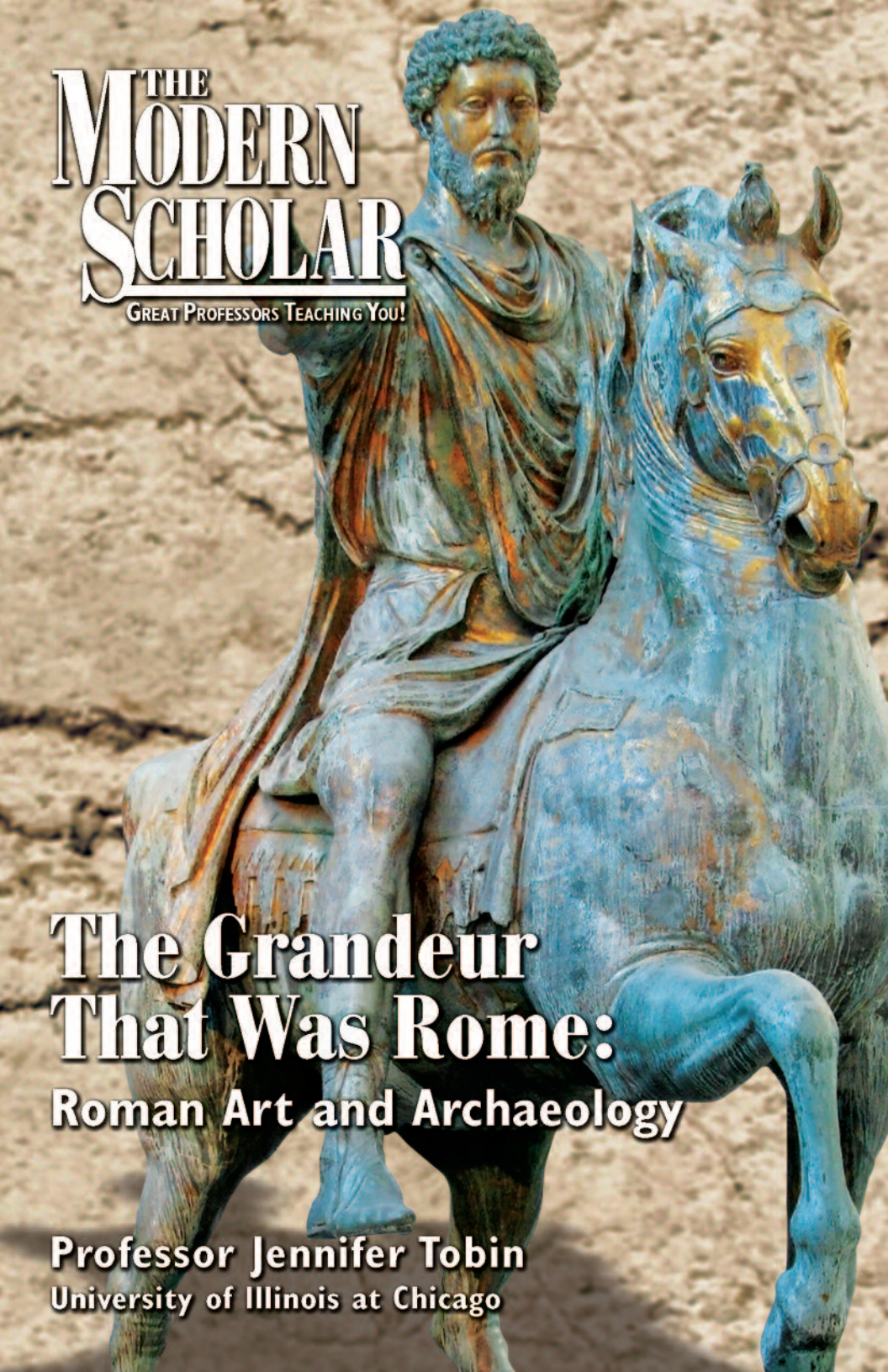
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The Grandeur That Was Rome:
Roman Art and Archaeology
Professor Jennifer Tobin
University of Illinois at Chicago

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Professor Jennifer Tobin

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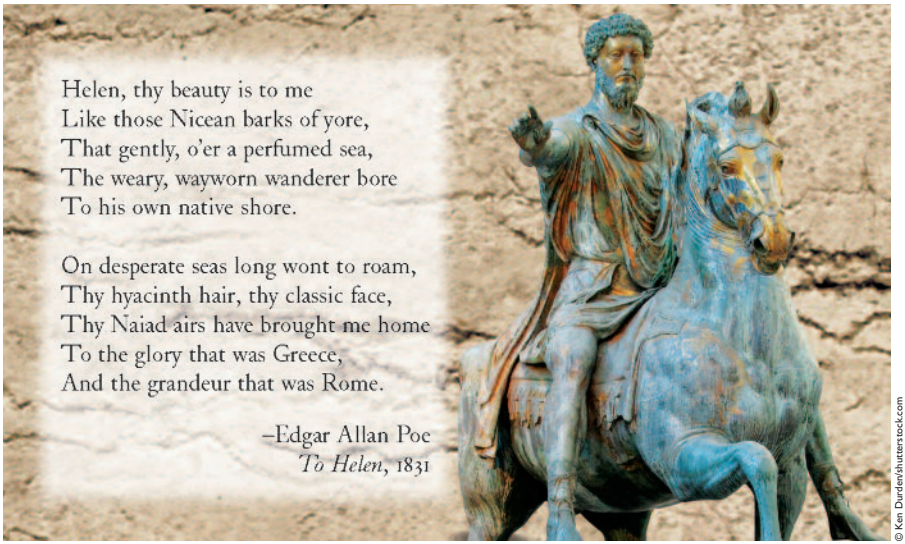
Photo courtesy of Jennifer Tobin

About Your Professor

Jennifer Tobin

Jennifer Tobin is an associate professor of classical archaeology at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where she has taught since 1999. Professor Tobin is the author of *Black Cilicia: A Study of the Plain of Issus during the Roman and Late Roman Periods* (British Archaeological Reports, 2004) and *Herodes Attikos and the City of Athens: Patronage and Conflict under the Antonines* (J.C. Gieben, 1997). She has participated in excavations in Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey and leads educational tours of archaeological sites in and around the Mediterranean basin.



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Introduction

The words "Ancient Rome" immediately conjure up images of crazy emperors hosting lavish feasts and orgiastic parties, scenes of chariot races and gladiatorial combat, processions of conquering armies, and legions defending against invading barbarians. Yet on further consideration Ancient Rome was also the genesis for numerous more lofty developments, such as senatorial government, the art of oratory, historical writing, the biography, and, of course, law. From toga parties to the alphabet, from the veto to carrying a bride over the threshold (an ancient Roman custom), in many ways the world of Rome is still with us today. Perhaps this is the reason why the Romans of the past seem so familiar to us. But this familiarity also stems from the nature of the remains left behind by the Romans: graffiti scratched on the wall of a tavern complaining about price gouging, a poignant epitaph carved on a tombstone mourning the loss of a son who died at age three, plates of food left on a table at Pompeii, abandoned in the face of volcanic eruption.

This course serves as a companion to the Modern Scholar course *The Glory That Was Greece: Greek Art and Archaeology*. Lines from Edgar Allan Poe's poem *To Helen* are the source for the titles. There is no mystery why Poe used the word "grandeur" to describe Rome. At its height the Roman Empire stretched from the western shores of Britain to the Euphrates, and from the Rhine to the Sudan. The city of Rome in the second century AD boasted a population of over five million, who were served by eleven aqueduct systems and dozens of baths, markets, theaters, and temples. But as the saying goes, neither the Empire nor the city of Rome was "built in a day," and Rome's growth from a village of mud huts on the banks of the Tiber River to a shining marble-clad fulcrum of a vast empire was a slow process. Furthermore, the "grandeur" of Rome evolved out of the ability of its leaders and artisans to adopt and adapt useful and beautiful ideas and forms from the peoples the great city conquered. In many ways, the art and culture of Rome was a distillation of the ancient world as a whole in that they contained elements borrowed from Greece, Egypt, and the Near East.

This course concentrates on the art and architecture of the city of Rome, but will also examine important monuments and artistic developments in the distant reaches of the empire. And while the Romans may seem to have been a people not too different from ourselves, their remarkable cultural and artistic achievements can nevertheless astonish and inspire.

Lecture 1

Early Inhabitants of Italy, 1000–500 BC

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapter 1.

Our story begins with the peninsula of Italy, a landmass existing in near isolation, separated from the rest of Europe by the Alps and surrounded on the east, west, and south by the Mediterranean. The rugged Apennine mountain chain that runs down the length of Italy like a spine separates east from west, making contact between the two regions difficult. Numerous coves and natural harbors, particularly on the western coast, brought early traders to Italy in search of the precious metals with which the peninsula was blessed. The rich soil of Italy, farmed as early as the sixth millennium BC, drew settlers from Greece and abroad. As we shall see, the development of early Italy is deeply indebted to these foreigners.

The earliest notable inhabitants of Italy were a people whom archaeologists call the Villanovans (named for a village near modern Bologna where they were first identified), who occupied northern Italy at least as early as 1000 BC. They were an indigenous people, culturally similar to contemporary groups in Central Europe. The Villanovans settled in hilltop villages, living in ovoid thatched huts whose foundations were cut into bedrock. They practiced farming and metallurgy, making good use of the rich ores available to them. The Villanovans are best known by their cemeteries, where the ashes of the cremated dead were placed in containers and buried in shallow pits. Often these containers took the form of miniature huts of fired clay, oval in plan, with a ridged roof, a chimney, and a door through which the ashes were inserted. Because these hut urns appear to be models of actual homes, archaeologists have interpreted them quite literally as houses for the soul, where the dead could reside in death as they had lived in life. The urns were placed in pits along with clay vessels presumably once filled with food, wine, and oil. Bronze objects of a personal nature, ceremonial belts, helmets, weapons, razors, and jewelry have been found in wealthier graves. In this way the deceased would be well prepared for whatever death might bring.

An example of a hut urn dating from the ninth century BC from a tomb near Lake Alban about twenty-five miles southeast of Rome.

Around 750 BC a new culture emerged in Italy, a people known today as the Etruscans. In antiquity, as well as today, their origins were something of a mystery. Herodotus, a Greek historian writing in

the fifth century BC, claimed the Etruscans came from Lydia, a region located in modern Turkey. However, another Greek historian, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, writing in the first century BC, insisted that the Etruscans were native to Italy. Today most scholars agree with Dionysius, particularly because recent excavations in northern Italy indicate that many Etruscan settlements appear to have evolved directly out of Villanovan ones.

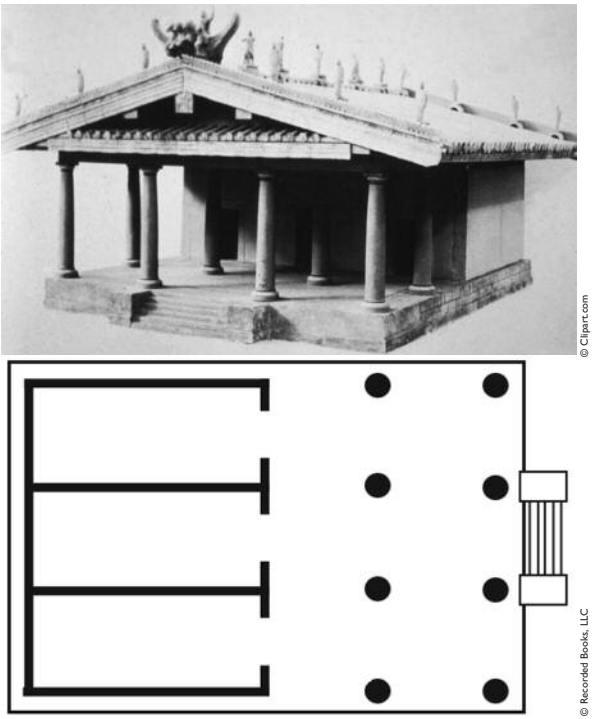
The Etruscan heartland, Etruria, lay between two great rivers of Italy, the Arno to the north and the Tiber to the south, roughly corresponding to the region of Tuscany. Etruria was never united into a single federation but comprised independent city-states each ruled by a king. Although few Etruscan towns have been excavated, chiefly due to the fact that they lie beneath modern Italian cities, many vast cemeteries have been investigated. One of the most impressive, located at Cerveteri, the ancient city of Caere, was composed of circular mounds of earth, known as *tumuli*, arranged along a network of streets, creating a necropolis, a "city of the dead." Beneath each *tumulus* was a tomb cut into the bedrock, designed to resemble a house. In one of the most interesting of these, the Tomb of the Shields and Chairs dating to 600 BC, a staircase leads underground to a tomb complex comprising six rooms along whose walls have been carved funeral beds. In the main room there are also chairs excavated from the bedrock, and shields were carved on the wall. This re-creation of a domestic structure continues the Villanovan hut urn tradition. In another necropolis serving the ancient city of Tarquinia, the walls of the subterranean tombs were painted with vivid frescoes depicting scenes of daily life, as well as scenes of myth and ritual. In the Tomb of the Augurs, dating to 530 BC, figures wearing long cloaks (togas) stand before a painted door, the passageway into the realm of death. Nearby, two figures wrestle as part of a funeral festival, and a priest, an *augur*,

Interior of the Tomb of the Shields and Chairs in Caere.

A running Phersu from the Tomb of the Augurs.

watches birds in flight, interpreting the future from their movement. Two masked figures, both identified as *Phersu*, represent actors involved in the funeral. One runs amidst birds and trees, and the other holds the leash of a dog that is attacking a prisoner. Such funeral activities may be the genesis for the Roman practice of gladiatorial combat.

The Etruscans worshiped their gods in temples. The best-preserved example is the Temple of Minerva in Veii, dating to the late sixth century BC. It was constructed on a high podium and accessed via a small staircase at the front. A deep porch, or *pronaos*, filled with columns, occupied the front half of the temple, while the back was the *cella*, or sanctuary, divided into three rooms to house statues of Minerva, Juno, and Jupiter. The superstructure was of wood plated with painted terracotta plaques, and on the ridge of the pitched roof stood life-size terracotta statues of gods.



Reconstruction of an Etruscan temple (top) according to a description by Vitruvius and a typical Etruscan temple plan (bottom).

The appearance of these statues, with drapery in stylized folds, rigid musculature, and smiling faces is very similar to contemporary Greek sculpture, and indeed Etruscans had firsthand knowledge of Greek forms. As early as the eighth century BC cities in Greece had been setting up colonies in south Italy and Sicily. Great cities such as Neapolis (Naples), Syracuse, and Tarentum maintained their Greek way of life in this foreign land and did much to influence the Etruscans and, later, the Romans.

By the beginning of the sixth century BC two great societies dominated Italy, the Etruscans in the north and the Greeks in the south. Between the two, however, lay a region known as Latium, and a small simple village on the Tiber, which soon would upset this balance of power.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Who were the earliest notable inhabitants of Italy?
2. What is thought to be the possible genesis of gladiatorial combat?

Suggested Reading

Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Hall, John F., ed. *Etruscan Italy: Etruscan Influences on the Civilizations of Italy from Antiquity to the Modern Era*. Terre Haute: Indiana State University Press, 1997.

Scullard, Howard H. *The Etruscan Cities & Rome*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.

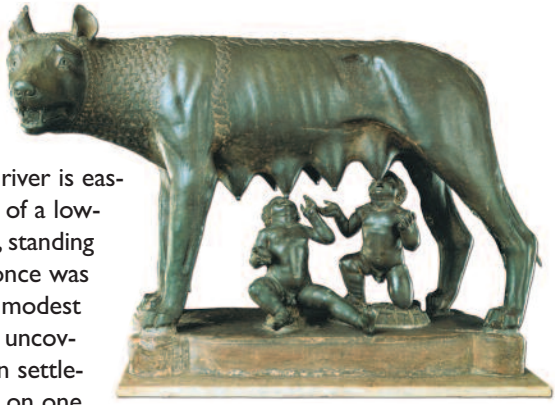
Websites of Interest

1. The *Ancient History Sourcebook* website at Fordham University provides an article entitled "Reports of the Etruscans, c. 430 BCE–10 CE," which cites entries of the origins of the Etruscans in Herodotus's *The Histories* (430 BCE) and Livy's *History of Rome* (AD 10). — http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/etrucans2.html
2. A *New York Times* article from April 3, 2007, entitled "DNA Boosts Herodotus's Account of Etruscans as Migrants to Italy" by Nicholas Wade. — http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/03/science/03etruscan.html

Lecture 2

Early Rome, 800–200 BC

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapters 1 and 2.



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Statue of the Capitoline Wolf showing Remus and Romulus as suckling infants.

