1   Introduction

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This is a golden age for scholarship on the city of Rome. Four developments have converged to produce this watershed moment. First, an intensive program of excavation and restoration in Rome has uncovered new structures and cast new light on old ones, especially in the monumental city center. Undertaken in the 1980s and 1990s as part of the elaborate preparations for the *Giubileo* celebration of 2000, this archaeological program, on a scale unseen since the days of Mussolini, has added significantly to our understanding of the ancient city.[1] Second, the sixth and final volume of the *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (*LTUR*) was published in 2000.[2] The completion of this major reference work, written by an international team of experts and equipped with thorough bibliographies and illustrations, marks a milestone in the scholarship on ancient Rome. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the *Lexicon* has already established itself as the indispensable tool for research on the topography and urban fabric of the city.[3] Third, the dawn of the twenty-first century has witnessed the rapid proliferation of digital technologies for the study of Rome, especially in the three-dimensional reconstruction of buildings and cityscapes. These digital reconstructions not only illuminate the principles of Roman architecture and engineering, but also facilitate the imaginative leaps necessary for an appreciation, however imperfect, of the visual impact of Rome's urban landscape – a vital step in understanding the lived experience of the city.[4] And fourth, the monumental topography and urban history of Rome have now

[1] Excavations and *Giubileo* celebration: Baiani and Ghilardi 2000; Filippi 2001. Archaeology in Rome under Mussolini: Packer 1989.

[2] *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae*, 6 vols. (with supplements), ed. E. M. Steinby (Rome: Quasar, 1993–2000).

[3] Important reviews of *LTUR*: W. V. Harris in *JRA* 8 (1995), 365–75, *JRA* 10 (1997), 383–88, *JRA* 14 (2001), 539–46, *JRA* 16 (2003), 540–44; A. Wallace-Hadrill in the *Times Literary Supplement*, May 14, 2001, 3–4. Though *LTUR* has superseded earlier topographical dictionaries, such as Platner and Ashby 1929 and L. Richardson 1992, it is still worth consulting these other works for alternative approaches and interpretations. Archaeological guides to the city also remain useful; see esp. Claridge 1998 and Coarelli 2008. For an overview of building activity in imperial Rome, see also Gros and Torelli 1988: 167–236.

[4] Haselberger and Humphrey 2006 is a good introduction to the rise, scholarly potential, and limitations of digital technologies.

been fully incorporated into "mainstream" histories of ancient Rome. No longer a subject for specialists only, the city of Rome has become one of the primary lenses through which scholars examine Rome's political, social, and economic history.[5]

One area of Rome's urban history that has received ample attention in recent years is the monumental topography of the city under individual emperors. Much of this scholarship has been devoted to the Augustan period. In addition to many studies of specific monuments and particular areas of the city, scholars working in a range of disciplines have produced a number of innovative works on various aspects of Augustan Rome, including a study of the city's "urban image" (Favro 1996); a large-scale, period-specific map with accompanying topographical dictionary (Haselberger 2002); a wide-ranging exploration of the city's neighborhoods (Lott 2004); and a comprehensive reevaluation of the city's macroscopic spatial development (Haselberger 2007).[6] The monuments and public space of Rome after Augustus have not been investigated with anything like this degree of comprehensiveness, but several reigns and dynasties have been the subjects of extensive monographs, and more works along these lines are forthcoming.[7]

This volume builds on this recent work on the city of Rome during the imperial period. Despite the intensive scholarship of the last couple of decades, much of it very good, there is still work to be done. A first

[5] We give just two examples. Recent debates about the democratic element in Republican politics have drawn heavily on the symbolic topography of the Forum and the relationship between public space and political participation in Rome; emblematic of the city's prominence in contemporary approaches to Republican Rome is the fact that the most recent handbook on the Roman Republic (Rosenstein and Morstein-Marx 2006) includes not one but two chapters on the city of Rome (by M. Torelli and J. R. Patterson). And for the imperial period there are Purcell's incisive chapters on Rome, its inhabitants, and its monuments in the second edition of the *Cambridge Ancient History* (Purcell 1996 and 2000; cf. Purcell 1994 on the late Republic), unparalleled in the first edition of the *CAH*, published in the 1930s.

