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- ***Cleopatra*** (1963)
- Dir. Joseph Mankiewicz
- **Cleopatra**—Elizabeth Taylor
- **Caesar**—Rex Harrison
- **Marc Antony**—Richard Burton
- **Octavian**—Roddy McDowall



- How did Octavian finally convince the Roman Senate to declare war on Marc Antony?
- By reading Marc Antony's will in which he requests to be buried in Alexandria, Egypt.

## Publius Cornelius Tacitus (56-117c)

- Senator, historian, orator (**aristocratic** and **conservative**)
- Held political office during terror of Domitian (81-96)
- Consulship in 97 under Nerva; Governor of Asia under Trajan c. 112
  
- Works:
  - **Agricola** (eulogy of father-in-law, governor of Britain)
  - **Germania** (moral contrast: Germany v. Rome)
  - **Annales** (Julio-Claudian era 14-68)
  - **Historiae** (Flavian period 69-96)

# Tacitus rewrites the Augustan narrative

- “Augustus found the whole state exhausted by internal dissensions, and established over it a **personal regime** known as the Principate.”
- “He **seduced** the army with bonuses, and his cheap food policy was successful **bait** for civilians. Indeed, he attracted everybody’s good will by the enjoyable gift of peace. Then he gradually pushed ahead and **absorbed the functions of the Senate, the officials, and even the law.**”
- “Opposition did not exist. War or judicial murder had **disposed all men of spirit.** Upper-class survivors found that **slavish obedience** was the way to succeed, both politically and financially.”
- “The country had been transformed, and there was **nothing left of the old Roman character.** Political equality was a thing of the past; **all eyes watched for imperial commands.**”

# **Nero** (Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus)—**chronology**

- 49 **Agrippina** marries her uncle **Claudius** [novelty; incest]
- 50 Claudius adopts **Nero** [now ahead of his own son **Britannicus**]
- 53 Nero marries Claudius' daughter **Octavia**
- 54 Agrippina poisons Claudius; Nero becomes emperor at **17**
- 55 Nero poisons his step-brother Britannicus
- 59 Nero has Agrippina assassinated [matricide]
- 62 Nero has Octavia murdered for his lover **Poppaea**
- 64 Great Fire in Rome, **Christians** persecuted  
Nero builds **Domus Aurea** (Golden House)
- 68 Rebellion of generals in provinces, Nero commits **suicide**  
--"What an artist dies in me." (Suetonius)

# Themes to look for in Tacitus

## Moral degeneration

- The emperor's house and Rome reduced to a site of **vice**
  - Augustus's merger of res publica and res privata is undone
- **Gender and class confusion**
  - aggressive **women**: Agrippina, Poppaea / scheming **freedmen** [liberti] in Emperor's court
  - Nero engages in **debauchery** and forces others to do so; loves everything **Greek**
- Virtues such as virtus, gravitas, dignitas, pietas disappear.
  - **No corrective virtuous exempla** to overcome vice—Octavia v. Lucretia
- Religion (cosmic order) is reduced to **superstition and portents**

Aureus, 54 CE, **Nero and Agrippina**

Agrippa Aug Divi Claud Neronis Caes Mater

Agrippina Augusta, wife of divine Claudius, mother of Nero

**Bust of Nero**, 60 CE



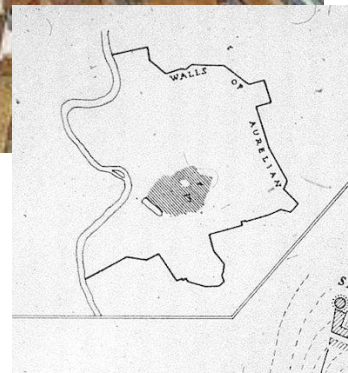
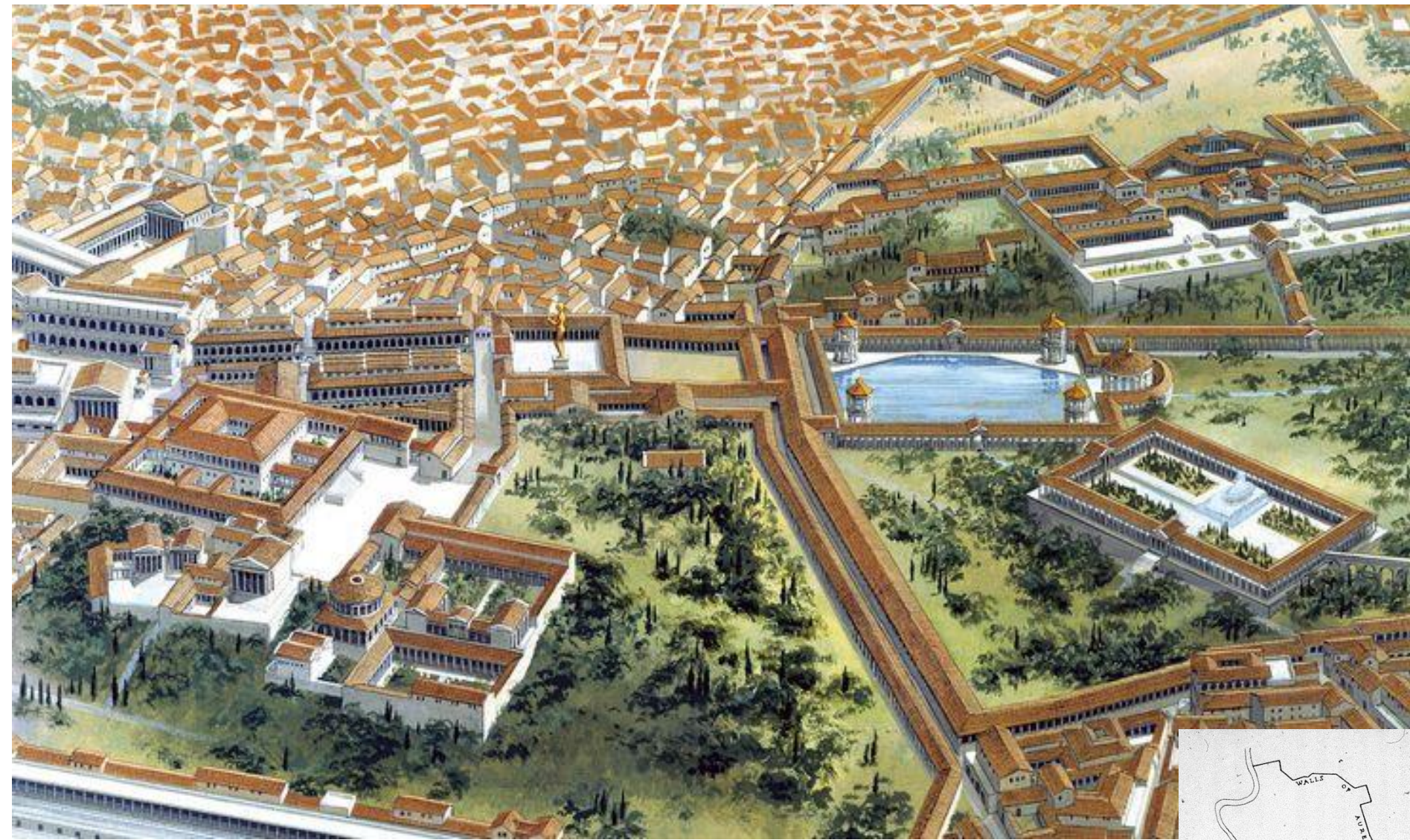


# Tacitus on Fire in Rome / Golden House

distorted refounding / making the public private

- A rumor had gone forth that, at the very time the city was in flames, the Emperor appeared on a private stage and **sang of the destruction of Troy**, comparing present misfortunes with the calamities of antiquity... It seemed that Nero was aiming at the glory of **founding a new city** and calling it by his name....
- Nero meanwhile availed himself of his country's desolation, and **erected a mansion** in which the jewels and gold...were not so marvelous as the fields and lakes, with woods on one side to resemble a wilderness, and, on the other, open spaces and extensive views...[with] the genius and audacity **to attempt by art even what nature had refused.**

# Nero's Golden House (**Domus Aurea**)



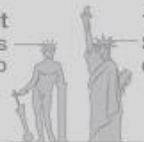
# Colossal statue of Nero as Sun God



Colosseum



103 feet  
Colossus  
of Nero



111 feet  
Statue  
of Liberty

Around the year 127 Hadrian moved the statue to a location near the amphitheater later known as the Colosseum. It took as many as 24 elephants to accomplish the feat.

