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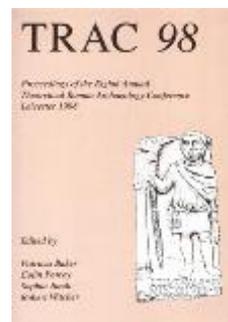# Architecture, Performance and Ritual:
the role of state architecture in the Roman Empire

by Ralph Häussler

Introduction

This paper examines how Rome's *superior* role was manifested in local communities in order to tie them to the centre of the empire. Road building, architecture and art are considered more than just a practical necessity or a physical expression of 'imperialism'. They play an often pivotal role in 'materialising' imperial ideologies, and coercion, as the most visible means through which to present the Roman state, a social construction, physically throughout the empire (cf. Mitchell 1991; Yiftachel 1998). Moreover, imperial architecture, or political architecture, as we shall see, provides the setting for rituals, and especially rituals related to Rome. The scale and elaboration of monumental architecture, which exceeds any functional requirements, is intended to impress subjects by displaying the power of the centre (Trigger 1990). The 'centre'–that is the *princeps*, the senate, and Roman magistrates – actively promote this type of architecture, most apparently at places such as Athens or Lugdunum which were of major concern to the Roman emperors. Here, they clearly 'imposed' architecture as a medium through which to communicate with and influence their subjects (cf. Alcock 1993:172–214).

All empires need to consolidate their dominions, colonies or provinces and all therefore face similar problems of coercion, control and communication. It is also a feature of empires to incorporate what are considered to be distinct ethnic units. The army, or even the long-term threat of military intervention, cannot have been an efficient means of control, as it is too costly. Instead, 'colonialism...is an operation of discourse,' which 'interpellates colonial subjects by incorporating them in a system of representation' (Tiffin & Lawson 1994:3). The Roman empire is no exception. There is a large range of influential media to promote imperial ideologies aimed at keeping the empire together. The function of ideology can be defined as 'to disguise the arbitrariness of the social order, including the uneven distribution of resources...' (Leone 1984:26) by promoting advantages, such as the protective role of individuals or the state, peace and order, or 'civilizing' missions. Yet if bureaucracy and direct force seem almost negligible in most pre-industrial empires, how did empires achieve the necessary degree of unity and coercion? The Roman empire seems to create a 'common Roman identity', at least among the élites, a development that had already started in the time of Cicero (who, in his *de legibus* 2.5, points out that everybody has two *patriae*, one of nature and one of citizenship) until the time of Aelius Aristides, during the second century AD, the empire had increasingly become like a single country whose people – or the wealthy strata of society at least – were unified by Roman citizenship (cf. Ael. Arist., εἰς Ρώμην, 49–50, 53–6, 93–104).

The emphasis of this paper, however, will be on a single medium of integration, namely public architecture as an expression of imperial ideologies, and as setting for events of an integrative nature. Tilley has pointed out that architecture and other objects:

> are affected by their place in the space of others. Presence, position and absence or 'negative presence' are of crucial importance. Places stand out and are vested with meaning and significance. They are far more than merely locational nodes in a spatial lattice. Places exist through time and space, and sacred places ... command awe and respect and this is an obvious reason for their monumentality

(Tilley 1994:122)

And Leone shows how architecture and landscape reflect the ideology of the time:

> ideology takes social relations and makes them appear to be resident in nature or history, which makes them apparently inevitable. So that the way space is divided and described, including the way architecture, alignments and street plans are made to abide by astronomical rules, or the way gardens, paths, rows of trees ... appear to be trained and under the management of individuals or classes with certain ability or learning, is ideology

(Leone 1984:26)

Nowhere else is this more obvious than in the art and architecture of the Augustan period. With its symmetry and regularity it mirrors the political will for order after the chaotic years of the Civil War (cf. Zanker 1988), while at the same time aspiring to order both time and cosmos, as reflected in Augustus' sundial. The emergence of another autocratic regime, where state and ruler become identical, shows clear parallels. The architecture of Louis XIV (1638–1715), especially his palace at Versailles, mirrors his political aims. The scale and technical accomplishments demonstrate the achievement of what could be called 'civilisation', the geometric layout of the palace represents the socio-political conditions, the iconography inserts the king into a mythical system of representation, with Apollo as allegoric representation of Louis XIV (Farrenberg 1996:54–8). Similarly, the Augustan regime created accomplished building works of unprecedented scale which astonished contemporaries like Horace; private, public and religious sphere can no longer be separated, for example, the merger of the temple of Apollo and Augustus' house on the Palatine. It is in this period that Rome became a true capital city, whose architecture reflects Rome's superior role, as well as the omnipresence of the emperor (Zanker 1988).