[6] Recent studies of individual monuments and areas of Augustan Rome include Ganzert 1996 (Temple of Mars Ultor); Ungaro 1997 (Forum Augustum); Spannagel 1999 (Forum Augustum); Rehak 2006 (northern Campus Martius); cf. Kuttner 1995, postulating a lost Augustan monument represented on the Boscoreale cups, and Severy-Hoven 2007, a collection of essays on various aspects of the Augustan period, with some attention to the city of Rome. Note also, among earlier works, Hofter 1988; Zanker 1988; Fraschetti 1990; Galinsky 1996: 141–224. Patterson 1992 is a useful survey of the archaeology of the city in the transition from republic to monarchy.

[7] E.g., Boatwright 1987 (Hadrian); Darwall-Smith 1996 (the Flavians); Holloway 2004 (Constantine); Lusnia forthcoming (Septimius Severus). For late antiquity in general, see also Bauer 1996; Ensoli and La Rocca 2000; Mayer 2002. In addition to these studies by reign and by period, recent years have seen several high-quality general studies of the imperial city, e.g. Kolb 1995; Lo Cascio 2000; Giardina 2000; Coulston and Dodge 2000; Edwards and Woolf 2003. See also the excellent *L'Urbs* volume of 1987, and the special volume of *Pallas* 55 (2001), devoted to the imperial city.

step is to expand the parameters of the investigation, and in particular to direct more attention to the study of imperial Rome after Augustus. The Augustan period was, of course, a pivotal moment in the long-term evolution of the city, especially in topographical and administrative terms, and several of the essays in this volume touch on Augustan Rome in one way or another (Zanker, Eck, Mayer, Packer, Koortbojian). But the topography of the Augustan city is now very well understood, and it is time to examine later periods in greater depth. To that end, this volume includes two studies of post-Augustan monuments and public space, one examining the difficult and relatively neglected subject of Antonine Rome (Boatwright), and one reassessing the relationship between the major monuments of Maxentius and Constantine (Marlowe).

Another way forward is to widen the focus from analysis of the city by imperial reign (or dynasty) to a broader exploration of the city as one facet of a larger monarchical system – to investigate the city of Rome, in other words, not under this or that emperor, but under the impact of monarchy in general, and as one of the structures that shaped the monarchy itself. Because analysis at this level must begin not with facts but with questions, the scholarly tools that have put the study of ancient Rome on a new footing in recent years, as useful and necessary as they are, do not offer much help. It is not always clear, in other words, what tools such as topographical dictionaries are for, and how, precisely, they advance our understanding of the experiential dimensions of the city or its historical evolution. Indeed, topographical dictionaries and digital reconstructions implicitly encourage what Moses Finley famously castigated as the "tell-all-you-know" approach, the collection of data for its own sake, not subordinated to any larger questions or problems. But in our view it is only through a problem-oriented approach, and only by beginning not with the discrete bits of data that happen to have survived, but with questions informed by a range of scholarly disciplines, that we can understand the complex and dynamic relationship between the Roman emperor and his capital city. This volume is intended as a step in that direction.

"The emperor and Rome" is a very big subject that could be approached from many angles, and this volume makes no claims to comprehensiveness. The essays that follow address three main topics: (i) the impact of imperial building programs on the configuration of space within the city and on the evolution of Rome's urban image ("Space"); (ii) the various ways in which the figure of the emperor himself was represented, both visually and symbolically, in the city's urban fabric ("Representation"); and (iii) the performance of rituals and ceremonies that expressed key imperial

ideals and values and enabled communications between the emperor and important collectivities in the city ("Ritual"). Because most of the essays in this volume do not fit neatly into just one of these three thematic categories, we have not attempted to arrange them under these rubrics. In order to set these essays in context, however, and to elucidate the central questions and problems around which the volume as a whole is organized, we would like to discuss briefly the historical and sociopolitical contexts in which the interrelated developments in public space, imperial representation, and monarchic ritual took place, and then to consider each of these three main topics in turn.

