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Heroes, saints, and gods: Foundation legends and propaganda in ancient and Renaissance Rome

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Heroes, Saints, and Gods:

Foundation Legends and Propaganda in

Ancient and Renaissance Rome

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Abstract

The paper investigates the way in which Roman leaders, during the classical and Renaissance periods, used foundation myths as a form of personal propaganda. It shows that men like Julius Caesar used the supposed founders of the city to promote their own claims to power through art and architecture. It not only explains how men like Augustus would build upon this by including not only the city's founders, but also Caesar to legitimize their own claims though art, architecture, and literature. And finally, it provides a look into how the princes of the Renaissance—especially the papal princes—took ancient, imperial, and biblical founders to uphold the papacy's power over Rome and Christendom, through art, architecture, literature, and art collecting.

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Introduction

The use of propaganda has been passed on through generations of peoples and civilizations. Often one of the main sources for propagandists has been the foundation legends surrounding the beginnings of a people or a nation and the leaders who brought that beginning about. In the city of Rome itself, starting in the classical period, foundation myths were used to promote legitimacy for political rulers. While the most popular founding figures were Aeneas and Romulus, there were some that argued for other heroes: Hercules, Odysseus, and Evander were all fine Greek heroes who had established cults in ancient Italy.[1] However, due to war with the Greeks and Alexander the Great in the early second century BCE, the Greeks became the enemies of Rome, and the Romans wanted *Roman* ancestors. Consequently they began to look to the Trojan Aeneas and his descendant Romulus as the primary founders of Rome. And not only did they make Aeneas and Romulus figureheads—they made them into family heads as well. As noted by Emma Dench in her work based on the theme of Romulus' asylum at the foundation of the city:

> Mythological geneaologies were the broad common 'language' of ethnic identity in the ancient Mediterranean world. Notions of shared origins and of descent from gods and heroes delineated human groups of all kinds. . .

Ancient peoples thus created and promoted their own ancestral origins in order to show "kinship, distinction, differentiation, and ethnic plurality."[2] When the times or perspectives of the people changed, these genealogies could also change in order to show new or additional themes and affinities. By asserting an ancient pedigree, families could legitimate their own ancestral claims and authority.[3]

How were the founders of Rome used to the advantages of Rome's later politicians? We can see the use of genealogical propaganda most prominently in two of the most

memorable men of Republican and Imperial Rome—Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus. These two Roman leaders—related by blood to each other, and supposedly to the ancient founders of Rome as well—used Romulus and Aeneas to promote their own power and legitimacy within the context of Roman society and politics. During and after civil wars in the first centuries BCE and CE, it was especially important for these men to assert the reason for their right to power and to give their exercise of power legitimacy.

Many issues would cause these leaders to need to provide legitimacy for their claims to power. Julius Caesar (100–44 BCE) faced numerous problems during his political career. His youth and relative inexperience were very large hurdles in achieving higher office in a society dominated by a gerontocracy. His connection to the *popularis* of the city alienated the optimates, who were the people that could actually help him gain political office, power, and wealth. His participation and perceived exacerbation of civil war and the ultimate upheaval of the Republic would lead to jealousy and betrayal. And, of course, his relationship with the foreign queen Cleopatra made him appear to be un-Roman and easily fooled.

His adoptive son, Caesar Augustus (63 BCE–14 CE), would encounter problems of his own after Caesar's death. He too faced criticism due to his youth. In addition, he had to deal with the condemnation of Caesar's rule as tyranny. He also faced the ravages of civil war, as Mark Antony rose as another potential successor to Caesar's supporters. Once peace had returned to Rome, he still had to provide for his legitimacy because of many legislative changes he made.

Later in the Renaissance (c. 1400-1600), the popes found themselves facing many difficulties of their own. The fourteenth-century papacy was located for the most part in

France, not Rome. When the popes returned in the fifteenth century, they found themselves the object of Roman anger for having abandoned their traditional seat in the city. They also found the papal lands, which had been given to them by former kings and emperors, unruly and loathe to return to papal authority. Last, the papacy would be seen as weak and corrupt by Christians around Europe due to the calamity of the Great Schism and the assertions of the Council of Constance. Dissatisfaction with papal rule culminated in widespread criticism launched at the popes by Protestant reformers such as Martin Luther (1483-1546) and Jan Hus (1369-1415).

The main focuses of this study will be the figures of Julius Caesar, Caesar Augustus, and the Renaissance popes. From the Republican period to the Augustan era, and down to the Renaissance in Rome, these men would use foundation myths to assert their claims to authority and power in times of trouble. Not only would they prove their right to rule to the Romans, but also, in the case of the popes, to the Christian world. By using connections to the Roman founder Aeneas and Romulus, all of these men would provide reasoning for their claims. And the popes, needing an additional Christian founder, would use their own connection to St. Peter to provide an explanation for their inheritance of the leadership of the Christian faith, as well as a connection to the Christian emperor Constantine, who was said to have provided the papacy with its lands.

In Chapter One, I will show how the legendary Trojan Aeneas was used by the ancient Romans to legitimize political power in times of turmoil. One of the surest ways for Julius Caesar to make himself over as a powerful Roman was to connect himself through blood to Aeneas, who was considered the founder of the "Roman" world. While he did not

found the city of Rome itself, Aeneas was considered the founder of its people, since he was believed to have brought the Trojans and the Trojan gods to the Italian peninsula. In addition, Aeneas was the son of the Roman goddess Venus, providing opportunities for men to relate themselves to the gods. By connecting to Aeneas though his ancestry, Caesar could not only show his true commitment to Rome, but he could also make himself the ancestor of the goddess Venus through Aeneas. With these two connections, Caesar created strength in his claims to power despite the many people and issues raised against him.

This chapter will also examine how Julius Caesar's successor, Augustus, used Aeneas to promote his own rise to power. The literature program, mostly provided by the poet Vergil (70–19 BCE), allowed Augustus to create his own legend around the Trojan leader and to make his character into something he could use. Because of the description provided by Vergil, Aeneas would allow Augustus to appear as a powerful yet peaceful ruler of Rome and as a man pious and dutiful—the perfect leader for a Rome that had been racked by a decade of bloody civil war.

Chapter Two will explore how another perceived founder of the city of Rome, Romulus, was grafted into Roman genealogies to promote political and military authority in classical Rome. Julius Caesar found an obvious connection to the ancient warrior, as he was himself a military man for most of his career. He would use the ancestry of Romulus to tie himself to the Roman god of war, Mars. He also used art and architecture to promote his relationship and advertise his kinship with Romulus and Mars to the Roman people and, perhaps more importantly, to Roman soldiers. The use of Romulus also allowed Caesar to assert his role as the defender of the "common man." Romulus was the main source for Julius

Caesar's political power among the plebeian class, and he was used to show not only Caesar's political strength but, more importantly, his military strength. This link was later exploited by Caesar Augustus to deify Julius.

Augustus would use Romulus as a show of his own military power, especially against Marc Antony, who had been a popular leader among Julius's soldiers. However, in addition to this, Augustus would also have to dispel several adverse connotations associated with the ancient founder, such as his act of fratricide and his base birth. Despite the negatives, Augustus was able to use Romulus to show his military strength to the men he inherited from his uncle Julius and to keep them loyal to his cause.

Chapter Three will explore how the men of the Roman Renaissance and, more importantly, how the popes found ancient Roman foundation legends to be equally useful in providing legitimacy for their own claims to power over the city of Rome. These heirs to the Roman Empire believed that by relating themselves to the ancient Roman founders and Roman emperors, they could win the support of the Roman people, which they needed after their long absence during the fourteenth century. In addition, this chapter will examine how they used the Christian foundation legends of St. Peter and the Donations of Constantine and Pepin to assert their rule over not only Rome, but also the papal lands. They would also use the figure of St. Peter to promote their claims to spiritual authority over Christendom in a time when many Christians found the papacy to be lacking in spiritual vigor. Even after the disastrous events of the Babylonian Captivity, the Council of Constance, and the rise of Protestantism, the papacy managed to seize upon pagan foundation myths and reinvent them for their own purposes. They also directly related the city of Rome to the founder of the

Church, thereby making their seat the home of Christianity.

Through the foundation myths of Aeneas, Romulus, St. Peter, and the donations of Constantine and Pepin, Rome's leaders would make the public recognize why their claims to spiritual and temporal power were tangible and legitimate. These legendary men and actions instilled such a sense of authority and trust in the Roman people that the leaders who came after were able to relate themselves to the founders and foundation myths in order to receive some of that inherent power.

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1 Andrew Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome: Local Tradition and Imperial Power*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 144.

2 Emma Dench, *Romulus' Asylum: Roman Identities from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 12.

3 Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 21.

Chapter One
"The Realm of Troy Will Rise Again"
Ancient Rome and Aeneas

The story of Aeneas, best known from Vergil's epic poem, *The Aeneid*, is a Roman continuation of Homer's Greek *Iliad*.[1] The character Aeneas appears in Homer's tale, as do other legendary Trojan founders of European cities and civilizations.[2] He is the son of the goddess Aphrodite and the noble Anchises, a relative of Troy's King Priam. In the *Iliad*, Aeneas, urged by Apollo, fights the greatest Greek warrior, Achilles, the son of Peleus and the sea-goddess Thetis. As Achilles is about to defeat Aeneas, the sea god Poseidon steps in and says that Aeneas is guiltless and faithful. He whisks Aeneas away from the battlefield, noting "that the race of Dardanus. . . shall not perish" and "Aeneas shall reign over the Trojans."[3] Even in the ancient Greek poem, Aeneas is expected to go on and rule over a Trojan population.

This legend would influence the Romans, who believed they were descended from the Trojan hero. Aeneas was thought to have founded the Roman race by settling in Latium, while his son would found the city Alba Longa, which was thought to be the mother city of Rome. Two men who would especially be interested in the myth of Aeneas were Julius Caesar (100–44 BCE) and Caesar Augustus (63 BCE–14 CE), who both used connections to Aeneas for their own advantages. Because both rose in politics during times of upheaval and civil war, they sought to gain legitimacy and stabilize their power by exploiting the myth of Aeneas to their own advantage. Julius Caesar claimed ancient, noble, and divine ancestry through the Trojan hero and his mother, Venus. Caesar Augustus used Aeneas in his lineage as well, but also focused on the hero's *pietas* and republican values, hoping to equate them

with Rome and himself and to restore to the war-torn and decadent Rome of his day those Republican values so well exhibited by Vergil's Aeneas.

Caesar and Augustus did not invent Aeneas in order to use him politically but built upon an existing Greek legend. The idea that the Trojan Aeneas was one of Rome's ancestors was already established when Vergil wrote his poem during the reign of Augustus. The Greeks often understood other countries and peoples by noting their relationship to themselves through mythology. This let Greek historians tie their subject matter into a world that their readers could understand.[4] That the Romans had conquered Macedonia, the "Greek" part of Alexander's former empire, in the early second century BCE only added to the need for a Roman foundation legend for the Greeks.[5]

Greeks could also use mythical ancestry to their advantage. Kinship was often related to diplomacy; by noting common ancestors, the Greeks inspired more advantageous political relationships with the Romans, just as the Segestans, Lampsakenes, and Lykians had.[6] The Acarnanians even tried to pay lower taxes to Rome by claiming that they had not fought in the Trojan War against the Trojans.[7]

Dionysius of Halicarnassus (c. 60 BCE–c. 7 BCE), a Greek historian and rhetorician, also gives some insight into even earlier ideas on how the founders of Rome were related to Aeneas in his *Roman Antiquities*.[8] He argued that Cephalon of Gergis, Demagoras, and Agathyllus all believed Rome was founded by Aeneas's son Romus. He also cites historians who said the city was founded by Aeneas's sons or grandsons of various other parentages.[9] Dionysius further reports that Hellanicus and others had claimed the city itself was founded by Aeneas and named by him after a Trojan woman called Romê, said to have roused other Trojan women to burn their own ships because they were tired of wandering, much like the

Trojan women in Book Five of the *Aeneid*.[10] Aristotle, as Dionysius notes, believed this woman actually set fire to Achaean ships, having been taken prisoner during the war, and that she was afraid of being forced into slavery if the Achaeans were allowed to sail home.[11]

While the Greeks may have originated the myth, the Romans adopted it into their own foundation story. The Roman historian Sallust (86 BCE–35 BCE), in his work on Catiline's Conspiracy, described the founding of Rome by Trojans led by Aeneas and in conjunction with the "Aborigines."[12] Another writer, Diodorus Siculus (fl. 60–30 BCE), says the city was founded by descendants of Aeneas 433 years after the Trojan War.[13] Vergil details the travels of the Homeric Aeneas, a refugee from fallen Troy, with his father, Anchises, and his son, Ascanius, also called Iulus.[14] The group carried the family gods as well. Iulus's mother, Creusa, tried to flee the city with her family but fell behind, though at her insistence Aeneas reluctantly flees the city.[15]

The Trojan aspect of the myth was important to Romans because it directly related them to the Greeks. Interaction with the Greek world influenced the Romans in their language, art, architecture, and mythology.[16] Roman boys learned Latin and Greek, and they were usually tutored by Greek slaves.[17] As noted by Emma Dench, ". . .there are abundant signs of the self-conscious transformation of the city of Rome into a Hellenistic capital."[18] Aeneas "provided the Romans and the Greeks with a common past that they could look back to and exploit in order to understand and validate their relationship in the present."[19] Like the Greeks, the Romans could use their Trojan relations to gain a solid foothold in politics. One Roman dedicated goods at the sanctuary of Delphi, noting that he was a "descendant of Aineias."[20] Any Greek who visited the temple would have known, from then on, who the Romans were, since they could be related to an already established Greek figure.

While some might have thought that Trojans were not Greeks, since the Greeks were fighting the Trojans during the Trojan War, many ancient writers disagreed. By making themselves descendants of Aeneas, the Romans felt they were actually making themselves Greeks. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, himself a Greek, notes that the Trojans "were a nation as truly Greek as any," and gave a very extensive explanation of how they were descended from Zeus, the king of the Greek gods, and Electra, the daughter of the Greek king Atlas.[21] Further, Greek cities often claimed descent from Trojans.[22]

The Roman historian Livy (59 BCE–17 CE) outlines a very interesting aspect of this Greek relationship to the Romans in his history of Rome. He gives two accounts of Aeneas's meeting with Latinus, an Etruscan king in an area near what would become Rome. In the first, Latinus was beaten by the Trojans and so married his daughter to Aeneas as a form of submission. In the second, Latinus, instead of fighting, took the route of friendship and gave Aeneas his daughter as part of an alliance treaty. Aeneas married Lavinia, naming the city which he founded after her. Livy also explains that Iulus was actually the child of Lavinia, not of Creusa. Interestingly, Vergil's story makes Iulus a full-blooded Trojan. By creating a marriage alliance between an Etruscan woman and a Trojan man, Livy actually was promoting an alliance between the indigenous local culture and the Greek culture. This may even have been an analogy for the Aenean myth, since it was likely started by Greeks and then adopted by Romans.[23] It could also have been meant to include the Etruscan ethnic group into Roman background. While Vergil's intent is to focus on the hero's Greek connections, Livy gives a more purely Roman or "Italian" account of the Julian lineage.

As the Aenean tradition became popular in the late first century BCE, many Roman families claimed Trojan origins, including the Caecilii, who switched their descent from

Caeculus (a son of the god Vulcan) to a Trojan.[24] Dionysius of Halicarnassus actually claims there were fifty families of Trojan descent in Rome during the first century BCE, among them the Cluentii and the Aemilii.[25] Some Romans, however, claimed descent from Alban families, which also would have connected them with Iulus: the Metillii, the Geganii, the Quinctii, and the Servilii. Yet others were said to be descended from companions of Aeneas, like the Sergeii and the Cluentii.[26] Many families then created their own mythological ancestors, aspiring to the prestige of the *gentes maiores*, whose families were already well connected.[27]

Identity was so important that many Roman men had three distinct names, each with a different connection or meaning. Kinship ties were shown through the *gens* in the *nomen gentilicium*—a common name held by all family members.[28] This name was often the second in the series of three or more. For example, "Gaius Julius Caesar" (c. 100 BCE–44 BCE), indicated the Julian *gens*. Caesar's ancestors and descendants had that same *nomen gentilicium*, which identified all the individuals who were related to a common ancestor. The *nomen gentilicium* even involved the women of the family, who in the Julian clan would have been called Julia.

This common relation provided in the *gens* served a purpose. Families and individuals used ancient characters as common founding ancestors of their lines. They related and compared themselves to their familial heroes, striving to become their equals.[29] Many Roman families used this method to promote themselves. The Mamilii, the Fabii, and the Caecilii all claimed to be descended from famous heroes. Marc Antony's family, the Antonii, traced their descent from Hercules's son Anton. Antony used this ancestry especially well with his army, playing the character of the hero.[30] The Julii claimed descent from Aeneas through his son

Iulus during the second century BCE.

Since Romans revered their ancestors, the *gens* signified their own nobility and *dignitas*.[31] The tradition of the Julian family claiming Venus as an ancestor was started by Sextus Julius Caesar and Lucius Julius Caesar around 129 and 103 BCE respectively.[32] Both patricians and minters, S. Julius Caesar and L. Julius Caesar included Venus on the reverse of their coinage, perhaps to gain political power through their ancestral claims, since in the second century BCE the most powerful families were generally plebeian.[33] However, their descendant Julius Caesar was the first to start capitalizing on the connection to Aeneas.[34] Iulus was believed to have founded the nearby ancient city of Alba Longa.[35]

Julius Caesar was the first of his line to strongly promote the kinship with Venus, and he was the very first to use Aeneas in his propagandist claims. He began his political career at age fourteen in 86 BCE, which was considered remarkably young; he was nominated for the position of *Flamen Dialis*—a priest of Jupiter. In order to be in a better position for winning the title, he married Cornelia, the daughter of one of the current consuls (the highest members of the republican political hierarchy) called Cinna.[36] However, at such a young age, it was necessary for him to present himself as nobly as possible.

While a priesthood may not appear to have been a political position, the Roman government was steeped in religious observances and rituals, and religious rites were performed by state officials.[37] Priests were politicians, members of the Senate, and often among the most prestigious men in society.[38] In addition, they were of course associated with the gods, who were not passive. In fact, most Roman religious activity was meant to curry the gods' favor or to prevent their wrath: ". . .its task was to ensure that the gods were not offended and that their intentions were identified and publicized."[39] If he could show himself

capable of accurate religious worship—the rituals were complex and required perfection—Caesar would have an advantage in future political and religious occupations.[40] In addition, by serving as a priest, Caesar could display his devotion and piety toward the gods, hence gaining and enjoying their favor.

Throughout his career, Caesar was a *popularis,* a man to whom the common plebeians could relate, because he often championed their needs. His mother, in fact, was a plebeian, and his family lived in the cheaper area of the city. Many patricians were optimates and did not like *popularis* ideas, and even politicians with similar stances would not necessary agree with one another.[41] While Caesar was still working his way up the political ladder, he had to show both the Roman people and the Senate that he was from an ancient noble family, and claiming descent from Venus would certainly accomplish that. His first opportunities to do this were at the funerals of his wife, Cornelia, and his aunt, Julia, who both died in 69 BCE, when he was thirty-one years old. Funerals were public affairs, used by patricians to promote their entire families, not only the dead. Caesar delivered a speech at his aunt's funeral, in which he mentioned his clan's descent from Venus, reminding his audience of the divine source of the Julian lineage.[42]

Six years later, in 63 BCE, Caesar ran for the office of *pontifex maximus*, the chief priest of the Roman religion.[43] Despite competing against many notable men, Caesar 's ancestry gave him an advantage; his ancestor and founder of the Julian clan, Iulus, was believed to have held the same office in Alba, where he was king.[44] This direct connection to the office through his ancestry helped him win the election. Caesar's Julian connection to divine and royal forebears was not disputed; even his enemies spoke of him as the descendant of Venus.[45]

Thus early in his career, Julius Caesar had firmly established his link to Venus and her offspring Iulus. Caesar continued to exploit these connections in his later political endeavors. By informing the Roman citizens that he had the favor of one of the great goddesses of Rome, he could portray himself as a source of security for the Republic. Venus would look after Rome as well as Caesar. According to the Roman politician and philosopher Marcus Tullius Cicero, Rome's prosperity depended on the will of the gods.[46] In fact, Venus' devotion to Caesar was later thought to have assured his spectacular successes in battle, especially in Gaul, since the first of his wars there were not planned yet were quickly won. During the civil war, according to Appian, Caesar sacrificed to the gods at midnight before the upcoming engagement of Pharsalus, and he vowed that he would dedicate a temple to his divine ancestor if he won.[47] Venus' name was even supposedly the password used by Caesar's soldiers in the battle.[48]

Throughout his career, Julius Caesar was denounced by many politicians and writers. Among the men who tried to turn public opinion against him were Cato the Younger and Caesar's fellow consul Bibulus. Cato (95–46 BCE) was a particular thorn in the side of Caesar; after Caesar's time in Spain, he returned to Rome to run for consul, and Cato tried to filibuster him by not allowing the Senate to vote on Caesar's candidacy, since Caesar could not enter the city as a general until he had been given a triumph, as was Roman custom. However, Caesar gave up his claim to a triumph in order to enter Rome.[49] With powerful men now set against him, Caesar needed even more to promote one of his biggest assets—his ancestry.

Caesar became consul in January 59 BCE at the age of forty. While he had achieved one of the highest positions available to Roman politicians during the Republic, he was still

overshadowed by Pompey the Great (106–48 BCE). Pompey was older than Caesar, much more successful in battle, and wealthier. Along with another patrician, Crassus (115–53 BCE), Pompey was one of the richest men in Rome.[50] The three men were generally disliked by most of the Senate and would first show their allegiance to one another in the support of a land reform bill, starting what would later be known as the First Triumvirate. This bill and others made them even less liked by their fellow senators, especially when Caesar ignored their vetoes, in direct opposition to the Roman constitution.[51] To further cement the triumvirate, Caesar married his only child, Julia, to Pompey, who was many years her senior.[52]

The alliance between Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus eventually deteriorated. Caesar went to Gaul in 58 BCE as proconsul. There he fought at the head of a devoted army, gaining respect and fame throughout the empire while worrying the Senate with his increasing power. Four years later Julia died in childbirth, severing the strongest connection between Caesar and Pompey. In 53 BCE, the third member of the triumvirate, Crassus, died at the battle of Carrhae in Parthia.[53] Then Caesar faced a rebellion in Gaul, led by Vercingetorix, whom he finally defeated in 52 BCE. In the meantime, Pompey had twice held the consulship (in 55 and 52). He had been a great general long before Caesar, and in response to Caesar's success in Gaul, he built a temple dedicated to his own military victories. The Senate urged Pompey to act against Caesar, hoping to end Caesar's authority and command in Gaul. While Pompey was originally unreceptive, his own pride finally won him over to the senate's plan. Pompey wanted Caesar to acknowledge him as the greater general and elder statesman. However, Pompey was not the only man with a sense of his own authority. Caesar led one of his legions to the Rubicon River, which divided the territory of Rome itself from that of

Cisalpine Gaul. There he made the decision to defend his *dignitas* by crossing the river and marching into Rome. This marked the beginning of civil war.[54]

We can see the rivalry of the two generals in their patronage of architecture. Pompey, in 55 BCE, built his massive complex housing a theater and a temple dedicated to Venus, in spite or because of Caesar's own kinship to her. This vast area was not only able to host the Senate for some meetings, but it also portrayed Pompey's victories in a house that once had belonged to an ancestor of the Julii. Pompey's action no doubt strained relations between the two men.[55] In addition, the secondary part of the forum, the theater, would have been used by many Roman citizens. This was the first permanent theater in the city, and Pompey ensured that it was extravagantly embellished.[56] Thus, as well as a religious and political arena paid for by Pompey, this complex was also seen as a social center for the Romans as well.

