

# Roman Art and Architecture



Youthful Augustus

Early Empire

# Early Empire



- The murder of Julius Caesar on the Ides of March, 44 BCE, plunged the Roman world into a bloody civil war. The fighting lasted until 31 BCE when Octavian crushed the naval forces of Mark Antony and Queen Cleopatra of Egypt. They committed suicide in 30 BCE. Egypt once the wealthiest and most powerful kingdom become a province of the Roman Empire.
- Roman Republic become the Roman Empire in 27 BCE when the Senate conferred the title of Augustus (the Majestic) on Octavian.
- He brought peace and prosperity to the Mediterranean world. He was 32 years old.

# Augustus



- Since he was 32, Roman portraitists had to produce images of a youthful head of the state.
- The Senate had declared Caesar a god after his death, and Augustus, widely advertised himself as the son of a god. His portraits were designed to present the image of a godlike leader who miraculously never aged.
- Even at the end of his life show him as a handsome youth.

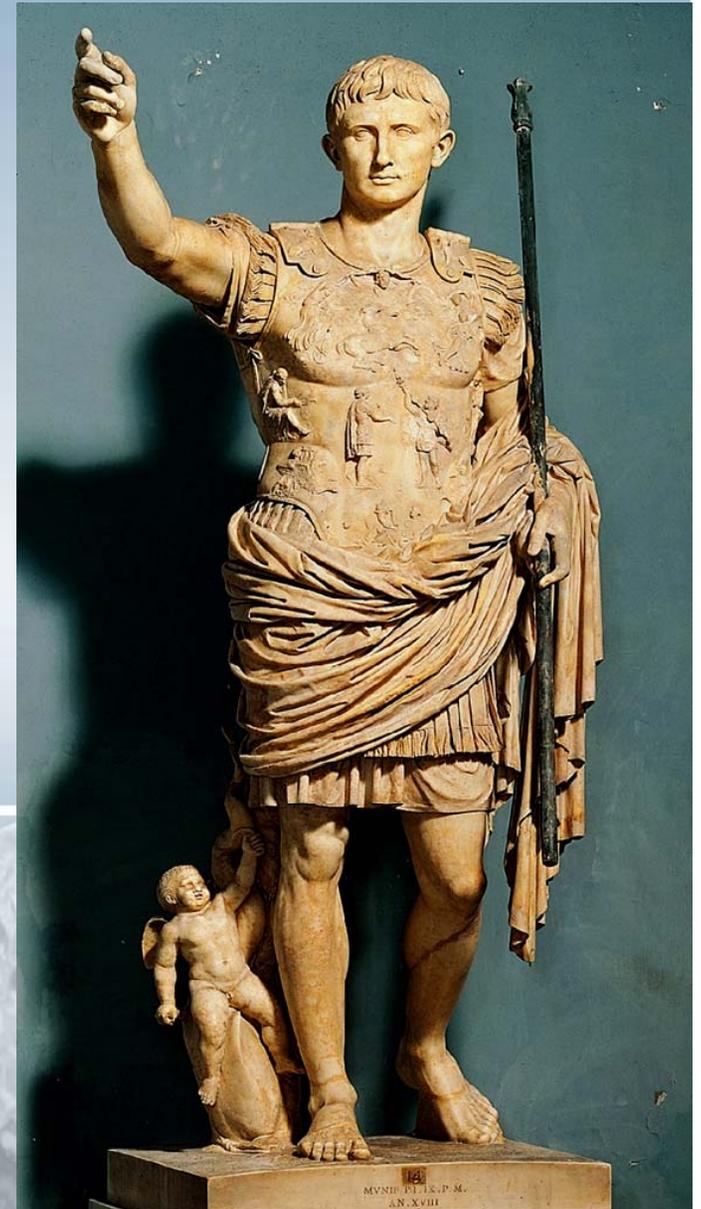
•The portraits of Augustus depict him in his many different roles in the Roman state but the models of them were Classical Greek statues.,

- Idealized view of the Roman emperor
- Confusion between god and man intentional; sense of divine self
- Standing barefoot indicates he is on sacred ground
- On his breastplate there are a number of gods participating in the return of Roman standards
- Breastplate indicates he is a warrior; judge's robes show him as a civic ruler
- Back not carved, meant to be placed on a wall

## Portrait of Augustus as general, from Prima Porta, Italy, ca. 20 B.C.E., marble, 6'8" in. high



Cue Card



## Portrait of Augustus



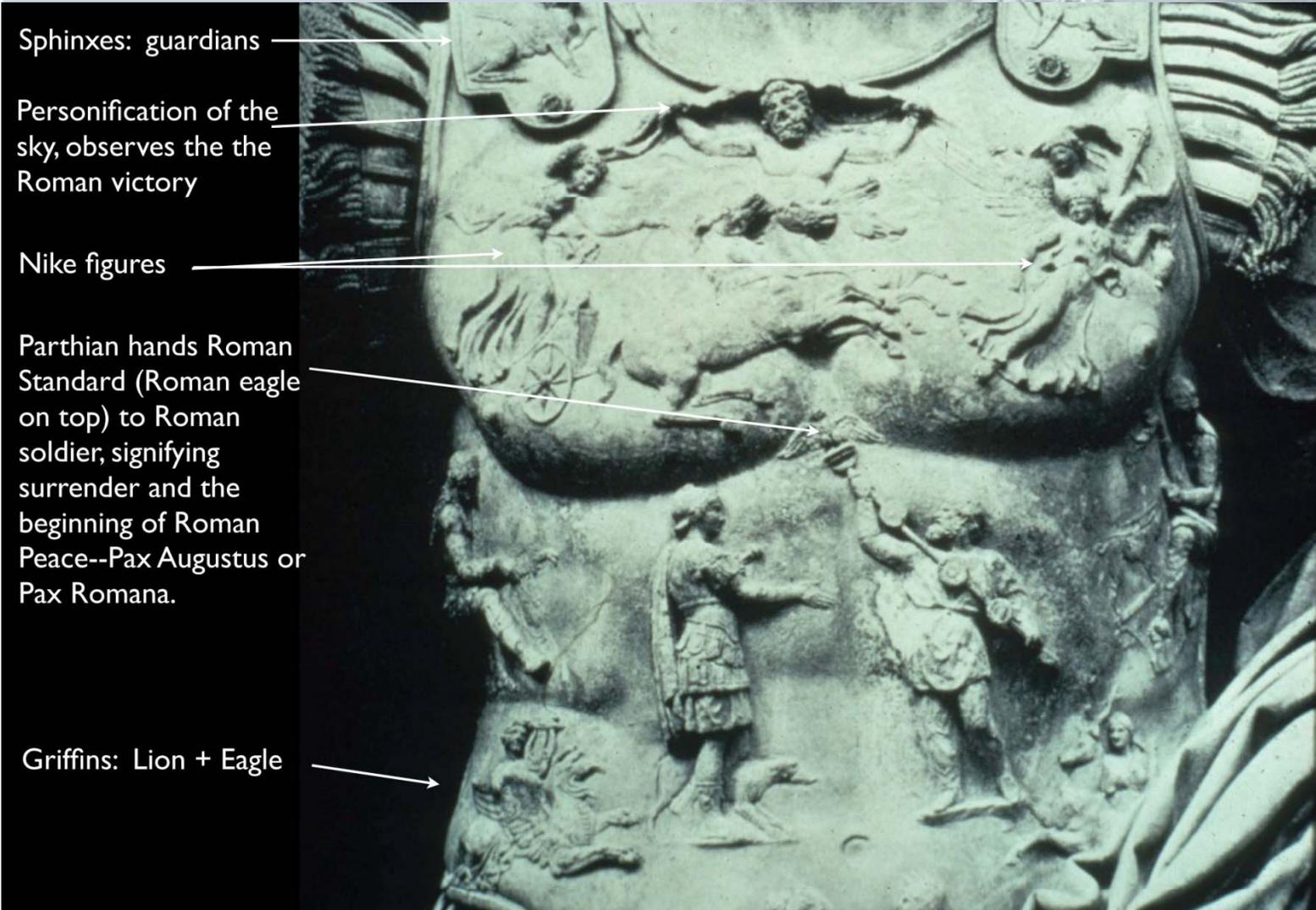
•Pair/share: How does Augustus; portrait remind you of Classical Greek images?

- Characteristic of Augustus, may have carried a sword, pointing down in his left hand, right hand in Roman orator pose, Base: cupid on the back of a dolphin-reference of Augustus' divine descent from Venus
- Ways this works serves as propaganda for Augustus as effective Emperor
- Style change: From Verism to Idealism youth
- Augustus was not yet 32 when he defeated Anthony and Cleopatra. In addition, Julius Caesar had been made a god after his death; and though Augustus didn't even claim to be a god himself, he did advertise himself as the son of a god. His portraits portrayed him as a god-like leader who miraculously never aged.

Augustus as general, from Primaporta stands like Polykleitos' *Doryphoros*, Roman marble copy from Pompeii, Italy, after a bronze original of ca. 450–440 BCE and addressed his troops like the Etruscan orator Aule Metele from Cortona, near Lake Trasimeno, Italy, early first century BCE.

He is standing like Polykleitos's *Doryphoros* with his right arm raised to address his troops in the manner like the orator Aule Metele from Etruscans





Sphinxes: guardians

Personification of the sky, observes the the Roman victory

Nike figures

Parthian hands Roman Standard (Roman eagle on top) to Roman soldier, signifying surrender and the beginning of Roman Peace--Pax Augustus or Pax Romana.

Griffins: Lion + Eagle

\*Purpose: to mold public opinion. The narration on the cuirass communicates Augustus' power, effective leadership and beneficence.

## Portrait bust of Livia (even old age)



•Livia – Augustus' wife, she shared the emperor's eternal youthfulness, her blemish-free skin and sharply defined features derived from images of Classical Greek goddesses, She outlived Augustus by 15 years, she died at 87, he portraits introduced new fashion but face remained young

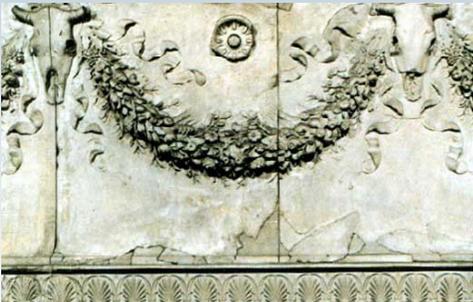
•On Livia's birthday in 9 BCE, Augustus dedicated the Ara Pacis Augustae (altar of Pax August, the Augustan peace) the monument celebrating his most significant achievement, the establishment of peace., He sought to present his new order as a Golden age equal to Athens under Pericles