I. Emperor, mass, and élite in imperial Rome

The transition from republic to monarchy at Rome may be seen as a rationalization of the state's political and administrative apparatus. During the Republic, the coexistence of multiple, discrete points of formal and informal decision-making authority within the state produced the sort of mixed constitution so beloved by classical political theorists (cf. Polyb. 6.11–18; Cic. *Rep.* 1.69–71), but came at the cost of administrative inefficiency and an institutional framework unsuited to long-term planning. Augustus and his successors, by contrast, exercised a *de facto* monopoly on ultimate decision-making authority – whatever the emperor said or did *was* the law, as the jurists put it (Gai. *Inst.* 1.2.5; Ulp. *Dig.* 1.4.1 *pr.*) – and controlled the resources necessary for the systematic implementation of plans and policies. This transition had an immediate effect on state and society throughout the empire.[8] Nowhere were the effects of this transition more pronounced than in the city of Rome.

This volume explores several distinctive aspects of the urban fabric and symbolic world of Rome under the impact of monarchy. But the transformation of the city went beyond the changes in space, representation, and ritual addressed in the essays that follow. Particularly important was the nexus between administrative and military developments in the city. Urban administration was thoroughly revamped by Rome's first emperors.[9]

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[8] Major changes included a halt to large-scale imperial expansion, an overhaul in the system of provincial administration and in methods for the extraction of material resources, and the rapid proliferation of the emperor's image, often in the context of the imperial cult. On the immediate impact of monarchy throughout the empire, see (e.g.) Millar [1984] 2002: 292–313; Woolf 1995, 2005.

[9] For overviews of urban administration in imperial Rome, all with references to more specialized studies, see Robinson 1992; Kolb 1995: 508–67; Daguet-Gagey 2000.

Changes to the city's administration and infrastructure under Augustus alone included the creation of a paramilitary police force under the command of a senatorial prefect; a professional firefighting service under the command of an equestrian prefect; a new administrative division of the city into fourteen regions (further subdivided into *vici*, "neighborhoods," which numbered 265 by the mid first century AD: Plin. *NH* 3.66); and new administrative departments headed by senatorial officials to oversee public buildings (*opera publica*), the grain supply, and the water supply (which was enhanced by the addition of three new aqueducts). This sea-change in the extent of Rome's basic services not only altered how the city functioned on a day-to-day basis, but also provided increased security for its inhabitants. Equally striking was the emergence of a highly visible military presence in the city. By the mid first century AD, some 7,500 soldiers were permanently stationed in Rome. The 1,500 soldiers attached to the urban prefect and the 6,000 soldiers comprising the praetorian guard (another Augustan innovation) resided right on the edge of the city's built-up area, on the Viminal Hill, in the massive barracks built during the reign of Tiberius.[10] This dramatic and permanent insertion of military force into the city's urban texture was perhaps the most palpable difference in the lived experience of Rome between republic and monarchy (cf. Coulston 2000).

The overhaul of Rome's administration by Augustus and his successors and the new presence of military force in the city were closely related developments. In particular, this military force augmented the state's executive capacity in the city by providing its officials with an unprecedented degree of manpower (cf. Purcell 2000: 793). Without this manpower, which was unavailable to Republican magistrates, and without the rationalization that arose from the emperor's monopoly on ultimate decision-making authority, such systematic improvements to urban administration would have been nearly impossible.

