

# Sulla's Tabularium

by  
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## *Author's Declaration*

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

# *Abstract*

This thesis examines the Tabularium in Rome. Very little is written about this building, despite its imposing size and commanding location at the juncture of the Forum Romanum and the two crests of the Capitoline hill. It remains a cipher, unconsidered and unexplained.

This thesis provides an explanation for the construction of the Tabularium consonant with the building's composition and siting, the character of the man who commissioned it, and the political climate at the time of its construction — reconciling the Tabularium's location and design with each of these factors.

Previous analyses of the Tabularium dwelt on its topographic properties as a monumental backdrop for the Forum to the exclusion of all else. This thesis proposes the Tabularium was created by the dictator Lucius Cornelius Sulla as a military installation forging an architectural nexus between political and religious authority in Rome. The Tabularium was the first instance of military architecture behind the mask of a civic program — a prototype for Julius and Augustus Caesar's monumental interventions in the Forum valley.

# Acknowledgments

First, I wish to convey my appreciation to my parents.

The Donovan Director Rick Haldenby introduced me to Rome vicariously during my second semester as an undergrad and personally during my seventh. His infectious enthusiasm for the material he teaches launched me on my explorations of ancient Rome. In the words of Pliny, *Quantum mutati a moribus Catonis censorii, qui sternendum quoque forum muricibus censuerat.*

Dr. Robert Jan van Pelt was the central figure in my graduate studies. He also defined and demonstrated what it means to be a University Professor. I discovered my vocation as his Teaching Assistant, and how much I (still) have to learn watching him lecture.

Dr. Anne Bordeleau has been a patient critic from my first semester as a Master's candidate. She is an insightful reader, generous with her time and support.

I am, of course, also grateful to the terrifyingly well-credentialed Dr. Altay Coskun for bringing his rigorous mind and strict academic standards to this work as my external reader.

My thinking and arguments were clarified during countless cigarette breaks with Pooya Baktash. I now know more about Los Angeles, as a result of these discussions, than could possibly be useful. And he can recite the line of Emperors from Augustus at least as far as Diocletian.

Prof. Farid Noufaily's timely intervention saved my sanity. If you admire the handsome typography of this thesis — the credit is his, not mine.

This thesis relies heavily on Plutarch's *Six Lives* and Appi-

an's *The Civil Wars* from among the ancient authors. The biography of Sulla by Aurther Keveaney provides a concise and balanced review of the dictator's actions and the context in which they occurred, although architects may be put off by his failure to recognize the importance of architecture in republican Rome. Delbrück's *Hellenistische Bauten in Latium: Baubeschreibungen* is still the best (and only) source for architectural drawings of the Tabularium. Filippo Coarelli's *Rome and Environs: An Archæological Guide* is the layman's authority on ancient Roman archaeology. *A History of the Roman People; Fourth Edition* by Allen Ward, Fritz Heichelheim, and Cedric Yeo is an excellent survey of Roman history I relied on it for general information as well as some opinion.



# *Dedication*

For Hannah Arendt, the Beatles, Le Corbusier, Noam Chomsky, Miles Davis, Don DeLillo, Glenn Gould, Eddie Van Halen, James Joyce, Louis I. Kahn, James Krenov, Primo Levi, Lyle Lovett, Joni Mitchell, Willie Nelson, Michael Ondaatje, Al Purdy, Lou Reed, Yamamoto Tsunetomo, Kurt Vonnegut Jr., and Peter Zumthor.



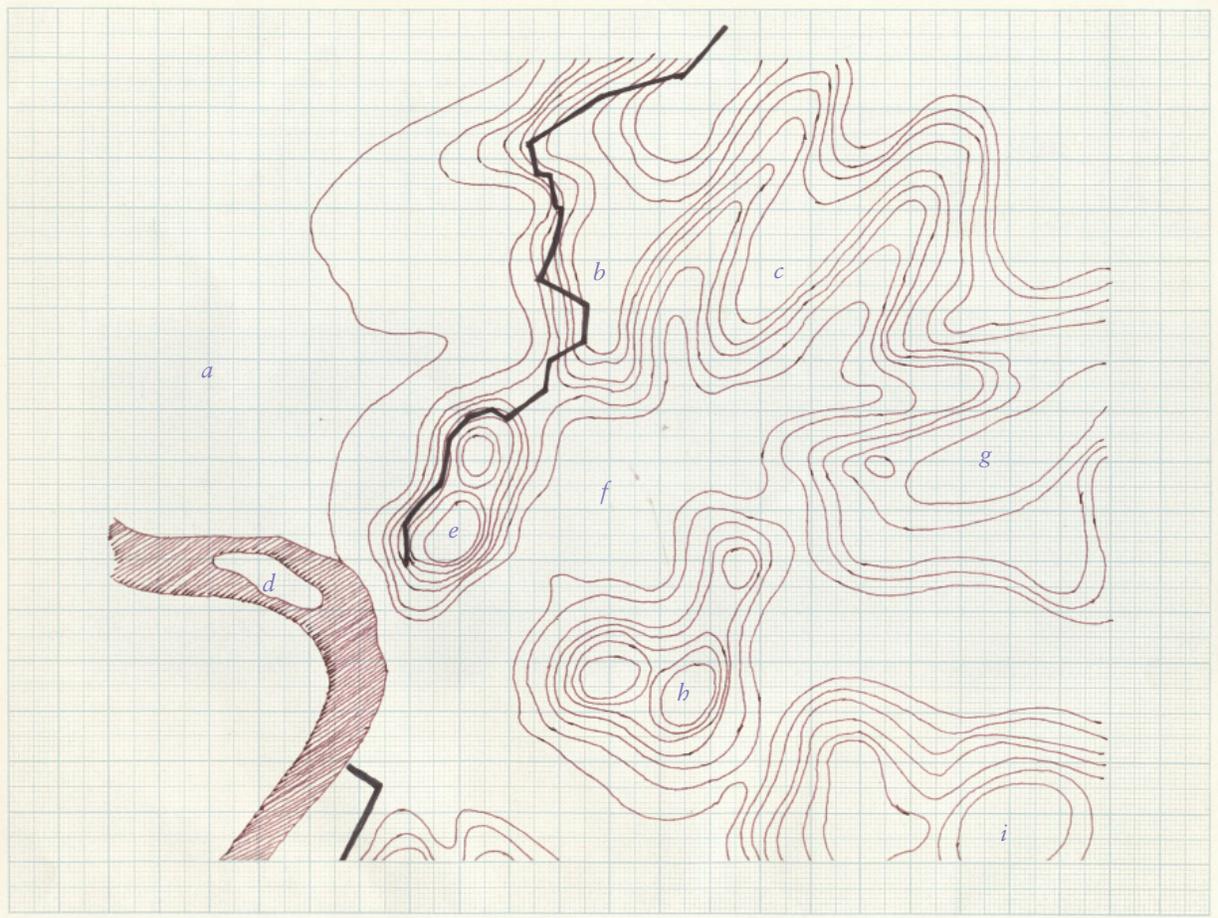
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# 1. The Forum Romanum

Rome began as a hill-town beside an island in the Tiber River, the first convenient ford above the Tyrrhenian Sea.<sup>1</sup> According to the rich mythology surrounding the city's origin, it was founded on April 21, 753 BCE by Romulus — the role his twin brother Remus played in the story is well known.<sup>2</sup> One of the founder's first acts, according to the same myth, was plowing the *pomerium*, a sacred boundary separating the city from the natural world.<sup>3</sup> Outside, all would remain as it had been but inside the pomerium the laws of Man would assume predominance over the laws of Nature.

The pomerium was physically related to the city walls (although the precise relationship is disputed). The Roman's vision of their city as an entity bounded by a mystical limit lasted for almost one thousand years, from the foundation of the city until the Emperor Hadrian extended the pomerium to include the entire empire (121 CE).<sup>4</sup>

Rome was always a mix of different peoples and traditions. Romulus and Remus were said to be Latin but the ceremony used to found the city was known as “the Etruscan ritual.”<sup>5</sup> The Latin (or Etruscan) tribe who occupied the Palatine hill, and the Sabine tribe who occupied the Quirinal hill formed an alliance very early in Rome's history.<sup>6</sup> Initially, these tribes lived apart, but at one time or another intermarriage became possible — a story preserved in the Roman myth known as “the Rape of the Sabine Women”. A low place in the valley separating the Palatine and Quirinal hills became a meeting ground, and then the center of a city in which the two tribes were united politically and, even more importantly, religiously (*fig. 1*).<sup>7</sup>

*Figure 1. Topography of Rome*

A) Campus Martius, B) Quirinal Hill, C) Viminal Hill, D) Tiber Island, E) Capitoline Hill, F) Forum Valley, G) Esquiline Hill, H) Palatine Hill, I) Caelian Hill.

*Rome's famous Seven Hills originally provided natural fortifications. The Aventine Hill is the only one of the seven not in this image; it is out of the frame, below the Palatine. The Capitoline is closest to the Tiber and Tiberina, the Tiber island.*

## 1. The Forum Romanum



*Figure 2. The Forum within the Modern City.*

*The Forum is an open air museum in the heart of modern Rome. Michelangelo's famous Campidoglio is in the upper left, Mussolini's Via dei Fori Imperiali is the diagonal line separating the Forum Romanum from the Imperial Fora.*

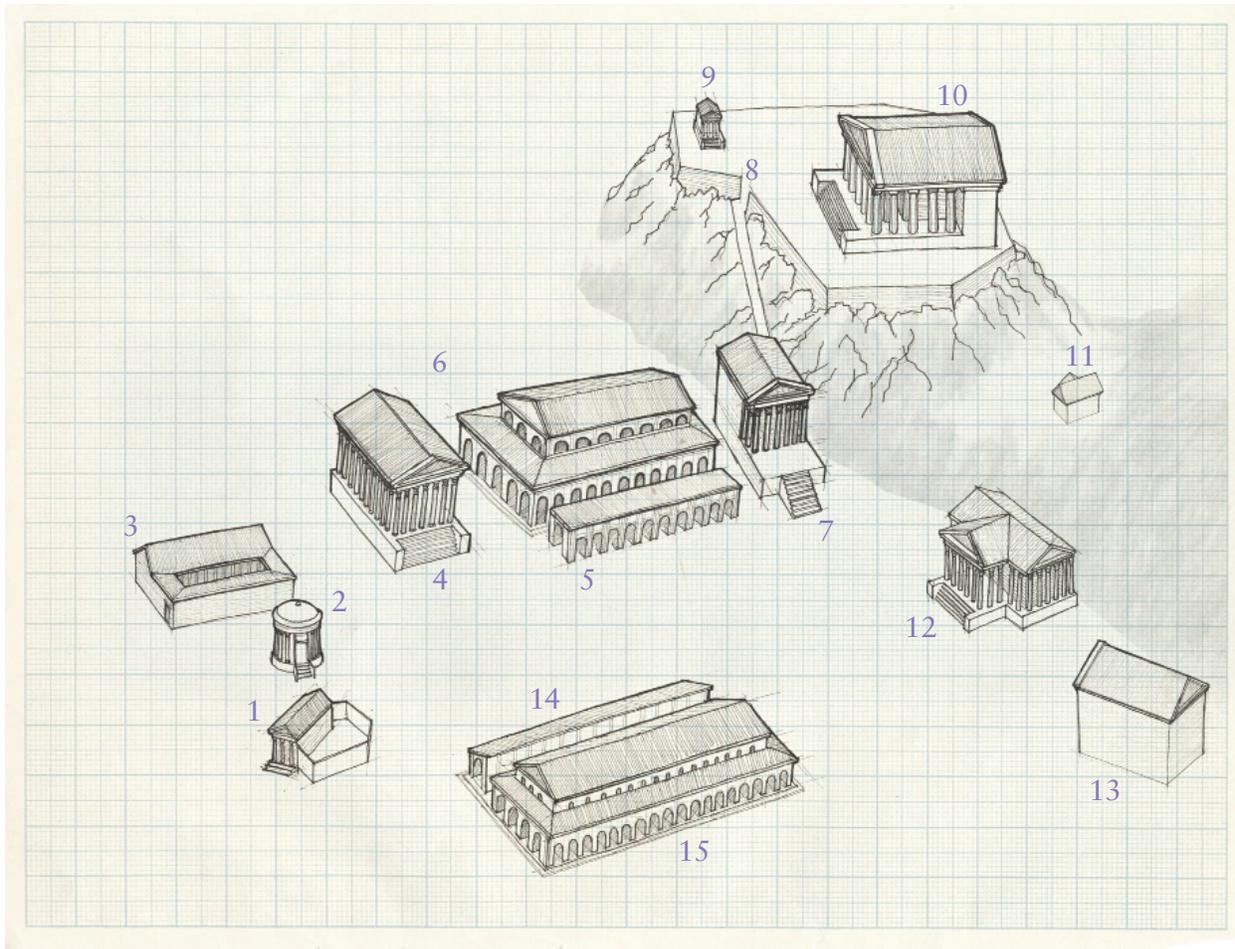
Tourists and scholars today see the Forum Romanum as isolated from the rest of the city because of the reorientation of the Capitoline finalized by Michelangelo, the superimposition of modern roads (particularly the *Via dei Fori Imperiali*) over the remains of the Forum valley by Mussolini, and the segregation of the whole area as an open air museum (*fig. 2*).<sup>8</sup> We must remember, in our attempts to imagine the ancient city, the Forum was not segregated from the rest of the city. In particular, the Forum extended directly on to the Capitoline hill; the *Via Sacra* that defined the northern edge of the Forum joined the *clivus Capitolinus* that provided access to the top of the Capitol. While the ancient Romans made distinctions between the Forum Romanum, the slightly higher levels abutting the Capitoline and Palatine hills, and the Capitoline, there were clear visual and spatial connections between them.<sup>9</sup>

If the Forum became the center of the people, the Capitoline hill, located on the northwest side of the Forum, became the precinct of the gods — the *templum*. The Capitoline has two crests: on the southern one, closest to the Tiber, stood the temple of Jupiter. It was, and would remain, the most prestigious, most consequential, most revered and holy site in Rome. The city's "share of immortality", its "promise of destiny" was contained in the *aedes Iovis Optimi Maximi Capitolini*.<sup>10</sup> On the second crest, north of the Jupiter temple stood the temple of Juno, Jupiter's sister and wife.<sup>11</sup>

The *templum* on the Capitoline Hill and the open space of the Forum constituted the physical embodiment of Rome's public realm (*fig. 3*).

Rome was founded as a monarchy. There were, in all, seven kings. The first four consolidated the city of Romulus; the last three are traditionally considered Etruscan and their reigns are collectively associated with a developing sense of civic unity.<sup>12</sup> Construction of the *Cloaca Maxima* (Great Sewer) to drain the Forum and protect it from the Tiber's yearly flooding is attributed to the Etruscan kings (the date is disputed with estimates ranging from 650 to 575).<sup>13</sup> The Forum's main space was

1. The Forum Romanum



open.<sup>14</sup> That is what the word forum means, an open space or field.<sup>15</sup> The buildings surrounded what was once a lake; there is a monument (a ring of stones worn smooth by rain) called the *Lacus Curtius* — in memory of what had been there before the site was drained.<sup>16</sup>

The Etruscan king Servius Tullius was traditionally thought to have been responsible for the first set of defensive walls enclosing the city, the so-called Servian Walls.<sup>17</sup> The Cloaca, the defensive wall, and the first contiguous paving of the Forum were all associated with the Etruscan kings; they are all civic projects reflecting the emerging consciousness of Rome as a collective.<sup>18</sup>

In 509 a group of prominent citizens led by Marcus Junius Brutus expelled the royal house of the Tarquins and established an oligarchic republic.<sup>19</sup> Rome's last king, Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, finished the great temple on the Capitoline (509).<sup>20</sup> Jupiter Optimus Maximus had been intended as a monument to the power and ambition of Rome's royal house, but instead became a monument to the foundation of Rome's new order.<sup>21</sup> This Temple, although known as a Jupiter temple, was dedicated to the Capitoline triad of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva.<sup>22</sup> Its Etruscan plan and proportions created a squat and bulky building that looked down on the Forum for four hundred years. It was here magistrates assumed and laid down their offices, and the Triumphal procession reached its climax — as the Triumphator came face to face with Jupiter.<sup>23</sup>

Roman trade and military conquests brought contact with the Greek colonies in Italy. Ever ready to absorb the strengths of other cultures, temples were dedicated to Greek divinities across the city: Apollo Sosianus, outside the pomerium to the West of the Capitoline (dedicated in 431, rebuilt in 353); and Castor and Pollux, on the southeast side of the Forum (vowed during the Battle of Lake Regillus and dedicated in 484) (*fig. 4 & 5*).<sup>24</sup> Temples, once concentrated in the Forum and on the Capitoline, spread throughout Rome's neighbourhoods — such as the Temple to the agrarian deities *Ceres Liber Liberaque* on the Aventine (493).<sup>25</sup>

*Figure 3. (Opposite Page)  
The Forum Romanum and  
Capitoline Hill, ca 100 BCE.*

- 1) The Regia, 2) Temple of Vesta,
- 3) House of the Vestal Virgins,
- 4) Temple of Castor and Pollux,
- 5) Tabernae Veteres, 6) Basilica Sempronia,
- 7) Temple of Saturn,
- 8) Clivus Capitolinus, 9) Temple of Fides,
- 10) Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus,
- 11) Temple of Veiovis,
- 12) Temple of Concord,
- 13) Curia Hostilia, 14) Tabernae Novae,
- 15) Basilica Aemilia.

