

# ***Roman Words in Many Cultures — patria, populus and res publica***

by Rose Williams

Language is a product and a tool of its culture; it does not exist in a vacuum, and it does not remain static. As a society moves forward, it tends to develop new language elements or transform old ones to meet its changing needs. To study a language is to approach an entire culture and its evolution. The Latin language served a culture which was an important and widespread political entity for over a thousand years. It has continued its influence beyond its political lifespan into the modern world. Some of the most important modern concepts in many fields, and the words we still use to express them, grow from ideas which the Romans developed.

In the context of Latin literature, this presentation will examine Latin words and concepts that shaped Roman and world socio-political thinking. Next we shall consider how they have grown and developed in subsequent societies and ask teachers to participate in finding ways of exploring such concepts to enrich the study of foreign language and world culture.

## **Development of concepts:**

Student projects on the development of influential words are very helpful, particularly as students tend to think Latin words have the same meaning as their derivatives or cognates in modern languages. In such development projects, working from a given list of words, students may consult textbooks or a good Latin dictionary as a start. The next step is to locate, examine, and evaluate those words as used in Latin literature. Latin writers did not set out to create a dictionary; we must look carefully at their uses of the words to see what they understood them to mean. This does not have to involve long or difficult passages – in fact, the more easily intelligible, the better

*(Reference for Latin works quoted is given in the body of the text)*

(English introductory quotes used to tie segments together are from  
THE LABORS OF AENEAS by Rose Williams  
and  
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## **Section A – *Individuals and their relationships***

### **I. Client and Patron**

Nearly every free man in Rome was either a patron or a client. Both words have many derivatives, but their meanings have changed over the years.

#### ***Sample study questions:***

1. Write a definition of client and a definition of patron in modern terms.
2. Define the two in Roman terms (students could use a Latin dictionary for this).
3. Read the passages below and revisit your definition of Roman patron and client.

**M. Cato in oratione, quam dixit apud censores in Lentulum, ita scripsit: “Adversus cognatos pro cliente testatur, testimonium adversus clientem nemo dicit. Patrem primum, postea patronum proximum nomen habuere.” Auli Gellii Noctes Atticae: Bk V, 13, 4.**

*Cato in an oration which he gave against Lentulus before the censors, so wrote: "One testifies on a client's behalf against relatives; no man gives testimony against a client. They (our ancestors) held a father in the first position of honor, and next to him a patron.*

**(Clientes) qui neque leges neque aequom bonum usquam colunt, 580  
sollicitos patronos habent.  
datum denegant quod datum est, litium pleni, rapaces  
viri, fraudulentum,  
qui aut faenore aut periuriis habent rem paratam,  
mens est in quo lis est. eis ubi dicitur dies, simul patronis dicitur.**

### Plautus Menaechmi Act IV, Scene II

*Clients who regard neither laws nor justice nor fairness have patrons who worry a lot. They deny just debts, and are forever embroiled in lawsuits; those greedy, tricky men who make money through usury or perjury and whose minds are ever plotting legal action. When the day of trial comes for them, it comes for their patrons also.*

Question: What are the striking features of the Roman concepts of client and patron?

### II. Dictator

**In hac tantarum expectatione rerum sollicita ciuitate, dictatoris primum creandi mentio orta... Creato dictatore primum Romae, postquam praeferrere securus uiderunt, magnus plebem metus incessit, ut intentiores essent ad dicto parendum; neque enim ut in consulibus qui pari potestate essent, (AUC 253) Livy History II 18**

*Now general anxiety having been stirred up in the state, the appointment of a dictator was mentioned for the first time...when the dictator of Rome had been chosen for the first time, great fear arose among the plebeians so that they were more careful about obeying orders, for there was no one equal to him in power as there was in the case of consuls.*

Question: How was a Roman dictator chosen? Why were the people wary of him?

