

ART OF THE HIGH ROMAN EMPIRE

The *Flavian Dynasty* consisted of emperors Vespasian, Titus and Domitian (from 69-96 CE). They were known for building some of Rome's most notable monuments.





When **Vespasian** became the Emperor of Rome in 69 A. D. he promised to make a difference. He did not want to live the rich life that Nero had. Vespasian tore down Nero's Golden House and turned the land into a public park. He also tore down Nero's giant gold statue called the Colossus. With the money from the statue's gold Vespasian built an amphitheater. He called it the **Colosseum** after the statue.

The Colosseum was a large center for entertainment. It took ten years to build of marble and limestone. The Colosseum was the largest building of its kind. It could seat 45,000 people. This is where the Romans gathered to watch the gladiators. During the Colosseum's opening ceremonies in A.D. 80, events were held for 100 days in which hundreds of animals and 2,000 gladiators were killed.











ROMAN AQUEDUCTS

The Romans typically built aqueducts to serve any large city in their empire.

The city of Rome itself, being the largest city, had the largest concentration of aqueducts, with water being supplied by eleven aqueducts constructed over a period of 500 years.

There were approximately 300 miles of aqueducts, while only 29 of them were above ground.

The aqueduct provided about one hundred gallons of water a day for the inhabitants of Nimes from a source some thirty miles away.





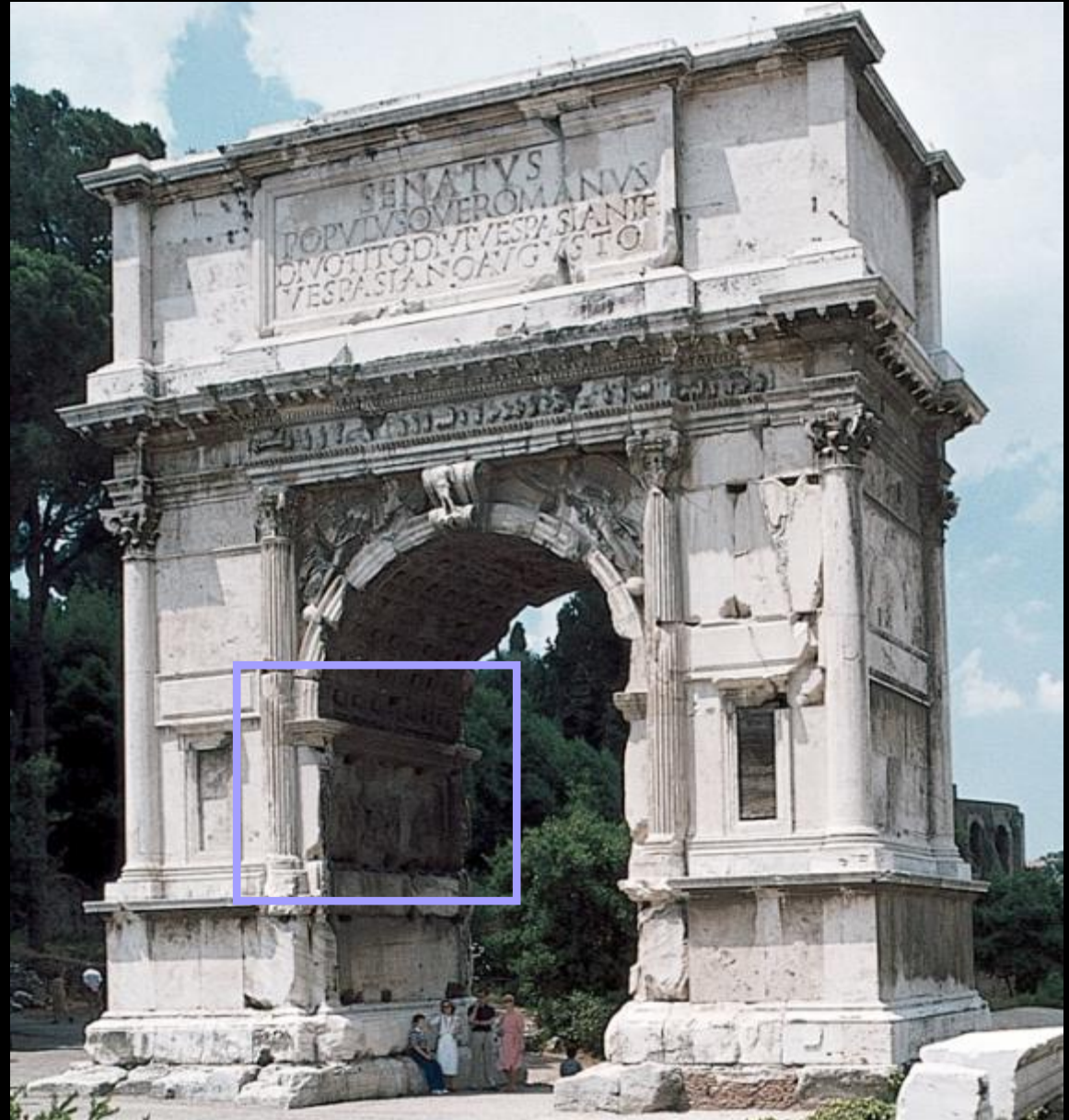


When Vespasian's older son, Titus, died only two years after becoming emperor, his younger brother Domitian, took over. Domitian made this arch in Titus's honor on the Sacred Way leading into the Republican Forum Romanum.