**7-29: Ara Pacis Augustae**  
**Rome, Italy**  
**ca. 13-9 B.C.E., marble**

**Cue Card**

# Ara Pacis Augustae



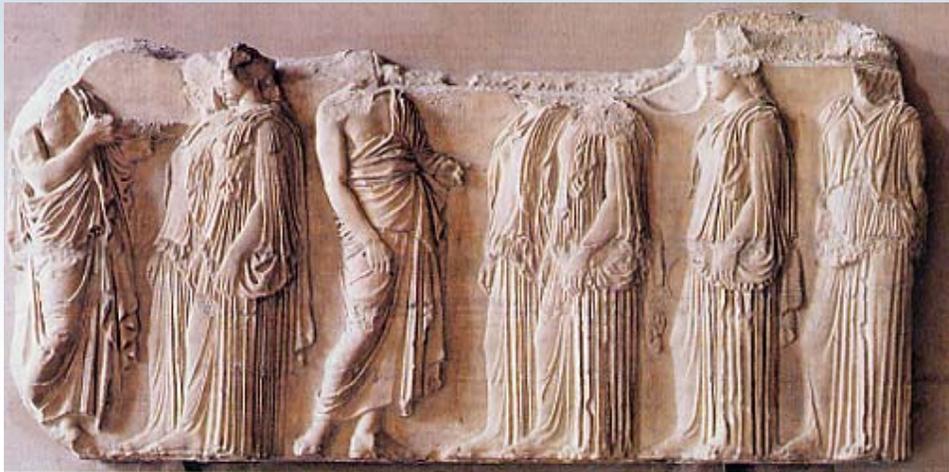


## Cue Card

### Female personification (Tellus?)

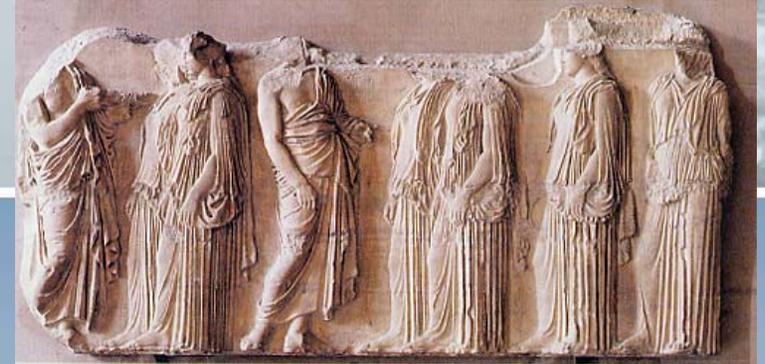
- The female personification with two babies on her lap embodies the fruits of Pax Augusta. All around her the bountiful earth is in bloom, and animals of different species live together peacefully
- Mother Earth breast feeds newborns; symbols of the four elements abound: bird is air; cow and sheep are earth; dragon is fire; seawater at bottom right; fresh water in bottom left; Greek classical composition and modeling of figures
- From the Ara Pacis, or Altar of Peace
- Tellus: Mother Earth breastfeeds newborns; symbols of four elements abound: bird is air; cow and sheep are earth, dragon is fire; seawater at bottom right; fresh water in a jug bottom left; Greek classical composition and modeling of figures
- Everything is bountiful and fruitful when all is at peace

## Procession of the imperial family



**Compare to  
Panathenaic procession frieze  
Parthenon**

## Procession of the imperial family



## Compare to Panathenaic procession frieze Parthenon

Inspired by the frieze of Parthenon, Ara Pacis processions depict recognizable individuals, including children, Augustus promoted marriage and childbearing. This is classical along with political as well as artistic, The Ara Pacis depicts a specific event – 13 BCE, recognizable historical figures, children hadn't appeared on Greek or Roman state monuments before,

Altar of Peace served as a moral exemplar, The emperor used relief sculpture as well as portraiture to further his political and social agendas.

Romans appear as the ruling class, not as gods, in a procession, figures have natural gestures and relaxed poses

- Romans appear as the ruling class, not as gods, in a procession;
  - figures have natural gestures and relaxed poses
  - Celebrates a specific event for the inauguration of the altar; actual people depicted;
- Augustus promoted marriage, and so children are prominently paced; informality

## 7-32: Maison Caree, Nimes, France, ca. 1-10 CE



- Augustus's most ambitious project in the capital was the construction of the new forum next to Caesar's forum, This is a well-preserved Corinthian pseudoperipteral temple in France, modeled on the temple in the Forum of Augustus in Rome, exemplifies the conservative New-Classical Augustan architectural style

- Corinthian capitals
- Set on a high podium
- Front entrance emphasized
- Walls of cella pushed out to meet the engage columns, interior expanded to the maximum size allowed beyond the porch
- Used as a model for Jefferson's State Capitol in Richmond, Virginia



Great aqueduct-bridge, In the fourth century BCE, the Romans began to build aqueducts to carry water from mountain sources to their city on the Tiber River, As Rome's power spread, its engineers constructed aqueducts, roads, and bridges to serve throughout the empire.

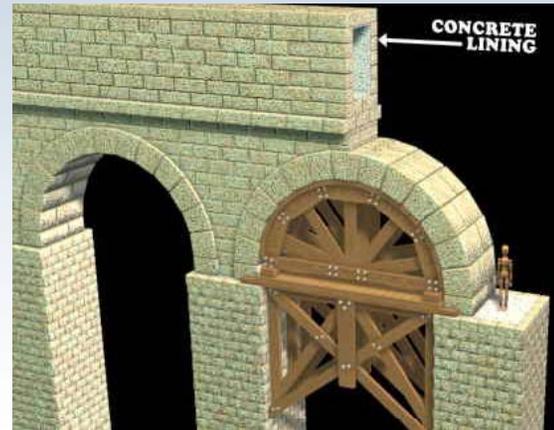
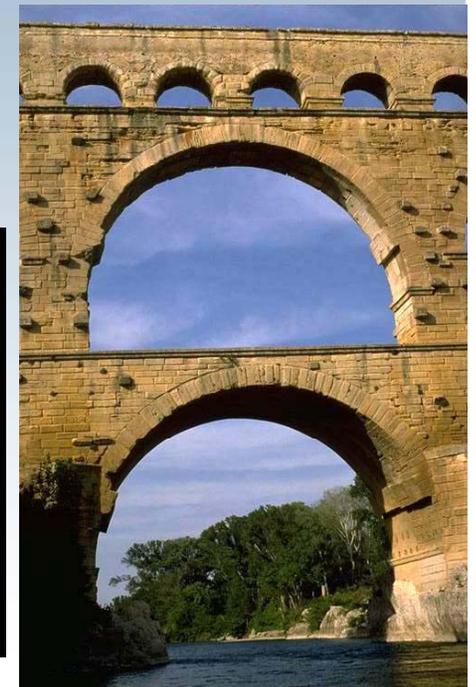
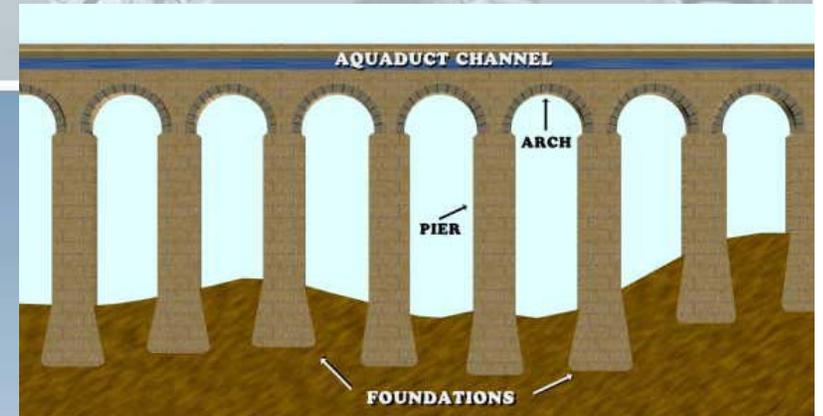
Provided about 100 gallons of water a day for each inhabitant from a source 30 miles away, The water flowed over the considerable distance by gravity alone, this required gradual decline over the entire route from source to city. 3-story Pont-du-Gard, each large arch spans 82 feet high, and consists of blocks weighing up to two tons each,



**7-33: Pont-du-Gard, Nimes, France, ca.  
16 B.C.E.**

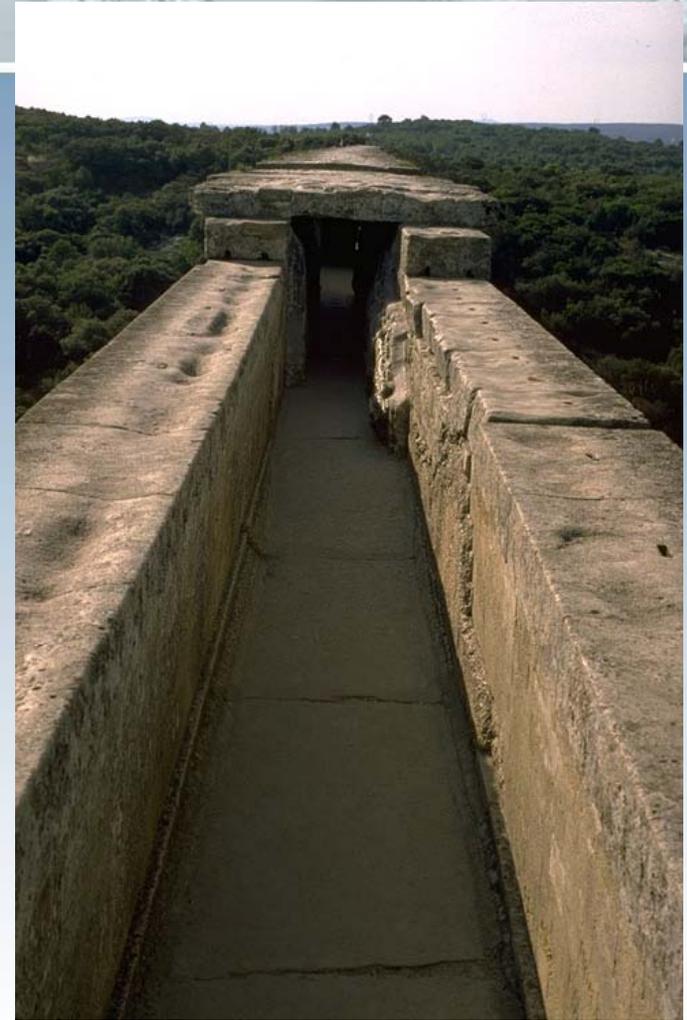
**Cue Card**

## Pont du Gard



- Ashlar masonry
- Aqueduct meant to bring water to the city of Nimes
- Heavy, squat arches on bottom level; thinner arches on second level; lighter rhythm of smaller arches on top level, which carries the water of the aqueduct

# Aqueduct system

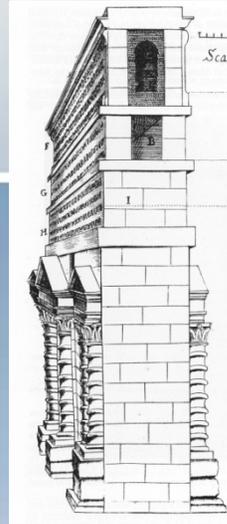


7-34: Porta Maggiore  
Rome, Italy c.50 CE



- Demand for water in the capital required the construction of many aqueducts. The emperor Claudius erected this gate. At the point where two of Rome's water lines converged. Its huge attic (uppermost story) bears a lengthily inscription that concealing the stacked conduits for both aqueducts. The gate is an outstanding example of the Roman restricted masonry style. Instead of precisely shaped block, the designed used smooth and rusticated surface. This gave a more interesting rustic design

# 7-34: Porta Maggiore Rome, Italy c.50 CE

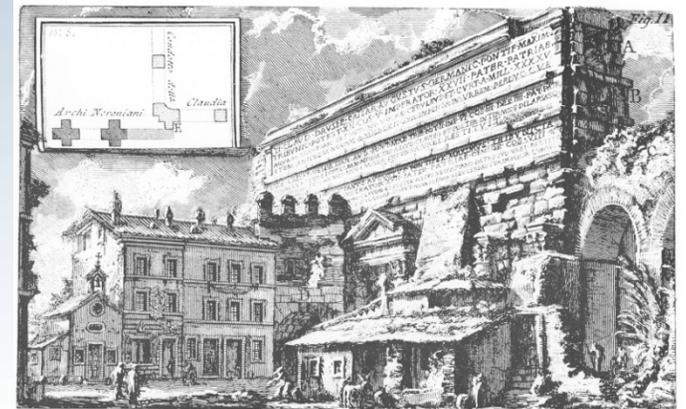
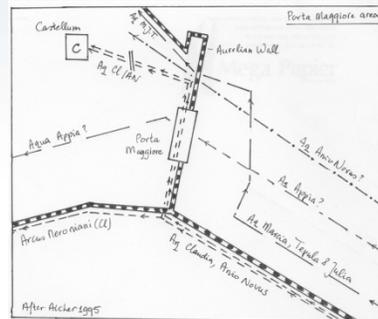


**Aqueduct channels**

**Model of the Porta Maggiore**



**Rusticated Masonry**



**Mediaeval view on the Porta Maggiore and dwellings (J.B. Piranesi)**

**Cue Card**

- Flavians ruled Rome for more than a quarter century - The Flavian Amphitheater, was known then, to build it was politically shrewd. Favorite pastime throughout the Roman Empire was going to the amphitheater to see two immensely popular kinds of spectacles: gladiatorial combats and animal hunts. Gladiators were professional fighters, usually slaves who had been purchased to train in gladiatorial schools to hand-to-hand combatants.

