ANCIENT ROME:
FROM REPUBLIC TO EMPIRE

ORIGINS OF ROME:

- **Legend:** Founded in 753 BCE by Romulus and Remus
  
  Romulus and Remus were twin brothers. Their parents abandoned them when they were just babies and put into a basket that was placed into the River Tiber. The basket ran aground and the twins were discovered by a she wolf. The wolf nursed the babies for a short time before they were found by a shepherd. The shepherd then brought up the twins. The twins became shepherds and was said that they founded Rome.

- **Geography:** In the curve of the Tiber river, near the center of the Italian peninsula, midway between the Alps and Italy's southern tip and midpoint of the Mediterranean Sea.

WHO WERE THE FIRST ROMANS?

- **Latins** – built the first settlement and called as the first Romans
- **Greeks** – (750 – 600 BC) established colonies along southern Italy and Sicily; became prosperous and commercially active
- **Etruscans** – from northern Italy; skilled metalworkers and engineers; strongly influenced the development of Roman civilization such as in writing and architecture

THE EARLY REPUBLIC:

- Ruled by an Etruscan kings who organized the settlements into a city, the first temples and public centers.
- Tarquin the Proud, the last Etruscan king in 509 BC, driven out of his power by the Romans and declared never to be ruled again by a king.
- Born the republic (res publica) which means “public affair”

THE REPUBLIC:

- A form of government in which power rests with citizens who have the right to vote for their leaders. Citizenship with voting rights was granted only to free-born male citizens.
- Different groups of Romans struggled for power- Patricians and Plebeians

EMPIRE:

- After Julius Caesar’s death, Mark Anthony governed the eastern provinces while Octavian, the west in Rome.
- Anthony and Cleopatra plotted against Octavian and in the Battle of Actium, Anthony was defeated.
- Octavian became the unchallenged leader in 31 BCE and renamed himself *Augustus* (“exalted one”)
- He also kept the title *imperator* (“supreme military commander”) origin of the word emperor.
- By the time of Octavian’s death in AD 14, Rome had acquired a political stability and a commercial success unsurpassed in its history.