THE POLITICS OF PUBLIC SPACE IN REPUBLICAN ROME

Taking public space as her starting point, Amy Russell offers a fresh analysis of the ever-fluid public/private divide in Republican Rome. Built on the 'spatial turn' in Roman studies and incorporating textual and archaeological evidence, this book uncovers a rich variety of urban spaces. No space in Rome was solely or fully public. Some spaces were public but also political, sacred, or foreign; many apparently public spaces were saturated by the private, leaving grey areas and room for manipulation.

Women, slaves, and non-citizens were broadly excluded from politics: how did they experience and help to shape its spaces? How did the building projects of Republican dynasts relate to the communal realm? From the Forum to the victory temples of the Campus Martius, culminating in Pompey's great theatre–portico–temple–garden–house complex, *The Politics of Public Space in Republican Rome* explores how space was marked, experienced, and defined by multiple actors and audiences.

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Preface

This book's cover image, an imperial-era wall-painting of the Forum in Pompeii, is neither Republican nor from the city of Rome. But it does capture a facet of Roman public space absent from the usual brooding ruins or tidy plans: these were real, living places. In this book I hope to capture some of the variety and vitality of public space in Republican Rome.

The seeds of this project were planted almost a decade ago, when I was a student on the City of Rome MA course at the British School at Rome (BSR). There, I had an experience shared with many before me (most notably Fergus Millar, whose tenure as Balsdon Fellow at the BSR in 1983 provoked his ground-breaking work in *The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic*): I realised that the city matters. To understand Roman Republican politics, we must understand its spaces.

This book is intended, among other things, as a contribution to Roman political history, to the study of Republican political culture, and to feminist history. The public and the political, both in studies of the ancient world and in contemporary life, are often too casually equated with each other. To break down notions of the public also challenges and can help to expand notions of the political. More concretely, politics takes place in (public and private) space, and everyone uses space. Considering the spatial context of political action is one way to incorporate a larger range of actors in our calculations, even if the result is only to be aware that certain people are excluded from political space.

It may seem surprising to some that I apply the word 'feminist' to a study of the public/private divide which nowhere takes on gender at any length. It was an attempt to think through gendered space in the ancient world which first brought me to questions of public and private, but I soon realised that the two issues must be tackled separately. Contemporary theorists of gendered space have developed models resting heavily on public and private space: they tend to either observe or react against the modern assumption that public space is gendered masculine and private

space is gendered feminine. In the ancient world, however, and especially (I think) in Republican Rome, there was no basic equivalence between public and masculine, or private and feminine – or if there was, it was so different from our own that we can scarcely recognise it.[1]

At times, Romans did imagine that women belonged in the home. The traditional praise of wifely virtues on epitaphs is exemplified by the claim *domum servavit* – 'she kept house'. Gaius Gracchus, quoted by Cicero, assumes that he will find his mother at home:

> quo me miser conferam? quo vortam? in Capitoliumne? at fratris sanguine redundat. an domum? matremne ut miseram lamentantemque videam et abiectam? (*ORF*[4] C. Gracchus 61 = Cic. *De or.* 3.214)
>
> Where should I take my wretched self? Where should I turn? To the Capitoline? But it drips with my brother's blood. Or to my home? So I may see my wretched mother weeping and brought low?

Gracchus contrasts the house, the domain of his mother, with the political spaces of his brother's tribunate.

Similar examples could be multiplied, but it is also easy to see from the sources that women were not confined to quarters. Nepos (*Praef.* 6–7) points out that in Rome (unlike in Greece) a woman goes out to banquets and *in celebritate versatur* (6) – 'moves among the crowd'. Nepos means upper-class women, but poor women were even more likely to have business which took them out in public.[2] Plenty of literary sources refer in passing to women moving around the city.

So far, all can be easily explained: the modern cities (Victorian London, say) which often provide our implicit models for the operation of gendered space in ancient Rome permitted a system in which women were conceptually attached to the home and the private sphere even if in practice they went everywhere. The problem in understanding interactions between gender and the public/private divide in the Roman city is not primarily a lack of evidence for women's movements inside and outside the house, but our imperfect understanding of the Roman public/private divide itself.[3]

[1] See Trümper (2012) for a recent summary of the state of the question; the predecessors she cites are almost uniformly Greek. Bielman/Frei-Stolba (2003) xii–xiii explore the definitions of ancient public and private spheres specifically by tracing the movements of women; the approach they lay out does not lack nuance, but in my opinion the basic assumption that women should be mapped onto the private sphere cannot stand for Republican Rome.

