This chapter discusses the sources of Roman law. It covers sources of law in the archaic period; sources of law in the Republic; sources of law in the Empire; the post-classical era; and Justinian’s codification of Roman law. It is difficult to provide a comprehensive and finite list of the sources of Roman law, since the Roman jurists never defined the term ‘source of law’ and different sources were emphasized at certain periods in the history of the Roman legal system to reflect their prominence as instruments of legal reform. There are three statements in which the sources of Roman law are listed, seemingly without any specific order. The earliest is by Cicero in the first century BC. The second is a comment by the second-century jurist Gaius in his Institutes. The latter was adopted and amended in Justinian’s Institutes of the sixth century AD.
2. The Sources of Roman Law

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