

# Roman architecture from a typological standpoint

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## History and Theory of Architecture and Design

Discuss Roman architecture from a typological point of view by emphasizing:

1. The displacement from preexistent to freshly developed typologies
2. The accomplishment gained in building techniques wherever applicable

See at least two different types.

### List of Illustrations

1. Rome, Forum Romanum: program

Steve Watson, 1996, *The Roman Forum* [ online ] . Available from [stevewatson.info/Rome/Italy/diary.html](http://stevewatson.info/Rome/Italy/diary.html). Accessed 14<sup>Thursday</sup> April 2014

2. Athinais, Stoa Basileios: digitalReconstructionof the edifice

Kronostaf [ online ] . Available from [www.kronostaf.com/nr/images/d/d3/Stoa-Basileios.jpg](http://www.kronostaf.com/nr/images/d/d3/Stoa-Basileios.jpg). Accessed 14<sup>Thursday</sup> April 2014

3. Rome, Basilica Aemilia: program

Vitruvius – De Architectura Libri X [ on-line ] . Available from [www.vitruvius.be/aemilia.htm](http://www.vitruvius.be/aemilia.htm). Accessed 14<sup>Thursday</sup> April 2014

4. Rome, Arch of Augustus: a possible Reconstruction of the lift

American Journal of Archeology [ online ] . Available from [www.ajaonline.org/article/90](http://www.ajaonline.org/article/90). Accessed 14<sup>Thursday</sup> April 2014

5. Rome, Pantheon: program ( above ) and subdivision ( below )

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My archicad [ online ] . Available from myarchicad. free. fr/Etudes/Pantheon  
% 20Rome/Pantheo % Rome01. htm. Accessed 14<sup>Thursday</sup> April 2014

## 6. Rome, Pantheon: the dome

Travel there guide [ online ] . Available from www. gothereguide.  
com/pantheon+rome-place. Accessed 14<sup>Thursday</sup> April 2014

It is hard, without any uncertainty, to discourse about what can be defined as Roman architecture. Roman civilisation covered a immense clip p that began with the foundation of the *Urbs* ( as Rome was called by Latin authors and philosophers ) , traditionally dated to 753 BC, and collapsed with the autumn of the Western Roman Empire, in 476 AD. Therefore, it is deducible that all the populations it got in touch with over the centuries influenced its civilization. Unlike Grecian architecture, merchandise of a self-assured civilisation that was able to keep an unbelievable integrity of artistic intent and that is still recognizable today as belonging to the Grecian civilization ( Ward-Perkins 1912 ) , Roman art and architecture

*“ Were born and took form in a universe that was already dominated both by the substance and by the thought of Grecian accomplishment, foremost through the Grecian settlements in the West, at 2nd manus through Etruria.”*

*( Ward-Perkins, 1912, p. 9 )*

As the consequence of the lucifer of these influences, it could be debatable to understand when it is appropriated to speak about Roman architecture as a definable architectural manner. Harmonizing to Sear ( 1982, p. 28 ) ,

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*“ It is when all the outside influences had been forged together and assimilated, when techniques and decorations were so to the full understood that they could be used with assurance to make something fresh and original. This procedure of hammering a new manner began under Augustus.”*

In this essay the displacement from the pre-existing to the freshly developed typologies and the proficient inventions produced by Romans will be analyzed by concentrating on the relationship between the Roman and earlier architectures. In order to discourse this alteration, four typologies, all belonging to the Augustan or subsequently periods, will be taken in consideration. In the first paragraph the writer will reason about the connexion between the Greek agora and the Roman forum. The 2nd typology will concern the beginnings and the chief characteristics of the Roman basilica. The 3rd typology discussed will see the honorific edifice. Finally, the writer will exemplify the typology of the spiritual edifices, concentrating on Roman temples and the Pantheon in peculiar.

As antecedently said, it is merely with the beginning of the Augustan epoch that a proper Roman architecture developed. This happened when the Foster boy of Julius Caesar, Augustus, started a redevelopment undertaking of his new born empire's capital metropolis. Like Suetonius ( 1977 ) studies, “ *He found Rome a metropolis of bricks and left it a metropolis of marble.* ” , and he did it harmonizing to his personal gustatory sensation and involvements. In fact, it has to be considered that a crowned head is by definition the “ architect” of his land. Furthermore, the rise of the Empire is a minute of

primary importance for the Roman history. Since that, the Romans of the Republic have ever avoided to allow a individual single keeping absolute power. From this position the slaying of Julius Caesar could hold been justified by the senator's will of continuing the unity of the Republic. In 27 BC, upon the assignment of the first Roman emperor, all the powers were put in the custodies of one, legalizing him to became non merely the swayer of the Roman properties but even a kind of God ; to boot, Rome was per excellence the symbol of the emperor's power. For all these grounds it was inevitable that Augustus likings were a major factor in determining a public gustatory sensation ( Ward-Perkins, 1912 ) . One of the most representative plants in this sense is the continuance of the Forum Romanum, originally begun by Augustus's male parent Julius Caesar.

