

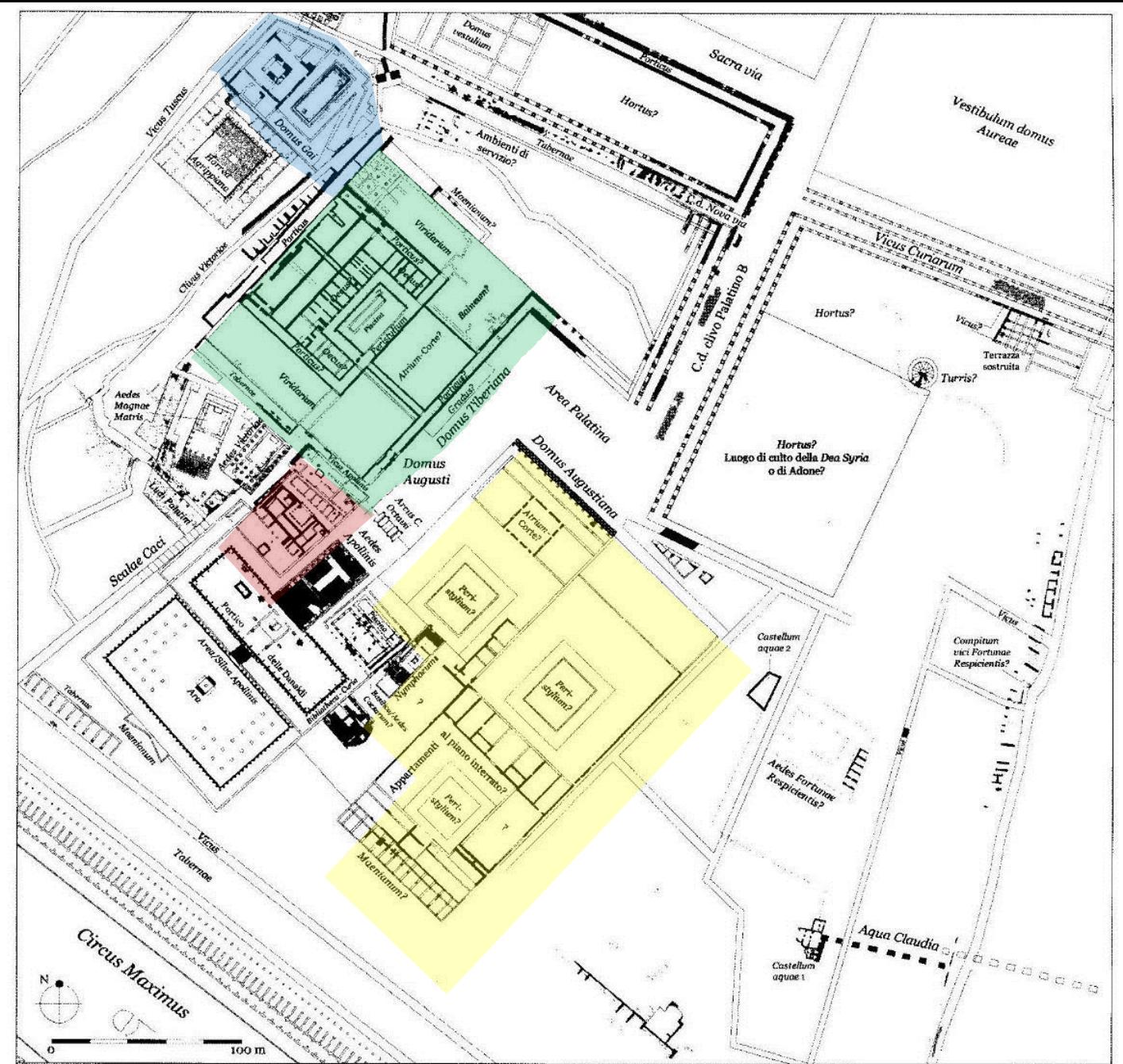
Flavian Rome



Image by Gunnar Back Pedersen. This image is in the public domain.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#).

Suetonius, *Augustus* 72:

- He lived at first near the Forum Romanum, above the Stairs of the Ringmakers, in a house which had belonged to the orator Calvus; afterwards, on the Palatine, but in the no less modest dwelling of Hortensius, which was remarkable neither for size nor elegance, having but short colonnades with columns of Alban stone, and rooms without any marble decorations or handsome pavements.



Palatine
AD 64-68

Suetonius, *Caligula* 22

He built out a part of the palace right into the Forum, and making the Temple of Castor and Pollux its vestibule, he often took his place between the divine brethren, and exhibited himself there to be worshipped by those who presented themselves; and some hailed him as Jupiter Latiaris.

...he would talk confidentially with Jupiter Capitolinus, now whispering and then in turn his ear to the mouth of the god, now in louder and even angry language...But finally won by entreaties, as he reported, and even invited to live with the god, he built a bridge over the temple to the Deified Augustus, and thus joined his Palace to the Capitol. Presently, to be nearer yet, he laid the foundations of a new house in the court of the Capitol.