- Concrete core, brick casing, travertine facing

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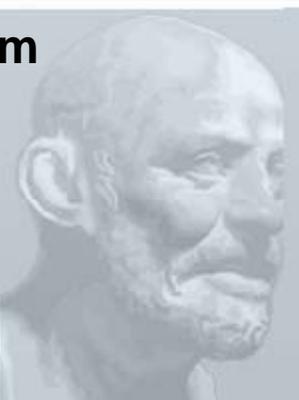
- Concrete core, brick casing, travertine facing

**7-36: Colosseum**

Rome, Italy

ca. 70-80 C.E.

**Cue Card**



It was on a site of a artificial lake during Nero's reign, he drained it and built the Colosseum. This was the largest arena, hold more than 50,000 spectators, complex system of barrel-vaulted corridors held up the enormous oval seating, there was a arena substructure, housed waiting rooms for the gladiators, animal cages, and machinery for raising and lowering stage sets as well as animals and humans

Adobe squared windows at top level are small brackets that are meant to hold flagstuffs; these staffs are the anchors for a retractable canvas roof used to protect the crowd on hot days

Much of the marble was pulled off in the Middle Ages

The exterior shell is 160 feet high, the height of a modern 16-story building, 76 numbered gateways provided efficient entrance and exit paths leading to and from the cavea (seating), where the spectators sat according to their place in the social hierarchy

Façade into four bands with large arched openings, Ornamental Greek orders frame the arches in the standard Roman sequence for multistoried buildings: ground up Tuscan, Ionic, and then Corinthian,

Interplay of barrel vaults, groin vaults, arches



**7-36: Colosseum**

**Rome, Italy**

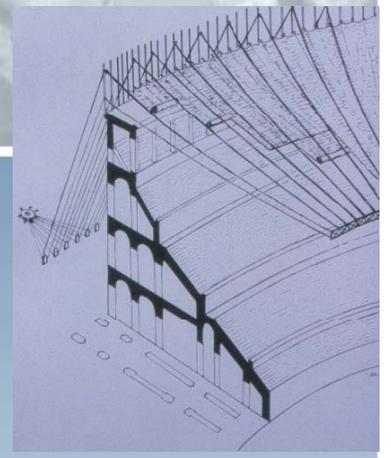
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**Cue Card**

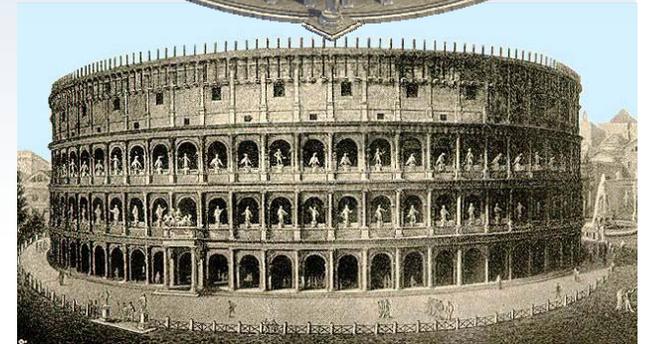
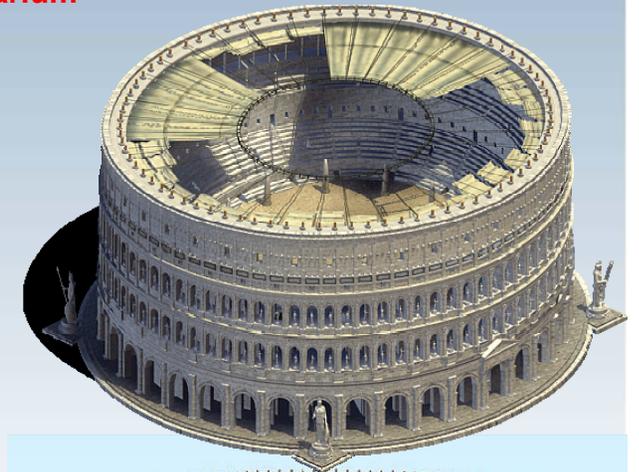
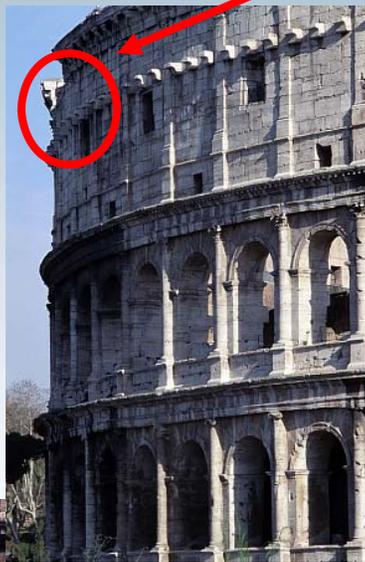
# Colosseum exterior



**velarium**  
(one theory)

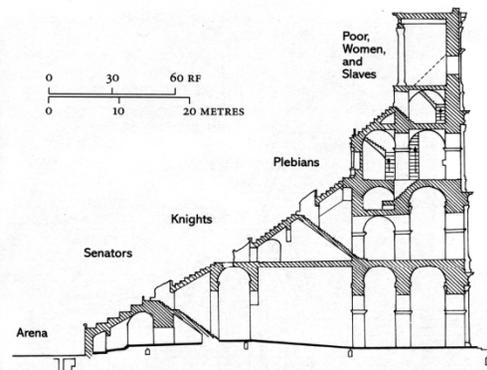
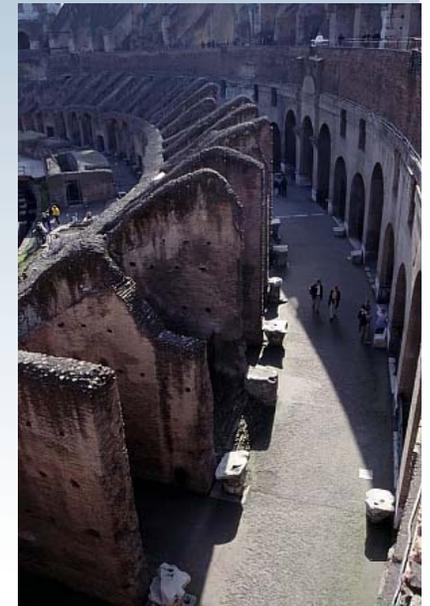
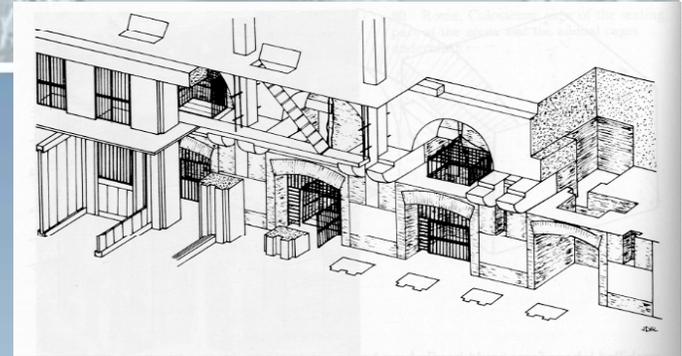
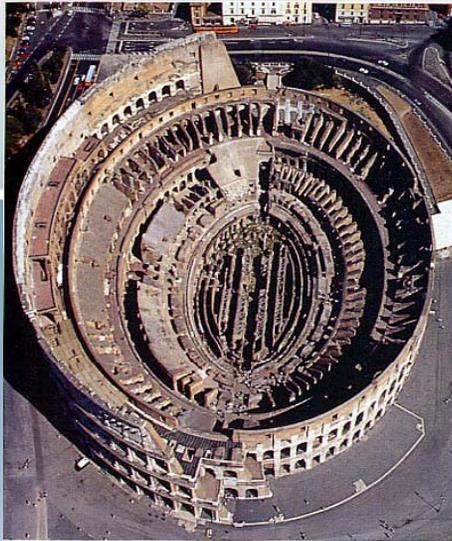


**Bracket for velarium**



Reconstruction

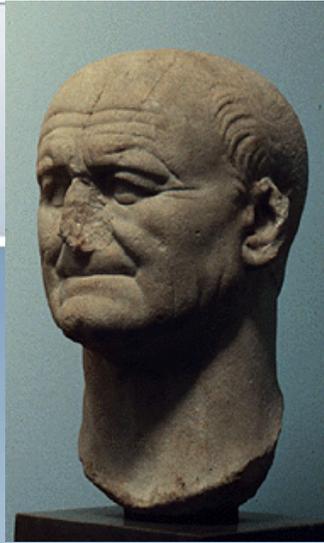
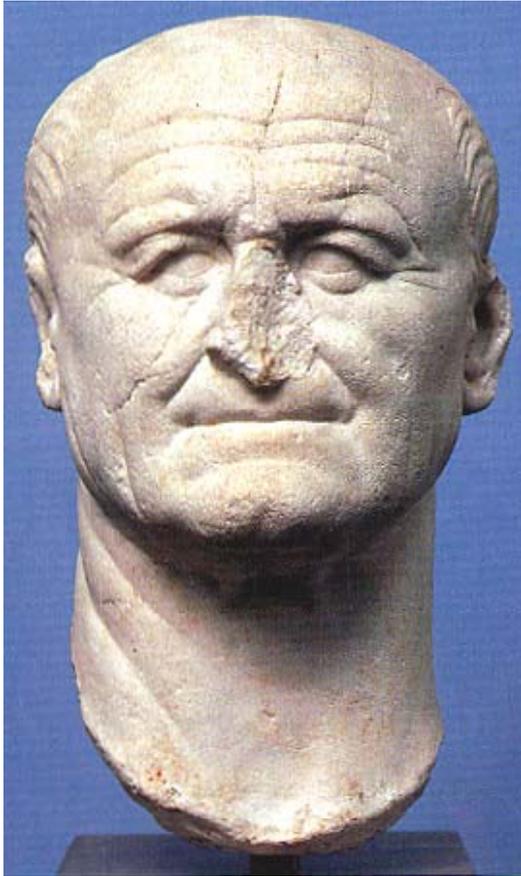
# Colosseum interior