**Vespasian** replaces Golden House with **Colosseum** and **Baths of Titus**  
political palimpsest: **restores the private to the public**



## Martial on Vespasian's building projects on the site of Nero's Golden House

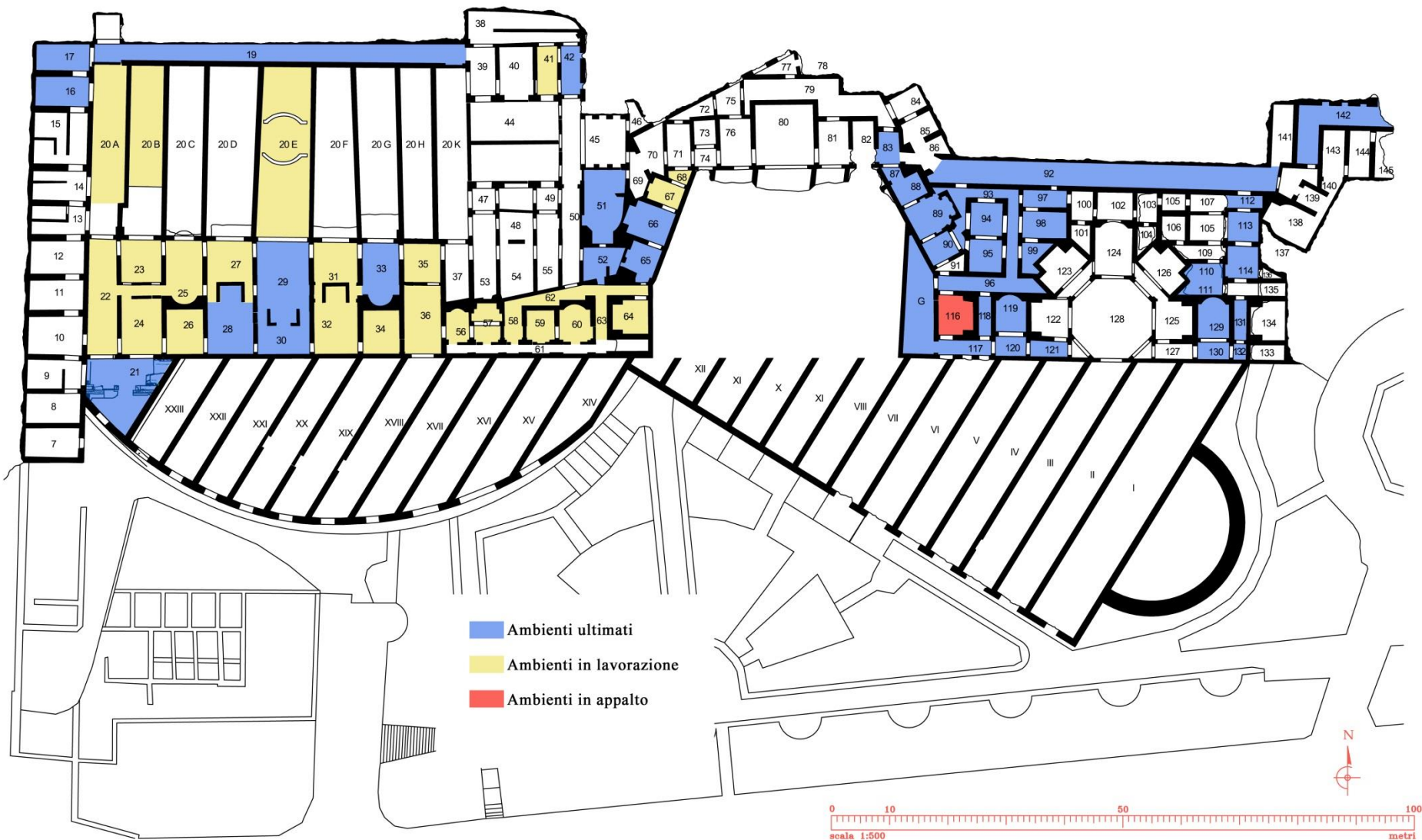
- Where the starry colossus sees the constellations at close range and lofty scaffolding rises in the middle of the road, once gleamed the odious halls of a cruel monarch, and in all Rome there stood **a single house**.
- Where rises before our eyes the august form of the amphitheater, was once Nero's lake. Where we admire the warm baths, a speedy gift, a haughty tract of land had robbed the poor of their dwellings.
- **Rome has been restored to herself** and under your rule Caesar [Vespasian], the pleasures that belonged to a master now belong to the people.

Nero  
recarved  
as  
Vespasian

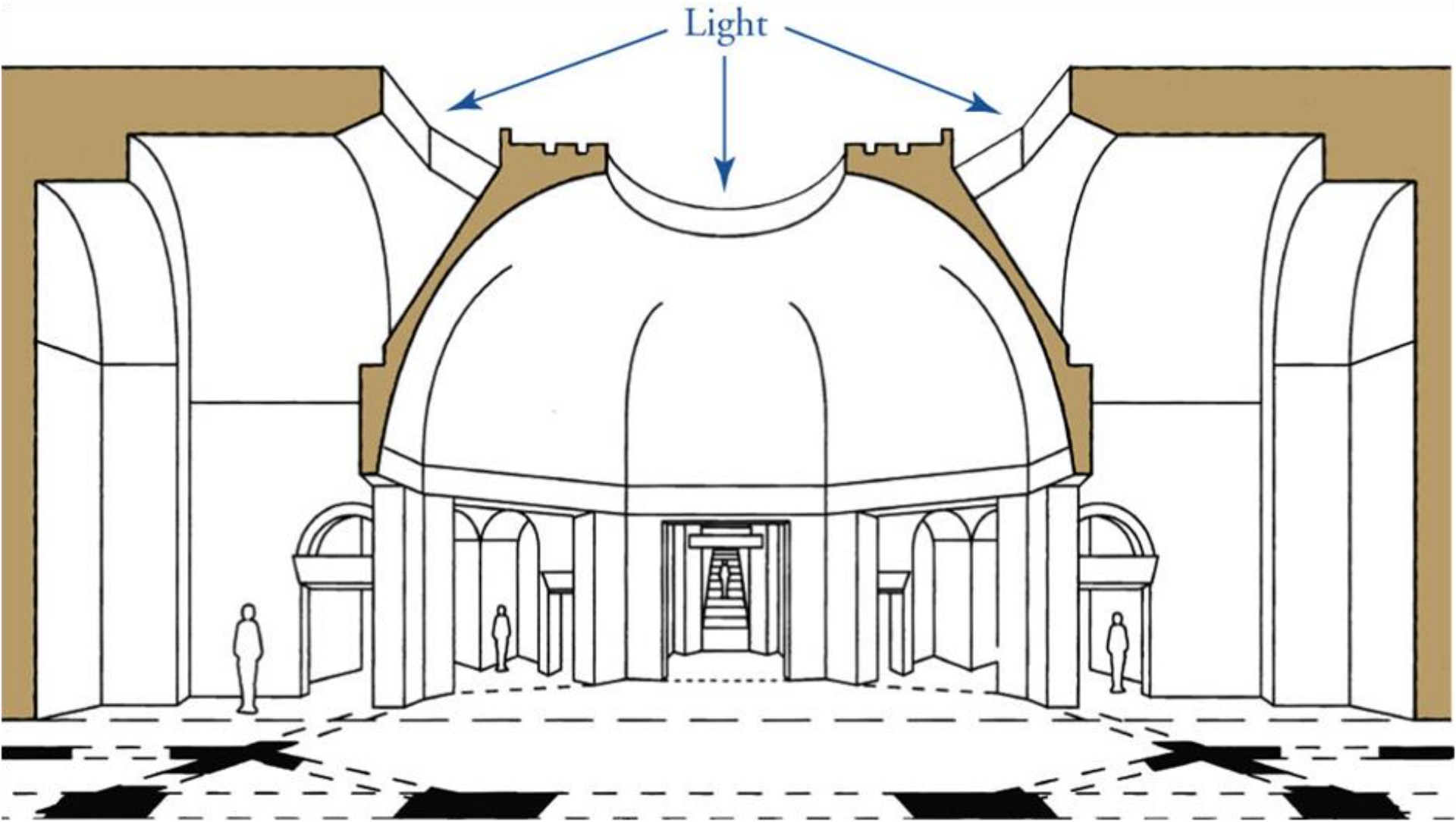


# Domus Aurea (Golden House 64-68 CE) / Severus and Celer

MiBACT SOPRINTENDENZA SPECIALE PER I BENI ARCHEOLOGICI DI ROMA - DOMUS AUREA  
PLANIMETRIA GENERALE - STATO DI ATTUAZIONE DEGLI INTERVENTI A MARZO 2014



Domus Aurea: **Octagonal room**—dome, vaulting, light











## Newest discovery: Nero's rotating dining room on Palatine

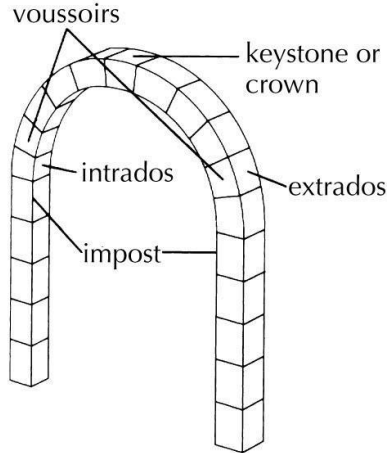
Suetonius: "The main banquet hall  
was circular and constantly revolved  
day and night, in imitation of the  
heavens."

