

ATHENS AND ROME: LIFE AND CULTURE IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

Lecture 34 – Art and Portraiture - Rome

CLCS4007

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Mosaics

- ▣ Developed in third century BC.
- ▣ *Tessella* – small cube of stone (often tend to be c. 0.5-1.5 cm.).
- ▣ Materials – coloured marble (and other stones) tiles/pottery, occasionally clear and coloured glass.
- ▣ Set together closely in fresh bed of mortar, after *tessellae* set in the mortar, the bed grouted (filled) with fine liquid mortar.
- ▣ Mosaic cleaned and polished.

Alexander Mosaic

- ▣ Restrained colour range, no greens or blues (possibly copied painting).



Roman copy of the Greek original - Museo Nazionale, Naples.

Roman Painting

- ▣ A good number of Roman paintings survive from Pompeii and Herculaneum.
- ▣ Popularity of copying earlier Greek paintings.
- ▣ Development of illusion by 1st century BC.



Painting from Pompeii c. AD 59-79
– Museo Nazionale, Naples.

Temple Architecture

Greek Style Temple

- Columns all round ('peripteral') with cella building inside– less frontal emphasis.
- On a low platform with three steps all around.
- rectangular ground plan.



Paestum/Poseidonia (S. Italy) Temple of Hera (5th cent. BC).

Roman Style Temple

- ❑ Strong frontal emphasis – frontal steps (now reconstructed in brick), temple stands on a high platform ('podium').
- ❑ Fusion of Etruscan/Italian and Greek approaches to temple design typical of Republican Rome.
- ❑ Free standing columns only in front – fake engaged columns in the cella.
- ❑ Rectangular plan, high proportions.



Temple of Portunus, Rome.

Art as Propaganda

Honorific Statues

- ▣ Style and material of statues of varying levels of prestige.
- ▣ Equestrian statues of high prestige, as were gilded statues.
- ▣ Gold and silver statues often for divine figures.

“...the censors, P. Cornelius Scipio and M. Popilius [158 BC], caused all the statues erected round the Forum in honour of those who had borne the office of magistrates, to be removed; with the exception of those which had been placed there, either by order of the people or of the senate.” - **Pliny *Natural History* 34.14.30.**

Triumphal Statues

“...[Augustus decreed] the senate should take its votes there [Forum of Augustus] in regard to the granting of triumphs, and that the victors after celebrating them should dedicate to this Mars their sceptre and their crown; that such victors and all others who receive triumphal honours should have their statues in bronze erected in the Forum...” –
Dio Cassius 55.10.3.

- Means of controlling honours by Augustus.

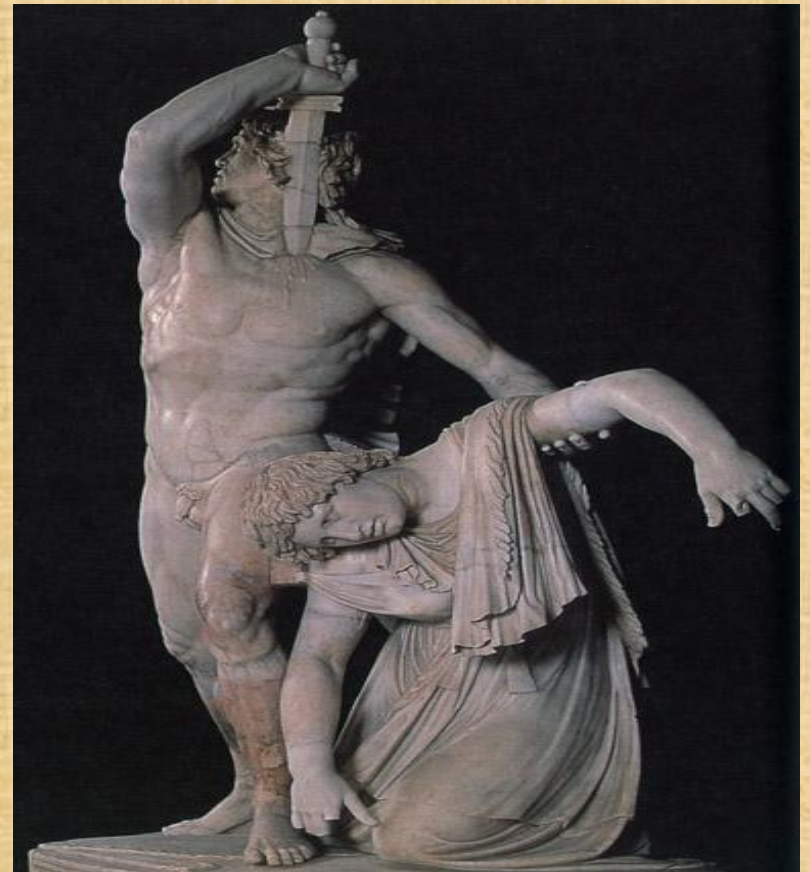
“Before Pompey [61 BC] himself were led the satraps, sons, and generals of the kings against whom he had fought, who were present (some having been captured and others given as hostages)... There were carried in the procession images of those who were not present, of Tigranes and of Mithridates, representing them as fighting, as vanquished, and as fleeing. Even the besieging of Mithridates and his silent flight by night were represented. Finally it was shown how he died, and the daughters who perished with him were pictured also, and there were figures of the sons and daughters who died before him, and images of the barbarian gods decked out in the fashion of their countries.” – Appian *The Mithridatic War* 117.

