

The Roman Empire and Christianity #1

One of the defining _____ in world history is the adoption of Christianity as the state religion of the Roman Empire. A major _____ point is often _____ the Edict of Milan, issued in 313 by Emperor Constantine, _____ recognized Christianity. It is _____ regarded as the cause of Christianity's _____, _____ really the case? Indeed, some _____ show that the _____ Christian population in the empire was less than 10 percent at that time. However, Christianity was growing _____ 40 percent _____ before the Edict of Milan. Also, Christianity provided a strong _____ followers, so Christian communities were highly organized and influential. On the other hand, _____ Roman _____ didn't _____ of the followers, attachments between them, and loyalties to the community. Constantine could not disregard the capacity to _____ human resources and political influence of the Christian _____. He also found Christianity useful to justify the _____ and _____ of the emperors. It was not that Christianity _____ because of Constantine; Christianity was already so influential _____ no choice but to officially _____. Why did one of _____ become _____ in the Roman Empire? What can we _____ human society _____ the rise of Christianity?

One of the defining events in world history is the adoption of Christianity as the state religion of the Roman Empire. A major turning point is often attributed to the Edict of Milan, issued in 313 by Emperor Constantine, which officially recognized Christianity. It is widely regarded as the cause of Christianity's triumph, but is that really the case? Indeed, some estimates show that the proportion of Christian population in the empire was less than 10 percent at that time. However, Christianity was growing at the rate of around 40 percent per decade before the Edict of Milan. Also, Christianity provided a strong sense of belonging with its followers, so Christian communities were highly organized and influential. On the other hand, traditional Roman polytheism didn't bring strong commitment of the followers, attachments between them, and loyalties to the community. Constantine could not disregard the capacity to mobilize human resources and political influence of the Christian churches. He also found Christianity useful to justify the legitimacy and sanctity of the emperors. It was not that Christianity rose because of Constantine; Christianity was already so influential that he had no choice but to officially approve it. Why did one of countless cults become dominant in the Roman Empire? What can we learn about human society through the rise of Christianity?

adoption	採用、受容	mobilize	動員する
attributed	起因する	legitimacy	正当性
recognize	公認する	sanctity	神聖さ
triumph	勝利、成功	dominant	支配的な
proportion	割合	cult	新興宗教、カルト的集団
decade	10年間	justify	正当化する

The Roman Empire and Christianity #2

Early Christianity was a _____ movement _____ Judaism, and the initial spread is _____ among the Hellenized Jews of the diaspora; Jewish people living in the Roman empire who were integrated into _____-Roman culture. They greatly _____ the Jews living in _____, and the majority of them lived in the _____ the empire. They had a _____ for a new religion. Many Hellenized Jews _____ some _____ of Roman polytheism and cultural views of Roman society. Also, the _____ of Judaism sometimes _____ participating in Roman _____. Yet, it was difficult to _____ their Jewish culture. The _____ of most people for _____ new things is small. _____ speaking, people are more willing to _____ a new religion to the _____ cultural continuity with conventional religions _____ they are already familiar. In the modern era, movements like Mormonism and the Unification Church have gained many followers, not by being entirely new religions, but by building upon the context of traditional Christianity to which people were already _____. Hellenized Jews in the empire wanted to blend in the Roman culture _____ maintaining their religious context of Judaism. Christianity effectively satisfied such a religious _____. It is estimated _____ a million Christians in the empire in A.D. 250, and only _____ every five Jews of the diaspora need to have _____ to _____ number. By appealing to diaspora Jews, Christianity gained _____ number of followers. Moreover, Christianity _____ universality that is free from Jewish ethnicity, while retaining the _____ of _____. This _____ to a religion that was open to everyone _____ maintained strong _____ identity and organizational _____.