Rather than merely *reflecting* or *reproducing* ideologies, imperial architecture is intended to *communicate* – more, it wants to *persuade*. Rhetoric is always one element of architecture, i.e. the wish to communicate and to convince (cf. Farrenberg 1996:28; Hauser 1973:122). By physically *materialising* ideologies, imperial dogmas cannot only be communicated and more easily understood, but can be experienced by their intrusion into everyday life through the creation of new spaces and perspectives, and points of focus. During the early Principate, landmarks in the urban landscape of Rome are increasingly related to events and personalities related to the *princeps*. Augustus' dynasty physically occupies space, but not only in Rome, but throughout Italy and the provinces.

The scale and diversity which Rome's empire had acquired during the late Republic demanded a very different approach to create long-term peace and harmony. For instance, the Civil Wars of the first century BC introduced a new chapter in Roman imperialism. An Italy of Roman citizens – united in legal terms, as well as by their experience in the wars – showed the way for an intensifying direct interference from the centre. Also the process of understanding Greek architecture only started in the Late Republic – characterised by instances of an aggressive alienation, i.e. the deliberate re-use of Greek art and architecture in a very different Roman context. For instance, Corinthian columns from the Olympieion in Athens were used for the reconstruction of the Jupiter temple on the capitol (Pliny *HN* 36.45). Moreover, the meaning of architectural forms changes, as Bammer has demonstrated in the case of the monument of C. Memmius at Ephesos. There, by combining different architectural motifs, a new political symbolism was devised which alienates existing motifs; the Romans use this new iconography to represent their relationship with conquered people (cf. Bammer 1985:116–9).

The public architecture of the Principate has to be considered a vital aspect for integration during the first and second centuries AD. While taking up existing symbols and iconography, the monumentality of buildings across the empire created powerful symbols that emphasised Rome's superiority, creating a visible presence of the central government and enhanced ties with the centre. It is essential for a vast state, such as Rome, to be present in the consciousness of its

people through its actions, symbols, festivals, parades, and public holidays, in order to create moments of widespread integration and identification with the state.

Roman landscapes

Rather than looking at individual provincial cities in isolation, it is necessary to remember the wider relationships, namely the provincial landscape created by Rome. It should not escape the enormous symbolic meaning to emphasise Rome's place at the centre of this road-system. Not unlike the Inca empire (cf. Hyslop 1985), road building and the introduction of Roman rule always seem synonymous and during the Principate, the network of *viae publicae* was extended throughout the empire (Purcell 1990; Witcher 1998). Itineraries and the *tabulae Peutingeriana* show the road network from Britain to Syria as an efficient communication system. Having improved communication throughout the empire, cultural boundaries were likely to diminish.