*The Forum was also lined with private homes, mercantile enterprises, and dotted with small shrines – these have been omitted for clarity. Drawn by Author.*

## 1. The Forum Romanum



*Figures 4 & 5. The Temple of Castor and Pollux (above) and the Temple of Apollo Sosianus (below).*

*These three columns of the Temple of Castor and Pullox have remained standing since antiquity.*

*The epithet Sosianus refers to a particular aspect of Apollo's powers; he was the god of healing.*

Institutions begun under the monarchy often found their architectural expression in the Forum or on the Capitoline. Roman religion was based on the family; in the east end of the Forum the royal hearth (*focus* in Latin) became the hearth fire of the city — tended by the Vestals, virgin daughters of Rome's aristocratic families.<sup>26</sup> The circular *aedes Vesta* (Temple of Vesta) marks the southeast edge of the Forum proper.<sup>27</sup> According to legend Rome's second king, Numa Pompilius, built the first *atria Vesta* (Vestal House) when he codified the state's religion.<sup>28</sup> The Temple of the Virgins was the "very heart" of Rome's state religion, where the city's sacred hearth-fire was tended.<sup>29</sup> Roman families were distinct religious and political units with the *Paterfamilias* as autocrat and representative.<sup>30</sup> The *Regia* (king's house) was rebuilt nearby to store religious implements and records — its name demonstrating the association with the monarchy — and the *Domus Publica* beside it became the official residence of the *Pontifex Maximus*, who assumed the most important of the king's religious obligations. The Vestals were Rome's family and the Pontifex their *Paterfamilias*.<sup>31</sup>

Rome suffered a humiliating defeat in 390 when a marauding army of Gauls sacked the city. This event left deep scars in Rome's memory; more than any other enemy, Rome feared the tall, light-skinned warriors from the north. In response, Rome altered and augmented her defenses, building the wall that would define the *urbs* for 650 years.<sup>32</sup> The area enclosed by the wall was much larger than the city; Rome clearly expected to conquer and expand as she had prior to the sacking of the city.

It was also in the fourth century the Forum became an exclusively civic space; the merchants whose shops had previously filled the *tabernae* were forced to relocate.<sup>33</sup> From around 300 on, the Forum was reserved for temples, the apparatus of the republican government, and, tellingly, moneychangers.<sup>34</sup> It became necessary to secure permission from the senate to build in the Forum.<sup>35</sup>

## 1. The Forum Romanum



*Figure 6. Remains of the Basilica Julia.*

*The open central area is in the middle of this image; the Basilica Julia (built to replace Sempronia) is on the right. The building's outline is very clear and the column grid has been marked with partial columns, segments of sculpture, and other material excavated from the Forum.*

*Figure 7. Reconstructed Curia.*

*The building's simplicity is in keeping with the Roman suspicion of sophistication, which they considered Greek and effeminate.*

Foreign wars and conquest changed the physical form of Rome and the Forum by bringing tremendous wealth into the city, making architectural patronage a venue for political competition, and expanding the repertoire of Roman architects' building types and techniques. Slaves were brought to Rome in unprecedented number — educated Greek slaves, including architects, being the most prized.<sup>36</sup> It was in the second century many different architectural types appeared for the first time in Rome: the first triumphal arch (196), first portico (193), first basilica (184), first paved streets (174), and first marble temple (*Iuppiter Stator* dedicated in 146).<sup>37</sup> The basilica type, in particular, had a great influence on the Forum. Basilicas are large, trebeated spaces suited to all kinds of activity. Their size and structural simplicity made them a natural fit for the Forum — and for competitive patrons attempting to outdo each other in lavish displays.

The outlines of the Basilica Julia remain clearly visible — a small *crepido* (curb) delineates the buildings boundaries (*fig. 6*). The rest of the building is gone, only the expanse of its floor remains. There is no hint of the grandeur once possessed by Caesar's most extravagant contribution to the Forum. A random selection of marble pieces sitting on squat brick piers marks the original column grid. This was the home of Rome's courts.<sup>38</sup> Here young aristocrats began their political careers pressing suits against family enemies. Inside, the republic's great orators, including Cicero and Caesar himself, pled cases before juries composed of senators or equestrians.

Romulus was said to have built the Curia himself (*fig. 7*). Mussolini restored it to its incarnation as the *Curia Iulia* between 1930 and 1936.<sup>39</sup> The building is surprisingly plain. The Latin curia is still used to refer to the Papal court. In the context of ancient Rome it meant a council or parliament, formal or informal, regular or extemporaneous, private or governmental. The term was extended in the same way 'parliament' has come to mean both the group and its meeting place. If the discussion was open to everyone it was called a *contio*

1. The Forum Romanum



*Figure 8. Site of the Comitium.*

*The original Comitium is now under the Arch of Septimius Severus (left) and the reconstruction of the Curia Julia (right).*

(from the Latin verb, 'to be silent').<sup>40</sup>

The senate could meet, according to the dictates of Roman religion, only in an area religiously sanctified and separated from the rest of the city — a *templum*. In practice this meant meeting in either in temples or in the Curia. The Curia was favoured because of tradition and location.

Only senators and members of the priestly colleges were allowed inside the Curia. Anyone else with an interest in the proceedings waited outside, either on the *Graecostasis* — “a raised platform on which foreign ambassadors, particularly Greeks, attended meetings of the senate” — or in the *Chalcidium*, a covered walkway protected from the elements.<sup>41</sup> The Curia's giant doors were left open while the senate was in session so those forced to remain outside could see and hear the senate's deliberations.

The remains of the *Comitium* (a one hundred meter square area where people met to elect magistrates and vote on legislation) are hard to identify amidst the palimpsest of paving stones under one's feet.<sup>42</sup> Coarelli describes it as “the ancient political center of the city”, its position dictated by the earth and sky, “following an ancient rite, augurs defined the area of the Comitium along the cardinal points.”<sup>43</sup> While architecturally unremarkable, the Comitium was essential to the republic; the Forum was the center of Rome's democracy as long as the republic lasted.<sup>44</sup> Karl Hölkeskamp describes the Comitium as a nexus between civic politics, cultural memory, and architecture:

In the Comitium the *populus Romanus* took on its institutional form as the *comitia*... It was the place, or space, for the permanent communication between magistrates, senators, and citizens, between the political elite and the people. The area of the Comitium was the most important civic and symbolic space within Rome's dense political topography.<sup>45</sup>

## 1. The Forum Romanum



Figure 9. Forum Ornament.

Almost certainly from the Imperial era. Greek sculptors were brought to Rome, often as slaves, to work marble. Romans had no experience working with hard stones; Roman ornament was terracotta and the architecture was of soft tufa or brick.

Figure 10. Temples of Saturn and Concord.

The reconstructed pediment of the Temple of Saturn is on the left. Three columns of the Temple of Concord are on the right. The remains of the Tabularium are in the background (note the open arches of the Sullan era arcade).

The Rostra was on the end of the Comitium opposite the Curia. It was a speakers' platform; candidates in elections stood on it to address the crowds. Similarly, Rome's prominent men would take their turns praising or abusing a piece of legislation. The Roman playwright Plautus described the characters to be found in the Forum's crowds: "For perjurers try the Comitium. Liars and braggarts, by the shrine of Cloacina; rich married wastrels, in stock by the Basilica."<sup>46</sup>

The ensemble of the Curia, Comitium, and Rostra was aligned with the *clivus Capitolinus* (the road leading up to the Capitoline temples).<sup>47</sup> The government's power was derived from, and sanctioned by, Jupiter.

Three temples sit at the base of the Capitoline — the Temple of Saturn, Temple of Concordia, and the Temple of Vespasian and Titus (*fig. 10*). Saturn is the most impressive. A motley assortment of columns has been placed under a reconstruction of the entablature — enough to give visitors a sense of the temple's size. Saturn had a shrine on the *Arx* before any other temples existed in Rome.<sup>48</sup> His Temple was moved to the Forum (to clear space for the Temple of Juno Moneta) and became the republican treasury.

The Temple of Concordia was vowed by L. Furius Camillus in 367 to quell the unrest caused by the passage of the Licinian-Sextian Laws.<sup>49</sup> The Temple was rendered ritually impure by the murder of Gaius Gracchus but restored and rededicated by L. Opimius in 121.<sup>50</sup>

Only three columns from the Temple of the Divine Vespasian and Titus remain. This temple, as the name indicates, is from the Imperial era.

Behind the Temples of Concordia and Vespasian and Titus is the looming wall of the Tabularium.<sup>51</sup> The massive wall is built of grey / brown tufa. Perched on top of the Tabularium is Michelangelo's *Palazzo del Senatorio*. This is the other side of Michelangelo's famous *Piazza del Campidoglio* — one of Rome's great postcard views; the *cordonata* (grand stair) leading from the street to the elliptical plaza with the eques-

## 1. The Forum Romanum



*Figure 11. The Cordonata.*

*The majestic stairs leading to Michelangelo's Piazza del Campidoglio are one of Rome's most popular tourist attractions.*

trian statue of Marcus Aurelius at its center (*fig. 11*). Three of the Tabularium arcade's towering arches remain open in the tufa wall, providing one of the best views of the temples and the Forum. The arcade is entered from the Campidoglio side, by means of the *Musei Capitolini*.

The story of Rome's foundation by Romulus is precisely that — a story:

The founder was the man who accomplished the religious act without which a city could not exist. He established the hearth where the sacred fire was eternally to burn. He it was, who, by his prayers and his rites, called the Gods, and fixed them forever in the new city.<sup>52</sup>

These works — the Curia, Comitium, Atria Vesta, Cloaca Maxima, the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, and the pomerium — were the DNA of ancient Rome. Like their biological counterpart, they provided the blueprint for the city's growth, subtly exercising their influence on Rome's politics, religion, and its physical form.

Rome was, by its nature, conservative; her citizens were devoted to the *mos maiorum* (ways of the ancestors).<sup>53</sup> “No people ever respected the customs of their ancestors more or were more tenacious in holding on to them, in however attenuated a form, than the Romans.”<sup>54</sup>

The Forum evolved and changed during the four hundred years of republican government that preceded Sulla's building program but the change was incremental and could always claim some precedent. Precedent governed construction within the Forum; Sulla's Tabularium was a building without precedent. Both its form and function were new. In more settled times the Tabularium would have been unthinkable, but the era that produced both Sulla and the Tabularium was anything but settled.

## 2. History of the Tabularium

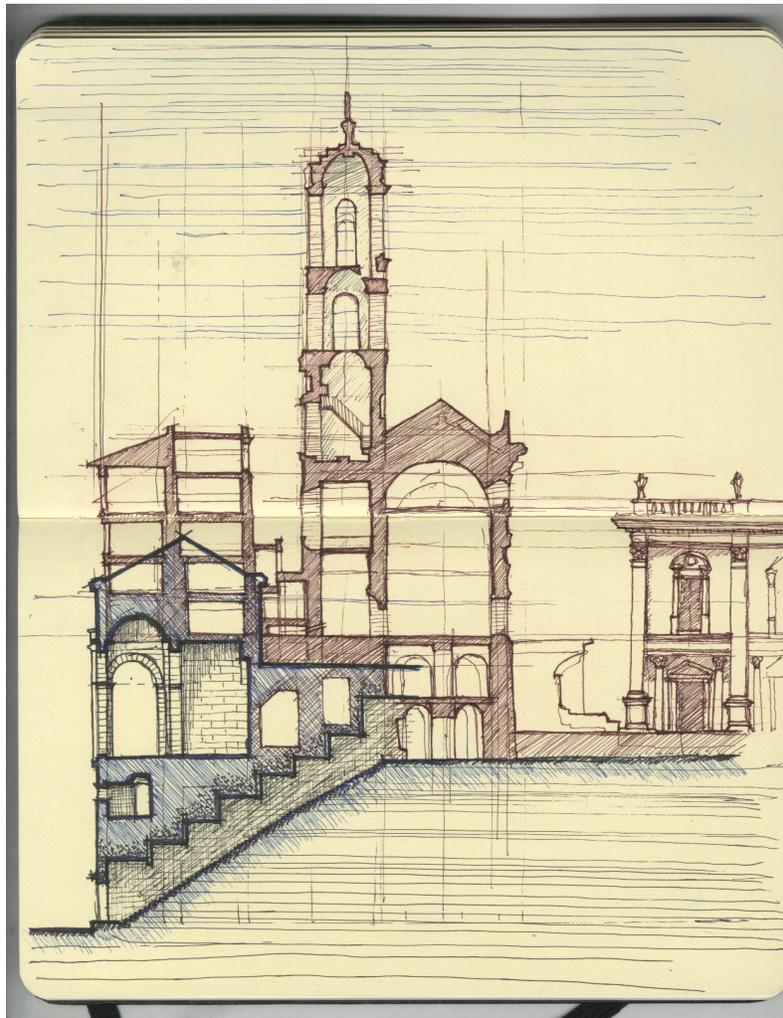


Figure 12. Section through the Palazzo Senatorio.

The Tabularium, in its original design, is drawn in blue - the Palazzo Senatorio is drawn in brown.  
Drawn by Author.

## 2. History of the Tabularium

The Tabularium has been the subject of very little architectural scholarship and is totally absent from the ancient literary sources.<sup>55</sup> It has become known as the Tabularium because of the inscription (CIL, VI. 1314) recorded by the Italian humanist Poggio Bracciolini, since lost.<sup>56</sup>

*Q(uintus) Lutatius Q(uinti) f(ilius) Q(uinti)  
[n(epos)] Catulus co(n)s(ul) substructionem et  
tabularium de s(enatus) s(ententia) faciundum  
coeravit [ei]demque pro[bavit]*<sup>57</sup>

Quintus Lutatius Catulus, son of Quintus, grandson of Quintus, consul, undertook the building and inspection of the foundation and tabularium in accordance with a resolution of the senate.<sup>58</sup>

A nearly identical inscription, found on site, also connects Q. Lutatius Catulus to the building (CIL, VI. 1313).<sup>59</sup> Sulla's authorship, despite the epigraphic evidence, is almost universally accepted.<sup>60</sup> The building's scale, prominence, and its architectural similarities to other Sullan projects also point toward his authorship.<sup>61</sup> The inscription implies the building was constructed during the consulship of Catulus, however such a large structure could not have been completed in the span of a single year; the building's design phase would have occurred prior to 78, while Sulla was still dictator.