Not to be outdone, Caesar began construction of the Basilica Julia on the southwest end of the Roman Forum in 54 BCE (see Appendix I). He also bought up expensive land on the back side of the Capitoline Hill adjacent to the Roman Forum. This land was considered some of the most valuable in the city and would eventually become the site of Caesar's own forum.[57]

The civil war between Pompey and Caesar lasted just over a year and a half (January 49 – September 48 BCE), with battles on the Italian peninsula and in Spain and Macedonia. The final battle took place in August 48 BCE near Pharsalus in southern Thessaly. Though Pompey was defeated, he escaped to Egypt, possibly hoping to regroup in what he thought was friendly and wealthy territory. However, in the Egyptian capital of Alexandria he was assassinated by two Roman officers acting on orders of the Egyptian government. Pompey's head was cut off and presented to the pursuing Caesar three days later, when he arrived in

Alexandria.[58] This effectively ended the civil war and left Julius Caesar in sole control of Rome.

In 51 BCE, Caesar began work on the Forum Iulium, which included the Temple of Venus Genetrix. The temple was dedicated by Caesar to his ancestor Venus for his success at Pharsalus three years earlier in which Pompey and his army were destroyed. Scholars believe that the temple was dedicated to the Venus Genetrix (Mother Venus) because it both alluded to Venus as Caesar's kin and avoided the epithet Venus Victrix, which had been used by Pompey in his temple, and which would have reminded Romans of the recent civil war.[59] The Forum Iulium was important because even after the death of Pompey, Caesar still needed to curry favor with the Roman people and senatorial class.[60] This proved especially problematic after his affair with the much disliked Egyptian pharaoh, Cleopatra. The time Caesar spent in Egypt with her not only allowed his enemies to regain their footing after the defeat of Pompey, but stirred mistrust and suspicion among the Romans themselves.[61] In addition, Pompey's sons, Gnaeus and Sextus, were rising against Caesar in Spain.[62]

Unfortunately, not many authors wrote about the Temple of Venus Genetrix, and the extant ruins date to a restoration by the emperor Trajan (98–117 CE), so it is difficult to analyze confidently the symbolism in its art or architecture. Because we have so little of the original temple left, many scholars have provided possible restoration images of what the temple may have looked like.[63] It probably included sculptural references to Aeneas, Venus' son and Caesar's ancestor.[64] The few remaining parts of the temple are ornate.[65] Such a grand space for religious worship and governmental use promoted Caesar's divine ancestry and gave the Romans a sense of his wealth and importance through its form and especially its location. Moreover, this temple was a constant reminder of how Venus—the mother of the

legendary founder of Rome—continued to favor Julius Caesar throughout his military campaigns, both foreign and domestic, and his political life.

Caesar returned to Rome in 46 BCE after many battles throughout Asia and Africa, subduing Pompeian loyalists. There, he was granted three consulships in succession, as well as the title of dictator and eventually the designation *dictator perpetuus*. While the civil war was over—at least temporarily—a rebellion in Spain, led by Cnaeus and Sextus Pompey, forced Caesar to leave the capital once again.[66]

In 44 BCE, after returning victorious from Spain, Caesar was given the title *imperator,* which the Senate made inheritable, along with *pontifex maximus*. Though Caesar had no living children, this honor suggested that the dictatorship might somehow become dynastic, paving the way for the later imperial line.[67]

Even after his death at the hands of assassins in 44 BCE, Caesar was linked to Aeneas and Venus. According to Lucan, an epic poet who wrote in the mid-first century CE, Caesar greatly admired his Trojan ancestor Aeneas, and he visited the destroyed city of Troy after the battle of Pharsalus. While this visit may or may not have been founded on an actual event, the story itself is still valuable to examine for its perceptions by contemporaries.[68] Though Caesar could have described or noticed many things in Troy, according to Lucan he chose to visit a very select group of ruins, perhaps denoting that he was in fact not ignorant at all. He pointed out, in Lucan's tale, the place where Anchises begot his son with the goddess Venus and the palace of Anchises' grandfather.[69] However, he ignored the ruins which were connected to fellow Trojans like Hector. In using his knowledge of the site, Caesar actually brought out the themes he wanted to emphasize by not reflecting on all the ruins.[70] Caesar, in Lucan's episode, assured the gods, telling them that the flame of Troy still burned in Rome

and promised that "...here with glad return/ Italia's sons shall build another Troy,/ Here rise a Roman Pergamus."[71] Like Aeneas, Caesar too would found a new Troy.[72] Many modern scholars believe that Lucan's portrayal of Caesar in the *Bellum Civile* was not flattering; to the contrary, he appeared as ignorant and disrespectful of the ancient site. However, the classical scholar Andreola Rossi has argued that Caesar was actually quite aware of Troy and its history, and Lucan was merely warning his readers that Caesar would use his knowledge to his own advantage.[73]

Professor Rossi also related the death of Priam in Homer's *Iliad* to the recent death of Caesar's foe, Pompey. Priam was more noble than Aeneas, since he was in fact the king. Caesar and Pompey were both Romans and were actually related, most closely through Caesar's late daughter, though Pompey was generally more accepted by the Senate. This similarity between Priam and Pompey may have been another reason Caesar did not mention the several ruins related to Hector and Priam's kin, but focused only upon the ruins associated with his own ancestors. There was also a parallel between the fact that Caesar would not recognize Hector's grave and the promotion of the idea that Pompey's grave would become just as unrecognizable in the future.[74]

The reasons why Caesar used Venus and Aeneas has been summed up nicely by Professor Jane DeRose Evans:

> Caesar's emphasis on Aenean propaganda can easily make us suspect that he wanted to create an image of legitimacy for his rule over Rome, claiming that it was sanctioned by the very gods themselves. The stress upon the legitimacy of his rule would be necessary to explain that his role in the Civil War was justified...[75]

After Caesar's assassination by the senators in 44 BCE, there were no living legitimate children to inherit his estate or titles. In his will, he had stipulated that he wanted

to adopt his great-nephew, his niece's son. As *pontifex maximus*, he had actually appointed this great-nephew to an open pontiff position when the child was only fourteen, showing an early interest in the boy. This youth, Gaius Octavius Thurinus, accepted the adoption and became the son of the late dictator.[76] Caesar's adoption made the young Thurinus a Caesar, and with the name came those men tied to the late Julius Caesar through patronage. As Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, he became a member of the Julian clan. Historians today call him either Octavian or, as he became after 27 BCE, the Emperor Caesar Augustus.

However, the inheritance of Caesar's name and clients put Octavian in danger, since those who murdered Caesar had not yet been brought to justice. Even among Caesar's supporters, there was disunity. One of the current consuls, Marc Antony, had been Caesar's right-hand man during his lifetime. While he was politically powerful, he refused to pursue Caesar's murderers, which many of the Caesarians wanted him to do.[77]

Octavian had been made rich by his inheritance, and when he came to Rome for the first time after Caesar's assassination, he was hailed by many soldiers who had been loyal to his adopted father. However, when he appeared before Antony to collect his inheritance, Antony refused him, considering Octavian to be nothing more than a boy. Octavian then began a campaign against Antony, calling him nothing short of a thief in public, thus beginning a political rivalry that would span the next fourteen years.[78]

While Antony held both political and military positions in the empire, young Octavian held neither. However, being Caesar's son gained him favor in the army, especially with Caesar's former men, and even with Antony's own legions. He also inherited his adopted father's popularity with the plebeians of Rome, who often surrounded him in the streets like a group of bodyguards.[79]

One of Octavian's first public acts as Caesar's son was the planning of the former dictator's funeral games. These games were a traditional method for family members to honor the dead, and as next of kin, it would show the Roman people that Octavian was willing and able to claim his inheritance, as well as pious enough to hold with Roman practice. Octavian chose to hold the funeral games on July 20, 44 BCE, four months after Caesar's death, in the month of the dictator's birth. It is possible that he also chose July of that year because Brutus, one of the traitorous senators who had a hand in Caesar's assassination, was holding a festival just a few short days earlier, and Octavian did not want the people to forget what had befallen just four months before. The games were also supposed to be in honor of Venus, again connecting the Julian clan to their goddess.[80]

During the funeral games, a comet was said to have appeared in the sky. Augustus himself reported that the comet appeared for seven full days in the north of the sky. It was believed by the ancients that the comet signified Caesar's soul and that it was rising into the heavens to join the gods. The comet, appearing not only during the funeral games (dedicated to both Caesar and Venus), also made itself visible at the same time as the evening star, which was the planet Venus. This was enough to allow many to believe that the normally baleful omen of a comet was actually something much more positive—the deification of Julius Caesar. After the appearance of the comet, many of the dictator's statues were given a starred helmet to signify the event.[81] Both the games and the comet served to promote Octavian's authority over Antony, his political rival, by showing his filial piety and ancestral claims to power.

Because the post of dictator had been abolished by law in 44 BCE after Caesar's death, Octavian could not inherit the position. When he tried to run for a consulship in 43

BCE, the Senate refused him. However, with the help of his recruited soldiers, he was elected despite being some twenty years underage; most men were not allowed to become consuls until they were forty-two, and Octavian was only twenty. With political power now in his grasp, Octavian secured passage of a bill making the assassination of Caesar a criminal offense. The conspirators were found guilty of the crime, and Octavian and Antony soon joined forces in order to pursue the murderers.[82]

With the young Octavian as consul, the Second Triumvirate was created through a political alliance of Octavian and two other men. His rival Marc Antony and a patrician named Lepidus were the other triumvirs, and they each were given provinces to govern. Antony governed a large part of Gaul, Lepidus the other part of Gaul and Spain, and Octavian Africa and Sicily. In this arrangement, Octavian, the youngest, was given the lesser provinces.[83]

Like Caesar before him, Octavian was constantly criticized and insulted by fellow politicians. Some even claimed that he had slept with Julius Caesar in order to gain power and position.[84] Perhaps it was because of their dislike of Caesar, or because of Octavian's incredibly young political beginning, that his enemies attacked his family, character, and morality.

Aside from his age, Octavian would have many obstacles causing him to need further legitimacy and prestige. In 43 BCE, the new triumvirs, following the example of the former dictator Sulla, introduced a proscription, which was a way to defeat or kill political rivals, though the triumvirs claimed the act was justified because of Caesar's assassination.[85] Pompey's son Sextus, who had challenged Caesar many years earlier, was also back to causing trouble for his father's enemies.

With forty-three legions, the triumvirs advanced upon the army of Brutus and Cassius, Caesar's principal assassins, in October of 42 BCE. At the double battle of Philippi in eastern Macedona, Cassius fled his camp and fearing defeat, supposedly had someone cut off his head. Brutus chose to throw himself on a sword, rather than give himself up to his opponents. Many of the soldiers led by Caesar's assassins chose to surrender willingly, and were granted pardons.[86] The battle ended after nearly a month of fighting.

Following the defeat of Caesar's assassins at Philippi, the triumvirs redistributed their provinces. Lepidus was the odd man out and had to relinquish Spain to Octavian and the rest of Gaul to Antony. These arrangements did not last long. Antony eventually went east to Ptolemaic Egypt, where he claimed to be the Greek god Dionysius.[87] Whereas Octavian was only related to a goddess, Antony was now himself a god. This would lead to Octavian's connection with the god Apollo, the perceived opposite of Dionysius.

Back in Rome, Antony's wife Fulvia and his brother Lucius raised troops against Octavian because of supposed disloyalty to Antony and Rome. While Octavian managed to defeat Lucius in the first few months of 40 BCE and bring the soldiers back to his side through mercy, the uprising did not affect Antony, who claimed to be ignorant of it. Fulvia died the same year, however, and Antony married Octavian's sister, Octavia, months after her own husband's death.[88] The marriage cemented the relationship and alliance between the two men, much as the marriage to Caesar's daughter Julia had done for the relationship between Caesar and Pompey.

Octavian's conflict with Sextus Pompey continued until 35 BCE. Sextus was relatively popular with the Romans, though he himself was young, and not yet widely recognized for his military feats. After a defeat of Octavian's forces on the seas, Sextus was

hailed as a son of the sea god Neptune—another blow to Octavian's more distant claim of ancestry. However, Octavian's friend and brilliant general Agrippa defeated Sextus in Sicily in 36 BCE.[89]

The biggest challenge for Octavian came when Antony took Cleopatra as his consort, an egregious insult to Antony's wife, Octavia, and a threat to Octavian himself. With the wealth of Egypt at his disposal, Antony would become even more powerful. In addition, Antony's battlefield prestige was much greater than Octavian's; his success against Sextus was a military victory for his friend Agrippa, not himself. The year 32 BCE especially would be difficult, because yet another Roman consul had sided with Antony against him.[90]

Antony's actions in and with Egypt fueled Octavian's fire for war. Tactfully, he declared war on Cleopatra and not Antony. Because Antony was working with—or even under—Cleopatra, however, Octavian managed to have Antony's consulship revoked.[91] Octavian decided to take his troops, along with his trusted general Agrippa, to fight Antony in Greece. The Battle of Actium (31 BCE) began with Antony's naval attack. Though there was likely very little fighting, Octavian came out the victor after Antony's and Cleopatra's ships fled. Not all of Antony's army escaped, however, and those who were captured by Octavian's men were actually given an honorable discharge. In the year 30 BCE, Octavian's battles with Antony finally came to an end in Alexandria, Egypt, when Antony and Cleopatra died, both supposedly by suicide.[92]

Rome itself was torn apart by the long years of civil wars. The triumviral armies needed to be retired. Politically, Octavian needed to find a new way to rule Rome and to establish his claim to power. Acting overtly as a single ruler or king would expose him to possible assassination as it had his adoptive father. However, he did not want to restore full

power to the Senate, either. Many senators were enemies of the Julii and had backed Antony in the recent war. To ensure peace and prosperity, Octavian had to find a way to exercise power and authority yet appear to be a common citizen.[93] In doing so, he would also have to win over the minds and the hearts of the Romans.

Before executing any plans to retain power, Octavian had to emphasize his right to it. He would need to provide ample proof of his lineage, his positive qualities, and his legitimate claim to high political office. Rome had always loved its talented writers and poets, and Octavian found a way to use this love for his own needs. Vergil began the *Aeneid* the same year as the success at Alexandria, 30 BCE, and was still working on it when he died in 19 BCE.[94] Vergil composed the *Aeneid* "under the patronage of Octavian's friend, Maecenas," whom he had known since childhood, and would have felt an obligation to promote Octavian's aims and claims to authority.[95]

In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas eventually arrives in Italy, near Cumae, and at the behest of his father's ghost, enters the underworld to speak with Anchises. In this important scene, Anchises tells his son of the many courageous men who will be descended from him: his son, Silvius, who will rule in Alba Longa, and after him Procas, Capys, and Numitor. Anchises also speaks of important men in later Roman history: Numitor's grandson Romulus, Caesar and the line of Iulus, and, last, "the man you heard so often promised," Octavian.[96]

Jupiter, in the beginning of the *Aeneid*, speaks to Venus about her son Aeneas and his descendants; among them "a Trojan Caesar.... His name shall be derived from great Iulus, and shall be Julius."[97] And if that was not enough to express Julian ancestry, Anchises, while in the underworld, reiterates this fact to Aeneas: "Here is Caesar and all the line of Iulus that will come beneath the mighty curve of heaven."[98] These passages renew the link between

Julius Caesar and Aeneas and Venus. But Vergil also skillfully weaves in a new link—one between Octavian and Aeneas, as well. Vergil's work gives Octavian the position of heir to the Aenean and Venusian lineage, through Iulus and Julius Caesar, his adopted father. This genealogy was meant to prove Octavian's legitimacy to exercise power over the Romans, just as each of his forebears had done.

Three years later, in 27 BCE, Octavian received the titles "Augustus" and "*imperator"* from the Senate, associating him both with religious and military power. He was thereafter called *Imperator Caesar Augustus*. As *imperator*, he held more authority than the consuls without holding their office. His power was legal, whereas the power he would have held through multiple consulships would have been unconstitutional, since consuls were not supposed to hold office continuously.[99] In 23 BCE, Augustus gained *maius imperium*—"greater power"—which allowed him a veto over governors. The same year he also received *tribunicia potestas*, which essentially made him the protector of all of Rome, with veto power over any Roman legislation.[100] He now possessed more authority than any previous Roman. However, the *Aeneid* held many more pieces of propaganda than just the Julian lineage.

A main point of Vergil's epic was to promote Rome's history "as one of predestined triumph and salvation."[101] By portraying not only the foundation of Rome as divinely ordained, but also the rule and birth of its new leader Augustus, the *Aeneid* could show the Roman people the grandness of both state and emperor. Romans not only read or heard and understood the epic, but embraced it.[102] Perhaps the part of the poem that best encompasses the idea of the greatness of the empire was the description of Aeneas's shield made by Vulcan. The shield depicted the future of Rome, especially its military triumphs, portraying the city and empire as successful, and always meant to be so.[103]

The opening stanzas of Vergil's story give a sort of abstract, telling the Romans that Aeneas travel to Latium with his household gods and would produce “the Latin race, the lords of Alba, and the ramparts of high Rome.”[104] After an invocation of the Muse (a traditional part of Homeric epics), Vergil writes that the goddess Juno feared her beloved city of Carthage would be outdone and destroyed by a civilization that would spring from “the blood of Troy,” and so she decided to throw Aeneas off his course for as long as possible.[105] Venus, afraid for her son, speaks to her father, Jupiter, who reassures her that Aeneas will reach Italy and found a great people, despite the trials he must face:

> But then he smiled upon her—Jupiter,
> father of men and gods—just as he calms
> the heavens and the storms. He lightly kissed
> his daughter's lips; these were his words to Venus;
> “My Cytherea, that's enough of fear;
> your children's fate is firm; you'll surely see
> the walls I promised you, Lavinium's city;
> and you shall carry your great-hearted son,
> Aeneas, high as heaven's stars. . . .[106]

When the Trojans finally reach the Tiber River and Latium, Aeneas is offered King Latinus's only daughter in marriage. Through some more of Juno's machinations, the native Latins are induced to work against Aeneas, especially Turnus, a local warrior, who leads an army against the Trojans. While searching for nearby kings to aid him, Aeneas is visisted in a dream by Tiberinus, the god of the Tiber River. In this dream, Tiberinus tells Aeneas that after he wakes, he will find a white sow “with a new-delivered litter of thirty suckling white pigs,” which will be the location of his new city.[107] He finds the site the next day and then continues on down the river to later defeat the Latins.

Augustus is compared to Aeneas elsewhere in the epic. Aeneas spends time in Carthage, where he has a divinely inspired relationship with its queen, Dido, to whom he

explains the Trojans' journey to her city. Along the way, Aeneas's boats landed in Thrace and then Crete, before Aeneas was told by the gods to sail for Italy. This mission eventually landed the group in Carthage. After some more plotting by the gods, Mercury reminds Aeneas that while he may be attracted to Dido, his destiny is in Italy. Aeneas, being the pious man that he is, obeys the will of the gods in spite of his heart and leaves Carthage, while Dido commits suicide in grief over his departure.[108]

Vergil chose Aeneas as his epic hero not only because of his connection to Rome itself, but also because of the Julian family's claim to be his descendants, since Augustus, by adoption, was a member of that family. There were, however, other important messages in the *Aeneid*; divine destiny and the Roman idea of *pietas* are major themes that played a large role in its propagandist value for Augustus Caesar.[109]

As ruler of Rome, Augustus was unsatisfied with the current immoral practices and attitudes of many Romans, especially the elite. He found the gaudy and careless spending of the nobility to be in sharp contrast to the Romans of two centuries earlier. A provincial boy from his birth, Augustus was a social conservative, and he wanted to use his political power "to restore the traditional values of rural Italy."[110] When Aeneas visits the underworld to see his father, not only does he gain knowledge of the Julian line, he also acquires knowledge of the afterlife. The pious and faithful who fight for their homelands go to the peaceful realm of Elysium. Tartarus, in contrast, is reserved for the adulterers, cheaters, and spendthrifts that Augustus so despised.[111]

Pietas had been a fundamental value of the early Republic, one that secured the gods' favor for the Romans. Many, including Cicero, believed that *pietas* was the reason for their success in battle, since it brought the gods' aid to the legions. Partially derived from the

Greek concept of *eusebeia,* a dutiful system of unwritten and written laws and obligations between citizens, it was a "semi-religious system of civil obligations to family, state, and deities."[112] The individual and his needs always came after these three important entities for all good Roman citizens. Not surprisingly, Aeneas acts with *pietas* throughout the entire *Aeneid* and is looked upon as a paragon of the virtue, as indicated by his special, Homeric-style epithet "*pius*."

As emperor, Augustus passed social legislation that served to enforce *pietas* toward family, which he believed to be in decline. With the addition of eastern lands such as Greece to the empire, the Roman people had allowed their virtue and morality to steadily decline due to the influence of Hellenistic culture. In addition, members of the Roman nobility were often divorced, and even when married were prone to committing adultery and other licentious acts. The rich were no longer procreating at an acceptable rate, and the number of those who entered political office was decreasing as well.[113]

The legislation Augustus passed was collectively called the *Leges Juliae*. These laws included the *Lex Julia de adulteriis coercendis* (18 BCE), which required a husband to divorce an adulterous wife. Punishment for adultery included exile and fines for all offending parties. The same year, he passed the *Lex Julia de maritandis ordinibus*, which was meant to improve the low birth rate by allowing freedwomen to wed citizens and by limiting the inheritance rights of the unmarried.[114] In addition to this, in 9 CE, the *ius trium liberorum* gave certain legal privileges to free Roman citizens who had three or more children. These laws aimed at increasing the *pietas* of Romans by ensuring the fulfillment of family and state obligations.[115] They also allowed Augustus to restore and present his association with Rome's past in another, more tangible way.

Augustus also showed his *pietas* in regard to the state and to the gods. His civil wars brought peace to Rome, which was perhaps the greatest achievement any one man could make for the state itself. As for his reverence and devotion to the gods, Augustus had been religious from a very young age; his first public office was as a priest. He would also build temples to the gods later in his life, a point which will be expanded upon later.

In comparing himself with Aeneas, Augustus was provided with a sympathetic figure in a time of civil war. Aeneas, like Augustus, had fought Italians. In the *Aeneid*, the act of killing was a work of *pietas* and duty, and thereby justified any necessary killing done by Aeneas. With this precedent set, Augustus's own battles could be condoned, especially those done in the name of the deified Julius Caesar, champion of the people.[116] However, Augustus also showed clemency to many of his enemies, which was another trait of Aeneas in the *Aeneid*. He pardoned many of the soldiers of Marc Antony after the Battle of Actium, paralleling the promise of Aeneas to Latinus' men that he would not subject them if the Trojans won in battle.[117] The link to Aeneas also helped to establish, again, the sense that the Julii were rulers due to their ancestry and because of their connection to the gods.[118]

Augustan propaganda included not only the *Aeneid* but the works of other poets as well. Many other writers carried the same themes as were present in the *Aeneid,* including the themes of *pietas* and godly favor. Horace (65–8 BCE) was another Roman poet supported by Maecenas. Horace, who had served as an officer under Brutus at Philippi, benefited from the clemency of the new *imperator*.[119] In gratitude, he especially focused on Augustus' strict adherence to religious rites, and thus his *pietas*, toward the state and gods.[120] His *Odes* were published in 23 BCE. Poem 1.37, the famous Cleopatra ode, highlighted the Battle of Actium and its aftermath. Horace calls the Egyptian queen a *fatale monstrum*, drunken coward,

chased from Italy by Augustus.[121] In addition to this obvious propaganda, there were also mentions of Venus and Aeneas. *Ode* 4.15 notes Augustus's success in providing peace for Rome, for which Horace believed the Romans owed thanks to Venus, Anchises, and Aeneas.