Symbols of Foreign Subjugation

- Suggestion that these statues were copied as part of Julius Caesar's Gallic triumph in 46 BC?



Dying Gaul – Capitoline Museum.



Gallic Chieftain committing suicide – marble copy of an original bronze statue created for Attalus I of Pergamum – Plazzo Altemps.

Triumphal Arch

“The reason of the statues being raised on columns, was, that the persons represented might be elevated above other mortals; the same thing being signified by the use of arches, a new invention which had its origin among the Greeks.” –
Pliny *Natural History* 34.12.27.

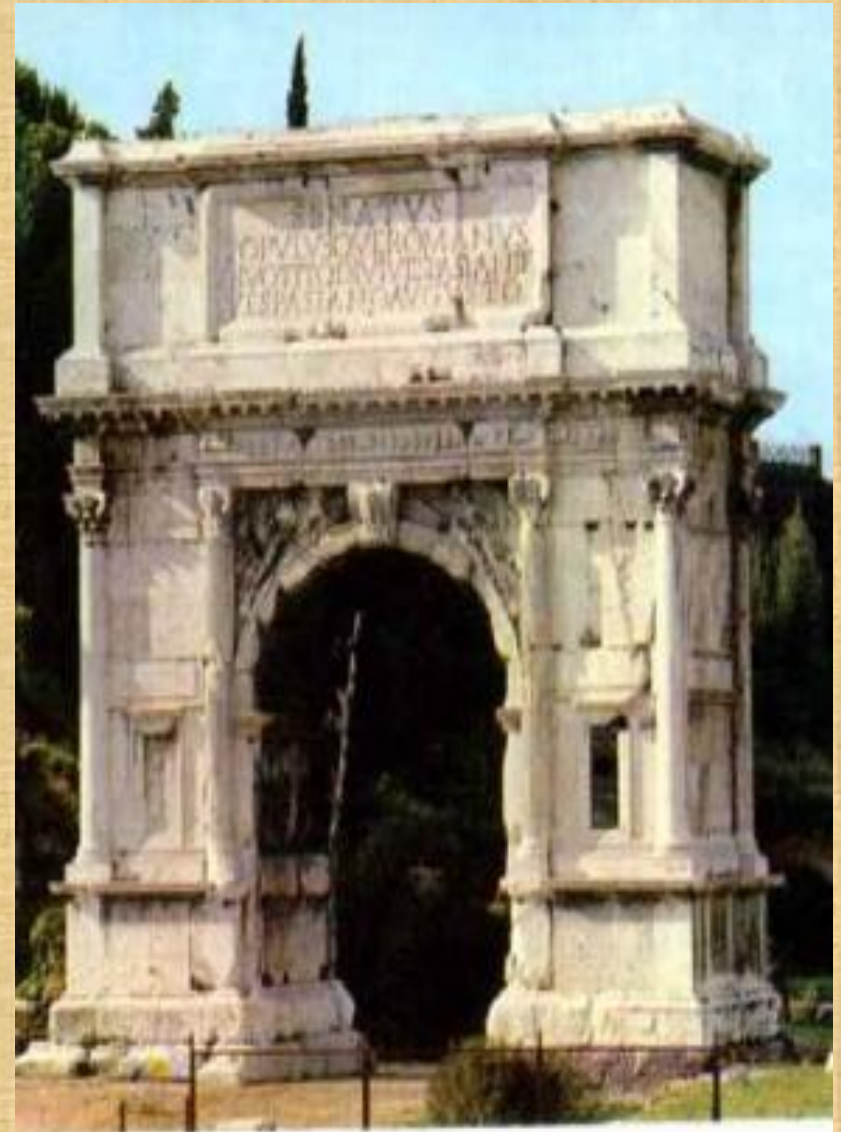