### III. Senator/senex

**Ac ne qui forte cum aliis studiis, quae reconditis in artibus atque in quadam varietate litterarum versentur, magis hanc dicendi rationem, quam cum imperatoris laude aut cum boni senatoris prudentia comparandam putet, convertat animum ad ea ipsa artium genera circumspiciatque, qui in eis floruerint quamque multi sint; sic facillime, quanta oratorum sit et semper fuerit paucitas, iudicabit. Cicero De Oratore I, 2: 8**

*But so that no one may think that other studies, which have to do with the more abstract arts and a certain variety of learning, is rather to be compared with art of speaking rather than the praise of the imperator or the wisdom (prudence) of a good senator, let him turn his mind to those kinds of arts and look about at those who flourished in them and how many there were; so very easily he will judge how great a scarcity of orators there is now, and always has been.*

**Num igitur, si ad centesimum annum vixisset, senectutis eum suae paeniteret? Nec enim excursionem nec saltu nec eminus hastis aut comminus gladiis uteretur, sed consilio, ratione, sententia; quae nisi essent in senibus, non summum consilium maiores nostri appellarent senatum. Cicero, De Senectute VI, 19**

*Therefore if he (Scipio Africanus) had lived to be one hundred, would he have regretted his old age? No, for he would not spend his time in running or leaping or working with spear and sword, but in reflection, reason and judgment; for if these qualities had not been in old men, our ancestors would not have called our highest deliberative body the senate.*

1. What qualities are expected to be found in an old man?
2. How does Cicero indicate that senators are expected to live up to their name?

## **Now for uses in modern languages:**

### **I. Client and Patron**

**English client** applies chiefly to someone who has hired a lawyer or who pays for the services of a professional.

**Italian cliente** is a person who buys services from someone: from a lawyer or a doctor, the phone company, the bank etc. In Italian "client" has also the meaning of "customer." In English "The customer is always right"; In Italian: "Il cliente ha sempre ragione."

**French client** refers to a person needing services that require remuneration (of a lawyer, notary), a customer (buyer), a patient (of a doctor/dentist), or a guest (hotel), or someone who frequents a particular establishment.

**Spanish cliente** basically means the same as customer in English in a variety of settings.

Question: How has this word shifted, almost reversed meaning in the modern world?

### **Patron**

**English patron** often implies an attitude that looks down on someone else, except in the case of saints and patrons of the arts. i.e. patronizing

**Italian patrono** Each town in Italy has one or more prominent men or women who have been elevated to sainthood by the Catholic Church and may be venerated as the protector of the town. The words "patrono" and "protettore" (protector) are synonyms, and can be used to indicate someone of a higher social status who watches over you without a religious connotation. The term is not disparaging; the "patrono" looks down on you but is always benevolent. Patronato is sometimes used to indicate a Patron's constituency or the time of his "office" – that is, either the people he watches over or the time he acts as their patron.

**French patron** is used to refer to anyone who has command over employees, i.e. an owner, proprietor of a business.

**Spanish patrón** is the boss or the owner. The term is especially used by ranch or farm hands and blue-collar workers to refer to the owner or manager or people who work in the market to talk to a customer as an equivalent for "sir". It is also used as a "patron" saint (Santo Patron).

Question: How is the English usage of patron different from the other languages? Why?

### **II. Dictator**

**English dictator** Mussolini and Hitler made the honorable Latin word a horrid word in English; the banana republics added their mite.

**Italian dittatore** Hitler, Mussolini and more recently Saddam Hussein were definitely all "dittatori." A dittatore has absolute power, either gotten illegally, perhaps by means of a violent coup, or exercised illegally, without a mandate from the people. If a politician, or professor, or a boss exercises any tyrannical kind of authority without regard to individual freedom, without flexibility etc., one says

he is a dictator. In a family one is deemed a "dittatore" if he/she decides things without listening to anybody else....

**French "dictateur"** refers to someone who has seized power and exerts it without check

**Spanish dictadores** don't allow opposition, free elections, or freedom of speech or the press. The Mexican writer Octavio Paz clashed with the Peruvian writer Mario Vargas Llosa some years back at an international conference of Latin-American intellectuals. Llosa made the remark that Mexico was the "dictadura perfecta" or the perfect dictatorship, because it was a dictatorship masked behind democracy. When Octavio Paz objected to the comment, he was criticized for being brainwashed by his government.