Halfway down the peninsula of Italy a broad river, the Tiber, meanders westward from the Apennines and empties into the Tyrrhenian Sea. Fifteen miles inland, where the river is easily forded due to the existence of a low-lying island, is the site of Rome, standing upon seven hills. The city that once was the center of the universe had modest beginnings. Archaeologists have uncovered the remains of a Villanovan settlement of the eighth century BC on one of the prominent heights of Rome, the Palatine, and several Villanovan hut urn cemeteries have been discovered in the low-lying valleys between the hills. The later Romans, however, had a more exalted memory of their early history. According to legend, during the sack of Troy by the Greeks, the hero Aeneas, son of the goddess of love, Venus, escaped from the doomed city. Accompanied by his son Iulus he escaped to Italy to found a city near Rome called Alba Longa. Four hundred years later, the king of Alba Longa, a descendent of Aeneas, was deposed by his brother and the king's twin infant sons were left to die on a river bank. Here they were found by a she-wolf, who nursed them until a shepherd took them in and raised the boys as his own. When the boys, Romulus and Remus, grew up they killed their uncle and founded the city of Rome at the spot where the wolf discovered them. According to Roman tradition, the foundation date was April 21, 753 BC, and the eighth-century date coincides nicely with the date of the remains on the Palatine Hill.

The city possessed a strategic location, on a series of defensible hills and on a navigable river leading to the sea. Unfortunately, the history and archaeology of early Rome is poorly known. According to tradition, a series of seven kings ruled Rome, starting with Romulus. The first four of these were probably mythical, but the fifth king, known as Tarquinius Priscus, seems to have really existed. He came to power at the end of the seventh century BC and was an Etruscan. Under his guidance and that of the next two kings, Rome became heavily influenced by Etruscan culture and developed from a village of huts to a full-fledged city. The marshy wasteland between the Palatine and Capitoline

Hills was drained and a public space was created, the Forum Romanum, destined to be the religious, commercial, and political heart of the city. A great racetrack, the Circus Maximus, was established between the Palatine and the Aventine Hills. During the reign of the last king of Rome, Tarquinius Superbus, a huge temple to Jupiter, the king of the gods, was begun on the Capitoline Hill. This temple, known as the Capitoleum, was an Etruscan-style temple with a tri-cella arrangement like the Temple of Minerva at Veii. Very little of the temple exists today, but enough survives to indicate it measured nearly two hundred square feet.

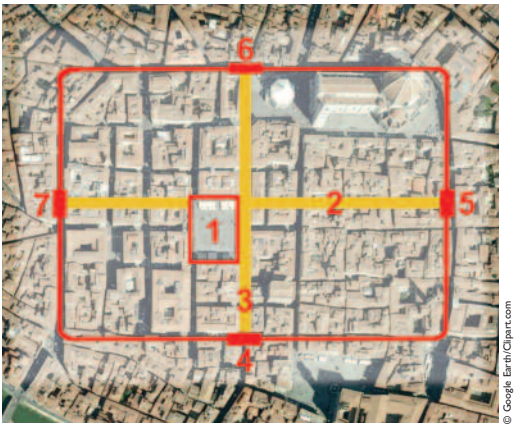
The temple was still under construction when Lucius Junius Brutus drove King Tarquinius Superbus out of Rome in 510 BC. Tarquinius Superbus, or Tarquin the Proud, had been behaving tyrannically toward the Romans, his offenses culminating in his refusal to punish his son for raping a noblewoman, Lucretia. After he was deposed the idea of kingship became distasteful to the Romans and so a new system of government was developed to ensure that no single person would have such great power. Rome was to be ruled by two consuls, annually elected officials, who were aided by a senate of aristocrats and a public assembly. Religious duties formerly held by the king were passed on to the chief priest, the Pontifex Maximus. Rome had become a Republic.

The removal of the Etruscan king did not mean that there was a rejection of Etruscan culture. The great Capitoleum temple was completed and an Etruscan artisan working in Rome around 500 BC created one of the most emblematic statues for the new Republic, a bronze she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus. The well-preserved statue depicts a female wolf, standing fore square and fierce with her head turned and ears pricked up in attention. Her open mouth displays sharp teeth and her eyes stare off into space. Teats heavy with milk hang down from her belly. Originally images of the twin boys sat underneath, but over time they have been lost. The babies that accompany the statue today were added during the Renaissance Period.

Over the next three centuries Rome was involved in constant wars, first with the neighboring mountain peoples (Sabines, Aequi, Volscians), then with the Etruscans and the Greeks. Rome also successfully engaged in battle with the great Phoenician city of Carthage in North Africa. By 200 BC, Rome controlled the whole of Italy, as well as the islands of Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, some sections of Gaul (France), and Spain. The conquered territories were known as provinces, each administered by a governor chosen by the state. The ramifications of conquest can be seen in the archaeological record, where amenities were needed both to help the Roman army and to protect the city of Rome. In 312 BC, when Rome was embroiled in war with the Samnites, one Appius Claudius Caecus undertook some public works as part of his role as censor, an office that supervised the census and oversaw public funds. In order to transport the army quickly, he built the Via Appia, stretching south from Rome to the western seaport of Brindisium. The road comprised four layers of gravel and stone, slightly crested in the center to allow rainwa-

ter to run off. This is the first of the numerous roads that "led to Rome." Recognizing Rome's need for a safe water supply, Appius Claudius was also responsible for the first aqueduct of Rome, the Aqua Appia, an underground channel that brought water to Rome from a source eleven miles away. Eventually, nine aqueducts would serve the city of Rome.

During this period military colonies were founded throughout Italy, designed both to keep the peace and to spread Roman culture. The plan of such settlements was often based on that of a military camp or *castrum*, rectangular in plan with streets laid out on a grid, and a public space, the *forum*, in the center. Many cities in Italy today began as *castra*, including Florence, whose city center, the *Piazza della Repubblica*, marks the location of the old Roman forum.



An outline of an ideal Roman *castrum* projected on an aerial view of modern buildings in downtown Florence. In most cases, the main gate (Porta Praetoria, represented by the number 5) would be at the north end (top in this picture).

1. Forum (now the *Piazza della Repubblica*)
2. Via Praetoria (road from the general's tent or building to the front gate of the fort)
3. Via Principalis (main road)
4. Porta Principalis Dextra (right gate)
5. Porta Praetoria (main gate)
6. Porta Principalis Sinistra (left gate)
7. Porta Decumana (back gate)

At the end of the third century BC a revolutionary invention was made: cement. Known as *opus caementicium*, Roman cement consisted of small stones mixed with a mortar of volcanic sand and lime. Once these elements were mixed with water they created a tight bond that could even set underwater. Cement was a cheap and strong material that demanded little training to make, and its first appearance during the Second Punic War when the Carthaginian Hannibal had invaded Italy suggests that perhaps it was created in answer to a crisis of finances and manpower. Although Roman cement could be molded into various shapes, it was chiefly used as a core for walls and platforms and was faced with stones or tiles. It would take four hundred years for architects to recognize the full potential for this remarkable material.

The long years of war demanded that the energies of the Roman Republic focus on the necessary: roads, water supplies, military camps, and cheap flexible building materials. However, a consequence of conquest was the foreign goods brought in as booty, the slaves taken into the homes, the new lands occupied and explored. As a result, during the final two centuries of the Republic, Rome came increasingly under the thrall of exotic lands to the East, Greece, Syria, and Egypt.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What is the story of Romulus and Remus?
2. What is *opus caementicium* and why was it so revolutionary?

Suggested Reading

Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Livy. *Livy: The Early History of Rome, Books I–V*. Rev. ed. Penguin Classics. New York: Penguin, 2002.

Websites of Interest

1. A *Discovery News* article from February 26, 2010, entitled "Prince's Palace Found in Volcanic Crater" by Rossella Lorenzi reports that the residence of Sextus Tarquinius, the prince who sparked the revolt that led to the foundation of the Roman Republic, may have been found outside Rome. — http://news.discovery.com/archaeology/prince-palace-rome.html
2. *The Illustrated History of the Roman Empire* website provides a chapter on the Roman Kings. — http://www.roman-empire.net/kings/kings-index.html

Lecture 3

The Later Republic, 200–44 BC

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapter 2.

During the second century BC Rome came to control Greece, portions of North Africa, and much of Asia Minor (western Turkey). Booty in the form of art and slaves poured into Rome from the east, forever changing the home-spun Roman traditions. Many Romans became enamored of Greek culture, as can be seen in the architecture and sculpture of the later Republic. One of the best-preserved temples of this period is the Temple of Portunus, god of ports, found in the Forum Boarium, the cattle market of Rome. It is rectangular in plan and constructed of travertine, a local stone of rather poor quality. Following Etruscan temple design the temple stands on a high podium, with a deep porch leading to a single-room cella. Influence from Greek architecture can be seen in the columns of the porch, created in the Ionic Order, and on the outer walls of the cella, which are decorated with half or engaged Ionic columns. These serve no architectural function, but mimic the appearance of a Greek-style temple.

One of the most innovative buildings of the Roman Republic was not constructed in Rome, but at Praeneste, a city located twenty-five miles to the east. Here, around 80 BC, the Roman general Sulla rebuilt the town as a colony for his veteran soldiers, crowning it with an immense sanctuary to Fortuna, the goddess of good fortune. Built on several artificial terraces and culminating with a small temple at the top, worshipers climbed up narrow vaulted passageways, circumnavigated bright sunlit colonnaded courtyards, and traversed steep staircases to reach the small round temple at the top, where they could ask the advice of the goddess. This complex structure was achieved through concrete, but the inclusion of Doric columns speaks of an attachment to Greek architectural styles.

One room from the lower section of the Sanctuary of Fortuna was graced with an intricate mosaic floor. Mosaics, created from cubes of colored stones known as *tesserae*, had long been used in the Greek East and to a lesser

A view of the Sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia at Praeneste (Palestrina), ca. 1950s.

degree in private homes in Italy. The Praeneste mosaic illustrated life along the Nile River complete with exotic animals (crocodiles, hippos, and camels), reed boats plying the water, and Egyptian-style temples on the shore. The mosaic most likely was made in Egypt and imported to Italy, reflecting the Romans' taste for the foreign.

From an early date the Romans were interested in depicting real events in sculpture. This set them apart from the Greeks, in whose sculpture historical events were couched in mythical allegories. Sometimes in Roman sculpture the line between the real and supernatural was blurred, however, because gods would often make an appearance in such scenes. A classic example is a set of two sculpted reliefs from Rome that date to the late second or early first century BC. They were set up together near temples to Mars (the god of war) and Neptune (the god of the sea). One scene depicts the taking of the census and a sacrifice of animals to Mars. The almost documentary-like realism, depicting soldiers, priests, animals, and a scribe recording events is leavened by the appearance of Mars himself next to the altar where he is being honored. The second set of reliefs reflects the influence of Greek sculpture. It depicts a purely mythical scene, the marriage of Neptune and Amphitrite, and the flowing style of the fishy creatures in attendance is dependent on Greek sculpture of the east.

Perhaps the most quintessentially Roman art of the Republic is portraiture. Amongst the Greeks portraiture tended to be idealized, but the Romans favored a hyper-realistic style of representation, known today as *verism*. This may have developed out of the habit of aristocratic Romans of venerating plaster or wax masks of their ancestors. Such masks were kept in the most public portion of the Roman home, the Tablinum, but on the occasion of a death in the family the masks would be carried in a funeral parade. A sculpture from the first century AD depicts a Roman aristocrat, a patrician, swathed in the heavy folds of his toga. He is balding, with hollow cheeks, a pointy nose, and thin lips. In his arms he holds the portrait busts of two ancestors, whose faces are carved with remorseless realism. Other busts

The Nile Mosaic from the Sanctuary of Fortuna, Praenesta, ca. 80 BC.

from the first century BC seem to glory in the unvarnished appearance of the sitter, and no mercy is shown: deep folds, warts, hollows where teeth are missing, crow-feet, and worry lines are all celebrated in these sculptures. Occasionally, however, Greek idealism creeps into Roman portraiture, such as the case of the portrait of a general found at Tivoli, just outside of Rome. While his face exhibits the features of a tough, hard-living military man, his nude body is that of a young man, perfectly formed.

Patrician carrying two portrait heads, ca. first century AD.

The constant wars of conquest of the second and early first centuries BC set up a dangerous situation, where soldiers felt more loyalty to their general than to the government of Rome. Wars erupted between various strong military leaders, culminating in a civil war between the two great generals of the mid-first century BC, Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, who had enjoyed many victories in the east and brought parts of Asia Minor and Syria under Roman control, and Gaius Julius Caesar, who had conquered Gaul to the west. In 55 BC, Pompey had adorned Rome with its first permanent theater; previous centers of entertainment had been temporary. Unlike Greek theaters that were built against hillsides, this magnificent building stood in the heart of Rome, freestanding and semicircular in plan. Although the building no longer survives, it is known that a small temple to Venus was located at the top of the seating area.

In 48 BC, at the Battle of Pharsalus, Julius Caesar defeated Pompey, who subsequently fled to Egypt and was murdered by the Egyptian king. Caesar was now the most powerful man in Rome, and the Republic granted him the title of Dictator. The office of Dictator had existed since the beginning of the Republic, but was rarely used. As Dictator, Caesar proceeded to reorganize Rome, to recodify Roman law, and to repair the many buildings in Rome that had suffered over the long period of civil war. Because Caesar believed he was descended from Iulus, the son of Aeneas, and consequently from the goddess Venus herself, he began a new forum for public assembly dominated by a temple to Venus Genetrix, his ancestress. In 44 BC, he was named Dictator for Life, but some members of the Senate suspected he might reach even higher, and take the title of king. On March 15, 44 BC, at an assembly of the Senate, Caesar was brutally murdered by a senatorial faction led by his friend Brutus, the descendent of the Brutus who drove out the last king of Rome, Tarquin the Proud, almost five hundred years earlier. Ironically, the meeting had taken place in Pompey's theater, so Caesar died on the steps of the building erected by his fallen rival.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What are *tesserae* and for what purpose were they employed?
2. How did the Roman view differ from the Greek view on sculpture?

Suggested Reading

Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Bringmann, Klaus. *A History of the Roman Republic*. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2007.

Crawford, Michael. *The Roman Republic*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.

Websites of Interest

1. The *Ancient Praeneste* website provides a detailed study of the city and includes further resources for study, images of sculpture and art, and a history of the area. — http://www.praeneste.it
2. A brief history of the Roman Republic by Richard Hooker is available from the Washington State University website *Rome*. — http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/ROME/REPUBLIC.HTM

Lecture 4

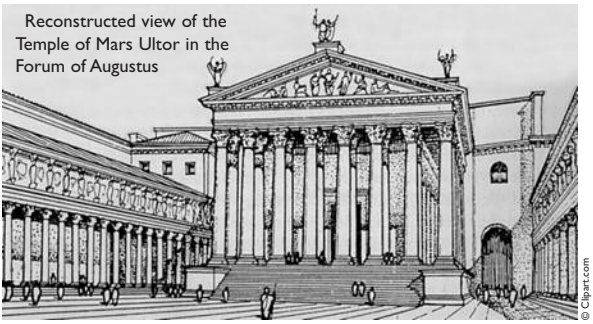
Augustus, 31 BC–AD 14

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapter 3.

After Julius Caesar's death his close friend Marcus Antonius (Mark Antony) and his nephew and heir Octavian wiped out the senators responsible for Caesar's murder. Eventually the two turned on one another and civil war ensued. Even though Antony was the more experienced soldier and had great support in the east, including his ally and lover Cleopatra of Egypt, Octavian defeated him at Actium, in Greece, in 31 BC. Antony and Cleopatra fled to Egypt, where they both committed suicide. Octavian returned to a grateful Rome, who bestowed on him the title Augustus and awarded him total control over Rome (*Imperium*); hence he became known as the Emperor Augustus Caesar. Although an emperor now ruled Rome, Augustus was careful to foster the fiction that Rome remained a Republic. The Senate still existed, consuls were still elected annually, and public assemblies still met, but all were at the behest of the emperor. Augustus saw himself as *Princeps*, "First Citizen," thus his rule and that of his successors is known as the "Principate."

Rome flourished under Augustus. In the many buildings he constructed and sculptures he erected he presented himself as the bringer of peace and prosperity to Rome, an inaugurator of a new golden age, comparable to the golden age of Athens four hundred years earlier. Augustus also focused attention on his connection with Julius Caesar, who was deified after his death and worshiped in an imperial cult. In an attempt to improve the morals of the Romans as well as a flagging birthrate, Augustus passed legislation outlawing adultery and encouraging marriage and procreation.

Augustus claimed to have found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble, and indeed, during his reign the great Carrara marble quarries in northern Italy were first exploited. Perhaps the most important building created by Augustus was his forum. Completed in 2 BC, this complex was designed to supplement the old Forum Romanum as well as Caesar's Forum. The Forum of Augustus was a rectangular complex built around the Temple of Mars Ultor, Mars the Avenger, in honor of Augustus's defeat of the murderers of Caesar. The temple, placed on a podi-



Reconstructed view of the Temple of Mars Ultor in the Forum of Augustus

um, with a deep porch filled with marble columns in the Corinthian Order, was a mixture of Etruscan and Greek elements. Within the broad cella stood three statues: Mars, Venus, and Julius Caesar. Flanking the temple were colonnades whose upper stories had columns that took the form of caryatids, statues of women that were copied from an Athenian temple, the Erechtheion, a building constructed in the fifth century BC during the "golden age" of Greece. The walls of the colonnades were decorated with images of an Egyptian god, Ammon, a reference to Augustus's defeat of Cleopatra. The lower floors of the colonnades had deep semicircular halls, *exedrae*, with niches that contained statues of heroes of Rome and relatives of Augustus. Thus the forum of Augustus celebrated his victory over his enemies, his illustrious lineage, and his promise of a golden age for Rome.

