

ATHENS AND ROME: LIFE AND CULTURE IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

Lecture 14 – Monumental Buildings - Rome

CLCS4007

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“Aware that the city was architecturally unworthy of its position as capitol of the empire, besides being vulnerable to fire and river floods, Augustus so improved its appearance that he could justifiably boast, ‘**I found Rome built of brick; I leave it clothed in marble.**’” - Suetonius *Divine Augustus* 28.

Res Gestae

"I built the Senate House, and the Chalcidicum adjacent to it, the temple of Apollo on the Palatine with its porticoes, the temple of the divine Julius, the Lupercal, the portico at the Flaminian circus, which I permitted to bear the name of the portico of Octavius after the man who erected the previous portico on the same site, a pulvinar at the Circus Maximus, the temples on the Capitol of Jupiter Feretrius and Jupiter the Thunderer, the temple of Quirinus, the temples of Minerva and Queen Juno and Jupiter Libertas on the Aventine, the temple of the Lares at the top of the Sacred Way, the temple of the Di Penates in the Velia, the temple of Youth, and the temple of the Great Mother on the Palatine."

...In my sixth consulship [28 BC] I restored eighty-two temples of the gods in the city on the authority of the senate, neglecting none that required restoration at that time. In my seventh consulship [27 BC] I restored the Via Flaminia from the city as far as Rimini, together with all bridges except the Mulvian and the Minucian." - *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 19, 20.4-5.

The Roman Forum



Political Buildings – Rostra and Curia



Rostra – the speakers platform. Augustus adorns it with prows from the battle of Actium.

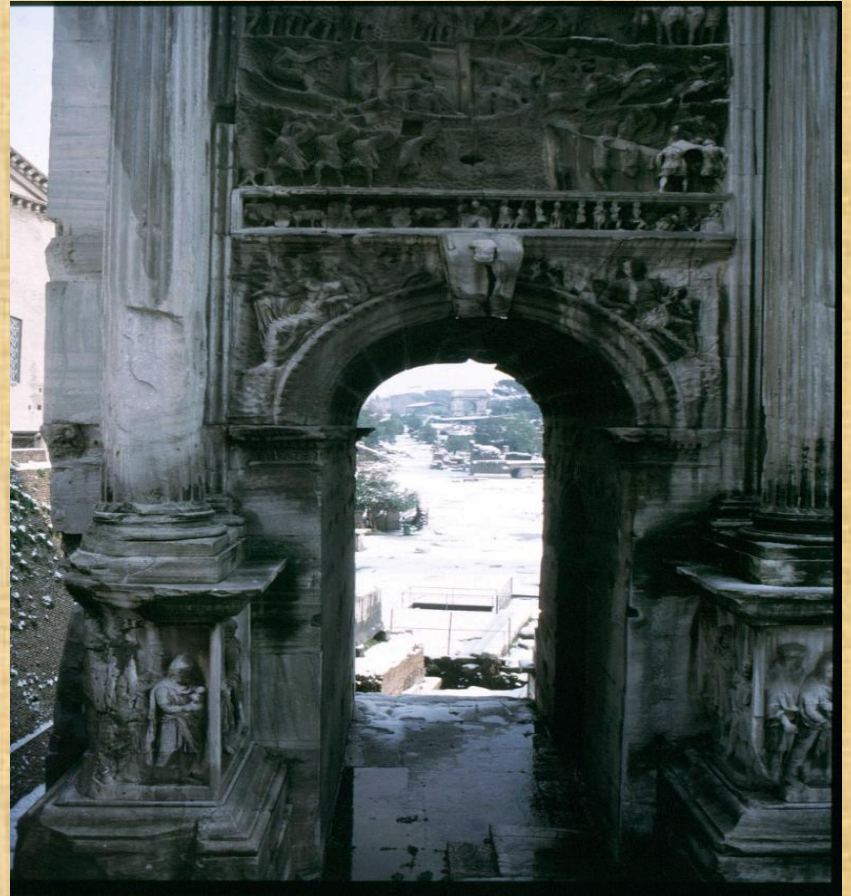


Curia Julia – built to replace the earlier senate house (Curia Hostilia). Completed by Augustus.