Question: What two elements of the Roman dictator have disappeared in modern thought? (chosen by government body, temporary position for an emergency)

### III. Senator/senex

**English Senator** is an elected member of the US Senate. He or she must be at least 30 years of age, a citizen of the United States for the past nine years, and a resident of the state he or she represents at the time of election.

**Italian senatori** are members of **il Senato**, the upper of the two houses of representatives elected every five years. Most members are elected, though a few are chosen by the President and all former Presidents are members. Senatori must be 40 years old or older. In Italy citizens can vote when they turn 18, but only those over 25 can vote for the Senate.

**French "senateur"** is a member of the upper house of the French parliament. The Senators are elected by the deputies of the Assemblée for a 9-year term. Their requirements have to do with age and notability.

**Spanish senadores** in Mexico are elected to the Camara de Senadores, the upper house of the bicameral congress. There is an age limit; to be a deputy or representative, the age limit is lower.

Questions:

- 1) How is the original idea of senex preserved in modern usage? (age, wisdom)
- 2) How do modern senators differ from Roman ones? (elected, not appointed or inherited)

## Section B – Group words

These are complex ideas, involving groups and their interaction. We shall examine the passages below as to how each phrase was used in ancient Rome, the first far-reaching and long-lasting Republic. Some say that the United States, shaped by founders well acquainted with Roman history, is the second to reach such extents of territory and longevity. These ideas are basic to this nation and, in the words of Lincoln, to "any nation so conceived and so dedicated."

### I. **populus**

**Est igitur, inquit Africanus, res publica res populi, populus autem non omnis hominum coetus quoquo modo congregatus, sed coetus multitudinis iuris consensu et utilitatis communione sociatus. Cicero, De Republica, I, 25, 39)**

*Therefore, said Africanus, the res publica is the res populi; however, a people is not just any collection of humans brought together just any old way, but a congregation of a large number of humans joined by an agreement in respect to justice and a partnership for the common good.*

**Consul Appius negare ius esse tribuno in quemquam nisi in plebeium; non enim populi sed plebis eum magistratum esse Livy History II, 66.**

*The consul Appius said that the tribune had no right except in the case of plebeians; for he was a magistrate not of the people, but of the plebeians.\* (see page 11)*

**negat se more et exemplo populi Romani posse iter ulli per provinciam dare. Caesar, De Bello Gallico I, 8**

*(to the Helvetians) He denied that he was able to give passage to any through the province by the custom and example of the Roman people.*

**Cicero ad haec unum modo respondit: non esse consuetudinem populi Romani accipere ab hoste armato condicionem. Caesar, De Bello Gallico V, 41**

*(Q.) Cicero (to the Nervii) replied in this way: that it was not the custom of the Roman people to accept any condition from an armed enemy.*

**Hanc mercedem unam pro eo munere paciscor: amicus populo Romano sis. Livy XXVI, 50.**

*(Scipio to the Celtiberian chief in the Second Punic War): I ask this one reward for my gift: that you may be a friend to the Roman people.*

Questions:

1. What is a people?
2. How does this concept compare to the word commonwealth?
3. Relate the first statement above to Marcus Aurelius: "whatever is not good for the swarm is not good for the bee."
4. Discuss Camillus and Caesar in their usage of "the army of the Roman People."