This type of arch, the so-called **triumphal arch**, has a long history in Roman art and architecture, beginning in the second century BCE and continuing even into the era of Christian Roman emperors.

The Roman arches celebrated more than just military victories, as they often commemorated events such as building roads and bridges.

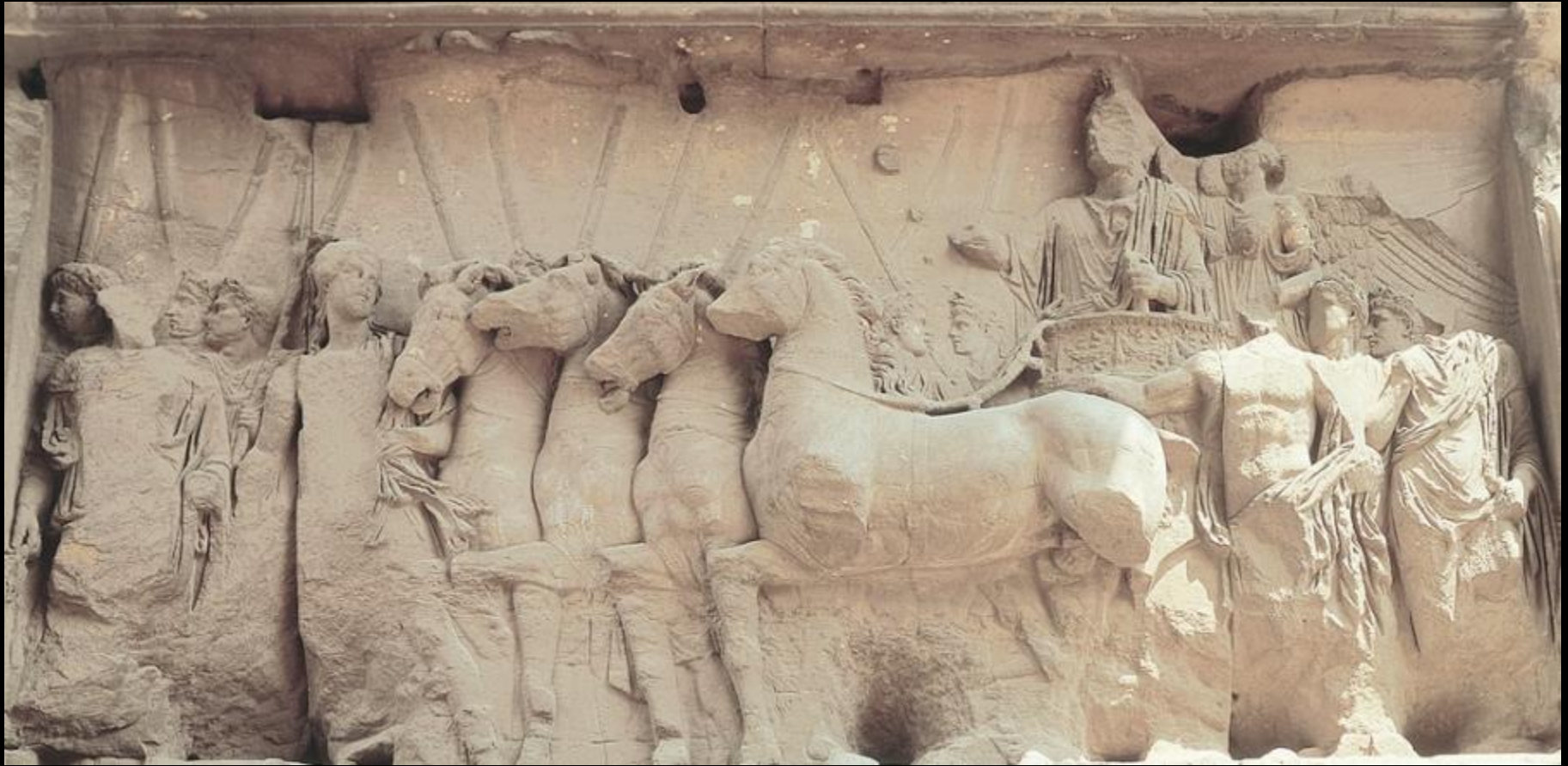
This arch commemorates Titus' sack of Jerusalem around 70 AD. This is the oldest arch of its kind.





The scene depicts the triumphal parade down the Sacred Way after his return from the conquest of Judaea at the end of the Jewish Wars in 70 AD. This panel contains the depiction of the sacred seven-branched **Menorah**, from the Temple of Jerusalem. Missing in this relief is the classicism that was contained in the depictions of the Altar of Augustan Peace.