Horace also wrote the *Carmen Saeculare* in 17 BCE, a command performance commissioned by Augustus for the competition of one *saeculum* or era and the birth of another. It credits Aeneas with Rome's foundation, stressing his *pietas* toward the gods. The following verses hint at an equation with Aeneas's imperial descendant:

> The high-born prince (that fells his foe,
> But spares the victim once laid low,)
> Of Venus and the Anchisean line,
> Now slays for you the milk-white kine.[122]

Here, the man of *pietas* sacrificing the white sow clearly alludes to Augustus, one "of Venus and the Anchisean line," though it could have also been Aeneas. Both men meet the full decription in the lines.

The love poet Propertius (c. 54–16 BCE) notes in his *Elegies* that Augustus's ship had "its sails swollen by a favouring wind from Jupiter," showing that Augustus enjoyed the patronage of the king of the gods much as his ancestor Aeneas had during his journey from Troy.[123] Jupiter's favor, then, like that of Venus, could have been seen to pass on to Augustus's empire and its citizens. Of course, Propertius also asked Venus to keep Augustus safe and alive, drawing on the emperor's descent from Aeneas as a reason for her intervention.[124] Propertius praised Augustus for the work he had done to remind Romans of their republican virtues and religious traditions, especially by celebrating the city's past through his ancestry.[125] He also extolled Vergil, saying that his *Aeneid* was even better than Homer's *Iliad*.[126]

Ovid, a contemporary of Vergil, began his *Fasti* (a poetic calendar of Roman religious festivals) in the first decade of the common era.[127] Likely because of his poor relationship with Augustus and his family, he frequently tried to flatter them later in his life. In the *Fasti* under the 11th of January, Ovid recounts the tale behind the Carmentalia festival.[128] Carmenta, a Greek prophetess, was exiled with her son, Evander, later the king of Arcadia, a Greek kingdom. Carmenta prophesied the coming of Aeneas and the Roman emperor Augustus, reiterating the connections among the Greeks, Aeneas, and Rome, as well as between Aeneas and Augustus.

The *Fasti* of Ovid also makes specific reference to the Julian family claims to divine origin much as the *Aeneid* had. Book IV (April) is devoted to Venus, the ancestral goddess of the Julii clan and the mother of Aeneas. The introduction to April's poem listed the genealogy of the Julian line, mentioning Anchises and his son Aeneas, "whose devotion was seen by the flames of Troy," then Iulus, and eventually Romulus and Remus, the twin founders of the city of Rome.[129] As has been noted, Venus was said to have favored Julius Caesar. But Augustus was also beloved by the gods, at least according to his poets. Ovid's *Fasti* claimed time had been pushed forward by Venus so that Augustus might gain prestigious offices even faster.[130]

Ovid too promoted the *pietas* of both Aeneas and Augustus. In book III (March) he sings the praises of Vesta, the Trojan gods, and Aeneas, who brought the Trojan gods to Rome. Augustus is also mentioned as the "chief high-priest" of Vesta and descendant of Aeneas.[131]

Aeneas also figures in Ovid's masterpiece, the *Metamorphoses*, written around the same time as the *Fasti*, which tells some 250 stories "from the world's beginning down to [Ovid's] own lifetime, in one continuous poem."[132] Ovid tells how Aeneas ascended into the

heavens by the grace of his mother. He was cleansed in the river Numicus and then called by the name Indiges. With Aeneas as a god, Ovid wrote, the Romans had yet another patron deity to assure them of success. The Trojan hero, a former mortal and founder of the Roman civilization, would be easily accessible, and his connection to Augustus would promote Augustus' legitimacy, giving him yet another divine relation and patron. The Roman people would have accepted this not only because it benefited them, but also because they already worshiped the Lares, or their ancestors.

Augustus gained another important position upon the death of Lepidus in late 13 or early 12 BCE, when he became *pontifex maximus.* The office confirmed Augustus's influence as religious and moral arbiter of Roman society. In fact, the title would even allow him to go further with his legislative plans.[133] As *pontifex maximus*, he was the high priest of the college of pontiffs and the guardian of the Vestal Virgins, who kept the sacred flame of Vesta burning.[134] He also played a key part in the religious observances of the empire and gained the authority necessary for a high-ranking politician.[135] According to the historian Livy, the *pontifex maximus* made crucial decisions related to public or private worship, and therefore he was able to interpret auspices—the name Augustus was thought to come from a related term.[136] This position, then, made Augustus the foremost guardian of piety and may be regarded as a culmination of his efforts, already having so much authority over the state and family through his legislation. In addition, it created another way for Augustus to compare himself to his ancestor Aeneas, who had been known for his own piety to the Roman gods, and to his familial gods or Penates, which he had carried all the way from Troy.

Augustus's other main forms of legitimating his exercise of authority and use of power were sculpture and architecture. Here, too, he stressed his relationship to Aeneas and

thus his preference for republican values. While the literary propaganda managed this through comparison and suggestion, Roman architecture and sculpture at the time of Augustus did it through association and function. As noted earlier, sculpture and architecture were primary forms of propaganda for many Romans as the buildings and their decorations were always associated with their patrons. The Temple of Venus Genetrix, unfinished at the time of Caesar's death, was finished by Augustus, showing his connection to both Venus and Caesar.[137] He was Caesar's heir and continued his father's work. In addition, his concern to complete this temple allowed him to emphasize his father's ancient, divine family line. These connections would be proof of his ability to also continue his father's greatness in politics and war.

In 2 BCE Augustus gained what was presumably his most meaningful title—*pater patriae*, or "Father of the Country." He was said to have had tears in his eyes when he accepted the title from the Senate.[138] The same year, his largest architectural work, the Forum Augustum (Appendix I), was completed just to the north of the forum of Julius Caesar.[139] The forum was made up of two long colonnades, each with its own *exedra* that held statues. The two *exedrae* depicted the two mythological cycles associated with Augustus. Aeneas was the pivotal figure in the western *exedra*, probably depicted fleeing the burning Troy. Because the statues no longer remain, most archaeologists can only guess at their forms, but the statue was most likely meant to personify the main characteristic of the man—his piety.[140]

The western *exedra* also held statues of the Julii and the kings of Alba Longa, stressing their relationships to Aeneas.[141] Both the kings as well as the Julii were descended from the founder of Alba Longa, Iulus.

The Ara Pacis (Altar of Peace), commissioned by the senate in 13 BCE after

Augustus returned from campaigns in Spain and Gaul, was originally located next to Augustus' mausoleum and was another prime example of sculptural propaganda.[142] The west side of this altar presented a frieze, or at least part of one, that showed a veiled Aeneas sacrificing a white sow. The south side had a similar scene of Augustus, veiled like Aeneas and acting as the *pontifex maximus*, or high priest of Vesta.[143] These both showed archetypes of Roman piety, and though Augustus was only actually shown on one frieze, the altar as a whole was devoted to his reign of peace. The altar also portrayed senators and Augustus's relatives attending its dedication, showing the other two aspects of *pietas*: duty and honor toward one's state and family.[144] The altar's focus on peace recalled Augustus's position as *pontifex maximus*, the official who obtained peace with the gods through piety, and it highlighted his peaceful reign after his defeat of Antony ended the civil war.

Augustus showed his *pietas* to the gods through building as well; he even made part of his palace into a new Temple of Vesta while he was *pontifex maximus*.[145] In addition, a small trophy base contained a relief of Aeneas sacrificing to the gods.[146]

Perhaps the most interesting piece of sculptural propaganda was an image of Aeneas which stood in front of Augustus's house on the Palatine with many statues of the gods for whom Augustus and built temples or shrines.[147] These sculptures served to show Augustus's own piety, for when people saw his house, they would notice the gods' statues and think of the many temples Augustus had built for them. The statue of Aeneas may have symbolized Augustus's kinship with the gods, just as many patricians displayed statues and images of their ancestors in the atria of their homes.[148] While the statue of Aeneas was not in the atrium of Augustus's palace, it was located in a prominent outdoor location near the home; its significance would have been quite clear—Aeneas was the ancestor of Augustus.

In 13 CE, seventy-six-year-old Augustus, having suffered poor health much of his life, began to write his will and funeral plans. He also wrote the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, a record of his achievements and the longest surviving ancient Roman inscription. In it, he details much of his past, omitting some of his more controversial acts like the proscription of 43 BCE and the civil war against Antony.[149] Augustus died the next year. But even after death Augustus was presented as a relative of Aeneas. His funeral procession, in a traditional display of the *imagines* of ancestors, included a mask of Aeneas; Augustus's heirs were piously continuing to stress his role as the direct heir of Aeneas, Iulus, and Julius Caesar.[150]

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Both Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus began their political careers as young men. Whereas the former took a military path and reached his real political height much later in life (he was forty-one when he held his first consulship), the latter made his mark already in his twenties. While Augustus needed to legitimize himself because of his age and lack of military experience, Julius Caesar had to use his own propagandist devices to gain political favor with powerful patricians because of his *popularis* political sympathies, but at the same time continuing to curry favor with the plebeians. Each encountered civil war and constant criticism from political rivals. Hatred of Julius Caesar was so strong that in the end it led to his murder. However, both men found themselves looking to the past for reassurance and promotion. Caesar based legitimacy on descent through Aeneas and Venus. He saw and represented himself as favored by Venus in both battle and politics. Augustus also knew his kinship with Aeneas was invaluable, though he emphasized Aeneas's role as an example of solid Roman republican virtues as well as his role as founder of Rome. With divine favor and

heroic piety, they would show themselves the equals of their ancestors, men worthy of the love and loyalty of the senate and the people of Rome.

> You will see
> a race arise from this that. . .will be
> past men, even past gods, in piety.[151]

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[1] Publius Vergilius Maro wrote the *Aeneid* from 30 – 19 BCE, dying before he could make his final edits to it. Unless otherwise indicated, all citations of the *Aeneid* are from Allen Mandelbaum's translation (New York: Bantam Dell, 2004).

[2] Aeneas was also supposed to have founded the Greek city Aineia; see Andrew Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome: Local Tradition and Imperial Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 94-95. Antenor, a Trojan advisor and relative of Aeneas, was said to have founded Padua (*Aen*. I.338-347), and later Venice, according Livy and many Venetians. Acestes was another Trojan founder of an Italian city (*Aen*. V.937-990). Genoa and Perugia were also said to be founded by Trojans; see Carrie E. Benes, *Urban Legends: Civic Identity and the Classical Past in Northern Italy, 1250-1350,* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011). The French, seeking to tie their monarchy with ancient Troy, claimed one of Hector's sons, later called Francus, was ancestor of the Franks/Gauls; see Susanna Phillippo, "'A Future for Astyanax': Alternative and Imagined Futures for Hector's Son in Classical and European Drama," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 14, no. 3 (December 2007), 340-341. Aeneas was even said to be the ancestors of the Britons, through either his son Silvius Posthumus or his grandson Brutus; see respectively, Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, in *Six Old English Chronicles,* ed. J. A. Giles (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1848) and Jacob Hildebrand, *Brutus the Trojan, Founder of the British Empire: an Epic Poem* (London: William Lewis, 1735).

[3] Dardanus, according to Homer, was a son of Zeus, whose descendants included both Aeneas and Priam. For the lineage of Aeneas from Dardanus, see Homer, *Iliad* XX.215-240. All citations are from the Samuel Butler translation (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2008).

[4] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome,* 39, 156.

[5] Adrian Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 22.

[6] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 40, 163-195.

[7] Jane DeRose Evans, *The Art of Persuasion: Political Propaganda from Aeneas to Brutus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 37.

[8] R. J. H. Shutt, "Dionysius of Halicarnassus," *Greece & Rome* 4, no. 12 (May, 1935): 140.

[9] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1.72.1-1.73.4. All notations are from the *The Roman Antiquities of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, v*ol. 1, trans. Earnest Cary, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), unless otherwise noted.

[10] Dionysius, *Roman Antiquities*, 1.72.2.

[11] Dionysius, *Roman Antiquities*, 1.72.4.

[12] William W. Batstone, introduction to Sallust, *Catiline's Conspiracy, The Jugurthine War, Histories*, trans. William W. Batstone, Oxford World's Classics (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), vii, 12.

[13] T. P. Wiseman, *Remus: a Roman Myth* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 161.

[14] Vergil, *Aen.* I.373-374. (For the purpose of this work, he will be called only Iulus.)

[15] Vergil, *Aen.* II.964-1082.

[16] Emma Dench, *Romulus' Asylum: Roman Identities from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 48-49.

[17] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 37.

[18] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 285.

[19] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 37.

[20] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 41-42.

[21] Dionysius, *Roman Antiquities*, 1.61.1-1.61.5.

[22] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 93-126: the cities include Aineia, Ilion, Skepsis, Gergis, Perkote,

Kolonai, Chryse, Ophrynion, Sidene, Astyra, Polichna, Daskyleion, Iliou Kolone, Arisbe, Pergamon, Lakonia, the Argolid, Tenea, Arkadia, Zakynthos, Epiros, and Boiotia.

[23] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 146.

[24] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 28; Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 21-22.

[25] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 22.

[26] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 29.

[27] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 39.

[28] Jacques Heurgon, *The Rise of Rome to 264 B.C.*, trans. James Willis (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 106.

[29] Donald Earl, *The Moral and Political Tradition of Rome* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), 66.

[30] Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus,* trans. Alan Shapiro, Jerome Lectures, Sixteenth Series (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), 45-46.

[31] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 137.

[32] Venus was the Roman counterpart of the Greek Aphrodite and consequently the mother of Aeneas.

[33] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 21-22; Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 28, 39; Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 31.

[34] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 40.

[35] Robert E. A. Palmer, *Roman Religion and Roman Empire: Five Essays,* The Haney Foundation Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1974), 137.

[36] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 49.

[37] Valerie M Warrior, *Roman Religion,* Cambridge Introduction to Roman Civilization (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 7.

[38] Anthony Everitt, *Augustus: The Life of Rome's First Emperor* (New York: Random House, 2006), 30; Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 50.

[39] Everitt, *Augustus*, 29-30.

[40] Warrior, *Roman Religion,* 6.

[41] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 49-50, 64, 369, 105, 254.

[42] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 98-99.

[43] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 125.

[44] Lily Ross Taylor, "The Rise of Julius Caesar," *Greece & Rome* 4, Second Series, no. 1 (March 1957), 15.

[45] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 40.

[46] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 147; for Cicero's full discussion, see his *On the Nature of the Gods*.

[47] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 232, 425; Appian, *Roman History: The Civil Wars*, vol. 3, trans. Horace White, Loeb Classical Library (New York: Macmillan, 1913), 353.

[48] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 19; Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 428.

[49] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 159-160.

[50] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 152-158.

[51] Everitt, *Augustus*, 21.

[52] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 170-174.

[53] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 294, 313.

[54] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 369-375.

[55] Roger B. Ulrich, "Julius Caesar and the Creation of the Forum Iulium," *American Journal of Archaeology* 97, no. 1 (Jan. 1993): 53; Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 344.

[56] Fred S. Kleiner, *A History of Roman Art,* enhanced edition (Boston: Wadsworth, 2010), 57.

[57] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 345, 63.

[58] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 422-432.

[59] Ulrich, "Creation of the Forum Iulium," 67.

[60] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 431.

[61] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 448.

[62] Everitt, *Augustus*, 44.

[63] Olindo Grossi, "The Forum of Julius Caesar and the Temple of Venus Genetrix," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 13, (1936): 215-217.

[64] Grossi, "Forum of Julius Caesar," 218.

[65] Grossi, "Forum of Julius Casear," 218.

[66] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 468-482.
[67] Everitt, *Augustus*, 50.
[68] Andreola Rossi, "Remapping the Past: Caesar's Tale of Troy (Lucan "BC" 9.964-999)," *Phoenix* 55, no. 3 (Autumn-Winter 2001): 313.
[69] Lucan, *The Pharsalia of Lucan*, trans. Sir Edward Ridley (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1896), 9.1145.
[70] Rossi, "Remapping the Past," 317-318.
[71] Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 9.1182-1184.
[72] Rossi, "Remapping the Past," 325.
[73] Rossi, "Remapping the Past," 315-316.
[74] Rossi, "Remapping the Past," 323.
[75] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 41.
[76] Everitt, *Augustus*, 31, 57.
[77] Everitt, *Augustus*, 56-59.
[78] Everitt, *Augustus*, 57-61.
[79] Everitt, *Augustus*, 61-65.
[80] John T. Ramsey and A. Lewis Licht, *The Comet of 44 B.C. And Caesar's Funeral Games*, foreword by Brian G. Marsden, American Philological Association, American Classical Studies (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 44-51.
[81] Ramsey and Licht, *Comet of 44*, 136-139. Augustus's own account was only found in a fragment identified by Malcovati; Ramsey and Licht have translated the fragment in their book (see page 159).
[82] Everitt, *Augustus*, 75-78.
[83] Everitt, *Augustus*, 79.
[84] Everitt, *Augustus*, 47.
[85] Everitt, *Augustus*, 80.
[86] Everitt, *Augustus*, 90-93, 96.
[87] Everitt, *Augustus*, 97-100.
[88] Everitt, *Augustus*, 103, 111-112.
[89] Everitt, *Augustus*, 129-143.
[90] Everitt, *Augustus*, 148, 155, 170.
[91] Matthew D.H. Clark, *Augustus, First Roman Emperor: Power, Propaganda and the Politics of Survival*, Greece and Rome Live (Exeter: Bristol Phoenix Press, 2010), 79-80.
[92] Clark, *Augustus*, 81-82.
[93] Clark, *Augustus*, 87-88.
[94] Allen Mandelbaum, introduction to Vergil, *Aeneid*, viii; the poem was reportedly left unfinished because of Vergil's death.
[95] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 17.
[96] Vergil, *Aen.* VI.1048.
[97] Vergil, *Aen.* I.400-405.
[98] Vergil, *Aen.* VI.1045-1047.
[99] Clark, *Augustus*, 92-93; Everitt, *Augustus*, 217-218, 228.
[100] Clark, *Augustus*, 95.
[101] Zanker, *Power of Image*, 193.
[102] Zanker, *Power of Image*, 193-194.
[103] Cristina Mazzoni, *She-Wolf: The Story of a Roman Icon* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 107.
[104] Vergil, *Aen.* I.11-12.
[105] Vergil, *Aen.* I.30-50.
[106] Vergil, *Aen.* I.354-362.
[107] Vergil, *Aen.* VIII.55-56.
[108] Vergil, *Aen.* IV.79-102.
[109] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 60-61.
[110] Clark, *Augustus*, 121-122.

[111] Clark, *Augustus*, 122.
[112] Warrior, *Roman Religion*, 56; George K. Strodach, "*Pietas*: Horace and Augustan Nationalism," *The Classical Weekly* 29, no. 18 (March 23, 1936), 139-141. For more on *eusebeia*, see W. den Boer, *Private Morality in Greece and Rome: Some Historical Aspects* (Netherlands: Leiden E. J. Brills, 1979).
[113] Everitt, *Augustus*, 238.
[114] Clark, *Augustus*, 126-128; Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 443.
[115] Johnathan Edmonson, ed., *Augustus*, Edinburgh Readings on the Ancient World (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 497.
[116] Anton Powell, *Roman Poetry and Propaganda in the Age of Augustus*, ed. Anton Powell (London: Bristol Classic Press, 1992), 147.
[117] Vergil, *Aen.* XII.252-264.
[118] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 15.
[119] Clark, *Augustus*, 118.
[120] Evans, *Art of Persuasion* 44.
[121] The ode also told of Cleopatra's death, something still highly debated among scholars. The general ancient consensus was that she had committed suicide by snake or poison, though many modern historians believe that the entire suicide story may have been created by Augustus to cover up her murder.
[122] Horace, *The* Odes *of Horace and the* Carmen Saeculare, trans. W. E. Gladstone, third ed. (London: John Murray, 1895), 153.
[123] Douglas Little, "Politics in Augustan Poetry," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II.30.1 (1982): 304.
[124] Propertius, *The Complete* Elegies *of Sextus Propertius*, trans. Vincent Katz (Princeton: Princeton Univeristy Press, 2004), 243.
[125] Little, "Politics in Augustan Poetry," 304.
[126] Propertius, *Elegies*, 227.
[127] Ovid lived from 43 BCE – 17 CE.
[128] Ovid, *Ovid's Fasti: Roman Holidays,* trans. Betty Rose Nagle (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 49-52.
[129] Ovid, *Fasti*, 106.
[130] Ovid, *Fasti*, 123.
[131] Ovid, *Fasti*, 92.
[132] Ovid, *Metamorphoses: A New Verse Translation*, trans. David Raeburn, Penguin Classics (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 5.
[133] Everitt, *Augustus*, 269.
[134] Everitt, *Augustus*, 31.
[135] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 126.
[136] Livy, 1.20. Unless otherwise noted, all citations are from *The Early History of Rome: Books I-V of the* Ab Urbe Condita, trans. B. O. Foster, introduction Matthew Peacock (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2005).
[137] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 42.
[138] Everitt, *Augustus*, 284.
[139] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 109.
[140] Zanker, *Art of Persuasion*, 201-203; Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage, *Roman Art: Romulus to Constantine,* third ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2001), 100.
[141] Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome*, 18.
[142] Samuel Ball Platner, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, ed. Thomas Ashby (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 30.
[143] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 45-46; Mazzoni, *She-Wolf*, 188.
[144] Ramage, *Roman Art*, 116.
[145] Eli Edward Burriss, "The Religious Element in the Poetry of Horace with Special Reference to the Religio of the Emperor Augustus," *The Classical Weekly* 21, no. 7 (November 28, 1927), 52.
[146] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 49-50.
[147] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 51.

[148] Warrior, *Roman Religion*, 32.
[149] Everitt, *Augustus*, 311.
[150] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 43.
[151] Vergil, *Aen.* XII.1113-1116.

Chapter Two
"Fearless, They Sucked Their Mother"
Ancient Rome and the Twins

The story of Romulus and Remus was perhaps first noted by the third century BCE Greek writer Lycophron. He called them "such a pair of lion cubs."[1] Another third century Greek called them the sons of Ares.[2] Italians believed that the twins were descendants of Aeneas, the founder of the nearby city of Lavinium, and that Rome itself was named after Romulus.

The Romulean legend connected to the epic of Aeneas by mythical lines of kinship in late Republican and Augustan-era literature. Many different parties used the myth of Romulus for their own propagandist ends. Aside from senators and generals, Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus both sought to gain by an association with the ancient king Romulus. Like Aeneas, Romulus was used to legitimize families and positions. However, where Aeneas was pious, Romulus was brave. Vergil's Aeneas demonstrated *pietas* and *gravitas*. Romulus, though, was a military man, mostly known for his warrior nature and ability to conquer other peoples. For this reason, both Caesar and Augustus claimed connections to Romulus to promote their own reputations as warriors. Julius Caesar's main adversary during the civil war was the great general Pompey, so it was important for him to show himself as at least an equal if not greater military leader. Caesar Augustus, as the adoptive son of Julius Caesar, needed to gain the continued support of his father's clients, who were mostly soldiers. Like Julius Caesar, he also had many adversaries known for their military prowess such as Mark Antony, Caesar's close friend and former tribune. To win over Antony's main supporters—his soldiers—Augustus had to show himself as a great military man as well. In addition, Romulus was a king—and ruler—and while Aeneas had done well to bring the ancestor of

the Romans to Italy and settle them there, his legend was mostly silent on his ruling and administrative abilities. By linking themselves with Romulus, both Julius Caesar and Augustus furthered their claims to administrative power in Rome by their ancestor's merit and experience, solidifying the claim which they had both made with their connections to Aeneas.