Earliest Arches

“...Sertinius [196 BC], who made no effort to obtain a triumph, brought away from Further Spain 50,000 pounds of silver for the public treasury, and with the proceeds from the sale of the spoil he erected two gateways in the Forum Boarium in front of the temples of Fortuna and Mater Matuta, and one in the Circus Maximus. On these three structures he placed gilded statues.” – Livy 33.27.4.

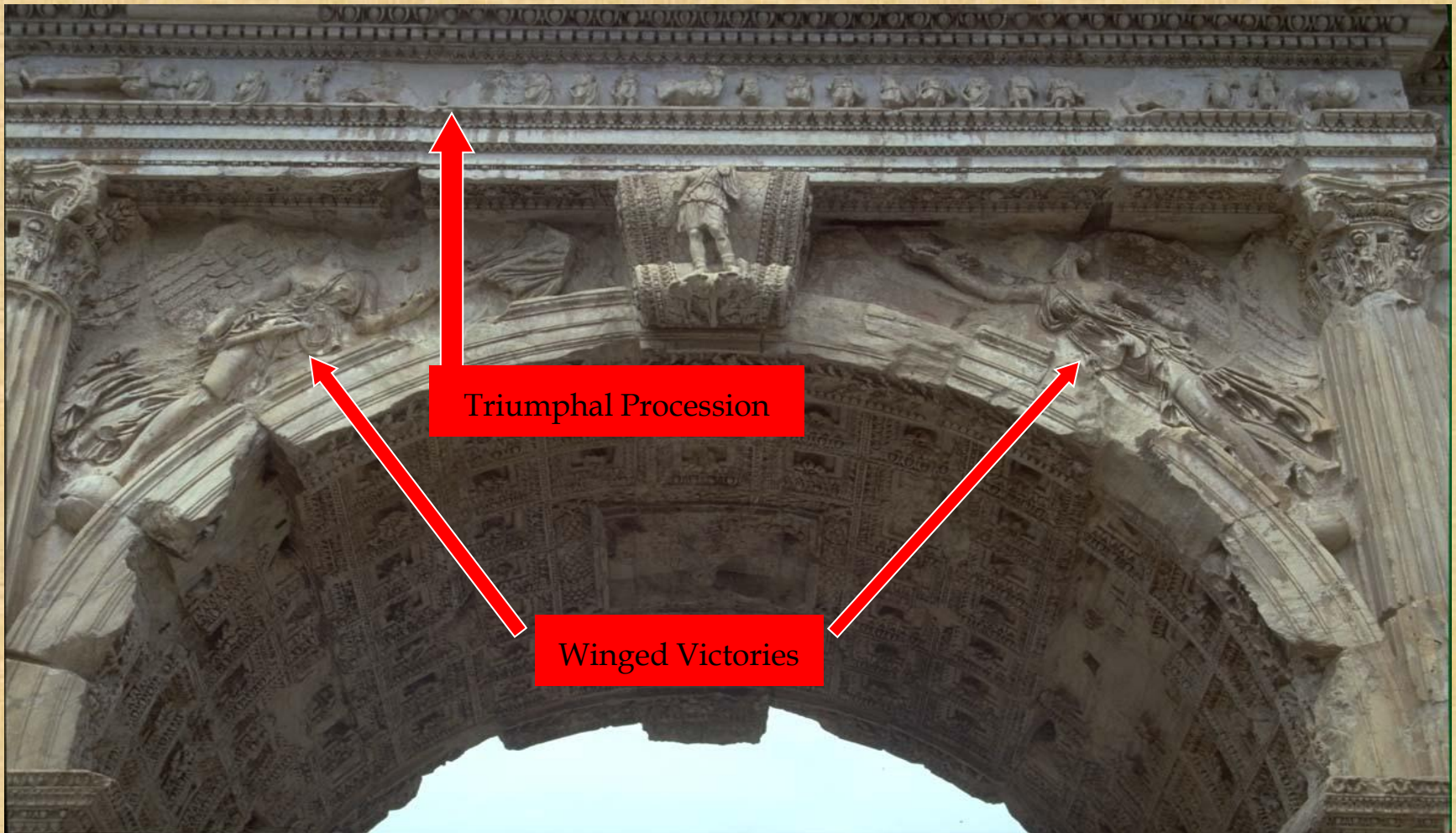
- ❑ Perhaps not overtly triumphal?
- ❑ From the second century BC to Augustus most of triumphal arches associated with the Clivus Capitolinus (Capitaline Rise).