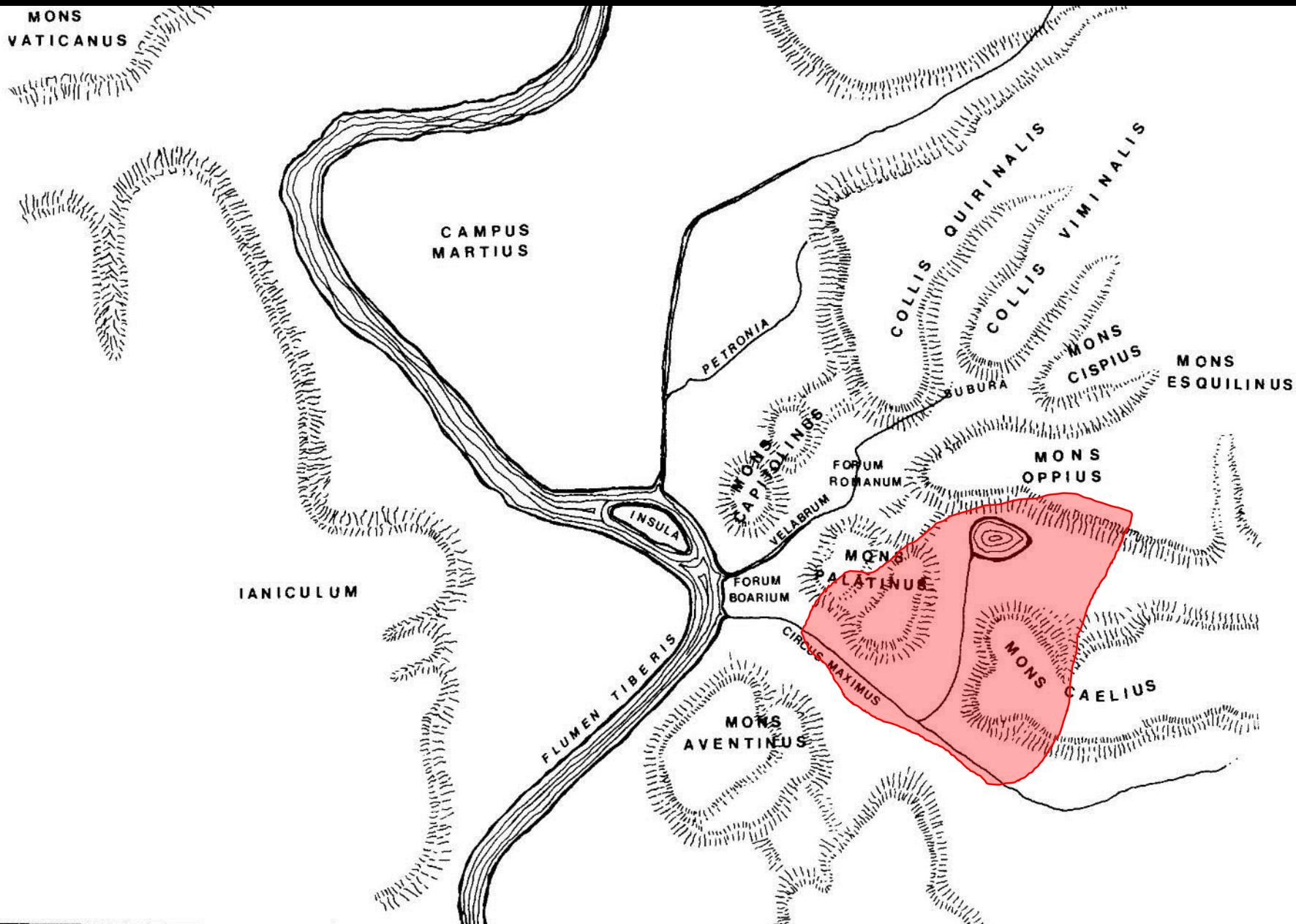
Suetonius, *Nero* 38

But he showed no greater mercy to the people or the walls of his capital. When someone in a general conversation said: “When I am dead, be earth consumed by fire,” he rejoined “Nay, rather while I live,” and his action was wholly in accord. For under cover of displeasure at the ugliness of the old buildings and the narrow, crooked streets, he set fire to the city.

Suetonius, *Nero* 38

Viewing the conflagration from the tower of Maecenas and exulting, as he said, in “the beauty of the flames,” he sang the whole of the “Sack of Ilium,” in his regular state costume.

Nero's Domus Aurea



Stambaugh, John E. *The Ancient Roman City*. John Hopkins University Press, 1988. © John Hopkins University Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>

Suetonius, Nero 31

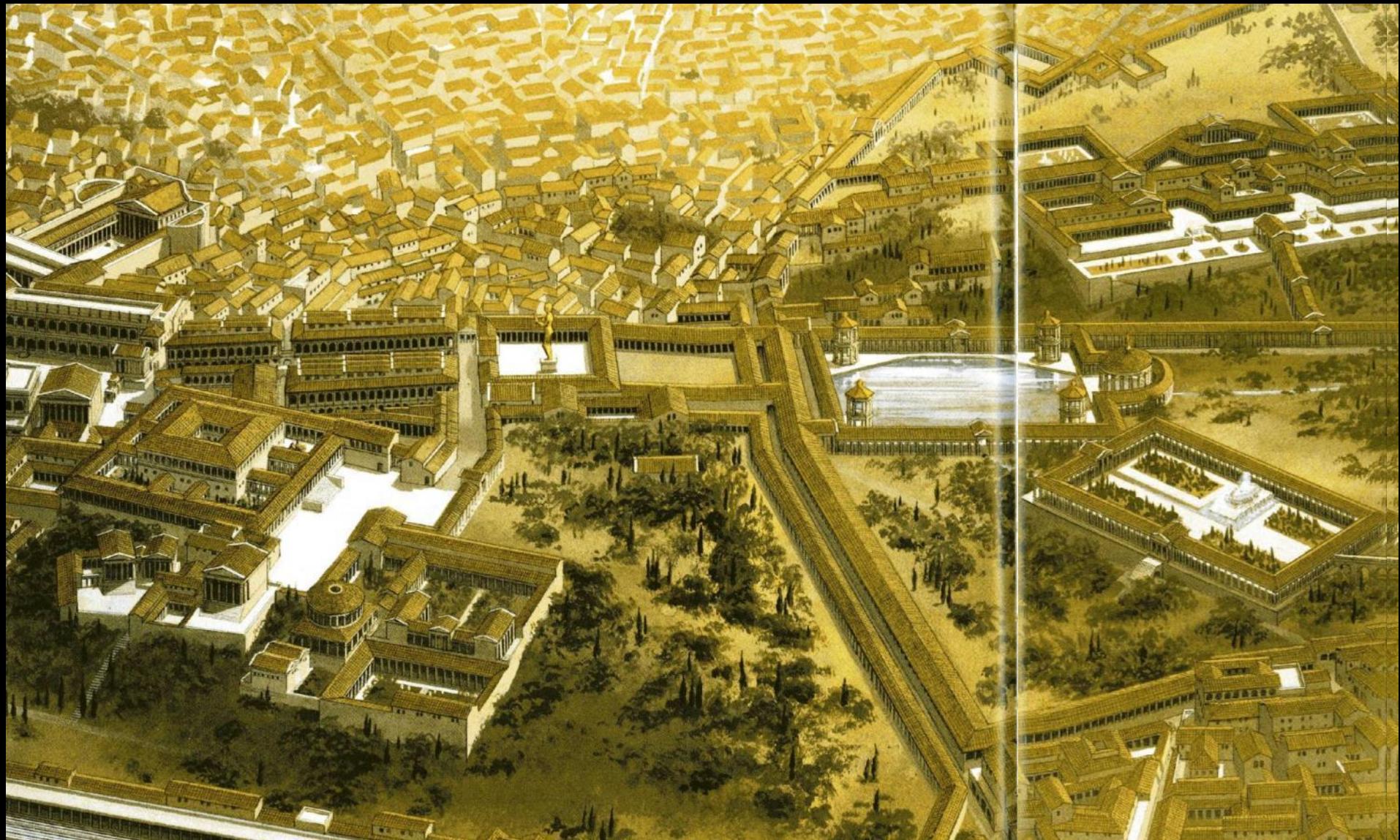
There was nothing however in which he was more ruinously prodigal than in building. He made a palace extending all the way from the Palatine to the Esquiline, which at first he called the House of Passage, but when it was burned shortly after its completion and rebuilt, the Golden House.