Along the roads, there emerges a network of Roman sites, including a countless number of *mansiones* (Pliny *HN* 6.102, 12, 52) and *mutationes* (e.g. Amm. Marc. 21.9.4) which were constructed to facilitate transport and communication. The political importance of roads is reflected by emperors assuming responsibility for their maintenance. Following the lines of Roman roads, the empire became monumentalised, not dissimilar to the monumentalisation of Rome herself. Throughout the empire, the ideology of Augustus' regime has been *materialised* in architecture and iconography. The passage led through triumphal arches and along monuments. Ascending to the Alpine passes one passed through Cottius' triumphal arch at Segusio (Susa) – a passage experienced by Ammianus Marcellinus (15.10.7) (cf. Bartolomesi *et al.* 1994) – or through Augustus' arch at Augusta Praetoria (Aosta) and the sanctuary to Iupiter Poeninus where votive inscriptions reflect the cosmopolitan nature of this route (Cavallaro & Walser 1988). Along the via Aurelia between Ventimiglia and Nice, the *tropaeum Augustae* celebrates Augustus' conquest of the Alps (Lamboglia 1983). Outside Aurasio (Orange), another triumphal arch – celebrating the conquest of Gaul – marks the passage north into Gaul. The popularity of arches can be explained by their symbolic meaning: subjugation – prisoners-of-war were driven through the *iugum* and the triumphal arch was a symbol for the purification of the army (*sub iugum*, cf. Bammer 1985:120; cf. Cic. *Off.* 3.30; Caes. *BG.* 1.12). The 'propaganda' function of imperial architecture was acknowledged by contemporaries, for example in Maecenas' speech, recorded by Cassius Dio, who advised Augustus to use monumental architecture in order to make Rome's allies respectful and to frighten Rome's enemies (Cass. Dio 52.30.1; cf. Hammond 1932). Winter has already noticed that the emperor's buildings 'thus became an important factor in the Romanisation processes in the provinces' (1996:235). By the first century AD Rome and the imperial family had become omnipresent and the empire had acquired a sense of homogeneity and unity, at least along roads.

These memorials to imperial glory are supplemented by urban monuments. When one approached a Roman town, necropoleis lined the suburban roads. Often there were impressive funerary monuments, like at Glanum (St. Remy-de-Provence), which followed fashion and types common at Rome at the time (cf. Häussler 1998b), and exemplified the presence of social groups with putative links to Rome and the *princeps*. Many Roman towns are re-foundations of existing settlements – part of Roman strategy to take accommodate existing social and religious structures and transform their meaning. Contrary to Millett (1990), I believe that the Romans deliberately transformed existing socio-economic patterns by reshaping existing 'indigenous' settlements and created Roman towns as part of a deliberate strategy to *assimilate* the local population, i.e. to integrate them in Roman forms of representation. This is not dissimilar to the Spanish policy to place, wherever possible, churches and main squares on the sites of an indigenous focus of either worship or power (Fraser 1990:64–5).

Entering a Roman town, provincial architecture is intended to communicate and persuade. On the one hand, it was a strategy of 'unification' to provide Roman citizens throughout the empire with urban amenities, such as aqueducts and bridges, *fora* and baths – at the same time,

these were characteristics of 'order' and 'civilisation'. On the other hand, it was a display of power, a demonstration of Rome's superiority – which local élites could profit from (Winter 1996:54–61); though sometimes provincials resisted violently, as in the case of Claudius' temple at Camulodunum which Tacitus described as *arx aeternae dominationis* (Tac. *Ann.* 14, 31, 6, 3–4). Scale represents wealth and power; the standardised geometrical perfection intimidates and impresses (for Assyria, cf. Reade 1979), whereas the street-grid represents, in sharp contrast to La Tène settlements, aspects of order (one of the reasons it was adopted for sixteenth century Spanish colonies was that the grid plan was 'a visible manifestation of ordered Christian society' (Fraser 1990:46)). As a result travelling along Roman roads architecture, art, and the names and languages of inscriptions, all have acquired Roman characteristics – supplied by means of an efficient communication network which diminished cultural boundaries (Häussler 1998a).

Only with Caesar and Augustus, does Rome's concept of urbanisation spread on an unprecedented scale throughout the Western Empire. Previously, Roman urbanism was more restricted: *coloniae* were, in Cicero's view, not *oppida*, but *propugnacula imperii* 'bastions of the empire' (Cic. *leg. agr.* 2.73) and provided land for veterans and proletarians. By contrast during the Principate, provincial cities included Rome's colonial foundations and re-foundations, as well as numerous indigenous sites, the *civitas* capitals. Why had urbanism become so important, considering that Rome had previously been able to control many peoples, such as the Samnites, Insubres and Taurini, without the need for municipalisation? This answer must lie in people's experience of the Late Republic, which stimulated changes in the relationship between the city of Rome, the 'centre', and the provincial or allied municipality.

