrorum and the Transition from Monarchy to Republic at Rome.” *Antichthon* 51 (2017): pp 68

monarchical period of Roman history from the expulsion of the kings in 509 BCE to the Battle of Actium in 31 CE⁴⁰.

The Roman Republic

When the Roman Republic was properly constituted the Government it was organized around religious and philosophical ideas²². The *Auctoritas* was the power composed within a group of distinguished people. The word *auctoritas* applied to *auctor* specific function in the political sphere²³. Cicero is the main proponent of the idea of *auctoritas*. He discusses this subject in the context of the role of a priestly college in order to address a specific political situation²⁴. The priestly *auctoritas* was considered the main pillar in the foundation of the Republican idea of religion. The Priest exerted a level of influence that other centers could not manage. Their actions had strong political implications but can be justified as actions that have religious significance.

The system of governance under the Republic according to Polybius²⁵ was divided into three categories. First, the consul which was concerned with the conduct of war and operations the consul needed both the support of the senate and the citizens. Second, the Senate, which decided whether to approve the consul plans, whether to retain his service at the end of his tenure or terminates in the end. Thirdly, the People who were respected and honored the senate in every aspect. Polybius²⁶ asserts the importance of a mixed system as the sure way to generate accord for the republic in war and in peace and to achieve the highest good for society. With the gradual decline of monarchy in Rome the role of the King was taken up by two consuls of equal power the patrician and

²² Santangelo, Federico. "PRIESTLY AUCTORITAS IN THE ROMAN REPUBLIC." *The Classical Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (2013): pp. 743–763.

²³ Santangelo, Federico. "Priestly Auctoritas in the Roman Republic." *The Classical Quarterly* Volume 63, Issue No. 2 (2013): pp. 743–763.

²⁴ *Ibid* pp 753-757

²⁵ Curtis, Michael. *The Great Political Theories: Volume 1*. New York: HarperPerennial ModernClassics, 2008. pp. 124-126

²⁶ *Ibid*

plebeian²⁷. This readily presents a challenge for governance when power is in the hands of two people. However, the two held together the Republic²⁸.

Cicero describes the transformation from King to Republic as being a series of events which had a cyclical character. The ruling power of the state (*res publica*), like a ball, was grabbed from the hands of the Kings by tyrants, then from tyrants by aristocrats or the people, and from aristocrats again by an oligarchical faction or a tyrant, and as such there was no government that maintained itself for a long time²⁹.

The transition from monarchy to the republic produced a mixed constitution which adopted the three forms of government: the aristocratic, democratic and monarchical models³⁰. Government could therefore take more than one form as opposed to what was suggested by Aristotle that is, tyranny (for preservation of Kings), oligarchy (sovereignty of few for wellbeing of many) and democracy (for interests of the poor)³¹. The mixed constitution is the only form of government capable of preserving a political society over the long term, but not just any mix will do³². Polybius interestingly argues that every constitutional order contains a vice engendered in it and cannot be separated from that vice³³. Cicero thought was profound such that, Machiavelli would echo many years later, that all kinds of government are not perfect and are indeed defective. That the idea of three arms of government being qualified as

²⁷ Morley, Neville. *The Roman Empire: Roots of Imperialism*. London; New York: Pluto Press, 2010.

²⁸ *Ibid*

²⁹ Curtis, Michael. *The Great Political Theories: Volume 1*. New York: HarperPerennial ModernClassics, 2008. pp.

³⁰ Richard Alston, *Aspects of Roman History, AD 14-117*. (London 2002) Routledge. pp 115

³¹ Curtis, Michael. *The Great Political Theories: Volume 1*. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2008. pp.

³² Wood, Neal. *Cicero's Social and Political Thought*. University of California Press, 1988. pp 163-168

³³ *Ibid* pp 173

ideal is short-lived since they contain in themselves viciousness seen in most governments in transition to democracy³⁴.