In the northwestern section of Rome, a region known as the Campus Martius, the Field of Mars, Augustus explored these themes further. Early in his reign, when he was suffering from an illness, he constructed a large tomb, his Mausoleum. Standing on the banks of the Tiber it took the form of a concrete drum topped by an earthen tumulus, bringing to mind the old burial customs of the Etruscans. Inside were numerous chambers designed to hold the cremated remains of the dynasty he hoped to found. On top of the tumulus stood a grove of trees and a bronze statue of the emperor. Not far from his Mausoleum Augustus erected an enormous sundial, or horologium, consisting of a stone pavement incised with lines upon which the shadow of the *gnomon*, or indicator, would fall, following the movement of the sun. The *gnomon* was an obelisk transported from Egypt, another reference to Cleopatra's defeat at Augustus's hands. On the anniversary of Augustus's birth the shadow cast by the obelisk would point directly into the doorway of another monument erected by Augustus, the Ara Pacis, the Altar of Peace.

Constructed between 13 BC and 9 BC, the Ara Pacis was an open-air altar enclosed by walls decorated with sculpture that celebrated the peace and prosperity that Augustus brought to Rome. The enclosure was rectangular, with the two short walls pierced by doors leading to the altar itself. On either side of the doors mythical scenes were carved. One depicts the hero Aeneas in the pious act of sacrifice, an indirect reference to Augustus, who counted Aeneas as an ancestor. Another scene depicts a woman, alternately identified as Tellus (Mother Earth) or Pax (Peace), seated with fruit in her lap and two babies in her arms. At her feet sit a placid cow and a contented

The Ara Pacis Augustae in Rome.

sheep. Flanking the woman are water nymphs. One, representing fresh water, rides a goose, and the other, representing salt water, sits atop a sea monster. The scene embodies peace, well-being, and prosperity in all environments, all thanks to the activities of Augustus. The style of the figures, particularly the seated woman, is deeply indebted to that of the Parthenon in Athens, once more reflecting the promise of a golden age in Rome like that in Greece.

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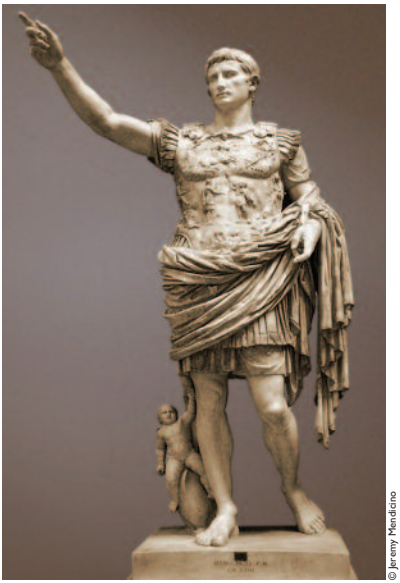
Detail of Mother Earth (Tellus) or Pax (Peace) from the Ara Pacis Augustae in Rome.

The long sides of the enclosure depict a more realistic scene: the procession of the members of the Senate and the family of Augustus. Once more the composition seems to have been influenced by sculpture from the Parthenon. Here can be identified members of Augustus's family, including children, whose presence not only embodies Augustus's dynastic ambitions, but also would have reminded the viewer of Augustus's legislation designed to encourage childbirth.

It will come as no surprise that Augustus carefully orchestrated his own portraiture. Throughout his forty years of rule his image remained youthful and handsome, eschewing the Republican tradition of verism in favor of Greek idealism. His most famous portrait is known as the Prima Porta Augustus, named for its place of discovery in his wife's villa at Prima Porta. The statue is a marble copy of a bronze original of 20 BC and celebrates a victory over the Parthians (Persians) in the east. In this statue all the themes already explored come into play. Augustus stands in full armor, wearing an ornate breastplate, short leather kilt, and heavy cloak looped around his waist and right arm. Curiously, he stands barefoot, perhaps a reference to his divine lineage, which is certainly recalled by the winged baby riding a dolphin at Augustus's feet. This is a depiction



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Augustus of Prima Porta.

of Cupid, who, like Augustus, was descended from Venus. One of the scenes sculpted on Augustus's breastplate shows the capitulation of the leader of the Parthians to a Roman soldier. These figures hover above a recumbent female figure holding a cornucopia and above them are figures representing the heavens, the sun, and the moon. The message is clear: peace and prosperity throughout the land. The body of Augustus, stripped of its armor, is almost an exact copy of the body of one of the most celebrated statues of fifth-century BC Greece, the Doryphoros, or "Spear Bearer." Augustus's face also resembles that of the Doryphoros, with the same calm serenity and idealized appearance, but some of Augustus's true appearance shines through. His broad forehead, narrow chin, and somewhat prominent ears make the Prima Porta Augustus seem flesh and blood.

Detail of the Prima Porta Augustus breastplate showing the capitulation of the Parthian leader to a Roman soldier.

Other portraits of Augustus share the same facial features and are instantly recognizable because of the careful pattern of the locks of his hair. One of the finest depicts Augustus in the role of priest. Here he wears a toga drawn over his hair in a hood, a reference to the act of sacrifice when the priest must cover his head. Although this statue was carved more than twenty years after the Prima Porta, Augustus's youthful features appear unchanged by the passage of time.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What was celebrated by the decorations in the Ara Pacis?
2. What is detailed on the Prima Portus Augustus breastplate?

Suggested Reading

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Other Books of Interest

Davies, Penelope J.E. *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004.

Levick, Barbara. *Augustus: Image and Substance*. London: Longman, 2010.

Websites of Interest

The *Ancient History Sourcebook* at Fordham University provides an idiomatic translation by William Stearns Davis (1913) of Augustus's *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* (ca. AD 14). The text—inscribed on marble in a building that was a temple of Augustus in Ankara, Turkey—was a copy of what is believed to have been an original inscribed on bronze set up before Augustus's mausoleum in Rome. The inscription is what Augustus wished to have regarded as the leading glories of his reign. —
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/14resgestae.html

Lecture 5

The Julio-Claudians, AD 14–68

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapter 4.

During his declining years Augustus had adopted his two grandsons by his daughter Julia to be his heirs. Unfortunately, both these young men predeceased Augustus, which left him little alternative than to adopt his stepson Tiberius to succeed him. Tiberius's full name was Tiberius Claudius Nero, but his adoption by Augustus brought him into the Julian family as well. Thus Tiberius and the family members who ruled after him are known as the Julio-Claudians. Before Augustus's death Tiberius was active with the army, fighting in Gaul (France) and elsewhere. Although an able soldier and popular with the troops, he did not like life in Rome. Consequently, during his twenty-three-year rule (AD 14–37), he spent little time in the city, preferring isolated villas. He did, however, construct the first royal palace in Rome, located on the Palatine Hill near the house of Augustus, who lived in a modest dwelling next to a hut believed to have been the house of Romulus (perhaps the antique remains of a Villanovan hut). Little survives of Tiberius's palace, the Domus Tiberiana, but it is noteworthy because it is the first of many royal residences on the Palatine, the hill whose name gives us the word "palace."

Much as Augustus had deified Julius Caesar, the Senate declared Augustus a god upon his death. Tiberius, as Augustus's heir, did much to support this idea and to connect himself closely with his predecessor. Tiberius built a temple to Augustus and modeled his own portraits on those of his adoptive father. A small but telling artifact known as the Gemma Augustea (a cameo measuring 7 by 9 inches) celebrates Tiberius's fitness to rule. The cameo has two registers; the upper one depicts Augustus enthroned in the trappings of Jupiter, holding a scepter with an eagle at his feet. He is seated next to a female figure, Roma, the personification of the city, and is being crowned by Oikoumene, the personification of the civilized world. Nearby Tiberius, emperor elect, steps out of a chariot, returning from war. The lower register depicts defeated Germans, quelled by the new emperor.

Crowning of Augustus is depicted in the top register of the Gemma Augustea.

Tiberius died childless and was succeeded by his nephew Gaius, nicknamed Caligula for the diminutive army boots he wore as a child. He began his rule well but after a mysterious illness he became cruel, debauched, and insane. During his four-year rule, Caligula (AD 37–41) did little building in Rome, although he planned to build a bridge from the Domus Tiberiana on the Palatine to the Capitoline Hill in order to connect himself with Jupiter, because he believed himself to be divine. He began the construction of several aqueducts and began a racetrack, the Circus of Gaius, whose location is now covered by the Vatican. To decorate the track Caligula brought an obelisk from Egypt, one that today occupies the center of the circular piazza of Saint Peter's. Eventually some members of the senate, together with the palace soldiers, the Praetorian Guard, assassinated Caligula.

According to tradition, after Caligula's murder, one of the guards found the dead emperor's uncle cowering behind a curtain. This man, Claudius, was the grandnephew of Augustus, but because he suffered from some physical deformities he had never taken a role in politics, but instead had devoted himself to writing history. Because of Claudius's lineage, the Praetorian Guard proclaimed him Emperor. Although Claudius was not groomed for public life his reign (AD 41–54) was a successful one, in which much new territory was added to the Empire, including Mauretania, Judaea, Lycia, and Britannia. He was responsible for many necessary public works, completing the aqueduct begun by Caligula, the Aqua Claudia, which tapped a water source in the hills forty-five miles from Rome. The water, propelled by the force of the spring and by gravity, flowed downhill along the natural slope of the land. Although much of the channel was underground, as the aqueduct approached Rome and the elevation dropped precipitously, the water channel was raised on stone arches to maintain the gentle gradient. The section of the Aqua Claudia that entered Rome is today known as the Porta Maggiore. Here the masonry of the supporting arches takes on a rough-hewn look, as if it was extremely old and weathered. This is an intentional treatment called rustication, a style favored by Claudius, perhaps a reflection of his antiquarian taste.

The Porta Maggiore as it appears today.

Claudius's successor was his nephew Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, better known as Nero. A great lover of the arts, Nero prided himself as being a great musician and poet. In AD 64, a fire swept through Rome, destroying most of the city. Legend has it that Nero watched the conflagration from safety, singing of the burning of the ancient city of Troy. The cause of the fire was unclear, and some even blamed Nero. Eventually, responsibility fell upon the adherents to a new cult, the Christians, who were rounded up and executed. During this first Christian persecution Saint Peter lost his life, executed in the Circus of Gaius, the racetrack under the Vatican. One positive result of the fire was Nero's institution of new building codes that limited the heights of buildings, encouraged the use of fire-resistant brick, and saw the construction of more cisterns and the broadening of streets to aid in fire fighting. However, Nero also confiscated a huge portion of the burned-out city for his own personal use. His villa, known as the Domus Aurea (Golden House), stretched over three-hundred fifty acres and included an artificial lake, a parkland for animals, and a palace. The architects, Severus and Celer, were given free rein to explore the full potential of concrete, and the portions of the villa that still survive consist of rooms of unusual shape and design. One of these rooms, the so-called Octagonal Room, was an eight-sided structure with a concrete vault supported by narrow piers. Apertures behind the piers allowed light to enter the vaulted zone and a round opening, or oculus, pierced the top of the vault. The light that filled the room gave the illusion that the vault was floating in air. One ancient description of the Domus Aurea mentions a dining room that revolved and sprinkled perfume and rose petals on the diners. Until recently scholars have believed this to be an exaggeration, but in 2009, at the foot of the Aventine Hill, traces of such a building were discovered: a round structure with a mechanism that caused its slow revolution. When his Golden House was completed Nero was said to exclaim, "At last I can begin to live like a human being!"

The Octagonal Room of the Golden House of Nero.

Under the early principate attention began to be paid to the provinces, regions that for the most part had been gained through conquest. Although some Roman families immigrated to these territories and retained their Roman citizenship, most people living in the provinces had little connection with Rome and few rights under Roman law. These regions retained their customs, language, and religion, but over time became somewhat Romanized, often through the construction of Roman-type buildings that would house

Roman-type institutions. In the city of Nimes (ancient Nemausis) in the province of Narbonensis, in southern France, stands one of the best-preserved temples in the Roman world, the Maison Carree. The design of this temple is very close to that of the second century BC temple of Portunus in Rome, with a high podium, a deep porch, and engaged columns, although those of the Maison Carree are Corinthian, not Ionic. The temple was dedicated to the worship of Gaius and Lucius, the grandsons of Augustus. Starting with Augustus it became standard for the emperor and his family to be worshiped in the provinces while alive, although in Rome and Italy the emperor was usually worshiped after death, and only if he had been a good ruler.

Just as Rome was equipped with many aqueducts, during the first century AD many provincial cities gained such amenities as well. Under the Julio-Claudians an aqueduct was constructed to carry water a distance of thirty miles to the city of Nimes. For much of its journey the water flowed through a channel, or *specus*, laid along the gently sloping hillside. At one point, however, the aqueduct needed to cross over the River Gardon, so there the *specus* had to be supported on a double row of stone arches. Today the so-called Pont du Gard is one of the most impressive examples of a Roman aqueduct anywhere in the world.

A portion of the Roman aqueduct at Pont du Gard near Nimes, France.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What is rustication?
2. What type of columns are featured in the Maison Carree?

Suggested Reading

Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Barrett, Anthony A. *Caligula: The Corruption of Power*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.

Champlin, Edward. *Nero*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005.

Seager, Robin. *Tiberius*. Blackwell Ancient Lives. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

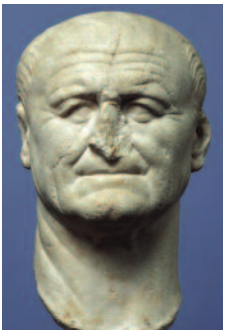
Websites of Interest

1. Marquette University (Milwaukee) website provides the text of Tacitus's *Annals*. Books I through VI include the life of Emperor Tiberius. — http://mcadams.posc.mu.edu/txt/ah/Tacitus/index.htm
2. The BBC History website features a detailed article on Gaius Julius Caesar Germanicus (Caligula). — http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/caligula.shtml
3. The State University of New York (University at Buffalo) provides a series of images showing different views of Nero's Domus Aurea (Golden House). — http://wings.buffalo.edu/AandL/Maecenas/rome/domus_aurea/thumbnails_contents.html

Lecture 6

The Flavians, AD 69–98

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapter 5.



Vespasian

To fund his extravagant building program, Nero raised taxes, which caused rebellions throughout the empire. Finally, the Praetorian Guard, in league with a revolting faction, forced Nero to kill himself. With Nero died the last of the Julio-Claudians. The year after Nero's death, AD 68–69, is often called the "Year of Four Emperors," as four men, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian, briefly became emperor thanks to the support of their army or the Praetorian Guard. Only the last of these, Titus Flavius Vespasianus, or Vespasian, managed to maintain control of the empire and found a new dynasty, the Flavians.

Unlike the Julio-Claudians, Vespasian was not an aristocrat. He was the son of a tax collector and a man of simple habits who had risen through the ranks in the army. In AD 67, shortly before his suicide, Nero named Vespasian governor of the province of Judaea, chiefly so that he could put down a Jewish revolt. Vespasian was still in the process of suppressing the Jews when his army declared him emperor and he departed for Rome, leaving his son Titus to finally squash the revolt.

Vespasian's ten-year rule (AD 69–79) brought stability back to Rome. From Nero he had inherited a bankrupt city, but Vespasian's shrewdness, efficiency, and imaginative taxation (he instituted the first pay toilets) gave him the means to beautify the city. He constructed a new forum-like complex, placed at right angles to the Forum of Augustus, the so-called Templum Pacis (Temple of Peace). The deity worshiped there was the goddess Pax, a reference to the peace brought to Rome by the new dynasty, echoing Augustus's message of nearly a century earlier. The complex also celebrated the capture of Jerusalem that took place in AD 70, serving as a museum displaying trophies from the Jewish War.

Vespasian distanced himself and his family from the memory of Nero; he refused to live in the Domus Aurea and turned much of the land taken up by Nero's villa back to the people of Rome. Where Nero had constructed his artificial lake, Vespasian built what is today perhaps the most famous building in Rome, the Colosseum. Known in its own time as the Flavian Amphitheater, it gained the name of Colosseum in the Middle Ages because of a colossal statue that stood nearby. This was the first permanent amphitheater in Rome and was an arena designed for entertainment, including mock sea battles, animal shows, and gladiatorial combat. Constructed from AD 72 to 80, the building was oval with a steeply stepped seating arrangement that held over fifty thou-

sand spectators. To help with crowd control there were eighty exits and numerous interior passageways that would allow easy access to seats. The seats were supported on concrete vaults radiating out from the center of the structure, but the exterior of the Colosseum was decorated with a stone facing of travertine, exhibiting superimposed entablatures of the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian Orders. At the center was the arena, which originally consisted of a wooden floor covered with sand. Below were subterranean galleries where props could be stored and where wild animals could be contained until they were sent by ramps up onto the arena floor. In hot or wet weather, a canvas awning was stretched across the seating area of the Colosseum to protect the audience from the elements. Gladiatorial combat had long been part of Roman life. Originally part of the funeral of an

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Closeup of the outside façade of the Colosseum.