It's size and splendour will be sufficiently indicated by the following details. Its vestibule was large enough to contain a colossal statue of the emperor a hundred and twenty feet high; and it was so extensive that it had a triple colonnade a mile long. There was a pond too, like a sea, surrounded with buildings to represent cities.

Suetonius, Nero 31

Besides tracts of country, varied by tilled fields, vineyards, pastures and woods, with great numbers of wild and domestic animals. In the rest of the house all parts were overlaid with gold and adorned with gems and mother-of-pearl. There were dining-rooms with fretted ceilings of ivory, whose panels could turn and shower down flowers and were fitted with pipes for sprinkling the guests with perfumes. The main banquet hall was circular and constantly revolved day and night, like the heavens. He had baths supplied with sea water and sulphur water.

When the edifice was finished in this style and he dedicated it, he deigned to say nothing more in the way of approval than that he was at last beginning to be housed like a human being.



Connolly, Peter, and Hazel Dodge. *The Ancient City: Life in Classical Athens & Rome*. Oxford University Press, 2000. © Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

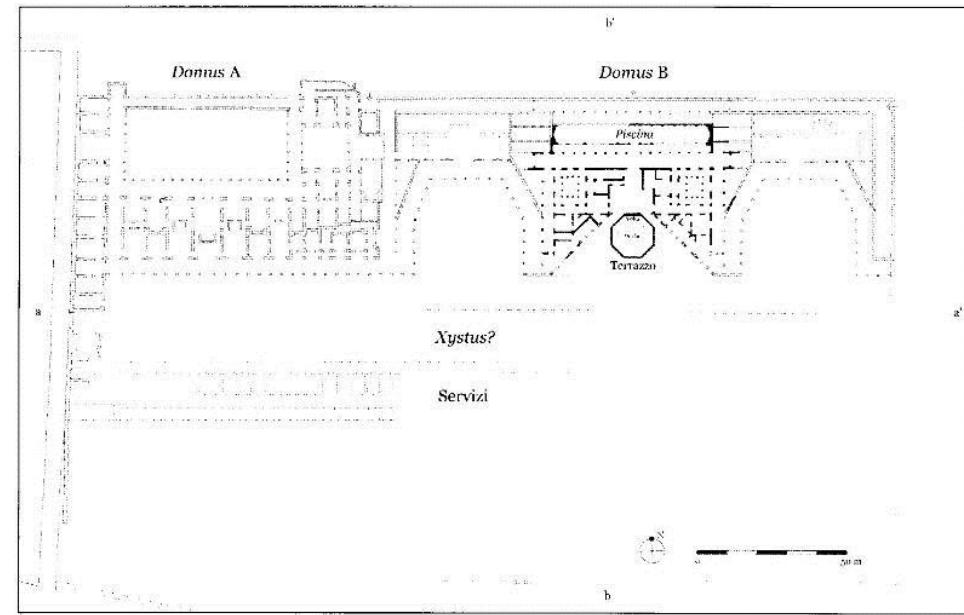
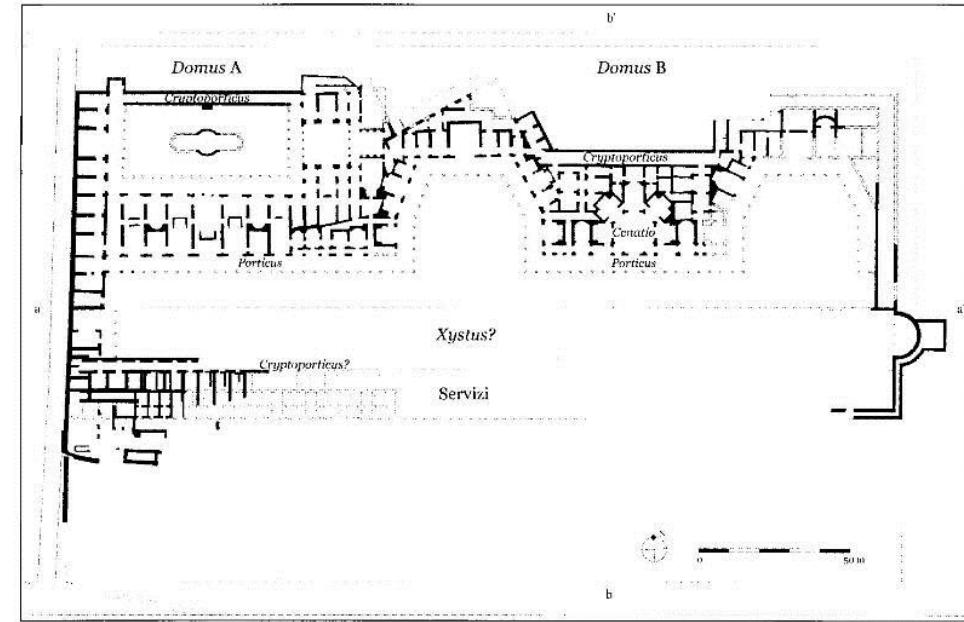


Fig. 85. *Domus Aurea*. Edificio residenziale dell'Oppio. Planimetria ricostruttiva del piano terra.

Fig. 86. *Domus Aurea*. Edificio residenziale dell'Oppio. Planimetria ricostruttiva del primo piano.



Image courtesy of [saragoldsmith](#) on flickr. License CC BY.

(Mirri 1776)



This image is in the public domain.



Image by sebastien amiet; I.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#). License CC BY.