## **II. patres /senatus**

**Centum creat senatores, sive quia is numerus satis erat, sive quia soli centum erant qui creari patres possent. Patres certe ab honore patriciique progenies eorum appellati. Livy I, 8**

*Romulus appointed one hundred senators, whether because this number was enough, or because only there were only one hundred who could be designated "patres." Certainly they were called fathers on account of their rank, and their offspring were called patricians.*

**Quibus cum esse praestantem Numam Pompilium fama ferret, praetermissis suis civibus regem alienigenam patribus auctoribus sibi ipse populus adscivit. Cicero, De Republica II, 12, 23.**

*Since for these qualities (kingly virtue and wisdom) Numa Pompilius had a great reputation, having passed over their own citizens with the advice of the patres (at the suggestion of the patres) the people chose a foreign king (a Sabine of Cures).*

Questions:

1. How did the patres(senators) and patricians originate? (chosen by the king, later they inherited the position or entered the senate after an elected term as consul) (Romulus appointed 100, there were 300 during most of the Republican era; Julius Caesar raised the number to 900)
2. What was their function in relation to the whole populus? (advisory)

### **Senatus populusque Romanus**

Senators were part of the body of people, and voted in two places, as our legislators can vote both as a citizen of a home territory and as a legislator.

### **III. patria**

**Neque enim hac nos patria lege genuit aut educavit, ut nulla quasi alimenta exspectaret a nobis, ac tantummodo nostris ipsa commodis serviens tutum perfugium otio nostro suppeditaret et tranquillum ad quietem locum, sed ut plurimas et maximas nostri animi ingenii consilii partis ipsa sibi ad utilitatem suam pigneraretur, tantumque nobis in nostrum privatum usum quantum ipsi superesse posset remitteret. Cicero, De Republica I, 8**

*Our country did not give us birth or rearing expecting no support from us or thinking only that she should serve our needs and provide a safe refuge for us and a quiet place for our rest; but so that she might receive the greatest and best part of our minds, talents, and judgment for her own use, and leave for our private use only that which she does not require.*

(LABORS, p 13 – As the smoking ruins of Troy were now a major disaster area, the gods suggested faraway places: the farther away, the better. The Trojans built twenty ships, and Aeneas says:)

**litora cum patriae lacrimans portusque relinquo  
et campos ubi Troia fuit. Vergil, Aeneid III, 10-11**

*Weeping I left the shores and harbors of my (patria) and the plains where Troy was.*

(LABORS, p 34 – Dido succeeded in making Aeneas feel like a louse, but he was a determined louse He restates the prophecy drawing him to Italy:)

**sed nunc Italiam magnam Gryneus Apollo,  
Italiam Lyciae iussere capessere sortes;  
hic amor, haec patria est. Vergil, Aeneid IV, 345-347**

*But now Grynean Apollo orders me to seek Italy; this is my love, this is my (patria).*

(LABORS, p. 57 Anchises gave Aeneas the grand tour of Elysium, pointing out souls who would be reborn and wind up in the Roman Hall of Fame.)

**uis et Tarquinius reges animamque superbam  
ultoris Bruti, ... natosque pater noua bella mouentis  
ad poenam pulchra pro libertate uocabit,  
infelix ...uincet amor patriae Vergil, Aeneid VI, 817-823**

*Would you see the Tarquin kings and the proud soul of Brutus the avenger? ... for liberty's sake he will call his revolutionary sons to punishment; Unhappy man ... love of (patria) will rule him.*

Question:

Evaluate:

- 1) One's patria is the land of one's birth.
- 2) One's patria is part of the self.

#### IV. Res publica

**Est igitur, inquit Africanus, res publica res populi, populus autem non omnis hominum coetus quoquo modo congregatus, sed coetus multitudinis iuris consensu et utilitatis communione sociatus. Cicero, De Republica, I, 25, 39)**

*Therefore, said Africanus, the res publica is the res populi; however, a people is not just any collection of humans brought together just any old way, but a congregation of a large number of people joined by an agreement in respect to justice and a partnership for the common good.*

Questions:

1. Using the fluid word "res" here as affairs or possessions, what is the republic?
2. Evaluate this statement: "One's patria is determined by birth; one's res publica by choice."