Sulla's dictatorship lasted from 82 to 79; Catulus was

## 2. History of the Tabularium

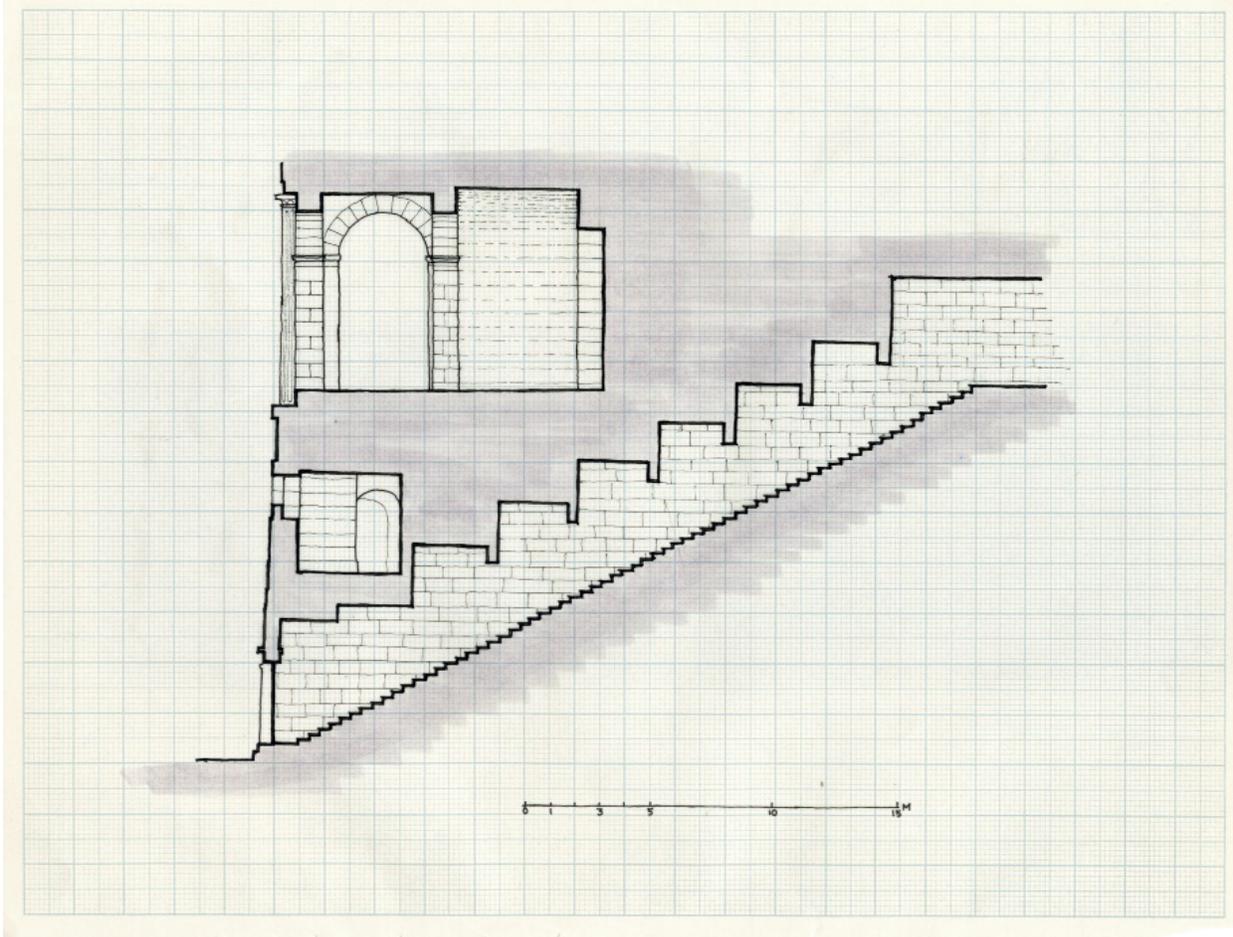


Figure 13. Section through the Tabularium.

The three distinct spaces — the arcade, corridor, and stair — are clearly described in section.  
Drawn by Author,  
following Delbrück.

elected consul for 78. Sulla had executed the most dangerous of his political enemies and restocked the senate with members of his party, of which Catulus was one. Consular elections were held far in advance so the consul elect could have a voice in the decisions he would have to implement the following year.<sup>62</sup> Catulus' election would have been in 79, before Sulla laid down the dictatorship.<sup>63</sup>

The inscription clearly indicates the areas of the building described as the *substructionem* and *tabularium* were completed by 78. This has been taken by Coarelli to indicate the construction required only five years, an improbably short period.<sup>64</sup>

Platner and Ashby's *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* is the standard English language reference on ancient Rome. The entry on the Tabularium is quoted at length because modern authors frequently offer nothing more than reiterations of this information.

On the forum side the foundation wall began on the level of the area Volcani, and the *substructio* (cf. inscription) consisted of this wall with a series of six recesses out of which narrow windows open, and a corridor between it and the tufa rock of the hill itself... Above this corridor of the *substructio* is the corridor of the first story of the Tabularium proper, 5 metres wide and 10 high, extending the whole length of the building and originally open at both ends, but not connected with any other part (*fig. 12*). Its front was an arcade of the Doric order. There were eleven arches all but one of which have been walled up.<sup>65</sup> This arcade afforded the means of communication between the two portions of the Capitoline, and formed a striking architectural terminus for the forum... Behind the corridor of the first

## 2. History of the Tabularium

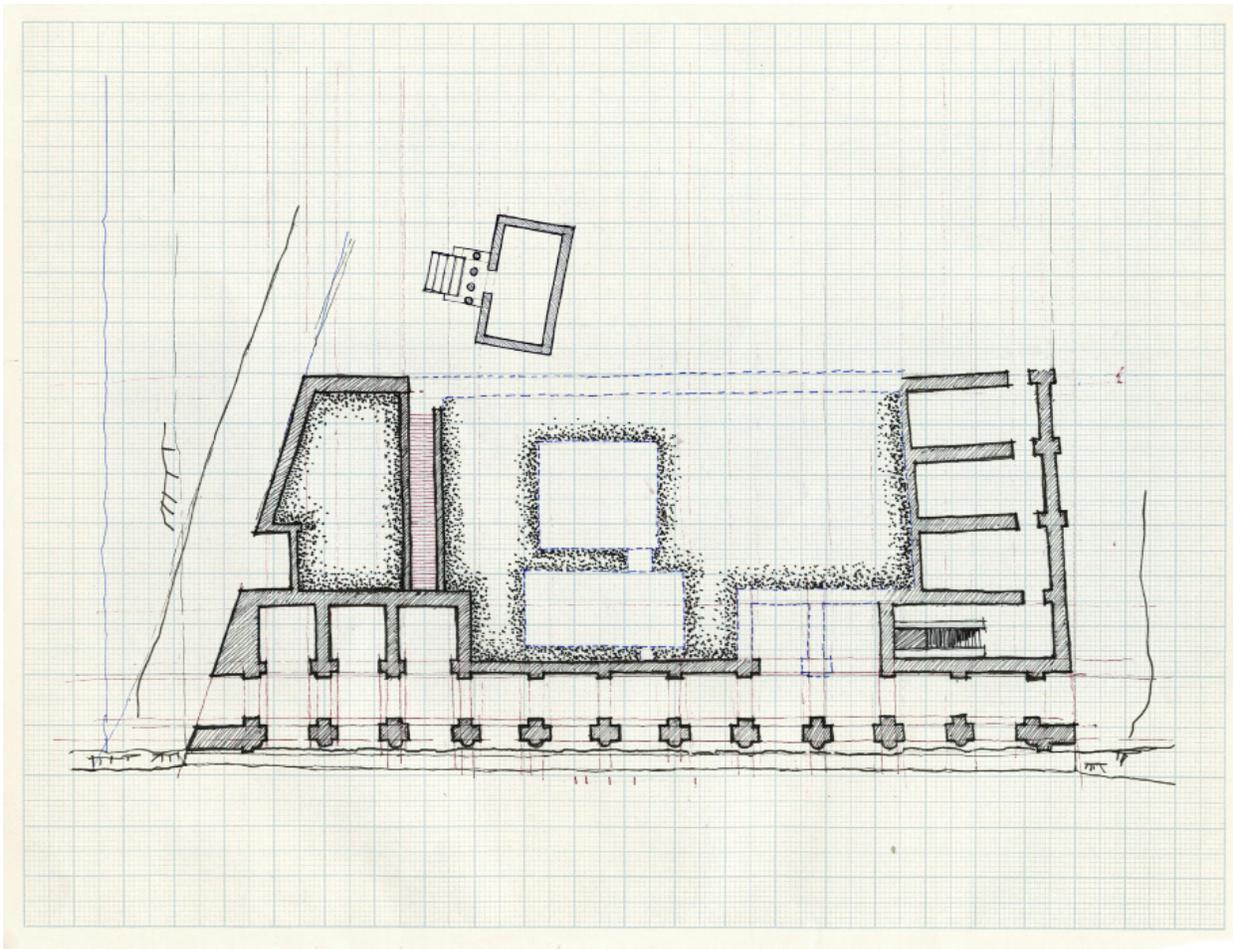


Figure 14. Sullan plan.

Note the preservation of the Temple of Veiovis in the plan. The Tabularium was partially cut from the rock on the Capitoline side; no information exists on the north elevation. Drawn by Author.

story are supporting walls and piers. A long flight of sixty-six steps, partly cut in the rock, leads down to the ground through a fine arched doorway in the wall of the substructure (*fig. 13*). These steps have no connection with any other part of the building, and afforded direct access from the forum to the upper part of the Tabularium and the summit of the Capitoline.<sup>66</sup>

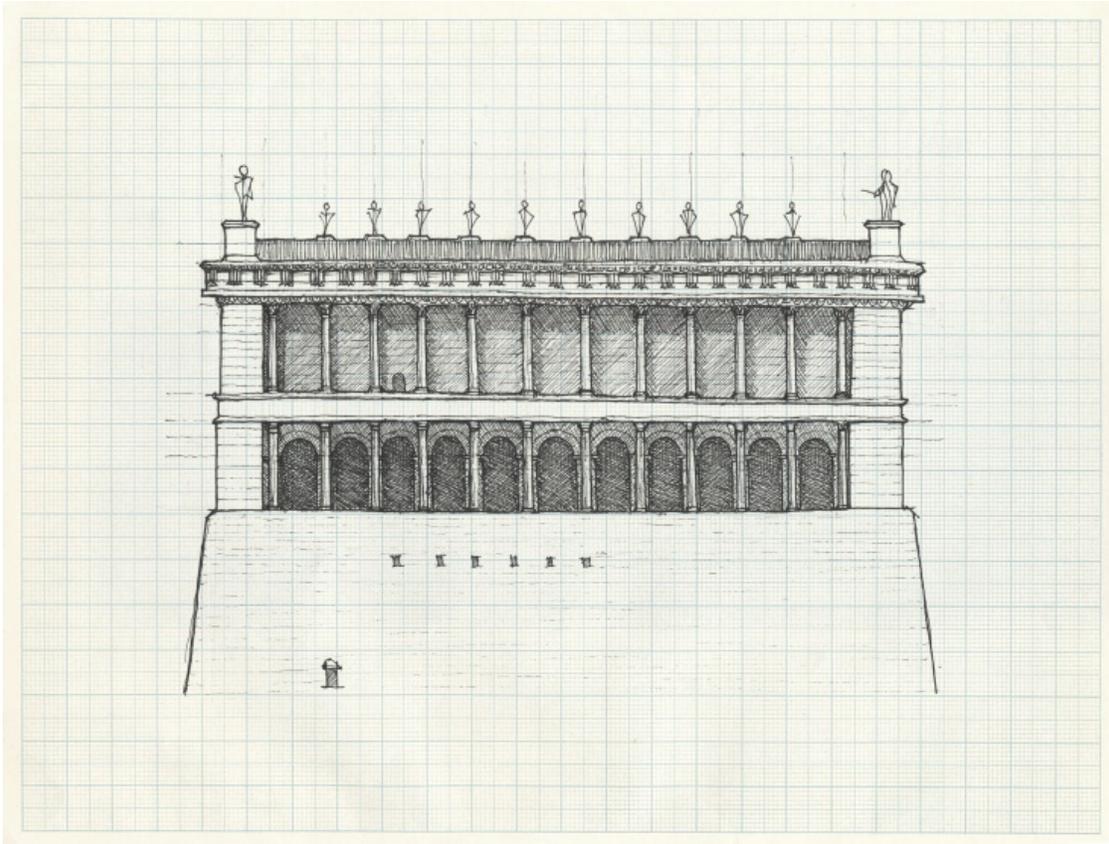
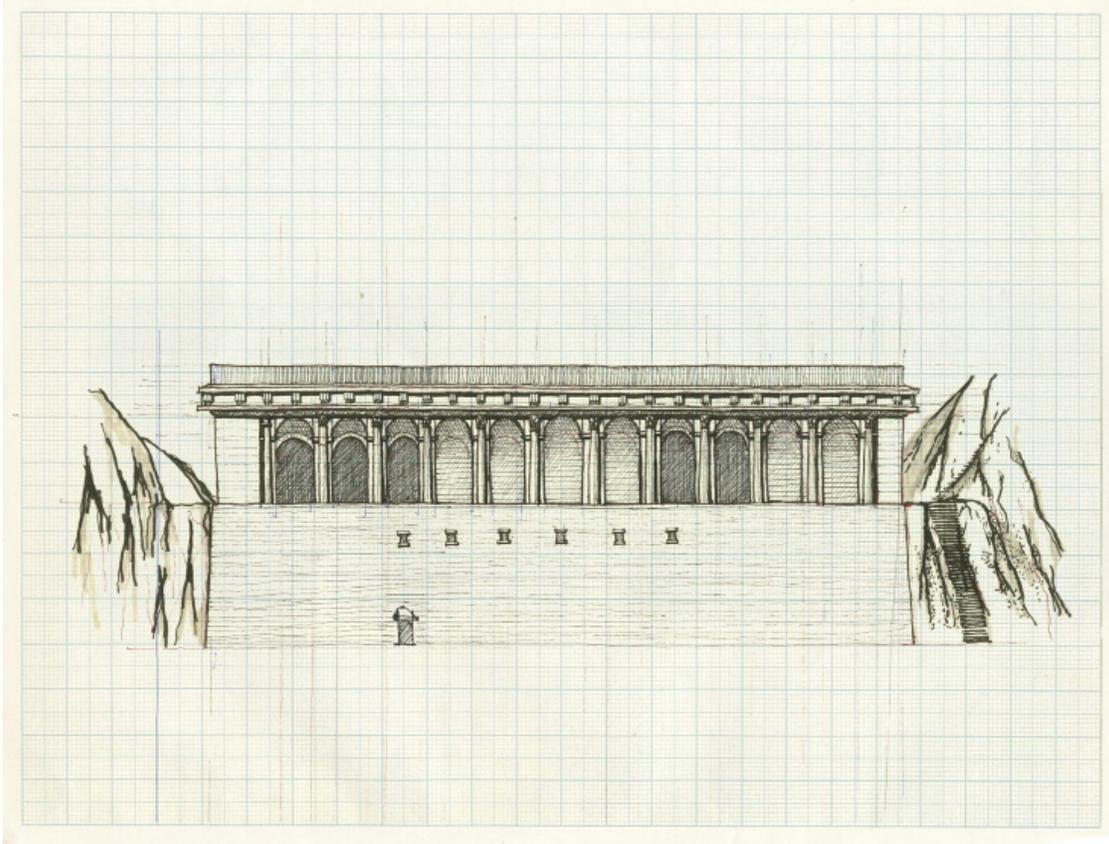
The Sullan building, the original design, consisted of three main programmatic elements: a corridor and connecting rooms within the substructure, with six small windows facing the Forum; the arcade, five meters wide and twice as high, providing the best view of the Forum available today; and the stair running up from the Forum to the Asylum (*fig. 13 & 14*).<sup>67</sup>

The six rooms within the substructure are also connected, via stairs, to a suite of four rooms on the upper level. The arcade was open on both ends — the Capitol on south side and the Arx on the north.<sup>68</sup> A portion of the Asylum was paved — the pavers are preserved in the *Musei Capitolini* — testifying to the presence of an atrium.<sup>69</sup>

The original design accommodated the existing Temple of Veiovis (*fig. 14*). This temple was “consecrated in 196 BC by Consul Lucius Furius Purpurio... then dedicated in 192 BC by Quintus Marcius Ralla.”<sup>70</sup> Veiovis was an indigenous deity possibly associated with the Underworld.<sup>71</sup>

It is difficult to determine the original entrances to the building. The stairs lower entrance was via a gated door in the Forum, beside the Temple of Concordia, and their upper entrance was from the Asylum. The upper level would also have been accessed from the Asylum and the lower level was accessed from the upper through a small stairway. The arcade, as already discussed, was entered from either end.<sup>72</sup> Delbrück indicates a second door in the substructure on the south side of the Forum façade, halfway between the arcade

2. History of the Tabularium



and stair entrance (*fig. 14*).<sup>73</sup> This provided entry to both the arcade and the corridor in the substructure, unfortunately “of the development of [the second entrance] we know virtually nothing.”<sup>74</sup> Lastly, there is currently a stair in the northeast corner of the building, connecting the lowest level of the building to the archive rooms. It is impossible to determine if this was original or a later addition — Claudian, Flavian, or some later date.