Early Christianity was a cult movement derived from Judaism, and the initial spread is thought to have occurred among the Hellenized Jews of the diaspora; Jewish people living in the Roman empire who were integrated into Greek-Roman culture. They greatly outnumbered the Jews living in Palestine, and the majority of them lived in the eastern part of the empire. They had a demand for a new religion. Many Hellenized Jews had embraced some elements of Roman polytheism and cultural views of Roman society. Also, the Law of Judaism sometimes prevented them from participating in Roman civic life. Yet, it was difficult to fully abandon their Jewish culture. The receptivity of most people for wholly new things is small. Generally speaking, people are more willing to adopt a new religion to the extent that it retains cultural continuity with conventional religions with which they are already familiar. In the modern era, movements like Mormonism and the Unification Church have gained many followers, not by being entirely new religions, but by building upon the context of traditional Christianity to which people were already accustomed. Hellenized Jews in the empire wanted to blend in the Roman culture while maintaining their religious context of Judaism. Christianity effectively satisfied such a religious demand. It is estimated that there were a million Christians in the empire in A.D. 250, and only one out of every five Jews of the diaspora need to have converted to meet that number. By appealing to diaspora Jews, Christianity gained its initial substantial number of followers. Moreover, Christianity acquired universality that is free from Jewish ethnicity, while retaining the exclusive elements of monotheism. This gave rise to a religion that was open to everyone yet maintained strong communal identity and organizational strength.

diaspora	離散（ディアスポラ）	conventional	従来の、慣習的な
Hellenized	ギリシャ化した	accustomed	慣れている
integrate	同化する、統合する	universality	普遍性
civic	市民の、市民生活の	ethnicity	民族性
receptivity	受容性	exclusivity	排他性
continuity	連続性	communal	共同体の、共有の

The Roman Empire and Christianity #3

Around A.D. 100, the Roman Empire _____ largest _____ expansion, _____ the entire _____ world. As the empire grew, traditional Roman polytheism couldn't satisfy the religious needs of the _____ state. _____ a historical tendency _____ society becomes older, larger, and more _____, people will demand _____ universal gods of _____. Roman polytheism had _____ of each _____. This had been one of the biggest _____ that supported the _____ of Roman society, _____ more gods than people could remember, gradually losing its attraction and influence. On the other hand, Christians were convinced that the _____ same God was _____ in the same way at every _____ the empire. _____, they could _____ they went, there would be _____ who worship the same God and welcomed them as members of the community. Christian communities particularly appealed to people who could not _____ to land-based or ethnicity-based groups. Such strong _____ and _____ Christians were the biggest _____ over the traditional polytheism. Traditional deities only _____ a _____-_____ relationship between a god and the believer; a person who _____ their time and resources, and the god who _____. On the other hand, Christian God also _____ the relationship between his believers; God loves people, so you have to love and save your neighbors who are loved by God, and they have to love and save you who is loved by God. This logic was unique to Christianity. As the empire expanded, people came and went between cities, and members became diverse, but Christian communities were open to everyone, _____ ethnicity, wealth, and birthplace. Being a Christian _____ more attractive, comfortable, and safer than being a Roman citizen.

Around A.D. 100, the Roman Empire reached its largest territorial expansion, dominating the entire Mediterranean world. As the empire grew, traditional Roman polytheism couldn't satisfy the religious needs of the vast state. There is a historical tendency that as society becomes older, larger, and more cosmopolitan, people will demand fewer universal gods of greater scope. Roman polytheism had incorporated regional deities of each conquest. This had been one of the biggest advantages that supported the tolerance of Roman society, but eventually there were more gods than people could remember, gradually losing its attraction and influence. On the other hand, Christians were convinced that the very same God was worshiped in the same way at every church across the empire. Even more importantly, they could expect that wherever they went, there would be fellows who worship the same God and welcomed them as members of the community. Christian communities particularly appealed to people who could not belong to land-based or ethnicity-based groups. Such strong cohesion and attachment among Christians were the biggest advantages over the traditional polytheism. Traditional deities only ask for a one-on-one relationship between a god and the believer; a person who sacrifices their time and resources, and the god who benefits them in response. On the other hand, Christian God also defines the relationship between his believers; God loves people, so you have to love and save your neighbors who are loved by God, and they have to love and save you who is loved by God. This logic was unique to Christianity. As the empire expanded, people came and went between cities, and members became diverse, but Christian communities were open to everyone, regardless of ethnicity, wealth, and birthplace. Being a Christian might have been more attractive, comfortable, and safer than being a Roman citizen.

