

How far football
stadia resemble the
roman colosseum in
their provisions for
spec...



Modern football stadiums owe very little to the colosseum in the architectural sense mainly due to the fact that the roman builders would have found it impossible to build in stone or roman cement. How they do resemble the colosseum is the impact that they have on the environment around them, expressing the wealth and status of the club it belongs to.

The colosseum and modern day football stadiums are designed to cope with problems that do arise, these are as follows, the accommodation of very large numbers of people, a good view of the spectacle, crowd safety and control all of which are modern day problems for football stadiums.

These are the elements that are classed I feel as functions of the colosseum and football stadiums. The access ramps in modern stadiums reflect those of the colosseum, because the routes of access for spectators determined the exterior of the building.

The lack of pillars between any spectators or the spectacle this is how visibility is maintained for everyone.

Oval structure of football stadiums is similar to the colosseum, which also means there is more space for spectators on the curved section at each end, this oval shape also means it can be used for more than one purpose i. e. athletics or cycle tracks. It also means that the ground will appeal to a wider variety of society not just football spectators while the colosseum appealed to an immense section of roman society by accommodating many forms of entertainment. I find that this is one aspect of the football stadia and the colosseum where they differ, as today many football stadiums are used purely for football and not used for cycle track or athletics unless they are of

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course major stadiums like Wembley, where the colosseum was used for many forms of entertainment for Roman society.

How did ancient writers react to the roman games? How would you explain their different attitudes?

The games were a complex mix of social, political and religious elements. There are many great Roman writers who voiced their opinions on the games.

Cicero wrote about the major political issues of his time, the nature of the roman constitution and roman imperialism. The writings also reveal his moral and religious attitudes. I believe that Cicero did not like the games due to the fact that he feels that they lack refinement and appeal to the baser instincts of the mob. He feels that they are cruel and inhuman.

Pliny the younger does not seem to be a profound thinker. Pliny feels that they are a great example of the power, glory and justice of the Roman Empire that makes it great. He enjoys the games; from the one article you could class him as overly complimentary which could be construed as slightly sarcastic if it was not for the content of the rest of the article.

Apuleius does not seem to like the games; He feels they are a horrible spectacle. In the “ Ass in the arena”, even the ass seems to be thinking what this spectacle is about and also feeling shame. Although if the ass was a spectator rather than a participant we get the feeling he may actually enjoy the games and the scene that is about to happen. In the “ Robbers tale”

Apuleius leaves us with no doubt that he finds the games distasteful, wasteful and decadent. He feels they are an exercise in vanity.

The three scholars that I have chosen are all reasonably similar in their attitudes towards the games. I have chosen two who dislike the games and think them wasteful and decadent, while one that I have chosen seems to like them, but the way he writes about them could also be construed as overly fawning and could also be seen as a sarcastic view of the games and what is wrong with them.

Cicero:

In his letter about the Pompey shows he says they are very lavish, but where is the enjoyment in seeing a man or powerful beast killed, and he also asks if they are worth seeing if you have already seen them because nothing new is happening. When he speaks about the elephants he feels that the crowd are capable of feeling pity and they received no enjoyment from watching an elephant being killed.

Cicero has a much more transparent view than the other two Roman writers, he says they are lavish, but also what is the point of them. He also has more respect for both the humans and the beasts. No other writer that I have looked at writes about the beast and the pity that is felt for it by the braying crowd.

Pliny:

He seems to enjoy the games. He enjoys the spectacle that Maximus put on with the gladiators. He sees them as a very fitting display to commemorate the
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death of his wife. He is very fawning with him, and it could be perceived as mildly sarcastic, when discussing the panthers that could not be shown due to adverse weather as they had not arrived. He sees the games with the gladiators as a great display of generosity, to have put on such a lavish show and that the crowd would not forget this display.

Apuleius:

From both Apuleius stories we can see that he does not like the games. He sees them as lavish, elaborate and decadent. In “The ass in the arena” he talks about the lavish bed and bedding brought out for the punishment of a woman, in which she is to be killed by wild animals. He talks about how an unconvicted innocent participant may be punished as it is impossible to control the beasts and that they will not know who is innocent and who is guilty. The ass is thinking this in a selfish manner, as he does not want to die. He speaks about the crowd are spell bound by the spectacle and the sensual pleasure. This story shows the shame that the ass is feeling in having to engage in the act, but you also get the feeling that if the ass was a spectator not a participant he may have actually enjoyed the scene.

In the “Robbers tale” it talks of the fine appearance and quantity of the beasts. The showy spectacle employed all the trappings of his inheritance to collect a large amount of bears. It also then talks of envy and that the bears become ill and reduced to nothing, leaving the carcasses in the streets. He sees this I think of wasteful and shows human nature as people tried to outdo each other by presenting him with bears as gifts. I think this is a swipe at the waste of life that the games involve.