In addition to driving these administrative and military developments, the concentration of executive and military power in the hands of a monarchic regime also restructured social relationships and their symbolic forms in the city of Rome. For nearly five centuries after the founding of the Republic, mass and élite in the city had engaged in the development of an elaborate institutional structure for distributing political power through the creation of various mechanisms for reaching and implementing

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[10] The praetorian guard originally numbered nine cohorts (Tac. *Ann.* 4.5), but was increased to twelve at some point before the death of Claudius (*AE* 1978, 226). There is no direct evidence for the size of the praetorian cohorts in the early imperial period, but it is likely that these cohorts, like those in the legions, were 480 men strong.

official decisions.[11] From this institutional structure arose a particular set of symbolic forms – from the mundane rhythms of the daily *salutatio* to the stunning magnificence of aristocratic funeral processions and triumphal celebrations – that both expressed and structured the balance of power between mass and élite.[12] The advent of monarchy, which brought to Rome a radically new way of making and implementing official decisions, upset this traditional balance of power, an upheaval that in turn demanded a new set of symbolic forms to express and indeed reinforce the new social and political reality.[13] Of these new forms, the most important were those that articulated the relationship between the emperor, the *plebs urbana*, and the senatorial order.

The relationship between emperor and urban plebs was ideologically charged because it symbolized the relationship between the state and its citizen body. At the heart of this key relationship was the regular expenditure of resources in the city of Rome by which the emperor singled out the urban plebs for public benefaction.[14] Routine modes of imperial benefaction included cash distributions (*congiaria*), grain distributions (*frumentationes*), public building programs, and public entertainment.[15] Though these forms of imperial largesse are well known and much discussed, there is little consensus on the crucial question of why emperors expended such resources in this way. Yavetz argues that Augustus and his successors, in an effort to detach the masses from their dependence on aristocratic patrons, showered benefits on them in return for their political support.[16] For Veyne, the emperors' largesse was not motivated by such narrow political

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[11] The essays by M. Jehne, J. North, and A. Yakobson in Rosenstein and Morstein-Marx 2006 provide critical assessments of the recent debates on the nature of Republican politics.

[12] For recent discussions of the symbolic dimensions of Republican political culture, see Flaig 2003a; Flower 2005; Sumi 2005; Hölkeskamp 2005.

[13] It should be noted that the various symbolic expressions of the new social and political reality, especially those drawing on Republican traditions, were often deceptive, designed to mask the dominance of the emperor. It is also worth noting in this context that the charismatic authority of Roman emperors, sometimes exaggerated by modern scholars (Lendon 2006), depended to a great extent on their capacity to get things done.

[14] The urban plebs must not be confused with the entire urban population of Rome, which included slaves and non-citizens, nor with the *populus Romanus* as a whole, even though it was often associated with the Roman citizen body for rhetorical purposes. The urban plebs was a particular and privileged collectivity that should be distinguished from these larger groups; see briefly Purcell 1994: 644–46.

[15] The best overview is still Kloft 1970.

[16] Yavetz 1969a (on the late Republican, Augustan, and Julio-Claudian periods), esp. 132 for the political calculus; cf. Yavetz 1987 for extension of this analysis into the period 69–117, with greater sensitivity to different social and economic groupings within the *plebs urbana* (esp. 165–74).

calculation, nor was the return of popular support for imperial benefaction so direct – or so rational. Instead, these routine forms of benefaction were intended to be concrete examples of the monarch's personal generosity, displayed on the grand stage of the imperial capital, valuable to the emperor as ostentation for its own sake, but also serving to induce in the urban plebs a particular "*modalité d'obéissance*" to the imperial regime, driven by their being honored through these benefactions as a privileged collectivity within the empire.[17] Seeking to place the idealized relationship between emperor and urban plebs in a wider context, Griffin (1991) suggests that it was meant to serve as a model for social relations in the empire as a whole, especially for upper-class provincial visitors to Rome who would witness the advantages of civic benefaction and the public display of social hierarchy as instruments of social control. More recently, Rowe has analyzed the role of the urban plebs itself in maintaining this relationship, emphasizing the honors it bestowed upon the imperial family and the attendant emergence within this subset of the urban population of a well-defined corporate identity, which helped to offset the loss of electoral power in the early imperial period (Rowe 2002: ch. 3).