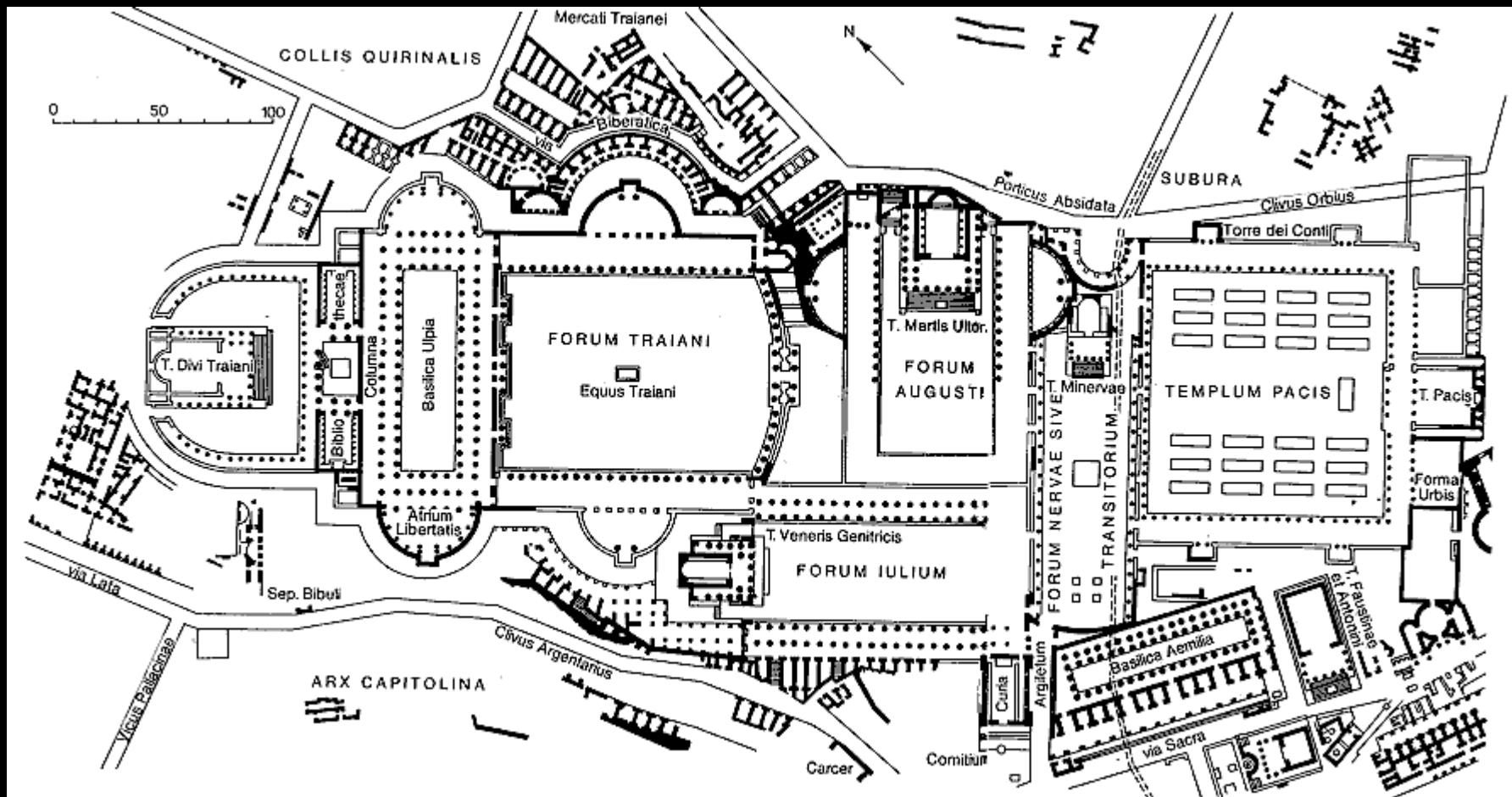
Nero's Macellum



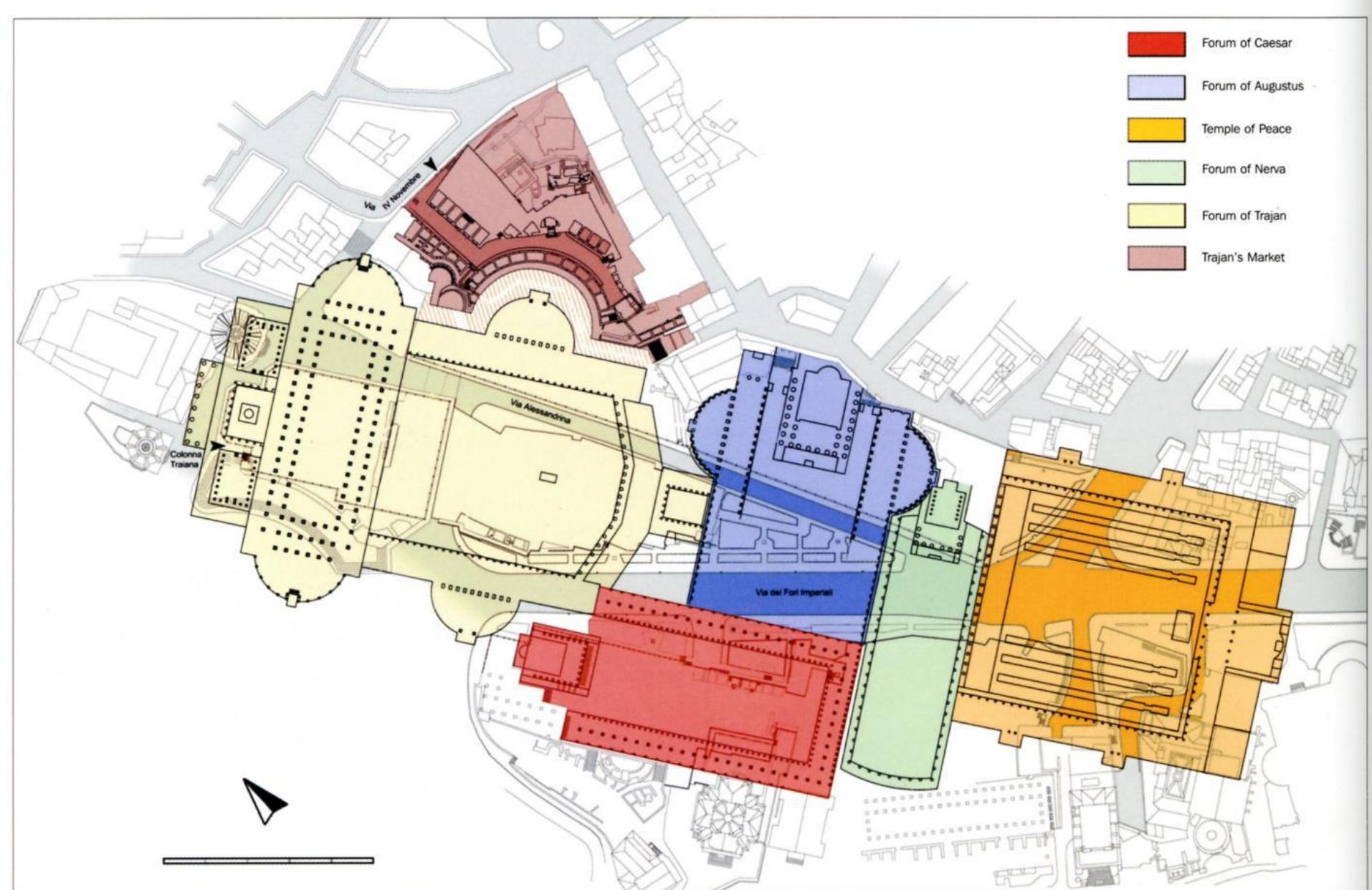
Image courtesy of the Roman Numismatic Gallery. This image is in the public domain.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#).