The original path taken by the *clivus Capitolinus* can only be inferred. I believe the *Clivus* proceeded in a more or less straight line up to the Capitoline (*fig. 3 & 24*). Several earthquakes damaged the *clivus Capitolinus* between the fall of the Empire and the Middle Ages. Part of roadway collapsed and was replaced by the new road on the *Porticus Deorum Consentium*.<sup>75</sup> The entrance midway up the substructure would have required a short spur from the *clivus Capitolinus*. Our knowledge of the topography of the Capitoline is incommensurate with the numerous reconstructions the area underwent over the last two thousand years.<sup>76</sup>

The Emperor Claudius undertook the first major addition to the Sullan design, adding a second arcaded gallery in 46 CE (*fig. 16*).<sup>77</sup> The fire that destroyed the Capitoline during the conflict between Vitellius and Vespasian in 69 CE damaged the interior and led to another renovation and possible addition.<sup>78</sup>

A fire started in the *Campus Martius* and spread to the Capitoline, in 80 CE, destroying the newly completed reconstruction begun by Vespasian and continued by Titus. The Emperor Domitian began anew. It was during the reconstruction of 81 CE the *Porticus Deorum Consentium* was introduced under the *clivus Capitolinus*, possibly altering the road's path (see above). Domitian began the Temple of the Deified Titus and Vespasian at the same time, blocking the Sullan stairway (*fig. 17*).<sup>79</sup> Richardson's *New Topographic Dictionary* adds “some have even suggested a third storey, which would make it not unlike the earliest theaters

Figure 15. (Opposite top)  
Sullan Elevation.

The Sullan original looks truncated compared to the later versions with two storeys of arcades.  
Drawn by Author.

Figure 16. (Opposite Bottom)  
Claudian elevation.

The Emperor Claudius added a second gallery. This reconstruction is far more familiar looking than Figure 10.  
Drawn by Author.

## 2. History of the Tabularium



*Figure 17. Base of the Temple of Vespasian and Titus.*

*On the left in this image is the Porticus Deorum Consentium, built to support the clivus Capitolinus. In the center is a remnant of the podium that supported the aedes divus Vespasian et Titus (the Temple of the Divine Vespasian and Titus). The door to the Tabularium stair is blocked but the lintel and semi-circular arch above it are just visible. Photo courtesy of the AAR.*

*Figure 18. Reconstructing the Forum.*

*Image courtesy of the AAR.*

with freestanding cavea.”<sup>80</sup> An illustration in Coarelli shows a third storey.<sup>81</sup> I consider the third storey unlikely, based on the available evidence, but the proposition cannot be entirely rejected.

The Tabularium survived the Empire but was handled roughly under the Papacy. The building was used as a storehouse for salt, and as a result the inner walls have suffered severely from erosion.<sup>82</sup> Pope Boniface VIII demolished part of the building to create the tower at the north end of the Forum façade, circa 1300;<sup>83</sup> Pope Martin V added the tower at the north corner (ca. 1427); and Pope Nicholas V, the tower at the east corner (1453).<sup>84</sup>

The Tabularium's present condition is the result of an intervention by Michelangelo. The first iteration of the Palazzo del Senatorio existed before Michelangelo began work on the Capitoline. Buonarroti, artist and architect, was commissioned in 1536 by Pope Paul III to create a show-piece on top of the most important of Rome's famous 'seven hills'. The occasion was a visit to Rome by Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor. Michelangelo removed what remained of the arcade storeys and built the present Palazzo del Senatorio directly upon the ancient structure.<sup>85</sup>

The section of the *clivus Capitolinus* connecting the Forum to the Capitol collapsed, taking a section of the south side of the hill with it, sometime during the first millennium CE.<sup>86</sup>

For two thousand five hundred years the buildings on the Capitoline hill had faced south, towards the Forum; Michelangelo's composition faced roughly north, towards the *Campo Marzio* and, across the Tiber, the Vatican. Michelangelo's design secured the Campidoglio's new relation to the Forum.

The Forum had fallen out of use long before Michelangelo's design. The Tiber's flooding had dropped thousands of tons of sediment over it and returned it to its condition prior to the *Cloaca Maxima* — it was a swamp and consid-

## 2. History of the Tabularium



*Figure 19. The Tabularium and Monuments at the Foot of Capitoline Hill, 1866.*

*This watercolour is by French architect and Prix de Rome winner Constant Mayoux. It illustrates the view from the Forum towards the Palazzo Senatorio.*

ered a health hazard. In the 'Prefatory Note' to his *Recent Discoveries in the Forum: 1898-1904* St. Clair Baddeley assures travelers:

I have heard life in the Forum likened unto '*La Città Morte*,' wherein the malign influences of ancient crimes rise up from the soil and evilly affect those who live upon the site. I have also heard it declared to be a place dangerous to physical health. It is with gratification, therefore, after living therein, both beneath it and above, as few can have done, for considerable portions of the last six years, that I can bring solid evidence to belie both accusations.<sup>87</sup>

The Tabularium was not even interesting to antiquarians like Baddeley: his one-hundred-fifteen-page book mentions it only once.



### 3. Interpretations

Excavation of the Forum began as part of the more general fascination with Rome characterizing the Renaissance. Architects traveled to Rome to document the surviving architecture. Our ideas about the purpose of the Tabularium are directly descended from those images (*fig. 20*). It was the epigraphers Bracciolini and Signorili who copied the inscription including the identification 'tabularium'.<sup>88</sup> Both men relied on the benefactions of Lorenzo de Medici, arch-classicist and patron of the arts.<sup>89</sup>

Purcell notes several problems with the inscription in his argument the building known as the Tabularium is actually the *atrium Libertatis* (Hall of Liberty).<sup>90</sup> The atrium Libertatis was the office of the censors during the Republic; the censors handled important tasks as compiling the list of Roman citizens and enrolling them in the *classis* (classes or ranks) which would determine their privileges and obligations as citizens. There is no consensus about its location despite the numerous literary references about it that have been preserved.

The first rule of epigraphy, "no opportunity to add to the dedicatory's prestige may be missed," raises awkward questions.<sup>91</sup> If this was the senate archive, as has been assumed, Catulus would have claimed credit for it as such; he does not. The existence of two inscriptions so similar (CIL, VI. 1314 and CIL, VI. 1313) can be taken to indicate, "The works referred to were the subsidiary parts of a greater whole."<sup>92</sup> The dual inscriptions are in keeping with Roman contract law, which specifies a separate proof of *probatio*, further evidence of a complicated structure articulated in separate components.

Bracciolini complained the text was almost illegible due to salt corrosion.<sup>93</sup> If this were the case, the inscription would have been inside the building and at the lowest level. Indeed, Bracciolini specified the location as the lowest storey on the northeast corner of the building. Placing the inscription inside the structure is not the way to increase the patron's prestige for obvious reasons. Lastly, there is the complicated matter of the inscriptions' texts: they use the phrase *de senatus sententia* (rather than *de senatus consultum*) and neither includes any mention of the people of Rome. Anyone who has been to Rome knows the ubiquity of the acronym SPQR, *senatus populusque Romanum* (the senate and people of Rome).

The political ascendancy of the Sullani was short lived. Q. L. Catulus was subjected to an unofficial *damnatio memoriae* when Gaius Julius Caesar took control of Rome.<sup>94</sup> This process would certainly include the destruction of all dedicatory inscriptions bearing his name — most famously the inscription on Jupiter Optimus Maximus, rededicated in Caesar's name.<sup>95</sup> It is possible, given the formal characteristics of the Tabularium, other inscriptions were made but destroyed either by Caesar or at a later date. This is a problem for epigraphers to unravel but, together, these issues certainly call into question the identification of the building as a tabularium.

Phyllis Culham, in her study of archives in republican Rome, remarks without the epigraphic information, “we would not even know what the building was called or what functions it might have housed, since there are no spaces clearly suited to the handling of documents.”<sup>96</sup> She suggests, further, the main function the Tabularium was intended to serve was as a “monumental marker of space.” Culham ultimately concludes the Tabularium was, “intended primarily to present an architecturally impressive terminus to the forum area and a central focus for the Capitoline.”<sup>97</sup>

I agree with both Purcell and Culham — to a degree. Purcell's nomination of the building as the long lost atrium Libertatis is seductive. It solves two separate topographic prob-

lems: it locates the Hall of Liberty and provides a program and literary corpus for the building known as the Tabularium. I am unwilling to accept it on the evidence provided (amounting to little more than a restatement of the problems associated with the Tabularium's identification). It certainly merits further investigation. For reasons enumerated below, it is clear the record keeping function of the Tabularium was, at best, a secondary feature. The design, most importantly the massing, had nothing whatsoever to do with the practical need to house the republican archives.

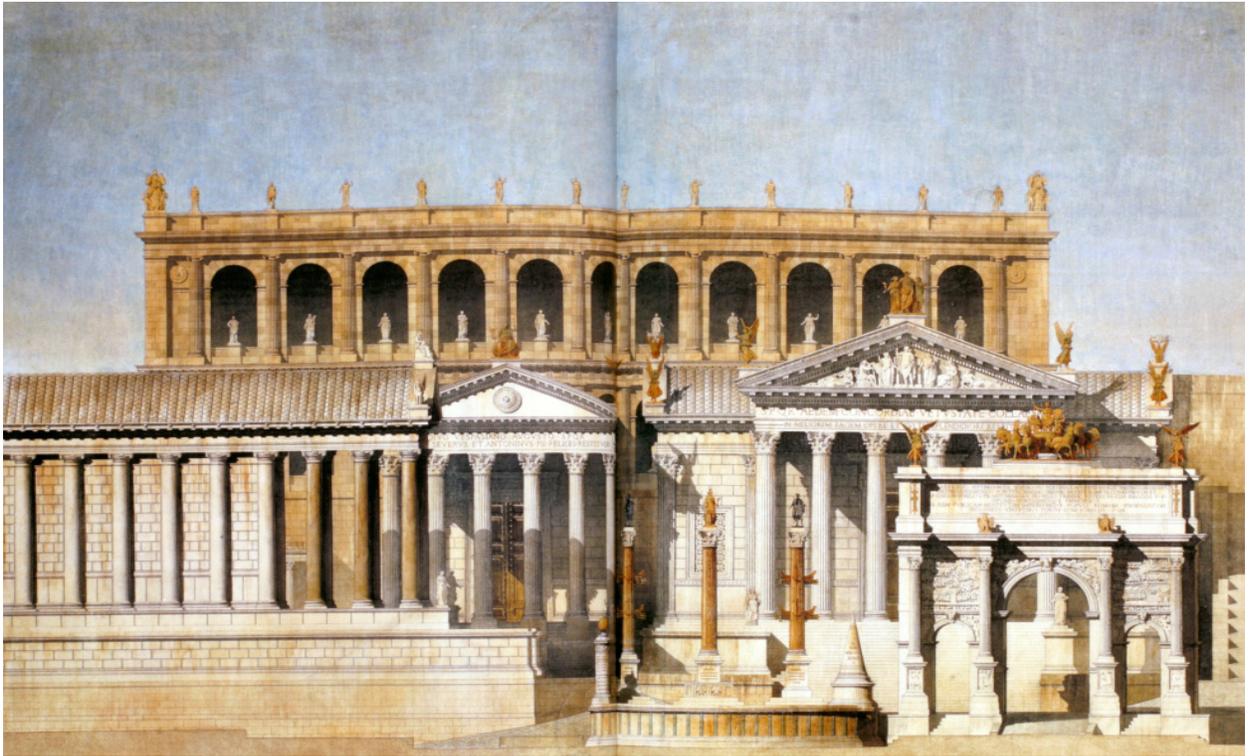
Filippo Coarelli, in his *Rome and Environs*, rejects the notion of a central archive, arguing the whole purpose of the building was to secure the transportation of newly minted coins from the Temple of Juno Moneta to the Temple of Saturn.<sup>98</sup> Coarelli's thesis hangs on the existence of a building connected to the Tabularium for which the archaeological evidence is very weak.

Richardson repeats the standard claim the buildings was "the record office in which were filed the official archives of Rome."<sup>99</sup> This statement must, by now, be considered dubious. Following a brief recital of the building's history he offers this verdict, "It consists of a number of distinct parts but served especially to provide a dramatic backdrop to the northwest end of the Forum Romanum."<sup>100</sup>

Favro's well-researched evaluation of Augustan architecture establishes the motives for, and history of, the creation of complete architectural environments — concentrating on the Augustan Forum. It is not surprising she interprets the Tabularium as a component of such an environment:

This large building in the low saddle of the hill between the [Capitol] and the Arx was constructed by Q. Lutatius Catulus in 78 BCE to house the state archives. Indeed, the Tabularium forms an impressive scenographic backdrop for the Forum Romanum.<sup>101</sup>

### 3. Interpretations



*Figure 20. The Tabularium and Monuments at the Foot of Capitoline Hill, 1866.*

*Another watercolour by Constant Mayoux reconstructs the Roman Forum in antiquity. He has rendered the Tabularium with two arcade levels.*

Casting the Tabularium as a “monumental backdrop” is also problematic; the original design almost certainly included a single storey arcade — sufficient to visually close the space but hardly monumental (*fig. 15*). The double or triple arcade appropriately described as monumental is of a much later date. Monumentality, in this sense, cannot be accepted as a purpose for the building or a factor in the design.

The Tabularium's site and program have not been subject to analysis because of the acceptance of it as a giant piece of scenography; architectural commentary has focused instead on its monumental presence. There is no evidence the so-called Tabularium ever served as the senate's archive; there is no evidence it was an archive of any kind except the single inscription, damaged when it was found and subsequently lost.



## 4. Roman Politics in the First Century

Sulla's architectural program was designed to support the magistracy he arrogated for himself — *dictator legibus faciendis et rei publicae constituendae* (dictator to make laws and reconstitute the State).<sup>102</sup> Examination of the circumstances leading to his dictatorship is essential to understanding his politics and architecture. Before either can be explained a brief rehearsal of the social and political realities in Rome in his time is necessary.

Rome had achieved a dominant position on the Italian peninsula by the early third century BCE. Although primarily a land empire, Rome began to come into conflict with other Mediterranean maritime powers. Her defeat of Carthage in the Second Punic War (218-201) secured control over the western Mediterranean.<sup>103</sup>

Keaveney, Sulla's biographer, summarizes Rome's position at the time of Sulla's birth (in 138):

After centuries of steady advance and conquest culminating in the destruction of her greatest rival, Carthage, in 146, Rome had achieved total mastery of the Mediterranean basin, since such few states in the area as retained their independence did so by her leave.<sup>104</sup>

Rome was an Italian power before 201 BCE. In 133 the Roman Empire included the entire Italian peninsula, the Kingdom of Pergamum, the province of Africa, southern and eastern Spain, Sicily, Macedon, a foothold east of the

Hellespont, southeastern Gaul, and uncontested command of the Mediterranean. Rome had become rich.<sup>105</sup>

The destruction of Numantia in Spain and the inheritance of Attalus' kingdom of Pergamum in Asia Minor in 133 BCE terminated the remarkable period of a little less than seventy years during which Rome had acquired imperial control over much of the Mediterranean world.<sup>106</sup>

The Punic Wars and Rome's expansion throughout the Mediterranean meant Rome had more armies in the field than at any previous time but the number of consuls did not increase. Instead, the practice of proroguing a consul's or praetor's imperium became common.<sup>107</sup> The senatorial families did not wish to increase the opportunities for other families to "share in the consular dignity."<sup>108</sup> The senate's determination to maintain its position increased in proportion to the size of Rome's empire. The conquest of the eastern Mediterranean was an immensely profitable opportunity for Roman generals, assigned by the senate from the ranks of the consulars (senators who had already attained the consulship) and praetors.<sup>109</sup>

One of the principal results of Rome's victories in the Punic and Pyrrhic Wars was the emergence of soldier-politicians who dominated civic politics after 200.<sup>110</sup> The consulship was fought over and rewarded to military commanders. The separation between civil politics and the military had never been very wide in Rome; after the eastern victories it disappeared entirely. The military theorist Carl Philipp Gottlieb von Clausewitz wrote, "War is merely a continuation of politics by other means".<sup>111</sup> When military commanders installed themselves in politicians' roles, the means of war and means of politics became one and the same.