[2] Holleran (2011) captures evocatively how Rome's poor, crammed into slum housing, lived their lives on the street.

[3] And equally, of course, our limited understanding of Roman gender. Violence (which I propose as one heuristic in this book) is also implicated in a Roman discourse of gender relying on vulnerability

Women were in some hazy way associated with the house and domesticity, but that does not mean they were necessarily associated with the private sphere. The Roman house was not entirely private – and certainly not private in a way a Victorian Londoner might understand.[4] As a first step towards understanding this facet of gendered space in Republican Rome, we need to learn more about public and private space.

I began to look more closely at public and private space as a means to that end, and I hope my conclusions may still serve that purpose in the future, for me and for others. The project which became this book, however, focuses on public and private space as an end in itself. Here, I aim to answer some small part of the call to action issued in 1999 by Andrew Riggsby, suggesting that we need an approach to the public and the private in the Roman world which both unifies and divides: unifies, in asking how the complex system of ideas which together formed Roman concepts of public and private combined to create a coherent whole, and divides, in discriminating between different spaces which were characterised by different mixtures of public and private.[5] My book focuses on public space, an arena more in need of division than unification: we already talk about gradations of the private within the house, but gradations of the public beyond the house have received far less attention. As a whole, though, I hope to present a unified, if fluid, image of public space in Republican Rome. Out of a loosely linked and constantly changing repertoire of ideas, ideals, and fantasies, Romans defined and redefined public space. As they did so, they redefined themselves and their society. *Res publica res populi*: the unstable category *publicus* lay at the heart of the community and of the Republic itself.

to violence and penetrability which is alien to us; Fredrick (2002) outlines an approach to gendered space in these terms.

[4] Wallace-Hadrill (1996) suggests that gender differences within the house might be expressed in time rather than in space. Milnor (2005), esp. 1–16, discusses the complicated relationship between the public and the domestic in Roman imperial culture.

[5] Riggsby (1999).

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The list of those who have helped me write this book is probably longer than the book itself. Erich Gruen, of course, comes first: he supervised the 2011 thesis which eventually became the book you see, and has been unfailingly supportive then and ever since. Carlos Noreña has also been an inspiring mentor and friend. The third most powerful influence on this book is not a person, but an institution: the British School at Rome, where I spent time as an MA student, Ralegh Radford Rome Scholar, and research fellow. An institution is made of people, and I owe thanks to all its staff and visitors, especially Christopher Smith, Mark Bradley, Robert Coates-Stephens, Carrie Vout, Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, Maria Pia Malvezzi, Valerie Scott, and every single member of the glorious cohort of 2009–10.

Among the many other teachers and mentors who have supported, inspired, critiqued, and challenged me along the way are Annmarie Adams, Greg Bucher, Anna Clark, Josephine Crawley Quinn, Tonio Hölscher, and Andy Stewart. I have benefitted immeasurably from discussions real or virtual with scholars and friends including Henriette van der Blom, Tim Doran, Jane Draycott, John Dugan, Lisa Eberle, Jaclyn Neel, David Newsome, Elizabeth Macaulay Lewis, Jim Packer, Laura Pfuntner, Clare Rowan, Joel Rygorsky, and Jamie Sewell. My colleagues at Durham deserve huge thanks for helping me through the final stages of the project: Peter Heslin, Phil Horky, and Ted Kaizer each read and commented on entire chapters, and every member of the department has provided useful advice and support. Finally, I cannot finish without thanking Michael Sharp, Elizabeth Hanlon, Hari Kumar, everyone at Cambridge University Press, and the two anonymous readers, whose advice has fundamentally reshaped and (I hope) improved this book. Its shortcomings are all mine.

In the acknowledgements of my thesis, I paid tribute to Corinne Crawford and Peter Derow, who were here to help me start this project

but did not see the end of it. To their names a third must now be added: Crawford Greenwalt, Jr. In the same words I used then: all who knew them will know how much I owe to them.

The final thanks belong to my friends and family – and to my Intermediate Greek class at the Intercollegiate Center for Classical Studies in Rome in Fall 2011, who helped me through the dangerous euphoria of having my draft manuscript accepted. I promised that I would dedicate the book to them, and so I will.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations for Greek and Latin authors are those found in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Abbreviations for journal titles follow the conventions of *L'Année Philologique*. The following additional abbreviations are used:

ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*. 1972– (Berlin: De Gruyter).
ArchLaz	*Archeologia Laziale*.
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. 1853–.
FGrH	Jacoby, F. 1957–. *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Leiden: Brill).
FRH	Cornell, T. (ed.) 2013. *The Fragments of the Roman Historians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
LTUR	Steinby, E. M. (ed.) 1993–2000. *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (Rome: Quasar).
ORF^{4}	Malcovati, E. 1976–9. *Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta* (Turin: Paravia). 4th edn.
RRC	Crawford, M. H. 1974. *Roman Republican Coinage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
RS	Crawford, M. H. (ed.) 1996. *Roman Statutes*. BICS Suppl. 64 (London: Institute of Advanced Studies).
TLL	*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. 1900– (Leipzig: Teubner).