▲ Fig. 133. Colosseum. Reconstruction of seating zones



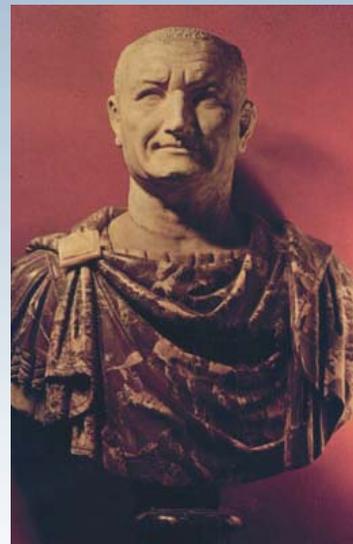
## Cue Card



Changed from the youthful god in the Augustus tradition back to the veristic tradition of the Republic, real likeness with receding hairline and again, leathery skin, **Veristic Roman Busts**

- Realism of the portrayal shows influence of Greek Hellenistic art; late Etruscan art
- Extremely realistic face, called a veristic portrait
- Bulldog-like tenacity of features; overhanging flesh; deep crevices in face
- Full of experience and wisdom—traits Roman patricians would have desired
- Features may have been exaggerated by artist to enhance adherence to Republican virtues

### Verism



### Vespasian

739: Portrait bust of a Flavian woman, 2'1" marble  
ca. 90 CE



## Cue Card

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### Veristic Roman Busts

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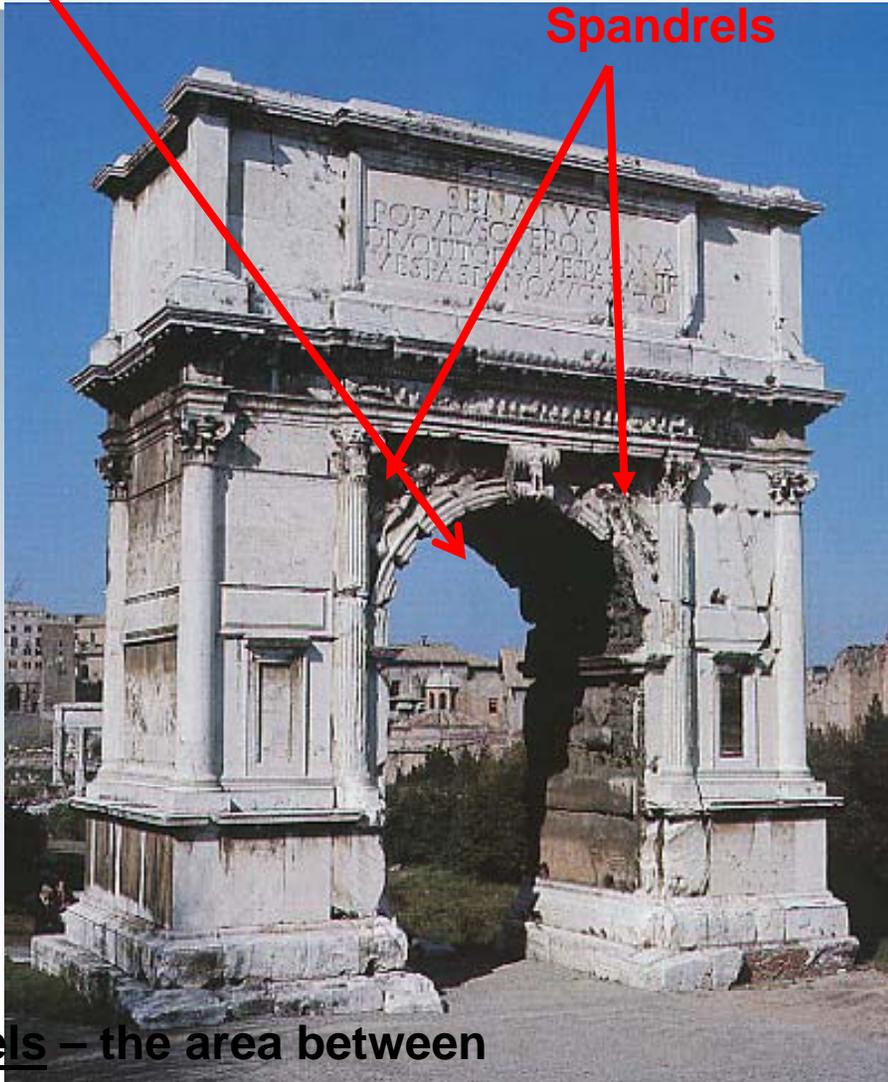
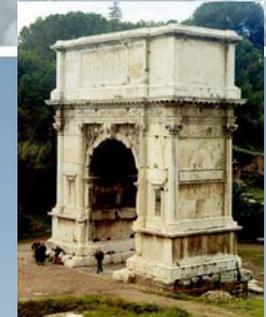
7-40: Arch of Titus  
81 CE

reconstruction

Arcuated opening -  
Curved or arched

Triumphal arch  
Composite columns

Spandrels



When Titus died in 81 CE, his brother Domitian erected an arch in his memory, triumphal Roman arches celebrated military victories, it is a typical triumphal arch in that it only has one passageway.

Composite capitals (ionic and Corinthian), reliefs depicting personified victories,

The inscription states the Senate erected the arch to honor the god Titus, son of the god Vespasian, showing Titus's ascent to heaven, The Senate normally proclaimed Roman emperors gods after they died

**Spandrels** – the area between the arch's curve and the flanking columns and entablature

# Arch of Titus Spoils of Jerusalem

# Cue Card



## Arch of Titus Spoils of Jerusalem

## Cue Card

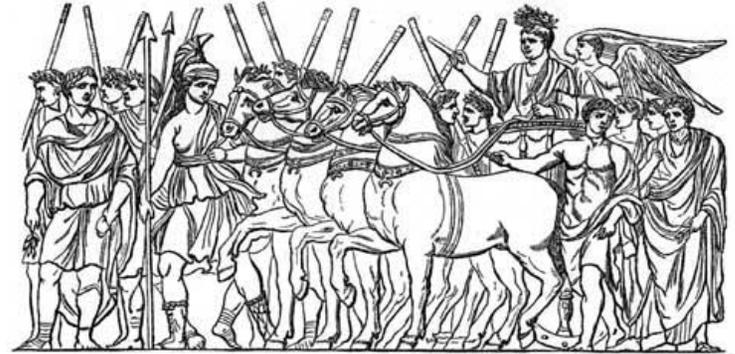


Commemorate the emperor's conquest of Judaea, Roman soldiers carry in triumph the spoils taken from the Jewish temple in Jerusalem, the energy and swing of the column of soldiers suggest a rapid march, deep carving casts strong shadows, which produced strong shadows, the play of light and shadow enhances the sense of movement

- Romans carry off splendors from the Temple of Solomon
- Repeated rhythmic movement of soldiers from left to right



## Arch of Titus Triumph of Titus



Victory crown Titus in his triumphal chariot, personification of honor and valor in this first known instance of the intermingling of human and divine figures in a Roman historical relief,

The Arch of Titus, honors the god Titus, not the living emperor, the interaction between mortals and immortals became a staple of Roman narrative relief sculpture, even on monuments set up while the emperor was still alive

## Pair/Share

List all the things that make this work representative of Roman art and architecture

### Art

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Architecture

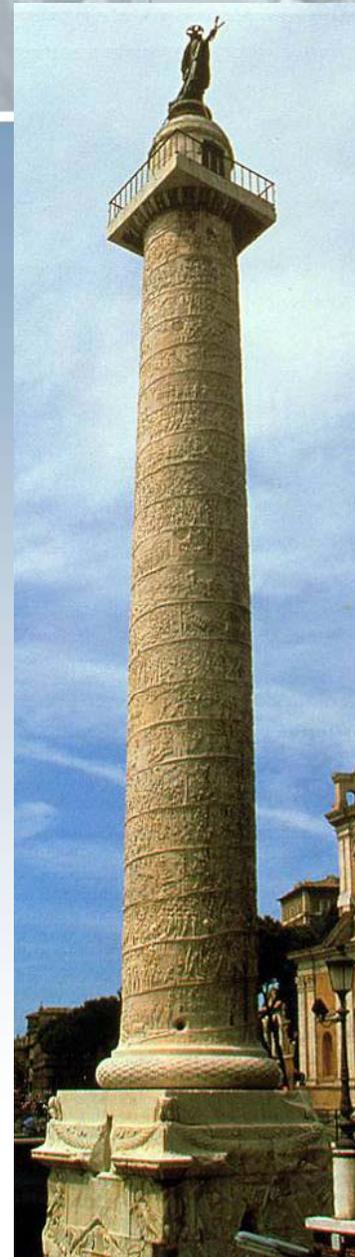
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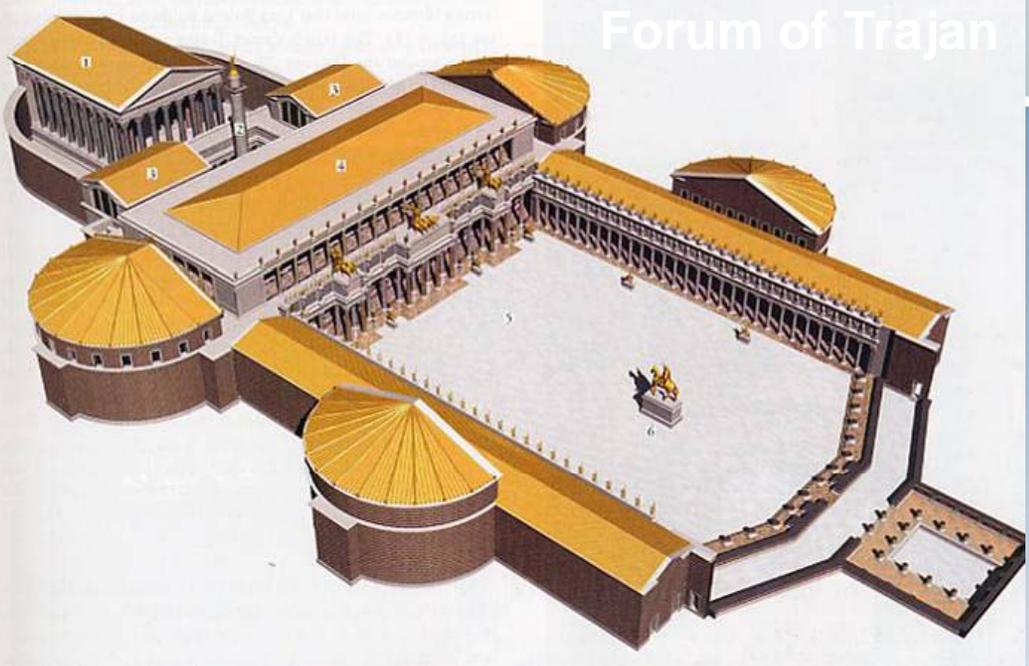