Rome's consular families were engaged in fierce and incessant competition. Relationships between the hous-

es constantly changed. Temporary alliances were forged and broken, relationships of convenience and opportunity sometimes ratified by marriage but more often described as *amicitia*, an informal recognition of friendship.<sup>112</sup>

The stability of the Roman state depended on the maintenance of a prolonged stalemate among the senatorial families. “At the heart of the system was the desire to prevent any one individual from gaining too much permanent power.”<sup>113</sup> The sudden rise of an individual or house inevitably produced a reaction — necessary to prevent one family from assuming dynastic powers. This was the other side to the prestige that came with military glory, epitomized by the case of Scipio Africanus. He was thrust into a position of unmatched predominance after he defeated Hannibal in 201. His eminence increased after he and his brother defeated the Seleucid Empire, extracting an enormous indemnity. Cato and his henchmen harried Scipio in the senate and in the courts with unfounded accusations. Scipio retired from Rome to his estate in Liternum, angry and resentful. His epitaph read: *Ingrata patria, ne ossa quidem habebis* (Ungrateful fatherland, you will not even have my bones).<sup>114</sup>

In a world where wealth and ancestry were crucial, Sulla could boast of neither. Hannah Arendt explains the Roman concept of *auctoritas maiorum*, “Those endowed with authority were the elders... who had obtained it by descent and by transmission from those who had laid the foundations for all things to come.”<sup>115</sup> The group who claimed *auctoritas* as their legacy were the so-called *nobilitas*<sup>116</sup> — the core group of the senatorial aristocracy. This group defended its position within the Roman state by ostentatious displays of their wealth, rhetorical skills, high birth, and (most importantly) their military victories.<sup>117</sup>

Whatever talents or qualifications he might possess, Sulla could never attain what he needed to be accepted amongst Rome's senatorial elites — respected ancestors.<sup>118</sup>

Sulla possessed an ancient name but his line of the Cornelii had not held a consulship for generations. The most famous ancestor he could claim was the unfortunate Rufinus — expelled from the senate for owning more silver tableware than anti-sumptuary laws allowed.<sup>119</sup> “Ironically, this incident gained for [Rufinus] something he would probably not have won by his substantial military and political achievements: an undying, if somewhat dubious, fame.”<sup>120</sup>

Sulla’s father died when he was still quite young. He left his son nothing, most likely because he had nothing to leave.<sup>121</sup> Although Sulla could always keep a roof over his head and food on his table, he found himself without sufficient means to start what his biographer Keaveney calls “the only career open to a man of his class, that is he could not enter public life.”<sup>122</sup>

Sulla’s inability to meet the property qualification for a Roman officer was a crippling political handicap. Appian described the prime mover in Roman political and social life as *cupido gloriae* (lust for glory); it was glory that lifted a Roman above his competition for electoral offices and military commands which brought a citizen *auctoritas*.<sup>123</sup> Rome’s consuls were also Rome’s top-ranking military officers, expected to personally lead Rome’s legions. A man without military experience had no future in Roman politics.

Sulla’s line of the Cornelian family had been excluded from the consulship for so long it was almost as if Sulla was a *novus homo* (new man).<sup>124</sup> Professor Syme could not be clearer about the obstacles and prejudices a new man faced in republican politics, “It was a scandal and a pollution if a man without ancestors aspired to the highest magistracy of the Roman republic — he might rise to the praetorship but no higher.”<sup>125</sup>

Sulla was a patrician and a republican. The members of Rome’s most powerful families considered him a parvenu — he considered himself an aristocrat. Sulla faced opposition, and outright hostility, throughout his public career. He

amassed a huge fortune from the spoils of war; Sulla was almost certainly the richest man in Rome when he installed himself as dictator. A courageous senator publically rebuked him; “There is certainly something wrong about you who have become so rich when your father left you nothing at all.”<sup>126</sup> It would be difficult to overstate the conservatism of Rome’s senatorial elite. According to Plutarch, “they still thought that to forsake one’s hereditary poverty was just as disgraceful as to squander a fortune one had inherited.”<sup>127</sup>



## 5. *Civil War*

The senate was losing its control over Rome by the end of the second century. Plutarch and Appian both begin their chronicles of the civil wars that brought an end to Rome's republican government with the political career of Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus. This is how Appian begins his narrative:

No sword was ever brought into the assembly, and no Roman was ever killed by a Roman, until Tiberius Gracchus, while holding the office of tribune and in the act of proposing legislation, became the first man to die in civil unrest, and along with him a great number of people who had crowded together on the Capitoline and were killed around the temple. The disorders did not end even with this foul act; on each occasion when they occurred the Romans openly took sides against each other, and often carried daggers; from time to time some magistrate would be murdered in a temple, or in the assembly, or in the forum.<sup>128</sup>

Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus was attacked while he was standing for re-election to the tribunate by a mob of senators and their clients.<sup>129</sup> He had been attempting to force the passage of a land redistribution act. Gracchus was young, popular, and from one of the most distinguished families in Rome. He was murdered in the precinct of Jupiter Capitolinus along with three hundred of his followers. Their bodies were thrown into the Tiber. The Gracchi (Tiberius and his younger brother

Gaius, also murdered) were the first aristocratic politicians to mobilize Rome's plebeians behind a popular issue — and gain seemingly unstoppable electoral support in the process.

Members of the senatorial families who imitated the politics of the Gracchi, relying on popularity with the plebeians, became known as *Populares*.<sup>130</sup> The conservative majority closed ranks and styled themselves *Optimates* (best men).<sup>131</sup>

The introduction of physical violence to Roman politics was not something that could be undone; violence, sometimes escalating to a level near warfare, was endemic in Rome during the century that followed.

The period between the murder of Tiberius Gracchus (133) and Sulla's assumption of the dictatorship (83) revealed Rome's inability to withstand the consequences of empire.<sup>132</sup> The tremendous influx of wealth, the land requirements of veterans and their new-found political clout, the gradual shift from small farms to *latifundia*, the emergence of the urban plebeians as a political bloc, and the increased competition for (and rewards from) military commands all demanded changes to the republican system. The members of the senate, drawn from Rome's consular houses, which had together controlled Roman politics for almost four hundred years, resisted any and all attempts to reform the system. They were forced to use increasingly drastic, and increasingly violent means to uphold the status quo as popular frustration mounted.

Reformers understood no change would come from within the senate; they used the tribunician' powers to attempt to force reforms.<sup>133</sup> Significantly, these reformers were also members of Rome's richest and most influential families; the senators considered them demagogues not ideologues. It was generally believed these young men were not interested in reform for the betterment of the republic but in advancing their own careers by ingratiating themselves with urban voters.

The result was serial conflicts between the conservative senate and the more radical tribunes.<sup>134</sup> The tribunes, with large segments of the populace behind them, pushed for change; the

senate, with tradition, wealth, and clients behind them, pushed back.<sup>135</sup> The Forum became a battleground on which magistrates and their supporters fought for supremacy and survival.

Gaius Marius was thrust to the pinnacle of Roman politics by an urban population seeking revenge against the aristocracy for the ineptitude of the consular generals. The public was impatient for the conclusion of the war against Jugurtha and shocked by the rout of two consular armies by Germanic tribes at Arausio (Orange) where inept Consuls led two armies against a numerically superior enemy and suffered the worst defeat by Roman arms in over one hundred years.<sup>136</sup>

Marius cemented his position against the conservative senate in two ways: with continuing military success and through alliances with radical tribunes.<sup>137</sup> In this way he managed to hold on to the consulship for an unprecedented six consecutive years (from 106 to 100, his consulship being prorogued for 105).<sup>138</sup>

His downfall came when, in 100, he ran out of wars to fight and was forced to put down optimate allies who over-reached themselves.<sup>139</sup> Lucius Appuleius Saturninus and Gaius Servilius Glaucia had a senator (and consul-elect) named Memmius lynched in the Forum.<sup>140</sup> Saturninus and Glaucia had used mob violence as a political tool before but this was too much for either the senate or the people to accept.<sup>141</sup> Marius' popularity among the plebeians evaporated when he used soldiers to suppress a tribune under orders from the senate. He went into self-imposed exile and did not return until the outbreak of the Social War.<sup>142</sup> Plutarch writes, "In war his great reputation and supreme power came to him because he was needed... He had no aptitude for peace and civilian life."<sup>143</sup>

Sulla rose to prominence as a successful military commander who was also acceptable to conservative elements within the senate; Sulla shared their ideology and was, at heart, very conservative politically. According to Plutarch, the senate set him against Marius from the beginning of his career.<sup>144</sup>

The rivalry between Sulla and Marius began during Marius' first consulship and Sulla's first military service — during

the war against Jugurtha.<sup>145</sup> Both men claimed credit for the victory although, as consul, Marius' claims carried more weight.<sup>146</sup>

Their rivalry continued during the war against the Teutones and Cimbri.<sup>147</sup> Marius won the triumph but Sulla's accomplishments were sufficient to keep him in the public eye.<sup>148</sup>

Sulla emerged from Marius' shadow when the so-called Social War erupted between Rome and her Italian allies (90).<sup>149</sup> Sulla's influential friends ensured he was given *imperium pro consule*, outranking Marius.<sup>150</sup> He scored the first ever Roman triumph over the Marsi, defeated the Hirpinii, and sacked the Samnite citadel of Bovianum.<sup>151</sup>

Although the war dragged on for years, the victories of the first two years allowed Sulla to return to Rome as the people's darling and stand for election as consul for 88. Marius' optimate enemies in the senate had been crucial in Sulla's dramatic rise. They used their influence, money, and networks of clients to assure his election to the consulship and, with it, the coveted command against Mithridates.<sup>152</sup>

Above all else, Roman generals desired commands against the rich kingdoms of Asia. Marius coveted that command — success would return him to his place as the first man in the republic. He made an ally of the tribune Publius Sulpicius Rufus; Marius would put his fame and influence behind Sulpicius' legislative agenda and Sulpicius would have the Mithridic command reassigned to Marius.

This is Plutarch's memorable narration: "Marius now formed an alliance with the tribune Sulpicius, a man so thoroughly bad as to be quite exceptional; one tended to inquire not what others he surpassed, but on what occasions he surpassed himself in wickedness."<sup>153</sup> Sulpicius maintained a band of 3 000 swordsmen whom he nicknamed his 'anti-senate'.<sup>154</sup>

One of the precedents set by the Gracchi was the tribunes' ability to legislate anything not governed by religious prescript; Sulpicius was able to have his proposed transfer of the command

against Mithridates from Sulla to Marius made law.<sup>155</sup> Sulla had tradition and popular opinion with him but the law was against him. The violence of the rioting in Rome was so severe Sulla was forced to flee the city, fearing for his life. Plutarch describes the lawlessness:

When [Sulla's] soldiers heard what had happened they stoned the military tribunes to death, upon which the party of Marius in Rome began to put to death the friends of Sulla and to make away with their property. Numbers of people fled and changed from one side to the other... The senate, no longer its own master, did what it was told to do by Marius and Sulpicius.<sup>156</sup>

In 88 BCE Lucius Cornelius Sulla became the first man to lead a Roman army against the walls of Rome.<sup>157</sup> In less than a year, Sulla had gone from the most beloved to the most hated man in Rome. The senate and common people, for once, were united in their resistance. The people despised him for branding Marius an outlaw; the senators were outraged by his contempt for their authority.<sup>158</sup> Every Roman fiercely resented his use of military force to gain political rule.<sup>159</sup> Sulla claimed, and likely believed, all of his actions were to restore Rome to its rightful authorities.<sup>160</sup> He took up his prized command to avoid prosecution in a Roman court.<sup>161</sup>

Marius had escaped Sulla and made his way to Africa.<sup>162</sup> In Rome, the new consul Cinna elected for his fierce opposition to Sulla, was starting to resemble Sulpicius in his political tactics. The senate, anxious for an opportunity to prove its power, branded Cinna a public enemy and drove him from the city.<sup>163</sup>

Cinna took refuge with a Roman army still prosecuting the war against the Italian allies. Marius, infuriated by Rome's ingratitude for his years of service, wanted revenge. He offered his services to Cinna and Cinna accepted. Following Sulla's disastrous example, the two began a march on Rome.

In this state of affairs the senate met and sent a deputation to Cinna and Marius, inviting them to enter the city and begging them to spare the lives of the citizens. Cinna, as consul, received the deputation seated on his chair of office and gave encouraging replies to the senate's representatives. Marius stood beside the consul's chair and, though he did not utter a word, the heavy anger on his face and the grimness of his expression made it clear all the time that, as soon as he could, he was going to fill the city with blood.<sup>164</sup>

The senate was unable to organize a defense — the city was in chaos. Out of options, they sent a delegation welcoming Cinna back to the city as Rome's rightful consul. Marius, however, would not be pacified. His followers murdered any noble or senator Marius wished; severed heads decorated the Rostra.<sup>165</sup>

Marius had received a sign as a child that he would be consul of Rome seven times; he achieved his seventh consulship in 86 but died a few days after taking office.<sup>166</sup> After Marius' death, Cinna assumed the powers of a dictator without assuming the title. However, since the senate had recognized his authority, he was the lawful head of Rome's government.

Cinna did not bother holding consular elections in the years that followed. He simply appointed his co-consul.<sup>167</sup> He passed the legislation he threatened earlier — stripping Sulla of imperium and command of the Mithridic War.<sup>168</sup>

Sulla at no time recognized the authority of Cinna's government. Instead, he kept fighting the war, defeating Mithridates' armies one at a time, hardening his legions. Sulla's veteran fighters defeated two separate armies, first at Chaeroneia and then Orchomenus.<sup>169</sup> Mithridates decided to cut his losses and sue for peace.

Sulla moved his triumphant army back to Greece while negotiations for his return to Italy sputtered to a halt. Many

nobles and their families had fled Rome for Sulla's camp to escape Marius and Cinna; so many that, according to Plutarch, he possessed a small senate.<sup>170</sup> Many more senators in Rome had either secretly opposed Cinna or come over to Sulla's side after he concluded his treaty with Mithridates. Cinna attempted to raise an army to oppose Sulla's return to Rome but was murdered by his own soldiers in 84.<sup>171</sup>

On July 6, 83 the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitol was destroyed by fire.<sup>172</sup> Although no one was ever prosecuted, it seems certain, under the circumstances, it was a deliberate act of arson. Sumi states the act was committed by the younger Marius, who removed the Capitoline treasures to Praeneste.<sup>173</sup> Mellor argues the parties responsible were Sullan elements within Rome.<sup>174</sup>

The senate succeeded in raising two consular armies to send against Sulla but they proved no match for Sulla's experienced legions. Sulla sent envoys to Rome to negotiate a peace; Plutarch portrays this action as insincere but Sulla was in a very difficult situation.<sup>175</sup> He was aware asking his soldiers to fight against fellow Romans was very different from asking them to fight the forces of Mithridates. He was able, through guile, to avoid fighting Scipio's legions.<sup>176</sup> Marius the Younger formed a legion from his father's veteran but was defeated and forced to take refuge at Praeneste; Sulla promptly sacked the town.<sup>177</sup> Rome's only effective defense came from thousands of Samnites, who continued to think of Sulla as their enemy from the Social War. They organized a close-up defense of Rome's Colline Gate and held the main body of Sulla's army off for hours, until their left flank collapsed under pressure.<sup>178</sup>



## 6. Dictator

Rome's first civil war ended when Sulla's forces captured the Colline Gate. As in 88, they used fire to drive the defenders back. In 88 the fire was contained but in 83 it raged out of control — destroying sections of the Forum (including the Curia) and the Capitol before it burned itself out.

Sulla's first appearance before the senate as Rome's conqueror was conducted outside the pomerium, in the Temple of Bellona. The senate used this temple for voting triumphs to victorious generals.<sup>179</sup> The symbolism would have been clear to both Sulla and the senators; they were being asked to invite him into the city as a Triumphator. Sulla had six thousand prisoners executed just outside the Temple precinct while the curia was underway, the screams clearly audible, so that the senate should not mistake his adherence to republican forms as an opportunity to render a decision.<sup>180</sup>

He told the senators to listen to what he had to say and not bother their heads with what was going on outside, "Some criminals", he said, "are receiving correction. It is being done by my orders."<sup>181</sup>

Sulla had to eliminate those senators hostile to him or his position. He invented the procedure known as proscription to expedite the process — a list of names was posted in the Forum of people condemned as "enemies of the state". This is Plutarch's description:

Immediately, and without consulting any magistrate, Sulla published a list of eighty men to be condemned. Public opinion was outraged, but,

after a single day's interval, he published another list containing 220 more names, and the next day a third with the same number of names on it. And in a speech which he made on the subject he said that he was publishing the names of those whom he happened to remember: those who escaped his memory for the moment would have their names put up later.<sup>182</sup>

Sulla assumed the office of dictator to acquire the powers to rebuild Rome physically and politically. It was not just the physical manifestations of government that required rebuilding; the destruction of the Curia and the great Jupiter Temple were symbols of the republic's convulsions. Tyrants and demagogues had overthrown the elected government again and again. Sulla's mission as dictator was to recreate the republic in new forms, capable of preserving itself.