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Interior of the Colosseum in Rome.

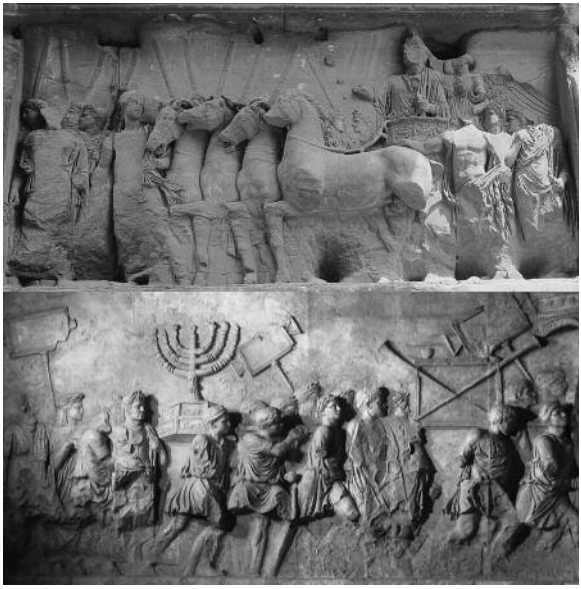
important personage, gradually it developed into a favorite entertainment, where slaves, trained to fight, would vie with one another or animals. The completion of the Colosseum witnessed one hundred days of games in which nine thousand animals were slaughtered.

Vespasian was known for his practical nature and his portraits reflect these qualities. Whereas the Julio-Claudians modeled their portraits on the idealized image of Augustus, Vespasian preferred a veristic image, with a seamed face weathered by war, a thin, determined mouth, and small, shrewd eyes. He was also known for his humor. When he lay on his deathbed after ten years of successful rule, he is said to have declared, "I fear I am becoming a god!" Certainly the senate accorded divine status to this practical leader who pulled the empire out of financial ruin.

Vespasian's elder son Titus, a man who had gained popularity by successfully completing the Jewish War, inherited the throne. Unfortunately, he died of disease, perhaps malaria, at the age of forty-two, having only ruled for two years. Titus left no heir, so the succession fell upon his younger brother Domitian, whose fifteen-year rule (AD 81–96) proved to be one of the worst experienced by Rome. Among his many offenses, Domitian adopted the title *Deus et Dominus*, Lord and God, and demanded to be worshiped while alive. Nevertheless, he honored the memory of his elder brother, constructing the Arch of Titus, which celebrated the deification of Titus and Titus's triumph over Jerusalem. The freestanding arch had a single vaulted passageway. The frieze above the vault represented the triumphant march of Titus and Vespasian into Rome. Two scenes were carved on the inner walls of the arched passageway. One depicted Titus entering Rome on his chariot. The artist of this scene manages to create the illusion of depth, as Titus's four-horse chariot seems to turn a corner. Although the head of Titus is missing, a figure of Nike, the personification of victory, hovers behind him, crowning him with a wreath. An armed woman, Roma, the mythical representative of the city, walks before the chariot, leading the way through a throng of soldiers. The other scene depicts a triumphal parade celebrating the defeat of the Jews and the sack of Jerusalem. The scene shows soldiers marching through

The Arch of Titus, Rome.

the streets carrying spoils from the war, sacred objects from the Temple of Jerusalem, including the great menorah. Once again the artist is able to convey great depth on this flat surface by showing the men make a slight turn to march through a triumphal arch, similar to the one the sculpture adorns. On the vault of the arch Titus is shown being carried on the back of an eagle, a reference to his deification, or apotheosis.



Relief sculptures from the Arch of Titus. Top: Titus entering Rome. Bottom: The Menorah Procession.

Domitian's most impressive architectural endeavor was his renovation of the old Domus Tiberiana, the palace on the Palatine Hill. Here the gifted architect Rabirius leveled the whole top of the hill to create space for the Domus Flavia, an official palace, and the Domus Augustana, a private wing. Together they covered an area of 440,000 square feet. Rabirius was a master of concrete and used this flexible material to create rooms of unusual shape that curved and undulated, fitting together like a jigsaw puzzle. The Domus Flavia contained a throne room, where Domitian could sit in a deep niche, in divine splendor, as well as dining rooms with fountains in the form of boats. The concrete was faced with thin veneers of marble coming from as far away as Africa and the Aegean. Rumor had it that Domitian made sure the white marble walls maintained a high gloss, so that he might see the reflection of any would-be assassins attacking from behind. The Domus Augustana, the private quarters, were furnished with fountains and gardens (one taking the form of a stadium), as well as dining rooms. One of the most innovative rooms was an octagon with each of the eight walls describing a curve, so that the plan resembled a rosette. With the Domus Flavia, concrete had come into its own.

Domitian began killing important Romans, allegedly for treason, but in reality to confiscate their goods. Eventually a conspiracy that included his servants, bodyguard, and wife arranged his murder. At his death he was so hated that the Senate passed a law to erase the record of his name from all parts of the Roman world, an edict known as a *damnatio memoriae*. His death marked the end of the Flavian dynasty.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. How did Vespasian bring stability back to Rome?
2. What two scenes were carved on the inner walls of the Arch of Titus?

Suggested Reading

Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

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Suetonius. *Suetonius: The Flavian Emperors: A Historical Commentary with Translation and Introduction.* Trans. Brian Jones. Intro. Robert Milns. London: Duckworth Publishing, 2002.

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Websites of Interest

1. *The Roman Empire in the First Century* on the PBS website provides a detailed article with links on Vespasian. — http://www.pbs.org/empires/romans/empire/vespasian.html
2. Livius website features information on the reign of Domition, including resource links for the Arch of Titus, contemporary events, and personalities associated with him. — http://www.livius.org/do-dz/domitian/domitian.html

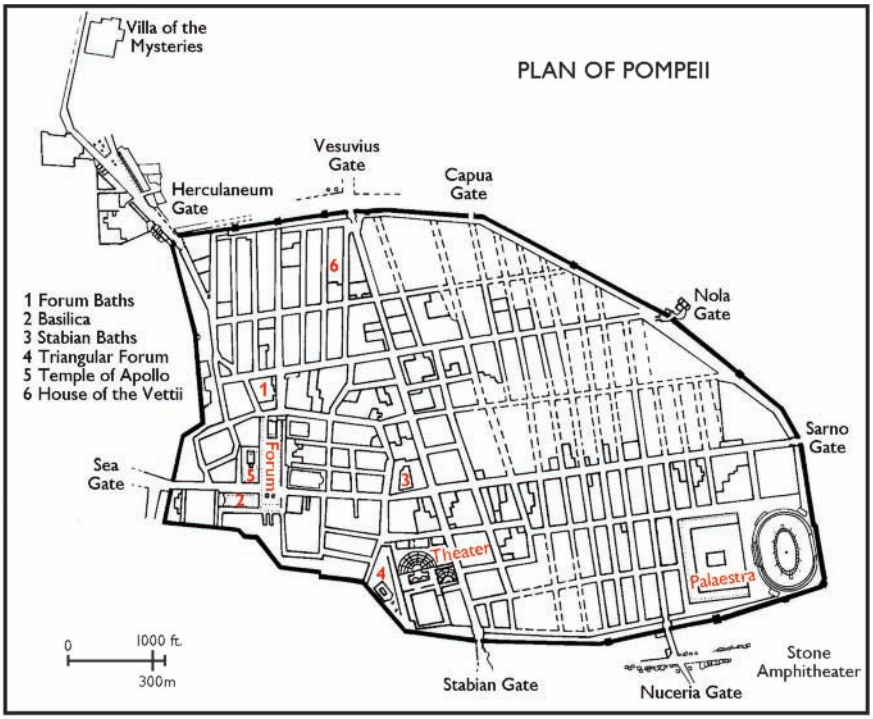
Lecture 7

Pompeii, AD 79

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapter 5.

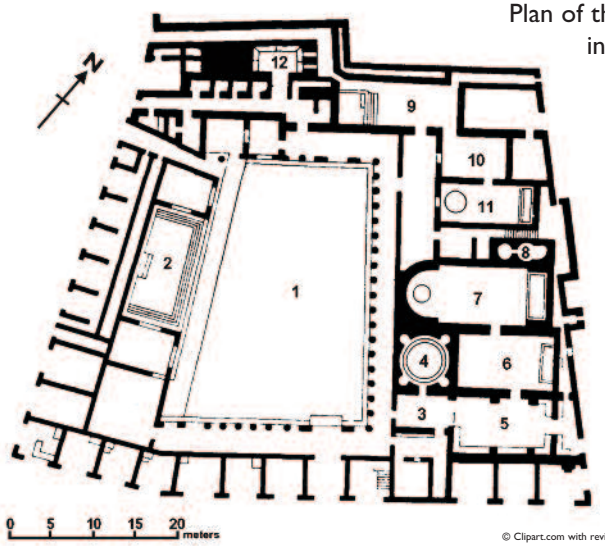
Certainly one of the most important events under the Flavians was the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, which destroyed several cities in the Bay of Naples. The most famous of these is Pompeii, whose excavation has vividly illuminated what life was like in a small town in the first century AD. Located some one hundred twenty-five miles south of Rome in a fertile plain near the sea, Pompeii had existed since the eighth century BC. First occupied by native Italians, influenced by Greeks in the sixth century, and overrun by Samnites in the fifth century, Pompeii was converted into a Roman colony in 80 BC. In AD 62, an earthquake greatly damaged the city, a harbinger of the great disaster to come seventeen years later when the eruption of Mount Vesuvius buried Pompeii and the neighboring towns with ash. The city was rediscovered in the eighteenth century and has been under excavation ever since.

The city of Pompeii was organized on a grid, with paved streets meeting at right angles. A wall pierced by gates surrounded the city, and tombs lined the



roads leading out of town. Like any Roman town, Pompeii possessed a forum that served a variety of public needs. Aggrandized in the second century BC and added to continually until the city's destruction, it was a rectangular space dominated by a Temple of Jupiter, modeled on the Capitoleum temple in Rome. To the southeast of the forum lay the theater district of Pompeii, where a large open air theater, similar to the Theater of Pompey in Rome, sat alongside a smaller roofed theater known as an odeum, used for more intimate performances, such as concerts and recitations. On the far eastern edge of town lay the amphitheater for gladiatorial combat. Built in 80 BC, over one hundred fifty years before the Flavian Amphitheater in Rome, this structure was much smaller and simpler than the Colosseum, with staircases on the exterior and no interior chambers under the arena.

The ruins at Pompeii preserve the earliest known example of a Roman bath building, the so-called Stabian Baths. Constructed in the second century BC over an earlier bath building of the fourth century, the Stabian Baths present an introduction to what eventually would become one of Rome's greatest pastimes, bathing. The bath occupied a city block at whose center was a courtyard, the *palaestra*, used for athletic activities. A visitor to the bath would first enter the changing room, the *apodyterium*, equipped with niches for the storage of clothing and other belongings. Then he might go outside to the *palaestra* and work up a sweat, possibly cooling down in the pool to one side of the courtyard, the *natatio*. After leaving the *palaestra* the bathing process was a carefully orchestrated progression from cold to hot, with the bather entering first an unheated room, the *frigidarium*, then moving to a warm room, the *tepidarium*, and then going on to a hot room, the *caldarium*. From there he would reverse his steps, going back through the rooms, returning to the changing room to

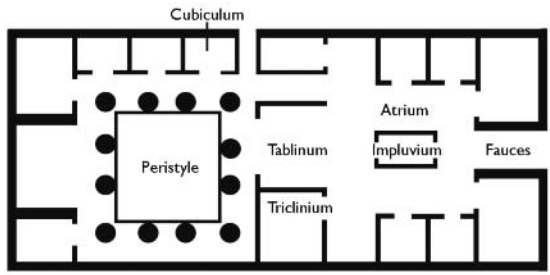


Plan of the Stabian Baths in Pompeii

1 *Palaestra*
2 *Natatio*
3 Entrance Hall
4 *Frigidarium*
5 Changing room
6 *Tepidarium*
7 *Caldarium*
8 Furnaces
9 Women's dressing room
10 Women's *tepidarium*
11 Women's *caldarium*
12 Latrine

retrieve his clothes and resume his day. Initially, portable braziers heated the warm and hot rooms, but around 100 BC the hypocaust system of heating was developed. This entailed a suite of subterranean rooms in one section of the baths that contained a wood-stoked furnace. The hot air from the furnace was funneled into the substructure of the caldarium, whose floor rested on stone or brick pillars. The hot air circulating beneath the floor heated the room from below. Vertical pipes in the walls of the *tepidarium* and *caldarium* allowed the hot air to escape through the roof of the bath, while at the same time provided radiant heat within the walls. Although sometimes men and women bathed together, it was more common for Roman baths to have a separate section for men and women (the latter usually smaller), or for women to bathe at specific times of the day or week. Most men would visit the baths every day, as it provided a good place to conduct business and socialize.

Pompeii provides an important window into the private lives of the Romans. Whereas few houses have been excavated in Rome, at Pompeii one can study the development of domestic structures. A typical Roman house was entered off the street via a passageway known as the *fauces,* which opened into a central hall, the *atrium*. The *atrium* was open to the sky, and a pool, or *impluvium*, designed to catch rainwater, occupied much of its center. Surrounding the atrium were small rooms, *cubicula*, which could serve as bedrooms. Across from the *fauces* was the main reception hall, the *tablinum*. There was a suite of rooms for food preparation and dining, and courtyards lined with colonnades containing gardens were located at the back of the house.



A typical Roman house plan.

At Pompeii archaeologists have been able to study the development of wall painting. The earliest and simplest wall decoration, known as the First Pompeian Style, consisted of plaster panels painted to resemble marble. This was the most common type of wall decoration in the second century BC, and a good example comes from the *tablinum* of the House of Sallust at Pompeii. Here, rectangular panels of plaster painted white, yellow, red, and green give the effect of a marble façade. The Second Pompeian Style developed in the first century BC and was concerned with realistic architectural façades, complete with columns, niches, and ledges that gave the wall a three-dimensional effect. Human figures also appeared in the architectural landscape. The finest example of this type of painting comes from a villa located just outside the walls of Pompeii, the so-called Villa of the Mysteries. Here a religious ceremony, involving marriage and the god of wine, Bacchus, was depicted, with life-size

figures of demigods and humans enacting a mysterious ritual within an architectural setting of red panels and mauve pilasters. The Third Pompeian Style, which becomes popular in the age of Augustus, develops out of the second style, but here the columns become attenuated and flimsy, creating an almost ornamental pattern on the walls. Usually the center of the wall contains a small vignette, an image of a tiny house, a miniature vista with trees or a shepherd and his flock. A fine example of the style comes from the villa at Boscotrecase, near Pompeii, where spindly golden columns that support a frail entablature enliven a black wall. Centered between the columns is a tiny landscape of a farmhouse. The Fourth Pompeian Style is a combination of styles two and three, where the architecture becomes more robust and frames fantastical vistas. The finest example of this style is found in the House of the Vettii, where, shortly before the destruction of the city, the walls of one of the dining rooms were painted with thin columns framing golden panels, each with an inset depicting mythological scenes, including the infant hero Hercules strangling snakes.

In addition to wall paintings, many houses at Pompeii preserve fine mosaic floors. The most impressive collection of mosaics comes from the House of the Faun, dating to the second or early first century BC. Although the walls of the house were decorated in the simple First Pompeian Style, many of the floors were covered with intricate images created from cubes of stone. Scenes include a cat catching a bird, food laid out for preparation in a kitchen, and most magnificent of all, a large historical panorama depicting Alexander the Great's defeat of King Darius of Persia at the Battle of Issus, a copy of a painting of 300 BC.

A portion of the floor mosaic of Alexander the Great defeating Persian king Darius at the Battle of Issus.

The vibrant city of Pompeii came to an abrupt end the morning of August 24, 79 AD. A letter written by an eyewitness to these events, Pliny the Younger, describes the events of that fateful day:

> [The volcanic cloud's] general appearance can best be expressed as being like an umbrella pine, for it rose to a great height on a sort of trunk and then split off into branches . . . Meanwhile on Mount Vesuvius fire and leaping flames blazed at several points, their bright glare emphasized by the darkness of night. . . . We saw the sea sucked away and apparently forced back from the shore . . . so that sea creatures were left stranded on dry land. On the landward side a fearful black cloud was rent by forked and quivering bursts of flame, and parted to reveal great tongues of fire-like flashes of lightning magnified in size.

