

The Palatine Hill | Finds and discoveries from the excavation Università di Roma La Sapienza



Crowdfunding to support the Palatine excavation



Discoveries include previously unknown buildings and monuments, extraordinary exemplars which shed light on the dynamics and development of the settlement.
(All photographs courtesy of Università della Sapienza.)

These discoveries include artefacts and buildings from different periods:

_ IRON AGE _



Remains of Iron Age huts near the Arch of Titus.

_ THE AGE OF THE KINGS _



A sanctuary dating back to the age of the kings, later beautifully refurbished in the Augustan-Claudian, identified as the shrine of the *Curiae Veteres*. Ancient sources place this on one side of the sacred boundary of the Square City founded by Romulus on the Palatine (mid 8th century B.C.). This was a sacred area where the citizens of the city-state, divided by the first king into 30 *curie* (equivalent to present day municipalities) would come together for communal meals and sacrifices to celebrate their guardian divinity.

The shrine was positioned on the path that led from the valley of the Colosseum to the Forum. This being the road used in the triumphal processions and all the ceremonies connected to the foundation myth.

The most ancient layers of the shrine found to date have yielded wall structures, decorative architectural elements and ceremonial objects used in the rites.

The decorated terracotta elements (such as the drip mould left) demonstrate the existence of important buildings related to the sacred rituals in this place.

Labrum fragment, containing the most ancient example of painting yet to be found in Rome. From the area of the *Curiae Veteres*. Now in the Palatine Museum, Rome



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_ THE AGE OF NUMA _

Towards the Arch of Titus, a second sanctuary was found - the Sanctuary of the Velia. This has been dated to the time of the legendary second king of Rome Numa Pompilius (715–673 BC).

Its votive wells have been found to contain offerings of great historical value, like this 15 cm high antefix of Acheloo (an ancient river god).

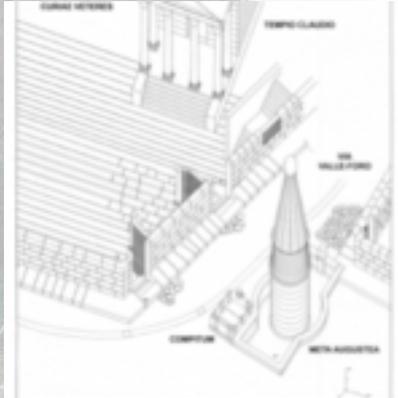


Some of the most important artefacts brought to light in 2015/16 have been decorative elements from buildings undergoing work between the 600-500 B.C. And fragments of imported ceramics. Such as this fragment of roof tile (right).

_ PROTO REPUBLICAN AGE _



AGE OF AUGUSTUS



Elements from this layer include the rebuilding of the *Curia Veteres* shrine by Emperors Augustus (7 B.C.) and Claudius (51 A.D.) (now in the Museum of Rome, Palazzo Massimo) and a monumental fountain identified as the *Meta Sudans* built by the Emperor Augustus at the entrance in 7 B.C.

It also marked the intersection of the 14 districts into which he had divided the city, and was dedicated to Apollo, Augustus' divine protector. Its shape is inspired by the turning points of the racing circus and the non-iconic image of Apollo. A later *Meta* from the Flavian Age (late 1st century AD), contemporary to the Arch of Titus and the Colosseum stood on the same location until it was dismantled under Mussolini.



A luxuriously decorated *domus*, possibly the birthplace of Augustus. After his death, his wife Livia turned it into a shrine.

Traces of buildings beneath suggest that residential facilities existed here in the age of the Tarquini (600 BC).

AGE OF NERO



Traces of the Great Fire of 64 AD that destroyed the entire neighborhood



Over the burnt remains of the previous streets, structural supports for the Palace of Nero, known as the *Domus Aurea* (64-68 AD) were built.

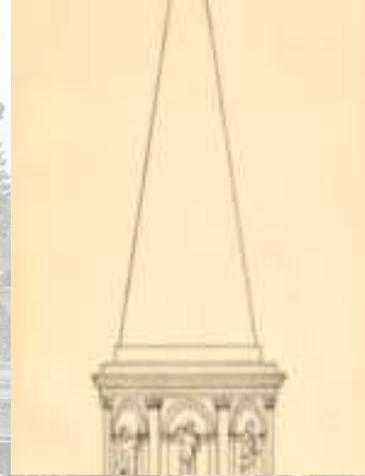


These provided a terrace area overlooking the pond where the later Flavian Dynasty would raise the Colosseum. These terraces were precisely regulated in height according to the incline of the hill.

_ AGE OF DOMITIAN _



The Flavian renovation (69-96 AD) of the Sanctuary of the *Curiae Veteres*, destroyed in the fire of 64 AD.



And a second *Meta Sudans* built on the ruins of the Augustan original (81-96 d.C.).

_ AGE OF HADRIAN _

A *horreum* (warehouse) dating to the reign of Hadrian (117-138 A.D.), between the upper limits of the *Curiae* sanctuary and the Arch of Titus, beneath the present day Via Sacra.

AGE OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS



A monumental complex, characterized by a large central courtyard, dating to the reign of Emperor Septimius Severus (193-217 A.D.) was built over Hadrian age warehouse. Marble busts of Septimius Severus and the imperial family, herms and other fine statuary fragments were reused as building materials in this complex.

AGE OF MAXENTIUS



Imperial insignia attributed to the Emperor Maxentius (312 A.D.): 4 parade spears, 4 banner-carrying spears and 3 sceptres. These signs of rank and office were buried inside a building connected to the *Curiae Veteres* complex, around the time of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, where he was to lose his life and his empire to Constantine. Today on display in the Museum of Rome, Palazzo Massimo.

The Baths of Elagabalus, a 4th century A.D. domus with a banquet hall, a garden with fountains, and a small thermal bath, built over the earlier Severian building



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_ LATE ANTIQUITY _

A necropolis, dating to the late 600s.

The presence of a necropolis here suggests that this ancient site had lost its significance at this time.

_ MIDDLE AGES _

A lime kiln from the 900s, garbage dumps from the 1200s and 1300s and endless medieval tunnels and modern pits.



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