There were practical reasons for Rome's direct involvement. Especially in the case of Italy it is obvious that an efficient taxation presupposed a cadastre in order to achieve a reliable census assessment (cf. Nicolet 1988); hence the need for large-scale land surveys or centuriation by Roman *gromatici* (Gabba 1985; Inaudi 1976). Similarly, the grant of Roman citizenship stimulated a process of municipalisation in Italy. Indeed, a municipalized Italy was so important that non-urban communities (e.g., many Alpine peoples) had to be attributed to an urban centre (on *adtributio*, cf. Laffi 1966; on the *reducciones* of 'natives' in sixteenth century Peru, cf. Fraser 1990:42); Augustus' *tota Italia* was symbolised by the re-organisation of Rome and Italy into *regiones*. Decision-making processes were transferred to Rome, i.e. the *praetor* had become the highest juridical institution and the *lex de Gallia Cisalpina* mirrors a process where the role of local authorities had to be defined vis-à-vis the Roman *praetor* (Laffi & Crawford 1996). At the same time, it is interesting to see that Roman magistrates took a strong interest in the running of local government, for example by imposing forms of *euergetism* into municipal charters, such as the *lex de coloniae Genetivae* of Urso obliging magistrates to spend a certain amount of money for *pane et circensem* public buildings (Gabba & Crawford 1996). Through this Roman cognitions of *euergetism* are actively imposed on communities throughout the empire. Fundamentally, this notion might not seem dissimilar to what Gluckman called the 'spirit of generosity' in 'tribal' communities (Gluckman 1965:50–2), though the Roman system encouraged the accumulation of wealth for the few (as compensation for loss of statesmanship). Wealth had to be redistributed through forms of *euergetism;* this became a fundamental essence of the Roman Empire during the Principate since it aimed at limiting social strife and political unrest under the auspices of Rome.

Many of these mechanisms had been developed during the Republic, but it was during the Principate that one can recogise their more efficient application. Moreover, links between the local community and Rome becomes increasingly institutionalised. Besides the official chain of command – from the senate, via the provincial governor to the local municipality – patronage links always were highly important in order to represent the individual community's interests at Rome. Among the new mediators between the *princeps* and the local municipality, were the

flamines and the *seviri*; the relationship was therefore based on a religious foundation, which enhanced its official role (cf. Price 1984). Similarly, in cities throughout the empire, urban plebs set up inscriptions to the emperor. This reflects that the urban and rural plebs acquired a group identity, as well as a direct link to the emperor bypassing existing hierarchies and thus undermining the authority of local élites and councils.

It appears that urbanism provided a setting for a certain kind of lifestyle and society that was unique to the Principate, where social structures were based on an urban lifestyle (cf. Owens 1991:146). In the context of a Roman town, the cultural and economic assimilation of people of various social and ethnic origins was promoted, while the link with the 'centre' could be fostered in institutions situated at the core of any regional centre. Indeed, places were constructed to create a setting for shared rites involving large groups of people. Forum, theatre, and amphitheatre are particular spaces in the urban landscape. Their design is highly standardised, increasingly copying examples at Rome, rather than Greece, which is not accidental, but reflects the strong focus on Rome, most apparent in the rebuilding of Greek theatres during the Principate (cf. Alcock 1993). Under the Roman premise of *utilitas publica* (cf. Winter 1996:42–53) it was the practical achievements of Roman engineering – aqueducts, bridges, roads, baths, etc., which became cultural symbols of *romanitas* (Bammer 1985:129–30; Waldherr 1989:38–9).