The senate had appointed him dictator. He legally possessed all the powers he needed. Sulla was a skilled politician; he shored up his support with the people, badly shaken by the proscriptions, before taking his next steps. He treated them to a spectacular triumph, quoting Plutarch again:

His triumph, which was gorgeous enough because of the richness and rarity of the spoils taken from the king, included something greater still. This was the noble sight of the returned exiles. The most distinguished and most powerful men in Rome, with garlands on their heads, went in the procession, calling Sulla 'saviour' and 'father' since it was because of him that they were returning to their native city and bringing their wives and children with them. And, finally, when the whole ceremony was over, he made a speech to the people, giving a full account of everything which he had done.<sup>183</sup>

Sulla's triumph took two days (27 and 28 January, 81); the first day dedicated to his victories over Mithridates, the second to his victories in the civil war.<sup>184</sup> He then established a new public festival, games to be known as *Ludi Victoriae Sullanae*, so that his victories would be commemorated annually.<sup>185</sup>

The senate was the republic's most venerated institution. Sulla doubled the senate's size, from three hundred to six hundred members. He selected the new senators from the wealthiest and most influential of Rome's equites.<sup>186</sup> He also increased the number of quaestors and praetors — making the quaestorship sufficient for membership in the senate. Sulla knew the prejudices “new men” faced from senatorial arrogance; he had faced them himself as a younger man. The aristocrats in the senate continued to look down on Sulla even after he was elected consul; “In their well-bred nostrils Sulla stank... He had no right to harbor pretensions or force himself in where he clearly did not belong.”<sup>187</sup>

Sulla believed the senate's exclusivity prevented some of Rome's finest men from being allowed to serve, men like himself. Increasing the number of senators, while decimating the existing senate through proscription, would allay the obstacles new men faced by simple arithmetic — the new men would be the majority in Sulla's senate.

Sulla was able to use his position as autocrat to undo both the policies of others and the offices that made those policies possible.<sup>188</sup> He had, in 88, been subject of a savage attack by a tribune. As dictator, he crippled the tribunate and, more importantly, debarred tribunes from holding any other elected office. All of Rome's most disruptive tribunes had belonged to aristocratic families; the tribunate was being used as a springboard to higher offices. Sulla erased this possibility by making the tribunate a political dead-end. He did not intend to allow the tribunes to subvert the senate's authority. Nor did he forget how quickly the reforms he passed in 88 were undone: “With new laws, he

strengthened the republic, diminished the powers of the tribunes of the plebs by taking away from them the right to introduce legislation.”<sup>189</sup>

The new Curia was enlarged but otherwise a faithful recreation of the ancient and revered Curia Hostilia. Sulla built his curia in the same location and in the same form as the original.<sup>190</sup> He repaved the Comitium and rebuilt the Rostra. Sulla vowed to make the Jupiter temple on the Capitol the largest and most splendid in the world. He had marble columns brought from Athens and other materials from around the Mediterranean to fulfill his vow. This is Stambaugh’s assessment:

The biggest temple [Sulla] encountered [in the Greek East] was the still unfinished Temple of Zeus Olympius at Athens. After he conquered Athens (which had supported Mithridates against the Romans) he carried off that temple’s marble columns and installed them in the new temple on the Capitoline.

[Jupiter Optimus Maximus] announced to the world that the cultural and material resources of Greece would henceforth, thanks to the military successes of Sulla, advertise and support the grandeur of Rome.<sup>191</sup>

## 7. Builder

Sulla built the Tabularium in between the Curia and the templum of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, crossing the low point of the Capitoline. A thorough analysis of the design of this monumental structure must consider both the building in all its parts and the significance of its site, given the specific topographic and political circumstances surrounding Sulla's assumption of the dictatorship. I will begin with the building before proceeding to its context.

The Tabularium was a single envelope inclosing three distinct programmatic elements: the stair from the Forum to the Asylum; the arcade across the Forum side of the Asylum, connecting the Capitol and the Arx; and the corridor within the foundation, lighted by six windows opening onto the Forum. These elements, spatially separated, must be considered separately.

It is clear from the spatial division between the programmatic elements and from the stair's location it was not intended to facilitate the examination of documents (*fig. 21*).<sup>192</sup> Purcell's argument the stair was to provide better access to the temple of Veiovis is unconvincing.<sup>193</sup> Had Veiovis required a separate road or stair (*clivus* or *scala*) it would already have possessed one — his temple pre-existed the Tabularium by over a century; there is nothing in the ancient literature even suggesting increased popularity of that particular cult. The purpose Sulla intended of the stair can be inferred from its location — in this case function follows form. The obvious conclusion, from an architect's perspective, is it had nothing to do with documents at all.

7. Builder

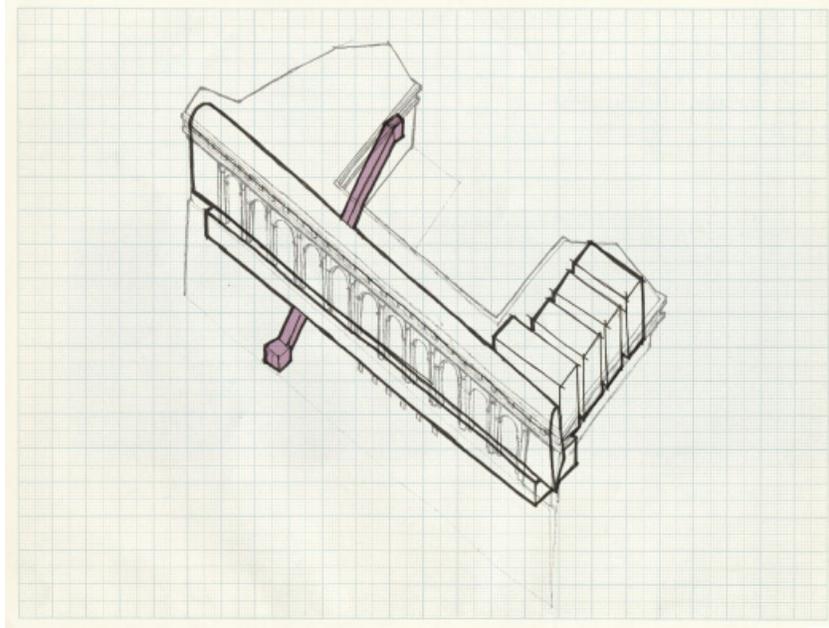


Figure 21. Axonometric Sketch of the Tabularium — Stairs.

The three main spaces of the Tabularium are shown here outlined. The stair is highlighted in purple. Drawn by Author.

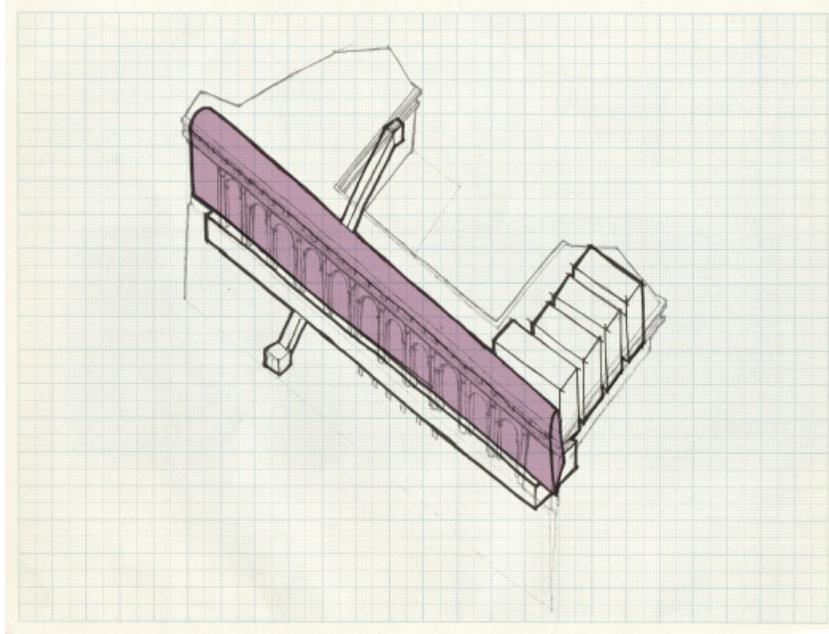


Figure 22. Axonometric Sketch of the Tabularium — Arcade.

Drawn by Author.

Sulla was a general; he would have understood the importance of the high ground. Sulla had the stair included so that, in an emergency, he could rush soldiers to the most significant point in Rome. Sulla had witnessed such an emergency when Marius was forced to suppress Saturninus and Glaucia who, when brought to bay, sought refuge within the Jupiter sanctuary on the Capitol.<sup>194</sup> The act of arson that destroyed the Jupiter temple is another example — the ability to hold the Capitol was essential for Rome's rulers.<sup>195</sup> It is easy to imagine Sulla's fear of another battle between competing political factions necessitating military intervention and, in preparation for such an emergency, the provision of a protected and controlled access to the Capitol was a sensible precaution.

Close examination of the spatial relationships between the Tabularium's elements force the conclusion the arcade had nothing to do with document storage either (*fig. 22*). Spatially, the arcade connects the route to the Capitol with the route to the Arx; the arcade is, by definition, a pathway enclosed by serial arches. The arcade provides magnificent views of the Forum so that is presumed to be its purpose. Architecturally, the arcade is significant only in that it is the first instance of the so-called *fornix* style in Rome. The term *fornix* is borrowed from Triumphal Arch design, where it refers to a single arcuated opening within a composition of three (or more) such openings. The style is a blend of indigenous forms with Greek motifs — arches separated by engaged columns with no structural purpose.<sup>196</sup> The most famous example of the style is in the façade of the Flavian amphitheater, better known as the Colosseum.<sup>197</sup> From a military perspective, the arcade is useful for surveillance of the Forum, particularly the Comitium, which had been the scene of so much violence during the tribuneships of Saturninus and Sulpicius.

The specific purpose of the arcade within the original design is called into question by the inscriptions identify-

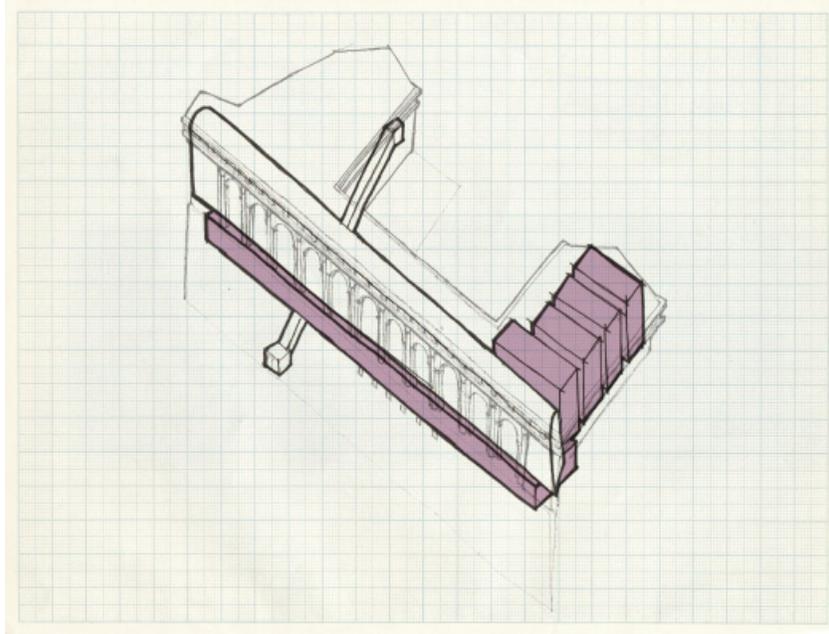


Figure 23. Axonometric Sketch  
of the Tabularium — Corridor.

Drawn by Author.

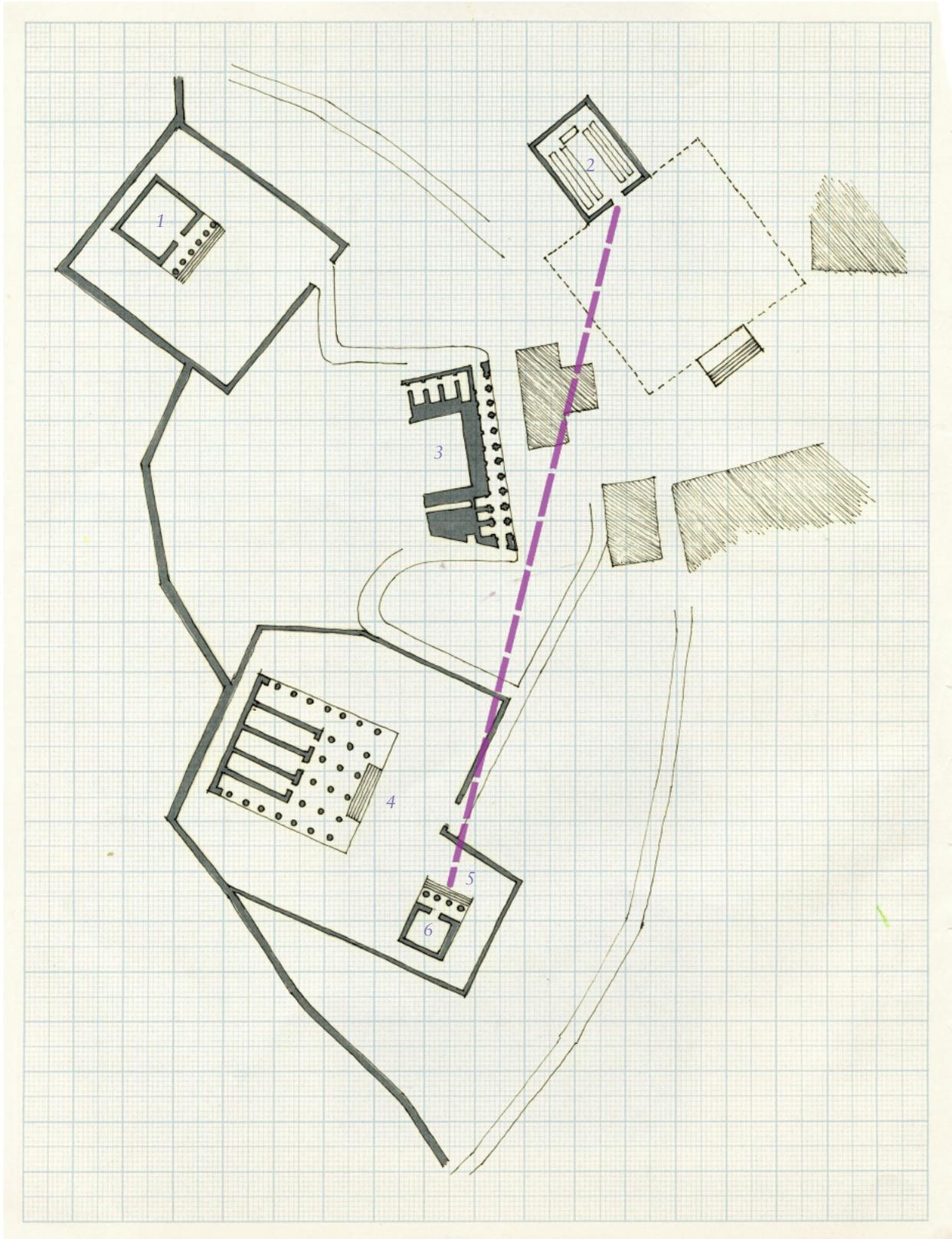
ing the building as a tabularium. The inscription specifies two components — the substructure and the tabularium. Since the arcade is neither, one could posit it was not part of the original structure at all. The importance of having one's name attached to significant projects has been emphasized throughout this document. If Catulus was responsible for the arcade, would that not have been included in the inscription? The alternative interpretations are the tabularium specified in the inscription refers to the arcade or a separate inscription linking Catulus to the arcade was destroyed (either by Caesar's agents or at some other time); the latter is much easier to accept. I consider it far more likely the arcade was included as a part of the original design primarily for aesthetic considerations rather than programmatic ones.

It seems clear the Tabularium's capacity for document storage was limited to the corridor within the substructure and the four rooms, one storey higher, attached to that space (*fig. 23*). Purcell's argument concerning the atrium Libertatis, that the corridor and linking rooms were the offices of the censors, has much to recommend it.<sup>198</sup> Culham's compromise solution, the space could have provided working areas for clerks and scribes without the specific designation of either aerarium or tabularium, does not directly contradict Purcell's argument.<sup>199</sup> It is not possible to satisfactorily resolve the point on the basis of the available evidence. And, when dealing specifically with the conditions that applied at the time of the building's creation, this point is not essential.

The principal reasons for the most basic architectural decision behind the Tabularium, placing several different programmatic elements in a single envelope, are two-fold: first, the spatial effect of closing the Forum with a marker as noted by Coarelli, Favro, Culham, and others; and second, the tactical prerogative of protecting the Capitoline.

Sulla was presented with the architectural problem of a Forum with no Curia and a Capitol with no Jupiter temple

7. Builder



precisely at the time he was attempting to restore political authority to the organ of government in some ways represented by these two buildings.