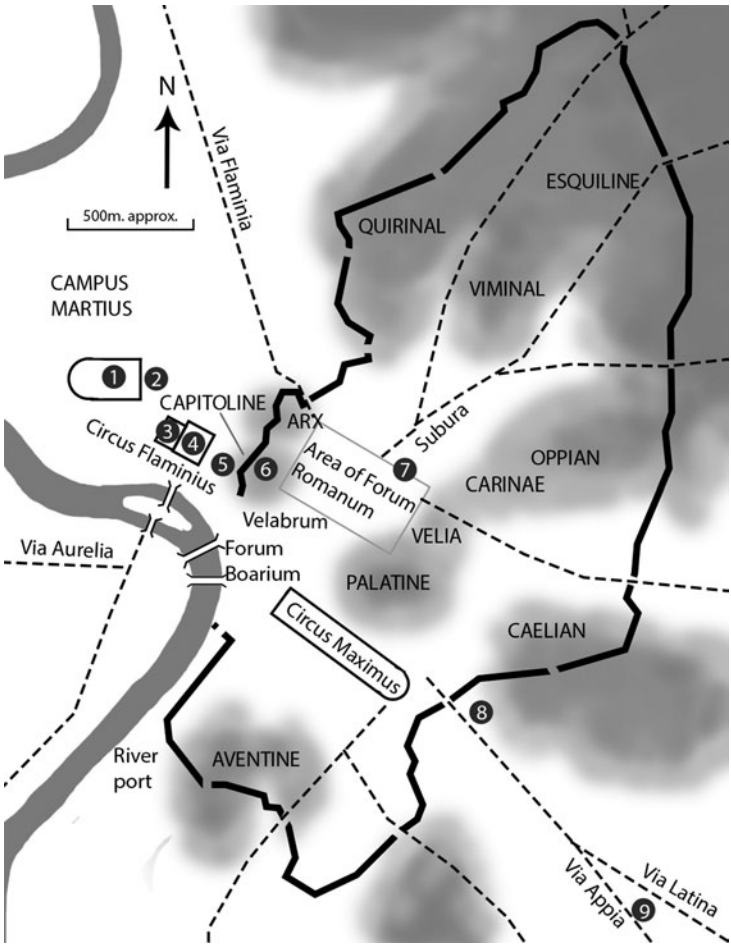
All translations are my own. Unless specifically noted in the text, Greek and Latin authors are cited from the Loeb Classical Library if they appear there and otherwise from the Teubner editions. The following exceptions and choices of edition should be noted:

Asconius	Clark, A. C. (ed.) 1907. *Q. Asconii Pediani orationum Ciceronis quinque enarratio* (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