Temple of Peace

Inaugurated AD 75



© Unknown. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.



Ungaro, Lucrezia, ed. *The Museum of the Imperial Forums in Trajan's Market*. Mondadori Electa, 2007. © Mondadori Electa. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

Pliny, *Natural History* 34.84

The most famous of the art works in Rome that I have mentioned above were originally brought to Rome by Nero's looting and placed around the private rooms of the Domus Aurea, but were since dedicated by the emperor Vespasian to the Temple of Peace and his other buildings.

Statue-base of Parthenokles of Athens



Image courtesy of [Sarah E. Bond](#) on flickr. License CC BY.

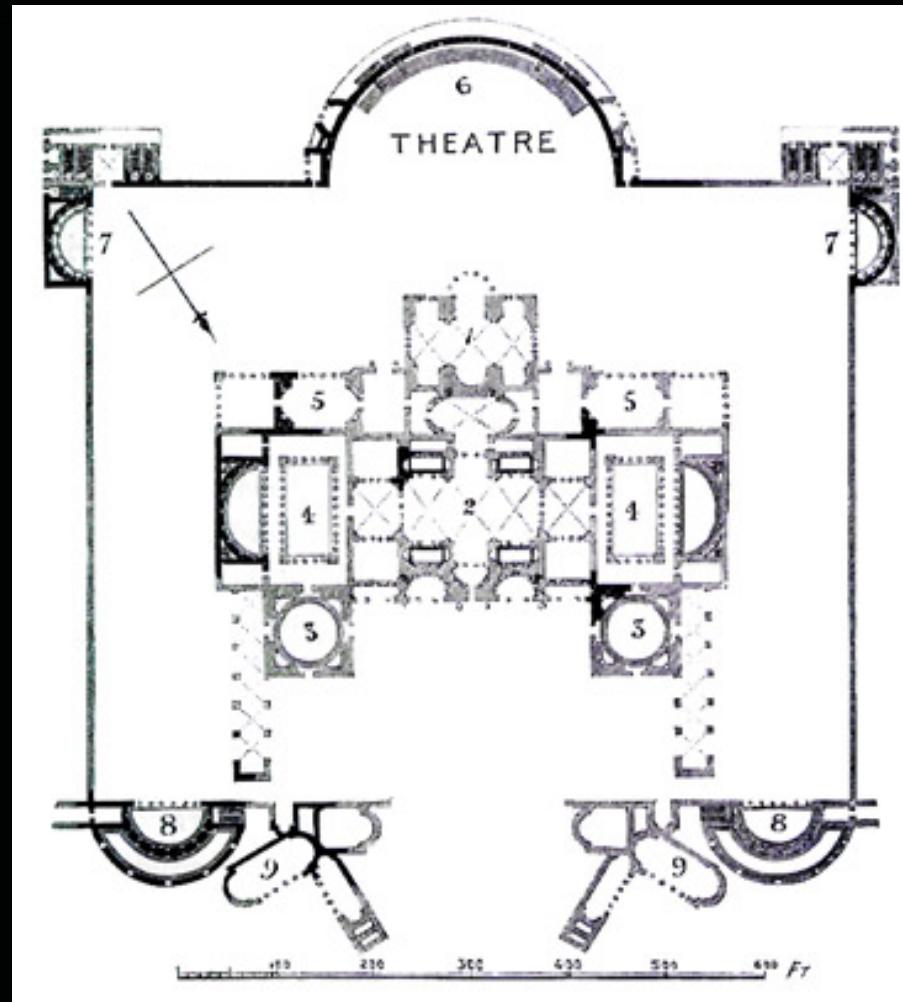
Josephus, *The Jewish War* 7.158

After his triumph was finished [in AD 71] and Roman rule was re-established on a firm foundation, Vespasian decided to build a Temple of Peace. The complex was completed very quickly, and in a style that beggars the imagination.

Not only did he have enormous financial resources at his disposal; but he embellished it with old masterpieces of painting and sculpture. In fact, into that one sacred precinct were gathered and stationed all the art-works that people had been willing to travel the world over to see, even when they were scattered. Vespasian also proudly kept here the works of gold taken from the Temple of the Jews.

Baths of Titus

Dedicated in AD 80



This image is in the public domain.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#).