Sulla was, on an interim basis, able to use the Temple of Fides as a substitute for the great Temple of Jupiter (*fig. 24*). Fides was closely aligned with Jupiter; although worshipped individually and separate from Jupiter, Fides was seen as one of Jupiter's attributes.<sup>200</sup> G. Sumi narrates two separate instances during Sulla's regime when the ambassadors from Greek city-states were allowed to dedicate a gold crown to Jupiter Optimus Maximus as a demonstration of their loyalty to Rome.<sup>201</sup> These dedications could not have taken place in front of Jupiter Optimus Maximus (as he wrongly concludes) but in front of the temple of Fides. Sulla, or more accurately Catulus, augmented the little temple with a large monument about which almost nothing is known except that it existed.<sup>202</sup> Sulla also imprinted his own identity onto that prestigious Roman site by resurrecting the sculptural group depicting his capture of Jugurtha (cast down by Marius in 87 or 86) and having its replacement (commissioned by Marius) removed from sight forever by burying it.<sup>203</sup>

The senate could meet in any templum, so the destruction of the Curia did not disable the republican government. However, the Curia was not just the traditional meeting place of the senate; the building had, symbolically and metaphorically, come to represent the senate, as described above, and, as such, was integral to that body's auctoritas. Rebuilding the Curia must have been Sulla's first priority. In fact, it seems distinctly odd to have diverted resources to the construction of the Tabularium given the urgency of rebuilding the Curia and the Jupiter temple.

The Comitium was an open area and could not be destroyed by fire but it was given its meaning only partly by tradition. The Comitium's character and its place in Roman society were defined by its spatial relationship to the Curia and the Capitoline Jupiter temple. In a very real sense, the Comitium ceased to

*Figure 24. Alignment of the Curia, Tabularium, and Jupiter temple.*

- 1) Temple of Juno Moneta, 2) Curia Cornelia, 3) Tabularium, 4) Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, 5) Clivus Capitolinus, 6) Temple of Fides.

*The Tabularium's location is established by the geometry relating the Curia and the two temples in the Jupiter precinct.*

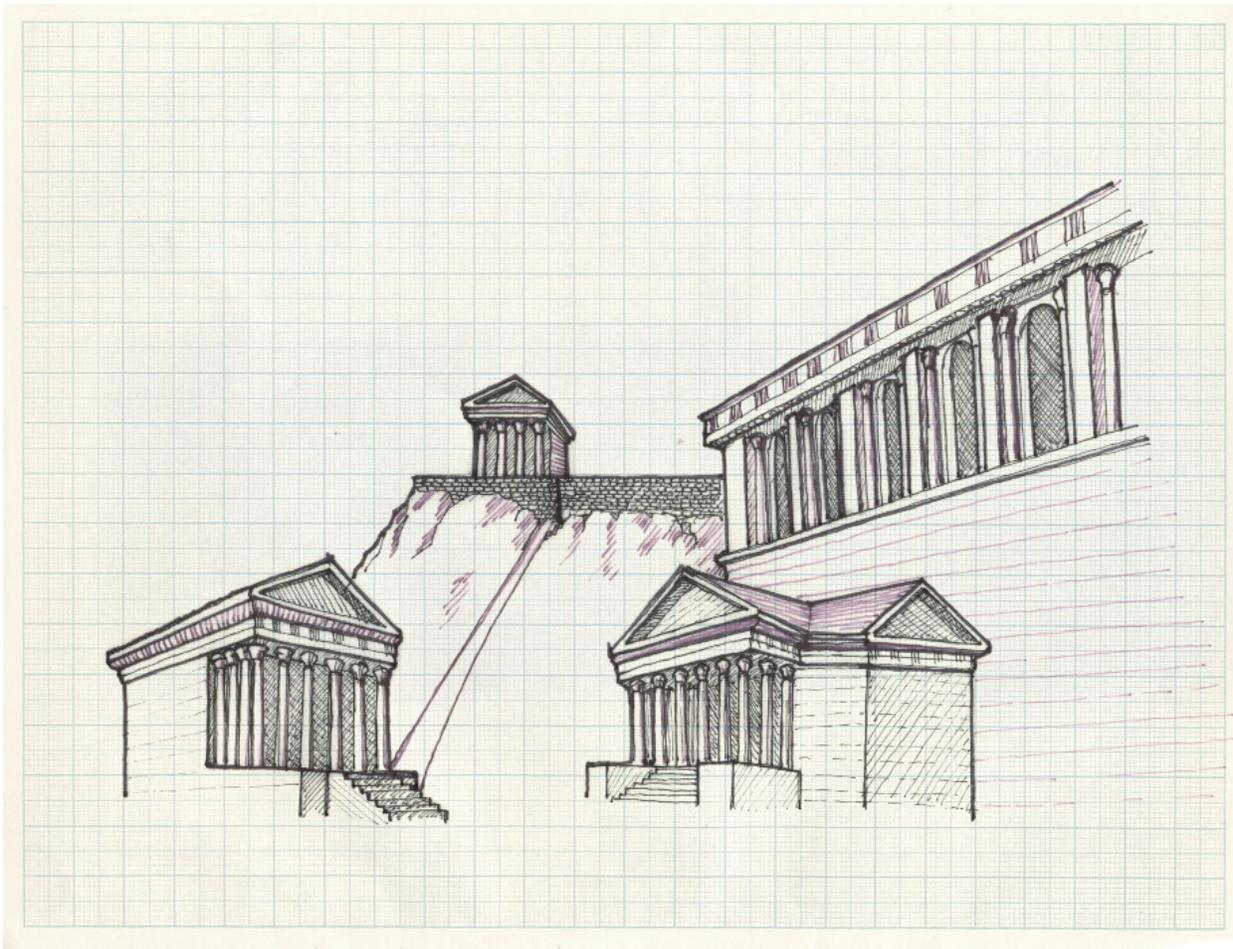


Figure 25. Looking Up at the Temple of Fides.

This sketch shows the view toward the Capitol from in front of the Curia.  
Drawn by Author.

exist without those buildings to locate it physically and provide it with symbolic substance.

The Tabularium's purpose becomes clear when it is seen as an element added to the ensemble including the Curia, Comitium, and Rostra. Whenever Rome's citizens had gathered to vote they had, since the beginning of the republic, looked up and seen Jupiter guaranteeing the perseverance of their city.<sup>204</sup> The Tabularium's purpose was to reinforce the linkage between the west end of the Forum and the Capitol. The giant substructure, without ornament of any kind, reinforces the ninety degree turn the via Sacra makes to become the *clivus Capitolinus* (*fig. 25*). It also blocks the view from the Curia to the site of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, directing the eye to the temple of Fides instead.

The arcade, a passageway created with the sole purpose of facilitating movement, dominated the façade presented to the Forum — the implied motion, the visual trajectory, connects the Forum and the Capitol. The long horizontal lines framing the arches also direct the eye to the Fides temple.

Although I consider the Tabularium to be primarily a military installation, it is an oversimplification to see Sulla's legacy solely as providing the precedent for assuming political authority through military power. Sulla's politics and his architecture were concerned with re-establishing the senate as the dominant political authority within the city and empire. Sulla's political programme was intended to provide a permanent basis for optimate rule.<sup>205</sup>



## 8. Outlook

The Tabularium was conceived as part of an architectural ensemble containing elements of both the Forum and Capitol. Investigations fixated on the building in isolation, including the very promising connection between the Tabularium and the atrium Libertatis, will come to frustration unless this point is recognized.

Further proof of this fact will come from the examination and analysis of Sulla's other major architectural set pieces — at Praeneste, Tivoli, and Terracina. I have omitted any discussion of these projects for the simple reason that I have not seen with my own eyes. It is, very generally, a bad idea to attempt an appraisal of an architectural work without having experienced it in person.

If one considers the number of military commanders who fought for possession of Rome — Marius, Cinna, Sulla, Pompey Magnus, Marcus Crassus, Gaius Julius Caesar, Marcus Antonius, Augustus — the relevant question is why some succeeded while others failed. Was it solely the result of military genius, the demands of history, luck? Sulla was not the first Roman to use architecture as a political tool. Rome had a long history of manubial building.<sup>206</sup> Successful generals were expected to dedicate a portion of the spoils of war to improving Rome. But there is a fundamental difference between those who use architecture as part of a cohesive political, social, and religious agenda — and those who do not.

Sulla was the first to make architecture part of a complete political program, as opposed to a generic claim of supremacy. In the years that followed, as Favro notes, "There was a direct

## 8. Outlook



*The Tabularium today.*

*The large winged victory  
in the background tops the  
Victor Emmanuel monument  
known, not unaffectionately,  
as 'the wedding cake'.*

positive correlation between individuals who patronized architecture in the city and political success, and a negative correlation between those who did not make notable additions to the city's form."<sup>207</sup> Favro has written an entire book on the ways Augustus used architecture; her conclusion, with which I am in complete agreement, is the power required to found the Empire (religious, symbolic, mythological) grew from Augustus' understanding of the Roman mind and his ability to insinuate himself into the culture at the most fundamental level through architectural intervention.<sup>208</sup>

There are extremely interesting epigraphic analyses identifying Q. L. Catulus as an architect. I am, at present, attempting to determine whether this is the same Q. L. Catulus charged with the rebuilding of the Capitol. It is also necessary to determine the specific usage of the term "architect" — not at all the same for ancient Romans as in the modern world.

The ultimate completion of this work will be brought about through three main lines of inquiry: similar investigations of the other major Sullan constructions (as noted above); evaluating the possibility Q. L. Catulus, consul and censor, might have been the most innovative, and most aristocratic, architect in Rome prior to Hadrian; and using topographic evidence to support or refute Purcell's renomination of the Tabularium as the atrium Libertatis.

SEAN IRWIN



# Notes

1. Grant Heiken, Renato Funicello, and Donatella De Rita, *The Seven Hills of Rome: A Geological Tour of the Eternal City*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005). An excellent review of Rome's geology and topography.
2. John E. Stambaugh, *The Ancient Roman City*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1988), 9. All dates are "before the common era" unless noted.
3. For a close examination of Rome's foundation ritual see; Joseph Rykwert. *The Idea of a Town: The Anthropology of Urban Form in Rome, Italy, and the Ancient World*. (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 1988).
4. See, Samuel Ball Platner. *A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*. Edited by Thomas Ashby. (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 392-6.
5. Rykwert, 37.
6. Roman citizens were referred to as *quirites*, a clear indication they had not forgotten their origins.
7. "Civitas was the religious and political association of families and tribes; Urbs was the place of assembly, the dwelling place and, above all, the sanctuary of this association." Numa Denis Fustel de Coulange, *The Ancient City: A Study on the Religion, Laws, and Institutions of Greece and Rome*, trans. Willard Small (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1874), 134.
8. Apparently one now has to pay admission to enter, which seems entirely wrong whatever the modern city's financial burdens.
9. Nicholas Purcell, "Atrium Libertatis," *Papers of the British School in Rome*, 61 (1993): 125-155, 132.
10. Robert Jan van Pelt and William Carroll Westfall, *Architectural Principles in the Age of Historicism*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 171.
11. "At the heart of Roman politics, from the beginning of the republic until virtually the end of the imperial era, stands the conviction of the sacredness of foundation, in a sense that once something has been founded it remains binding for all future generations. To be engaged in politics meant first and foremost to preserve the founding of the city." Hannah Arendt, "What is Authority?," in *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, 91-141 (New York: Penguin, 2006), 120.
12. This argument closely follows Stambaugh.
13. Heiken, Funicello, and De Rita, 81. The most common tradition holds the Cloaca was initiated by Tarquinius Priscus, the alternative attribution is to Servius Tullius.
14. Specific information about Forum monuments: Platner, 230-36; Filippo Coarelli, *Rome and Environs: An Archeological Guide*, trans. James L. Clauss and Daniel P. Harmon. (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 2007) 47-101. Reconstruction of the Forum in the second century BCE: Favro, 13.
15. OLD. Forum, literally 'what is out of doors' in Latin.
16. See Albert J. Ammerman, "On the Origins of the Forum Romanum," *American Journal of Archeology*, 94, 4 (1990): 627-645; Amanda Claridge, *Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 88.
17. The term 'Servian Wall' has largely been replaced with 'Republican Wall' to more correctly identify its origins in the fourth, rather than sixth, century BCE. See Claridge, 59; Michael Grant, *History of Rome*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1978), 28 & 54.
18. Stambaugh, 14.

19. The term “republic” is derived from the Latin *res publica* (‘thing belonging to the people’). For this reason I do not capitalize the word even in instances when it is used to replace the proper noun Rome.
20. Arthur Keaveney, *Sulla: The Last Republican*, 2nd Edition (New York: Routledge, 1982).
21. Stambaugh, 17.
22. Coarelli, 30. The stylobate is preserved in the Palazzo dei Conservatori.
23. See Mary Beard, *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).
24. All dates from Amanda Claridge, *Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide*. (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). For a lucid and comprehensive explanation of the problems associated with establishing dates from early Roman history see: R. M. Ogilvie, *Early Rome and the Etruscans*, (Glasgow: Fontana Paperbacks, 1976).
25. Platner, 109.
26. See Fustel de Coulange and Rykwert for poetic and anthropological discussions of Rome’s religion. For an exhaustive philosophical examination of Livy’s *Ad Urbe Condite*, see Michel Serres. *Rome; The Book of Foundations*. Trans. Felicia McCarren. Stanford; Stanford University Press, 1991.
27. L. Richardson, Jr. *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 412
28. Fustel de Coulange, 179.
29. “She [Vesta as the hearth fire] was moral order. They imagined her as a sort of universal soul, which regulated different movements in the worlds, as the human soul keeps order in the human system.” *Ibid.*, 32.
30. “No external power had the right to regulate either the ceremony or the creed. There was no other high priest than the father: as a priest, he knew no hierarchy. The Pontifex ...might, indeed, ascertain if the father had performed all his religious ceremonies; but he had no right to order the least modification of them.” *Ibid.*, 37-8.
31. See also Allen M. Ward, Fritz M. Heichelheim and Cedric A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People*, 4th Edition (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003), 30. “The living were expected to serve the spirits of the dead in the afterlife through maintaining the sacrifices and rituals of the family cult and to follow the ‘custom of the ancestors’ (*mos maiores*) with the utmost respect.” The respect the Romans possessed for the dead was so great it is preserved in the modern English word *demon* (from the Latin *di manes*, ‘the dead’).
32. Stambaugh, 20.
33. Livy. *The Early History of Rome*. Translated by Aubrey de Selincourt. (Baltimore: Penguin Classics, 1960), 9.46.14.
34. Stambaugh, 22.
35. This permission was displayed to the public either by an inscription including the phrase in *senatus consultum* (by decree of the senate), or by the simpler form *SPQR* (*Senatus PopulusQue Romanum* – the senate and people of Rome).
36. Stambaugh, 29.
37. *Ibid.*, 29.
38. Esther Boise van Deman, “The Sullan Forum,” *The Journal of Roman Studies*, 12 (1922): 2.
39. Coarelli, 57. Il Duce wanted all Italians reminded of their glorious heritage but did not want to offend either the Vatican or the citizens’ religious scruples by celebrating the architecture of Rome’s pagan past
40. OLD.
41. Coarelli, 51.