The legend of Romulus and Remus was probably Etruscan while the other foundation story of Aeneas was Greek in origin. Many scholars believe that the interpretation of Romulus as a descendant of Aeneas was the Romans' way of unifying two different and independent legends about Rome's founding.[3] The Romans wanted both men as founders because of their different traits; Rome needed Aeneas to please the gods, and Aeneas's piety would have ensured the gods' favor. Romulus was a great warrior, a man of law who provided a military reputation for Rome as well as an ancient foundation for their Republic.

The early Greek writers Hegesianax of Alexandria (who used the name "Cephalon" as a pseudonym), Demagoras, and Agathyllus all agreed on the time-line of Rome, making Romulus a close relative of Aeneas.[4] But later, when the historians realized this was illogical since the Trojan War had occurred centuries before the founding of the city, traditionally either in the sixth or eighth century BCE, they made him a more distant descendant.[5] Since the Romans respected Greek culture, even though there was an indigenous legend of Romulus they would have included the Greek tradition of their foundation in order to promote their Greek connections—and to assert their dominance over the Greek world.

There is no way to know for certain which legend began first. Aeneas appears in Homer's *Iliad*, but there is no evidence of his connection to Rome until much. The earliest evidence for Aeneas in Rome is from a fifth century BCE Greek cited by Dionysius of

Halicarnassus.[6] However, as Aeneas was actually a Greek character to begin with, it is easy to believe that he would be found in texts dated earlier than texts featuring the Etruscan Romulus, who wasn't noted by Greek writers until the third century BCE. The first Greek writer to note Romulus is cited by Plutarch as Diocles of Peparethus (fl. ca. 300 BCE), who lived in the late fourth or early third century.[7] The other problem with determining which myth came first is the fact that many texts spoken of by the writers we do have access to, like those mentioned by Dionysius, are lost to us. We can only base our conclusions on the texts we have. Lycophron in the third century mentioned both the twins and Aeneas in his *Alexandra* as a prophecy of Cassandra, the royal prophetess of Troy. In his text, Aeneas and the twins were already related by blood.[8] In the late-third-century Roman texts of Naevius and Fabius Pictor, Aeneas was related to the twins.[9]

Sculptural evidence of the two legends is a bit different. While Aeneas appears in Etruscan works, some scholars have noted his absence in Roman inscriptions and art until the Punic Wars. It is possible that the image of Aeneas was even avoided around the year 280 BCE because of the arrival of Pyrrhus (the Greek who defeated the Romans at Heraclea), a man claiming descent from Achilles, who fought Aeneas in Troy.[10]

There are many Etruscan pieces featuring Romulus and Remus, but the possible Roman art we have found depicting them is dated much earlier than those that show Aeneas. One statue, known as the Capitoline She-Wolf (see Appendix I), is from the sixth century BCE, though the twins underneath the wolf herself were a later addition. However, many scholars believe that the posture of the wolf may mean that similar twins had been placed under her originally.[11] Since Rome was most probably founded sometime between 777 and 675 BCE, the Capitoline She-Wolf could be the oldest representation of the legend made.[12]

There is also a mirror from the fourth century BCE which some scholars think may depict the twins, though this cannot be easily confirmed.[13] Many scholars, however, consider the first Roman art featuring Romulus and Remus to be the Ogulnian monument, which is thought to have been made near the year 300 BCE.[14]

The Roman historian Livy (59 BCE – 17 CE) told the story of the twins starting with their grandfather, Numitor. Proca, one of the many kings of Alba after Aeneas' son Iulus, had two sons: Numitor, the elder, and Amulius, the younger. Numitor, as the eldest, was supposed to inherit the kingdom, but his brother Amulius took the throne from him. Amulius killed Numitor's sons and condemned Numitor's only daughter to become a Vestal Virgin, thus never to create heirs of Numitor's line. The daughter, known as Rhea Silvia or Ilia, was later raped, possibly by the god Mars, and bore twin boys. Amulius, obviously upset by this development, condemned the babies to be drowned in the Tiber.[15]

Dionysius of Halicarnassus (c. 60 BCE – c. 7 BCE), one of the Greek historians who wrote on Aeneas, also discussed the Roman twins. He gave many different interpretations of the parentage of Romulus and Remus. His main theory, though, was similar to the later one of Livy's; he even listed both the names Rhea Silvia and Ilia for their mother. Dionysius' version told that when Ilia went to get water for sacrifices, she was “ravished by somebody or other”—possibly a former suitor, her uncle Amulius, or most commonly Mars—and was told not to be upset at her indiscretion, for she would bear great sons.[16]

According to Dionysius, when Ilia failed to attend Vestal ceremonies, her uncle Amulius inquired many times about her condition. Finally, getting insufficient responses, he sent his wife to see to her. His wife realized that the girl was pregnant and told Amulius, who ordered that Ilia be put to death, as was customary for defiled Vestals. Dionysius noted that

stories diverged here; Ilia was either killed or secretly imprisoned after giving birth.[17]

The consensus among the ancients was that Ilia was thrown into a prison, and when she gave birth to twin boys, called Remus and Romulus, the king ordered them to be drowned in the Tiber River. But when the men who were supposed to drown the children found the river flooded, they simply left the twins on the bank next to a fig tree, believing the water would simply rise and drown the twins on its own.

However, as fate would have it, the twins were found on the banks of the Tiber by a female wolf who had recently birthed a litter. According to Livy, ". . .A she-wolf, coming down out of the surrounding hills to slake her thirst, turned her steps towards the cry of the infants, and with her teats gave them suck so gently, that the keeper of the royal flock found her licking them with her tongue."[18] The royal shepherd, named Faustulus, took the children back to his home, where his wife, Larentia, nursed them, as she had recently lost a newborn child.[19]

The twins' legend was used in many ways by the ancient Romans. The first major way the myth was used in the Republican period was to symbolize the "nature of kingship."[20] Because the Senate would not want a king for fear of losing its own political power, it is very likely that it would have wanted to promote a malicious story about kings, and Romulus was a convenient and well-known model.

The first major flaw of Romulus that those who disliked monarchy could use was his birth. Not only could he be considered a bastard son of a defiled Vestal, but both Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus noted an additional problem with his mother. Dionysius, a Greek, stated that there may have been no wolf involved in the raising of the twins, since Laurentia, their foster mother, may have been a whore called Lupa, in the Greek fashion of calling a

woman a prostitute. Lupa was also the word for "wolf."[21] Livy noted in his *History* that other men said the same thing. This idea would have appealed to many Republicans for the immoral connotations it would equate with the king, Romulus. It would also have appealed to the Greeks, who saw the Romans as barbarians and tyrants who had conquered their lands.

However, Romulus also gave himself a bad name through many of his actions. For example, after Romulus and Remus grew up, they discovered their parentage and helped their deposed grandfather regain his kingdom. Numitor then allowed them to go off to create their own kingdom in the place they had been raised. However, the twins, like their forefathers, argued over who should rule. They each went to a different hill—Romulus to the Palatine and Remus to the Aventine—to observe the auspices, or signs from the gods that usually involved birds. Remus was the first to see the birds—six vultures. Immediately upon hearing this, Romulus said that he saw twelve vultures from the Palatine. A dispute arose over which would rule: the first to see the birds, or the one who saw more? The twins fought, and Remus was killed.[22] Livy also presented another version of the death of Remus, saying that it was more common than his first version. In this story, Remus jumped over the walls which Romulus was constructing, "whereupon Romulus in great anger slew him, and in menacing wise added these words withal, 'So perish whoever else shall leap over my walls!'"[23]

However, unlike in Livy's more neutral account, Dionysius told of two clans forming between the brothers. Romulus wanted to found his city on the Palatine, and Remus wanted to found his in a place called Remoria. Unable to decide, the twins asked their grandfather for advice, who told them to ask the gods. So, the story of the observing of the auspices is relayed, though Dionysius gave a less noble view of Romulus, saying that he cheated by

declaring his sighting of birds when he actually saw none. A battle ensued, where Faustulus and Remus were both killed.[24] By noting that Romulus killed his own brother, the Republic could show that kings were vicious and desirous of absolute power.

In addition, Romulus, who had created his city on the basis of asylum, later realized that it was filled with mostly men and not nearly enough women. So after a failed attempt at diplomatic intermarriage with Rome's neighbors, Romulus staged a festival, inviting all the nearby peoples, most notably the Sabines. When enough people—especially young women—were assembled in Rome, the Roman men pounced, taking unwilling Sabine women to become their brides.

Despite his actions, it was said that the people loved Romulus. He showed the *virtus* of Rome and Romans through his military greatness, and gave the city and its people the favor of his father, Mars, and the rest of the gods.[25] He sought the Romans approval in war and law; he gave most of the spoils of war to the people; he kept the city organized; and he often promoted equality between the classes. "No wonder, then, that after his death, the people resisted the attempt of the senate to rule, and insisted upon another king."[26]

Romulus was also loved because of his role as the leader of Rome. Dionysius of Halicarnassus said that Romulus gave his people a choice of government; the Romans chose the constitution of Alba and gave the kingship to Romulus. As the ruler of Rome, Romulus consulted the gods on the best way to run the city.[27] Romulus also gave the Romans laws, though Livy did not say which laws these were. Plutarch mentioned a law that forbade women to leave their husbands and decreed that if a husband divorced his wife without reason, he would have to pay a form of alimony. He also wrote that Romulus believed any murder to be parricide, and it was believed that no murders were committed until the war

with Hannibal.[28] Upon founding the city, Romulus chose administrators from the population, who were to be called patricians because "Romulus thought it the duty of the foremost and most influential citizens to watch over the more lowly," as a father should watch over his children.[29] These patricians would make up a senate. His role as leader gave the Romans some of the things most favored by the Republic—laws and a senate.

Lastly, Romulus was the one who made the political and military leader of Rome synonymous with the religious leader. According to the classical scholar Augusto Fraschetti:

> The king was responsible for religious and legislative tasks, asking the senators to judge on crimes of minor importance. The king was always responsible for command during war.[30]

Further, Romulus provided the introduction of priesthoods and cults into the city.[31] Many of the Roman religious rites were attributed to the style in which Romulus worshiped. It was said that he performed rites in the Alban way, aside from those done in honor of the Greek Hercules, which were done in a Greek manner.[32]

In regards to Romulus's death, it was thought that he ascended into heaven, as Aeneas had. Livy, though, argued that it was possible Romulus had simply been killed by the senators who disliked him. It is entirely possible that many early Romans did not typically deify men and that the idea of Romulus becoming a god was Etruscan in nature, which could explain this argument over his death.[33]

There were many things about Romulus that could have been utilized by Republicans in order to decry the kings, and thus be used against anyone who would later claim Romulus as an ancestor: he was a bastard to a defiled Vestal; he may have been raised by a whore; he cheated during a contest with his brother; he killed his brother, as Cicero noted, in an act of neither *pietas* nor *honestum*;[34] he provided asylum for uncouth characters, as Cato the

Younger noted by calling the first inhabitants of the city “Romulus's crap”;[35] he abducted the Sabine women and later battled with his new kin.[36] Overall, as a legendary founder, Romulus was not the noblest and most pious candidate. He became a dictator—a tyrant—and as noted by Livy, he may have been killed by the senators for his unjust rule.

If Romulus's background wasn't enough for many Romans to believe that the kings had been bad, Republican-era writers also created more reasons in its time. According to Cicero, the murder of Remus was the reason for the civil wars of the late Republic; as brother fought brother during the foundation of the city, brother fought brother in the civil wars.[37] Horace, the Roman poet agreed in one of his *Epodes*, as did a young Ovid. [38] Another poet, Propertius, blamed Romulus for the contemporary sexual immorality present in society, arguing that Romulus's abduction of the Sabine women began the moral decline of the Romans.[39] The poet Ovid believed it was the seduction of Romulus's virgin mother that caused the declining morality of pre-Augustan times.[40]

Propaganda based on the founders of Rome included not only promotion and legitimization through favorable comparisons, but also slanderous propaganda through unfavorable associations. After the dictator Sulla began to style himself after Romulus, the propaganda against him began to focus on Romulus's many bad points.[41] Pompey was subjected to comparison to Romulus's later tyranny and was told by some Romans that “he would not escape the fate of Romulus” if he continued to act like him.[42] Even Cicero fell under the scope of the evil Romulus, being compared to the king for killing the Catilinarian conspirators. Of course, Cicero returned the favor by accusing Julius Caesar of the same kind of fratricide that Romulus had committed.[43] In fact, the insults used by these men may have even stopped Augustus from taking the name Romulus upon being made emperor.[44]

This idea is interesting, because it would inspire a real event. Julius Caesar met his death at the hands of senators on the infamous Ides of Markh in 44 BCE. Appian, a second-century CE Roman historian, said explicitly that Brutus and Cassius, those most responsible for the murder, formulated their plan based on the story of Romulus's assassination.[45]

Romans from Republican times, cognizant of the bad actions and behaviors associated with Romulus, even created a sort of replacement for the founding king of Rome to better work with their anti-monarchical attitude. Lucius Junius Brutus (dates unknown) was the first Roman consul and was said to have ended the original monarchy established by Romulus in the sixth century BCE, traditionally in the year 509.[46] He therefore became celebrated as the founder of the Roman Republic and a more likable figure to many of the Republicans.

The Romans, as we know, had another foundation legend in Aeneas; Romulus and Remus seemed to be of a more indigenous stock than the Trojan hero. These two legends were not entirely separate, but were often related by making Romulus and Remus the sons, grandsons, or later descendants of Aeneas. This kinship blended the Greek and the Etruscan, the foreign and local, and assured Romans not only of their antiquity and grandeur, but of their Italian roots as well.[47] This practice also made the usage of the Romulean myth accessible for positive propaganda, though the Republic had emphasized the ancient king's poor character and disreputable lineage.

One of Romulus's main functions in positive propaganda was his reputation as a great warrior. Once he had founded the city itself, he began to divide the men into legions of soldiers. After taking the Sabine women, the Romans had to fight their new in-laws. They easily defeated their enemies in most battles under the guidance of Romulus. Then he fought

the Caeninenses: “Their army he broke and routed, and pursued it as it fled; their king he killed in battle and despoiled; their city, once their leader was slain, he captured at the first assault.”[48] Livy related further battles with the Fidenates and the Veientes and the submission of both to Rome. He noted that Romulus was loved by the commoners, the army, and his personal guard.

Romulus even used his military victories to please the gods. As mentioned, when Romulus defeated the Caeninenses, he was said to have despoiled the king, Acron. The spoils he framed, and upon return to Rome, he deposited them on the Capitoline Hill on a piece of land he then marked off for a Temple to Jupiter. Romulus vowed:

> Jupiter Feretrius...to thee I, victorious Romulus, myself a king, bring the panoply of a king, and dedicate a sacred precinct within the bounds which I have even now marked off in my mind, to be a seat for the spoils of honor which men shall bear hither in time to come, following my example. . . .[49]

This supposed speech played a very important role in the warrior culture of Rome. Because of his military exploits, the first to use Romulus as a positive source of power were the victorious Roman generals. The initial general was Aulus Cornelius Cossus in 426 BCE. He carried the spoils of his own victory over King Tolumnius of Veii in a procession and deposited them in the Temple of Jupiter laid out by Romulus. His soldiers compared him to Romulus in songs during the procession.[50] Further, as we know from Livy, Romulus had set a precedent fighting those same Veientes. The second was Markus Claudius Markellus in 222 BCE, who brought back spoils from his defeat of the Insubres of Gaul. Like Cossus, he returned in a procession and dedicated his war trophies to Jupiter. It has been suggested that the dedication of spoils to Jupiter Feretrius was actually begun by M. Claudius Markellus, perhaps because Jupiter was supposedly the god of treaties and the “ritually correct end to

wars."[51] This would have promoted not only success in battle, but also religious piety. One of the last to emulate Romulus militarily was Sulla (138-78 BCE), but as has been mentioned, this backfired after the people turned on him.

Frequently victorious generals referred to themselves as second founders of Rome in direct reference to the first founder.[52] They showed their military prowess by associating themselves with Romulus, who was known for his courage and success in military campaigns, by bringing back spoils from war as Romulus had done and prophesied future men would do. These generals used the piety and reverence for the god Jupiter present in Romulus's own character to emphasize their victories. By mimicking the practice of dedicating prestigious spoils to Jupiter, they would be seen as Romulus's equals or successors. Romulus's ability to lead men and fight was well cataloged in the stories of the annalists; his success over his uncle, over his brother, and over his many Etruscan neighbors proved his ability in combat. It would not be surprising then that the generals from the Republican period would want to be associated with him. Perhaps being called "founder" was merely an added bonus of choosing to aspire to so warlike a man as Romulus. Or, it might be that as the founder, Romulus was seen as the model Roman or served to inspire feelings of the purity of more ancient times.[53] Or, perhaps, by defeating one's enemies and defending Rome, one could be seen as a secondary founder, as Romulus was thought to have had defeated Rome's enemies and given it a great wall to keep it safe.

Romulus the founder was also connected more specifically to the general Julius Caesar. The title of *pater patriae*, Father of His Country, which had be originally bestowed upon Romulus, was also given to Caesar.[54] Another interesting connection pointed out by Cassius Dio is that the news of Caesar's victory in Spain reached Rome the day before the

festival which celebrated Rome's founding. Dio mentioned that the festival that year celebrated the victorious news, connecting Julius's success to the beginning of the city through the calendar itself.[55] After his return from Spain, according to Cassius Dio, Caesar was able to offer the *spolia opima* to the Temple of Jupiter just as Romulus had first done.[56]

In addition to these, Caesar's defense of Rome also connected him to Romulus as the city's founder. A supporter of the plebeians, he was known as a friend to the common man,and thus a defender of the liberties of the largest population of Rome's citizenry. He lived in the unfashionable district of Rome with the poorer citizens, likely because it was cheap, but perhaps because it let him live among those he was to represent.[57] Romulus was notably connected to the plebeian cause. The most notable connection between the cause and Romulus came in 296 BCE, when Quintus Ogulnius dedicated a statue of the twins suckling the she-wolf; this is significant because this same Quintus was involved in the creation of the *lex Ogulnia* four years earlier. This law gave the plebeians "their own place in the college of pontiffs and of augurs."[58]

As consul in 59 BCE, Caesar made a law that forced the Senate to have a written record of its proceedings and for the *comitia* to keep written minutes. This law put pressure on both groups to keep in accordance with laws, as their meetings would be recorded for all to examine. He also reduced taxes on farmers, banned extortion, and put limits on the abilities of governors.[59] He protected the common man from those in power, winning the trust and backing of the majority of the Roman people—the same sort of people that Romulus once invited to form his own city centuries earlier.

As dictator, he strove to improve the condition of living for Roman citizens by looking into free grain rations for the deserving poor, finding work for others within his own

building projects, beginning plans for a library and for the codification of Roman law, and allowing desirable men (mostly doctors) to become new Roman citizens.[60] In addition, Ovid noted that Romulus had worked with the calendar, creating the number of months and naming them. Like his predecessor, Caesar reformed the calendar, giving it 365 days, leap years, and adding two extra months.[61] In doing this, though, he was not thought to have reformed Romulus's calendar, but rather to have continued the founder's own reforms.[62]

In the more traditional sense, he was also a military defender, thereby exploiting both the image of Romulus the founder and that of Romulus the warrior. Like earlier Roman generals and Romulus, Caesar dedicated war spoils to Jupiter, and he was called a second founder as previous generals had been.[63] While many Roman generals would typically command from near the actual front lines, Caesar actually fought with his men, showing a bravery commensurate with that of the ancient king, who had fought in duels and was held to have single-handedly killed six thousand men in one battle. During combat against the Belgian Gauls in 57 BCE, Caesar reported in his memoir that he advanced to the front lines to fight alongside his men when the battle became dire.[64] He was "a refined and cultured nobleman, with an appreciation of the comforts of a life of privilege, he was yet able to submit with agility and tenacity to the harshest and most dangerous of discipline."[65] His relationship with his men often led not only to rumors of his own valor, but also his ability to bond with simple men easily.

One fine example of Caesar actually defending Rome is early in his military career, when he was visiting Rhodes. In 74 BCE, King Mithridates attacked those loyal to Rome in Asia. At this point, Caesar had been studying in Rhodes as a private citizen and had no obligation to fight but, nonetheless had gone on to find soldiers and defeat the king, saving

the province from invasion or at least preventing others from going over to the enemy. Thus he proved his *virtus* at a young age and without having even been a soldier.[66]

In addition, Romulus was used, much like Aeneas, to establish ancestry. While it was commonly believed that the Julian line was begun by Aeneas' son Iulus, there was also another possible ancestor that was the eponymous founder of the line. The daughter of the Alban king Numitor (who would have been descended from Iulus, the founder of Alba) was named Ilia.[67] This was the Vestal Virgin who bore Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome. Vergil, in his *Aeneid*, said that the twins' mother was named Ilia, and he found no doubt that their father was Mars. So not only could the Julian line claim descent from Aeneas, but also Romulus, the putative founder of the city of Rome. In addition to this, Caesar also claimed that his mother's family was descended from royalty, which may have hinted that he was related to Romulus through both his parents.[68]

The belief that Romulus and the Albans were ancestors of the Julian family created a trend for other families to find similar connections, just as their claim to Aenean descent had caused families to find Trojan ancestors. The Octavii family was supposedly promoted to the patrician class by King Servius Tullius, one of the early successors of Romulus who had been born a slave. (This clan was the source of Augustus's birth name, Octavius.) The Claudii family, the “other half” of the Julio-Claudian dynasty of emperors, was also imported from Romulean times. As Suetonius describes in his *Lives of the Caesars*, the emperor Tiberius was of the Claudii, a Sabine family from the town of Regilli. The family came to Rome either at the behest of Titus Tatius or through the family's own motives. This family not only provided Rome with future emperors, but also twenty-eight consuls, five dictators, seven censors, six *triumphatores*, and two ovations (a minor form of a triumph).[69] By connecting

themselves to the earliest Romans, these families gained for themselves legitimacy for political office as well as a sense of nobility and *auctoritas* for the family name.

The ancestral connection not only promoted legitimacy. Like the kinship with Aeneas, the Julii could claim divine favor through their relationship with Romulus. Three remarkable situations in the Romulean myth—the flooding of the river, the appearance of the wolf, and the revelation of the twins' identities—were all extremely auspicious for the twins and for the Romans. It was thought that the gods, in accordance with the story of Aeneas, were focused on the founding of their great city. Because of apparent divine intervention, Romulus was allowed to survive in spite of many elements opposed to him. One god had a specific link to Romulus—Mars, who was Romulus's father, just as Aeneas' mother was Venus. Mars and Venus were believed by Romans to be consorts, and with two children in the Julii line, both of these gods would have been thought to be patrons of the gens. As mentioned in the previous chapter, before his battle against Pompey, Caesar actually sacrificed to both Venus and Mars.[70]

We can see this favor of the gods further in Ovid's *Metamorphoses.* Ovid told about the clash of the gods during the battle against the Sabines. Venus came to the Romans' ancestors' aid, trying to stop Juno from attempting to destroy Rome by helping the Sabines.[71] So both of the Julii gods were original patrons of Rome. During his time as dictator, Caesar was even said to have begun plans for a temple dedicated to Mars, Romulus's father and the god of war, which would have been "greater than any in existence."[72]

During his career Caesar also provided himself with direct imagery that connected him to Romulus. He was the first to wear a fully purple toga, reminiscent of the purple-bordered toga worn by Romulus and the early kings of Rome.[73] According to Ovid, Caesar

was also the head priest of Vesta (with authority over the Vestals), which would make him, like Romulus, the head of the Roman religion.[74] All of these actions would have shown Caesar's right to the consulship and other honors, since he was descended from and easily compared to the original founder of Rome. This would have been in addition to his similarity to Romulus as a warrior and general.