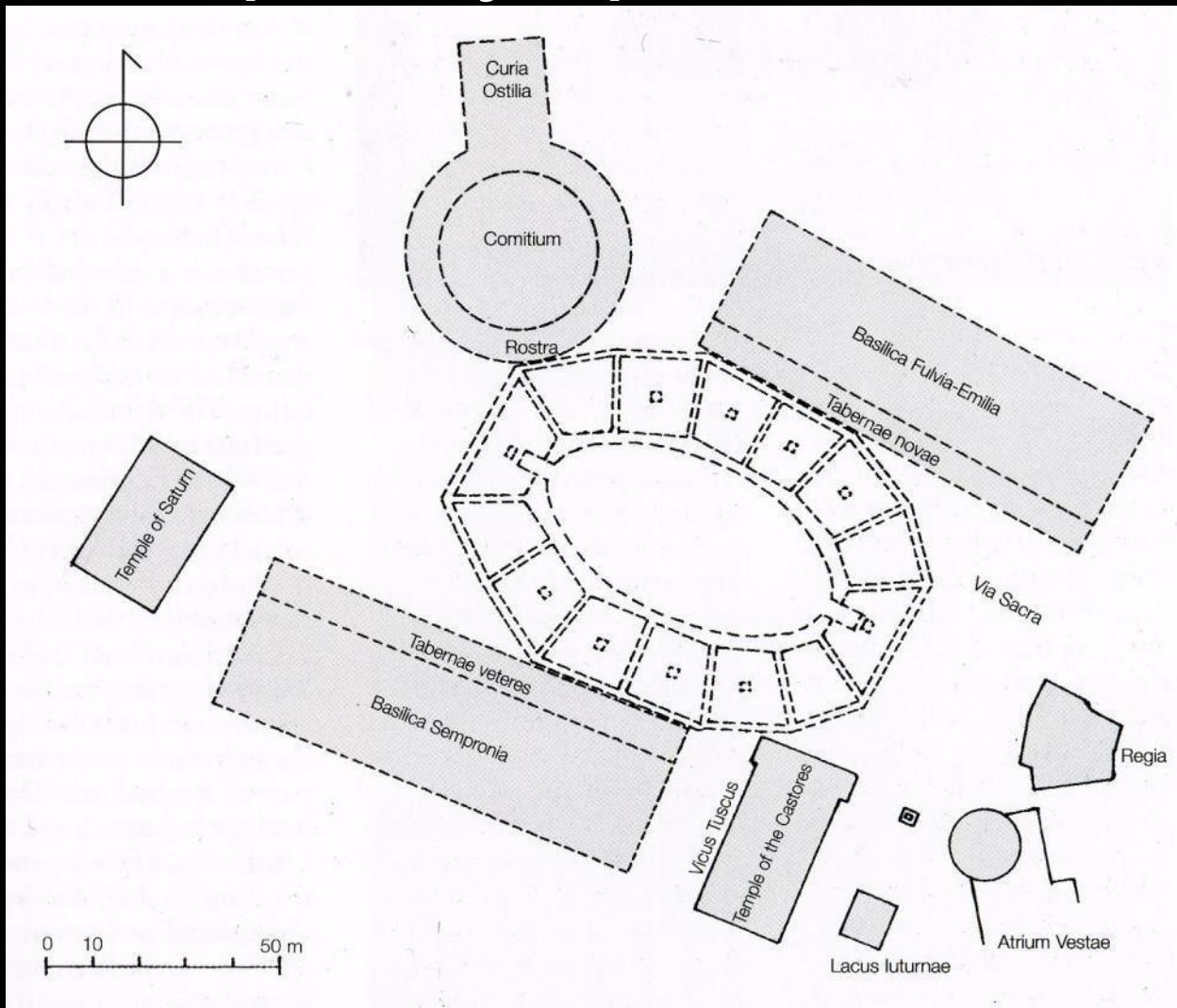
The Colosseum



Image by Gunnar Back Pedersen. This image is in the public domain.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#).

The Flavian Amphitheater

Republican Forum with temporary spectacle seating

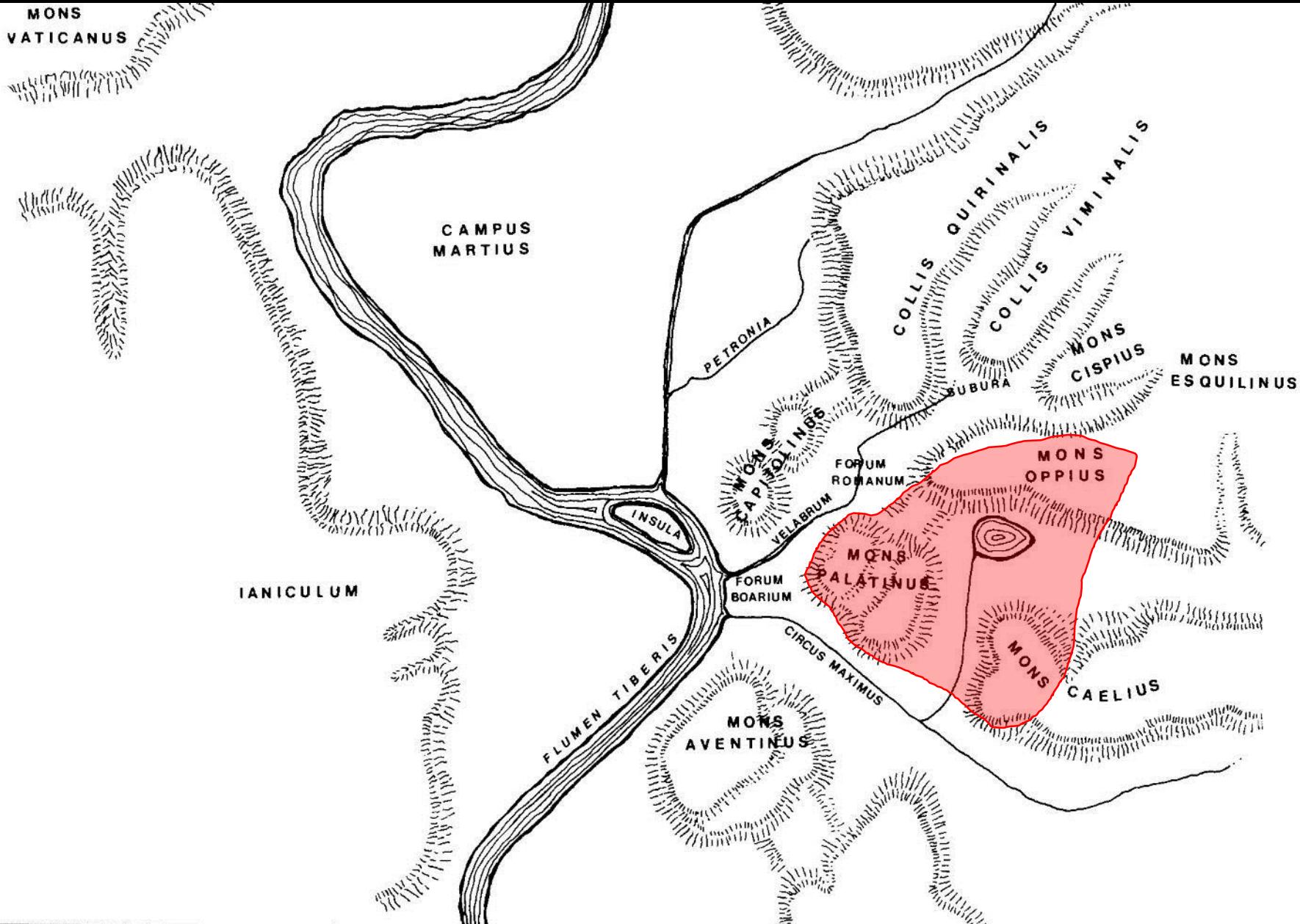


Guidobaldi, Paola. *The Roman Forum*. Mondadori Electa, 1997. © Mondadori Electa. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

Suetonius, *Vespasian* 9

He also undertook new works, the temple of Peace hard by the Forum and one to the Deified Claudius on the Caelian Mount, which was begun by Agrippina, but almost utterly destroyed by Nero; also an amphitheatre in the heart of the city, a plan which he learned that Augustus had cherished.