- ▣ Located on the highest point of the Sacra Via – Clivus Palatinus.
- ▣ Its 15.4m high, and 13.5m wide.
- ▣ Looks across to Roman Forum to the Temple dedicated to himself and his father Vespasian.
- ▣ Made of Attic marble from Mt Pentelicon.
- ▣ Bronze statues of Vespasian and Titus in a four-horse chariot had stood on top.

Arch of Titus



Triumphal Procession



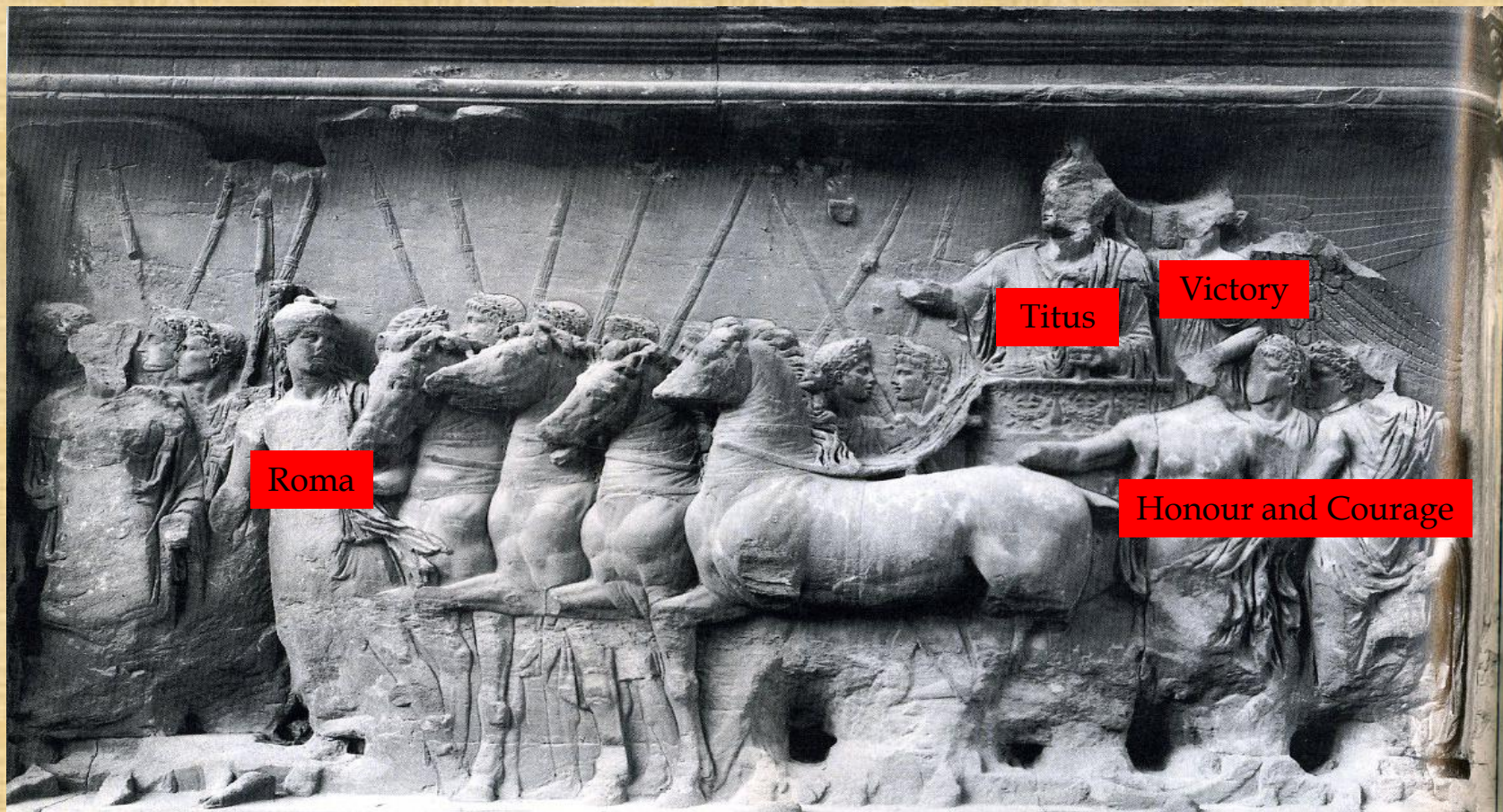


Sack of Jerusalem

“The Senate and People of Rome dedicate this arch to the emperor Titus... because, with the Senate’s advice and counsel and with auguries, he conquered the nation of the Jews [AD 70/71] and destroyed Jerusalem, which all of the generals, kings, and nations before Titus had either failed to do or even attempt.” – *ILS 264* = *CIL 6.944*.

- ▣ Inscription from another Arch of Titus, now destroyed, located near the Circus Maximus.