Several of the essays in this volume build on these ideas and provide new ways of understanding the relationship between the emperor and the urban plebs. In analyzing imperial public building and the provision of public entertainment in Rome, Zanker emphasizes the critical importance of Greek culture to Roman imperial benefaction. Emperors not only provided the urban plebs with suitable venues for their leisure and entertainment, but also undertook a form of "cultural patronage," according to Zanker, in which the ideals of Greek *paideia* were transmitted to the masses through art and architecture.[18] Only in this way could the urban plebs fully experience "togetherness" and "the happiness of the times" (*laetitia temporum*), both of which depended on the emperor's *liberalitas*, and only in this way could they become, through their participation in Greek culture, full-fledged citizens. In return, the plebs offered a whole range of honors to the emperor, which allowed the emperor to represent himself as a civilian magistrate rather than a military autocrat. This exchange of cultural patronage for civic honors in the city of Rome is a good example of how the city and its inhabitants could partly shape the monarchy itself, in this case by encouraging a particular monarchic style in which emperors expended more resources on the

[17] Veyne 1976: ch. 4, esp. 621–47 (benefactions), 675–80 (ostentation), 689–90 (special relationship between emperor and urban plebs), 709–10 (the plebs' "modality of obedience"); for criticism of Yavetz (1969a), 775, n. 386.

[18] For a Republican precedent, see Kuttner 1999 on Pompey's theater and portico complex.

edification of their most privileged subjects than on their own private residence – a major contrast with resource allocation in other premodern imperial capitals, where the palace normally predominated over everything else.

Flaig, like Yavetz, concentrates on the political implications of the relationship between emperor and urban plebs, but approaches this relationship, like Veyne, through analysis of the symbolic communications between these two actors. Taking the fall of Nero as a case study, Flaig applies his model of the principate as an "acceptance system," developed in his groundbreaking study of usurpation in the Roman empire (1992), to show how an imperial regime could collapse if the urban plebs withdrew its support. Because the urban plebs was one of the "relevant political sectors" in the Roman empire (along with the senate and legionary armies), capable of collective action and therefore capable of demonstrating public acceptance of a given emperor – the key to the stability of any one emperor's reign, according to Flaig – it was vital for the imperial regime to honor the plebs in specific ways in order to secure that public acceptance. Nero's disastrous failure to play by the rules of this symbolic dialogue forms the principal subject of Flaig's study, and offers a useful model for understanding the basis of the emperor's political authority in the city of Rome.

In a wide-ranging essay on imperial honorific in Rome and in the provinces, Mayer begins with the observation that most "imperial" monuments were in fact dedicated by other groups to (and not by) the emperor, and then examines the ways in which social status shaped this public discourse in praise of the emperor. Ranging from the Augustan through the early Severan periods, Mayer underlines the long-term stability of what he calls a "class-bound *decorum*" in public praise, visual and spoken, for the emperor. Analyses of the compital altars in Augustan Rome and the Arch of the Argentarii dedicated to Septimius Severus usefully move beyond generalities in distinguishing "popular" from senatorial modes of imperial honorific, and open up new avenues for investigating the structural factors that determined how, precisely, the urban plebs honored the emperor.

The relationship between the emperor and the urban plebs largely supplanted the relationship between senate and plebs as the main framework at Rome for symbolic interaction between mass and élite in the public sphere. The senate did not, of course, disappear with the fall of the Republic, and indeed played a critical role – in institutional, administrative, social, and ideological terms – in the maintenance of the monarchic regime at

Rome.[19] But the senate did have to reinvent itself, in the wake of Rome's political transformation, and forging its own symbolic relationship with the emperor, especially in the city of Rome, was of paramount importance for the successful reshaping of its corporate public image and, ultimately, for preserving the social and political status of its individual members. Several aspects of this complex process are addressed in this volume.