Arch of Septimius Severus

- ▣ One of the best preserved structure in the Roman Forum.
- ▣ Commemorated in AD 203 to celebrate victorious campaigns against the Parthians.

“To the emperor Caesar Lucius, son of Marcus, Severus... the senate and the Roman people dedicate this arch.” – *ILS 425*.



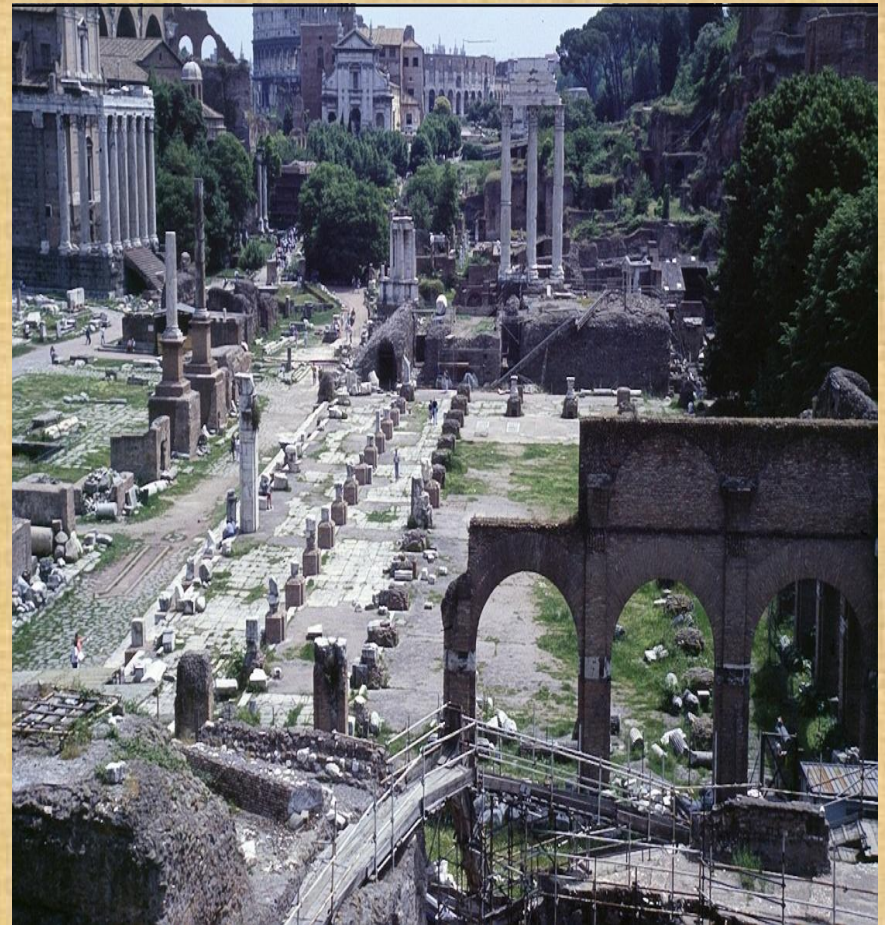
Forum of Augustus / Temple of Mars Ultor

- ▣ Completed near the end of the first century BC.
- ▣ An architectural complex, composed of a new forum containing the temple of Mars Ultor ('the Avenger')
 - a third forum, for overspill of legal business
 - regular planning
 - lavish building materials
 - messages:
 - piety to gods and family,
 - Augustus himself and the Julian family,
 - Rome's past.