territorial	領土の	attachment	愛着、つながり
cosmopolitan	国際的な、世界的な	deity	神
incorporate	組み込む、取り入れる	sacrifice	犠牲にする、捧げる
conquest	征服	define	定義する、明確にする
tolerance	寛容	regardless	〜に関係なく
cohesion	結束、まとまり		

The Roman Empire and Christianity #4

In March 180, Emperor Marcus Aurelius, the last of the Five Good Emperors, _____, which marked the _____ peace and prosperity of the Roman Empire, known as the Pax Romana. Under his _____, disasters were frequent, epidemics were _____, and borders were _____. With the death of Marcus Aurelius, who had been _____ addressing such crises, the empire _____ an _____. Low _____ had been a serious problem since the 1st Century, and the _____, which _____ the lives of one-quarter to one-third of the population, made the situation even worse. Public order and social bonds had changed due to a constant _____ of “_____” _____ to make _____ the population decrease. The _____ was sought with violence and the government became unstable. The _____ of currency and resulting inflation put many people in poverty. Meanwhile, Christianity was _____ by these crises. Frequently in human history, crises and disasters have caused transitions of _____, especially _____ the traditional religion fails to provide satisfactory explanation of why the disaster _____, a _____ of actions against the crises, and _____ to their _____. Epidemics, in particular, revealed _____ contrasts between the traditional religion and Christianity. While _____ of Roman polytheism were struggling to deal with the epidemic, Christianity told that those who care, sympathize, and support their neighbors even in difficulties would be rewarded _____. In other words, Christianity gave meaning to the _____ and guidance for action. As Roman citizens abandoned the cities, Christians remained, _____ to caring for the sick. Moreover, such norms and mutual support resulted in substantially higher rates of survival among Christians. This _____ in the _____ of each epidemic, Christians made up a larger _____ of the population _____ new _____. Moreover, their better survival rate _____ a “_____” of God. The same was true for the influx of immigrants and economic distress. To cities _____ newcomers and strangers, Christianity offered a basis for attachment and _____. To cities filled with homeless and _____, Christianity offered charity, as well as hope that all people are equal before God. All of these made Christianity more _____ when people were gradually _____ with the traditional deities.

In March 180, Emperor Marcus Aurelius, the last of the Five Good Emperors, passed away, which marked the sunset of peace and prosperity of the Roman Empire, known as the Pax Romana. Under his reign, disasters were frequent, epidemics were rampant, and borders were threatened. With the death of Marcus Aurelius, who had been diligently addressing such crises, the empire plunged into an era of turmoil. Low fertility had been a serious problem since the 1st Century, and the plague, which claimed the lives of one-quarter to one-third of the population, made the situation even worse. Public order and social bonds had changed due to a constant influx of “barbarian” settlers to make up for the population decrease. The throne was sought with violence and the government became unstable. The devaluation of currency and resulting inflation put many people in poverty. Meanwhile, Christianity was propelled by these crises. Frequently in human history, crises and disasters have caused transitions of faith, especially when the traditional religion fails to provide satisfactory explanation of why the disaster occurred, a guiding principle of actions against the crises, and healing to their grief. Epidemics, in particular, revealed notable contrasts between the traditional religion and Christianity. While Priests of Roman polytheism were struggling to deal with the epidemic, Christianity told that those who care, sympathize, and support their neighbors even in difficulties would be rewarded eternal peace in heaven. In other words, Christianity gave meaning to the calamity and guidance for action. As Roman citizens abandoned the cities, Christians remained, dedicating themselves to caring for the sick. Moreover, such norms and mutual support resulted in substantially higher rates of survival among Christians. This meant that in the aftermath of each epidemic, Christians made up a larger percentage of the population even without new converts. Moreover, their better survival rate would have seemed a “miracle” of God. The same was true for the influx of immigrants and economic distress. To cities filled with newcomers and strangers, Christianity offered a basis for attachment and shared norms. To cities filled with homeless and impoverished, Christianity offered charity, as well as hope that all people are equal before God. All of these made Christianity more appealing when people were gradually disillusioned with the traditional deities.