**Roman Architectural Revolution: arch and concrete**  
(Synergy between Roman 'civilization' and Roman building techniques)

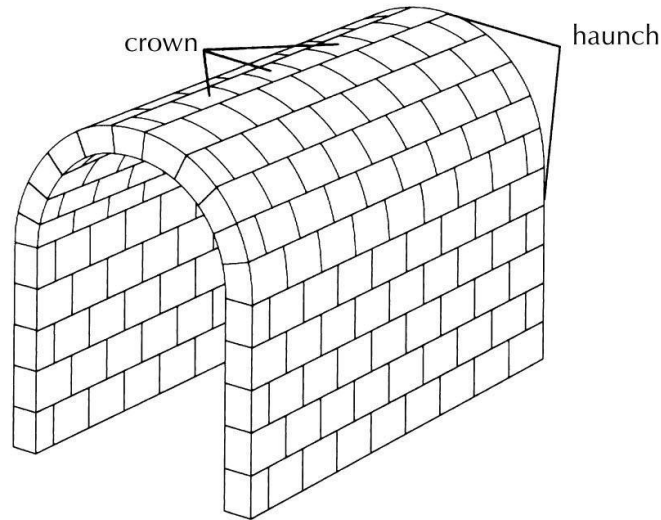
**Hadrian's villa: post and lintel vs. arch**



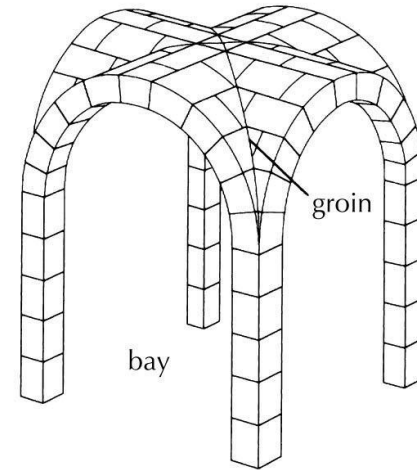
# The **ARCH** can be expanded in **barrel** or **groin vaults**



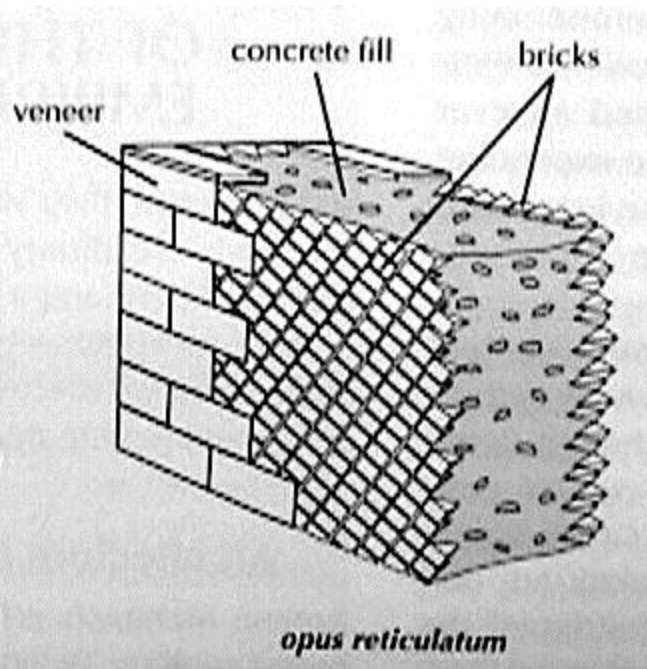
arch



barrel vault



groin vault

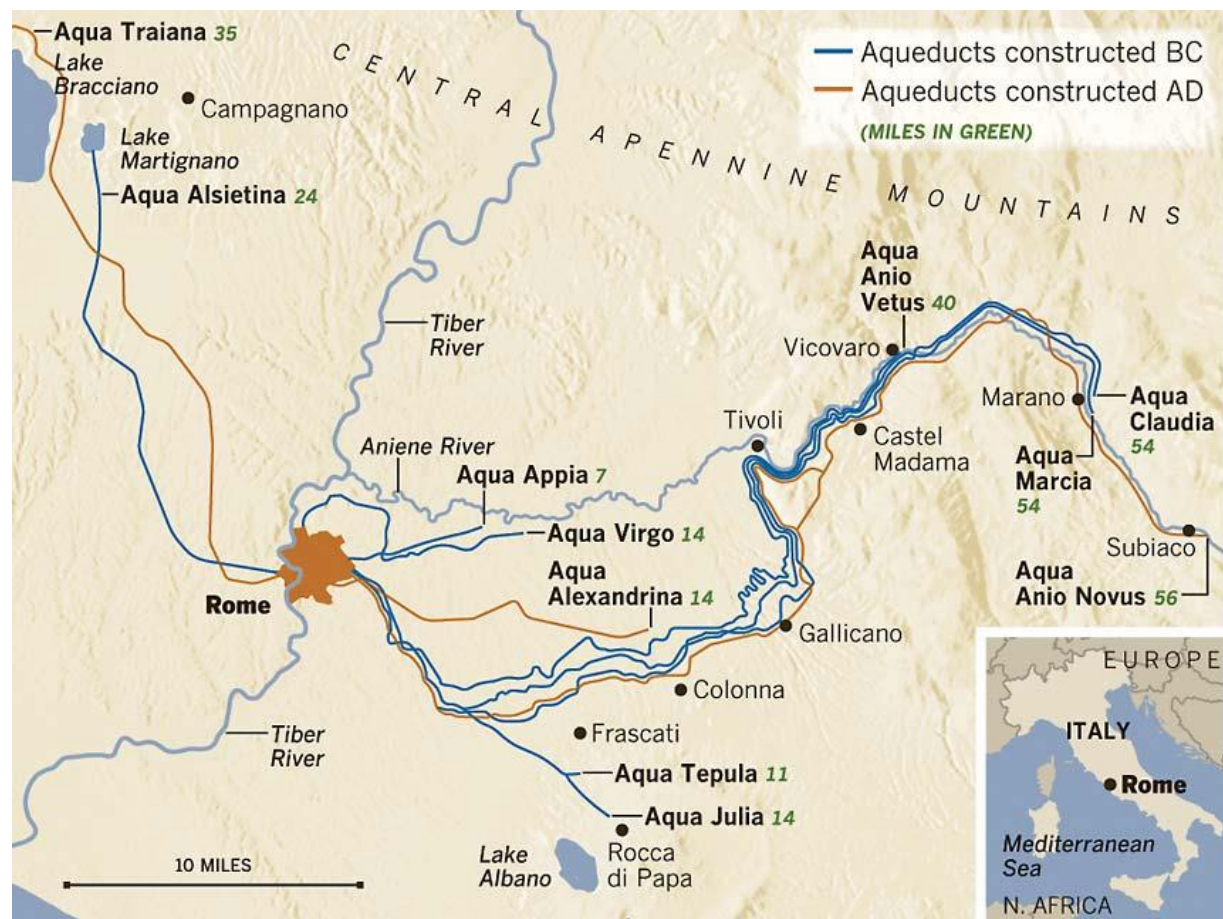


- **CONCRETE**: lime mortar, volcanic sand, water, small stones
- Concrete sheathed in **brick**, and **stucco** or **marble** veneer.
- a consistently solid mass: permits large walls, ceilings and domes; to **mold space**

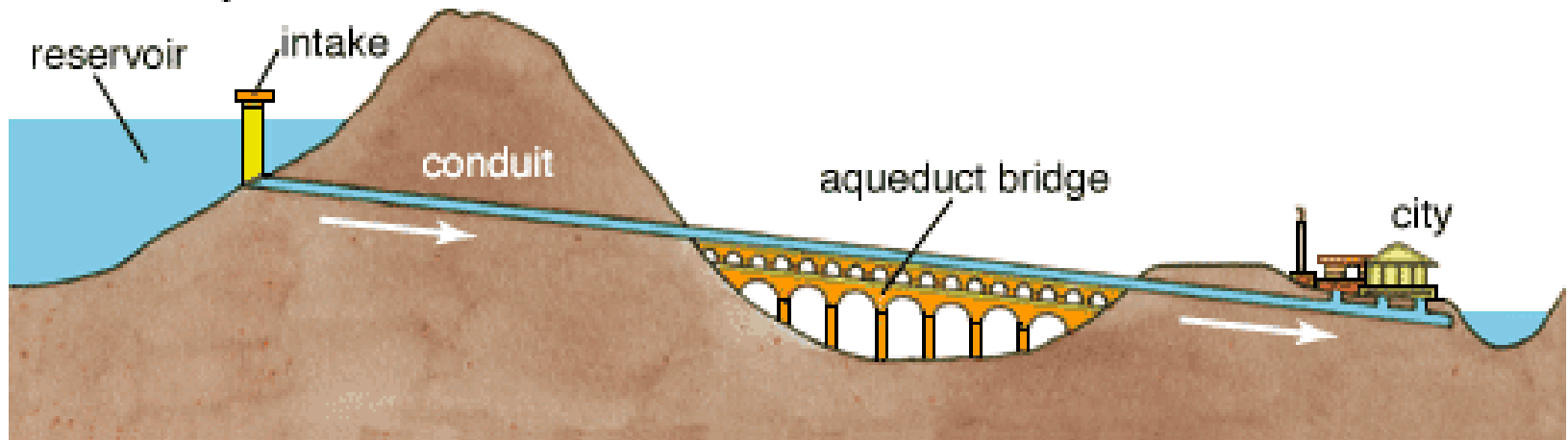
**Aqueducts:** Aqua Claudia, Rome



# 11 aqueducts in Rome from 312 BCE to 226 CE



## Roman Aqueduct



# Pont-du-Gard, Nimes, France





# Segovia, Spain



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## 2) **Colosseum** [Flavian Amphitheater] 79-80 CE (Vespasian)