Further, the Senate bestowed upon Caesar titles related to Romulus. The title *pater patriae* that was given to Romulus was also given to Caesar. However, as we have seen, Romulus was sometimes a controversial character, especially in the Republic. Caesar, therefore, had to temper his connection with Romulus in order to distance himself from the king's lesser qualities. For example, while Mark Antony was said to have desired Caesar to be called a king and wear a diadem during his lifetime, the dictator actually refused, though it would have made him more like Romulus and supposedly given him more power.[75] Unfortunately, the mere suggestion would lead to his assassination. This murderous act would afterward be called parricide by Suetonius and not tyrannicide, as the senators had thought it would be; they were seen as killing a father figure, a man who was seen as the *pater patriae* by later Romans.[76]

After his death, Caesar was still referenced using Romulean terms; some historians said that Romulus, sorry for his brother's death, had an empty chair carried in processions in his memory. This was also done for Caesar after his own death.[77] Ovid even claimed that Vesta saved him from death by the hands of the Senators so that he could be made into a god because of his position as her chief high-priest.[78]

Like Aeneas, Romulus was part divine. According to Livy, one day during his reign, on the Campus Martius, Romulus disappeared in a storm, and the people claimed that he had

been deified. This idea was furthered when a Roman man said the divine Romulus had spoken to him. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* reported that Romulus became the god Quirinus through Mars' intercession and that Romulus's wife, Hersílië, was also made into a divinity, called Hora.[79] Quirinus also gave his name to the Romans, who were called the Quirites. In addition to this honor, the early Romans also viewed this god on the same level as Jupiter and Mars. Together, these three made up the archaic Capitoline Triad and had the three most powerful priesthoods in Rome, the *flamines maiores*.[80] These three priesthoods were the highest in rank, above even the *pontifex maximus*. Another practice that set them apart was the giving of *spolia* to each of these three gods.[81]

Caesar was to be made a god himself. Even during his life, Caesar was given a priesthood like Romulus had been given priesthood as the god Quirinus, and a statue of Caesar was placed in Quirinus' temple.[82] Caesar even claimed to have seen Quirinus in a vision. The story of Romulus, who as a mortal Roman had been made into a god, was part of the basis for the belief in Caesar's own ascendancy into the heavens. As noted in the previous chapter, this deification was promoted by Augustus upon the appearance of a comet thought to be the spirit of the dead Caesar hovering in the heavens.[83]

After a temple was constructed for Divus Julius on the forum, the Roman people granted the right of asylum to it in honor of Caesar and in direct succession to the concept of Romulus's own asylum.[84] His remains were even allowed to be kept within the city limits like those of Romulus, which was a very rare occurrence, since it was believed that the dead polluted the city.[85]

Imperator Augustus also used Romulus for his own propaganda themes, though for the younger Caesar, the relationship to the great warrior and founder held a different focus.

Augustus too wanted to be associated with Romulus the warrior. As noted in the previous chapter, Augustus was constantly in battle against Caesar's assassins, Mark Antony, or other contenders for power. He needed to be known as a strong military leader for fear that his army might abandon or turn against him. He also wanted to continue expanding the Roman Empire. In addition to the *pietas* of Aeneas, Augustus promoted the *virtus* and warrior prowess of Romulus and strove to show that he was a fitting heir to their founder of Rome.[86]

One of the easiest ways for Augustus to connect to the military side of Romulus was through art and architecture. The Forum Augustum, as mentioned earlier, was made up of two long colonnades and two *excedrae*. The central figure of the eastern *exedra* was Romulus, likely shown as a triumphant warrior—the aspect of his character which the generals tended to portray. It is probable that the statue was meant to personify the main characteristics of Romulus: virtue and courage.[87] The eastern exedra also held statues of some of the most famous men in Roman history. Scipio Aemilianus, Sulla, Pompey, and Lucullus were among these as men celebrated as triumphant leaders and generals.[88] Shown with their statues were lists of their achievements.[89] These statues, present in Augustus's own forum, physically connected him to their military successes just as the statue of Romulus would have done.

The two central figures of Romulus and Aeneas would have also related directly to the large temple in the forum at the far (north) end dedicated to Mars Ultor—Mars the Avenger. The temple was vowed by Augustus at the Battle of Philippi in 42 BCE in honor of the defeat of Caesar's assassins. Since Aeneas was the legendary symbol of filial piety and Romulus the symbol of the great warrior, it would have made sense to include both figures, even if they weren't directly related to Augustus himself. In fact, their inclusion may have

even helped Augustus to establish his legitimate claim to authority. Julius Caesar's links to Aeneas and Romulus were well known, as was the relationship between Mars and Venus, the latter to whom Caesar had dedicated an imposing temple in his own nearby forum. Thus the tightly conceived iconography and temple found on the Forum Augustum worked well to remind the Romans of the continuity and close ties between the gods, Julius Caesar, and Augustus himself.[90]

Augustus's temple to Mars was not dedicated until 2 BCE, after the emperor had received the same title as both Romulus and his adopted father, that of *pater patriae*.[91] Appropriately for the god of war, the complex was funded by spoils and built on land owned by Augustus.[92]

Cassius Dio wrote that the Temple of Mars Ultor was meant to look very much like the Temple to Jupiter Feretrius, which Romulus had vowed with his first *spolia opima*. Augustus, acknowledging the imitation, actually laid the recovered standards from his Parthian campaign in the Temple of Mars Ultor as if they were his own *spolia*. A law was also passed that would demand that any future recovered standards be placed in the Temple of Mars Ultor, just as Romulus had declared that future *spolia opima* would be dedicated to Jupiter Feretrius. In addition, the original plan of the senate was for the temple to be built on the Capitoline, just as the Temple of Jupiter Feretrius had been. Augustus, however, declined to build his temple there, perhaps because he wanted it in his own forum or because he did not want to too closely align himself with the possibly dangerous image of Romulus.[93] It may have also been done in order to further link himself wit his adopted father, as Augustus's forum is but a stone's throw from Julius Caesar's own.

In and on the temple, there were only a few figures. Mars was prominently shown in

the center of the pediment of the temple, as well as centered within the temple. Venus was placed next to Mars in both locations, referencing her relationship to Mars as his consort, as well as pointing to her connection to Augustus and Rome through her son, Aeneas. One relief in the temple showed Venus with Mars' sword, standing next to the god, who was between her and a possibly Julian male. The fact that Venus held Mars' sword symbolized peace, which is what Augustus's reign was most known for.[94] However, the Mars on the pediment was much more war-like, probably because Augustus wanted to emphasize his role as a warrior, not just of a peace-maker.[95] In addition, since Venus and Mars were Augustus's two putative ancestors, their prominent display in the sacred spot would also serve to remind Romans of the connections that Augustus had to the gods.

Back on the Republican forum, a triumphal triple arch for Augustus was constructed near the Temple of Divus Julius. On the arch were mounted plaques of the dates of each consulate meant "to affirm the chronological succession from Romulus...to Augustus" in 12 BCE.[96] Some scholars believe that these same plaques were found during the Renaissance and are now housed in the Palazzo dei Conservatori and are called the *fasti Capitolini*. A public monument with such a list would have been completely original—the only other places that kept many lists of any sort were magisterial or sacred in nature, and these lists were never on public display.[97] The *fasti* consist of three separate groups: the *fasti consulares*, the *fasti triumphales*, and a summary of the *ludi saeculares*, which described the religious games.[98] The *fasti consulares* was a listing of the consuls and other magistrates of Rome. Both Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus were listed here, as well as Mark Antony, who was crossed out after his name was declared *damnatio memoriae*. It is likely that the list began with the first consul, Lucius Junius Brutus in 509 BCE, but the earliest parts of the

fasti have been lost.[99] The *fasti triumphales* was a listing of the triumphs and ovations of Roman kings or generals. Again, Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus were both listed and, interestingly, so was Mark Antony, though his name was left intact, perhaps because his ovation was due to the peace made with Augustus.[100] Both of these lists would have associated Augustus with the great men of the past, such as his adopted father, triumphant generals, former consuls, and Romulus, just as the imagery of his Temple of Mars Ultor did. However, these connections were now made in the form of *fasti* (a calendar) on a triumphal arch in the middle of the old forum near the temple dedicated to the ascended Divus Julius. No one could ignore the connection between his own military success, the temple to the late Caesar, and the listing of Rome's historical greatness all in one location.

It is debated in modern scholarship why the arch itself was constructed, as there are a few mentions of an arch being built for Augustus in the classical record. Vergil mentioned one being made for the recovery of the standards during the Parthian campaign. Cassius Dio said that an arch was supposedly erected in honor of the victorious battle of Actium.[101] However, for whichever victory it was intended, we can assume the arch itself stood to connect Augustus to Romulus through his continued success in battle and further legitimate his claim to power.

Sculpture outside of the city was also used to link Augustus to Romulus. The statue now known as the "Augustus of Prima Porta" shows the emperor wearing a cuirass detailed with a man with a wolf at his feet.[102] While it is not the typical iconography presented in regards to Romulus (the wolf nursing the twins), nonetheless, it is probably meant to allude to either Romulus or Mars.[103] This particular piece was perhaps the most obvious way of connecting the two great leaders—depicting Augustus as a warrior by referencing Romulus

on the emperor's own armor.

Augustus was also often compared to Romulus as the founder of the Roman empire, as was his adopted father before him. Like Julius Caesar, he gained both the titles of *pater patriae* and *pontifex maximus,* two titles also held by Romulus while he was king.[104] However, unlike Caesar, it wasn't by his defense of Rome and his law-making, but rather by his religious connections and building programs that he related himself to the mighty king who first constructed the city of Rome.

Before taking the name Augustus, some suggested that Octavian should take the name of Romulus, since "he too was, as it were, a founder of the city."[105] However, he preferred to take the name Augustus in reference to Romulus, as it was related to augural rites, such as the one that Romulus used to win power over his brother.[106] Others believe he took the name in relation to the title *augustiorem*, which Romulus received after providing himself with twelve lictors.[107] Whatever the reasoning, Augustus henceforth became associated in pious name with the founder of Rome.

Another religious connection to Romulus was made when Augustus was observing the auspices during his first consulship. Augustus saw twelve vultures in the sky, the same number and type of bird that Romulus saw on the Palatine before the founding of the city.[108] This connection associated Augustus with the favor of the gods shown to Romulus, since this was what the auspices were meant to bestow. The auspices were also a religious rite, and the favorable viewing of the vultures was noted as directly related to Augustus's own *pietas*, not to mention the fact that it could be seen as a second foundation for the city.

In another show of his connection to Romulus and also to the gods, later in his life Augustus moved from living in the Roman forum to a new home on the Palatine near where

the Casa Romuli, the supposed house of Romulus, was located.[109] This geographically paralleled Augustus with his royal ancestor and constantly reminded his visitors of his association with the ancient king. Suetonius noted that Augustus also created a monument in honor of the site where Romulus and Remus were raised, and later in his life he reinstated the Lupercalia, the celebration that the twins were said to have celebrated when they were told of men stealing cattle.[110] These direct connections with Romulus's early life and commitment to religious rites further showed Augustus's *pietas* to the gods, one of whom was Romulus himself.

Lastly, Augustus used his building programs, as noted extensively in the last chapter, to emphasize his likeness to first king. Throughout Rome Augustus renovated some of the temples associated with Romulus, thereby giving his patronage to buildings which would link him to the founder of the city. He rebuilt the Temple of Jupiter Feretrius, the temple in which Romulus first dedicated his spoils.[111] He even brought back the worship of Quirinus, the ascended godly form of Romulus, whose temple he also rebuilt on the Quirinal Hill, further promoting the god's patronage over the city.[112]

One further piece of architecture can be noted for its depictions of Romulus. The Ara Pacis was constructed by the senate to commemorate Augustus's triumphant return from Spain in 13 BCE. The monument, noted in the previous chapter for its Aenean images, also depicted the Romulean saga. On the west side of the altar still survives an image of the twins being suckled by the she-wolf, watched over both by Faustulus, their foster father, and Mars, their divine father. The image is meant to invoke the peaceful aspect of Romulus's life—before learning of his true identity. It also served to emphasize the idea that Augustus was favored by the gods by showing Mars watching over his sons, who were saved from death

and cared for by a wild animal.[113] The altar also promoted Augustus's role as founder of a golden era by reaffirming his lineage from both Aeneas, the founder of Roman civilization, and Romulus, the founder of the city itself. One image on the altar that particularly invoked the double connection is Venus holding the twins in her lap.[114]

Some believe that the family scene on the altar was meant to correspond to Romulus as well. The two boys in the frieze were Augustus's grandsons and possible heirs, Gaius Caesar and Lucius Caesar. Gaius may have been meant to portray Iulus and Lucius to portray Romulus, the two main founders of the Julian clan and Rome.[115]

However, as a devoted member of the Republic and because he had seen the ill that had befallen his adopted father, Augustus was also familiar with the poorer characteristics of the ancient king and how they could affect him. Therefore, many Augustan poets would try to avoid or deny the more controversial aspects of Romulus's life. Ovid's *Fasti* told that when the twins' mother was gathering water to wash some holy items, she fell asleep. Mars then raped her, unbeknown to the sleeping virgin. When she woke up, she remembered a dream about two palm trees rising from her headband, one of which grew bigger than the other. Her uncle, Amulius had an ax, which he had used to try to cut down the two trees in her dream. He was unable to do so, however, because they were protected by a woodpecker and a wolf. The dream was meant to correspond to the future of her sons, one of whom (Romulus) would be greater than the other. This vision also showed Amulius' failed attempt to kill the boys, who were aided by sacred animals, as they were in the founding legend. Ovid managed to take the defiling of the Vestal Virgin and make it more respectable by having the girl—ignorant of the sacrilege—raped by a god known for such lustful activities. He also promoted the story of the she-wolf, rather than noting the possibility that Romulus's foster-mother was

a prostitute.

In many versions of the killing of Remus during Augustus's reign, the idea of fratricide is either played down or omitted.[116] Ovid, in the description of the Parilia in his *Fasti*, even laid full blame for the deed upon Romulus's impulsive friend Celer. Romulus, he said, wanted to grieve for his loss but felt he had to put on a brave face for his people, so he seemed to be unmoved.[117] Propertius (c. 54–16 BCE) emphasized the fraternal aspects of the twins, rather than the fratricidal. He even portrayed Remus' death as being necessary for Rome, as his blood was what made the walls of the city firm.[118] In addition, Propertius does not give the name of the person who killed Remus, thereby not putting the blame on Romulus.[119]

The poets also employed other methods of putting aside Romulus's bad qualities. In addition to avoiding the ignoble topics, writers made Augustus surpass the sometimes immoral Romulus. Ovid noted that whereas Romulus promoted the rape of the Sabine women, Augustus promoted more civilized marriage and chastity. Whereas Romulus ruled over only his nearest neighbors, Augustus made an empire. Romulus allowed his brother to conquer his walls by jumping over them, while Augustus made them stronger. Romulus invited men of all types to enter his domain, but Augustus banished those he deemed criminals. While Romulus ruled mostly by force, Augustus ruled by law. Although Romulus was made a god by his father, Augustus made his father into a god. As the poet so concisely stated, "Romulus, take second place."[120]

Romulus's twin brother Remus also served a purpose in Augustus's propaganda. The emperor's close friend was named Agrippa. It was hinted at by Propertius and even the fourth-century CE commentator Maurus Servius Honoratus that Agrippa played Remus to

Augustus's Romulus. Augustus and Agrippa grew up together, like brothers, in the same house. Agrippa was even given high offices in the government after Augustus became emperor, and many Augustan poets began to tell stories about the founding twins ruling together, not fighting one another.[121] A pediment on the Temple of Quirinus commissioned by Augustus showed the twins as almost equals, though Romulus is surrounded by more gods and thus is more favored.[122]

Augustus would also find connection to Romulus in death, as Caesar had. His heir Tiberius (42 BCE–37 CE) gave the eulogy at Augustus's funeral and noted that Augustus had done much for Rome from an early age, just as Romulus had done.[123] Like both Caesar and Romulus, Augustus was said to become a god after his death.[124] An eagle was released at his funeral to symbolize the ascension (as would be done with many future emperors as well), and later a senator said that he had seen Augustus actually going up into the heavens.[125] The Temple of Divus Augustus was depicted on Roman coins as having two statues on its roof—one of Aeneas, and one of Romulus. Both of Augustus's ancient ancestors had been mortals who were deified upon their deaths, according to legend.[126] There would certainly have been many senators who knew the tradition, who would have recognized the diversion by the Augustan poets. Propaganda against Augustus could easily use his connections to Romulus against him. The connection could not be missed by anyone passing the temple.[127]

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The inclusion of Romulus into the family tree was a great benefit to the Julii. Descended from not only two mortals-turned-gods, but also through two important divinities, Venus and Mars, they were given many connections to nobility and godly favor. This

connection to the gods, again, was a profitable and easily marketable way for Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus to show their ability to translate their favors upon the Roman people.

Romulus was also useful in times when both leaders would need to show their military prowess. For Caesar, this connection would have gained him military allegiance from his soldiers when he fought against his many enemies. The connection was an easy one to make considering his noted bravery and success in battle. Augustus, however, was not as well known as a military commander due to his young age, and it was important for him to appear to have as much *virtus* as his political and military rivals like Mark Antony. Both men were able to use their ancestral connection to the warrior king of Rome to promote their own political legitimacy and use of military power.

The role of Romulus as the city's king and founder also proved valuable for the two Caesars. Julius Caesar, defender of the city and of the plebeian class used his connections to Romulus the founder to promote his role as a *popularis;* both Caesar and Romulus were friends of the common man. Caesar made laws that favored farmers, veterans, and the poorer classes of Rome, which often angered the wealthier and more powerful patriciate. However, it seemed that perhaps the connection to Romulus helped contribute to Caesar's downfall, since it was his close connections to the ancient monarchy in both appearance and deed that would get the great dictator killed. Augustus Caesar, however, used his connections to Romulus the founder in a more religious and constructive sense, showing that he was related to the ancient king through his titles, his divine favors, and his *pietas*. In addition, Augustus would curb his connections to the ancient leader by declining certain honors, such as the name of Romulus. Therefore, the addition of Romulus to the propagandist program was beneficial despite the king's negative connotations.

The overall programs of both Caesar and Augustus's propaganda worked in both Romulus and Aeneas, two men seen as heroic founders of Rome and Roman civilization. Emperors after Augustus would continue to play upon these figures in order to promote their own ends, as well as use the figures of both Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus, as we will see in the next chapter.

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1 T. P. Wiseman, *Remus: a Roman Myth* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 160; William N. Bates, "The Date of Lycophron." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 6 (1895): 75-82.

2 Wiseman, *Remus*, 161.

3 T. J. Cornell, "Aeneas and the Twins: The Development of the Roman Foundation Legend," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 21, (1975): 3-4.

4 It is unknown when these men were writing; Dionysius of Halicarnassus calls them "very ancient."

5 Jacques Heurgon, *The Rise of Rome to 264 B.C,* trans. James Willis (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973*)*, 128-131.

6 Cornell, "Aeneas and the Twins*,"* 3.

7 Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives,* vol. 1, Romulus, trans. Bernadotte Perrin, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914) 97.

8 Wiseman, *Remus*, 160.

9 Elias J. Bickerman, "Origines Gentium," *Classical Philology* 47, no. 2 (April 1952): 67.

10 Jane DeRose Evans, *The Art of Persuasion: Political Propaganda from Aeneas to Brutus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 36.

11 Bickerman, "Origines Gentium," 67.

12 Andrea Carandini, *Rome: Day One*, trans. Stephen Sartarelli (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 116.

13 Carandini, *Rome: Day One*, 37.

14 Cristina Mazzoni, *She-Wolf: The Story of a Roman Icon* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010)*,* 31.

15 Livy, 1.3-1.4. Unless otherwise noted, all citations are from *The Early History of Rome: Books I-V of the* Ab Urbe Condita, trans. B. O. Foster, intro. Matthew Peacock (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2005).

16 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1.77.1. Unless otherwise noted, all citations are from *The Roman Antiquities of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, v*ol. 1, trans. Earnest Cary, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960)

17 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1.78.3-1.79.3. However, according to Augusto Fraschetti, *The Foundation of Rome*, trans. Marian Hill and Kevin Windle (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), there is also another version of the birth of the twins given by the ancient historians, including Plutarch. It was said that the twin founders of Rome were born from a slave girl who had coupled with a "male organ" that had appeared in the hearth of her owner, the king. This, however, is mostly regarded as a mix-up with the birth of another of Rome's early kings, Servius Tullius, whose birth mirrored this almost exactly.

18 Livy, 1.4-1.5.

19 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1.79.4-1.79.10.

20 Wiseman, *Remus*, 96.

21 This is actually quite odd for Dionysius of Halicarnassus to have said, since *lupa* is a Latin word. The English translator and editor of his *Roman Antiquities,* Earnest Cary, noted that the Greek word (λύκαινα) was not used for "prostitute," so Dionysius may have incorrectly labeled the word as Greek instead of Latin.

22 Livy, 1.6-1.7.

23 Livy, 1.7.

24 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1.84.4-1.87.4.

25 Donald Earl, *The Moral and Political Tradition of Rome* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), 74.

[26] Matthew Fox, *Roman Historical Myths: The Regal Period in Augustan Literature,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 15.
[27] Fraschetti, *Foundation of Rome,* 65-66.
[28] Plutarch, *Lives*, 163.
[29] Plutarch, *Lives*, 125.
[30] Fraschetti, *Foundation of Rome*, 67.
[31] Fraschetti, *Foundation of Rome*, 67.
[32] Fraschetti, *Foundation of Rome*, 43; Fox, *Roman Historical Myths*, 101.
[33] Lily Ross Taylor, *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor,* Philological Monographs 1, (Middletown: American Philological Association, 1931), 44.
[34] Cynthia J. Bannon, *The Brothers of Romulus: Fraternal* Pietas *in Roman Law, Literature, and Society,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 162.
[35] Emma Dench, *Romulus' Asylum: Roman Identities from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 16.
[36] Wiseman, *Remus*, 97.
[37] Bannon, *Brothers of Romulus*, 164.
[38] Douglas Little, "Politics in Augustan Poetry." *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II.30.1 (1982): 277, 336.
[39] In *Elegies* 2.6. See Little, "Politics in Augustan Poetry," 297.
[40] From the *Amores*. See Little, "Politics in Augustan Poetry," 336.
[41] Sallust, *Catiline's Conspiracy, The Jugurthine War, Histories,* trans. William W. Batstone, Oxford World's Classics (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 135; Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 89.
[42] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 90.
[43] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 90.
[44] Gertrude Hirst, "The Significance of Augustior as Applied to Hercules and Romulus: A Note on Livy I, 17, 9 and I, 8, 9," *The American Journal of Philology* 47, no. 4 (1926): 348.
[45] Fraschetti, *Foundation of Rome*, 108.
[46] Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars,* trans. Catharine Edwards, Oxford World's Classics (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 37.
[47] Heurgon, *Rise of Rome*, 128-129.
[48] Livy, 1.10.
[49] Livy, 1.10.
[50] Livy, 1.10-1.11. Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 87; Palmer, *Roman Religion*, 140.
[51] Harriet I. Flower, "The Tradition of the *Spolia Opima*: M. Claudius Markellus and Augustus," *Classical Antiquity* 19, no. 1 (April 2000): 42-43.
[52] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 87.
[53] Bannon, *Brothers of Romulus*, 161.
[54] Before Caesar, the title had only been given to two other men that we know of. The latter was Caesar's contemporary, Cicero, during the time of the Catiline Conspiracy. The former was the general Markus Furius Camillus, who recovered Rome after it was sacked in the fourth century BCE.
[55] Kenneth Scott, "The Identification of Augustus with Romulus-Quirinus," *Transactions and Proceedings of the* 56,(1925), 83-84.
[56] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 91; Cassius Dio, *Dio's Roman History,* trans. Earnest Cary, vol. 4, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916), 315.
[57] Adrian Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 63-64.
[58] Mazzoni, *She-Wolf*, 31.
[59] Luciano Canfora, *Julius Caesar: The Life and Times of the People's Dictator,* trans. Marian Hill and Kevin Windle (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007) 78-82.
[60] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 478-479.
[61] Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, 20. The typical Roman calendar consisted of 355 days, but it required monitoring to keep it accurate. The college of pontiffs was in charge of installing or removing days to the year. For more on this, see Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 479.
[62] Powell, *Roman Poetry and Propaganda*, 10.