The Forum – a particular piece of social space
Not all places have the same design or cultural intent. Different kinds of square stimulate different forms of experience. A square is a place for human interaction, whose mode is produced or reproduced by size, location and access patterns. There are various forms of public interaction, such as processions, commercial exchange, executions or games. In this respect, the Roman *forum* can be defined as 'a particular piece of social space, a place socially and ideologically demarcated and separated from other places,' – a place which 'conveys and evokes a range of responses. The importance of these sites is not only their manifest and distinctive appearance, but their qualifying and latent meaning...' (Kupfer 1972:420). The forum, as such, was a key place in the urban landscape. In Zucker's typology, it is both a dominated square, with the temple as focal construction and a closed square in which the space is surrounded by repetitive built forms (Zucker 1959). Access becomes prestigious as the restricted number of entrances, usually two, allow social control. During the Republic, the focus of *fora* in Rome's colonies was on the capitolium and the voting assembly as shown by the example of Cosa. Through time, a distinct architectural feature emerges in which the *fora* of Caesar and Augustus at Rome are archetypes by having just one or two entrance gates, repetitive colonnades incorporating the basilica, and the temple (cf. in general, Anderson 1984). This structure is not accidental, nor does it originate as such from known Greek predecessors. Zanker has demonstrated in the case of Forum Augustum how Greek architectural models were taken up and modified to become expressions of Roman *Machtdenken;* the architectural frontage had become a ritualised demonstration of Roman authority (Zanker 1970:11–2; Winter 1996). The visitor was engaged in a dialogue – art and architecture of imperial *fora* intended to communicate the *imperator*'s grandeur and his achievements (for the Forum Iulium, cf. Westall 1996). This usage of architecture seems characteristic of autocratic regimes and is exemplified in baroque and renaissance architecture whose rectangular squares show order and harmony (just like in Augustan art); through the scale of buildings one intends to intimidate, to overwhelm; buildings induce respect and fear. It is society that shapes buildings, but buildings also impose constraints on future social actions (cf. Hillier & Hanson 1985), that make them a useful tool for a new regime.

Both emperors and local élites were involved in building. For instance, local élites were motivated by the need for self-representation, for example, the capitolium, underlines the *romanitas* of a town (cf. Dohna 1997), Roman examples are imitated, most obvious the copy of

Augustus' forum at Mérida (de la Barrera & Trillmich 1996). On the other hand, the emperor's direct involvement is frequently attested (Winter 1996; even using the army for civil building, e.g., *SHA Prob.* 9.3; 18.8). The emperor's activities are often concentrated at 'cosmopolitan' sites where his image and message can be seen by many people, as in cities like Nikomedeia and Nikaia in Bithynia, Trapezous in Pontos, Ankyra in Galatia (Winter 1996:234).

To the visitor of any Roman forum, there unfolds the picture of power relationships (with the exception of Propertius, for whom the splendour and charm of the Forum of Augustus was merely an excuse for him being late for a date (Prop. 2.31: *Quaeris, cur ueniam tibi tardior? aurea Phoebi porticus a magno Caesare aperta fuit*; cf. Klodt 1998)). Already the controlled flow of movement along the rectangular axes of the Roman town, the controlled access to the forum, the overwhelming size of architecture must have provided a claustrophobic and intimidating emotion. Entering the forum – usually through triumphal arches, a common metaphor for relationships of power and subjugation – the visitor's view was focused on the dominating temple, on the basilica, as well as the colonnades and statues. As an icon of Roman urbanism the forum provided the stage and the facilities for an urban way of life. It allowed people to stroll along the colonnades and pavements, creating the 'civilised' atmosphere which contemporaries considered an essential aspect of *humanitas* (Tac. *Agr.* 21).

The statues visualised imperial power relationships – from the *princeps* to the local *patronus* and other local magistrates. The relatively uniform patterns of statue arrangement is no accident, as shown by the similarities from geographically distinct regions, such as Africa (Zimmer 1989) and Spain (Alföldy 1979). Similar to the forum of Augustus, statues communicate a particular view of history – centred around the *princeps*. There also seems to have been the need to represent the ruler's family (e.g., cult of Livia (cf. Gross 1962)). While coins had a more 'secular' message, statues were identified with the person, so that honours paid to the emperor in person and to his statue were interchangeable (Price 1984:204–5). For instance, Apuleius referred to the emperor's statue as a haven of refuge (*Metamorphoses* 3.29; cf. Price 1984:119). How better to include Rome and the emperor in everyday life?

Entering the forum, people's view had to be focused on the temple or *capitolium* as the centrepiece of the layout. Vitruvius demanded that the temple had to be visible from anywhere in the city; hence its prominent location on a podium overlooking the surrounding structures (Vitr. 1.7.1; e.g., at Aosta (Viale 1967)). This temple reflected the continuous presence of Rome, whether worshipped in form of the Capitoline Triad or on behalf on the deified emperor. The importance of this dominating focus on the temple can be seen, for example, at Roman Athens, where the layout of the *agora* was radically altered providing a more penetrating focus on a Roman-style temple (Alcock 1993:192–8). The creation of these imperial points of reference in the heart of public places was clearly considered important, and emperors continuously added dominant buildings, for example, in Athens where the imperial *familia* was visible throughout the *agora* (Alcock 1993; Whittaker 1997).