Function: **mass entertainment**

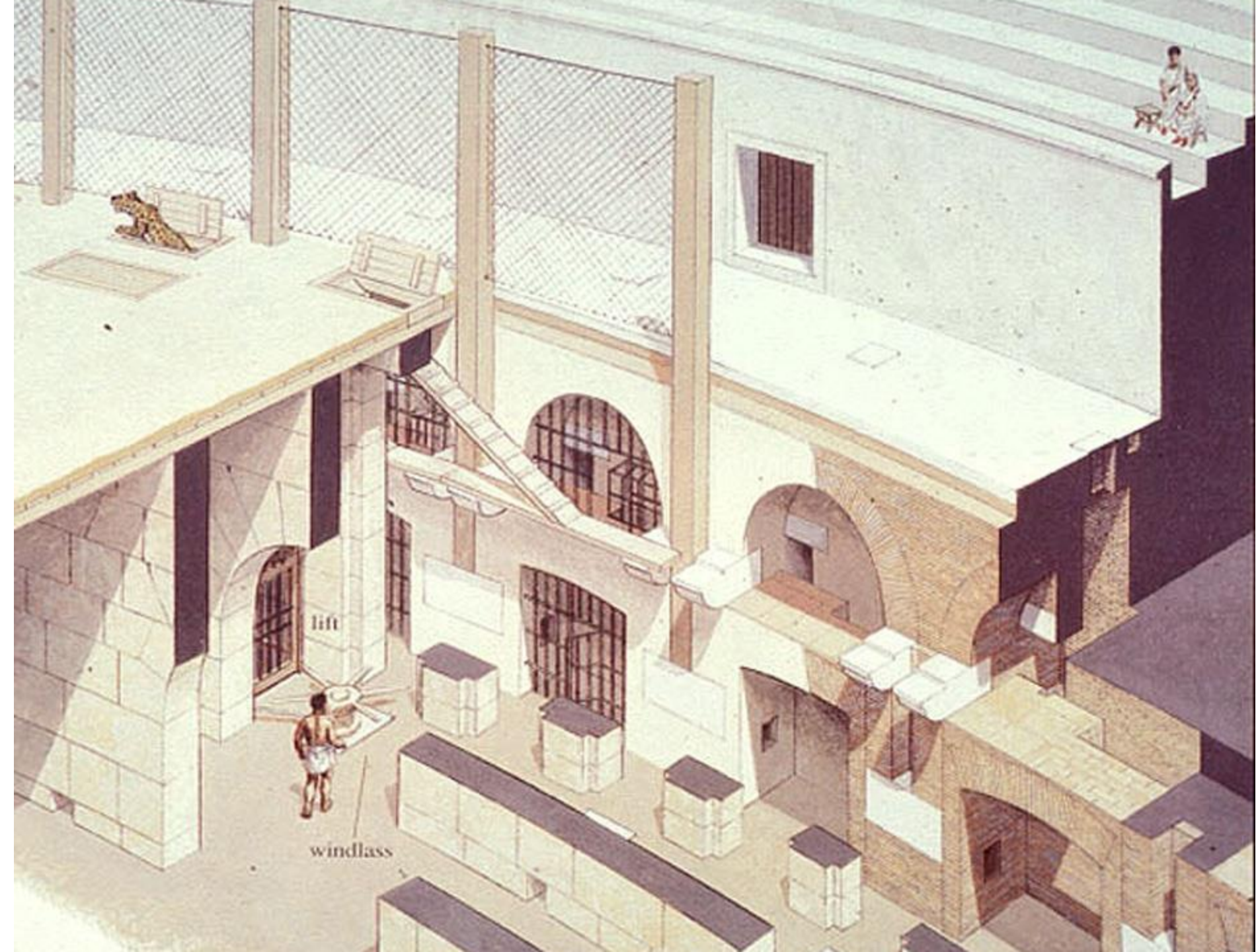


- Constructed on site of Nero's private lake
- Seated 50,000
- 80 entrances
- Travertine, tufa, marble, brick faced concrete



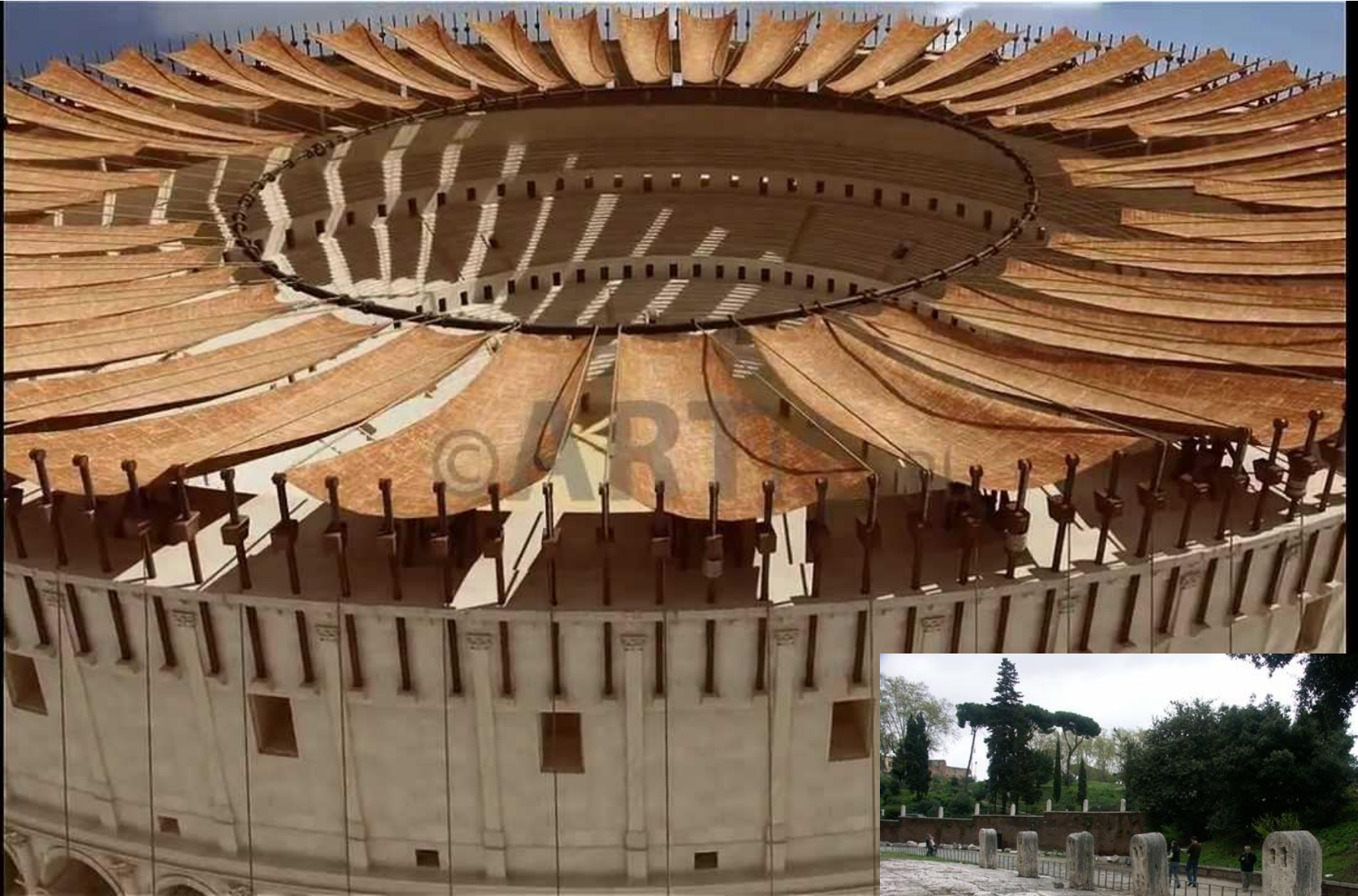
# Colosseum: **cavea**, **arena**, **substructure**