Basilica Julia - Dedicated in AD 12

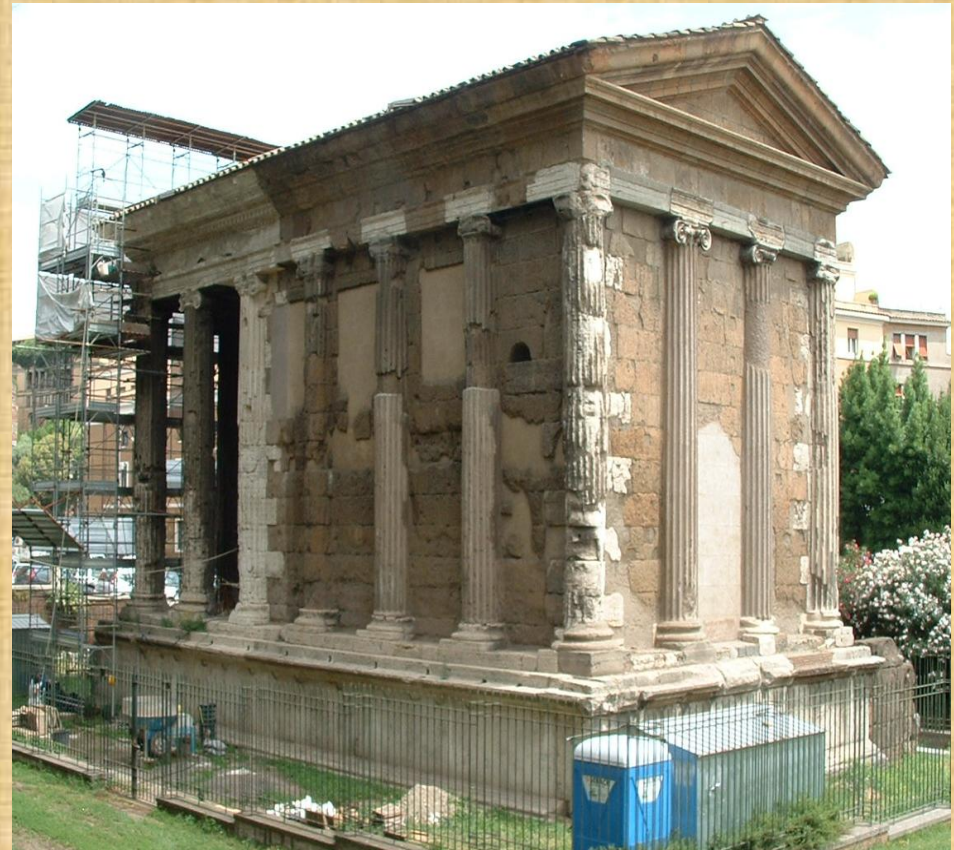
“I completed two works that Caesar had begun... the basilica located between the Temple of Castor and the Temple of Saturn. When this basilica burned down, I began its reconstruction after enlarging its site, now giving it the names of my sons, Gaius and Lucius. – *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 20.



Temple of Portunus

- ❑ Ionic temple, reconstructed in 1st century BC.
- ❑ Conversion into a church (9th century or earlier) meant building reasonably preserved.
- ❑ Probably originally dedicated to a god of the river port, Portus Tiberinus.
- ❑ Made of local stone – brown volcanic tufa and harder white limestone travertine, both smoothed over with plaster (stucco).

“Merchandise of the same product can provide the distinguishing name to a part of the city... For instance, the area along the Tiber near the Temple of Portunus they call the Forum Piscarium, for its fish.” – Varro *The Latin Language* 5.146.