For eighteen to twenty hours Pompeii endured a rain of ash that covered the town in nearly ten feet of debris. Then a cloud of superheated gas, ash, and rock, known as a pyroclastic flow, poured down the side of Mt. Vesuvius. The heat of the cloud, estimated at 850 degrees centigrade, would have asphyxiated and burned any living creature in its path. It is not known how many died at Pompeii. The remains of some eleven hundred bodies have been found, but it is likely that this is only a percentage of those who lost their lives in this terrible event.

Mt. Vesuvius looms as a backdrop from the ruins of the main Forum at Pompeii. Inset: Plaster casts of the remains of two victims of the 79 AD eruption.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What was the process followed in a Roman bath?
2. What constituted First Pompeian Style?

Suggested Reading

Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Beard, Mary. *The Fires of Vesuvius: Pompeii Lost and Found*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010.

Cooley, M.G.L., and Alison E. Cooley. *Pompeii: A Sourcebook*. Routledge Sourcebooks for the Ancient World. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Websites of Interest

1. The *Soprintendenza Archeologica Napoli e Pompei* is the Italian Ministry of Culture website devoted entirely to Pompeii, its art, culture, and remains. — http://www.pompeiisites.org
2. The *CyArk* website provides detailed information and images on Pompeii as a World Heritage Cultural Site. — http://archive.cyark.org/pompeii-info

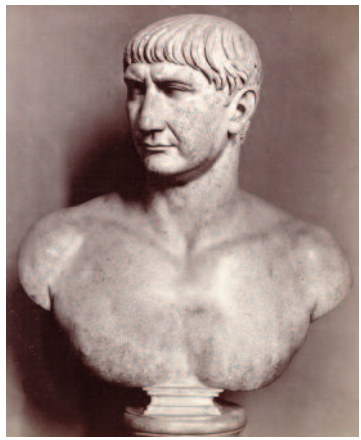
Lecture 8

Trajan, AD 98–117

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapter 6.

When Domitian was murdered the Senate had already chosen his successor, a sixty-year-old aristocrat called Nerva. The army, however, wanted a military leader to rule Rome, so Nerva was encouraged to adopt a successful soldier, Marcus Ulpius Trajanus (Trajan) as his heir. During his two-year rule (AD 96–98) Nerva proved to be a modest and able leader. His greatest achievement, however, was setting the precedent of adopting an able successor, a practice that would continue through much of the second century and one that ensured good leadership of Rome.

Nerva's successor, Trajan had been the commander of the upper regions of the Rhine and was very popular with the troops. Born in Spain but of Roman ancestry, he was forty-four years old when he came to the throne. Over his nearly twenty years of rule (AD 98–117) he expanded the Roman Empire to its greatest extent, conquering Dacia (Hungary), Armenia, and Parthia (Persia) and annexing Arabia, thus ensuring peace and prosperity at home in Italy. Not since Augustus had Rome seen such an emperor. He was greatly loved by the people, earning the nickname *optimus princeps*, "best leader."

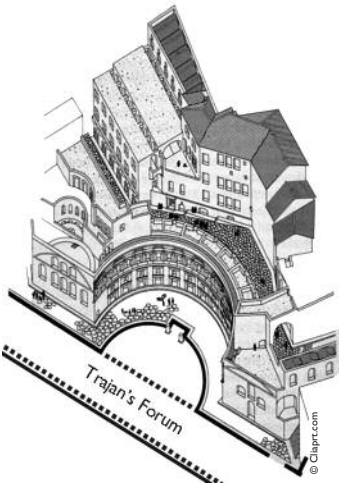


A late-nineteenth-century photograph of a portrait bust of Trajan.

Portraits of Trajan depict him as a mature figure, with a "bowl"-cut hairstyle and a fringe of bangs falling over a low forehead. In these unvarnished representations he has a pointed nose and a wide, thin-lipped mouth. The verism is somewhat mitigated by the fact that most of the portrait busts depict the general bare-chested, a reference to the heroic quality of the man.

The engineer who accompanied Trajan on his many campaigns was Apollodorus of Damascus, who also served as his architect back in Rome. One of Trajan's grandest projects was the creation of Imperial Thermae, or grand baths. Significantly, these were constructed above the abandoned remains of Nero's Domus Aurea and consisted of a huge bathing suite enclosed by a perimeter wall, measuring over one thousand feet on each side. The bath contained the elements of a standard bath, such as in the Stabian Baths at Pompeii, but writ much larger. At its core was a huge pool, a natatio, off which ran the typical suite of bathing rooms, the *frigidarium*, *tepidarium*, and

caldarium. Symmetrically arranged on either side of this block were suites containing a *palaestra*, changing rooms, lecture halls, dining rooms, and gardens. For a minimal fee anyone could use these lavish amenities, and Trajan's generosity was greatly appreciated.



A reconstructed anoxometric projection view of the Markets of Trajan.

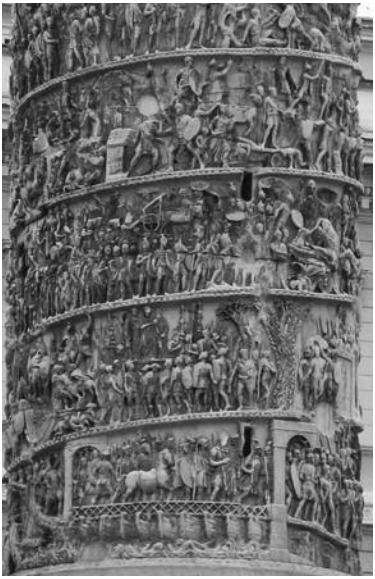
Trajan also constructed a multilevel series of shops to serve the needs of the populace. Designed by Apollodorus, the market was constructed of brick-faced concrete over three terraces, and comprised one hundred fifty shops and offices. The lowest section of the market wrapped around a broad semicircular space, part of the forum also constructed by Trajan. Above and slightly inset, the Via Biberetica (a modern name meaning Pepper Street) followed the same curve, with shops angling off this paved road. At a higher level was a broad two-story hallway, the Aula, flanked by two levels of shops. The Aula was roofed with six groin vaults (intersecting barrel vaults). Small apertures on the upper walls allowed light to illuminate the space. Like Rabirius before him, Apollodorus was a master of concrete construction. It is likely that the Aula served as the center for one of Trajan's charitable institutions, the *alimenta*, which provided free food to the poor, especially children.

Like many emperors before him, Trajan constructed a forum for public use and for propagandistic purposes. Built from the spoils of the Dacian War and dedicated in AD 113, the magnificent Forum of Trajan celebrated his military exploits. Accessed via the Forum of Augustus, some features of Trajan's forum were inspired by the forum of his great predecessor. At one end of the forum was a large courtyard flanked by colonnades, containing broad *exedrae*, like those of the Forum of Augustus. As was the case with Augustus's forum, the upper floors of Trajan's colonnades had human-shaped columns, statues of Dacian prisoners. At the center of the courtyard stood a statue of Trajan on horseback.

The courtyard led to a basilica, set perpendicular to the axis of the forum. The basilica form had long been used by the Romans, particularly in the context of the forum, where it served a multiplicity of functions, such as a banking house, a law court, and an assembly hall. Called the Basilica Ulpia, after Trajan's family name, the structure

Interior of the great hall of the Markets of Trajan in Rome, ca. 100–112 CE.

measured five hundred eighty-six feet long. Its two short sides also ended in *exedrae*, and the interior was lavishly decorated with colored marble, and a ceiling of gilded bronze. Sculpted reliefs above the interior colonnade of the building featured images of Victories slaying bulls. Beyond the basilica stood a courtyard flanked by two libraries, one devoted to Greek literature and one to Latin. Between them stood a column, nearly one hundred feet tall, covered with relief sculpture documenting Trajan's campaign against the Dacians. The reliefs appear as a narrow band that winds its way to the top of the column, where a statue of Trajan stood. The column is carved with some twenty-five hundred figures that reenact life on campaign. Some of the scenes depict the mundane realities of camp life, horses being picketed, the pitching of tents, the building of barricades, while others celebrate the accomplishments of battle, the siege of a Dacian fortress, the capture of enemy soldiers, the suicide of the Dacian king. Throughout is the figure of Trajan, making speeches, encouraging his troops, plotting his victory. The narrative begins at the bottom of the column, with the fording of the Danube River over a bridge of boats. The personification of the river god is depicted rearing up from his watery domain, dripping wet, looking on as the Roman army makes its fateful crossing.



Detail view of Trajan's Column in Rome.

In 100, Trajan founded a colony named Thamugadi in what is today Algeria. Now called by its modern name of Timgad, it was designed to be a home for military veterans, thus rewarding loyal soldiers with land while maintaining a stabilizing presence on the edge of the empire. The plan of the city is based on the old castrum design and all standard public amenities were present: forum, baths, library, theater, markets. Square city blocks were reached by a gridwork of streets, the important ones lined with colonnades. During the second century AD, the colonnaded street became a standard element of Roman provincial architecture. Outside the walls of the city stood the Capitoleum Temple, on a high podium and containing three cellas, based on the temple in Rome, now nearly six hundred years old.

Trajan died returning from his campaign against Parthia. He took sick while sailing along the coast of Cilicia (today in Turkey). He had no son to succeed him, so on his deathbed he named as his heir an adult cousin, a man named Hadrian. Trajan was cremated and his ashes brought back to Rome, where they were placed in a golden urn and interred within the sculpted column that graced his forum.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What was Nerva's greatest achievement?
2. What was at the center of the courtyard in the Forum of Trajan?

Suggested Reading

Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Bennett, Julian. *Trajan: Optimus Princeps*. 2nd ed. Roman Imperial Biographies. London: Routledge, 2000.

Grainger, John D. *Nerva and the Roman Succession Crisis of AD 96–99*. Roman Imperial Biographies. London: Routledge, 2004.

Surhone, Lambert M., Miriam T. Timpledon, and Susan F. Marseken, eds. *Trajan's Column: Trajan's Column, Roman Empire, Trajan, Roman Senate, Apollodorus of Damascus, Trajan's Forum*. Beau Bassin, Mauritius: Betascript Publishing, 2010.

Websites of Interest

1. *Roman Empire* website article on Emperor Trajan. — http://www.roman-empire.net/highpoint/trajan.html
2. The architecture website *Great Buildings* provides a short biography on Trajan's architect Apollodorus of Damascus. — http://www.greatbuildings.com/architects/Apollodorus_of_Damascus.html

Lecture 9

Hadrian, AD 117–138

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapter 7.

Marble bust of Roman emperor Hadrian, from the Diktynna sanctuary in Crete, ca. second century AD.

Trajan's successor Publius Aelius Hadrianus, or Hadrian, was another Spaniard. His twenty-year reign began poorly, with the violent suppression of a faction in Rome that was against his succession. His fascination with Greek culture was also controversial, as was his decision to abandon the provinces of Armenia, Assyria, and Mesopotamia, recently created by Trajan, on the belief that these frontiers could not be held. While other emperors in the past had passed through certain provinces while on military campaign, Hadrian was the first emperor since Augustus to tour all the provinces in order to inspect their administration. He made three journeys, traveling west to the Atlantic and east to the Euphrates, north to the Danube and south to the Sudan. Many of the places he visited benefited from his largess. For example, while inspecting the distant province of Britain he ordered the construction of a wall to protect the provincials from northern barbarian raids. Unlike Trajan, Hadrian was involved in few military campaigns. Near the end of his life, however, he was forced to put down yet another Jewish uprising, the famous Bar-Kochba revolt, resulting in Hadrian's only major war.

Portraits of Hadrian broke out in a new direction. Since the time of Augustus, all emperors had been depicted clean-shaven, but Hadrian's portraits showed him wearing a full beard. Although it was speculated in his own day that the beard was adopted in order to hide blemished skin, it is more likely that his beard reflected his admiration for Greek philosophy, the beard being the attribute of wise thinkers. His portraits also show him with a full head of curling hair, deeply undercut to provide depth and shadow. For the first time the pupils of the eye are picked out with a carved dot and the outline of the iris is incised. Previously these features would have been represented in paint. Later emperors and private individuals would model their portraits on that of Hadrian.

Although Hadrian had a wife, Sabina, his deep affection went to a young man from Bithynia (Turkey) named Antinous. Antinous accompanied Hadrian on several of his provincial tours, but in AD 130 the youth drowned mysteriously in

the Nile. Hadrian went into deep mourning, and instituted a cult in Antinous's honor. Consequently, numerous portraits exist depicting the youth in divine persona, with the attributes of other gods such as Sylvanus the god of agriculture, Bacchus, the god of wine, and Osiris the Egyptian god of death and resurrection. Antinous's own features, a broad chest, thick neck, richly curling hair, and fleshy chin are always recognizable. From a building in Rome come a series of sculptures, the so-called Hunting Tondos, round reliefs that depict scenes of Hadrian and Antinous in happier days, riding, hunting, and making sacrifices to the gods in the countryside. The extent of Hadrian's grief at Antinous's loss can be measured by the fact that throughout the Roman world, no other non-imperial figure engendered so many portraits.

© Michael Natale/National Museum of Rome

Antinous as Sylvanus harvesting grapes. Marble relief, 130–138 CE.

Hadrian was an amateur architect, designing at least one building in Rome, the Temple of Venus and Roma, completed in AD 135. Intended to resemble a Greek temple, it was constructed by workmen imported from Greek Asia Minor. Unlike typical Roman temples, it did not rest on a raised platform, but on three low steps. The two goddesses were worshiped in two separate *cellas* arranged back to back, one facing eastward and the other facing to the west. The unorthodox plan and huge (it measured 52 by 105 meters), but squat, proportions elicited the criticism of Trajan's architect, Apollodorus. In one ancient tradition, Hadrian had the man executed for his unkind words.

Hadrian also gave rein to his passion for architecture at his villa at Tivoli, located not far from Rome. Here within the gently rolling landscape Hadrian created a personal escape, enlivened with buildings, fountains, and gardens, many of which were inspired by favorite places he had visited in his provincial journeys. Several buildings in his villa were named after famous Athenian centers of learning, the Academy, the Lyceum, and the Poikile, although they were not exact copies of the Greek structures. In Athens, the Stoa Poikile was a simple hallway, but at Tivoli the Poikile was a large colonnaded court with a deep pool in its center. Some buildings at Tivoli did directly copy structures in the

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A view of the canal at Hadrian's villa in Tivoli.

provinces. For example, to house the Aphrodite of Praxiteles, one of the most celebrated of all Greek statues, he copied the round temple in which the statue originally stood.

One interesting building at the villa is the so-called Maritime Theater, a small suite of bedrooms. Reached by narrow bridges that led across a moat, the complex was a round island surrounded by a circular colonnade. Small rooms, delineated by curving porticoes, created a maze of convex and concave spaces, allowing no straight lines. Another equally imaginative use of space was a long pool with a dining room at one end, often called the Canopus because of the modern belief that it was modeled on the Canopus Canal in Egypt, the place where Antinous drowned. The pool was surrounded by columns, some of which took the form of Greek caryatids inspired by those of the Erechtheion in Athens. Elsewhere statues of crocodiles provided an exotic aspect to the pool. At the far end of the pool stood a semicircular structure vaulted with a concrete half dome. Rather than a smooth half-vault, here the vault was created with lobed sections. Apollodorus of Damascus not only criticized Hadrian's Temple of Venus and Roma, he also scorned the "pumpkin domes" created by the emperor. Segmented vaults such as this one may have been the cause of his remark.

The most famous building associated with Hadrian was the Pantheon in Rome. Constructed between AD 118 and AD 128 as a temple to all the gods, it was actually the rebuilding of an older temple of the same name, built in the reign of Augustus. It consisted of two components, a columnar porch and a rotunda. Its original setting, however, at the end of a narrow court, allowed a view only of the rectangular front porch and masked the presence of the round building behind. The Pantheon is thought to be the culmination of con-

Interior view of a portion of the rotunda ceiling of the Pantheon, which was first built in 27 BC by Agrippa and rebuilt by Hadrian.

crete architecture, quite simply because its enormous dome, pierced by an opening, or oculus, twenty-seven feet wide, is still standing. A concrete foundation, thirty feet thick, supported the Pantheon's walls of brick-faced concrete. The dome was also of concrete, but here the mortar was mixed with pumice, a strong but lightweight volcanic material. The round oculus in the ceiling provided the only light for the temple, light that shifted across the interior with the movement of the sun. When the Pantheon was converted into a Christian church in the seventh century, few changes were made to its interior; the colored marble plating of the walls and floor survive. Therefore the Pantheon is the best surviving example of how a Roman temple would have appeared.

Hadrian died near Naples and was buried in a mausoleum that he had constructed on the banks of the Tiber north of the Mausoleum of Augustus. Augustus's tomb had served as the final resting place for nearly all the subsequent Emperors and their families, but by now was full. Hadrian's Mausoleum followed the same tumulus-type plan, with a mound of earth planted with trees at the top, surmounted by a statue of Hadrian in a chariot. In the Middle Ages it was converted to the fortress of Castel Sant'Angelo.

In addition to being an amateur architect, Hadrian was also a poet. Although little of his work survives today, there is a poem reputedly written on his deathbed:

O winsome wandering soul
Guest and friend of the body
To what place now are you going
Stern, pale and empty?
You will be able to joke no more.