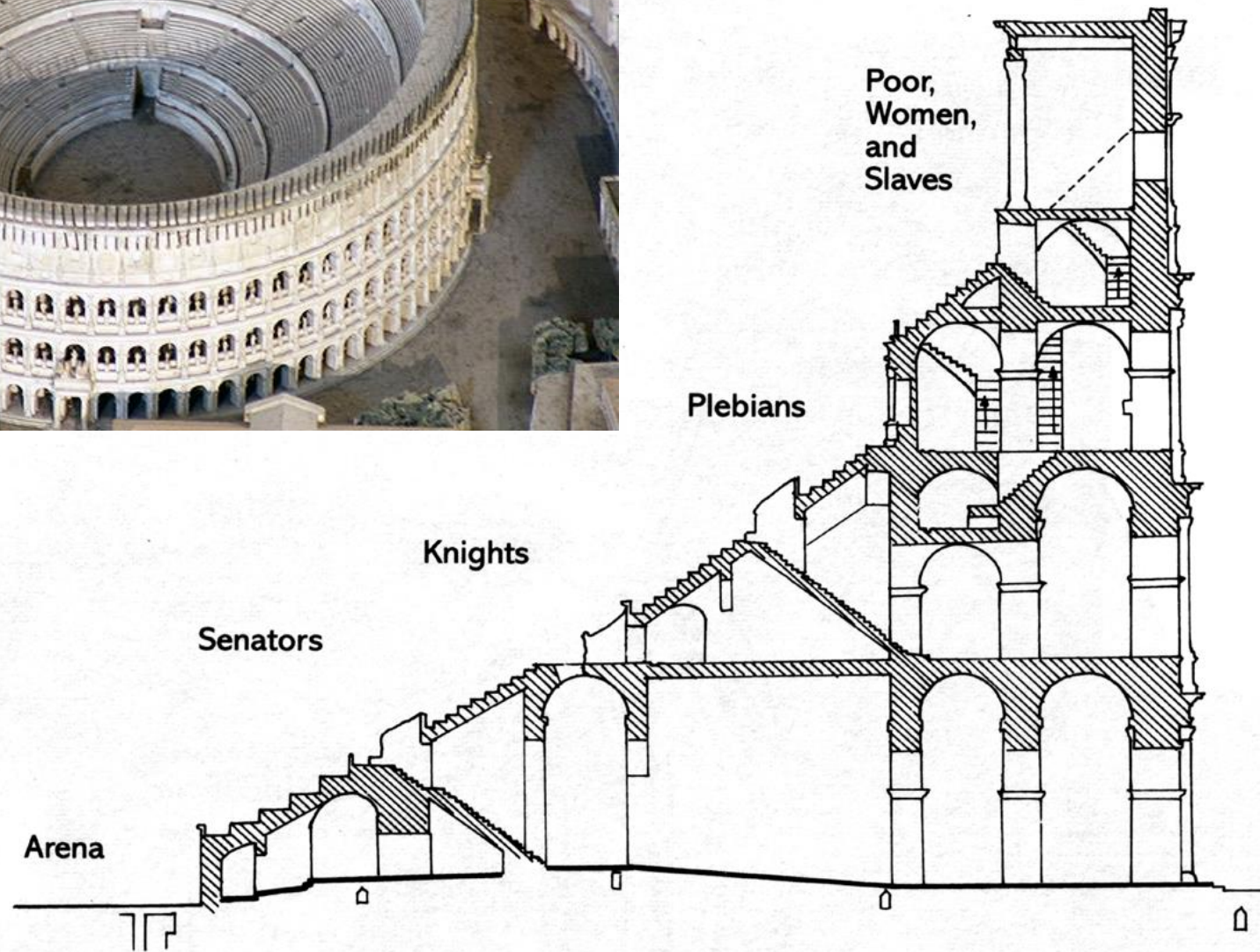




windlass

# Colosseum: **velarium** (awning)





▲ Fig. 133. Colosseum. Reconstruction of seating zones





A day at the Colosseum:

**Beast hunting** (venationes)

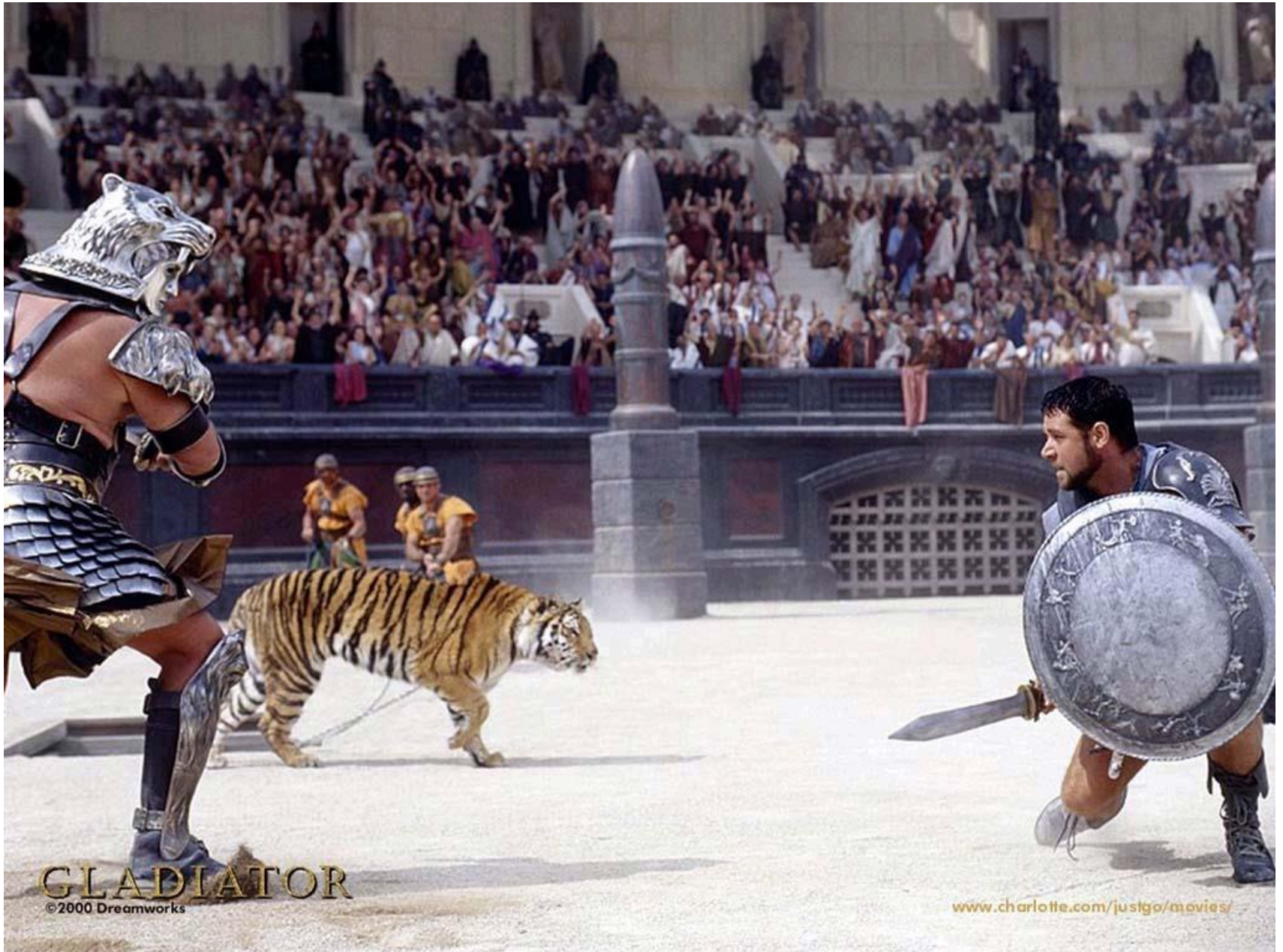
**Public executions**

**Gladitorial games** (munera)

**Naval battles** (naumachia)



# An Australian gladiator

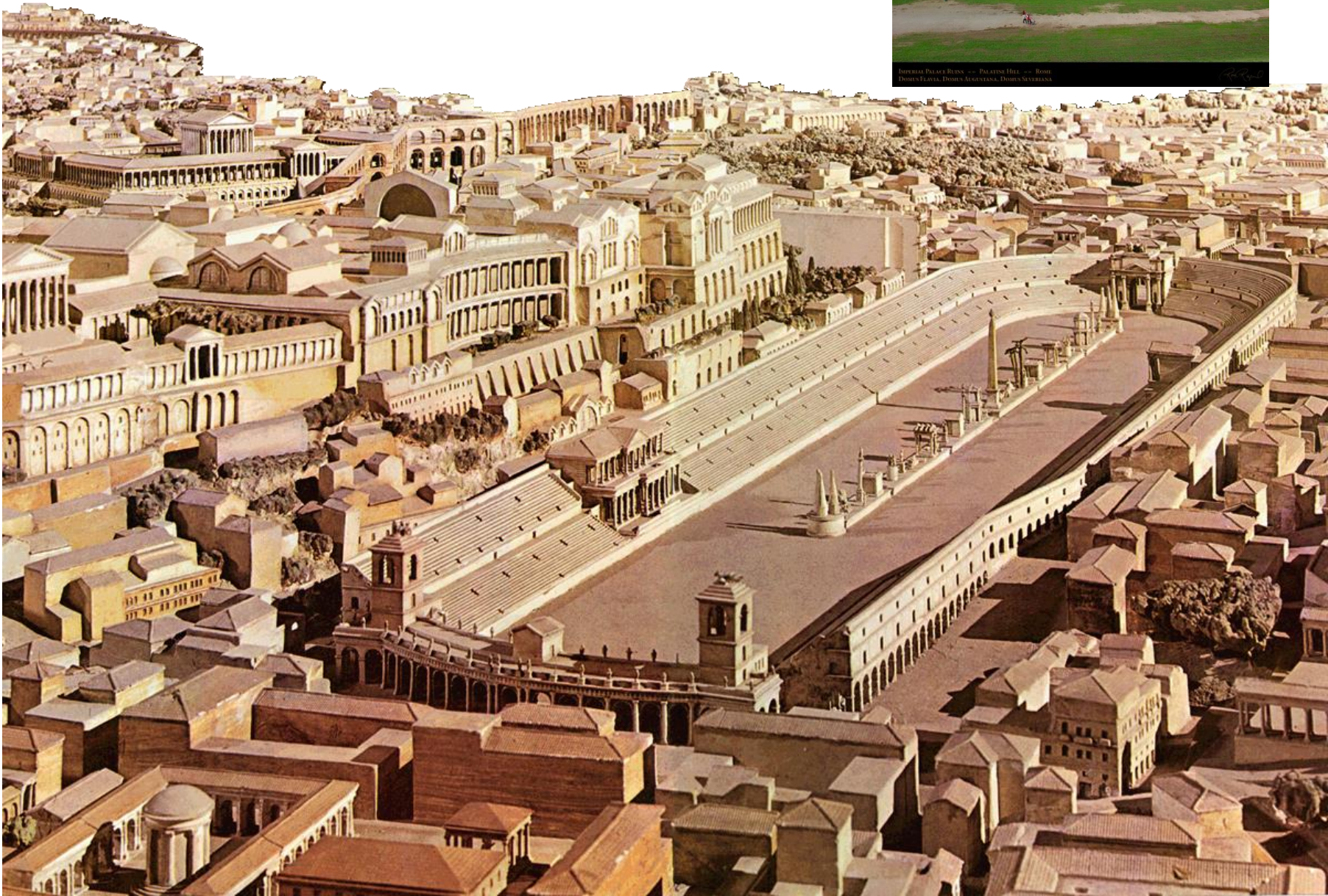


GLADIATOR

©2000 Dreamworks

[www.charlotte.com/justgo/movies/](http://www.charlotte.com/justgo/movies/)

# Circus maximus



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# Pantheon, 125 CE, Hadrian (original 27 BCE, Agrippa)



- --**Temple** to all the gods
- --**Eclecticism:** Classical temple porch leads into domed circular space

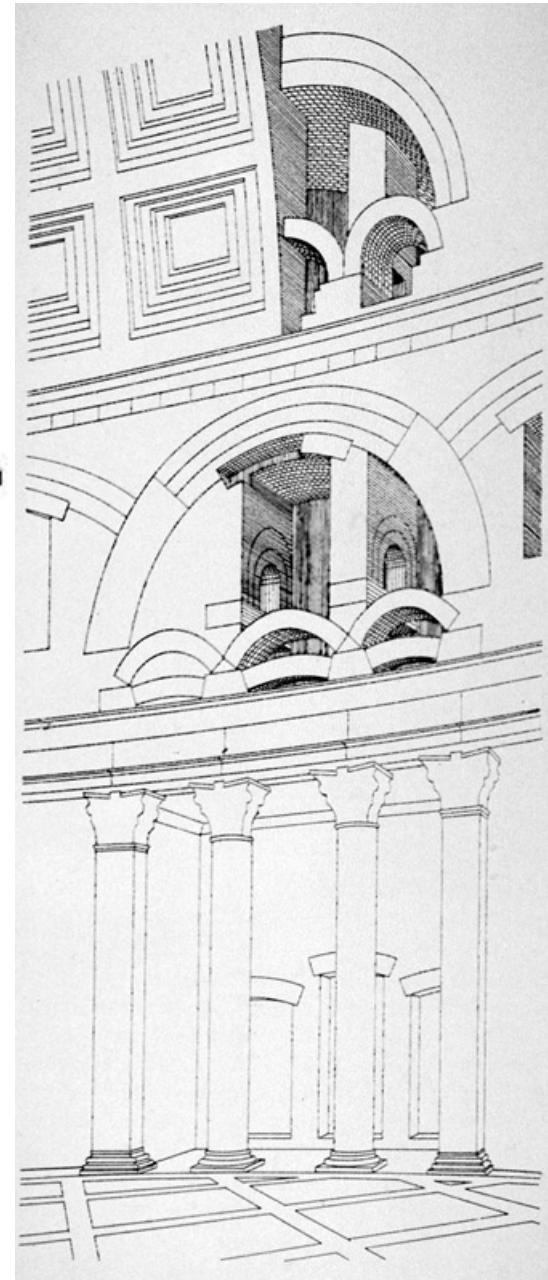
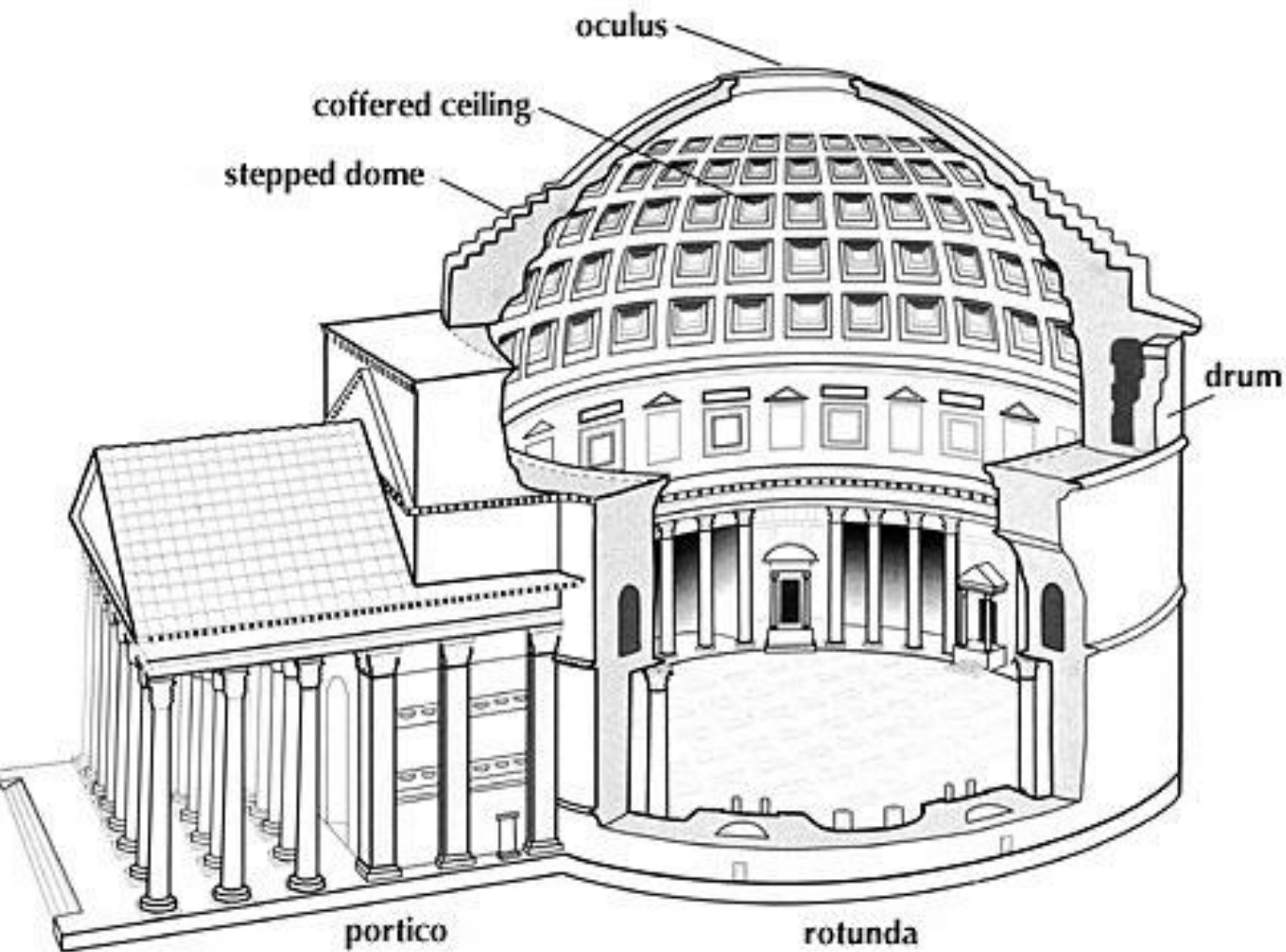
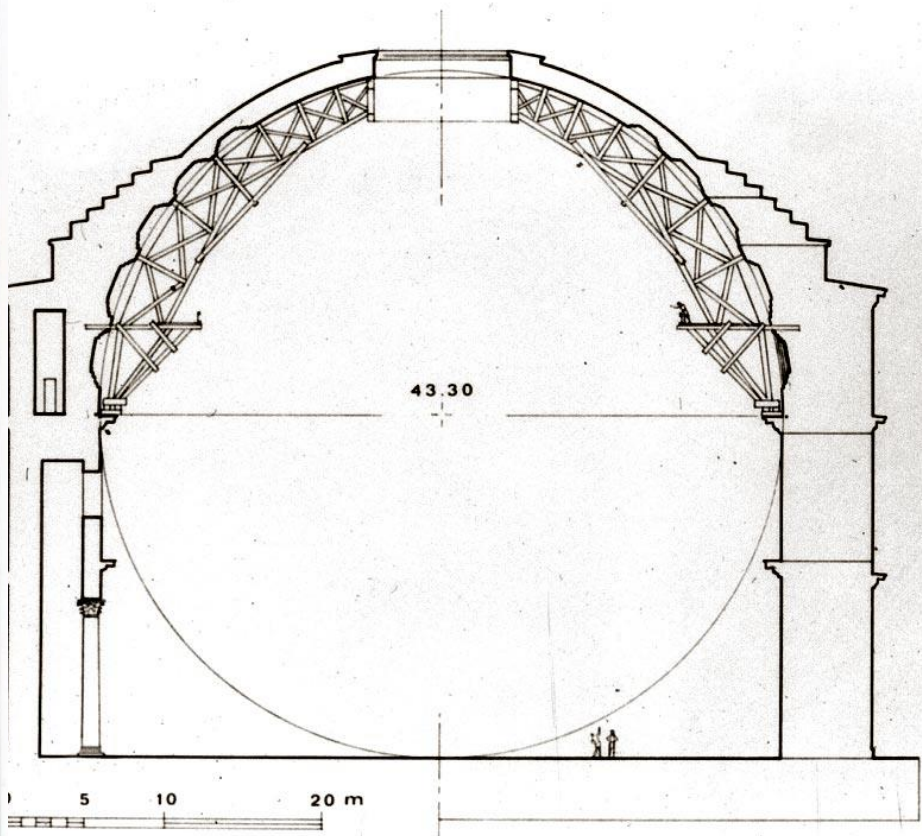