Transition from Republic to Empire

To understand this transition it would be critical to understand the Roman society generally³⁵. The interactions between Rome and the Empire offers a good understanding of Roman society³⁶ Rome began to become a super power in the region by conquering territory by engaging just war principles³⁷ The spark that ignited the metamorphosis of Rome from an a normal state to a Mediterranean hegemony can be traced back to a small incident which led to the Punic Wars. The first Punic war (264–241 BC) was a small accident occasioned by a criminal gang that had its enterprise in the Greek city of Massena at the tip of Sicily³⁸. It is argued that there was a treaty that was entered into between Carthage and Rome leading to the end of the first Punic War³⁹. The Second Punic war (218–201 BC) is most remembered for the Carthaginian general Hannibal's crossing of the Alps in Rome⁴⁰. This consolidated the resolve in the Republic which led to the tendency to seek hegemony. The Third Punic War (149–146 BC) involved an extended siege of Carthage, which marked the end of the City through utter destruction.

The Second aspect touches on several generals who attempted to introduce radical reform in Rome's army. For instance Gaius Marius (156-86BCE) who was not initially a soldier introduced military reforms. The other reforms were introduced by Sulla (138-78 BCE) who reorganized the constitutional order

³⁴ Barlow, J.J. "The Fox and the Lion: Machiavelli Replies to Cicero." *History of Political Thought* Volume 20, Issue No 4 (1999): 629

³⁵ Hankins, James. "Exclusivist Republicanism and the Non-Monarchical Republic." *Political Theory* Volume 38, Issue No. 4 (2010): pp 452–82

³⁶ Anthony Kamm, *The Romans: An Introduction* 2nd Ed (New York, 2008). pp. 57

³⁷ G. A. HARRER, "Cicero on Peace and War," *The Classical Journal*, Volume 14, Issue 1, 1918, pp. 26-38

³⁸ T. J. Cornell. *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars*. London (1995). pp 22-33

³⁹ *Ibid* pp 40

⁴⁰ *Ibid*

and placed power back to the upper class in society⁴¹. He virtually nullified the traditional influence of the tribunes of the people by increasing the membership of senate. Sulla is also famous for introducing the clarity on the legal system by establishing a clear distinction between criminal and civil law⁴². These reforms introduced by Sulla brought back what appears to be an absolute monarchy type of government. Several years after the death of Sulla, Crassus, Pompey and Julius Caesar who ruled as what was referred to as the first triumvirate. Thirdly, the government in the Roman Republic which had designed checks and balances became characterized by political strife⁴³. General Gaius Marius and Lucius Cornelius Sulla demonstrated that a successful general could control Rome solely with the army leading to a militarized Republic. Maintaining and controlling army in the Republic, being an expensive affair, was a source of political strife between the different arms of government⁴⁴. General Gaius Julius Caesar (100BCE to 44BCE) exploited the idea of ruling Rome with the army to the greatest extent possible⁴⁵. He was able to conquer Gaul and Pompey which led him to being declared dictator for life.

The Rise of the Roman Empire

To maintain control, Rome had to preserve its military values while instilling pacifism and submissiveness in its new subjects⁴⁶. To maintain control several things were done to ensure submissions by the conquered. First, the conquered assimilated into Roman society. Many became citizens and, as such, enjoyed rights and protections⁴⁷. Second, the Rome no longer had to be so violent with

⁴¹ Curtis, Michael. *The Great Political Theories: Volume 1*. New York: HarperPerennial ModernClassics, 2008. pp.

⁴² Frost, Peter. "The Roman State and Genetic Pacification." *Evolutionary Psychology*, (July 2010)

⁴³ *Ibid*

⁴⁴ Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J.B. Bury with an Introduction by W.E.H. Lecky (New York: Fred de Fau and Co., 1946), Vol. 1. pp 144-166

⁴⁵ *Ibid*

⁴⁶ Henderson, M. M. "Tiberius Gracchus and the Failure of the Roman Republic." *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, Issue No. 31 (1968): 55-61.