42. Walter Dennison, "The Forum as Cicero Saw It," *The Classical Journal*, 3, 8 (1908): 318-26, 321.
43. Coarelli, 51.
44. See Alexander Yakobson, "Petitio et Largitio: Popular Participation in the Centuriate Assembly of the Late Republic," *The Journal of Roman Studies*, 82 (1992).
45. Karl J. Hölkeskamp, "Images of Power: Memory, Myth, and Monuments in the Roman Republic," *Scripta Classica Israelica* (The Israel Society for the Promotion of Classical Studies) 24 (2005): 249-271, 257.
46. Plautus, *Curculio*, 470 as quoted in Favro, 36.
47. van Deman, 32.
48. Coarelli, 30.
49. Ward, Heichelheim, and Yeo, 72. The Licinio-Sextian Laws were passed to relieve Roman citizens threatened with debt-slavery. They also limited the amount of land any one citizen could own to 500 jugera.
50. Platner, 137.
51. The word tabularium is a Latin rubric for archives storing tabulae. Tabularium is the name associated with this specific building. The use of lower-case or italics when referring to the building type and an initial capital used when referring to the specific building will, hopefully, limit the confusion.
52. Fustel de Coulange, 142.
53. Stambaugh, 8.
54. Ward, Heichelheim and Yeo, 30.
55. "Strangely enough, our literary sources do not mention the Tabularium." Richardson, 377; "Textual sources are silent regarding this monument." Coarelli, 36
56. Donald R. Dudley, *Urbs Roma: A Source Book of Classical Texts on the City and its Monuments*, (London: Phaidon, 1967), 72.
57. CIL conventions use round brackets where the text was traditionally omitted in inscriptions and square brackets where the text has been lost or obscured but interpolated by epigraphers.
58. Translation from Coarelli, 36. The phrase *de senatus sententia*, used in CIL, VI. 1313 and CIL, VI. 1314, instead of the more common *de senatus consulto*, can be taken to mean "in accordance with the will of the senate" rather than "in accordance with a resolution of the senate." In this context, *sententia* typically reflects an attempted veto by a Tribune.
59. [Q(uintus) Lu]tatis Q(uinti) F(ilius) Q(uinti) N(epos) C[atulus Co(n)s(ul) [De S]en(atu) Sent(entia) Faciundu[m Coeravit] Eidemque [P]rob[avit].  
Q. Lutatius Catulus, son of Quintus, grandson of Quintus, consul, by a decree of the Senate, saw to the erection of this building and approved it as satisfactory. CIL, VI. 1313.  
Translation by Coarelli.
60. "No ancient sources connect the Tabularium specifically with Sulla, yet its scale, prominence, proximity to other Sullan projects, and the involvement of Catulus all point toward his involvement." Favro, 56.
61. Coarelli, 56.
62. The consul-elects' privileges were recognized in the senate where, by custom, they spoke immediately after the consuls, before any other elected magistrate.
63. Catulus fled to Sulla's camp during Rome's occupation by Marius and Cinna.
64. Coarelli, 54.
65. Two more arches have been opened since 1929.
66. Platner, 507-8.
67. The reconstruction used is from Richard Delbrück, *Hellenistische Bauten in Latium: baubeschreibungen*, (Strassburg: Charles J. Trübner, 1907).
68. Claridge, 239.

69. Musei Capitolini, *Musei Capitolini: Route through the rooms: Tabularium: Foundation area*, Mariangela Licata, 2006, <http://en.museicapitolini.org/> (accessed 10 16, 2009).
70. Musei Capitolini, *Musei Capitolini: Ancient Capitol: The Temple of Veiovis*, Mariangela Licata, 2006, <http://en.museicapitolini.org/> (accessed 12 08, 2009).
71. Veiovis is, etymologically, an anti-Jupiter. Jupiter is the king of the gods and, specifically, related to the sky; Veiovis as an Underworld figure makes sense in this context.
72. At some point the a stair was cut out of the hill on the Tabularium's north side — the Via di San Pietro in Carcere — removing the original access to the Arcade from the Arx but it is impossible to provide a definite date for this alteration.
73. Delbrück, 24.
74. Richardson, 377.
75. Coarelli, 31.
76. See Favro, 113, "Table 2". She provides a comprehensive list of thirty-six "major disasters" that struck Rome during the reign of Augustus. Rome's location at the border between the Alban Hills and Sabatini volcanic fields makes it earthquake prone. Fires almost always accompanied earthquakes in the era before electric lights.
77. Richardson, 376. It is probable the Temple of Veiovis was interred inside the Tabularium during this renovation.
78. Dudley, 72.
79. Coarelli, 31.
80. Richardson, 377.
81. Coarelli, 48.
82. Claridge, 240.
83. Platner, 506.
84. Richardson, 377.
85. Platner, 506.
86. Coarelli, 30.
87. St. Clair Baddeley, *Recent Discoveries in the Forum: 1898-1904. A Handbook for Travellers, With a Map Specially Made for This Work by Order of the Director of the Excavations and 45 Illustrations*, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1904), vii.
88. Platner, 507; Purcell, 138.
89. Christopher Hibbert, *The Rise and Fall of the House of Medici*, (Baltimore: Penguin Classics, 1979), 44-6.
90. Purcell, 138-40.
91. *Ibid.*, 139.
92. *Ibid.*, 139.
93. *Op Cit.*
94. Giulio Molisani, "Lucius Cornelius Quinti Catuli Architectus," *Rediconti* (Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Classe di Scienze Morali, Storiche e Filologiche) 26 (1971): 41-49, 45.
95. *Ibid.*, 43.
96. Phyllis Culham, "Archives and Alternatives in Ancient Rome," *Classical Philology*, (University of Chicago Press) 84, no. 2 (April 1989): 100-115, 101.
97. *Ibid.*, 102.
98. Juno Moneta was the republican mint (and the source of the English word 'money') and Saturn was the treasury: Coarelli, 38.
99. Richardson, 376.
100. *Ibid.*, 377.
101. Favro, 33-4. Favro's date for the construction is incorrect.
102. Adrian Goldsworthy, *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*, (London: Pheonix Paperbacks, 2006), 68.
103. For an outstanding review of the military engagements and strategic developments throughout the war, see: Nigel Bagnall, *The Punic Wars: Rome, Carthage, and the Struggle for the Mediterranean*. (London: Pimlico, 1999).
104. Keaveney, 1.
105. Ward, Heichelheim, and Yeo, 122.

106. Ibid., 130.
107. Ibid., 139.
108. Ibid., 139.
109. The enormity of the spoils captured in Africa changed Rome's attitude to foreign wars. Religious prescript forbade Rome from declaring war for any reason other than self-defense. After the Second Punic War, factions within Rome developed an economic interest in prosecuting wars against older, wealthier cities. As a result, Rome became much more willing to assert its power in the eastern Mediterranean.
110. Stambaugh, 21.
111. Der Krieg ist eine bloße Fortsetzung der Politik mit anderen Mitteln.
112. Syme, 12.
113. Goldsworthy, 18.
114. Ward, Heichelheim, and Yeo, 140.
115. Arendt, 121
116. OLD, literally "well-known".
117. Hölkeskamp, 253.
118. Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, (New York: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1952), 10-11.
119. Plutarch, *The Fall of the Roman Republic: Six Lives*, ed. Robin Seager, trans. Rex Warner (Baltimore: Penguin Classics, 2006), Sulla, 1.1
120. Keaveney, 5.
121. Keaveney, 6-7.
122. Ibid., 7.
123. Favro, 53.
124. The phrase *novus homo* refers to the first man in any family to win a position in the senate.
125. Syme, 10-11.
126. Keaveney, 24.
127. Plutarch, Sulla, 1.1
128. Appian, *The Civil Wars*, trans. John Carter (London: Penguin, 1996), 1.2. As with Plutarch, citations from Appian will refer to book and paragraph, rather than page number.
129. Ibid., 1.16-17.
130. "In no way should the terms *populares* and *optimates* be taken as representing anything like modern political parties... they do not even signify cohesive factions. The terms mainly indicate in a broad way the two different types of political tactics employed by individual politicians." Ward, Heichelheim, and Yeo, 165.
131. Keaveney, 3.
132. Syme, 8.
133. Ward, Heichelheim, and Yeo, 163.
134. "Tribunes seized upon popular fear and frustration with corruption and incompetence to attack popular commanders and other leading senators with prosecutions." Ward, Heichelheim, and Yeo, 170.
135. "The Roman institution was remarkable for its all-pervasiveness and binding cogency. Clientela was hereditary; it was also charged with feeling and emotion. A man was supposed to rate his clients even before his own relations by marriage. The law of the mid-fifth century BCE damns and curses any patron who behaved fraudulently towards his client": Grant, 70.
136. Ibid., 178.
137. Marius aligned himself with the radical *populares* Lucius Appuleius Saturninus and Gaius Servilius Glaucia to secure his election in 102 and 100. "He also stirred up feelings in the army, got the soldiers to join in the public assemblies... This sixth consulship of his, which he obtained, came as the result of distributing large sums among the voters and bribing people." Plutarch, Marius, 28.2.
138. Ibid., 9.1.
139. Ibid., 30.1.
140. Appian, 1.32.
141. Goldsworthy, 16.

- 142 . Plutarch claims Marius had other reasons for leaving Rome; “What he hoped was to make trouble among the kings of Asia, and in particular Mithridates, who was thought to be on the point of making war on Rome; he would then immediately be given the command against him and would be able to delight Rome with the spectacle of more triumphs and to fill his own house with the spoils of Pontus and with the wealth of kings. It was for this reason that, when Mithridates treated him with the greatest politeness and respect, he simply remarked: ‘King, either try to be stronger than the Romans, or else keep quiet and do what you are told.’” Plutarch, Marius, 31.1-2.
- 143 . Ibid., 28.1 and 31.1.
- 144 . Plutarch, Sulla, 2.1.
- 145 . For causes of the Jugurthian War, see: Keaveney, 11. For Marius’ plot to secure the consulship, see: Plutarch, Marius, 7.2; Keaveney, 14.
- 146 . See: Keaveney, 19; Christopher S. MacKay, “Sulla and the Monuments: Studies in His Public Persona.” *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, (Franz Steiner Verlag) 49, no. 2 (2000): 161-210.
- 147 . For Marius’ second consular election, see: Plutarch, Marius, 11-12.1.
- 148 . Plutarch, Marius, 27.2; Keaveney, 23-4.
- 149 . “Technically Rome stood at the head of an Italian confederacy. This confederacy consisted of a large number of Italian nations who were her allies but in an inferior position to her... It was the Romans’ consistent and stupid refusal to make any concession whatsoever to these allies which led, in the end, to the Social War, when the exasperated Italians finally rebelled.” Keaveney, 33-4. The specific date for the end of the Social War is debated. The major conflicts in Italy were concluded by 88 but fighting continued in other theaters, primarily Spain, much longer.
- 150 . Plutarch, Sulla, 6.2.
- 151 . Appian, 1.46, 50-51.
- 152 . Ward, Heichelheim, and Yeo, 176.
- 153 . Plutarch, Marius, 8.1.
- 154 . Keaveney, 48; Plutarch, Marius, 34.2.
- 155 . Appian, 1.56; Plutarch, Sulla, 8.1.
- 156 . Plutarch, Sulla, 9.1.
- 157 . Ibid., 9.3: Appian, 1.63-64.
- 158 . Plutarch, Sulla, 10.1; Keaveney, 59.
- 159 . Keaveney, 58.
- 160 . “[Sulla] unblushingly declared he was the one divinely appointed to bring peace to the Roman world.” Ibid., 57.
- 161 . Plutarch, Sulla, 10.1; Appian, 1.64.
- 162 . Plutarch, Marius, 40.2.
- 163 . Ibid., 41.1-2.
- 164 . Plutarch, Sulla, 43.1.
- 165 . Appian, 1.68-74.
- 166 . Ibid., 1.75.
- 167 . Ibid., 1.75.
- 168 . Ibid., 1.76-84.
- 169 . Plutarch, Sulla, 16-21.
- 170 . Ibid., 22.1.
- 171 . Appian, 1.79.
- 172 . Ibid., 1.83-86.
- 173 . Geoffrey S. Sumi, “Spectacles and Sulla’s Public Image.” *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, (Franz Steiner Verlag) 51, no. 4 (2002): 414-432, 418.
- 174 . Ronald Mellor, “The Dedications on the Capitoline Hill.” *Chiron*, (Mitteilungen der Kommission für alte Geschichte und Epigraphik des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts) no. 8 (1978): 319-330, 329.
- 175 . Plutarch, Sulla, 28, 1-2.
- 176 . Ibid., 28.1; Appian, 1.85-6.
- 177 . Plutarch, Sulla, 28. 2-3.
- 178 . Ibid., 29.1-4; Appian, 1.93.
- 179 . Coarelli, 270. A commander lost his imperium once he crossed the pomerium — the religious boundary separating the city and the natural world.
- 180 . Appian, 1.85-6.

- 181 . Plutarch, Sulla, 30.1.
- 182 . Ibid., 31.2.
- 183 . Plutarch, Sulla, 34.1.
- 184 . Sumi, 416.
- 185 . Ibid., 419.
- 186 . The equites were part of the same class as senators — just as rich but less esteemed.
- 187 . Keaveney, 24, 46.
- 188 . MacKay, 171.
- 189 . Livy, 39.3-4.
- 190 . This appraisal is based on the best information available at this time.
- 191 . Stambaugh, 40.
- 192 . Culham, 102.
- 193 . Purcell, 137.
- 194 . Plutarch, Marius, 30.2; Appian, 1.32.
- 195 . Purcell, 133.
- 196 . Axel Boëthius, *Etruscan and Early Roman Architecture* (New York: Pelican History of Art, 1978), 156.
- 197 . See, for example, Stambaugh, 40; Claridge, 281.
- 198 . Purcell, 143.
- 199 . Culham, 115.
- 200 . “Dius Fidius, an ancient deity who combined attributes of both Jupiter and the personified Fides.” Ibid., 111.
- 201 . Sumi, 424.
- 202 . Mellor, 321.
- 203 . Ibid., 330.
- 204 . “A consul is something more than a man; he is a mediator between man and the divinity. To his fortune is attached the public fortune; he is, as it were, the tutelary genius of the city.” Fustel de Coulange, 181.
- 205 . Mellor, 428.
- 206 . OLD. Manubiae is Latin for ‘booty’ or ‘plunder’.
- 207 . Favro, 53.
- 208 . Ibid., 43.



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Figure 1, “Topography of Rome”. Pooya Baktash, unpublished. Based on Rodica Reif and Richard H. Abramson, *Map of Rome in 52 BC*, from Favro, 32.

Figure 2, “The Forum within the Modern City”. GOOGLE EARTH. 41°53’33.00”N, 12°29’09.29”E, EYE ALT. 869 M. Consulted Feb. 28, 2010.

Figure 3, “The Forum Romanum and Capitoline Hill”. Author’s drawing. Based on Coarelli, *The Roman Forum. Reconstruction from the northeast*, 48.

Figure 4, “Temple of Castor and Pollux.” Dan Kamminga, “Tempio dei Castori o Dioscuri, Roma, Italy,” Wikipedia Commons, 09 17, 2005, [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roma-tempio\\_dei\\_castori.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roma-tempio_dei_castori.jpg). Consulted Feb. 28, 2010.

Figure 5, “Temple of Apollo Sosianus”. Jensens, “Apollo Sosiansus temple Rome,” Wikipedia Commons, 07 08, 2008, [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Apollo\\_Sosianus\\_temple\\_Rome.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Apollo_Sosianus_temple_Rome.jpg). Consulted Feb. 28, 2010.

Figure 6, “Remains of the Basilica Julia”. Marcel Germain, “Roman Forum,” Flickr, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/3821185372.jpg>. Consulted Aug. 14, 2009.

Figure 7, “Reconstructed Curia”. Author’s photo.

Figure 8, “Site of the Comitium”. *aGuyIUsedToKnow*, “Roman Forum, Rome,” <http://www.flickr.com/photos/26428944@N04/3124201077/>. Consulted Feb. 21, 2010.

Figure 9, “Forum Ornament”. Author’s photo.

*Figure 10*, “Temples of Saturn and Concord”. Author’s photo.

*Figure 11*, “The Cordonata”. Robert Morancho, “La Cordonata,” Panoramio, <http://www.panoramio.com/24892410.jpg>. Consulted Aug. 14, 2009.

*Figure 12*, “Section Through the *Palazzo Senatorio*”. Author’s drawing. Based on Claridge, *Tabularium*, 239.

*Figure 13*, “Section Through the Tabularium”. Author’s Drawing. Based on Delbrück.

*Figure 14*, “Sullan Plan”. Author’s drawing. Based on Delbrück.

*Figure 15*, “Sullan Elevation”. Author’s drawing. Based on Delbrück.

*Figure 16*, “Claudian Elevation”. Author’s drawing.

*Figure 17*, “Base of the Temple of Vespasian and Titus”. AAR collection, *FU 143*.

*Figure 18*, “Reconstructing the Forum”, AAR collection, *FU 6*.

*Figure 19*, “The Tabularium and Monuments at the Foot of Capitoline Hill, 1866.”, Constant Moyaux. From Cassanelli, David, de Albentiis, and Jacques, 74.

*Figure 20*, “The Tabularium and Monuments at the Foot of Capitoline Hill, 1866.”, Constant Moyaux. From Cassanelli, David, de Albentiis, and Jacques, 78.

*Figure 21*, “Axonometric Sketch of the Tabularium — Stairs”. Drawn by Author.

*Figure 22*, “Axonometric Sketch of the Tabularium — Arcade”.  
Drawn by Author.

*Figure 23*, “Axonometric Sketch of the Tabularium —  
Corridor”. Drawn by Author.

*Figure 24*, “Alignment of the Curia, Tabularium, and  
Jupiter temple.” Author’s drawing. Based on Platner,  
*The Forum of the Republic*, 96.

*Figure 25*, “Looking Up at the Temple of Fides”. Drawn  
by Author.

*Final Image*, “The Tabularium Today.” Author’s photo.



# *The Typeface*

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