Theatres and Amphitheatres – Pompeii

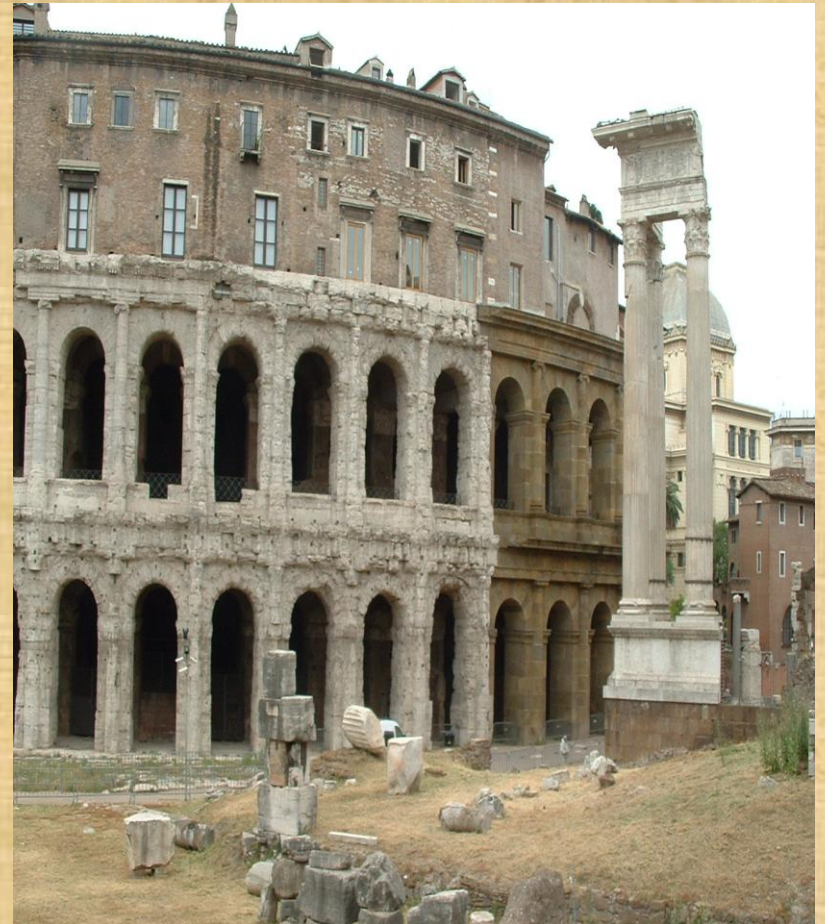


- Amphitheatre (right image), oval in shape, usually hosted combat/blood sports.
- Theatre (left image), semi-circular in shape, *cavae* (seating/enclosure), *scaena* (stage/background), *orchestra* (area reserved for members of the elite).

Theatre of Marcellus

- One of the three major theatres in Rome (see also theatre of Balbus and Pompey).

“I built the theatre that stands besides the Temple of Apollo... I named this theatre after Marcus Marcellus, my son in law.” – *Res Gestae* 21.



- ❑ Completed in 13 BC.
- ❑ About a third of the travertine facade of the *cavea* survives.



The Colosseum



- ▣ Know in antiquity as the Flavian Amphitheatre or just “the” amphitheatre.
- ▣ Built from land reclaimed from part of Nero’s Golden House, between AD 70-80. Used plunder from defeat of Great Jewish uprising.
- ▣ The name Colosseum derives from the colossus next to it.
- ▣ Restored a few times – c. 6th century, then in c. AD 1200. Plunder for it travertine blocks and marble seating during 15th and 16th centuries.



Arches framed by columns – the Colosseum (Doric, Ionic, Corinthian).

The Pantheon



M(arcus) Agrippa L(ucii) F(ilius) CO(n) S(ul) TERTIUM FECTI
Marcus Agrippa, son of Lucius, made this building when consul for the
third time [27 BC] – *ILS* 129.1 = *CIL* 6.896.

Gobbet Assignment

General Advice

- ❑ **Don't** simply describe or paraphrase what is said in the passage – or in the case of the images simply tell me what you see – **Analyse** its significance.
- ❑ **Don't** write a general essay about x or y, remember you are discussing the significance of the passage or image.
- ❑ Provide **context** – but be **concise** – who is the author of the source and what is its nature and tone, why was it written? Most importantly how does this impact on the detail given in the passage? – In the case of the images when and by whom might it have been produced/commissioned and for what purpose.

- **Critical Analysis** – what are the key themes or issues (and people) of the passage – can what is said in the passage be considered reliable? – In the case of the images, what are the significant features that can be noted and does this tell us anything important? In both cases explain the significance of what is read or shown.
- **Comparison** – are there any **relevant** texts or objects which can be meaningfully compared with the Gobbet. Do they conform with or contradict what is in the Gobbet.

- ▣ What is your **own interpretation** of the passage or image – on what basis are you making that interpretation?
- ▣ What interpretations have been made by **modern scholars** about the passage or image? Don't simply quote them, engage with what they are arguing, do you agree or disagree with their interpretations and on what basis?
- ▣ Proof-read your work and don't forget to reference properly.