⁴⁷ Frost, Peter. "The Roman State and Genetic Pacification." *Evolutionary Psychology*, (July 2010)

its subjects. Piracy largely disappeared following the battle of Actium in 31 BC. After the emperor Hadrian (117-138 AD), there were no new provinces to pacify and fewer rebellions in the older ones⁴⁸. Third, a profound behavioral change was spreading through the population. People were less willing to become soldiers than earlier generations had been, and many would pay gold or cut off their thumbs to avoid military service⁴⁹. A new kind of Rome was emerging, one less interested in violence and more submissive to authority. In fact, the new Romans were coming to see arrogant, aggressive conduct as wrong, even wicked.

Lessons from the Decline of the Roman Empire

There have been several attempts in the scholarly works seeking to perpetuate a narrative that there was an issue with Roman liberties that led to the collapse of Rome. This is supported by the fact that the Empire became so big for control. The provinces conquered in Italy, Spain and Mediterranean Africa, Greece, and the Hellenistic east as far as Euphrates constituted an empire too great for the Citizen to control without losing the capacity of managing the Military and civil societies⁵⁰. The *cui bono* question is who benefits from the narrative of the collapse or decline of the Roman Republic? It is difficult to find an agreement among scholars on which verb to use best to describe the end of the influence of the Roman Empire. In addition, dating the decline of the Empire is difficult since it was not a onetime event, it was gradual, and varied reasons could be contributed to it⁵¹. Instead of considering the question of decline which demonstrates negativity, poverty, and weakness the emphasis should be on the positive, rich and active period which presents valuable lessons⁵². The school of late antiquity adopts the definitive period for the decline to stretch from the middle of the third to the end of 19th Century CE⁵³.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*

⁴⁹ *Ibid*

⁵⁰ *Ibid* p 609

⁵¹ Brown, Peter. "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity." *Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971): 80–91

⁵² *Ibid* 97

⁵³ Guy Middleton, *The Fall of the Western Roman Empire: What led to the collapse of Rome: Ancient History of Modern Myths* (2017 Cambridge University Press). pp 182-212.

Such expansive periods readily introduce a challenge since then the consideration is how factual it could be in the context of the Eastern and Western Rome. Admittedly deciding what is meant by collapse is a daunting task.

For purpose of this paper we adopt the three ways to consider dating the collapse or fall of the empire⁵⁴. First, the fact that the Empire was shrinking from maximum extent that had been achieved under Septimius Severus (193-211 BCE). Second, Rome is considered as not having political might or being the most powerful state in the Mediterranean. Third, Rome as not being able to rule Italy the home ground of the Roman Empire. These three alternatives bring the dates from 410 BCE to 476⁵⁵. What is more attractive is to consider the end of key institutions such as the Roman army in the West. This may include Emperors such as Romulus Augustus one of the youngest Emperors who lacked control over the entirety Rome. He is argued to be the last Emperor in the Western Roman Empire⁵⁶ It is hard to hinge the collapse of Rome to a single cause or event. It was a long and rough process through a series of events some connected, and others interconnected, personalities, and other internal and external factors⁵⁷. One of the factors leading to the disintegration of the empire was existence of a critical fault-line between the imperial government and the interest of the regional elites. This was unseen but eventually uncovered if the ties binding Rome together⁵⁸. Some of the reason attributed to the decline of the empire are firstly, the empire was big and impossible for one man to govern so power was shared in one way or the other with the pyramid with the emperor at the top. The emperor relied on senatorial aristocracy as well as on his household. When the central institution of power failed the increased bureaucracy to cope with administration was not helpful,

⁵⁴ *Ibid*

⁵⁵ *Ibid*

⁵⁶ *Ibid*

⁵⁷ Brown, Peter. "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity." *Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971):

⁵⁸ Guy Middleton, *The Fall of the Western Roman Empire: What led to the collapse of Rome: Ancient History of Modern Myths* (2017 Cambridge University Press). pp 182-212.

instead the provinces created their own armies and leaders⁵⁹⁶⁰ The Empire was prone to fragmentation and division simply because no one could rule it alone.