IMMAGINE DI GIANCARLO GASPONI







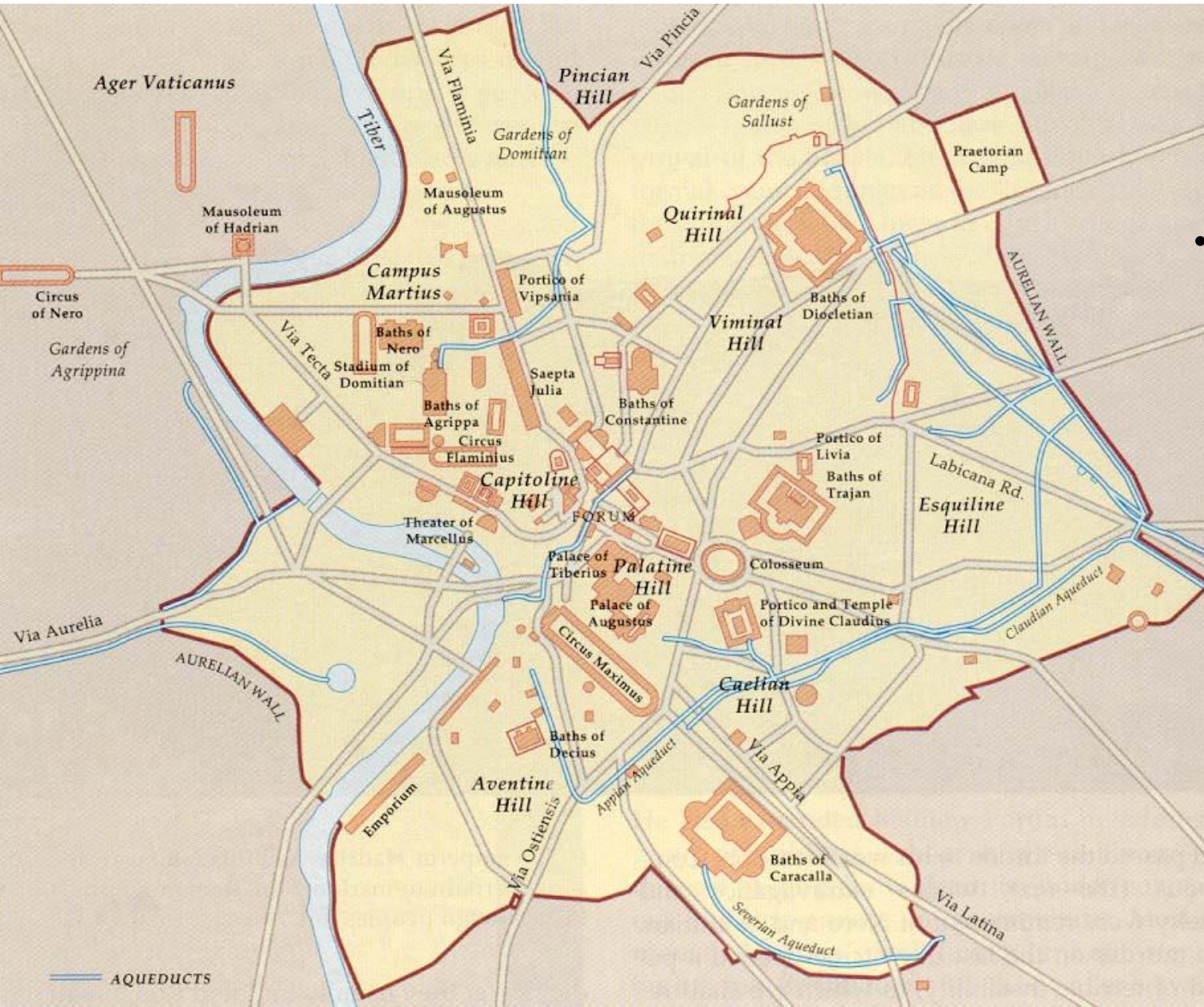
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# Baths of Caracalla, 216 CE