Mayer's essay, for example, is concerned primarily with identifying senatorial modes of honoring the emperor and with exploring the motivations that underpinned this type of "public praise." He suggests that senatorial monuments for the emperor in the city of Rome tended either to highlight the social proximity of the emperor to the senatorial aristocracy, as on the Ara Pacis, or to subordinate the emperor's individual exploits to the achievements of the Roman state as a whole, as on the Arch of Septimius Severus; in both cases the contrast with "popular" monuments, which stress the individual, paradigmatic, and quasi-divine role of the emperor himself, is striking. Mayer also adduces textual evidence, especially Pliny's *Panegyricus*, to illustrate the distinctively senatorial concern to demonstrate "insider knowledge" about how to praise the emperor appropriately. This badge of insider status so proudly displayed by Pliny and other senators, such as Arrian, shows that they could employ the power of the monarchy in their own interests, and casts doubt on the notion that either panegyric or "imperial" monuments in the city of Rome should be seen as vehicles of imperial "propaganda."[20]

The senate was also an active agent in shaping the monumental landscape of the imperial city. In her study of Antonine Rome, Boatwright notes the senate's dedication of the Arch of Marcus Aurelius and also draws attention to the senate's "remarkable involvement" in the construction of the Temple of the Deified Faustina, observing that the Italic style of the monument differs from the Greek form of the Hadrianeum, and contrasting the senate's maintenance of Faustina's cult with Antoninus Pius' active patronization of the cult of Hadrian. These monuments are reminders that architectural form and cult practice in Rome were not determined by the imperial regime alone. Antonine Rome, as Boatwright puts it, was partly a "senatorial product," a label that rings true for other periods as well. Indeed, not even political decentralization in the later empire and the advent of a

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[19] For the senate under Augustus, see Brunt 1984; Eck 2003: 41–76, esp. 67 ff.; cf. Rowe 2002: ch. 2 on the senate under Tiberius. On the imperial senate, Millar 1977: 290–355; Talbert 1984; Flaig 1992: 94–131; Ando 2000: 152–68; Veyne 2002a: 54–57.

[20] On the meaning and use of the term "propaganda," see below, pp. 33–37.

Christian emperor could extinguish the senate's influence in the city. As
Marlowe shows in her study of Constantinian Rome, the senate remained a
crucial participant in the direction of urban affairs in the early fourth cen-
tury. Whereas traditional accounts claim that Constantine concentrated his
resources on Christian buildings on the outskirts of the city, intentionally
snubbing the traditional, pagan city center, Marlowe argues that Constan-
tine's clever appropriation of many of Maxentius' building projects in the
city center, including the Quirinal bath complex, the Temple of Romulus,
and, above all, Maxentius' Basilica, was designed to demonstrate Constan-
tine's commitment to traditional civic benefaction in the heart of Rome.
She also notes that Constantine did not punish Maxentius' supporters, and
even sought to place members of the senate's most established families in key
administrative posts, including the urban prefecture. These monumental,
architectural, and administrative policies should be seen as a reflection of
power relations in early fourth-century Rome, and indicate that the senate
could still be a crucial collectivity in the Roman imperial state.

But we should not exaggerate the influence of the imperial senate in the
public sphere at Rome. The advent of monarchy, after all, did curtail most
forms of senatorial self-representation in the city. How senators reacted
to these changed circumstances, and what new strategies they developed
for public self-representation, have been examined in a series of influential
articles by Werner Eck.[21] In this volume he expands on these earlier studies
with a chapter on senatorial uses of public and domestic space. As a result
of the emperor's near monopoly of public space in the city of Rome, sen-
ators who wished to engage in public building of their own were forced
to redirect their projects to municipal centers in Italy and the provinces,
where there was little or no competition with the emperor. Within the city
of Rome itself, a small number of senators could employ public spaces for
self-representation, but this depended on the favor of the emperor. Most
chose to concentrate their resources on their grand *domus* – urban "*palazzi*,"
as Eck calls them – and on novel forms of domestic display, such as inscribed
trapezophora, marble bases with small-scale equestrian statues tailored to
the dimensions of the atrium or peristyle. This senatorial concentration
of resources on domestic space transformed Rome's residential topogra-
phy. At the center was the imperial palace, dominating the Palatine Hill –
long the aristocratic residential quarter *par excellence* – and fanning out
from this nucleus along the hills to the northeast, east, and southeast were

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[21] Eck 1984a, 1992, 1996 (updated Italian translation of several articles), 1997a, 1997b, 1998,
2001a, 2005.