# Roman Art And Architecture

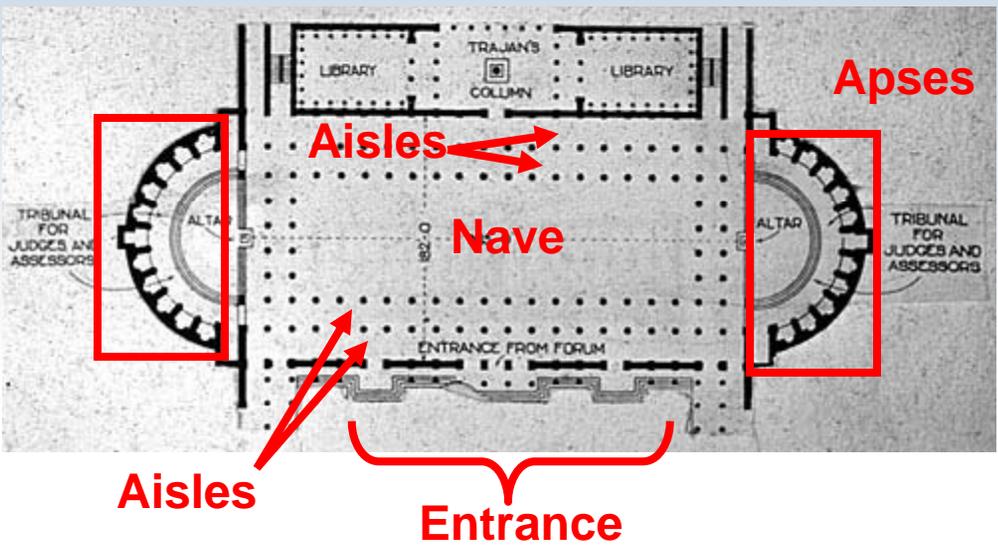
## High Empire and Late Empire



7-44: Apollodorus of Damascus, Forum of Trajan  
Rome, Italy, 112 CE



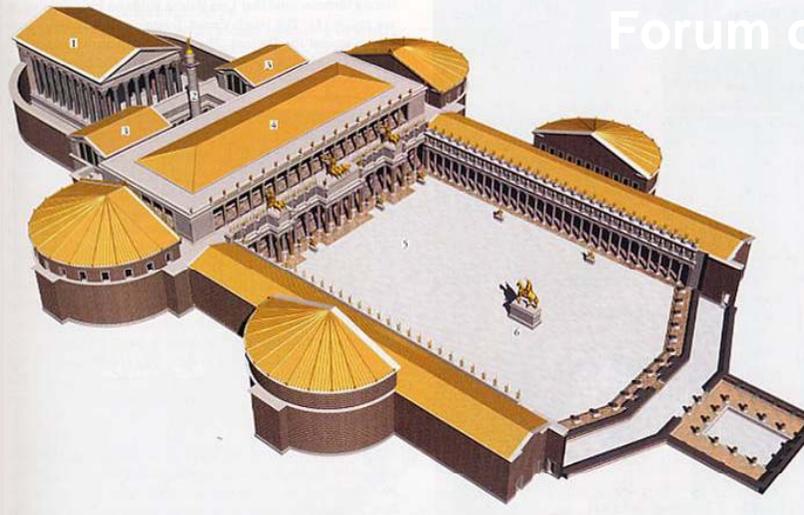
Forum of Trajan



Reconstruction –interior

Clerestory windows

7-44: Apollodorus of Damascus, Forum of Trajan  
Rome, Italy, 112 CE



Forum of Trajan



Rome's largest forum featured a basilica with clerestory lighting, two libraries, a commemorative column and a temple of the deified Trajan, The architect was Apollodorus of Damascus, Trajan's chief military engineer during the Dacian wars, completed after the emperor's death, it was dedicated to the newest god in the Roman pantheon, Trajan himself, entry to Trajan's forum was a impressive gateway resembling a triumphal arch, 400 feet long and 200 feet wide, light entered through clerestory windows,

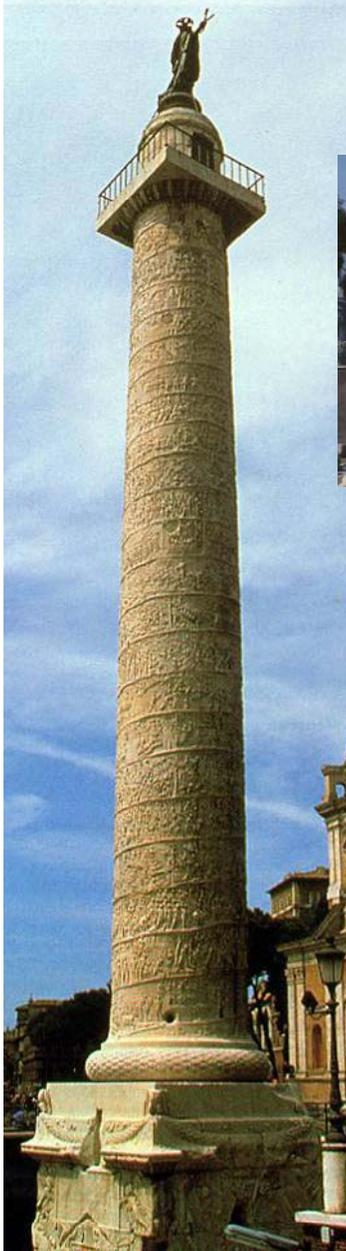
## 5: Trajan's Column.

Roman soldiers building a wooden palisade at the siege of Sarmizethusa, the capital of the Dacian chief Decebalus.

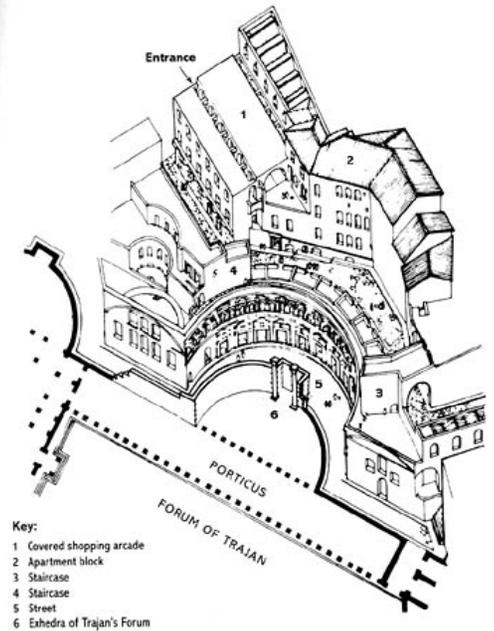
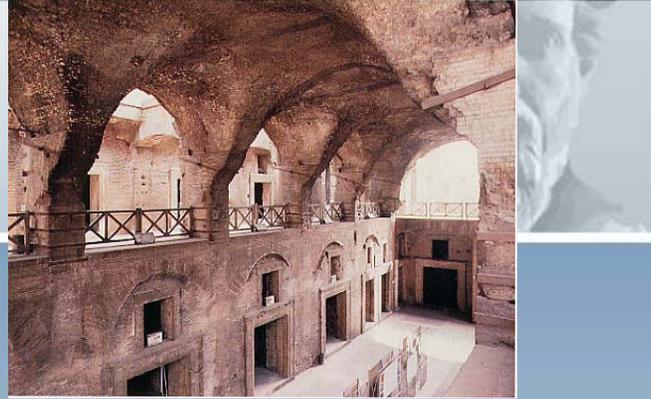


Colossal freestanding column with continuous spiral narrative frieze. 128 foot tall column once had nude state of the emperor on the top, the tall pedestal served as Trajan's tomb, 625-foot narrative cycle wrapped around the column, telling the story of Trajan's defeat of Dacians

- Crowded composition
- Low relief, few shadows to cloud what must have been a very difficult object to view in its entirety
- Column meant to be entered; visitor to wander up the interior spiral staircase to the viewing platform at the top where a heroic statue of the Emperor was placed
- View would impress visitor to Trajan's accomplishment, including his forum and his markets



## 7-46 & 7-47: Markets of Trajan Rome, Italy, ca. 100-112 CE

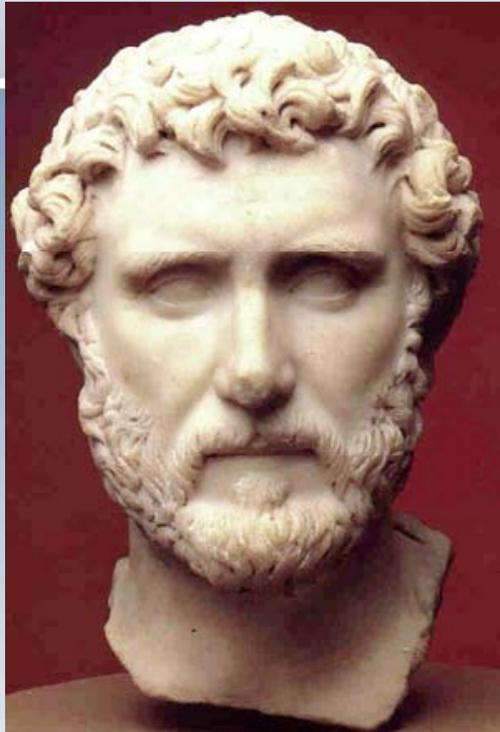


Overlooking the forum, to house both shops and administrative offices, multileveled complex, The basic unit was taberna, single-room shop covered by a barrel vault, wide doorway, usually with a window above through which light entered a wooden inner attic used for storage, shop were on several levels, great umbrella-like groin vaults covering the hall,

- Original market had 150 shops
- Multilevel mall
- Semicircular building held several levels of shops
- Main space groin-vaulted; barrel-vaulted shops



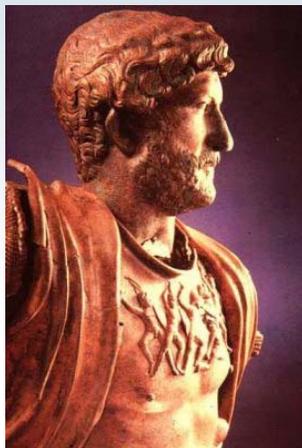
## 7-48: Portrait Busts of Hadrian



Compare to  
KRESILAS, Pericles



**Hadrian's Wall**



Hadrian, Trajan chosen successor and fellow Spaniard, was a connoisseur and lover of all the arts, as well as an author, architect, and hunter, greatly admired,, he was greatly admired, local officials set up statues and arches everywhere in his honor, this is why there are more portraits of Hadrian than nay other emperor except Augustus, 41 years old when he began ruling, his bust are Classical Greek Statues of a bearded men,



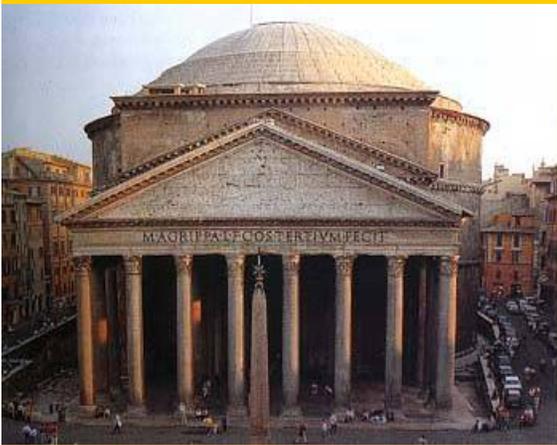
## Cue Card

**7-49: Pantheon, Rome, Italy, ca.  
118-125 C.E.**

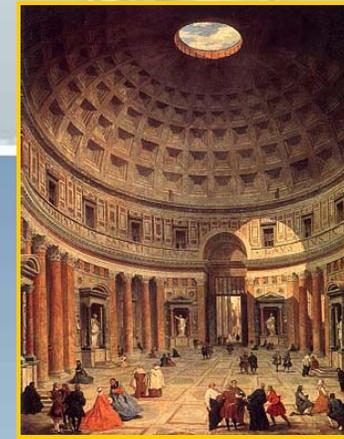
Soon after Hadrian became emperor, work began on the Pantheon, temple of all the gods, one of the best preserved buildings of antiquity, one of the most influential designs in architectural history, revealed the full potential of concrete, both as a building and means for shaping architectural space,

- Dedicated to all the gods
- Inscription: “Marcus Agrippa, son of Lucius, having been consul three times, built it.”
- Corinthian capital porch in front of building
- Façade has two pediments, one deeply recessed behind the other