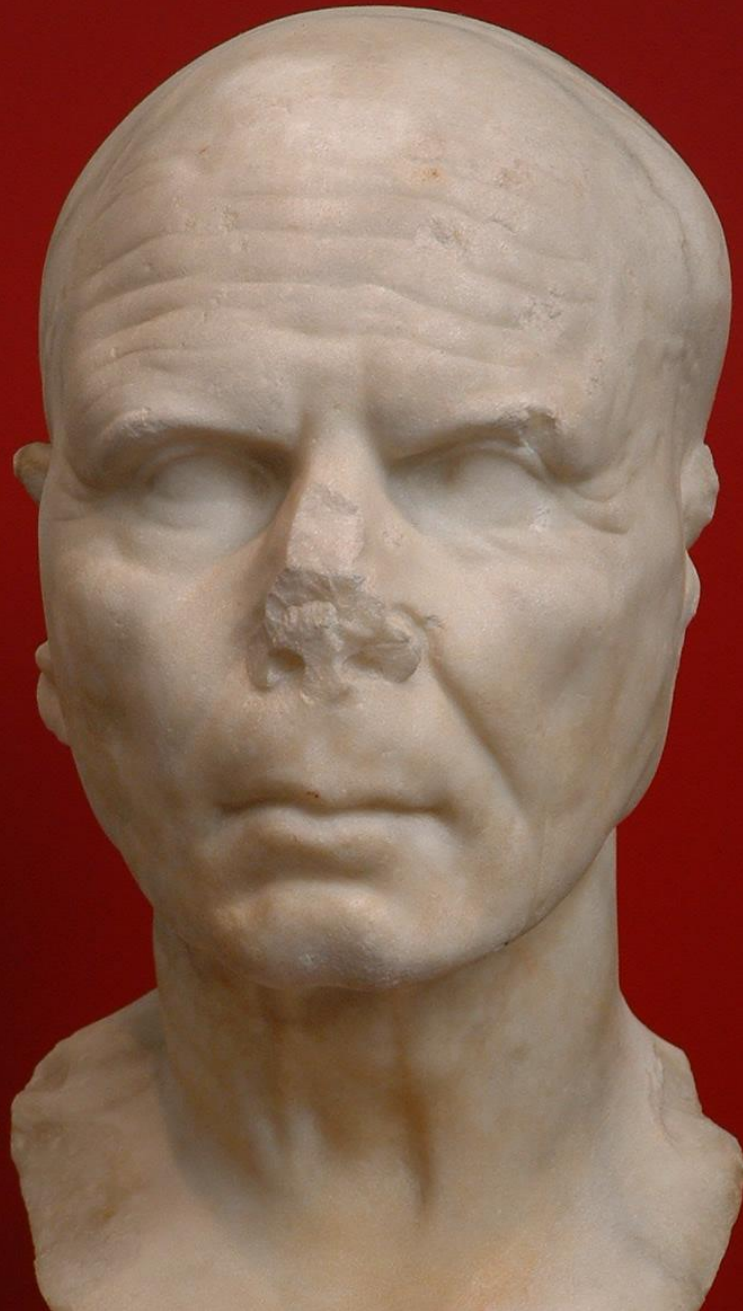
Roma

Titus

Victory

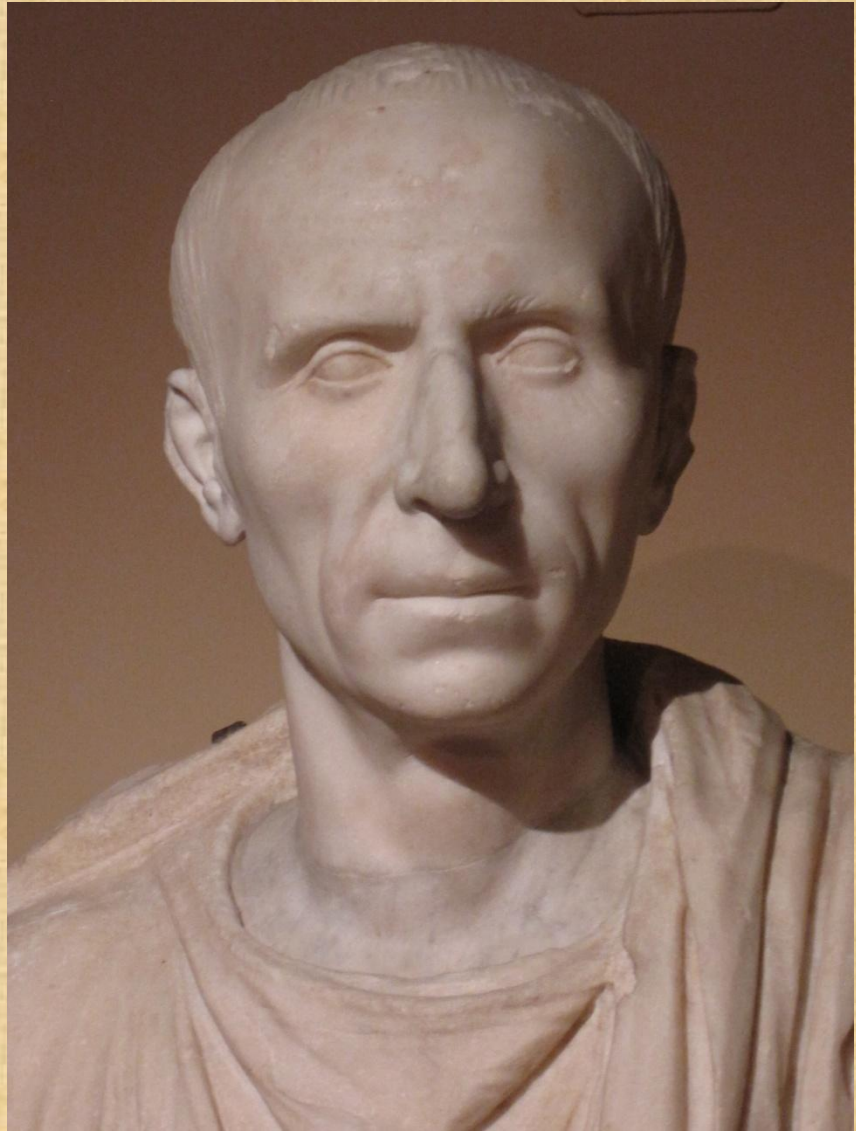
Honour and Courage

Part Two: Roman Portraiture Workshop



**Republican style
'veristic' portrait,
Palazzo Massimo
Museum, Rome**

Montemartini Museum, Rome
1st cent. BC?





**Pompey
the Great
(original
c. 50 BC?)
Ny Carlsberg
Glyptotek,
Copenhagen**

**Via Labicana
Augustus as priest,
Palazzo Massimo
Museum, Rome**







Prima Porta Augustus, Vatican Museums

basalt head of Livia (left)



Unknown woman (freedwoman?), marble,
Palazzo Massimo Museum, Rome



Claudius, c. AD 40s, Vatican Museum

Bibliography

- ▣ Henig, M. (ed.), 1983: *A Handbook of Roman Art*. Oxford: Phaidon Press.
- ▣ Edwards, C. (2003) 'Incorporating the Alien: The Art of Conquest'. In Edwards, C., and Woolf, G. (eds.), *Rome the Cosmopolis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press): 44-70.