(CICERO THE PATRIOT, p. 33 - Cicero explained to P. Lentulus in a letter that at this point he had a little conversation with the Res Publica, asking, after all he had suffered for her sake, that she give her permission for him to redeem the pledge of good behavior given by his brother and to show gratitude to those, Caesar in particular, who had helped him. [These little chats with his country were favorites with Cicero. In the First Catilinarian Oration he includes a touching and powerful speech in which the Res Publica pleads with Catiline to go out of the city and leave her in peace. As in the earlier Catiline affair, at this crisis his country seemed very conveniently to agree with Cicero on all points.] )

#### M. CICERO S. D. P. LENTULO IMP.

**Haec cum ad me frater pertulisset, ... collegi ipse me et cum ipsa quasi re publica collocutus sum, ut mihi tam multa pro se perpesso atque perfuncto concederet, ut officium meum memoremque in bene meritos animum fidemque fratris mei praestarem, eumque, quem bonum civem semper habuisset, bonum virum esse pateretur.**

**Ad Familiares I.9 Scr. Romae exeunte mense Octobri a.u.c. 700.**

*When my brother had reported all this to me, ... I pulled myself together and held as it were a conversation with the republic, asking that she would allow me, in the light of my having suffered and performed much on her behalf, to do my duty and show a spirit of gratitude to those who deserved it well, and to redeem the pledge given by my brother, and that she would consider one whom she had always held to be a good citizen to be one still.*

(CICERO THE PATRIOT, p 32- after an exile of a little more than a year, Cicero was allowed to return to Rome. The populace in general and the senators in particular had gotten more than a little tired of all those attacks on the Roman constitution, such as it was, and he received a rousing welcome all along his return route, from Brundisium to the capital city itself. This not only thrilled his glory-loving heart, but also gave him the entirely false hope that he and the senate could rebuild the Good Old Days.)

**cum res publica maiorem etiam mihi animum, quam umquam habuissem, daret, cum declarasset se non potuisse me uno civi carere cumque Metellum unius tribune plebis rogatio, me universa res publica duce senatu comitante Italia, referente consule promulgantibus octo tribunis, comitiis centuriatis cunctis ordinibus hominibus incumbentibus, omnibus denique suis viribus recipavisset.**

## **Ad Familiares I.9 Scr. Romae exeunte mense Octobri a.u.c. 700.**

*When the republic was inspiring for me greater courage than I had ever possessed, when she declared me to be the one citizen she could not spare, and when Metellus' recall was on the motion of one plebeian tribune, while the whole republic called for me with all her strength – the Senate leading, all Italy joining in, eight tribunes proposing the motion, you as consul referring it to the assemblies with all orders of men promoting it.*

Question:

American founders such as Franklin, Washington and Jefferson were well-versed in Latin literature and they knew what the Romans meant by *res publica*. Now what, to the Romans, was the *res publica*?

### **V. foedus, foederis**

Our country is a federal republic. Let us look closely at what that means.

**Postremo Masinissa nos ita instituit, patres conscripti, ne quem coleremus nisi populum Romanum, ne societates, ne foedera nova acciperemus [Adherbal speaking] Sallust, Bellum Jugurthinum, 14,18**

Finally Masinissa instructed us, senators, that we should not cherish any except the Roman people, that we should accept no new alliances or ( ).

*neque ullam societatem optimis civibus cum inportunissimo hoste foedere ullo confirmari posse credidi. Cicero, Philippica Secunda, 35, 89*

I did not believe any alliance for the best citizens with a most ruthless enemy could be confirmed by any ( ).

**nec sanctam uiolasse fidem, nec foedere nullo diuum ad fallendos numine abusum homines, Catullus 76, 3-4**

Never (have I) violated a sacred oath, nor in any ( ) have I abused the name of the gods for the sake of deceiving mankind.

Questions:

1. What is a foedus?
2. Considering these passages, write a definition of a federal republic.

### **Now to consider some modern countries**

**English populace** - the people at large, not distinguished by any rank

**Italian popolo** - Il popolo Italiano may have political and cultural connotations. It can indicate the people as a civil community which votes and expresses its opinion. Culturally, it indicates collectively the individuals belonging to a country i.e. il popolo/la gente Italiano/a; il popolo/la gente Francese etc.

**French populace** - Latin "populus" meaning "people, nation" has evidently contributed to two French words – "populace", a pejorative term for the rabble, hoi polloi, plebs, and the word "people," which today has the same meaning and connotation as "populus" in Latin.