[63] Hirst, "Significance of Augustior," 349.
[64] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 249; Plutarch, *Lives*, 165. Caesar also did this in the battle of Alesia in 52 BCE.
[65] Canfora, *Julius Caesar*, 92.
[66] Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 77.
[67] Little, "Politics in Augustan Poetry," 275.
[68] Canfora, *Julius Caesar,* 15-16.
[69] Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, 98.
[70] Appian, *Roman History: The Civil Wars,* vol. 3, trans. Horace White, Loeb Classical Library (New York: Macmillan, 1913), 353.
[71] Ovid, *Metamorphoses: A New Verse Translation,* trans. David Raeburn, intro. Denis Feeney (Penguin Classics. New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 587-589.
[72] Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, 61.
[73] Evans, *Art of Persuasion,* 91.
[74] Ovid, *Fasti*, 99.
[75] Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, 36.
[76] Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, 42.
[77] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 91.
[78] Ovid, *Ovid's Fasti: Roman Holidays,* trans. Betty Rose Nagle (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 99.
[79] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 589-591.
[80] Of course, the archaic Triad was later replaced by the later Triad of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, and had much less to do with Romulus.
[81] Inez Scott Ryberg, "Was the Capitoline Triad Etruscan or Italic?" *The American Journal of Philology* 52, no. 2 (1931): 145-153.
[82] Scott, "Identification of Augustus," 83.
[83] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 92; Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, 41.
[84] Dench, *Romulus's Asylum*, 17.
[85] Fraschetti, *Foundation of Rome*, 110. For more, see The Twelve Tables, cited in Oliver J. Thatcher, ed., *The Library of Original Sources*, vol. III: The Roman World (Milwaukee: University Research Extension Co., 1901), 9-11.
[86] Matthew D.H. Clark, *Augustus, First Roman Emperor: Power, Propaganda and the Politics of Survival,* Greece and Rome Live (Exeter: Bristol Phoenix Press, 2010), 97.
[87] Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus,* trans. Alan Shapiro, Jerome Lectures, Sixteenth Series (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), 203; Nancy H. Ramage and Andrew Ramage, *Roman Art: Romulus to Constantine,* third edition (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2001), 100.
[88] Andrew Erskine, *Troy between Greece and Rome: Local Tradition and Imperial Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 18.
[89] Evans, *Art of Persuasion,* 111.
[90] J.W. Rich, "Augustus'ss Parthian Honours, the Temple of Mars Ultor and the Arch in the Forum Romanum," *Papers of the British School at Rom*e 66, (1998): 97.
[91] Rich, "Augustus'ss Parthian Honours," 88-89.
[92] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 195.
[93] Rich, "Augustus's Parthian Honours," 89-91.
[94] Zanker, *Power of Images,* 196-197.
[95] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 201.
[96] Philip Jacks, *The Antiquarian and the Myth of Antiquity: The Origins of Rome in Renaissance Thought*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 14.
[97] Christopher J. Simpson, "The Original Site of the 'Fasti Capitolini.'" *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 42, no. 1 (1993): 61-64. Other scholars believe that the *fasti Capitolini* were originally mounted inside a building, such as the Regia.
[98] Three celebrations are mentioned: games in 236 and 17 BCE, and 88 CE. The games held in 236 and 17 are noted as the third and fifth games, respectively.
[99] For the listing of the *fasti consulares*, see Attilio Degrassi, *Fasti Capitolini* (Torino: G.B. Paravia, 1954), 28-

88. Or online: http://www.attalus.org/translate/fasti2.html.

[100] For the *fasti triumphales*, see Degrassi, *Fasti Capitolini*, 90-110. Or online: http://www.attalus.org/translate/fasti.html.

[101] Leicester B. Holland, "The Triple Arch of Augustus," *American Journal of Archaeology* 50, no. 1 (1946): 53.

[102] According to Valentin Muller, the statue was likely made after the death of Augustus, commissioned by his successor Tiberius. It was found in a villa owned by Augustus's wife, Livia, in Prima Porta.

[103] Mazzoni, *She-Wolf*, 181.

[104] Ovid, *Fasti*, 60, 92; Katharine Allen, "The Fasti of Ovid and the Augustan Propaganda," *The American Journal of Philology* 43, no. 3 (1922), 261.

[105] Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, 46.

[106] Alexandre Grandazzi, *The Foundation of Rome: Myth and History,* trans. Jane Marie Todd (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 143; Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, 46.

[107] Hirst, "Significance of Augustior," 348.

[108] Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, 93; and Dio, in Wiseman, *Remus*, 144.

[109] Augustus likely bought a preexisting house on the Palatine near 40 BCE, though O.L. Richmond mentioned the senate was thought to have constructed the actual palace for him sometime between 40 and 29 BCE. See "The Augustan Palatium," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 4, pt. 2 (1914), 193-226.

[110] Jacks, *Antiquarian*, 14.

[111] Zanker, *Power of Images*, 203.

[112] Jacks, *Antiquarian*, 14; Wiseman, *Remus*, 146; Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 98.

[113] Mazzoni, *She-Wolf*, 189.

[114] Peter J. Holliday, "Time, History, and Ritual on the Ara Pacis Augustae," *The Art Bulletin* 72, no. 4 (Dec. 1990): 547-551. Holliday argues that the woman (Venus) can be argued as being many different female figures, such as Pax, Terra Mater, or Venus.

[115] Jacks, *Antiquarian*, 16.

[116] Bannon, *Brothers of Romulus*, 164.

[117] Ovid, *Fasti*, 127.

[118] Propertius, *Elegies*, 267; Bannon, *Brothers of Romulus*, 170.

[119] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 94-95.

[120] Ovid, *Fasti*, 61.

[121] Wiseman, *Remus*, 145-146.

[122] Wiseman, *Remus*, 148-149.

[123] Evans, *Art of Persuasion*, 97.

[124] Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, 96.

[125] Taylor, *Divinity of the Emperor,* 229.

[126] Rich, "Augustus'ss Parthian Honours," 96.

[127] This divinity placed upon the first Roman emperor would play a very important part in the Renaissance of Rome in the next chapter.

Chapter Three
A Renaissance of Myth-Making and Propaganda in Rome

Beginning in the early fourteenth century, the papacy found itself in trouble that caused not only Romans, but many Christians to question the authority and legitimacy of the popes. The Babylonian Captivity of the papacy (1305-1377) combined with the Great Western Schism (1378-1417) and the growing Protestant Reformation (traditionally noted as beginning in 1517), led many Renaissance popes to assert their temporal and spiritual authority. Using the foundation myths of Romulus and Aeneas, the popes curried favor with the Romans, and by using the foundation stories surrounding St. Peter and the papacy itself, they also managed to show their legitimate position as the leaders of Christianity. With the help of humanists, and through art, architecture, literature, and other means of *renovatio Romae*, the papacy of the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries expressed its renewal of the land of the Roman Empire and its spiritual leadership of the Christian empire.

Yet even with both of these claims—temporal and spiritual—the popes of the Renaissance found themselves struggling to maintain control. The papacy had been taken out of its home city in 1305 by Pope Clement V (1305-1314 CE), a Frenchman who decided to move the papal court in 1309 to Avignon in southern France because of his own illness. French popes continued to be elected in Avignon, and the papacy seemed to be stranded outside Italy under the control of the French king. Italian Christians did not approve of these changes, and Christians in other regions of Europe like England disliked the papacy's seeming to favor one country.[1] Many called this period the Babylonian Captivity of the papacy due to its similarity to the Jews' forcible relocation to Babylon in the sixth century BCE. Without the support of the papacy, the city of Rome fell into disrepair and ruin.

Without the support of its lands in Italy and, further, without compensation from the alienated lands of Europe, the holy treasury was nearly empty.[2] No pope attempted to move the court back to Rome until the time of Pope Gregory XI (1370-1378 CE) in 1377, when the Papal States rebelled. Yet this attempted relocation actually hurt the papacy even more, as Gregory died shortly after relocating the papacy to Rome.

After the pope's death, many cardinals still wanted the court in Avignon, but since the cardinals had to elect a new pope in Rome, they were easily mobbed by the disgruntled Roman citizens. The Italian Archbishop of Bari, Bartolomeo Parignano, was elected as Pope Urban VI (1378-1389) to pacify the Romans and wanted to stay in his native Italy, but soon he lost the support of most of the cardinals.[3] Urban then infuriated the cardinals by refusing to abdicate after the conclave was safely out of the city. The cardinals then decided to elect a new pope, Robert of Geneva (cousin of the king of France), as Clement VII (1378-1394). Because the cardinals agreed that the first election had been invalid having occurred under duress, Clement was able to move his court back to Avignon.[4] Of course, neither pope could allow the other to remain in office; they then excommunicated each other and stuck with their own factions in their own locations. So the papacy actually divided, creating the Great Western Schism.

In 1409, a council was convened in Constance to settle the dispute between the two latest popes, Gregory XII (1406-1417) and the Avignon pope, Benedict XIII (1394-1423). However, neither pope responded to the council, so the cardinals of the Council of Constance elected yet another man pope, Alexander V (1409-1410). With three popes, each with a patron ruler of Europe, another council was convened in Constance to end the disgraceful schism. Finally in 1417 the three popes were deposed or had resigned, and the council

elected a new pope—Martin V (1417-1431)—ending the Great Schism.[5]

To prevent history from repeating itself, the council declared its authority superior to the pope's. In doing so, the council hoped to avoid future schisms and damage to the authority of the church itself. In two proclamations, *Sancrosancta,* 1415*,* and *Frequens,* 1417, the council asserted this idea. *Sancrosancta* stated:

> [The holy synod of Constance] first declares that this same council, legitimately assembled in the Holy Ghost, forming a general council and representing the Catholic Church militant, has its power immediately from Christ, and every one, whatever his state or position, even if it be the Papal dignity itself, is bound to obey it in all those things which pertain to the faith and the healing of the said schism, and to the general reformation of the Church of God, in head and members.[6]

In *Frequens*, the council decreed that in the future councils would always either be in session or expected to be in session at the expiration of a previous council.[7] By these two decrees, the council created a power other than God that the popes would need to obey.

The entire episode of the schism angered most of the Christian world and made the Church look corrupt and disorganized. The council had emerged to become the foremost spiritual authority in Christendom. Additionally, the papacy had also lost control of the Papal States in central Italy. It would be hard for the popes to regain the reputation and lands that the papacy had controlled just over a century earlier. The popes again would need to find a way to assert their authority over both Christianity and Italy.

In Rome, further problems arose for the absent popes. The first was Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374), better known as Petrarch, an Italian poet. One of the first Western Europeans since the fall of the western Roman Empire to delve deeply into classical culture, Petrarch took classical sources and used them to "provide a set of examples in which his contemporaries could pattern their life."[8] Petrarch's works would inspire others to become

involved in the revival of classical culture and literature. He believed that through learning about and embracing its past, Rome could return to its imperial glory.[9] However, for Petrarch, that imperial glory had little to do with the papacy. In a letter to the Roman leader Cola di Rienzo (c. 1313-1354), he wrote:

> In that very city in which Caesar Augustus, the ruler of the world and the lawgiver of the nations, by special edict forbade that he be called a god, in that same city, today, beggarly thieves judge themselves unpardonably offended if they be not addressed as gods.[10]

Beginning in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, this humanist ideal took hold in Rome, and many humanists began to study the city itself, especially Republican Rome. Historical studies on the city focused mainly on the arts and architecture. The topography and ruins of the city would influence humanists in Rome much more than the civic principles that would influence humanists in Florence.[11] The heroes of ancient times were loved once again; classical statues were found, admired, and collected. Many of these statues were honored in public places throughout Rome.[12] For example, the famous Herculean *Belvedere Torso* was displayed by the Colonna family of Rome in the early 1400s before it caught the eye of Julius II in the 1500s and was moved to the Hall of the Muses in the Vatican.[13]

In literature, Cicero was seen as the paramount prose writer of the Latin language, while Vergil was thought to be the foremost Roman authority on poetry. Many humanists strived to base their own works on those of these ancient writers.[14] Petrarch and Cola di Rienzo tried to use the history of imperial Rome to support their own cause of Republican freedom in the absence of the popes. In May of 1347, during the Avignon pontificate of Clement VI, Cola claimed the title of Tribune and led the Roman people in the desire for

civic freedom, and in August he insisted that members from various Italian cities meet and declare freedom for the whole of Italy. However, the exorbitant taxes di Rienzo imposed so that he could live in luxury alienated him from the people, and he was murdered in 1354. After his failed attempt at liberating Rome, the humanists began to find themselves assisting the returned papal monarchs.

Because of the Babylonian Captivity and the schism, the papacy was absent from the city of Rome for over a century and was perceived by most of Christianity as weak. This made it very hard for the popes to gain the prestige and power that would bring the papacy back to its former glory. The city of Rome had been dominated since the eleventh century by noble families such as the Colonna, the Orsini, and the Conti. As noted by Gregorovius:

> The curse of the city lay not in the turbulent spirit of the democracy, but in the lawless nature of the feudal nobles. Their power was far too great to render it possible that they could be overcome by the populace…they sat entrenched within fortified monuments, as it were in quarters, warring daily with one another from motives of revenge or ambition, and mocking at the Capitol.[15]

The feuds did not even stop after the papacy returned; there was also an unyielding fight between the Colonna and the Orsini, which did not end until a papal bull demanded peace between the Roman noble families in 1511.[16] Later, noble families showed their power much in the same manner as the popes would—with large palaces and patronage of the arts. Many members of Renaissance noble families often became popes, expanding Roman familial power into the Renaissance.

To promote their temporal authority, the popes had to defeat the local nobility, the Roman government, and even foreign princes and councils trying and assert their own power over Rome and the papal lands.[17] As stated by Professor Kathleen Wren Christian, it was no longer possible for the papacy to merely assert its authority, it needed to prove that it

deserved and legitimately held imperial status.[18]

In addition, the papacy faced a lack of spiritual authority due to the schism. The Protestants, as they came to be known, found fault in many of the papacy's actions, including indulgences, nepotism, idolatry, and other corruptions. Starting during the schism and moving into the sixteenth century, men like John Wycliffe (1330-1384), Jan Hus (1369-1415), and Martin Luther (1483-1546) presented different popes with pressures on their claims to spiritual authority and created various Christian factions which would challenge the spiritual authority of the popes. Even Catholic priests like Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498) found the papacy wanting in terms of its spiritual authority and proposed courses of action to remedy the weakness of the popes.

One way in which the popes legitimized their temporal office was through the humanists. Many considered the papal court as the "employment center for humanists" in the High Renaissance period. Because of its monarchical structure and unification through the Latin language, there was an easy bridge from the empire of classical times to the modern empire of Christianity centered in Rome. The humanist Lorenzo Valla (1406-1457) noted that the archbishop of Rome was the inheritor of the power and culture of ancient Rome. While this idea—called *translatio imperii*—began in medieval times, it gained momentum because of the humanists and the papal need to legitimate temporal authority.[19] Priests and friars became humanists themselves; men like the Franciscan Jacopo della Marca (1391-1476) and Paolo Cortesi (1465-1510) used ancient words like *orator* instead of preacher and *divus* instead of saint.[20]

Papal claims to temporal authority were based on two donations of land. The "first" was the more famous Donation of Constantine.[21] This document, supposedly issued by

Constantine the Great (272-337), gave the Church control of the lands surrounding Rome in honor of the emperor's baptism by the pope:

> And to the extent of our earthly imperial power, we have decreed that his holy Roman church shall be honored with veneration, and that more than our empire and earthly throne the most sacred seat of the Blessed Peter shall be gloriously exalted, we giving to it power, and dignity of glory, and vigor, and honor imperial. And we ordain and decree that he shall have the supremacy as well over the four principal seats, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Constantinople, as also over all the churches of God in the whole earth. And the Pontiff, who at the time shall be at the head of the holy Roman church itself, shall be more exalted than, and chief over, all the priests of the whole world, and according to his judgment everything which is provided for the service of God and for the stability of the faith of Christians is to be administered.[22]

The Donation and the baptism of the Emperor were portrayed by the artist Raphael in the Sala di Costantino of the Vatican Palace.[23]

The second donation, which actually did occur, was by King Pepin in 756. King Pepin, the first of the Carolingian line, defeated the Lombards of Italy and forced King Aistulf to transfer lands to the Church. Included in the list were the areas of "Ravenna, Cesena, Forlimpopoli, Forli, with its castle of Sussubium, Montefeltro, and Comacchio; from the Pentapolis came Rimini, Pesaro, La Cattolica, Fano, Sinigaglia, Jesi, San Marino, Urbino, Cagli, Gubbio, and Luceoli; and in the Roman district-Narni." These lands and towns later made up a sizeable portion of the Papal States.[24] Because of the mistaken dating of the Donation of Constantine, the later Donation of Pepin was regarded as a restoration of papal lands, rather than as the initial gift. The lands had been bestowed by the great Emperor Constantine, not by a Frankish king. The king was a good Christian ruler and gave those lands back to the pope. Through these gifts, the papacy became temporal lord over a good deal of territory in Italy. And with these gifts, the humanists asserted papal legitimacy in the

temporal realm.

In addition to the donation claims, Renaissance humanists like Piero da Monte (c. 1400-1457) took to calling the Church an empire, which would make the pope, the Church's leader, its emperor. This idea was furthered by the connection between Constantine, the first "Christian" emperor of Rome, and the Donation of Constantine.[25] The donation included the Lateran Palace in Rome, the imperial tiara, diadem, scepter, and banners formerly held by the Roman Emperor in addition to the actual land grants.[26]

By the fifteenth century, the popes had finally begun reasserting their temporal authority over the Papal States. Pope Martin V (1417-1431) was the man who brought the papacy back to Rome in 1420. A member of the powerful Roman Colonna family, he was the first to begin rebuilding Rome after it had been left to ruin during the Babylonian Captivity. He was seen as a third Romulus (the second being the renowned Roman general Camillus) for his efforts to restore the ancient city to glory.[27] It was necessary for him to assert his Roman heritage, as he was the first to reclaim the city of Rome and the Papal States for the papacy. By showing his connection to Romulus, he could gain the favor of the Roman people.

After the disastrous pontificate of Eugenius IV (1431-1447), Pope Nicholas V (1447-1455) became the first pope to take control in Rome and to employ humanists in any sizeable number. He began the *renovatio Romae*—a building program meant to restore the city of Rome to its imperial glory. As the heirs of the emperors, the popes needed to revive the beauty and splendor of the city, which had fallen into ruins during the Babylonian Captivity. While many cardinals did not understand the need to use the papal treasury to rebuild the city itself, Nicholas explained his reasoning to them in terms of how the grandeur of Rome would

benefit the Church. He told them that the people needed a renewed and beautiful city, for "unless their faith becomes aroused by extraordinary sights," the illiterate Christian masses would begin to forget their faith, since they could not otherwise understand the great power of the Church.[28] Constructing great buildings and monuments, then, would show the Christians, especially pilgrims, the money, power, and influence of the papacy in the temporal world and reassert its power over the Christian faith. If the people were awed by the buildings, they would be awed by their Christian leaders. In addition, Nicholas believed that by strengthening Rome, the papacy could protect itself from foreign influence. In accordance with these ideas, Pope Nicholas would rebuild the city's fortifications, as well as restore and aggrandize many of the churches in the city, including the medieval Vatican Palace and St. Peter's Basilica.[29] It was because of his work with the Vatican that it replaced the Lateran as the home of the popes. He also worked to restore one of Rome's ancient aqueducts to provide fresh water to Rome's citizens.[30] By acting more like the lord of Rome, the pope managed to exert his temporal authority over the Roman people.

Born in northern Italy, Pope Nicholas was not a native Roman. By strengthening Rome, he not only strengthened the papacy, but also increased his own popularity with the Roman people and enhanced his temporal authority. It became even more obvious to Nicholas that he needed to remain respected by the Romans, as in 1453 he discovered an assassination plot led by a Roman man, Stefano Porcaro, who hoped to return Rome to a republic.[31] Piero da Monte, a humanist who often addressed his works to Nicholas, provided the pope with a medieval link to the ancient empire, which connected him to Rome through his papal office. Da Monte noted that Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) had said that the pope was the *imperator* of the world and the *paterfamilias* of the Church. Since the Church was

the Kingdom of Christ, it could be inferred that the pope was a king. Also, like the ancient *imperatores*, he was both king and high priest of his kingdom's religion.[32] By relating Nicholas to the ancient emperors, Piero showed papal authority in terms the Romans could respect.

The Aqua Virgo, one of Rome's few remaining functional aqueducts, was also repaired by Nicholas V. By improving the aqueduct, he allowed more water to flow into parts of Rome. He also improved the Trevi fountain, which received its water from the aqueduct, and had his name and his role in the restoration etched on it in large, Roman letters. Most importantly, the repair allowed him to transfer the care of the aqueduct from the civic government to the papal government, thereby decreasing Roman authority over the city. Pope Sixtus IV (1471–1484), another northern Italian, also made repairs to the Aqua Virgo (renaming it the Acqua Vergine) and promoted the restoration of many dilapidated churches, such as St. John in the Lateran and Santa Maria del Popolo. These renovations came just in time for the Jubilee of 1475, which was attended by many Christian pilgrims.[33] Through these repairs, Sixtus IV equated himself with the Roman emperors, especially Augustus, who had done the same with ruined pagan temples.[34] In addition, these works made the city much more inhabitable and much more glorious for the pilgrims travelling for the Jubilee. Later, another pope, Paul III (1534-1549), put more money into improving the Acqua Vergine. This project extended the aqueduct and brought fresh water to the lower areas of the city, which not only helped the city to grow, but also made beautification of the city possible through more fountains.[35] He also proposed to build a new, stronger wall around the city of Rome after the Sack in 1527 to protect from invaders, which was reminiscent of Romulus's beginning in Rome with the pomerium.[36] By refurbishing the city of Rome, the popes

managed to not only promote their claims to temporal power through a connection to the ancient emperors, but also by giving travelers and Romans alike the impression that the popes had made the city great again.