prosperity	繁栄	propel	推進する、駆り立てる
epidemic	伝染病、疫病	calamity	災難、惨事
turmoil	混乱、不安	aftermath	余波、結果
fertility	出生率、繁殖力	disillusioned	幻滅した
devaluation	通貨の価値の下落	impoverished	貧困に陥った、困窮した
inflation	インフレ、物価上昇	charity	慈善、施し

The Roman Empire and Christianity #5

One of the _____ characteristics of Christianity was _____ higher costs and more severe restrictions from its believers than the traditional polytheism. First of all, Christians had to live a peculiar lifestyle, and invest a lot of time on regular weekly worship. Generally, high costs make a service or a product less attractive, but religions may not be the case. Firstly, _____ “_____ - _____” problems. High costs _____ potential members whose _____ and participation would be low. Also, high costs tend to increase participation among those who do join, driven by the _____. Moreover, the more each member pays, the higher levels of benefits they gain _____. For example, the more _____ join the songs and _____, and the more enthusiastically they participate, the greater the satisfaction each participant _____. Another cost of being a Christian is _____. Christians are not _____ to worship other _____ and belong to other religious communities _____. This often _____ persecution, _____ a strong sense of _____. Thus, the high participation costs made Christian communities attractive and cohesive, which _____ to mobilize human resources and political influence. The Roman Empire was fundamentally a collection of city-states and _____; the city of Rome had relations with other cities and regions individually. The essence of Roman governance ultimately _____ maintain _____ the ruling class in each region. _____ of Christianity, churches and bishops in each city _____ to organize and mobilize a large number of citizens. Constantine’s favorable approach to Christianity is due to its growing influence, _____ to stabilize his _____. _____ his official approval in 313, Christian population further increased, surpassing the majority by the time of Emperor Theodosius in the late 4th century. Christians, once persecuted, had now _____, sometimes attacking pagans and destroying their temples. In short, Christianity had a lot of characteristics to match Roman society _____ religious needs. _____ the expansive network of the Roman Empire, Christianity spread widely and deeply, and profoundly _____ the course of human history

One of the profound characteristics of Christianity was that it required higher costs and more severe restrictions from its believers than the traditional polytheism. First of all, Christians had to live a peculiar lifestyle, and invest a lot of time on regular weekly worship. Generally, high costs make a service or a product less attractive, but religions may not be the case. Firstly, costly demands mitigate “free-rider” problems. High costs screen out potential members whose commitment and participation would be low. Also, high costs tend to increase participation among those who do join, driven by the sunk cost fallacy. Moreover, the more each member pays, the higher levels of benefits they gain collectively. For example, the more fellows join the songs and prayers, and the more enthusiastically they participate, the greater the satisfaction each participant can experience. Another cost of being a Christian is that it requires exclusive commitment. Christians are not allowed to worship other deities and belong to other religious communities simultaneously. This often triggered persecution, but it fostered a strong sense of solidarity in reverse. Thus, the high participation costs made Christian communities attractive and cohesive, which brought its great capacity to mobilize human resources and political influence. The Roman Empire was fundamentally a collection of city-states and provinces; the city of Rome had relations with other cities and regions individually. The essence of Roman governance ultimately depended on whether it could maintain loyalty and support from the ruling class in each region. With the expansion of Christianity, churches and bishops in each city earned power to organize and mobilize a large number of citizens. Constantine’s favorable approach to Christianity is due to its growing influence, which he could not ignore to stabilize his rule. Backed by his official approval in 313, Christian population further increased, surpassing the majority by the time of Emperor Theodosius in the late 4th century. Christians, once persecuted, had now turned the tables, sometimes attacking pagans and destroying their temples. In short, Christianity had a lot of characteristics to match Roman society and its religious needs. Leveraging the expansive network of the Roman Empire, Christianity spread widely and deeply, and profoundly impacted the course of human history

profound	深い、重大な	solidarity	連帯感、一体感
peculiar	特有の、風変わりな	cohesive	結束した、まとまりのある
mitigate	緩和する、和らげる	province	属州、地方
free-rider	タダ乗りする人	mobilize	動員する
sunk cost fallacy	埋没費用効果	stabilize	安定させる
exclusive	排他的な、独占的な	leverage	活用する、影響力を行使する