## Pantheon exterior



## Pantheon interior

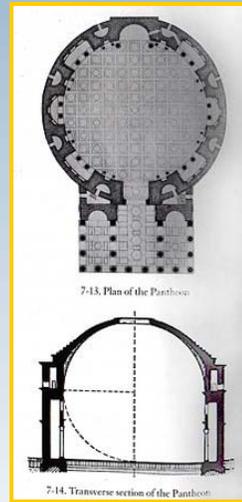
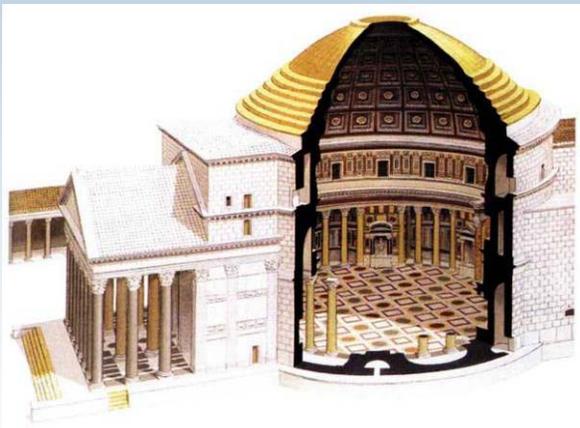


- Interior contains slightly convex floor for water drainage
- Coffers may have been filled with rosette designs to simulated stars
- Cupola walls are enormously thick: 20 feet at base
- Square panels in floor and in coffers contrast with roundness of walls
- Oculus 27 feet across: allows for sunlight and air; acts as a moving spotlight across the interior
- Height of building equals its width; interior of building based on the circle, a hemisphere
- Walls have seven niches for statues of gods
- Thickness of walls thinned at top, coffers take some weight pressure off walls
- Triumph of concrete construction
- Oculus 27 feet across: allows for sunlight and air; acts as a moving spotlight across the interior
- Was brilliantly decorated
- Originally had a large atrium before it; originally built on a high podium; modern Rome has risen up to it

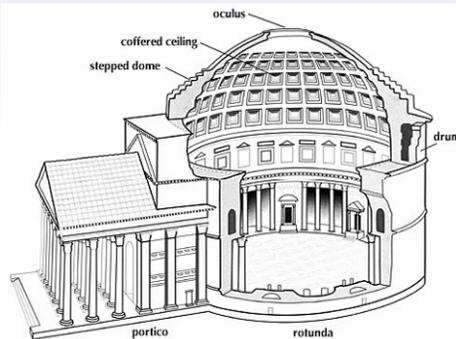
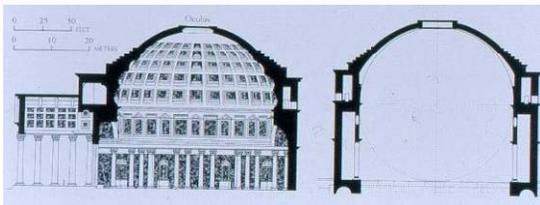
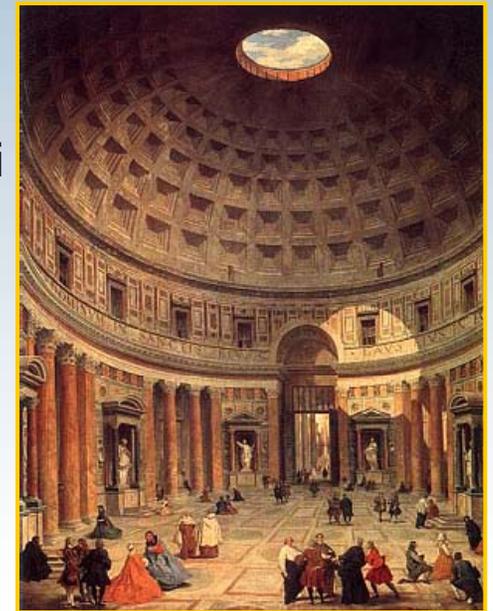
# Pantheon interior



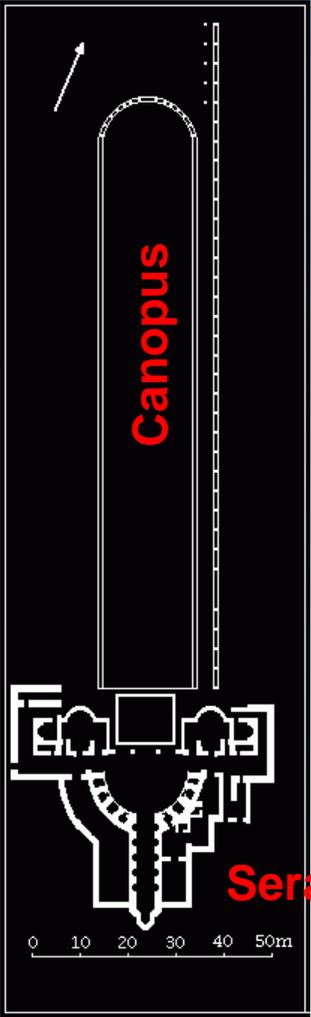
Coffers



Painting  
by  
Giovanni  
Pannini



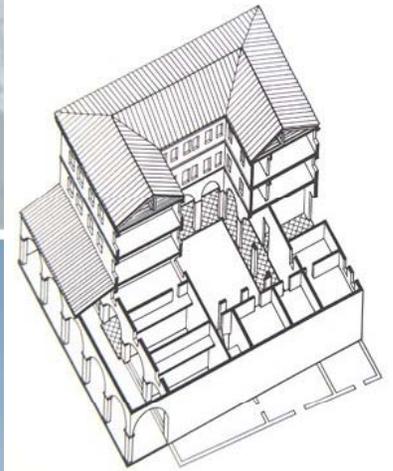
# Canopus and Serapeum, Hadrian's Villa



- Huge complex for the delight of Emperor Hadrian
- Highest quality workmanship lavished on the mosaics, murals, and architectural settings
- Canopus: colonnade with a cornice connecting the tops of columns; alternating rounded with fattened lines; sculpture placed inside the rounded arches; framing a reflecting pool

rear of the Serapeum complex

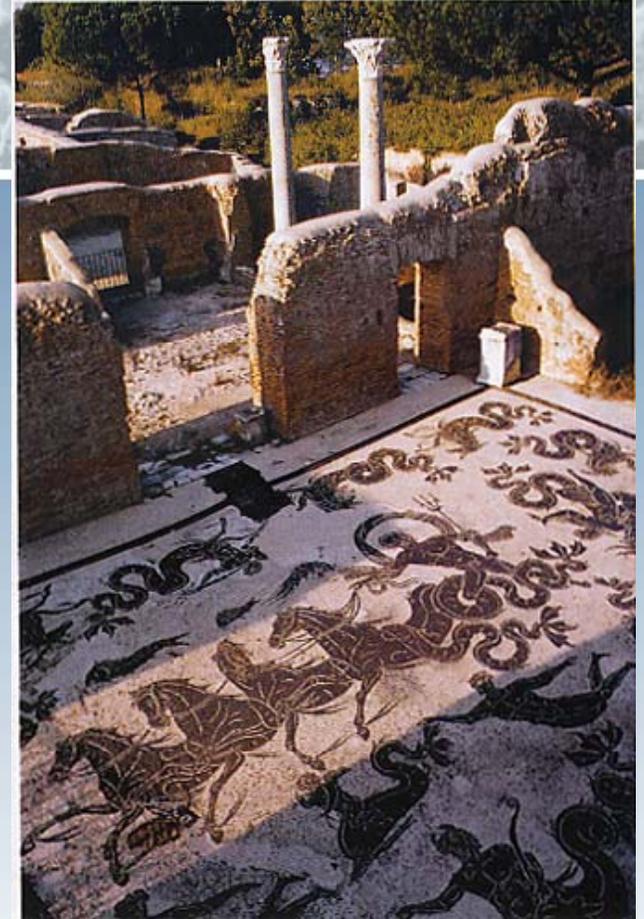
## 7-54: Model of an insula



90 percent of Rome's population of close to one million lived in multistory apartment blocks (insulae). The rents were cheap. Shops occupied the ground floors. Above were up to four floors of apartments. Many of the apartments were large and have frescoed walls and ceilings, they didn't have the space of light like the houses in Pompeii, large number of windows faced the busy streets, only few had bathrooms in their apartments – most shared often on another floor, they cook food in the hallways



**Floor Mosaic:  
Neptune and  
creatures of  
the sea**



Finer homes had mosaic floors as well as painted walls and ceilings, the Baths of Neptune is one of the best preserved floor mosaics,

## Equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius



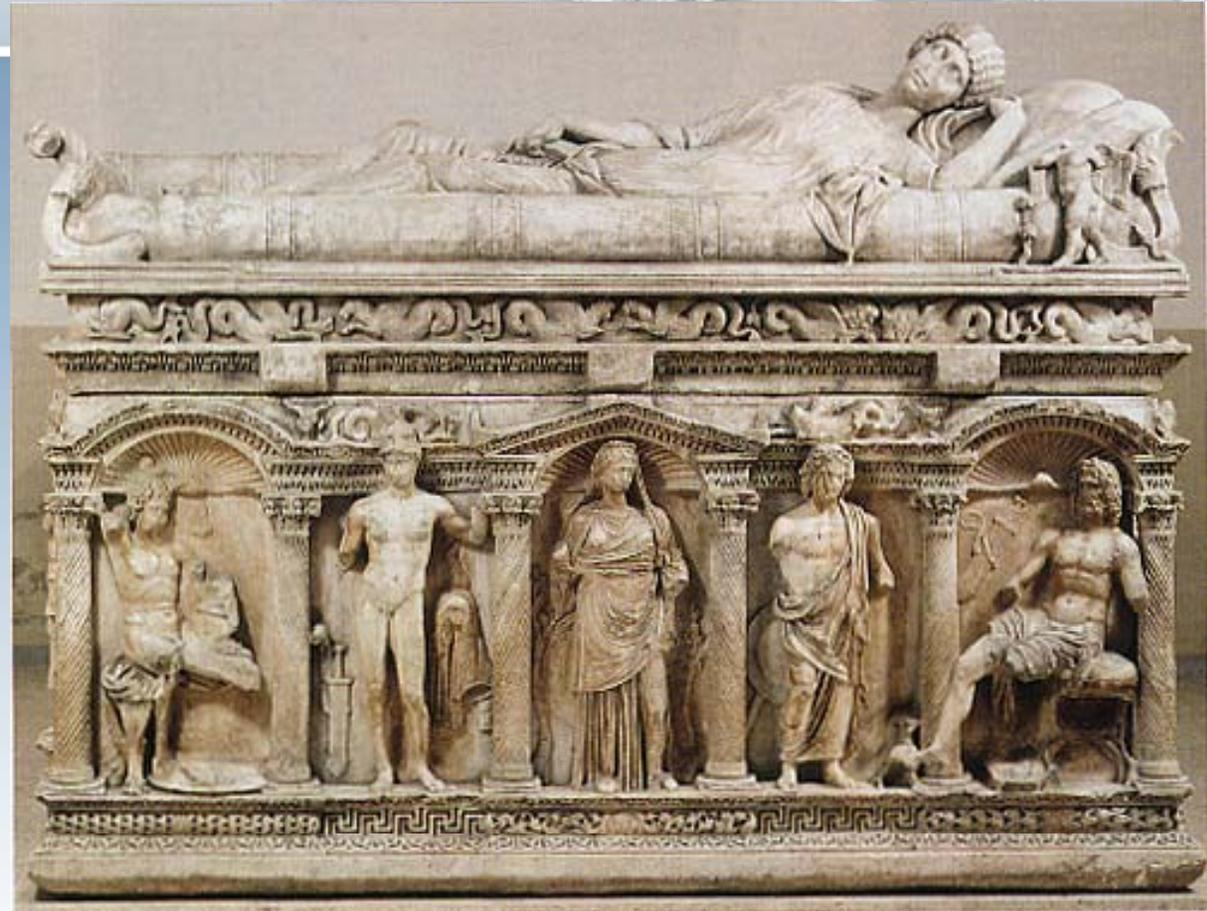
## Cue Card

- On parade, passing before his people
- Gesture is benignly authoritative
- Horse is spirited, hard to control, but Marcus has mastery over man and beast
- Characteristic Roman oratorical gesture
- Rider is larger than the horse
- May have been a figure of a defeated king under the horse's upraised hoof
- Mistaken for Constantine in Middle Ages, which is the reason why it was not melted down
- Not in its original location

