

# KMUNC Historical Crisis: The Fall of Rome

The quote: "Rome wasn't built in a day" is certainly true, but have you ever considered the opposite? "Rome didn't fall in a day" also reigns the due to the tumultuous events throughout Roman politics, culture, and religion. Despite this, the contributions in art, architecture, literature, and philosophy proved Rome to be an excellent empire. As delegates, you have the opportunity to give Rome a second chance; to save it from outside threats, like the Vandals and Goths, as well as inside threats that corrupted the government. This crisis begins in 475 CE, roughly 1 year before the official end of Rome. You have one year to stop the invasion of the barbaric tribes, or let Rome fall to pieces.

## Early Timeline:

- 753 BCE: Rome is founded
- 510 BCE: Rome becomes a republic
  - First treaty between Rome and Carthage
- 498 BCE: Rome defeats the Latins
- 396 BCE: Camillus is hailed dictator of Rome
- 390 BCE: Gauls sack Rome
- 389-380 BCE: Camillus is hailed dictator of Rome again and city is rebuilt
- 264-241 BCE: First Punic War, Rome acquires Sicily from Carthage
- 218-201 BCE: Second Punic War
- 146 BCE: Rome is no longer a Republic
- 58 BCE: First triumvirate is formed, Pompey, Crassus, and Julius Caesar
- 45 BCE: Julius Caesar becomes the first dictator of Rome
- 44 BCE: Julius Caesar is assassinated
- 31 BCE: Naval battle of Actium
  - Octavian (Caesar Augustus) becomes the first emperor
- ~33 CE: Jesus is crucified

- 64 CE: Great fire of Rome
- 79 CE: Eruption of Mount Vesuvius in Pompeii
- 96-180 CE: Pax Romana period
- 285 CE: Rome is split by Emperor Diocletian and moved capital to Byzantium
- 305 CE: Constantine is the first Christian emperor
- 315 CE: Christianity is legalized in Rome
- 324-337 CE: Rome is no longer split

Though every event listed contributed to the fall of Rome, the next 100 years are crucial to Rome's survival. Throughout the late 300s, Rome was at war with Persia, the Goths, the Vandals, the Huns, and Britain. Constant fighting and tension caused many people within the barbaric tribes to move towards Rome's borders, thus referring to the "Great Migration." The Vandals led an assault through Rome that lasted for over two days, looting the city of anything valuable. To keep up with all fighting, exchanged land for military services. Soon enough, land began to run out, leaving Rome with less surface area and even less soldiers. Generals were advised to protect the inner city of Rome, thus leaving the outskirts unmanned, perfect for an invasion.

The Roman conquests for land slowly grinded to a halt, consequently slowing down the economy. Rome strongly relied on agriculture and slaves. Without gaining new land, slaves could not be captured. Without slaves to do jobs such as farming, mining, and construction, the empire could not progress. The question of loyalty also came into play. Roman citizens showed loyalty to emperors with military power. By entrusting a sole person with power over not only the senate, but also the military, could be a recipe for disaster. For example, Julius Caesar easily became dictator because of his military power.

In 475 CE, Romulus Augustus is named the new emperor. His father, Orestes, was the commander - in - chief for the Roman army, easily overpowered the actual emperor (Julius Nepos) and gave the title to his son. The Roman people strongly disliked this because of their fondness of Julius Nepos, and refused to acknowledge

Romulus. This is the last current event that has occurred. As mentioned earlier, you have approximately one year before the expected invasion of Odoacer and the Goths.

## Key Players:

1. Romulus Augustus
2. Orestes
3. Odoacer
4. Alaric
5. Gaiseric
6. Julius Nepos
7. Consul (advisor to emperor)
8. Plebeian (spoke on behalf of the lower class)
9. Patrician (spoke on behalf of the upper class)
10. Pontifex Maximus (high priest)
11. Aedile (dealt with city architecture and natural disasters)
12. Quaestor (controls Roman treasury)
13. Praetor (judge and lawmaker)
14. Legate (military leaders)
15. Censor (record keepers / morality police)
16. Lectores (bodyguard to emperor)
17. Vigiles (served as police and firefighters to citizens)

## Questions to consider:

1. What could Rome do to create a stable economy?
2. Do you think the military system should be changed? If so, how?
3. How could the role of "emperor" be altered to protect Rome?
4. Should the military and the government be separate entities?
5. Should there be a separation between church and state?
6. How could Rome expand without entering into another war? Should it expand?

7. What do you think your player contributes to Roman society?

Helpful Sources:

- <http://courses.wcupa.edu/jones/his101/web/t-roman.htm>
- <https://www.history.com/news/8-reasons-why-rome-fell>
- <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/fall-roman-republic-income-inequality-and-xenophobia-threatened-its-foundations-180967249/>
- <https://www.britannica.com/place/Roman-Republic>