Sixtus IV, among others, also worked to renew papal temporal authority by financing major architectural and artistic projects. He continued the work on the Vatican begun by Nicholas V by having the Sistine Chapel constructed and decorated by the Renaissance's leading artists.[37] One of the most interesting figures painted in the Chapel are the sibyls of Michelangelo, especially the Cumaean and Erythraean Sibyls, who are both directly connected to Aeneas.[38] Though his extensive building and renovation plans probably mimicked those of Nicholas V, they also made him appear to be a new Augustus.[39] As Augustus had revived war-torn Rome, so too Sixtus worked to revive the run-down city and further prove the papacy's power over Rome.

In an even grander display, Sixtus IV took several ancient bronzes that had been on display in the front of the Lateran palace and relocated them on the Capitoline Hill in honor of the Roman *populus*.[40] In doing so, not only did he distance himself from his greedy predecessors, he also managed to find a way to counter growing arguments about the papacy's right to political power in Rome.[41] By giving the statues into the care of the Roman Conservatori, Sixtus was actually acknowledging the people and recognizing his own authority; the Conservatori were essentially made into the pope's agents.[42] One of the bronzes donated to the Capitoline was the Capitoline *She-Wolf*, the famous Etruscan wolf suckling the Romulus and Remus. It was used by the popes as a symbol of the foundation of Rome, and their connections to it.[43] He also moved the colossal bronze head and hand of Constantine (with a globe) to the Capitoline, placing an obvious symbol of his own papal power there. By

moving the many statues to their new location, he created the Capitoline Museum, which opened to the public in 1471. The museum showed not only the pope's desire to please the people and restore the beauty of Rome, but it also showed his acceptance of the humanists and their love of antiquity. By becoming a patron of the arts, Sixtus was also showing a similarity to the Roman emperors.[44]

In order to promote his political and temporal authority over Rome, Paul III, at the insistence of the humanist Agostino Steuco (1497-1548 CE), embarked on urban planning activities that were reminiscent of both Julius Caesar and Augustus's own plans for ancient Rome. The proposals put forth included a reconstruction of the Tiber River that was meant to improve trade and boat traffic, much like one of Julius Caesar's own proposals mentioned by Plutarch, to divert the Tiber to make the passage easier for those traveling to Rome.[45] Paul III also improved St. Peter's with the Pauline Chapel, which was painted by Michelangelo. This chapel was devoted to the Roman saints Paul and Peter. He also had Michelangelo design the new layout for the basilica and put him to work redesigning the Piazza del Campidoglio of the Capitoline Hill.[46]

Michelangelo's renovations on the Capitoline Hill in the 1530s were a great example of papal propaganda (see appendix) that attempted to link the Renaissance papacy to the ancient Roman empire and to the powers of the emperors. The statues of Castor and Pollux placed at the top of the hill's ramp may have been used as symbols of Roman co-rulers, much in the way that the legend of the twins could have played the same role in ancient times. But the Gemini were also meant to portray the Roman emperor and the Roman bishop—the pope. By depicting the pope and the emperor as twins—ancient twins, no less—the association would have been quite obvious. In addition, Michelangelo had the great bronze equestrian

statue of Marcus Aurelius placed in the center of the piazza. While this may not seem like it would be that logical of a choice, it should be noted that many people during the Renaissance believed that the statue was actually of the emperor Constantine and not Marcus Aurelius.[47] As a statue of Constantine, the man who donated the "original" gift of temporal lands and power to the papacy, placing the statue in the seat of Roman civic government portrayed the papacy's power over the city. By moving the statues there, Paul was laying down the papal claim to political *imperium*; as the heir of Constantine and the Roman emperors, the pope was putting his mark on the political seat of Rome. In addition, he commissioned the renovations on the hill just in time for Holy Roman Emperor Charles V's official visit to the city in 1536.[48] Not only would Rome know the papacy was in charge of the government, but the emperor would as well.

In addition to his own personal connections to ancient Rome, Pope Julius II (1503-1513) was also a great patron of the arts like the earlier Roman emperors and his uncle Sixtus IV had been. As mentioned earlier, the popes often hired humanists to work in the papal court as writers and secretaries. They also hired them to locate and retrieve ancient sculptures for their own collections.[49] In line with this, Julius chose an area in the relatively new Vatican complex to house the sculptures the humanists retrieved for him. The garden and its hall were called the Belvedere by his uncle, Sixtus IV, and the hall still houses many of these statues originally gathered there by Julius. Among them are the famous *Apollo* and *Laocoön*.[50] The Belvedere's program was actually thought to be based upon Vergilian themes, including the *Venus Felix*, a statue that was connected to Aeneas, Julius Caesar, and Julius II through blood. Here too was the *Laocoön*, which was reminiscent of the Trojan War.[51] By promoting the collection of ancient statuary, and in particular Aenean statuary, not only was Julius

connecting himself to the classical city and ancient founders, just like Nicholas V and Sixtus IV, but he was also promoting the papacy's position among Roman nobility, as many nobles also patronized the humanist archeologists.

In addition to asserting their control over the city of Rome and winning over the Roman people, the popes also needed to bring the lands and towns of the papal states back under their control. The papal states were considered the lands given to the papacy in the Donations of Constantine and Pepin and were still believed by the papacy to be the Church's rightful property. Pope Julius, the warrior pope, actually fought in battles in order to regain territory. He "saw his conquests as enlarging the *imperium* of the Roman Church."[52] During his time as pope from 1503-1513, Julius had to deal with the uncertain political and military ambitions of various European countries. France and Spain were becoming aggressive powers, both threatening Italy. Even on the Italian peninsula, Venice had begun to encroach upon the Papal States. In order to maintain the land—and the prestige—of the papacy, Julius II fought battles and gained territory, often under the impetus of war.[53] Because of his need to emphasize his ability to wage war, he portrayed himself as not only the second Pope Julius, but the second Julius Caesar.[54] Erasmus was not at all happy with this claim, dryly noting that, "Pope Julius wages war, conquers triumphs, and acts wholly like Julius [Caesar]."[55] Still others called him *Divus Julius*.[56] Julius II also created a medallion, giving his name as *Julius Caesar Pontifex II,* materially encouraging the connection to the ancient general. He freed the papacy of foreign control through his military and political savvy, regaining the temporal power it had lost.

Pope Pius II (1458-1464) saw himself as a new Aeneas, which was quite befitting, since his given name was Aeneas. When he became pope, Pius II also tried to Christianize his

link to the ancient hero, Aeneas, who was "pius Aeneas."[57] By making the ancient founder more Christian through his writings, Pius was able to equate papal temporal propaganda with spiritual propaganda. He typically signed documents as "Aeneas Silvius," never completely ridding himself of his connection to ancient Rome.[58] In his memoir, he used the third person in his narration, possibly in an attempt to mimic Julius Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*, who had done the same in his own memoirs of the Gallic wars.[59] He also noted that "*the divine* Vergil" lived in a house not far from where he once stayed.[60]

With the fall of Constantinople in 1453, it was necessary for Pius II to appear strong, since he hoped to reclaim the city for Christianity. He required the support of European kings to form a crusade and thus needed to make himself appear able to lead the troops. By creating a connection to Aeneas and Caesar, he was making a link to the strong, battle-hardened founders of the empire, just as Julius Caesar and Augustus had both done.

However, many would argue that the most important function of the papacy was its spiritual authority, not its temporal strength. Much like the *pontifex maximus* of ancient Rome, the pope was the religious "ruler" of the city of Rome and of the *respublica christiana*. However, with the Babylonian Captivity, the Council of Constance, and the beginnings of the Protestant Reformation, over the past two hundred years the papacy had found itself severely lacking in its image as Christianity's leader. The Protestants especially began to hound the Church for its claim on the leadership of Christians. Martin Luther, in his prelude on the captivity of the Church, challenged the papacy's supposed inheritance of power from St. Peter:

> Therefore, O Rome…I defy you to prove that you have been given any authority to change these things by as much as one hair, much less to accuse other of heresy because they disregard your arrogance. It is rather you who deserve to be charged

with the crime of godlessness and despotism.[61]

With the claims of the Protestants rising in popularity, the papacy had to find a way to fight back and ensure the Christian community of its spiritual legitimacy.

To regain spiritual authority, it was important for the popes to show power in terms of Christian superiority. Gestures toward Roman founders and emperors worked well to earn the popes respect among the Romans, but in order to provide legitmacy for their spiritual authority, the popes needed to establish links to their power over Christianity as well. The Renaissance poet and humanist Maffeo Vegio (1407-1458), in the service of Pope Eugenius IV, argued that the crucifixion of St. Peter happened between the tombs of Romulus and Remus near where the basilica of St. Peter's now stood[62] By doing this, he attempted to demonstrate that as the founder of the pope's spiritual power, Peter was the equal to Romulus and Remus, who were the founders of the temporal power of ancient Rome.[63]

In papal Rome, there were many efforts to show how the Christian founders of the city were superior to the founders of ancient, pagan Rome. The addition of Christian founders to the papal propaganda program allowed the popes to enhance their claim as the heirs of St. Peter, and thereby the leaders of Christianity. One medieval work told the story of how Augustus and his senators, on the day of the birth of Jesus, saw an image of the Virgin and Child on the Capitoline Hill; this tale was also relayed by the humanist Petrarch.[64] By promoting this tale, the popes could show the great pagan emperor's acknowledgement of the superiority of Christianity. In fact this story was so well-known and believed that on the Capitoline Hill the church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli was built. The Church was said to have been "raised to the son of God by the emperor Augustus, who had been warned of Christ's advent by the Sibylline books. For this reason the figures of Augustus and of the Tiburtine

Sibyl are painted on either side of the arch above the high altar, and both have been given a place of honor in this church."[65]

Further, there was the figure St. Romulus of Fiesole (c. first century), who was often associated with the ancient Romulus. Like his namesake, St. Romulus was exposed as a baby and then suckled by a she-wolf. Many believed that the saint was named Romulus and baptized by the apostle St. Peter himself, after he had found the baby and the she-wolf, just as Faustulus had found Romulus and Remus.[66] One image from the tenth century even depicted the crucifixion of Jesus happening on a hill that was on the back of the suckling she-wolf. This image may have been used to show the relationship between Rome and Christianity, the one holding up the other.[67] It was certainly a perfect legend for Renaissance humanists to use for fusing together the ancient pagan tradition and the Christian religion.

Not only were the pagan Romans made to recognize the supremacy of Christianity, but Christ himself was made into a triumphant emperor superior to the temporal emperor of Rome. Various humanist writers like Cristoforo Marcello called Christ a "*triumphator invictissimus*" or a "Imperator Maximus." Flavio Biondo said that Christ was the "true emperor" of Rome. [68] In Marco Girolamo Vida's Christian epic poem, the *Christiad* (1535), Jesus' ascension was even likened to a typical Roman triumph.[69] These humanists worked to take images of imperial, temporal power and unite them with Christian figures. By projecting Christ and his disciples as higher than, but still relatable to, Roman emperors, the popes managed to weave their claim to temporal power (as the inheritors of the Roman emperors) together with their claim to spiritual power (as the inheritors of St. Peter). They showed that Rome was meant to be the seat of Christianity in the world.

In fact, in addition to Aeneas and Romulus, some claimed that Rome had been

founded by another ancient Biblical figure—Noah. It was thought that Noah had sailed to the Tiber itself and had arrived in Latium either with Aeneas or instead of Aeneas.[70] Many medieval Romans believed that the Old Testament patriarch had arrived after the flood, his ark becoming an artifact in the Forum of Nerva, a remnant of which bore the inscription "ARCA NOE"—Noah's ark.[71] The anonymous medieval guidebook *Mirabilia Urbis Romae* even said that the Janiculum Hill had been named after Noah's son, Janus, instead of the traditional god Janus.[72] In suggesting that Noah had been directed toward Rome by God, the humanists could suggest that God meant for Rome to become the home of the Christian religion, ruled over by the popes.

Another humanist, Flavio Biondo (1392-1463), employed by Popes Eugenius IV, Nicholas V, Callixtus III, and Pius II, believed that the Vatican or St. Peter's was raised on what was in ancient times the place of Roman triumphal processions.[73] He was thereby showing how Christian Rome defeated pagan Rome and, again, why the temporal and spiritual power of the popes should dominate the city. Several others connected the very name of the Vatican hill to an ancient place of seers, prophecies, and oracles, further giving the papacy a claim to antiquity even before the arrival of St. Peter.[74]

Pope Leo X (1513-1521) was often seen as the second Augustus. As the successor to Julius II he was looked to as one who could bring peace to the Italian peninsula, and his pontificate was seen as ushering in a new Pax Augusta and age of intellectual achievements.[75] Upon his papal coronation, Leo X rode in a triumphal procession across Rome called the *Possesso,* passing by numerous images of saints and Roman gods, much like the triumphs of Roman generals or even the ancient nobles' funeral processions.[76] Like the ancient triumphal processions, the *Possesso* of Leo X followed the route of the *Via*

Triumphalis through Rome. Yet, unlike the ancient route, Leo connected the Capitoline to the Vatican, thereby linking the political center of Rome to the spiritual center of Rome and showing that both were now dominated by the pope.[77] Under Leo's papacy, the humanist Girolamo Vida wrote his Vergilian-style *Christiad* detailing the life of Christ.[78] Another humanist churchman, Blosio Palladio, wrote how God had always favored Rome even in ancient times. While that great empire collapsed, God saw fit to found a new empire in the same place—his church.[79] By joining the two empires together, Leo was able to show again how the pope was the spiritual monarch of Rome.

Humanist writers working for the papal court not only showed the supremacy of Christianity over the pagan traditions. They also strove to show that the popes were leaders of this superior religion, thereby placing them above the Roman emperors in terms of the spiritual *imperium*. While Christian tradition and artifacts could be used to prove the legitimacy of papal spiritual authority, the most important claim was made through scripture. In Mk 16: 17-19, Jesus spoke to his disciple Simon, also known as Peter, and gave him charge of the Christian church. Thus, the New Testament was cited as the basis for the pope's spiritual authority over the church:

> And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
> And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.[80]

From this text, canon lawyers had argued that St. Peter was the leader of the Church built by Christ. He was commanded by Christ to "feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17), and tradition had it that he went to Rome to lead the growing Christian community there. He would then be martyred by the Roman emperor Nero, and his body would be interred in the Vatican hill. St.

Peter, therefore, was held to be the first bishop of Christian Rome, and his successors in Rome were believed to inherit the same authority exercised by Peter over all other Christians. Likewise, papal proponents argued, Rome was the center of Christianity because of Peter's ministry and his martyrdom there.[81]

In addition to tracing their spiritual authority back to St. Peter, the popes also needed to focus on their legitimacy through God. Pope Nicholas V invoked his divine election as a form of propaganda. As a pope elected not long after the damning issues of the Captivity and schism, he found it necessary to promote his election and decisions by stating that they were spiritually inspired. By firmly advocating his election through God, Nicholas was paralleling himself—more so than popes who failed to use the same tactic—with the man originally given the position, St. Peter.[82]

Pius II also connected himself to St. Peter, and more importantly, to St. Peter's martyrdom—the act which related him to Rome. Pius sought his own death, claiming that he wanted to emulate St. Peter and the other martyr popes who had followed. When undertaking his crusade against the Turks, he said "We too will lay down our life for our flock since in no other way can we save the Christian religion from being trampled by the forces of the Turk."[83] He died at Ancona in 1464, five years after he summoned Europe's leaders to a congress to discuss his proposed crusade. His connection to St. Peter would have inspired those he meant to lead on the crusade.

Sixtus IV also promoted his connection to St. Peter, as had earlier pontiffs like Nicholas V, through asserting his divine election. After his death, the humanist Aurelio Brandolini wrote a poem, *De laudibus et de rebus gestis Sixti IIII Pont. Max.*, that left no doubt on the matter, as it told of God high on Mount Olympus, creating Sixtus especially to

lead the Christian world in St. Peter's place.[84] Because of his extensive practices of nepotism, it is likely that the pope found himself needing to reassert his legitimacy as pope in order to keep angry Christians at bay. He gave six nephews the red hats of cardinals during his papacy. In addition, he was involved in the Pazzi Conspiracy in Florence, which nearly killed the head of the Medici family, Lorenzo, and led to war with Florence.[85] This conflict, along with the continuing military actions of the Ottoman Turks, made it necessary for him to use both the links to ancient Rome and to St. Peter in order to emphasize his claim to spiritual authority in Rome and throughout Christendom.

The popes of the Renaissance also sought to demonstrate their spiritual authority to pilgrims in a striking fashion. Pilgrims came to Rome because St. Peter's Basilica was built on the tomb of St. Peter, whom tradition held had been executed nearby under the emperor Nero. Not only was the Vatican hill a holy place because of Peter's martyrdom, but also because the martyr had been appointed by Christ as the chief disciple and head of the faith. By creating a lavish complex for St. Peter, Julius II honored St. Peter while at the same time providing an awe-inspiring sight for Christian pilgrims, showing how wealthy and powerful the papacy was. Julius was one of the first to begin work on St. Peter's Basilica, wanting to expand and aggrandize the preexisting building into something more befitting the renewed Renaissance papacy.[86] Construction on the Basilica continued from 1506 under Julius II until 1614 under Pope Paul V.[87] The building itself was constructed in the manner of many ancient Roman and Greek buildings with columns, Corinthian capitals, and a huge dome that was even bigger than the ancient Roman Pantheon. The church was made to be exceedingly lavish, costing in its first year of construction alone as much as 250 skilled craftsmen together would make in a year.[88]

In addition to the actual building, the surrounding Vatican complex as well as the piazza outside were involved in the papal development program. The piazza was given fountains, columns, and even an ancient Egyptian obelisk that the Renaissance Romans thought contained the ashes of Julius Caesar himself.[89] The obelisk, having been proposed for the piazza during the papacies of both Nicholas V and Julius II, was finally moved from Nero's Circus under the papacy of Pope Sixtus V (1585-1590). Bramante had suggested to Pope Julius that St. Peter's should be oriented to the south to include the obelisk within the area proposed for the piazza, but the pope declined because it would have meant that St. Peter's tomb be moved.[90] The colossal basilica, piazza, and sprawling palace showed pilgrims and Romans alike that the popes were the spiritual leaders of the Christian world and that their house of God—much bigger and more grand than any other church—was the seat of the popes who had powerful authority in both the temporal and the spiritual realms.

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While Aeneas and Romulus were still used in the Renaissance to promote identity and temporal power, attempts to create Christian founders for the city also worked to reconnect the papacy to its spiritual power. Because of the development of humanism, the popes were able to not only connect themselves to the imperium of the Roman empire, but also to elevate themselves above the paganism of the ancients by noting the superiority of the Christian religion in Rome. The Renaissance popes in trying to renew their power and authority over their own Roman empire had to retake religious and political control of the city. This need to legitimize themselves led to the popes promoting ideas that the papacy was the continuation

of the ancient Roman Empire and of the original Christian community in Rome. In order to make these connections, the popes advertised themselves as the new caesars and as the heirs of St. Peter.

Popes like Nicholas V, Sixtus IV, and Julius II became patrons of humanists and collectors of antiquities. They used art and literature as propaganda that connected them to ancient Roman heroes and to the classical founders of the city. However, they also promoted their connection to the Roman martyrs Sts. Peter and Paul in the same manner. By using all of these figures, the papacy managed to claim legitimacy for its renewed rule over the Papal States after the Babylonian Captivity, the Schism, and in the face of growing Protestant criticism. By using the tactics of Romulus and Julius Caesar, they kept invaders out of Italy and reaffirmed their control over the "donated" papal lands. By using the tactics of Caesar Augustus, they made Rome look as resplendent as it had in classical times. Finally, by using their relationship with St. Peter, they emphasized that their rule over Christendom divinely ordained, established by Christ himself. Just as the ancient Romans had created links to their legendary founders, so too the Renaissance popes connected themselves to the old and new founders of Rome.

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1 Ludwig von Pastor, *History of the Popes, From the Close of the Middle Ages: Drawn from the Secret Archives of the Vatican and Other Original Sources*, ed. Frederick Ignatius Antrobus, 3rd ed., vol. 1 (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1906), 59.

2 Von Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 71.

3 Prignano was not even present at the conclave when he was elected; only three of the sixteen cardinals present were Italian, so the conclave found it hard to find a candidate suitable to keep the Roman mob satisfied.

4 John W. O'Malley, *A History of the Popes: From Peter to the Present* (Lanham, MD: Sheed & Ward, 2010), 146-147.

5 O'Malley, *A History of the Popes*, 139-157.

6 J. H. Robinson, trans., *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History,* series I, vol. III (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1912): 31-32.

7 Robinson, *Translations and Reprints*, 31-32.

8 Angelo Mazzocco, "Rome and the Humanists: The Case of Biondo Flavio," in *Rome in the Renaissance: The City and the Myth*, ed. P. A. Ramsey, Papers of the Thirteenth Annual Conference of the Center for

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[9] Kathleen Wren Christian, *Empire Without End, Antiquities Collections in Renaissance Rome, c. 1350 1527* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 13.

[10] Francesco Petrarca, "To Cola di Rienzo and to the Roman People," in *Francesco Petrarca and the Revolution of Cola di Rienzo* by Mario Emilio Cosenza (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1913), 21.

[11] Charles L. Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 2.

[12] Christian, *Empire Without End*, 18.

[13] Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 311.

[14] John F. D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome: Humanists and Churchmen on the Eve of the Reformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 125.

[15] Ferdinand Gregorovius, *History of the City of Rome in the Middle Ages*, vol. 5, part 1, 2nd ed., trans. Annie Hamilton (London: George Bell and Sons, 1906), 297. Some of these fortresses stand today; you can see the remaining parts of the Torre dei Conti and the Torre delle Milizie still.

[16] Caroline P. Murphy, *The Pope's Daughter: the Extraordinary Life of Felice della Rovere* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 114.

[17] Christian, *Empire Without End*, 91.

[18] Christian, *Empire Without End,* 112.

[19] D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome,* 118-119.

[20] D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome*, 201.

[21] The document actually proved to be a forgery according to Lorenzo Valla. His argument is made in Lorenzo Valla, *Discourse on the Forgery of the Alleged Donation Constantine*, trans. Christopher B. Coleman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922).

[22] Gratian, *Decorum*, part 1, division 96, chapters 13 and 14, in Valla, *Discourse on the Forgery*, 13.

[23] Raphael died in 1520 before the paintings were completed, so much of the actual painting was done by students.

[24] Jan T. Hallenbeck, "Pavia and Rome: The Lombard Monarchy and the Papacy in the Eighth Century," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series 72, no. 4 (1982): 84.

[25] J. M. C. Toynbee, "The Shrine of St. Peter and Its Setting," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 43, (1953), 7.

[26] Christian, *Empire Without End,* 102.

[27] Philip Jacks, *The Antiquarian and the Myth of Antiquity: The Origins of Rome in Renaissance Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 95; O'Malley, *A History of the Popes*, 161-162.

[28] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 157.

[29] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 157.

[30] O'Malley, *A History of the Popes*, 168-169.

[31] O'Malley, *A History of the Popes*, 169.

[32] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 203.

[33] David Karmon, "Restoring the Ancient Water Supply System in Renaissance Rome: The Popes, the Civic Administration, and the Acqua Vergine," *The Waters of Rome*, no. 3 (August 2005), 4-7.

[34] Augustus, The Deeds of the Divine Augustus, trans. Thomas Bushnell, (1998), http://classics.mit.edu/Augustus/deeds.html (accessed March 14, 2013).