The Mausoleum of Hadrian in Rome was completed in 140 AD and is now the Castel Sant'Angelo. The bridge over the Tiber (at the right of the image) was also built during the time of Hadrian.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What spurred Hadrian's only major war?
2. What are the components of the Pantheon?

Suggested Reading

Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Boatwright, Mary T. *Hadrian and the Cities of the Roman Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Opper, Thorsten. *Hadrian: Empire and Conflict*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008.

Websites of Interest

1. *Archaeology* magazine article (with images from the Sagalassos Archaeological Research Project) entitled "Major Find at Sagalassos: Colossal Statue of the Emperor Hadrian Discovered." Sagalassos is located in south central Turkey. — http://www.archaeology.org/online/features/hadrian
2. The British Museum provides a video of its exhibit "Hadrian: Empire and Conflict." The site has several other videos on Hadrian accessible through the "Videos about Hadrian" link on the left of the page. — http://www.britishmuseum.org/whats_on/all_current_exhibitions/hadrian_empire_and_conflict/videos_about_hadrian/an_emperors_love.aspx

Lecture 10

The Roman East in the Second Century

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapters 7 and 8.

Although Hadrian traveled all over the empire, one city that received his particular favor was Athens. Part of the Roman province of Achaea, the city was politically unimportant, but was a center for education and the arts. Augustus had also been a benefactor to Athens, completing a market begun by Julius Caesar, and constructing an odeum, or music hall. The city responded by building a small round temple dedicated to Roma and Augustus on the Acropolis, next to the great temple of Athena, the Parthenon.

Hadrian continued Augustus's pattern of munificence by constructing several temples in Athens, as well as a gymnasium, a library, and an aqueduct system. He also completed the Temple of Olympian Zeus in AD 132. The foundations of this giant temple had been begun in the sixth century BC, and some work on the building had been carried out in the second century BC, but it was Hadrian who finally completed the temple, surrounding the cella with a colonnade of Corinthian columns that measured fifty-five and a half feet high. Within the temple was a gold and ivory statue of Zeus, the equivalent of the Roman god Jupiter. Around the outside of the temple were dozens of statues and altars dedicated to Hadrian, referring to him as the Olympian, thus combining the

Temple of Olympian Zeus in Athens. The Acropolis can be seen in the background.

worship of the emperor with that of the god. Nearby, the people of Athens set up an archway over the road that led between the Sanctuary of Olympian Zeus and the Acropolis. As one passed under the arch going toward the Zeus temple one would read, "This is Athens, the city of Theseus," referring to the mythical founder of the city. Walking under the arch toward the Acropolis the inscription over the arch read: "This is the city of Hadrian, and not of Theseus." Athens's devotion to Hadrian is reflected by the fact that a portion of the city was renamed Hadrianopolis, or "City of Hadrian."

© Brigida Soriano/shutterstock.com

Hadrian's marble arch (*Pyli Adrianou*) in Athens, Greece, erected in AD 131 to mark the division between the ancient Greek city and the modern Roman one.

Another region that benefited from Hadrian's largess was the province of Asia, today located in western Turkey. This province flourished under Hadrian, in part because of his personal support of the region, but also because of the region's marble quarries. Although the Carrara quarries in Northern Italy had been utilized since the time of Augustus, by the time of Hadrian there was a demand for more exotic marbles, purple, green, grey, or blue in color. During the second century quarries in Asia came under imperial control and were heavily exploited. Architectural blocks and columns were roughed out in the quarries and loaded onto ships that then sailed for Rome and other parts of the Empire. A result of the trade in marble was a trend in architecture known as the "Marble Style," where buildings were decorated with elaborate columnar facades in different colors of marbles.

A good example of the Marble Style can be seen on the façade of the Library of Celsus, constructed in Ephesus in AD 120. Caius Julius Celsus was a wealthy Ephesian whose family had long held Roman citizenship. This phenomenon of awarding Roman rights to important provincial families had begun during the Republic, but during the second century more and more provincials were becoming active in Rome. Celsus became a Roman Senator and even served as consul under Trajan. When he died his son and grandson built a library in his honor, at the foot of a major thoroughfare of Ephesus. Austrian archaeologists have reconstructed the two-story façade. The lower story consists of four pairs of projecting columns that support small entablatures. On the upper floor three pairs of projecting columns straddle the spaces between the lower projecting elements. In this way the façade has an undulating appearance, enhanced by the use of white, yellow, and purple marble. Behind the façade are statues representing qualities of Celsus (wisdom, dignity, virtue, and so on)

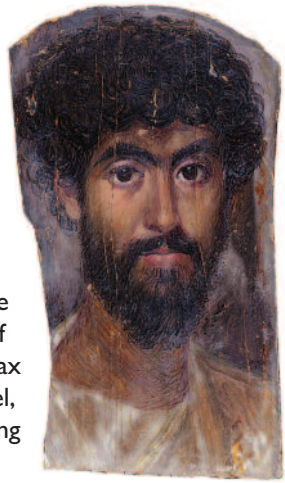
and three doorways that lead inside the building. Here, a large rectangular room was lined with niches that would have held wooden shelves for papyrus rolls. A small staircase led to a chamber underneath the library, and Celsus was buried in this chamber in a marble sarcophagus.

The marble trade was not only devoted to the production of architectural elements, but to the creation of elaborate marble coffins known as sarcophagi. Sarcophagi had been used for burial in the East since the sixth century BC. The Romans, however, traditionally practiced cremation, placing the ashes of the deceased in decorative urns, much like the Etruscans and Villanovans before them. During the reign of Hadrian, however, for reasons not fully understood, many Romans stopped cremating their dead and began inhuming them in sarcophagi. Large centers of sarcophagus production developed in Greece and Turkey. Some sarcophagi were conceived of as small temples with lids carved to resemble roofs, complete with tiles and waterspouts. The exterior walls of these sarcophagi had carved columns between which stood figures, usually taken from myth. A favorite myth was the Twelve Labors of Hercules, where episodes from the hero's life were placed between the columns. Since Hercules' successful completion of the labors awarded him a happy afterlife, this story was particularly appropriate for a sarcophagus. Other sarcophagi did not use the motif of columns but presented continuous scenes of Greek myth, dealing with such heroes as Achilles and Orestes, while others were decorated with images evoking fertility: garlands of fruit and flowers and cupids. Some sarcophagi had lids sculpted to resemble couches with reclining figures, meant to represent the deceased. Sarcophagi such as these would have

The Library of Celsus at Ephesus, Turkey.

been sent from their point of manufacture in the East to showrooms in Rome with the heads unfinished. Once a sarcophagus was purchased, a local sculptor would have been hired to carve the new owner's features on the unfinished head.

Although sarcophagi became widely used all over the Roman Empire there were some adherents to the old ways, and none more so than the Egyptians, who still clung to the time-honored process of mummification. Mummification entailed a special treatment of the body, where many of the internal organs were removed and the body was wrapped in linen after having been treated with salts and other materials. In earlier times, a cartonnage mask covered the head of the mummy, but during the second century these were replaced with wooden panels painted with portraits of the deceased. Using the encaustic technique, where wax mixed with pigment was seared into the wooden panel, these portraits are amazingly lifelike, with subtle shading on the cheeks, eyes, and softly curling hair. From the detailed depictions of the clothing, jewelry, and hairstyles it is clear that although these people lived in a distant province, they followed the styles back in Rome.



Portrait of a young man painted on wood, from the Fayum, Egypt, AD 160–170.

The Labors of Hercules sarcophagus is on display at the Archaeological Museum in Konya, Turkey.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Why were Hercules' labors an appropriate motif for sarcophagi?
2. What is the encaustic technique and for what was it employed?

Suggested Reading

Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Boatwright, Mary T. *Hadrian and the Cities of the Roman Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Walker, Susan, ed. *Ancient Faces: Mummy Portraits in Roman Egypt*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

Websites of Interest

1. *A Rome Art Lover's Webpage* is a personal website by Roberto Piperno. "Hadrian's Athens" includes several images of the Roman Agora in Athens and those built by or dedicated to Emperor Hadrian. — http://romeartlover.tripod.com/adriano.html
2. The University of Cincinnati, McMicken College of Arts and Science, provides a study website on the library of Celsus at Ephesos. The site includes details on the structure, a bibliography, and links to photographs. — http://classics.uc.edu/~johnson/libraries/celsus.html
3. The *Wikipedia* entry "Fayum mummy portraits" provides a number of images of the paintings and links to several sites that discuss them in further detail. — http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fayum_mummy_portraits

Lecture 11

The Antonines, AD 138–193

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapters 7 and 8.

Hadrian was childless, but before his death he named as successor Antoninus, who came from a well-established Roman family from Nemausis (Nimes). At the time of his death Hadrian was very unpopular in Rome and it took heavy lobbying by Antoninus to convince the Senate to allow Hadrian's burial in Rome and his deification. On account of his honorable treatment of Hadrian Antoninus earned the sobriquet Pius. Unlike Hadrian, Antoninus Pius appears to have never left Italy during his twenty-four years of rule (AD 138–161). His reign witnessed no outright wars, but there were minor rebellions in Egypt, Judaea, and Germany, indicating that all was not well in the empire. The ancient sources say that Antoninus was strikingly handsome. His portraits are based on the bearded Hadrian type, with a crown of thick curls, a full beard, aquiline nose, and deep-set, thoughtful eyes. He built little in Rome, constructing the Temple of the Deified Hadrian, whose walls today are embedded in a modern structure housing the stock exchange of Rome. The walls of the temple contained reliefs depicting personifications of the provinces that Hadrian held so dear. He also constructed a temple to his beloved wife, Faustina the Elder, who died in AD 141. Located in the heart of Rome, in the old Forum Romanum, the temple was of traditional Roman form, set on a podium with a deep porch, but the columns were created from imported green marble from Greece. When Antoninus died twenty years later, the temple was rededicated to serve as a temple for him as well. He was buried in the Mausoleum of Hadrian and may have been the first emperor to adopt inhumation over cremation.

Perhaps one of the most intriguing acts of Antoninus was to name two heirs to rule Rome after his death. This seems to have been a stipulation of Hadrian, who had urged Antoninus, having no surviving son of his own, to

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The original bronze statue of Emperor Marcus Aurelius, created in AD 176 and now on display in the Capitoline Museum, Rome.

adopt Marcus Annius Verus, a nephew of Hadrian, as well as Lucius Ceionius Commodus, the son of a man who had been Hadrian's first choice as heir, but who had died before him. Upon Antoninus's death, these two men, better known as Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, ruled Rome together for eight years. Lucius Verus, nearly ten years younger than his co-ruler Marcus Aurelius, was reputed to have been wild and luxury-minded, but Marcus nevertheless treated him as an equal partner. Verus fought in the east against the Parthians and later on the Danube. In AD 169, he died of a stroke while returning to Rome.

As a child Marcus Aurelius had impressed Hadrian by his serious demeanor and love of learning, and by the time he ascended the throne Marcus Aurelius was deeply committed to the tenets of Stoic philosophy. This belief in self-control and fortitude in the face of disaster is vividly recounted in *The Meditations*, a sort of memoir composed by Marcus Aurelius. His writings reveal him as a man of peace, so it is unfortunate that it fell to Marcus to spend much of his reign (AD 161–180) waging war on the borders of the empire, against the Parthians and the Sarmatians in the east and the Germanic tribes of the Quadi and the Marcomanni in the north.

The portraits of Marcus Aurelius are unusual in that they depict him at various ages, as a teen, youth, adult, and old man. The youthful images of Marcus depict him as beardless, with a shock of curly hair and a serious, triangular face. His large eyes are heavy lidded and surmounted by feathery eyebrows. As an adult he retains the heavy curls and assumes a thick beard. What is most remarkable is that there are portraits depicting Marcus in old age, with tired eyes, a creased brow, and hollow cheeks, seemingly weighed down by the burden of war. The most famous portrait of Marcus Aurelius is a gilded bronze equestrian statue from Rome. An adult, bearded Marcus is on horseback wearing military garb; he is reviewing the aftermath of a successful battle against a Germanic tribe. The front right hoof of his mount is lifted and originally hovered above a fallen barbarian (now lost). Marcus looks toward the fallen man and reaches his hand out to him in a gesture of clemency. The message behind the statue is victory tempered with mercy.

Marcus Aurelius shows his clemency toward the vanquished after his success against Germanic tribes.

From a now-destroyed triumphal arch honoring Marcus Aurelius come eight relief panels depicting highlights of Marcus's career: victory in battle, donations to the poor, triumphant return to Rome. One of these reiterates the message of Marcus's equestrian statue. The emperor is on horseback in a forest landscape. Roman soldiers surround him, and barbarian prisoners kneel at his feet. Once again, Marcus holds out a hand in their direction, promising clemency.

Marcus Aurelius is considered today the last of the "Five Good Emperors," a list that included Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus Pius. These men had been good rulers, chiefly because they were chosen to rule based on their merits and not their bloodlines. Marcus Aurelius, however, abandoned this practice and named his son Commodus to rule after him, a decision that some have seen as the single black mark on the record of this noble emperor.

When Marcus Aurelius died of illness in AD 180 while campaigning along the Danube, his eighteen-year-old son and heir was by his side. Commodus quickly made peace with the Germans and returned to Rome, where he began a twelve-year reign (AD 180–192) of hitherto unrivaled debauchery and megalomania. He demanded that the Senate deify him as a living god and insisted on fighting in the arena as a gladiator. Dressed as the heroic strongman Hercules, he would shoot wild animals from the safety of a raised walkway. A well-preserved portrait bust of Commodus portrays him with the curly hair and beard of his father, as well as the heavy-lidded eyes and feathery brows. Wrapped around his bare chest and slung over his head, however, is a lion skin, the emblem of Hercules. Few portraits of the man exist. After he was murdered in a palace coup organized by his mistress and his chamberlain, the Senate declared a *damnatio memoriae*, where all images and official records of Commodus were destroyed. The seriousness of the edict can be seen in one of the panels from the Arch of Marcus Aurelius that originally depicted Marcus and Commodus sharing a chariot as they rode triumphantly into Rome. After Commodus's death, the panel was recut, and Commodus was expunged, leaving an awkwardly vacant space next to Marcus.

Bust of Commodus as Hercules.

The one important monument erected in Rome by Commodus was a temple to his divine father Marcus Aurelius. The temple no longer exists, but in front of it stood a tall column carved with scenes of Marcus's war against the Germans. Modeled after the Column of Trajan, it stood at the same height and had a continuous scene wrapping around the shaft. Like the figure of the

Danube River on the Column of Trajan, there is also a supernatural figure, a storm spirit, shown looming behind the soldiers. This male figure, bearded, winged with a shaggy cloak, represents a downpour that caused rivers to flood, drowning the enemy. There are scenes of great brutality on the column: Roman soldiers wrenching children from captive women's arms, barbarian prisoners being speared as they beg for mercy, the decapitation of German captives. These scenes elicit sympathy for the vanquished and it has been suggested that they reflect Marcus Aurelius's own misgivings about warfare.

Detail from the Column of Marcus Aurelius in Rome showing the miracle of the rain with the prominent storm spirit behind the soldiers.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Why are the portraits of Marcus Aurelius unusual?
2. What insight into his character can be gleaned from the famous bust of Commodus that depicts him wearing a lion's skin?

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Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Hekster, Olivier. *Commodus: An Emperor at the Crossroads*. Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002.

Marcus Aurelius. *The Emperor's Handbook: A New Translation of The Meditations*. Trans. David Hicks and C. Scot Hicks. New York: Scribner, 2002.

McLynn, Frank. *Marcus Aurelius: A Life*. New York: Da Capo Press, 2009.

Websites of Interest

1. Richard D. Weigel of Western Kentucky University authored a short annotated biography of Antoninus Pius on the *Roman Emperors* website. — http://www.roman-emperors.org/tonypis.htm
2. Lawrence University (Appleton, WI) provides images of a coin struck in honor of Faustina the Elder with detailed information about the coin. — http://www.lawrence.edu/dept/art/buerger/catalogue/098.html
3. The *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* features a lengthy article by John Sellars on Marcus Aurelius. — http://www.iep.utm.edu/marcus

Lecture 12

The Severans, AD 193–235

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapter 9.

The year following the murder of Commodus was one of bloodshed as several would-be emperors struggled for supremacy. Finally, in AD 193, a general named Septimius Severus prevailed. Severus hailed from North Africa, from a provincial Roman family from the city of Leptis Magna. In order to legitimize his rule he claimed that he had been adopted by Marcus Aurelius and modeled his portraits after his great predecessor. His wife was a formidable figure named Julia Domna, a Syrian whose father was an important priest of the sun god Elagabal. When she was a girl it was prophesied that whomever she married would be a king. Severus wed her when she was just sixteen. Together they had two sons, Caracalla and Geta, thus founding the Severan Dynasty. Severus spent much of his nine-year reign (AD 193–211) fighting in the east against the Parthians, but he died in York, England, trying to conquer Scotland.