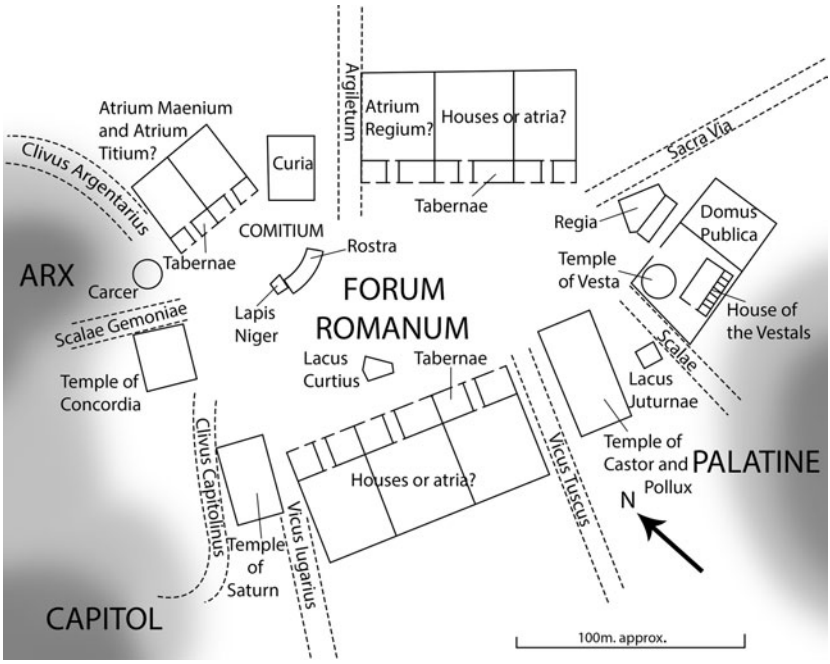
Caecilius	Ribbeck, O. (ed.) 1897–8. *Scaenicae Romanorum poesis fragmenta* (Leipzig: Teubner). 3rd edn.
Chron. Pasch.	Mommsen, T. (ed.) 1892. *Chronica minora saec. iv. v. vi. vii*. Monumenta Germaniae Historiae: Auctores Antiquissimi 9 (Berlin: Weidmann).
Ennius	Vahlen, J. (ed.) 1967. *Ennianae Poesis Reliquiae* (Leipzig: Teubner). 2nd edn.
Festus, Paul	Lindsay, W. M. (ed.) 1997. *Sexti Pompei Festi De Verborum Significatu quae supersunt cum Pauli epitome* (Leipzig: Teubner).
Lucilius	Marx, F. (ed.) 1904. *C. Lucilii Carminum Reliquiae* (Leipzig: Teubner).
Nonius	Lindsay, W. M. (ed.) 2003. *Nonius Marcellus. De Compendiosa Doctrina* (Leipzig: Teubner).
Sall. *Hist.*	McGushin, P. (ed.) 1992–4. *Sallust: The Histories* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Maps

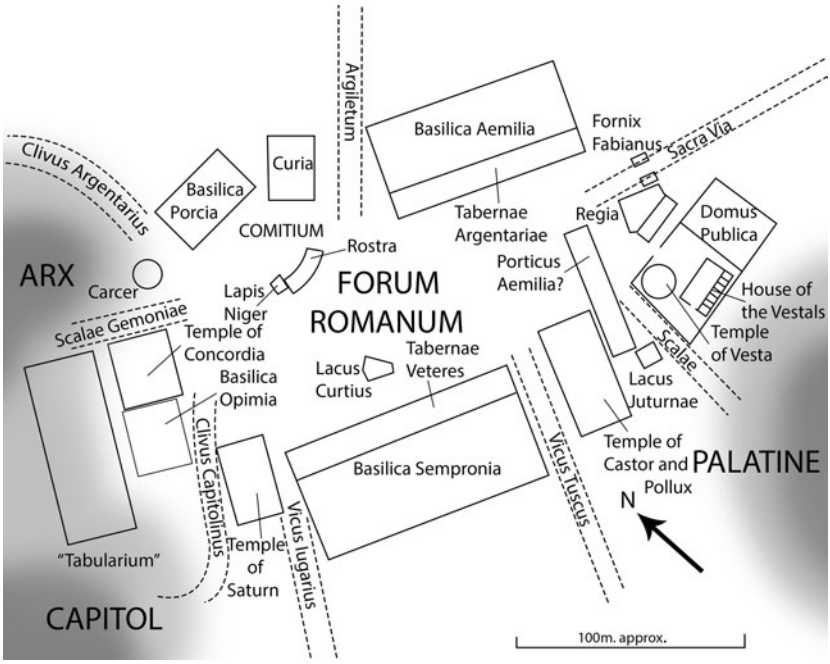
There is a great deal we do not know about the topography of Republican Rome. The reader should approach the following three sketch maps as aids to general orientation, rather than as complete and definitive reconstructions.



Map 1. Sketch map of the city of Rome in the Republican period, showing the approximate locations of places mentioned in the text. 1.Theatre and portico of Pompey 2.Temple of Fortuna Huiusce Diei 3.Temple of Hercules Musarum 4. Porticus Metelli 5.Temple of Bellona 6.Area Capitolina 7.Macellum 8.Temple of Honos et Virtus 9.Tomb of the Scipios.



Map 2. Sketch map of the Forum Romanum, *c.* 200 BCE. Much remains conjectural. The alignment I have suggested for the tabernae and houses on the north long side is based on scanty remains under the tabernae of the later Basilica Aemilia, for which see pp. 67 and Fig. 3.4. For the location of the Curia, see p. 63.



Map 3. Sketch map of the Forum Romanum, *c.* 60 BCE. The exact locations of the Basilica Porcia and Fornix Fabianus are unknown. For the possible Porticus Aemilia, see Steinby (2012) 59–61.