Nero's Domus Aurea



Sestertius of Titus



Image courtesy of [Peter Roan](#) on flickr. License CC BY NC.

Martial on the Colosseum

Where the starry Colossus sees the constellations at close range and lofty scaffolding rises in the middle of the road, once gleamed the odious halls of a cruel monarch, and in all Rome there stood a single house. Where rises before our eyes the august pile of the Amphitheatre, was once Nero's lake. Where we admire the warm baths, a speedy gift, a haughty tract of land had robbed the poor of their dwellings. Where the Claudian colonnade unfolds its wide-spread shade, was the outermost part of the palace's end. Rome has been restored to herself, and under your rule, Caesar, the pleasures that belonged to a master now belong to the people.

(Martial, *The Book of Spectacles* 2)



Image by Gunnar Back Pedersen. This image is in the public domain.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#).



Image by Wolfgang Rieger. This image is in the public domain.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#).

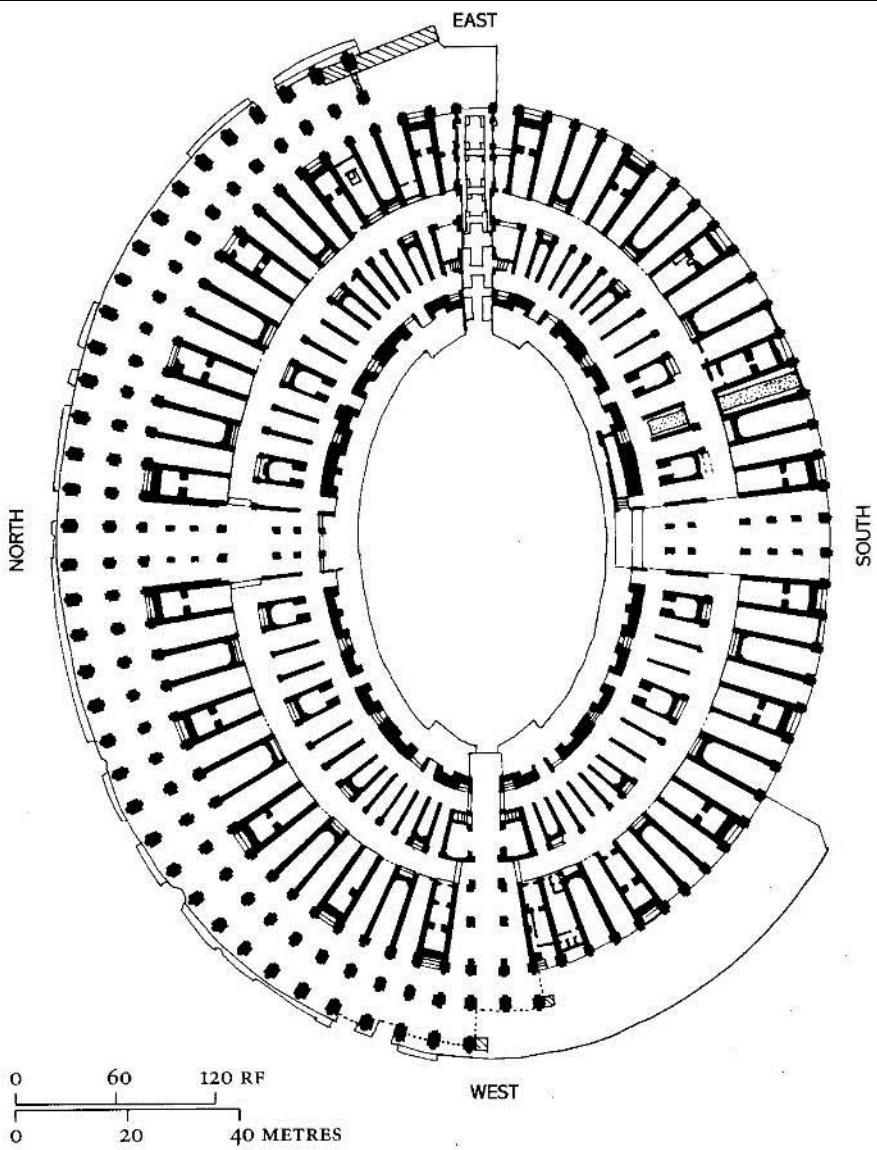


Fig. 132. Colosseum. Ground plan, actual state

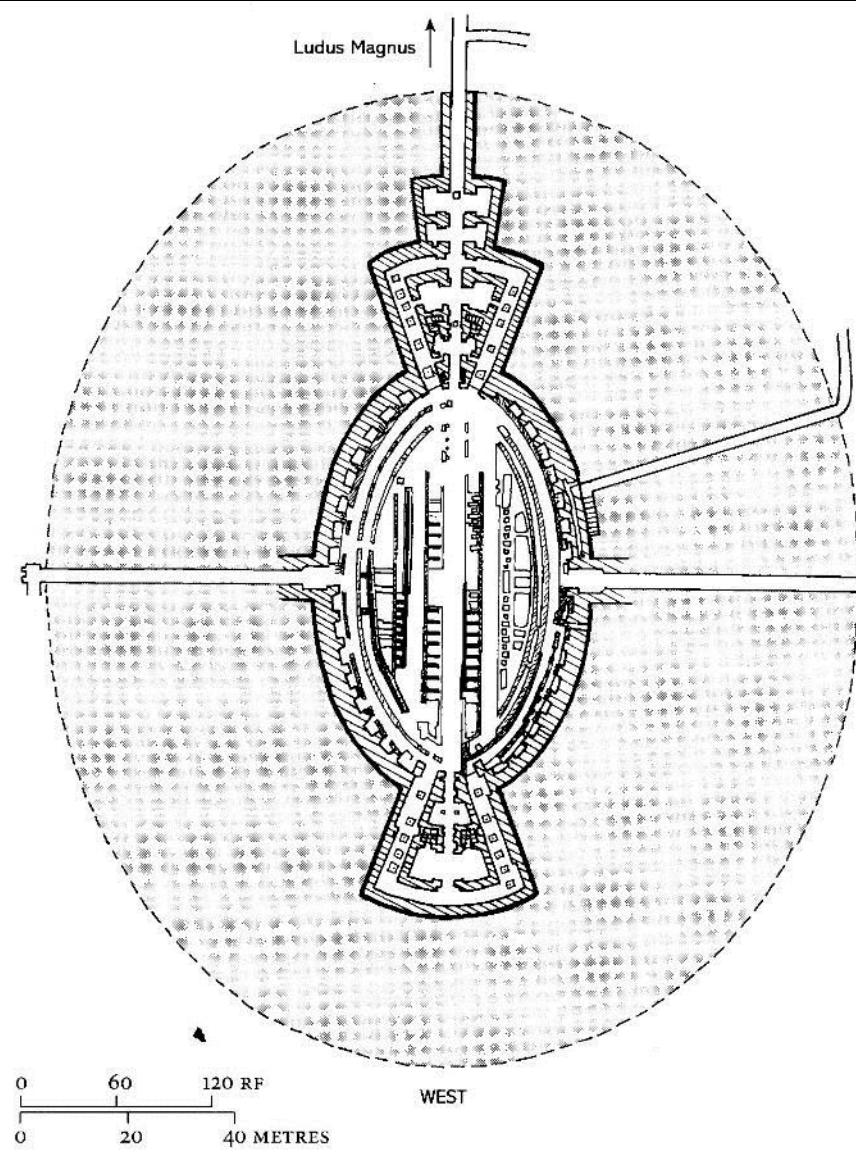


Fig. 134. Colosseum. Plan of subterranean levels