## Asiatic sarcophagus



Compare to  
Etruscan  
sarcophagus

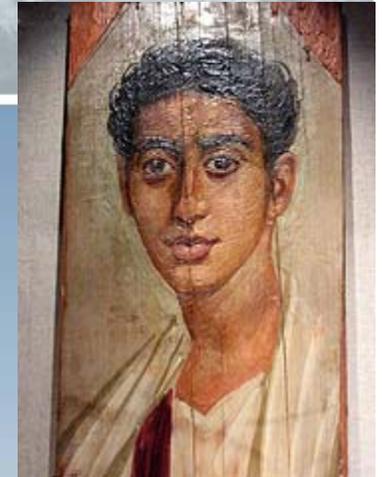
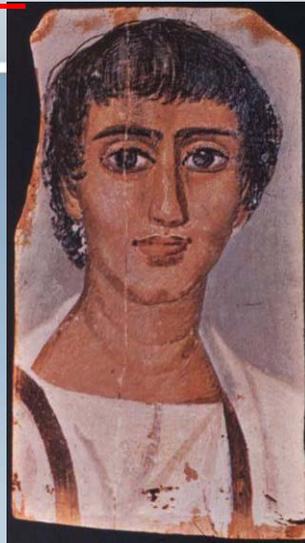


The Romans produced sarcophagi in several regions. Western Sarcophagi have carvings on the front. Eastern sarcophagi, such as this one with a woman's portrait on the lid, feature reliefs on all four sides, the deceased woman reclines on a kline bed with her faithful little dog.

## Mummy portraits from Faiyum, Egypt

**Encaustic – mixing wax with paint**  
**Regional differences –**

**CUE CARD**



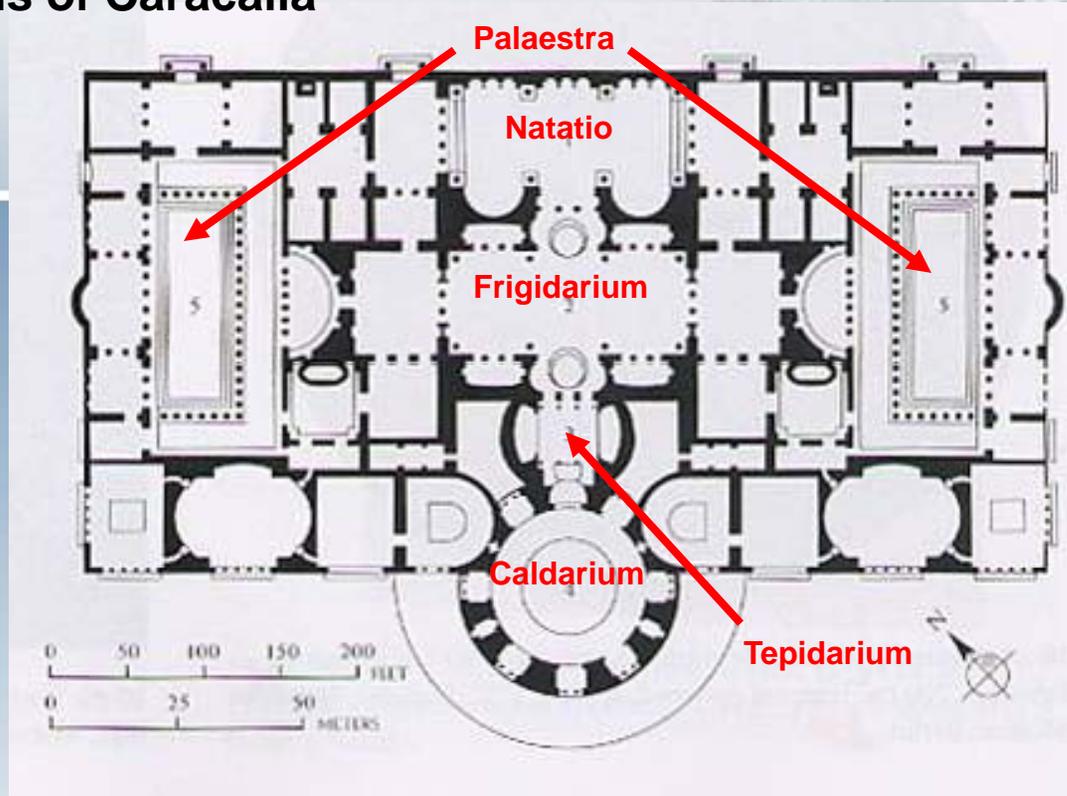
Even after Augusta reduced the Kingdom of the Nile, Egyptians continued to bury their dead in mummy cases. In Roman times, however, painted portraits on wood often replaced traditional stylized portrait masks. Hundreds of Roman mummy portraits have been unearthed in cemeteries of the Faiyum district.

# The Late Empire



- By the time of Marcus Aurelius, two centuries after Augustus established Pax Romana, Roman power was beginning to erode. It was increasingly difficult to keep order on the frontiers, and many in the Empire challenged the authority of Rome.
- The economy was in decline
- The Late Empire was a pivotal era in world history during which the pagan ancient world gradually gave way to the Christian Middle Ages.

## Baths of Caracalla



One of the many bathing and recreational complexes constructed with imperial funds to win the public's favor. This was smaller than the one in Ostia and Pompeii. The rooms had thick brick-faced concrete walls up to 140 feet high covered by enormous concrete vaults.

Tepidarium: warm

Caldarium: hot

Frigidarium: cold

Natatio: swimming Pool

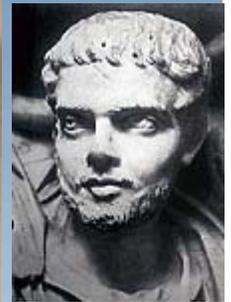


## Heroic portrait of Trebonianus Gallus Bronze, 7'11"



Over-life size heroically nude statue, Trebonianus Gallus projects an image of brute force. He has the massive physique of a powerful wrestler, but his face expresses nervousness.

## Ludovisi Battle Sarcophagus – Battle of Romans & Barbarians



- Extremely crowded surface with figures piled up top of one another
- figures lack individuality
- Confusion of battle is echoed by congested composition
- Roman army trounces bearded and defeated barbarians



**Porphyry – purple  
marble, Schematic  
drapery**

## The Four Tetrarchs

St. Mark's, Venice

ca. 305 C.E. porphyry

51 in. high

**Cue Card**



- Porphyry sculpture quarried in Egypt; purple is the royal color
- Tetrarchs illustrate a period in which the Roman Empire was ruled by four men, each equal, each dividing the state; explains the uniformity of gesture, movement, forms; a harmony among the four men is implied even if it did not exist in practice
- Faces are types, not individuals; emotionless



- Built to commemorate Constantine's victory over Maxentius at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312
- Friezes and sculptures taken from monuments to older emperors; Trajan, Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius; Constantine draws a parallel between their accomplishments and his
- New friezes are done in Situ
- Renunciation of the classical ideal in contemporary sculpture; head too large for their bodies; squat figures; lack of space; large eyes; frontal stare; mechanical and repeated stances and gestures; shallow relief; heads not distinguished from one another
- Place at this location so that the central arch would, at a distance, frame a 100-foot-tall statue of the Sun god, Sol

## 7-75: Arch of Constantine

Rome, Italy

ca. 312-315 C.E.

**Cue Card**





Arch of Constantine.



Distribution of largess



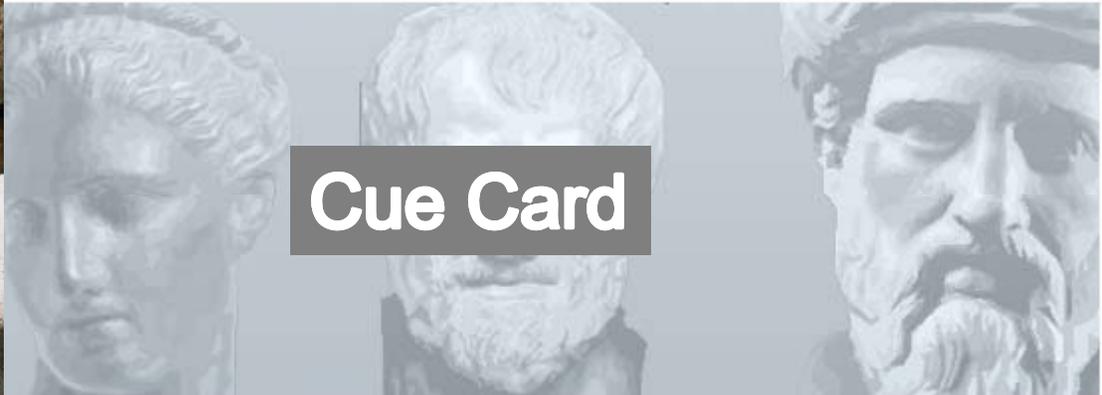
Constantine flanked by statues of Hadrian & Marcus Aurelius



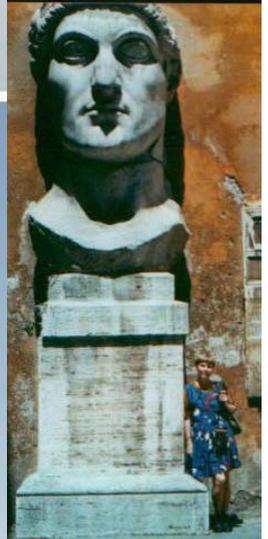
**7-77: Portrait of Constantine, from the Basilica Nova, Rome, Italy, ca. 315-330 C.E., marble head approximately 8 ft. 6 in. high**



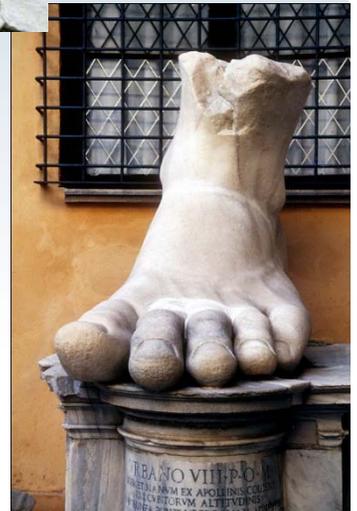
- Whole statue must have been over 30' seated
- Part of an enormous figure that sat as the focal point of the Basilica Nova in Rome
- Parts of the body that show were done in marble; lost now are the wooden elements that represented the torso-perhaps covered in bronze
- Colossal size meant to have reference to Jupiter
- Idealized portrait; timelessness
- Air sits on the head like a hat