When believing about the Forum, it is ineluctable to seek to happen a possible connexion with the Greek agora, the public infinite built by the Athenians. The Grecian agora was the topographic point where administrative, politic, legal, commercial and moreover activities occurred and the stoa or colonnade porch was likely the most of import edifice standing in the square: it is defined by Watkin ( 1986, p. 49 ) as a “ *Covered meeting-place for a broad scope of activities* .” However, it has been argued ( Pergolis, cited by Carlos Zeballos ) that the purpose of the agora was to give the citizen uneasiness ; on the other manus the Roman forum's intent was to do him cognizant of the State.

The purpose of the Forum Romanum was to remind the Romans of the award of the old Republic, and the victory of the new leader, Augustus. This

aspiration is proved by the plants he started since the early old ages of his reign in this location. Once the redevelopment undertaking ended, the forum consisted in two long basilicas ( Aemilia and Julia ) , three temples, two of them started by Julius Caesar ( temple of Concord and temple of Castor ) , and a new last one, dedicated to the Divus Julius, Augustus former male parent. The temple of Divus Julius was flanked by a monumental building, the Arch of Augustus. All of these architectural buildings played a cardinal function in the Roman history.

The Roman basilica is one of the most representative typology of edifices in the Roman architecture. It operated as a meeting-place for the citizens, an exchange for merchandisers and even as a tribunal of justness. In this sense, it has been argued ( Purdue University ) that the design hailed from an Hellenic Hellenic edifice called Stoa Basileios ( Grecian: ??? Ι?????? ??? Ι→ ) , located in the Athenian agora. In this peculiar instance, the interlingual rendition of the term Basileios is Royal: it was in fact identified as the place of the Archon Basileus, one of the nine head magistrates in antediluvian Athens, whose responsibilities were spiritual and juridical. It appeared to be a rectangular edifice with eight Doric columns along the facade and four interior ( Foundation of the Hellenic World, 2006 ) , a form that good reminds of the basilica. A last grounds of the Greek beginning of the Roman basilica is the spelling of the word basilica itself that, as Welsh stated, came from the Grecian term “ basilike” , which means “ kingly” . The basilica normally had a rectangular program and it was usually timber-roofed. It besides could hold a rectangular tribune, a individual or two apsiss and an interior colonnade that divided the infinite. The city manager entryway could hold been on

either the transverse or the longitudinal axes ( MacDonald, 1986 ). An illustration of this typology could be given by The Basilica Aemilia. It was one of the earliest basilicas: the first building is dated from 179 BC and it is stated that it has had a two-storied colonnaded facade of 16 bays as a stoa. On the interior, it was located an enclosed hall, where the magistrate could pattern his work. The basilica was wholly rebuilt by Augustus. The Imperial basilica was divided in three parts: the porch, the hall and the " tabaerne" , six square room that were likely used as offices. This porch was absolutely similar to the 1 of the basilica Julia: it consisted in two floors supported by marble's pilasters and columns. The land floor facade was divided in 14 arches overcome by a Doric Lodge. The usage of the arch is one of the inventions that distinguish Roman architecture from 1s that came before. Greeks ne'er learned to construct an arched building and used a post-and-beam construction, as they did in their stoa. This technique allowed Romans to construct larger suites:

*" Arches could redirect a edifice 's weight over long distances to thick stations, leting for huge, comparatively unobstructed suites " ( essential-humanities ) .*

In this instance, because of the singular size of the room, it was necessary to present some metal ironss to reenforce the construction. From the porch, the visitant entered in a secondary room that worked as passageway to the cardinal hall. It consisted in three naves separated by columns ; the side's 1s supported a 2nd floor. ( Sear, 1982 )

Traveling on, the 2nd type that will be discussed will be the honorific memorial, concentrating on the best-known 1s, the triumphal arches.

Baldwin Smith ( 1956 ) asserts that the beginning of triumphal arches has to be sought in the ceremonials of deification of the sovereign that gave a heavenly content to an arched portal, as it happened during the Hellenistic Epiphany. He even stated that merely the common factors in the history of ceremonials could explicate the manner in which the arched passageway was used to mark the ceremonial of Latin Triumph. It was in fact a Latin version of an Etruscan rite in which the Triumphant One was acclaimed as a God.

A monumental arch, despite its monolithic and elemental signifier, is a complicated sort of edifice. In every archway the radially works in opposing way at the same clip,

*“ It focuses down and in toward the curve’s unseeable centre point, but at the same clip suggests mutual extension fanning outward and upward” .*

( MacDonald, 1986, p. 75-76, 1<sup>st</sup> happening within the paragraphs )

MacDonald ( 2<sup>nd</sup> happening within the same paragraphs ) explains that this implies a tenseness that is regulated and framed either by flanking walls, or monolithic wharfs and by masonry piled up above the arch and its supports: this counterbalance is so increased by adding orders and ornaments.