Secondly, the relationship between the Empire and the cities can be seen as a relatively harmonious one. But around 200 BCE changes occurred which ultimately led to the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West⁶¹. Some of the changes include attacks on the Empire by Germans, financial resources from the cities were lessened and the process of centralization was not effective operationally among others. Access to the law became impossible for the poor inhabitants of the Empire because of bribes and charges demanded for services. The unity of the legal system was pierced by the head of departments obtaining legal authority from members of the departments⁶². Christian communities also founded their own circles of relationships. The growth of the Empire offers a model which was ultimately dysfunctional due to the incoherence of the state in the late antiquity. This dominance and integration which was cascaded downwards to the entire Empire that led to the collapse of the Roman Empire⁶³.

Thirdly, control of the economic resources was at play in the Roman Empire. The structural foundation of the economic conditions in Rome were family. Domination and aristocracy have been aptly demonstrated since the participation in decision making by the Magistrates, patrons, grown up sons of the family can be seen as being very essential⁶⁴. There was a good appreciation of the role foreigners played in state development as a citizen. The economic arrangement that was to go with the governance structure did work initially.

⁵⁹ Brown, Peter. "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity." *Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971):

⁶⁰ _91

⁶¹ Martin, Jochen. "The Roman Empire: Domination and Integration." *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics (JITE) / Zeitschrift Für Die Gesamte Staatswissenschaft* Volume 151, Issue No. 4 (1995): pp 717.

⁶² Wickham, Chris, "The Other Transition. From the Ancient World to Feudalism," *Past & Present*, Oxford University Press, Issue No. 103 (May, 1984), pp. 13

⁶³ *Ibid* pp 30

⁶⁴ Martin, Jochen. "The Roman Empire: Domination and Integration." *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics (JITE) / Zeitschrift Für Die Gesamte Staatswissenschaft* Volume 151, Issue No. 4 (1995): pp 719

The collection of taxes relied on the convention that existed prior to the Roman conquest. This was to become a challenge because it could not respond to all the dynamics of as the Empire extended its dominance.

Fourth, the Roman Empire is portrayed as being orderly which is critical to appreciation of the effect of dominance⁶⁵. The Senators and Governors were indeed central to the administration of justice and command of the military in the Provinces⁶⁶. The structure of the administration was not expanded by the Emperors to respond to the hegemonic tendencies which was to become one of the fatal flaws leading to the collapse of Roman Empire. The relationship between Rome and the provinces led to a build-up to the expansion tendencies without adequately adjusting the governance structure⁶⁷.

Fifth, the role of the Emperor which was central to the functioning of the Empire did not adequately respond to the increased governance needs. There is a good appreciation by the author that the Emperor's control over the affairs and festivities of the cities would not be maintained successfully in the context of increased number of cities and provinces⁶⁸. It would become unmanageable to expect that permission for all constructions would be given by the Emperor⁶⁹.

Six, the increasing size of the Roman Republic and Empire made tax collection and management of the Empire very difficult. The Roman Empire grew to about 2 million square miles, and its population rose to about 54 million⁷⁰. The size of the Roman state administration tended to lag behind of the empire, and the republican administration had too few magistrates to govern the provinces

⁶⁵ *Ibid* p 720

⁶⁶ Wickham, Chris, "The Other Transition. From the Ancient World to Feudalism," Past & Present, Oxford University Press, Issue No. 103 (May, 1984), pp. 13

⁶⁷ *Ibid* 16

⁶⁸ Martin, Jochen. "The Roman Empire: Domination and Integration." *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics (JITE) / Zeitschrift Für Die Gesamte Staatswissenschaft* Volume 151, Issue No. 4 (1995): pp 719