**Cue Card**

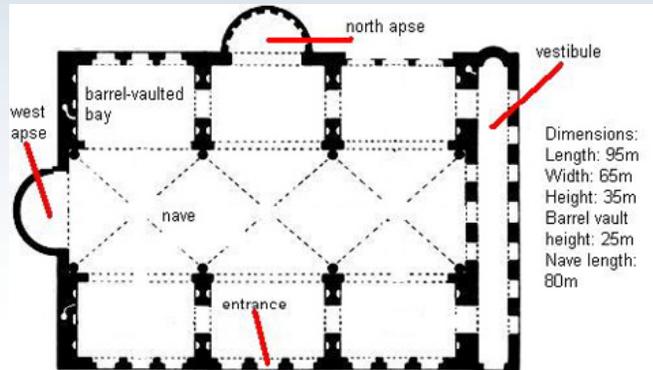
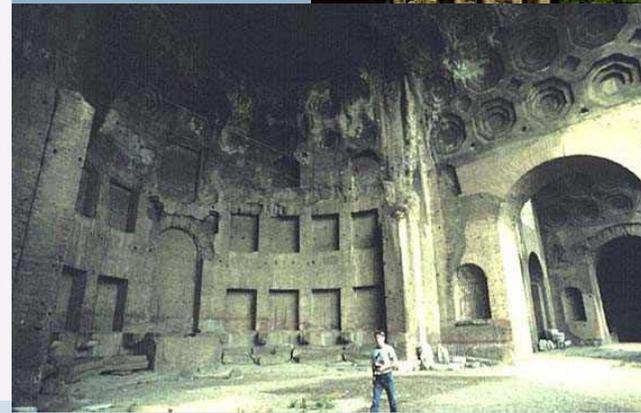
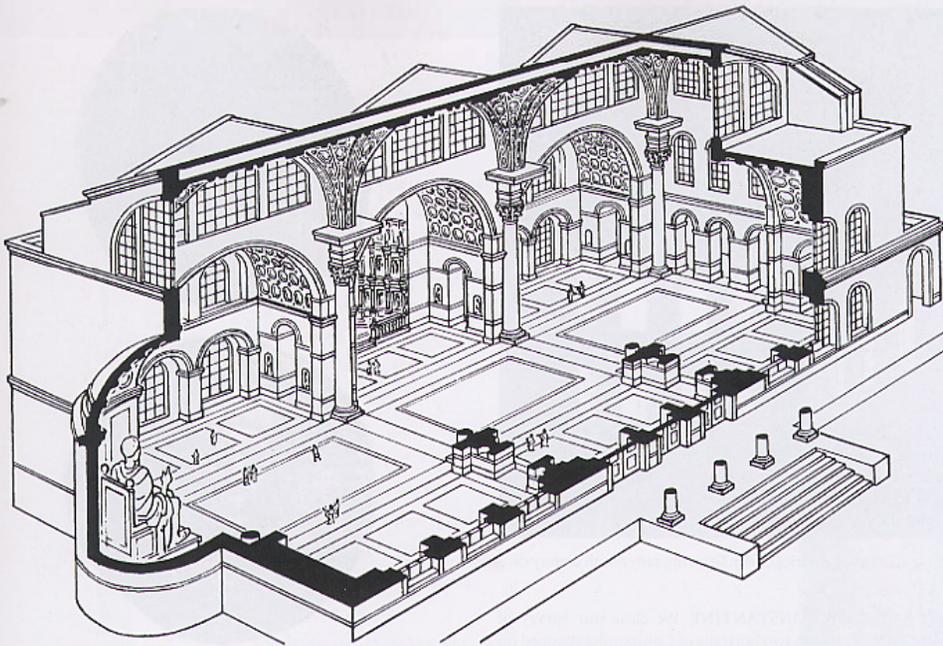


## Portrait of Constantine



# Cue Card

7-78: Basilica Nova, Italy  
Ca. 306-312 CE



- Once housed giant sculpture of Constantine
- Massive building with great window paces for maximum light
- Large groin-vaulted main aisle; barrel-vaulted and coffered side aisles
- Begun by Constantine's rival, Maxentius; completed by Constantine

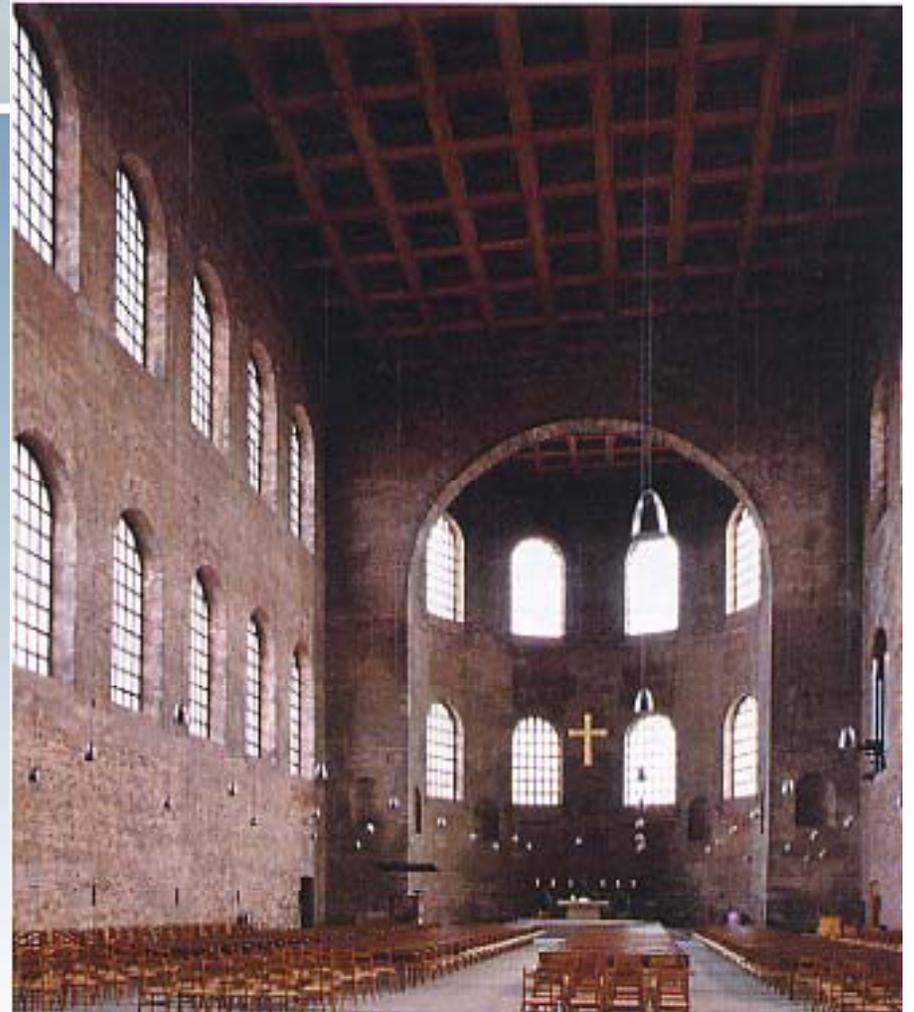
- Solid brick; plain audience hall once covered with marble on the interior
- Semicircular triumphal arch in apse
- Basilican architectural plan inspired Christian churches of the Middle Ages
- Hall is heated by hypocausts, space under the floor that retained heat from a furnace
- Exterior: buttresses arch as two-story arches embraced windows
- Large windows used lead to bind glass panes together



7-79-Aula Palatina (Basilica), Trier, Germany, early 4th century C.E.

Cue Card

# Aula Palatina





## Julius Caesar--Republican Period



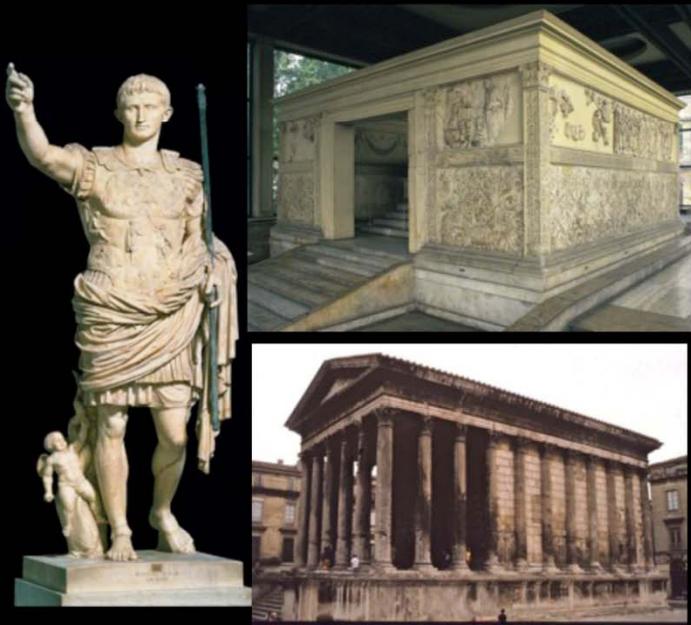
Republican portraits make a statement about Republican virtues and individual personality:

- serious and responsible
- experienced/mature
- determined/steadfast
- loyal to family and state...**

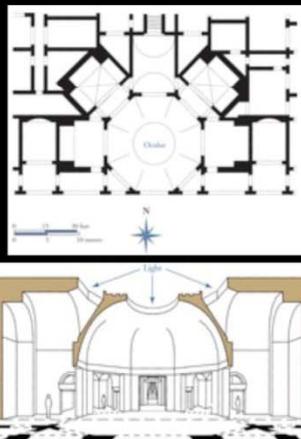




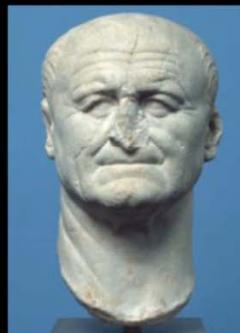
**Early Empire: Caesar Augustus**



**Nero**



**Vespasian**



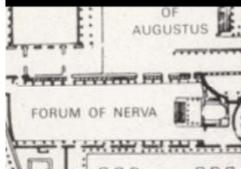
**Titus Domitian**



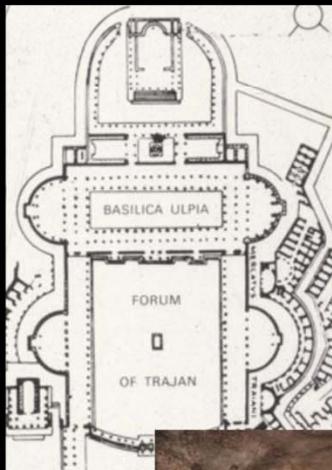


**High Empire:**

**Nerva**



**Trajan**



**Hadrian**



**Antonines**

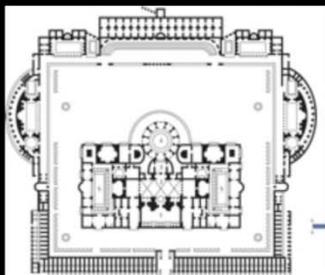


**Marcus Aurelius**





**Late Empire: Caracalla**



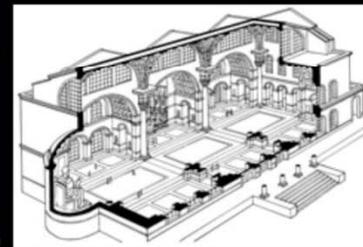
**Trajan Decius**



**Diocletian**



**Constantine**



# Discussion Questions



- ❖ What are some of the unique elements of Roman art and architecture that distinguish it from Greek and other art of the same time period?
- ❖ What does the presence of *veristic* portrait art of the Romans say about Roman culture?