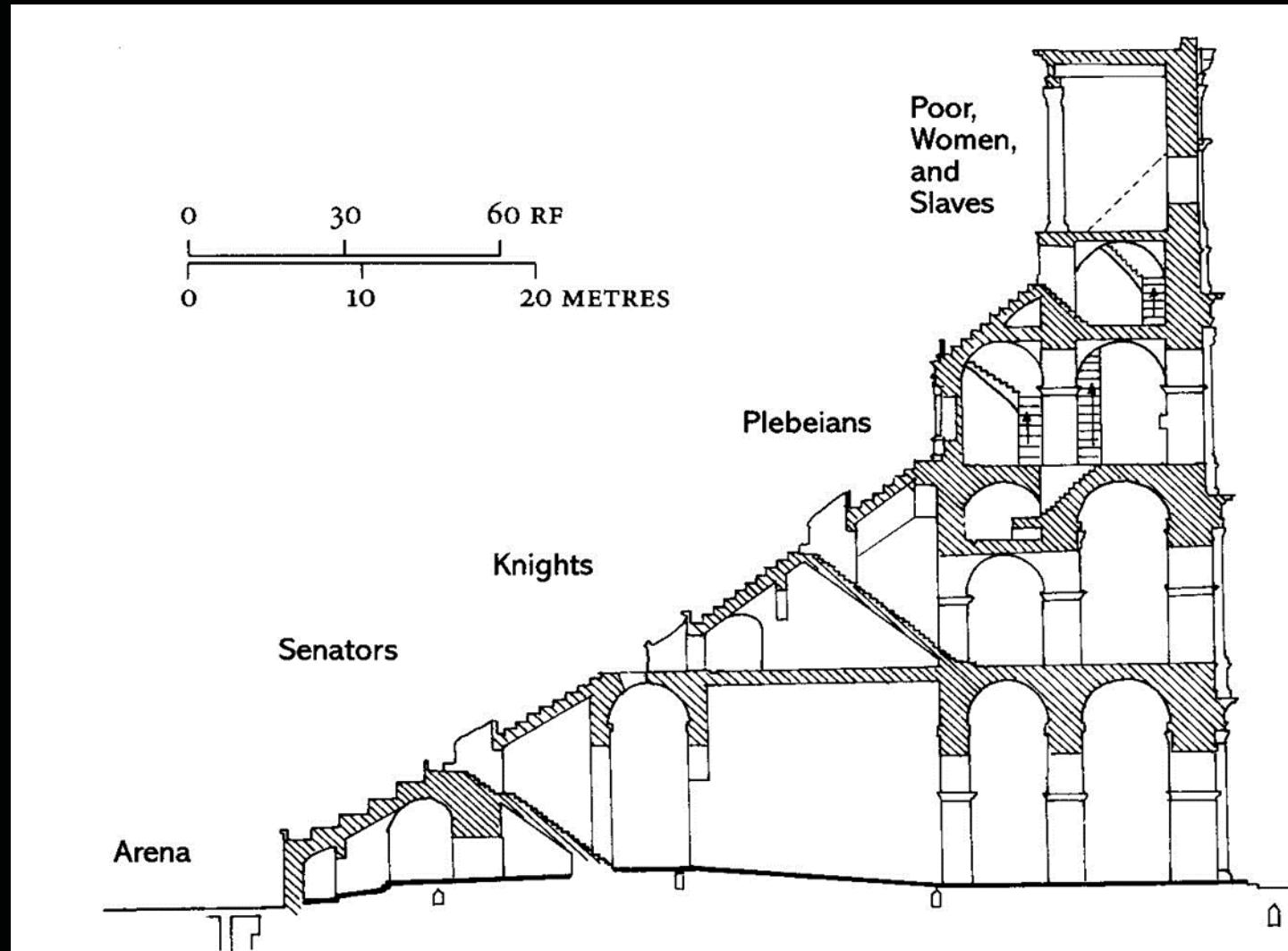
Claridge, Amanda. *Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide*. Oxford University Press, 1998. © Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.

Claridge, Amanda. *Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide*. Oxford University Press, 1998. © Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.



Image by Bjarki Sigursveinsson. This image is in the public domain.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#).

Segregated seating in the Colosseum



Claridge, Amanda. *Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide*. Oxford University Press, 1998.
© Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.



Arch of Titus

ca. AD 82



Image courtesy of [Steven Zucker](#) on flickr. License CC BY NC SA.



Image courtesy of [Steven Zucker](#) on flickr. License CC BY NC SA.

Temple of Vespasian and Titus



© Unknown. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/>.



Dedicated by Domitian
80s AD

MIT OpenCourseWare

<https://ocw.mit.edu>

21H.132 The Ancient World: Rome

Spring 2017

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <https://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.