Early Roman Empire Triumph of Titus, relief panel from Arch of Titus, Rome, after 81 CE



This scene depicts the actual triumphal procession with the toga-clad Titus in the chariot, but with the addition of allegorical figures--the winged Victory riding in the chariot with Titus who places a wreath on his head, the goddess leading the horses (identified as either Roma or Valor), and the semi-nude Genius of the People. Because the reliefs were deeply carved, some of the forward heads have broken off.

Hadrian was a connoisseur and lover of all the arts, as well as an author and architect. There are more existing portraits of Hadrian than of any other emperor except Augustus. Though he ruled Rome for more than 20 years, he is depicted in portraits as a mature adult who never ages.

Hadrian's portraits more closely resemble Kresilas' portrait of Pericles than those of any Roman emperor before him, and no one doubts that his likenesses were inspired by Classical Greek statuary

Hadrian wore a beard, a habit that, in its Roman context, must be viewed as a Greek **affectation** (an appearance or manner assumed or put on as a show or pretense, often to impress others).

Beards then became the norm for all subsequent Roman emperors for more than a century and a half.





With the new Emperor Hadrian in power, work on a new temple dedicated to all the gods began. This temple became known as the **Pantheon**.

Excluding the use of an eight Corinthian column facade, the temple was completely revolutionary for its time.

The dome of the Pantheon steadily decreases in thickness from the base to the top. In the very middle there is an open “**Oculus**” that is used as a skylight, and the only lighting of the building.

The “Oculus” measures 30 feet in diameter.

This is the oldest domed building in the World that still has its original roof.



From this indoor photo of the Pantheon you can see the carved panels as well as the intense light that the “Oculus” provides for the room.

These decorative panels are called **coffers**. Coffers not only made the dome visually more appealing, but greatly lightened the load of the dome to prevent cave ins.



Pantheon,
Rome, Italy. 125-128 CE



Rain drain directly underneath the oculus!



Raphael's tomb – in the Pantheon



Inside of U.S. Capitol Dome



Dome Room in Vatican



HADRIAN'S WALL

During Hadrian's reign, he ordered construction of a monumental stone wall to keep the 'barbaric' Scots and Picts from invading from the North. This 74-mile stretch across Northern England is known as **Hadrian's Wall**. It was 8-10 feet wide and 20 feet tall, with a tower located at every mile mark. It was built in only about 6 years!







High Roman Empire

Forum of Trajan

Designed by Apollodorus of Damascus

Forum and markets

Rome, 106-112 CE

HIGH EMPIRE ROMAN

The Forum of the Emperor Trajan (98-117 CE), the last, largest and best preserved on the Imperial fora, comprised a considerable complex of buildings, including a temple and basilica as well as three monuments erected in honor of the Emperor himself - a triumphal arch, an equestrian statue and a victory column.



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Built on to the rear of the basilica were two libraries, one for Latin and the other for Greek literature, and between the two reared up Trajan's victory column. Beyond this, at the end of the forum (between the two churches dedicated to the Virgin), was a temple of deified Trajan. Only Trajan's column is left to represent this whole complex, much admired in ancient times, dedicated to honoring the Emperor under whom the Roman Empire reached its greatest extent.



High Roman Empire

TRAJAN'S COLUMN

Celebration of Victory against the Dacians
Rome, 113 CE

HIGH EMPIRE ROMAN

This column commemorates Roman emperor Trajan's victory in the Dacian Wars. It is located in Trajan's Forum, built north of the Roman Forum. Completed in 113 CE, the freestanding column is most famous for its spiral bas relief, which artistically describes the epic wars between the Romans and Dacians (101–102 and 105–106). Its design has inspired numerous victory columns, both ancient and modern.



This larger-than-life gilded bronze equestrian statue was selected by Pope Paul III as the center piece for Michelangelo's new design.

Most ancient bronze statues were melted down for their metal value during the Middle Ages, but this one happened to have survived.

Marcus possesses a superhuman grandeur and is much larger than any normal human would be in relation to his horse. He stretches out his right arm in a gesture that is both a greeting and an offer of **clemency** (an act that bestows or shows mercy toward another person over whom somebody has ultimate power)

Some speculate that an enemy once cowered beneath the horse's raised right foreleg begging Marcus for mercy.

The statue conveys the awesome power of the godlike Roman emperor as ruler of the whole world.





Portrait of Marcus Aurelius

Rome, Italy ca. 175-180 CE

Deep Thoughts by **Marcus Aurelius**

The happiness of your life depends on the quality of your thoughts.

Very little is needed to make a happy life. It is all within yourself, in your way of thinking.

The first rule is to keep an untroubled spirit. The second is to look things in the face and know them for what they are.



High Roman Empire

Equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, Rome, Italy 175 CE



ROMAN ART

High Roman Empire



Mummy portrait of a man

Faiyum, Egypt 160-170 CE

Egyptians buried their dead in mummy cases. In Roman times, however, painted portraits on wood replaced the traditional stylized portrait masks.

The man in this mummy painting, copying Marcus Aurelius, has long curly hair and a full beard.

These paintings were probably painted when the subjects were still alive. They were used to trace the evolution of portrait painting after Mount Vesuvius erupted.

Some aspects to note are the refined use of the brush and the spatula, soft and delicate modeling, and sensitive portrayal of the calm demeanor of its thoughtful subject.