⁶⁹ *Ibid* 721

⁷⁰ Temin, Peter. "The Economy of the Early Roman Empire." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* Volume 20, Issue No. 1 (2006): 133-151

adequately. The size of the Roman state administration grew substantially under the Empire⁷¹. Under Augustus there were about 150 civil servants in Rome and 150 senatorial and equestrian administrators with small staffs of public slaves in the provinces⁷² Even then its ability to control the provinces was limited due to poor communications and its small size⁷³

Lastly, one of the famous debates over the collapse of the Roman Empire involves Religion. The question is whether Christianity destroyed Rome. Or did Rome destroy itself by pacifying its subjects while more and more unpacified barbarians pressed on its borders? The answer probably lies somewhere in-between. All State societies are prone to collapse because their existence depends on the State's ability to repress religious and communal violence⁷⁴. On the one hand, the State could no longer hold down the potential for religious violence that still existed among its citizenry and on the other, it could no longer keep out unpacified populations that lie beyond its borders⁷⁵. This new social environment reduces economic output, thus worsening the initial instability and causing a downward spiral that may spin out of control.

Conclusion

While the ideal state according to Cicero was everlasting, it is not self-sustaining⁷⁶. Its preservation depends on three pillars: justice, a mixed constitution, and an active citizenry. The mixed constitution—the best type of *res publica*—thus comes to be seen not as the ideal state itself, but a key real-

⁷¹ *Ibid*

⁷² Slootjes, Daniëlle. "Local Elites and Power in the Roman World: Modern Theories and Models." *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 42, no. 2 (2011): pp 235-249

⁷³ Kiser, Edgar, and Danielle Kane. "The Perils of Privatization: How the Characteristics of Principals Affected Tax Farming in the Roman Republic and Empire." *Social Science History* Volume 31, Issue No 2 (2007): 191-212

⁷⁴ Frost, Peter. "The Roman State and Genetic Pacification." *Evolutionary Psychology*, (July 2010)

⁷⁵ *Ibid*

⁷⁶ Richard W. Mass "Political Society and Cicero's Ideal Stat" *Scholarly Incursion, Historical Methods*, Volume 45, No 2, (2012). Routledge Taylor & Francis Group pp. 79-92

world mechanism needed to approach that ideal⁷⁷. Rome started as a Kingdom and developed into a power sharing nobility only to fall back to individual rule which was untenable in practice due to the expansive jurisdiction. Hence the old adage Rome was not built in a day. Towards the end there existed a tension between managing the empire in its expansive state and local problems. Also, the challenge between the internal and external problems were real. Such problems beset many Empires and in the absence of failure to acknowledge the instability of expansion, change, adaptation, the eventuality is collapse. The lesson of Rome is often taken as a warning about collapse that could happen to any state. Rome is a useful example of collapse because it teaches us that while historical change happens, modern attempts to explain it can involve seriously different interpretations of the same evidence. Even with textual history and contemporary sources commenting on what was happening, in addition to archaeological evidence, Rome's collapse is still debated in terms of whether it even happened, whether there was a clean break, or whether we should think instead of a period and process of transition and transformation. One may therefore suggest avail more evidence. Having more evidence does not necessarily make it any easier to understand a collapse it can make it much harder. The way we interpret the evidence and the stories we tell with it are also very much affected by our current concerns. It should be obvious that, across such a large territory, change took many forms and that many people, processes, and events were responsible. In examining other collapses, recalling the complexity of what happened in the Roman Empire caution should be taken against simple or simplistic explanations and characterizations of what was happening. Seeing as there was no apocalyptic collapse of empire that wiped the slate clean or killed everyone off, a great degree of continuity is assured, but that does not mean there was no imperial collapse, or that such a collapse was insignificant historically, even if it was a steady erosion of imperial power that took place in the Rome over a century.

⁷⁷ Curtis, Michael. *The Great Political Theories: Volume 1*. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2008. pp. 102-146

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