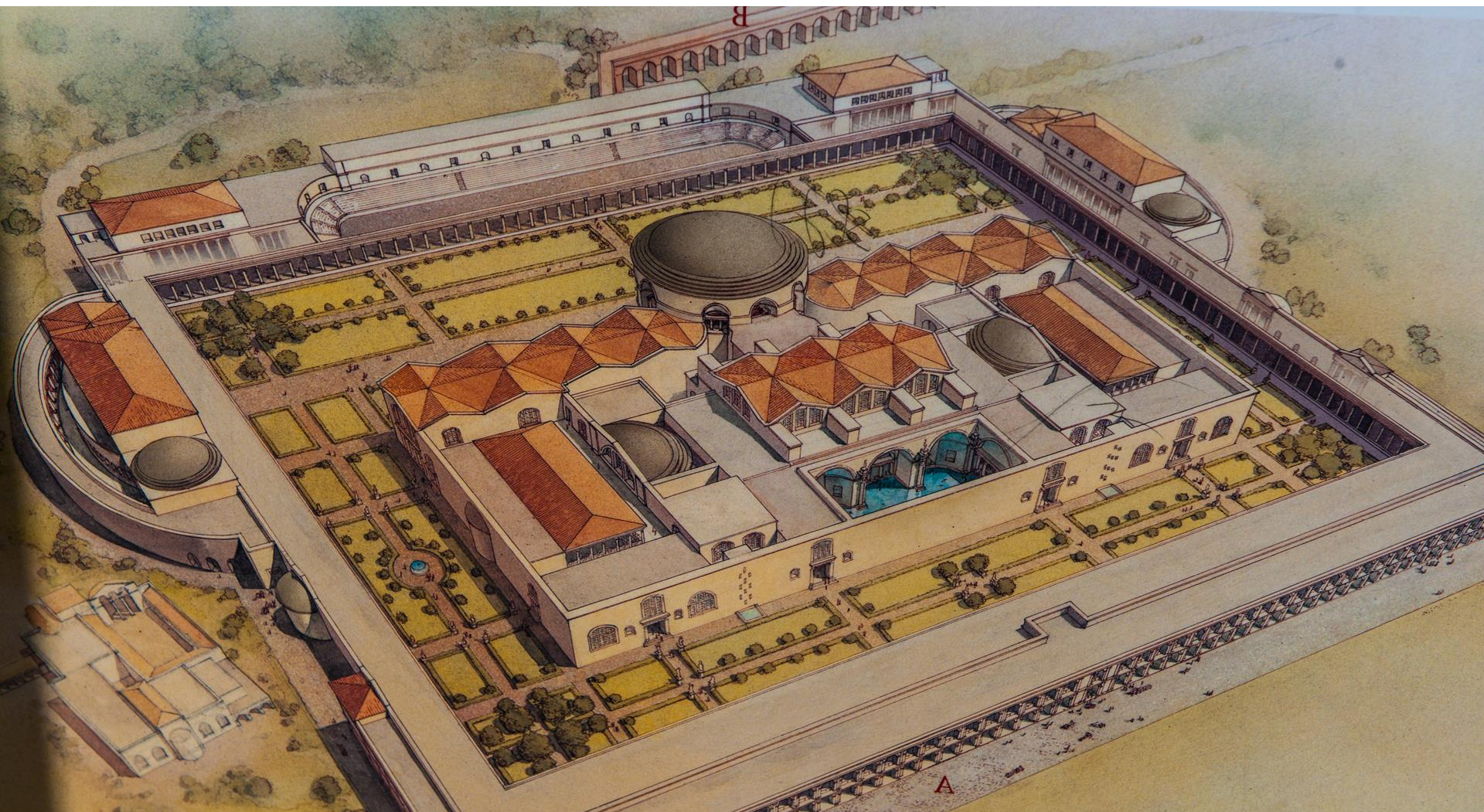


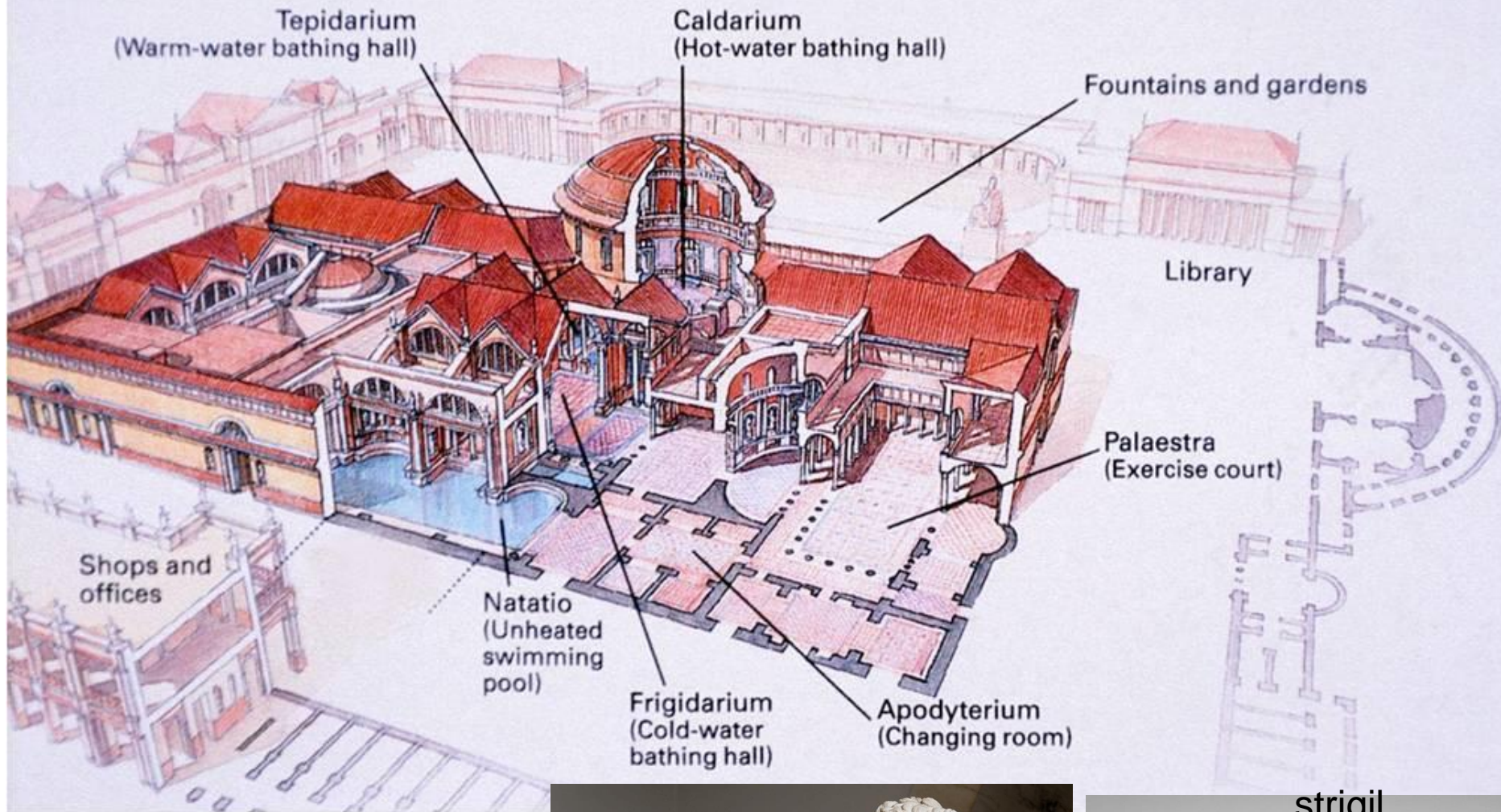
# The Roman Baths: public leisure [commoda]



- 11 thermae
- 856 balneae

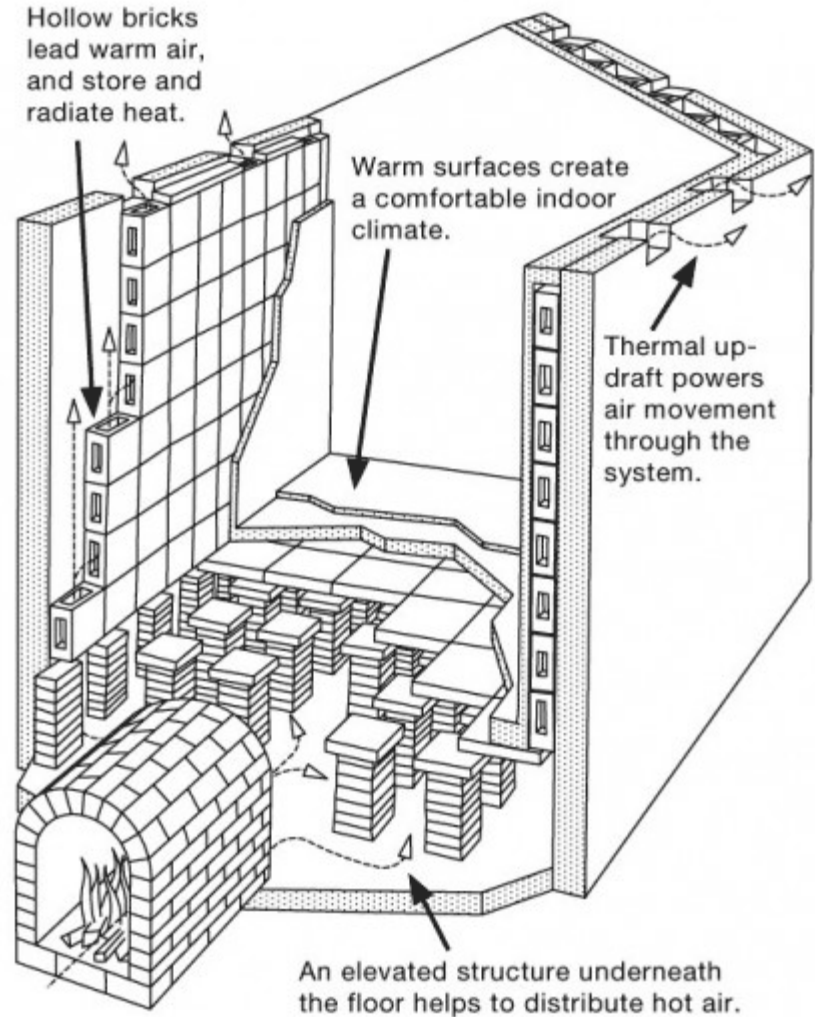
- Core of **Caldarium, Tepidarium, Frigidarium, Natatio**
- Periphery: dressing rooms, gyms, small stadium, libraries, meeting rooms, gardens







**Caldarium:**  
faces south for maximum sun  
uses floor and wall heating





# Statuary from Baths of Caracala: Farnese Hercules



# Mosaics with Athletes



Piazza Armerina (Sicily) mosaics, 4<sup>th</sup> century CE