Severus repaired and rebuilt many structures in Rome, including the Flavian Palace (the Domus Augustana) and Vespasian's Templum Pacis. During his reign, however, there were pronounced changes in the style of sculpture, shifting away from the "Classical" style seen in the monuments of Hadrian and the Antonines. A triumphal arch erected in the Forum Romanum to celebrate Severus's Parthian campaign exemplifies the change. Individual panels on the front and back of the arch depict battle scenes in which Severus is prominent. Rather than being distributed on a single level, the figures are set out on various ground lines, creating a crowded effect, but also a new depth of field, as the figures higher up in the panel are meant to be seen as standing in the background. The figures themselves, small and squat, with heads slightly too large for their bodies, are carved in low relief. Definition for the hair and drapery is created by means of deeply drilled grooves, rather than through gently swelling modeling, as had been the case in Antonine art. This new style will dominate in the coming centuries.

The Arch of Severus in the Roman Forum.

Rather than focusing on Rome, Severus lavished attention on his native city of Leptis Magna, today located in Libya. Originally a Carthaginian trading station, it became a Roman colony under Augustus. Severus saw to the construction of a new harbor, an amphitheater, and several baths, and he lined the major thoroughfares with colonnades. Under his patronage, Leptis became one of the wealthiest cities in Africa. Among the impressive structures created by Severus was an Imperial Forum, like those back in Rome. At the far end of a broad, paved piazza stood a large temple to the Severan family on a high podium. On the opposite end of the courtyard was a basilica featuring ornately carved pillars that intertwined foliage, humans, and animals. This so-called "peopled scroll" decoration was characteristic of artisans from Asia Minor, who must have been imported to complete the work. Marking the intersection of two major streets of Leptis was a tetrapylon, or four-way arch, decorated with scenes of the Severan family making sacrifices to the gods, and Severus and his two sons riding in triumph in a chariot. The treatment of the flattened figures, deeply outlined with drilling, matches the carving found on the Arch of Severus in Rome.

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Above: The Severan family tetrapylon in Leptis Magna.

Below: A relief carving that once adorned the arch in Leptis Magna, showing Severus and his two sons riding in a chariot.

© Bill Perry/shutterstock.com

When Severus died he left the empire to his two sons, Caracalla and Geta, to rule together, but the elder brother Caracalla, desiring sole control of Rome, soon did away with his sibling. In order to legitimize his rule, Caracalla proclaimed a *damnatio memoriae* against Geta, commanding all portraits of his brother to be destroyed. Because Severus had set up many images of his family throughout the empire to reinforce the validity of the new dynasty, there is good evidence for the youth's erasure. One interesting example comes from Egypt, where an encaustic painting depicts the happy family: a silver-haired Severus, Julia Domna decked in jewels, and a childlike Caracalla wearing a small crown. Present also is another figure whose face has been removed, the mangled remains of Geta.

Like Commodus before him, Caracalla saw himself as a second Hercules. A statue of him as a child portrays him strangling snakes in his cradle, in imitation of the feat attributed to the mythical strongman when he was a child. Caracalla also identified strongly with Alexander the Great. Like that leader, he invaded Persia, but he was murdered by one of his generals. He had only ruled for six years.

Encaustic (wax) tondo painting showing the Severan dynasty.

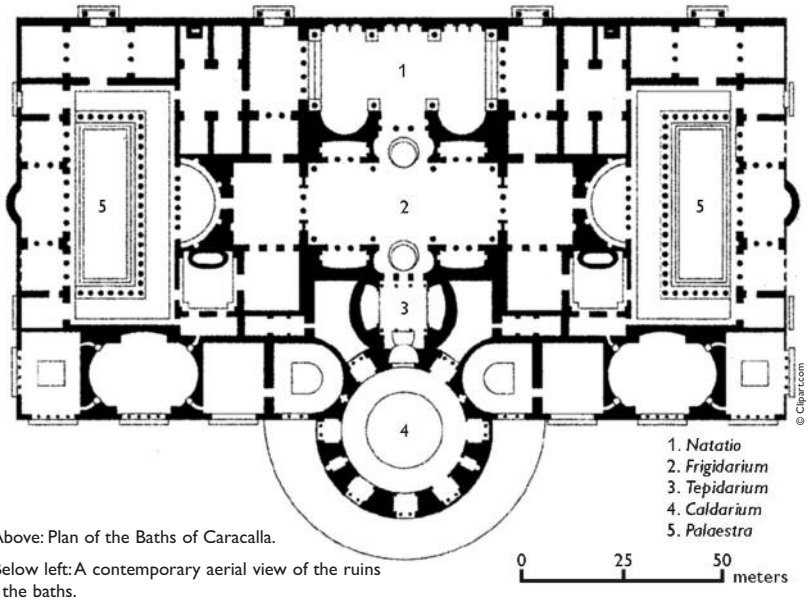
The portraits of Caracalla make a clean break from any imperial portrait type that had come before. His hair is short-cropped, as befits a soldier, and his beard is equally short, represented by fine lines pecked onto the surface of his chin and cheeks. His neck is twisted and his mouth scowls as he stares with a sidelong glance. Lines in his furrowed brow and creases running from nose to mouth create an "X" that intersects at his flattened nose. A masterful portrayal of power, determination, and brutality, this portrait would serve as a model for imperial portraits for the next century.

Despite his short rule, Caracalla was responsible for the completion of imperial baths in Rome, probably begun by his father. In plan—virtually identical to the Baths of Trajan—the much larger Baths of Caracalla measured 750 feet by 380 feet and could accommodate sixteen hundred bathers at a time. Mosaics of athletes decorated the floors and large marble statues occupied the walls. One of these statues, known as the Farnese Hercules, was a copy of a statue created by the Greek sculptor Lysippos in the fourth century BC. The version created for Caracalla's baths stood ten feet high.

Bust of Caracalla, ca. 217–230.

Caracalla's murderer, the general Macrinus, declared himself emperor, but he ruled less than a year before he was supplanted by a young cousin of Caracalla, Varias Avitus Bassianus, better known as Elagabalus. Although Elagabalus was only fourteen years old, an aged Julia Domna, determined to maintain her family on the throne of Rome, saw to his promotion. Though young, he was already a priest of the Syrian sun god Elagabal, and when he arrived in Rome to become

emperor, he brought with him a black stone (perhaps a meteorite), an image of the god. He imposed the worship of this deity on the people of Rome, as an almost monotheistic religion, insisting that all other gods bow before the Syrian sun god. Elagabalus erected several temples to his god in Rome, one atop the Palatine, but none are still standing. After only four years of rule the Praetorian Guard murdered him to make space on the throne for yet another young Severan. This last member of the dynasty, Alexander Severus, ruled with the help of his mother for thirteen years. Eventually both were murdered by the army.



Above: Plan of the Baths of Caracalla.

Below left: A contemporary aerial view of the ruins of the baths.

Below right: An artist's rendering of the *frigidarium* as it may have looked during the period.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. How do portraits of Caracalla differ from previous imperial portraits?
2. What did Severus contribute to the city of Leptis Magna?

Suggested Reading

Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Birley, Anthony R. *Septimius Severus*. Roman Imperial Biographies. London: Routledge, 1999.

Swain, Simon, Stephen Harrison, and Jaś Elsner, eds. *Severan Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Websites of Interest

1. The *Telegraph* (London) website provides a short video on the ruins at Leptis Magna, part of the Wonders of the World series. — http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/travelvideo/world-wonders/6864763/Wonders-of-the-World-Leptis-Magna-Libya.html
2. *Roman Empire* website article on the Severan Julias by Herbert W. Benario (Emory University) features the women in the Severan dynasty. — http://www.roman-emperors.org/sevjulia.htm#Note_jd
3. The Baths of Caracalla can be viewed in 360° panoramic images on the *Italy Guides* website. — http://www.italyguides.it/us/roma/baths_of_caracalla/baths_of_caracalla1.htm
4. The PBS *Nova Online* website features reenacted images and a virtual tour of the Baths of Caracalla from the "Secrets of Lost Empires–Roman Baths" production. — http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/lostempires/roman

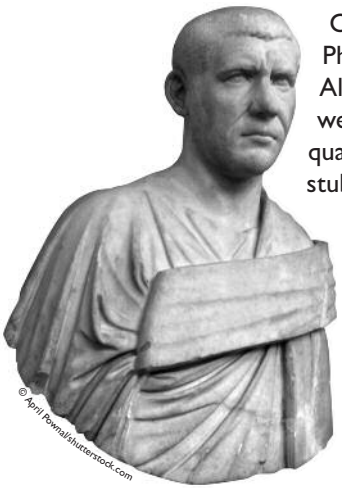
Lecture 13

The Soldier Emperors, AD 235–284

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapter 10.

The death of Severus Alexander plunged the Roman Empire into fifty years of anarchy. Invaders beset the borders on all sides, raging inflation brought on an economic crisis, and a lack of strong central leadership created breaks in the integrity of the empire. During these five decades, at least twenty men declared themselves emperor, many of whom never even entered the city of Rome. Few ruled more than a few years before they were violently overthrown by a usurper or killed in battle on the edges of the empire. During this time the empire began to splinter. The western province of Gaul declared its independence, and Syria came to be ruled by Queen Zenobia of Palmyra. Needing a scapegoat on which to blame these problems, many of these short-term emperors turned to the persecution of the Christians, a growing sect that refused to follow Roman religious practice.

Although few of these soldier emperors had the time or means to build in Rome, most created portraits to celebrate their rule. Most of these were based on the Caracalla type, with short hair and the beard rendered by faint chisel marks on the stone. These portraits attempted to show the emotional state of the figure through the careful carving of the facial features, sometimes depicting the leader as fierce, sometimes as worried, and sometimes as gazing into the future looking ahead to better days.



Bust of Roman emperor Philip the Arab at the Hermitage Museum, Russia, ca mid-third century.

One of the finest of these portraits is that of Philip the Arab, who ruled Rome from 244–249. Although a military man, in his portrait bust he wears a toga, demonstrating his administrative qualities. He has a short cap of hair and the mere stubble of a beard. His head turns to the right, as if responding to a distant sound. Like the Caracalla portrait type, the creases in his face form an "X" that converges at his beak-like nose, but where Caracalla looked harsh, Philip appears sensitive, strong, and deeply concerned about the fate of the empire.

Sarcophagus production continued during this period. The mythical themes of the second century continued, but during the third century battle scenes grew in popularity. One sarcophagus, the so-called Ludovisi Sarcophagus, dating

to around AD 250, features a writhing mass of figures. Roman soldiers in full armor with helmets, breastplates, shields, and swords fight barbarians in baggy trousers and cloaks, their shaggy heads uncovered, agony on their contorted faces. Horses, some fallen, some rearing, spill their riders into the fray. A Roman youth blows an alarm on a curved battle trumpet. Rising out of the chaos in the center of the composition is a soldier on horseback with his arm outstretched, urging his men to victory. The realistic portrait, again following the Caracalla type, indicates that this man commissioned the creation of the sarcophagus and was buried within. The theme of battle may have been autobiographical, but it may reflect the hope of victory over death.

Rome's weakness allowed some parts of the empire to exert their independence. One of these was the oasis city of Palmyra, located in the Syrian desert. Well situated on a caravan route, this great merchant city became part of the Roman Empire in the first century AD. In the third century, however, a remarkable woman named Zenobia gained control over Syria, Judaea, and much of Asia Minor, making Palmyra the capital of her kingdom.

The buildings visible today at Palmyra stem from the first through third centuries, and reflect a fascinating mixture of Roman and local Syrian forms. Laid out on a grid, the major streets were lined with colonnades, a standard element of Roman cities of the East. Unique to Palmyra was the practice of placing statues on consoles projecting out of the columns, placed ten feet above the street level. These were statues of leading Palmyrene citizens, as the inscriptions on the consoles report. Like other Roman cities, there were arches marking important intersections and as was standard for any Roman town, there was a theater, odeum, and baths. Although part of the Roman Empire for nearly three centuries, the population of Palmyra was never fully Romanized,

The so-called "Grande Ludovisi" sarcophagus depicting a battle scene between Roman soldiers and Germans, ca. AD 251–252.

as can be seen in the appearance of their chief temple to the god Baal Shamin. The temple was initially constructed in AD 23, but was greatly rebuilt by the husband of Zenobia some two hundred thirty years later. Set within a walled precinct, the large temple was a mixture of Greco-Roman and Syrian forms. Unusually, the rectangular temple was entered from one of its long sides. The exterior colonnades were originally in the Corinthian order, with the leafy decoration rendered in gilded bronze. The interior of the building was open to the sky, with two small rooms at either end of the building serving as points of ritual. The ceilings of each room were richly carved, one with images of the Zodiac. A staircase within the temple gave access to the roof, where further religious acts took place. Relief carvings from the temple depict sacrifices to the god, as well as a camel train, with women swathed in drapery, bringing goods to this wealthy caravan city.

In AD 272, the Roman emperor Aurelian successfully took Palmyra, allowing his soldiers to sack the city. Zenobia was captured and taken to Rome in chains to march in Aurelian's triumphant procession. The reign of Aurelian (AD 270–275) marks the beginning of recovery for the empire. He not only regained Syria, he also retook the splinter kingdom of Gaul. Significantly, he built walls around the city of Rome, replacing those constructed in the fourth century BC, rightly fearing that the borders of the empire could no longer protect the city at its heart. He also instituted a new state religion, the cult of Sol Invictus, the unconquered sun, which already held great popularity among the military. He constructed a temple to Sol near the Mausoleum of Augustus in the Campus Martius, and decorated it with goods taken from the Temple of Baal Shamin at Palmyra.

Unfortunately, Aurelian's murder by his private secretary returned Rome to another ten years of civil war. It was only with the advent of an able general named Diocletian that Rome entered a much needed period of stability.

Left: Colonnaded street in the ruins of Palmyra showing the consoles extending out from the columns on which statues of leading citizens were placed.

Right: The ruins of the Temple of Baal Shamin, Palmyra.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What are the similarities and differences between the portraits of Caracalla and Philip the Arab?
2. What practice of statue placement was unique to Palmyra?

Suggested Reading

Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

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Zahran, Yasmine. *Philip the Arab: A Study in Prejudice*. London: Stacey International, 2001.

Websites of Interest

1. The *Art of the Roman Empire* website features sculpture and other works from the Severan period. — http://www.all-art.org/history100-4.html
2. The *All Empires* website provides a detailed article entitled "Zenobia, Queen of the East." — http://www.allempires.com/article/index.php?q=zenobia
3. The UNESCO World Heritage website page on Palmyra. — http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/23

Lecture 14

The Tetrarchy and Constantine the Great, AD 284–327

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage's *Roman Art*, chapters 11 and 12.

True recovery for Rome began with the rule of Diocletian (AD 285–305), a seasoned soldier from Illyricum (Montenegro) who completely reformed the organization of the empire. Deciding that the empire was too huge for one man to rule, he developed a new system in which there were two equal rulers (Augusti) each assisted by a junior leader with the title of Caesar. This rule of four was known as the Tetrarchy, with each leader controlling a different section of the empire. Diocletian ruled as Augustus in the east, assisted by his Caesar, a man named Galerius. In the west, another Illyrian named Maximian served as Augustus, assisted by Constantius Chlorus. It was Diocletian's intent that eventually he and Maximian would step down and their Caesars would be promoted to the level of Augustus, choosing new Caesars to occupy their old positions.

Statue of Diocletian's Tetrarchy, red porphyry, ca. AD 300. It was brought to St. Mark's Square in Venice, in 1258.

A statue group of the Tetrarchs vividly reflects Diocletian's vision of shared leadership. Carved from porphyry, a hard, purple-colored stone from Egypt, the four rulers are portrayed identically, each arrayed in armor and clutching a sword with an eagle-head hilt. The figures are arranged in two pairs, each embracing one another as a sign of unity. It is impossible to determine which leader is which, however, because each face is rendered exactly the same, block-like with short hair and beard, furrowed brow and large staring eyes. The message was clear: the individuality of each leader was suppressed by his role as Tetrarch. Four men now ruled Rome, but they acted as one.

In this new division of the empire, each Tetrarch ruled from a different capital: Diocletian chose Nicomedia (today in Turkey); Maximian occupied Milan

in Italy; Galerius ruled from Thessaloniki in Greece; and Constantius Chlorus's capital was Trier in Germany. Rome was no longer the center of the empire. In AD 305, Diocletian retired to his boyhood home of Spalato (Split on the coast of Croatia), where he constructed a palace based on the old castrum design. The rectangular plan, measuring 650 by 550 feet, was fortified, with gates leading to two intersecting streets that divided the interior into four regions. The self-contained palace met all of Diocletian's needs, with private quarters, a bathing suite, an audience hall, a temple, and a mausoleum.

An artist's rendering of Diocletian's palace in Split based on a 1912 architectural reconstruction by Ernest Hébrard.

A villa excavated at Piazza Armerina in Sicily and dating to the early fourth century AD may have belonged to one of the Tetrarchs. Unlike Diocletian's palace, this villa sprawls unprotected across the Sicilian countryside in a manner reminiscent of the Villa of Hadrian at Tivoli. The Piazza Armerina villa contains fountains, courtyards, baths, and dining rooms, and nearly every floor surface was lavishly decorated with fine mosaics.