[35] Ronald K. Delph, "*Renovatio*, *Reformatio*, and Humanist Ambition in Rome," in *Heresy, Culture, and Religion in Early Modern Italy: Contexts and Contestations*, ed. Ronald K. Delph, Michelle M. Fontaine, and John Jeffries Martin, Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies 76 (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2006), 84-85.

[36] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 103-104.

[37] O'Malley, *A History of the Popes*, 175-176.

[38] Vergil, *Aeneid*, book 6. Unless otherwise indicated, all citations of the *Aeneid* are from Allen Mandelbaum's translation (New York: Bantam Dell, 2004).

[39] Christian, *Empire Without End*, 113.

[40] Christian, *Empire Without End*, 106-109.

[41] Christian, *Empire Without End*, 92.

[42] Christian, *Empire Without End*, 118.

[43] Cristina Mazzoni, *She-Wolf: The Story of a Roman Icon* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 45.
[44] Jill E. Blondin, "Power Made Visible: Pope Sixtus IV as "Urbis Restaurator" in Quattrocento Rome," *The Catholic Historical Review* 91, no. 1 (January 2005), 5-6.
[45] Delph, "*Renovatio*, *Reformatio*, and Humanist Ambition," 75-76; Plutarch, *Parallel Lives*, Vol. VII, Julius Caesar, trans. Bernadotte Perrin, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914), 579.
[46] O'Mally, *History of the Popes*, 191.
[47] James S. Ackerman, "Marcus Aurelius on the Capitoline Hill," *Renaissance News* 10, no. 2 (Summer 1957), 69-70.
[48] James G. Cooper, "Two Drawings by Michelangelo of an Early Design for the Palazzo dei Conservatori," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 67, no. 2 (June 2008): 178.
[49] Margaret Ellen Mayo, "Collecting Ancient Art: A Historical Perspective," in *Who Owns the Past?: Cultural Policy, Cultural Property, and the Law*, ed. Kate Fitz Gibbon (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 136.
[50] Christian, *Empire Without End*, 162-163; R. A. Scotti, *Basilica: The Splendor and the Scandal: Building St. Peter's* (New York: Penguin Group, 2006), 85.
[51] Christian, *Empire Without End*, 165-167.
[52] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 11.
[53] Christine Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 123-127.
[54] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 91; Jacks, *Antiquarian*, 172.
[55] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 236.
[56] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 238.
[57] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 91; Gerard Noel, *The Renaissance Popes: Statesmen, Warriors and the Great Borgia Myth* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2006), 31.
[58] Pius II, *Memoirs of a Pope*, 315; Noel, *Renaissance Popes*, 30
[59] Leona C. Gabel, introduction to Pius II, *Memoirs of a Renaissance Pope: The Commentaries of Pius II, an Abridgement,* trans. Florence A. Gragg, ed. Leona C. Gabel (New York: Capricorn Books, 1962), 17.
[60] Pius II, *Memoirs of a Pope*, 116.
[61] Martin Luther, "A Prelude of Martin Luther on the Babylonian Captivity of the Church," in *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*, 2nd ed., ed. Timothy F. Lull, 210-238 (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005), 219.
[62] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 183; Jacks, *Antiquarian*, 27.
[63] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 179. Vegio, before becoming a papal servant, actually composed a poem that was supposed to be a continuation of Vergil's *Aeneid*
[64] Jacks, *Antiquarian*, 38; Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 309.
[65] Rodolfo Lanciani, *Pagan and Christian Rome* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1892), 24.
[66] Mazzoni, *She-Wolf*, 194.
[67] Mazzoni, *She-Wolf*, 195-196.
[68] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 170, 241-242.
[69] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 243.
[70] Alexandre Grandazzi, *The Foundation of Rome: Myth and History*, translated by Jane Marie Todd (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 11.
[71] Jacks, *Antiquarian*, 90-91. One medieval writer noted that the supposed inscription that verified this claim actually said "ARCUS NERVAE"—Nerva's arch, instead of "ARCA NOE"—Noah's ark.
[72] Anonymous, *Mirabilia Urbis Romae: The Marvels of Rome or a Picture of the Golden City*, trans. Francis Morgan Nichols (London: Ellis and Elvey, 1889), 2.
[73] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 183.
[74] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 184.
[75] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 12.
[76] Leo X managed to use a more theatrical type of propaganda to connect himself to ancient Rome. As a Florentine Medici, it would have been difficult for Leo to win the favor of the Roman public. In September of 1513 Leo staged a pageant on the Capitoline in celebration of his brother Giuliano, the future Duke of Nemours, and his nephew Lorenzo de Medici, whom Leo would later make Duke of Urbino. The event

resembled the ancient *Palilia,* dedicated to the foundation of the city. Imagery was used in the event that promoted the connection between the Etruscans and Romans, and so between his own family, his city, and Rome itself. Perhaps the most interesting part of the pageant was a play that featured the *Deus Capitolinus* with the ancient temple of Jupiter Capitolinus and the home of Romulus. For more on the Palilia, see Leonhard Schmitz, "Palilia," in *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, ed. William Smith (London: John Murray, 1875), 849. For more on the pageant, see Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 97-98.

[77] Nicholas Temple, Renovatio Urbis*: Architecture, Urbanism and Ceremony in the Rome of Julius II* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 60-62.

[78] D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome,* 125.

[79] D'Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome*, 135-136.

[80] Mark 16:17-19 *King James Bible*, Cambridge ed.

[81] Margaret Finch, "The Cantharus and Pigna at Old St. Peter's," *Gesta* 30, no. 1 (1991): 16; Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 90, 16, 170.

[82] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 90-91.

[83] Pius II, *Memoirs of a Pope*, 356; Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 174.

[84] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 90.

[85] O'Malley, *A History of the Popes*, 174-175.

[86] Shaw, *Julius II*, 195.

[87] Noel, *Renaissance Popes,* 224.

[88] Scotti, *Basilica,* 80.

[89] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 185; Jacks, *Antiquarian*, 38; Shaw, *Julius II*, 200.

[90] Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 185-186.

Conclusion

The use of Roman foundation myths as political propaganda manifested itself most blatantly from the time of Julius Caesar to the reigns of the Renaissance popes. Because of civil war, perceived character flaws, and political rivals, men like Julius Caesar, Caesar Augustus, and the Renaissance popes needed to prove themselves worthy of their roles as rulers of Rome. By linking themselves through blood, resemblance, and deed to Rome's founders, these leaders were able to assert their claims to power and show the legitimacy of their right to rule in times of turmoil.

By laying claim to kinship with Aeneas, the Trojan founder of the Romans, Julius Caesar asserted his legitimate right to the power he had seized. When men of the optimate class tried to stop his political ascension, Caesar recalled to the Romans how he was descended from Aeneas and his divine mother, Venus. By emphasizing these connections, Caesar not only rationalized his seizure of power, he also promoted a sense of security among the Romans by stressing the notion that the gods were watching over them as long as he was in control. Caesar would provide reminders of his ancestry through funeral processions of his relatives and the building of temples dedicated to his lofty forbearers. All Romans passing through the heart of the city of Rome would see the forum of Caesar and recognize his power and ancestry through the imagery displayed in his temple.

Julius Caesar would also pass this ancestral claim down to his adopted son, Octavian, better known to us as Augustus. Much like Caesar, Augustus needed to prove his right to power in uncertain times. Because of his youth, he strove to assert his authority over older, more respected men like Mark Antony. In addition, he had to deal with the many enemies Julius Caesar had made and the civil war he inherited arising from Caesar's murder. Augustus

turned to literature to show his many similarities to the ancient Aeneas and enlisted the words of numerous Roman poets to provide Romans with the same feeling of security that they had received under Caesar. Augustus would also use Vergil's *Aeneid* to show the piety and sense of duty in Aeneas, and thereby emphasize his own morality to the Roman people. Both men used Aeneas and his connection to Venus to legitimate themselves in the minds of the wary Roman people, and they did so through various programs of artistic propaganda.

However, the Romans had another founder to draw validity from—the warrior Romulus. By making Romulus a descendant of Aeneas, they laid claim to the earlier figure and his godly mother while adding the power that would come from being related to Romulus and his godly father, Mars. Caesar made the most obvious association to the city's founder—the military association. A great martial leader, Caesar did not need help to show his authority to the soldiers. Numerous campaigns made his army well aware of Julius's military skills. However, his campaigns also kept him away from Rome for long periods of time, so it was important to remind the Romans of his loyalty to the city. Romulus, as the city's original defender and leader, was the perfect way to assert his position. In addition he used the persona of Romulus as a strong leader against Pompey the Great, who was himself a great soldier. To make these connections to Romulus Caesar used art, architecture, and spectacle. Through the strength and the innate Roman-ness of Romulus, Caesar positioned himself as a true defender and leader of Rome.

We have shown that Augustus also benefited from the warrior persona of Romulus. His rival, Mark Antony, had control of part of the military of Rome due his former association with Caesar. It was important for Augustus to be seen by the army as a soldier equal to Antony and to Caesar. Yet, it was also important for him to appear different from his

adopted father, who was seen as having destroyed many Republican institutions. Augustus therefore used Romulus in another way—to show his superiority over the ancient founder, not just his equality. He took claims that were made against Romulus, such as the fact that he was a bastard and that he killed his brother, and showed how he, Augustus, was a man of greater virtues. He also emphasized the role of Romulus as the founder of the city—the political and religious founder. Augustus used the peace that Romans enjoyed under his long rule to provide for a second founding of the city, improving and beautifying it. He restored temples and built a spectacular one of his own dedicated to the god Mars, which was the height of his artistic propaganda. The temple brought both cycles of founding mythology, those of Aeneas and Romulus, into one sacred place created by Augustus and therefore easily linked to him.

After centuries of Roman emperors and the dark times of Vandals, Goths, and the schism, Rome would again find itself with leaders who would make extensive use of foundation myths to seek legitimacy for their rule. The Renaissance papacy, due to its long absence from the city, needed to provide validity for its rule over Rome once it returned to the city in the fifteenth century. Therefore the popes used the imagery of Aeneas and Romulus to reaffirm their hold over the Roman people. Since many popes were not from Rome, they needed to find reasoning for why they should be accepted as rulers of the city. Thus the popes used men like Caesar and Augustus, who were seen by the Renaissance Romans as founding figures as well, to further assert their right to rule over the temporal realm of Rome and surrounding papal lands. By claiming the papacy was the heir of the Roman empire, the popes sought to reaffirm their hold over the Roman people. They did this mostly through their policy of *renovatio imperii*, in which they reclaimed and rebuilt Rome,

restoring it to its imperial splendor. Popes like Sixtus IV and Julius II not only renovated the dilapidated Rome, but they fought for control of papal lands as well. Julius II especially coined himself as a soldier for the papacy, even naming himself after the great military leader Julius Caesar. Most of the connections were made for the popes through humanists and artists hired by the Church. Not only did they use artists like Michelangelo to create their connections to the founders, they employed the talent of humanists like Agostino Steuco to help articulate their renovation plans. Through building programs and defense of their territories, which aligned them with the ancient founders, the popes regained and legitimized their temporal power over the city of Rome.

However, the papacy also had to contend with the need to reclaim its spiritual authority. Because of the Schism and the development of Protestantism, the popes had lost much of their power and legitimacy as spiritual leaders of the Christian church. Instead of using ancient and classical pagan Roman founders to show their legitimacy here, they needed to exploit a Christian founder associated with Rome. Thus they turned to St. Peter, who as the heir to Christ's church, the first bishop of Rome, and a Roman martyr, was the perfect figure for the papacy to claim as its founder. The popes moved their papal "home" from the Lateran Palace to the Vatican and St. Peter's Basilica. They took Roman monuments and topped them with Biblical figures. They claimed the ancient Roman ruins and traditions by conquering them with Christianity, thereby weaving their claims to Roman authority with the claims to Christian authority. They made all these claims through the use of court humanists like Flavio Biondo, who wrote extensively arguing why the popes were fated to be the leaders of Christendom.

By linking themselves through imagery and kinship to founders of the past, the rulers

of classical and Renaissance Roman sought to legitimize their power to the Roman people. In many cases, these Roman rulers mixed multiple foundation legends into one great propaganda program. Since Aeneas and Romulus had different strengths, they could both be used by Caesar and Augustus to assert different claims. These two founders were also exploited by the Renaissance popes, much in the same way as Caesar and Augustus had exploited them. Further, the popes would take the Roman emperors as their "ancestors" and employ them to validate their power over Rome and surrounding territories. They further used St. Peter to lay claim to their spiritual authority over not only Rome, but the entire Christian religion. All these men found power in exploiting the founding myths of the city of Rome, and they all used the myths according to their own needs and values.

APPENDIX I

Roman Forum

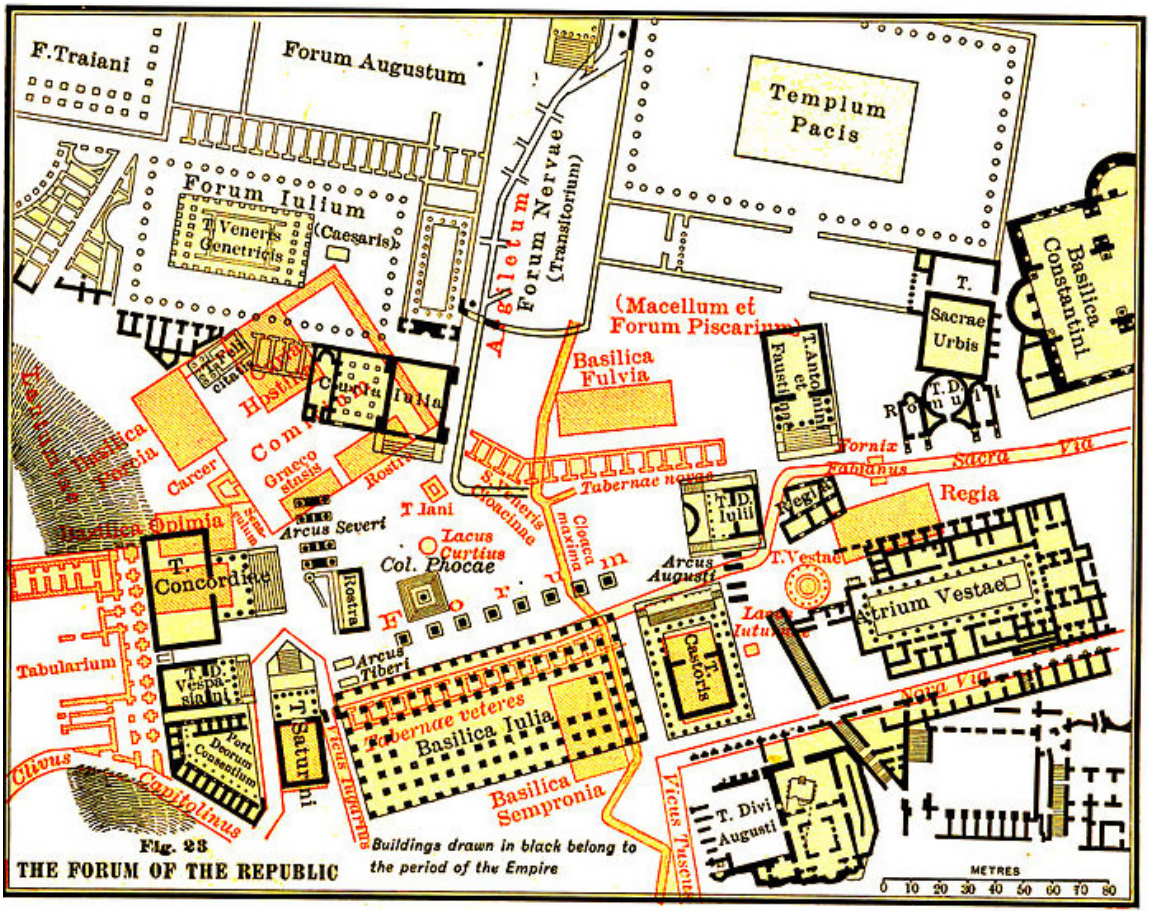
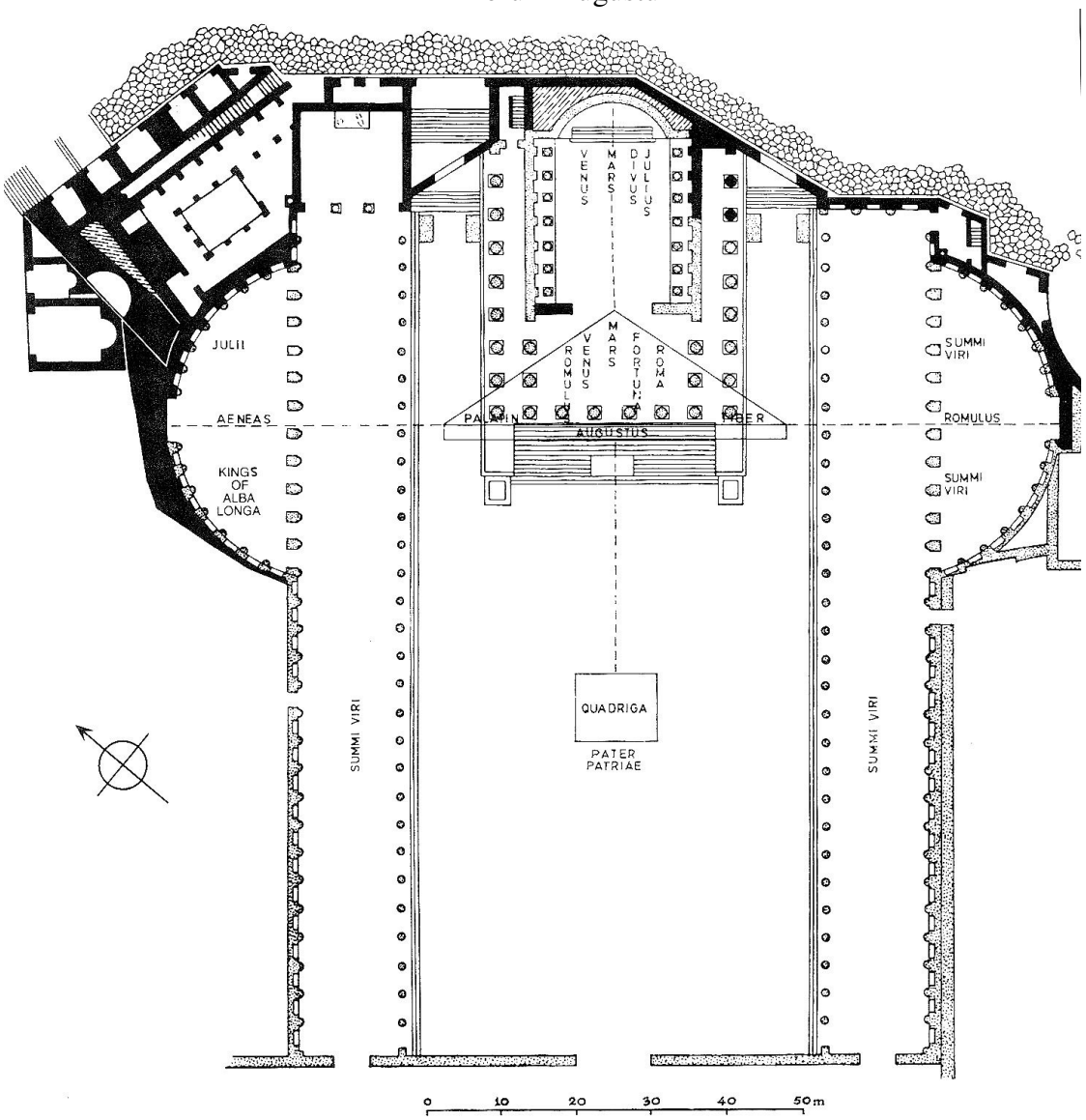


Fig. 23
THE FORUM OF THE REPUBLIC

S.B. Platner, *The Topography and Monuments of Ancient Rome* (1904). Alterations by Mark James Miller. Public domain.

Forum Augustum



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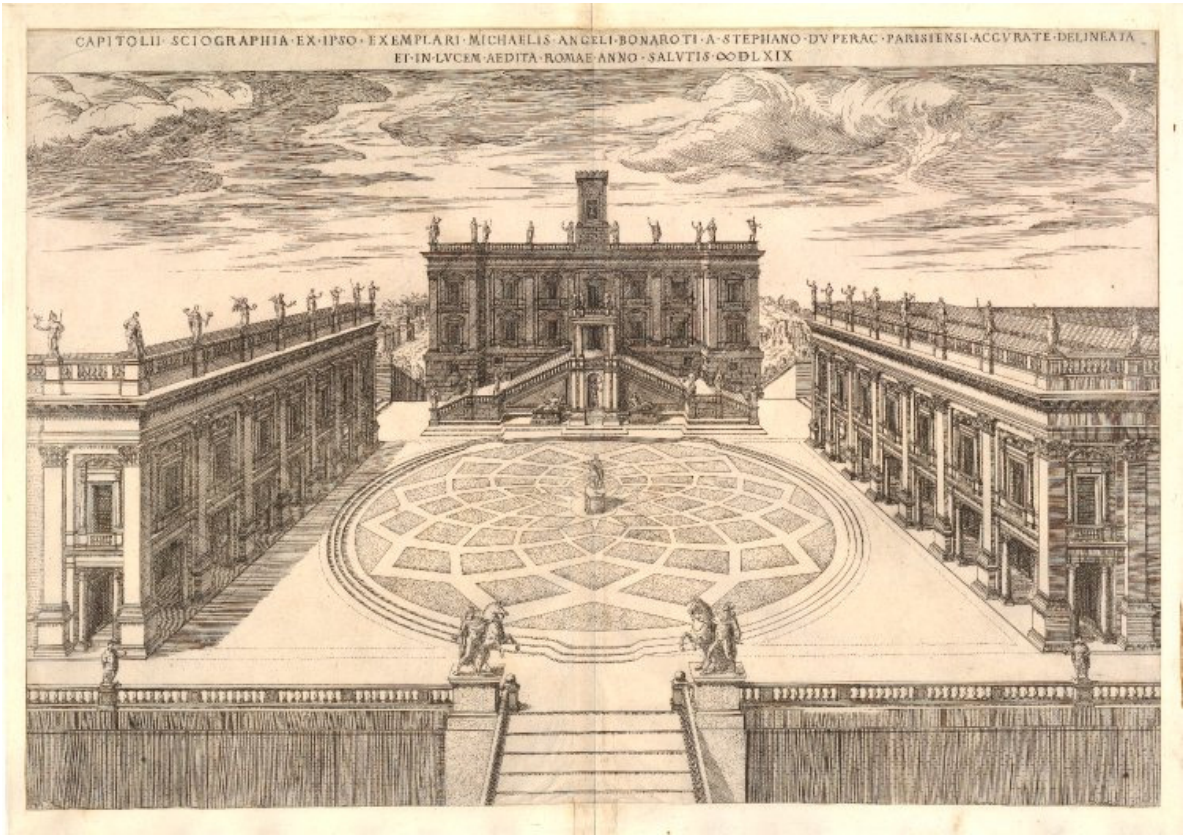
Capitoline She-Wolf

Emmanuel Müller-Baden, *Bibliothek des allgemeinen und praktischen Wissens*, vol. I, Berlin: Deutsches Verlaghaus Bong & Co, 1904.



Etienne Dupérac, *Capitolii sciographia ex ipso exemplari Michaelis Angeli Bonaroti a Stephano Duperac Parisiensi accurate delineate*, 1568. Used with permission from the British Museum.

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