**Spanish pueblo** - Populus became "pueblo" in Spanish. It can refer to a small town or one's home town or even "people" in the sense of referring to an ethnic or cultural group. The adjective "popular" refers to the choices of the people i.e. popular culture instead of elitist culture (guitar instead of Mozart for example).

Question: How do these relate to the concept of SPQR and to Camillus and Caesar's the army of the Roman people?



## II. patres /senatus

**English Senate** - In the United States the Senate is the upper body of the Legislature. It consists of 100 members elected for terms of six years by their state as a whole; there are two from each of the 50 states. Before 1913, state legislatures appointed the Senators (indirect election); since the passage of the Seventeenth Amendment, Senators have been elected directly by voters. If a vacancy occurs between elections, the governor of the state appoints a senator to serve until the next biennial election.

**Italian Il Senato**, a body of 315 elected members, is the upper of the two houses of representatives elected to office every 5 years. The Italian Senators were appointed by the King when Italy was a monarchy. The Senate became elective after Italy became a Republic. In addition to the elected Senatori, the President of the Republic (who is elected by both chambers every 7 years) has the power of appointing other people—usually distinguished politicians or artists or entrepreneurs, as senators 'senatori a vita' (= senators for life). The president of the republic, unlike his US counterpart, is not the head of the executive branch and has very limited powers, but former presidents automatically become senators for life when they leave office. Now there are 3 or 4 non elected senators. Gianni Agnelli (the president of FIAT, the Italian car manufacturer) was one until his recent death. The lower house of government, having 630 seats, is called "Camera dei Deputati" or "Chamber of Deputies."

**French senat**, the upper house of the French parliament, is composed of 321 Senateurs elected for a 9-year term. Beginning in September 2004, the mandate will be reduced to 6 years while the number of senators will progressively increase to 346 in 2010 in order to reflect changes in the French demography. Senators are elected by approximately 150,000 representatives of local administrative councils and the 577 *députés*, members of the "Assemblée nationale." This last body, the French National Assembly, is presided over by a President. The President of France may dissolve the Assembly (ie: call new election), if he has not dissolved it in the preceding year.

**Spanish senado** or senate and the "cámara de diputados" (the equivalent of the US house of representatives) form what is known as the "Congreso de la Unión." The model was taken from the bicameral congress of the United States. The Senado has 128 seats; 96 are elected by popular vote to serve six-year terms, and 32 are allocated on the basis of each party's popular vote. The Federal Chamber of Deputies or Camara Federal de Diputados has 500 seats; 300 members are directly elected by popular vote to serve three-year terms; remaining 200 members are allocated on the basis of each party's popular vote, also for three-year terms.

Questions:

- 1) In what respect do the modern senates differ from the Roman (elected, not inherited, not permanent).
- 2) In what respects do they follow it? (age, higher status)
- 3) How does Italy preserve some of the Roman senatorial traditions?(president appoints some; president member for life.)

## III. patria

**English** patriot, repatriate, patriotic – usually relates to country of birth.

**Italian Patria** - the country of birth; though a citizen spends some time in other countries, Italy is still his 'patria'. As an adjective, patria is very rarely used to signify something inherited from your fathers ("patrii lidi", meaning the shores of your fathers, is a poetic way of saying fatherland. It is also used in the legal term "patria potesta", which relates to the role assigned by law typically to the father as the head of the family. Whoever exercises the "patria potesta" has the right of making important decisions regarding the life and upbringing of minor children. One doesn't have to be the biological father, or even a man for that matter, to exercise this right.

**French Patrie** has traditionally referred to the land of one's birth. Le Petit Robert claims that it can also be used to refer to the land one would like to CONSIDER one's own. Therefore, if one becomes a naturalized citizen of France, which appears to be quite common today, then France would become one's "patrie."