Many of the mosaics depict scenes of hunting. Some seem to be local expeditions, where men in short tunics capture wild boar with the aid of fierce hunting dogs. In one such scene a man dressed like a Tetrarch is looking on, perhaps a representation of the owner of the villa. Other scenes reveal a more exotic locale, Africa, where wild animals are being collected for the arena in Rome. In one of these scenes an ostrich, feathery wings flapping in protest, is being marched up the gangplank of a ship. A mosaic from the baths of the villa depicts an unusual scene of women exercising. Dressed in costumes resembling bikinis the women run, jump, and play ball. Some of

Mosaic of what is believed to be the Villas owner with two of his staff, late third to early fourth century AD at Piazza Armerina, Sicily.

them receive crowns and palm branches, indicating this may be some sort of athletic competition.

When Diocletian retired to his fortified villa he forced his fellow Augustus, Maximian, to step down as well. Constantius Chlorus and Galerius were promoted to the position of Augustus and two new leaders, Severus and Maximinus, became the new Caesars. When Constantius Chlorus died the following year, however, the Tetrarchy collapsed. Chlorus's son, Constantine, proclaimed himself Augustus, as did Maximinus's son Maxentius. Ultimately, these two met at a pitched battle at the Milvian Bridge outside Rome. The night before the battle Constantine was visited with a dream in which he saw the symbol of the cross and heard the words "In this sign you will conquer." The next day he led his army to victory, his troops marching with standards proclaiming the Christian faith. For a time Constantine co-ruled with another Augustus, Licinius, but in AD 324, he became sole ruler of the Roman Empire.

Detail of two women playing ball from a large mosaic depicting ten young women participating in various palaestra games from the villa at Piazza Armerina, Sicily.

Before his defeat at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, Maxentius was in the process of improving the old Forum Romanum in Rome by constructing a new public hall, the Basilica Nova. Built on a concrete platform measuring 328 by 213 feet, the basilica comprised a main hallway vaulted with intersecting barrel vaults (groin vaults) flanked on either side by three vaulted bays. After Maxentius's defeat, Constantine completed the building, adding an apse at the end of the long hall in which he placed a colossal portrait of himself, thirty feet tall, seated in majesty, one hand raised pointing to the sky. The huge head, eight and a half feet tall, wears a cap of short-cropped hair. Surprisingly, he is clean-shaven, the first emperor since Hadrian not to wear a beard. The most notable feature of this portrait, however, are the enormous eyes with deeply cut pupils that gaze upward toward some unearthly realm.

Constantine also constructed a triumphal arch in Rome, celebrating his victory over Maxentius and other contenders for the throne of Rome. Friezes running above the vaulted openings of the arch narrate historical events: Constantine's departure from Rome, his siege of Verona, the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, Constantine's return to Rome, his speech in the forum, and his distribution of wealth to the senate. The style of the figures, squat, flat, and deeply cut, further

develops the style seen in the Arch of Septimius Severus. The Arch of Constantine also incorporated elements from older Roman monuments: statues of Dacian prisoners from Trajan's Forum, the Hadrianic Hunting Tondos (with the figures of Hadrian and Antonous recut to resemble Constantine and his companions), and fragments from the Arch of Marcus Aurelius. Although it was once believed that Constantine's reuse of sculpture reflected a lack of funds, his choice of materials indicate that he was intentionally associating himself with good emperors of Rome, making a promise to rule as well as his successful predecessors.

The head of Constantine from the colossal sculpture that at one time occupied the Basilica Nova. The head and other remaining pieces of the sculpture are on display at the Capitoline Museum in Rome.

Constantine owed his victory to the Christian God, whose popularity had escalated over the past fifty years despite periods of intense persecution. Perhaps his greatest gift to the city of Rome was the construction of Saint Peter's, the first official Christian church, built on the site of the Circus of Gaius, where Saint Peter had been martyred during the reign of Nero. Although the church was demolished in the sixteenth century for the construction of the present Saint Peter's Church in the Vatican, drawings indicate the church utilized the old basilica plan, with a long central aisle or nave, flanked by two side aisles. This basilica plan would become standard for church design.

Perhaps to make a break with pagan traditions, Constantine abandoned Rome to found a new capital, choosing the town of Byzantium in Asia Minor. Strategically placed at the mouth of the Bosphorus and comprising seven hills, the city was celebrated as the New Rome, although Constantine renamed the city after himself, calling it Constantinople. Here he re-created many of the elements of the old capital city, a palace, a circus, a forum, and baths, and decorated the structures with treasures from all over the empire, including Egyptian obelisks and sculpture from Greece. But this "City of Constantine" differed from its predecessor in that Constantine built no temples; there was no place for the old gods in this "New Rome." Instead, Constantine constructed churches, honoring his new faith, the faith that forever changed the Roman world and that underpins its successor, the Byzantine Empire.

The Arch of Constantine in Rome as it appears today.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What was the nature of the Tetrarchy?
2. What is surprising about the Constantine portrait?

Suggested Reading

Ramage, Nancy H., and Andrew Ramage. *Roman Art.* 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Burckhardt, Jacob. *The Age of Constantine the Great*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.

Leadbetter, Bill. *Galerius and the Will of Diocletian*. Roman Imperial Biographies. London: Routledge, 2008.

Websites of Interest

1. The Digital Library for the Decorative Arts and Material Culture at the University of Wisconsin provides illustrations and plates from a book entitled "Ruins of the palace of the Emperor Diocletian at Spalatro in Dalmatia," self-published by Robert Adam (1728–1792) in 1764. — http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/DLDecArts/DLDecArts-idx?id=DLDecArts.AdamRuins

2. *Rome Reborn* by the University of Virginia's Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities is an international initiative whose goal is the creation of 3D digital models illustrating the urban development of ancient Rome from the first settlement in the late Bronze Age (ca. 1000 BC) to the depopulation of the city in the early Middle Ages (ca. AD 550). — http://www.romereborn.virginia.edu/index.php

Computer Application

For an interactive experience that features 3D modeling of ancient Rome from the *Rome Reborn* project, download the free Google Earth version 5.1 application to your computer. The application features panoramic images taken of famous ancient architectural and modern sites in the city, detailed information on ancient structures, and links to *YouTube* videos of 3D models and of recent views of the city. — http://earth.google.com/rome

(Important Note: Please read all instructions and system requirements for a successful download and installation on your computer.)

COURSE MATERIALS

Suggested Reading:

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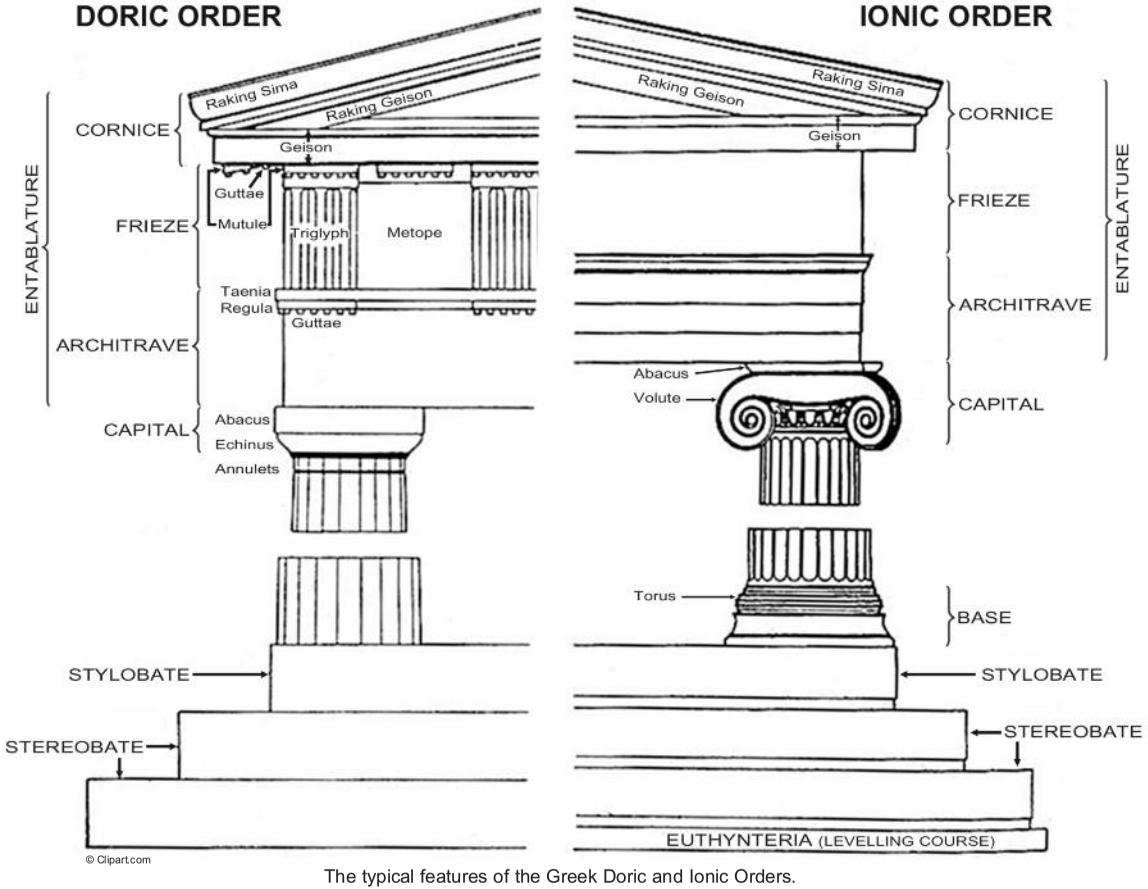
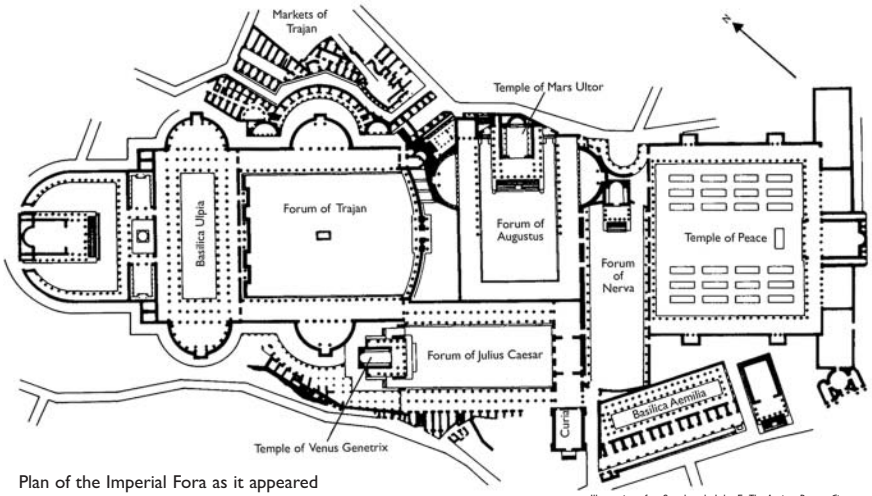
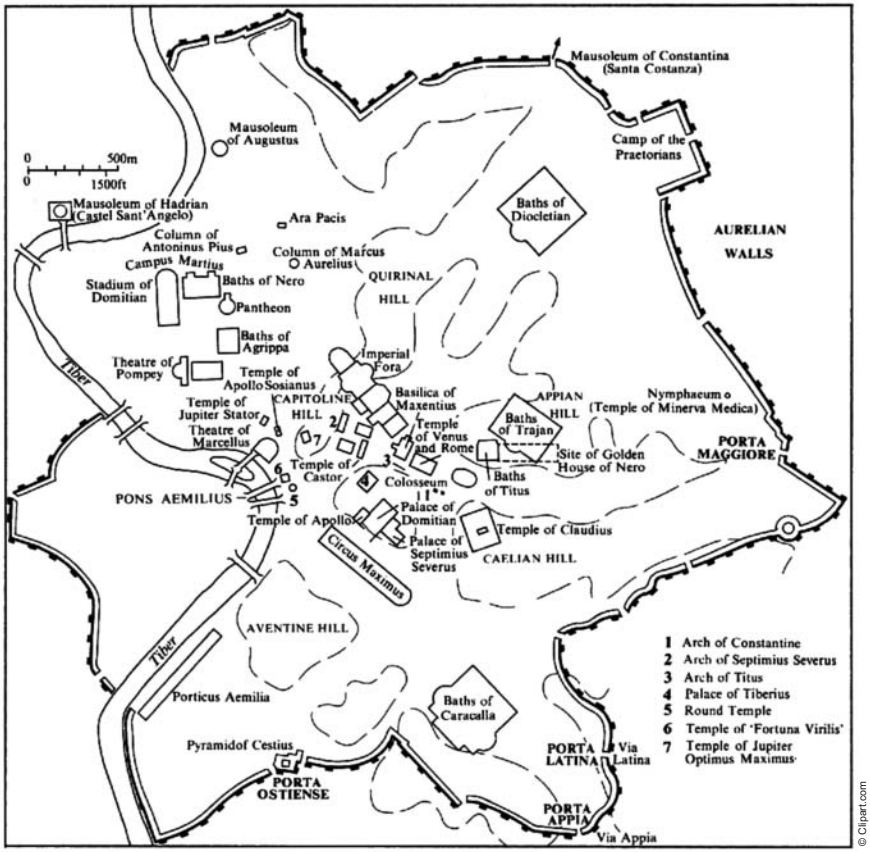


The typical features of the Greek Doric and Ionic Orders.



Plan of the Imperial Fora as it appeared in the second century AD.

Illustration after Stambaugh, John E. *The Ancient Roman City*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.



Plan of Imperial Rome showing many of the major buildings and features of the city.

The Principal Roman Emperors and Dynasties

The Julio-Claudian Dynasty

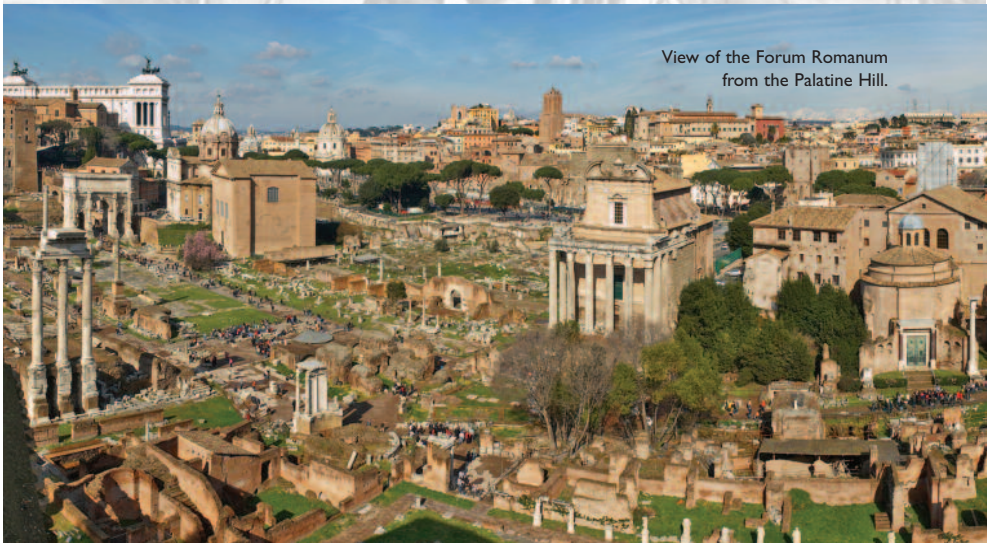
Augustus	27 BC–AD 14
Tiberius	AD 14–37
Gaius (Caligula)	AD 37–41
Claudius	AD 41–54
Nero	AD 54–68

The Flavian Dynasty

Vespasian	AD 69–79
Titus	AD 79–81
Domitian	AD 81–96

The Antonine Dynasty

Nerva	AD 96–98
Trajan	AD 98–117
Hadrian	AD 117–138
Antonius Pius	AD 138–161
Marcus Aurelius	AD 161–180
Lucius Verus	AD 161–169
Commodus	AD 180–192



View of the Forum Romanum from the Palatine Hill.

The Severan Dynasty

Septimius Severus . . . . . .AD 193–211
Caracalla . . . . . .AD 211–217
Elagabalus . . . . . .AD 218–222
Alexander Severus . . . . . .AD 222–235

The Soldier Emperors

Maximinus Thrax . . . . . .AD 235–238
Balbinus . . . . . .AD 238
Philip the Arab . . . . . .AD 244–249
Trebonianus Gallus . . . . . .AD 251–253
Gallienus . . . . . .AD 253–268
Aurelian . . . . . .AD 270–275

The Tetrarchy and Constantinian Dynasty

Diocletian . . . . . .AD 284–305
Maximian . . . . . .AD 286–305
Constantius Chlorus . . . .AD 305–306
Galerius . . . . . .AD 305–311
Maxentius . . . . . .AD 306–312
Licinius . . . . . .AD 307–324
Constantine I, the Great .AD 307–337

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Epochs of European Civilization I: Antiquity to Renaissance
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