Triumphal arches were built in Rome since the 2nd century BC, nevertheless it was Augustus who set the manner for constructing them all over the

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Empire ( Watkins ) . Sear ( 1982 ) states that in the Forum Romanum it was erected a triumph Arch known as the Arch of Augustus, rebuilt in the 19 BC per chance with fragments from an earlier one, dated 29 BC. A description is given by MacDonald ( 1986 ) : it was a ternary gateway in which the centre nothingness was arched and set between immense wharfs with a outstanding Attic above ; side gateways were trabeated. The orders stood on a pedestals and base on the same degree. The interior one was overlapped with the wharfs and topped by a Corinthian capital. Wilson Jones ( 2000 ) claims that about two-thirds of all imperial columns were Corinthian. This order in fact suited the emperors for many grounds: it was Augustus pick to advance an Hellenic image of his Rome, eventually capable of fiting Greece culturally. For Augustus ' purpose the Corinthian order was perfect to arouse the yesteryear without falling in a mere transcript of Grecian architecture. Furthermore, the acanthus, the taking subject of the order, was a symbol of sacredness but it was non related to any peculiar deity. This characteristic permitted Augustus to advance his imagine of a God.

Political deductions in Roman architecture were involved even in the last type of edifice that will be analyzed, the spiritual 1. Roman temples find their beginnings in both Etruscan architecture and, as the old 1s, Grecian architecture. Early Roman temples were realized in brick and followed Etruscan design by demoing high dais and deeply columned porch. After the 2nd century, Grecian orders begun to be employed in the lift and, like Grecian temples, they were east orientated. However, Roman temples tradition had a facade that was easy recognizable thanks to the monumental steps that leaded to the porch, the lone portion of the edifice in which

columns were erected ( Dried-up 1982 ) . Above all the others, The Pantheon is the most known Roman temple and it is considered, together with the Parthenon, the most representative memorial of classical architecture. The first Parthenon, commissioned by Agrippa, Augustus' general and son-in-law, is dated between 27-25 BC. The purpose was to stand for Augustus' Imperial program's chef-d'oeuvre: in fact it has been claimed ( Ancient History Encyclopedia, 2014 ) that it may hold been designed as a topographic point where the emperor could do public visual aspects in order to remind his people of his Godhead position. However, the edifice was likely destroyed by fire and rebuilt by Emperor Domitian. The temple once more was destructed by a lightning bolt. The current Pantheon was built by Adrian on his return trip to Rome as the new emperor in 118 AD. Alongside his designers, he decided to construct the new Temple by utilizing a new design that attempts to unify the Greek's porch and the Roman rotunda ( Wilson Jones, 2000 ) , a typology that had already been used in earlier Roman temples. It has been argued that Hadrian's purpose was to plan the Pantheon in order “ *to turn out that the Imperial order, with its regulation of jurisprudence and its nucleus for the Republic was portion of the Godhead order, initiated by it and subsumed to it .*” ( McEwan, 1993, cited by Art History Presentation Archive, 2007 ) .

The accent of the edifice is wholly focused on the interior infinite. The formal strategy of the inside could look rather simple, a cylindrical membranophone topped by a dome. By contrast, this building shows all the astonishing abilities owned by Roman designers and applied scientists. The construction of the rotunda is composed by eight wharfs which support eight arches,

which in bend correspond to the eight bays. From this position, the membranophone could be seen as an arched construction designed to cut down weight and minimise the effects of differential colony. Once once more the prevalent order is the Corinthian: Corinthian columns of giallo antico are free-standing in each bay and stand for a superb device to give graduated table. The dome was the biggest of all time realized until the devising of Santa Maria del Fiore's one in Firenze by Brunelleschi. In blending the concrete, another of Roman's most superb inventions, several make fulling stuffs were used and graded in order that the construction resulted lighter at the dome's top by utilizing pumice. The oculus captivates visitor's oculus and is the lone beginning of visible radiation in the whole edifice, possibly to mean that in the Temple of all Gods the merely light admitted can come from the celestial spheres above. ( Wilson Jones, 2000 ) . In this essay the writer has illustrated the development of the displacement from the preexistent typologies to the freshly developed 1s, every bit good as the proficient inventions implemented. Furthermore, the Roman emperors ' political and personal attack to their architectures has been discussed. Four instances of survey were presented: foremost, a relation between the Greek agora and the Roman forum was demonstrated by demoing similarities in their utilizations but different political purposes ; secondly, the writer illustrated the Roman basilica as a new type of edifice that perchance derived from the Grecian stoa. Traveling on, political deductions and Hellenistic beginnings have been debated and proficient characteristics have been shown by showing the triumphal arch 's typology. Finally, the last instance, the spiritual edifice type, has been analyzed by concentrating on

the Roman temple with two intents: in the first topographic point to explicate analogies with earlier illustrations and so to depict one of the most important edifice in Roman architecture, the Pantheon.

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