**Spanish patria** In Mexico, patria is one's home land, with which he or she has a strong emotional relationship. September is "mes de la patria" because of independence day beginning the night of the 15th and continuing all day the 16th. Phrases like "murio por la patria" or dying for one's country are said in praise of heroes. (The word has a special emotional and personal meaning; I could legally have dual citizenship in the US and Mexico, but I don't think that I would call Mexico my patria even then – comment supplied by an American living in Mexico).

Questions:

1) How close do the modern concepts of patria come to Cicero's definition?

2) What other ancient Roman idea related to this word still exists in Italy only? (patria potesta)

#### IV. res publica

**English republic** – a sovereign state governed by elected officials

**Italian Repubblica** indicates a representative form of government. In such a government every citizen has the right to vote; the power is (or should be) in the people's hands. Italy is a repubblica in that its legislative bodies (the Camera dei Deputati, and the Senato) are elected by the people every 5 years. Unified in 1861 as a monarchy, Italy became a republic by referendum on June 18, 1946. (The electoral system is pretty complicated and has been changed over the last few years and I am not sure anybody knows exactly how it works. Of course the concept was much older than that, originating in Rome, which became a republic in 509 BC – comment supplied by an Italian).

**French republique** is a government chosen by the vote of the people (or by representatives of the people)...it actually arose from the French Declaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen, the French Bill of Rights. (The French embrace this form of government as they make the most of their rights to protest anything and everything under the sun – comment supplied by a resident of France).

**Spanish republica** Mexico is called "la republica mexicana:" a democratic alternative to a monarchy. A republic should be democratic and not necessarily in the strict sense of allowing voting. (As seen in the Octavio Paz story, Mexicans are sensitive about this. Comment supplied by a Mexican).

Question: Compare the modern concept of republic with the Roman one. (right to choose officials by vote.)

#### V. foedus, foederis

**English Federal** government – government by treaty. Articles of Confederation; Confederacy

**Italian federazione** (n), **federale** (adj.): refers to a system like the US and Switzerland where a country is made up of separate political entities (the states) with varying degrees of autonomy, each with their own form of local government, but sharing a form of central government typically in charge of matters like defense and other common issues. Italy has no legal federazione in the political sense. In a way "federazione" and "lega" (league) are interchangeable. There is a political faction, called LEGA NORD of some northern counties of Italy, which says it is a federation, but it is not officially recognized. The term 'federazione' indicates some associations, in specific fields (e.g. sport: Federazione Ginnastica Italiana; Federcalcio, etc.), whose members agree to respect common rules. The term "confederazione" designates a union based on a treaty of some sort.

**French federation** is a grouping of states (eg. USA, Switzerland, the former USSR) which has power over the whole of the states, but not over each individual state.

**Spanish federacion** is an association of entities or states as opposed to centralized government. Mexico's constitution is federalist in the formal sense but it is centralist in reality. There is really not much difference in State laws. Driving rules, for example, are different in different US states but are uniform in Mexico.

Questions:

- 1) How is the concept of federal government realized in the US?
- 2) How does it impact our daily lives in the US?

## **Roman thoughts Note**

### **Page 5 I. populus and plebs**

**plebs** – (a segment of the people as conceived by the Romans)

**illos eo potissimum anno patriam liberatam, patrem liberatorem, consulatum ortum ex domo Iunia, patres, plebem, quidquid deorum hominumque Romanorum esset, induxisse in animum ut superbo quondam regi, Livy II, 5**

That they (the sons of Brutus) in the very year in which their country had been freed and their father the liberator, in which the consulship had been born from the Junian line, should have plotted to betray to a haughty former king everything – the fathers (patricians), the plebeians, and all the gods and men of Rome!

**plebs autem a populo eo differt quo species a genere: nam appellatione populi universi cives significantur, connumeratis etiam patriciis et senatoribus: plebis autem appellatione sine patriciis et senatoribus ceteri cives significantur. Justinian, Institutiones I, 2.**

However the plebeians differ from the people as one type from a whole category: for all the citizenry is meant by the term "populus," including also patricians and senators: the rest of the citizenry excluding the senators and patricians are meant by the term "plebs."