The forum is also the venue for one of the most Roman activities: jurisprudence. During the Republican period, fora were constructed in Italy, Spain and the South of France as 'scenes of *iudicia publica*' (Ruoff-Väänänen 1978:9); many of these fora later acquired the status of *colonia* or *municipia* (e.g., CIL 5.7375; 11.1059)), and every juridical person belonged to a certain forum (e.g., *suum forum* in Cic. *Verr.* 3.38). Indeed, jurisdiction had to be one of the forum's prime functions. In Rome, all trials took place in the Forum Romanum during the Republic and because of their increase Caesar and Augustus started the construction of two new fora (App. *BC.* 2.102; Suet. *Aug.* 29.2). The basilica is only occasionally attested as a venue for jurisdiction (as argued by Welin 1959:447), but it was there (basilica or forum) that people in cities throughout the empire were actually able to see the Roman magistrate in action; the closest most people would get to representatives of the central government. The superior role of Roman jurisdiction, allowing the appeal to governor and emperor (cf. Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*

3.29) are essential in ideologically justifying the benefit of Roman rule. One should not underestimate the absolutely essential role of Roman law and jurisdiction for the integration process since it allowed control of 'indigenous' people by involving them in legal practice. Stern (1982) has demonstrated the possibilities of jurisdiction in the case of Spanish colonialism in South America, where in the long run, "indigenous' litigation weakened capacities for independent resistance by fostering rivalry and conflict, and by integrating 'native' society more tightly into the power structure of the conquerors' (Stern 1982:291). At various levels Roman juridical institutions created ties with local communities and élites. Already in the second century BC permanent courts for extortion were created aimed at suppressing any military resistance of an exploited province by transferring occasions of strife to the law courts. Similarly, inner-élite power struggles are decided by Roman magistrates, as in the case of Genoa and the Veturians (CIL 1^2.584) or between Magnesia and Priene (Sylloge 3.679). Juridical institutions integrated local communities and brought them close to Roman authority which sought coercion, i.e. law could be used by local communities to defend their interests at Rome, but also by the centre to enable compliance.

Besides the forum being a representation of the Roman emperor and State through its statues, its intimidating architecture and the presence of Roman magistrates, we have to focus on the cult activity as a major event involving people in ceremonies related to the emperor. It is necessary to emphasise the ritual function of cult; be it the Capitoline Triad or the so-called Imperial cult, i.e. the cult to Roma and the deified emperors which existed throughout the empire – not as a standardised, 'alien' imperial imposition, but as a more or less integral part of existing religious practices (cf. Beard *et al.* 1998:313–63; Price 1984). Philo already suggests that the name and the temple for the emperor had acquired an all-dominating place in the transformation of any *polis* (Phil. *Leg. Ad Gaium* 149–50), so that Rome became omnipresent (also cf. Price 1984:133; Owens 1991:140–5). Part of the success of the Imperial cult is its integration with existing cults. For instance, at Thugga the Imperial cult was almost completely fused with the Capitoline Triad (Dohna 1997:476; *AE* 1949:109), while in many Greek cities other deities were worshipped on behalf of the emperor (cf. Price 1984). What is important is that throughout the empire people participated in cults and worship which were directly or indirectly connected to the welfare of the *princeps* and the empire. The constant focus on the emperor is mirrored in imperial religious calendars (e.g. third century AD Dura Papyrus 54).

The *princeps* used, consciously or not, religious power as a means of coercion; its importance becomes more apparent in periods of crisis, as reflected in the sources of the third century AD. Though often seen as 'homage', rather than 'worship' (cf. discussion in Price 1984; Beard *et al.* 1998:313–63), as a cult the communal activity includes sacrifice and consumption of the sacrificial food by the community. Our evidence for sacrifices to the emperor is restricted. There were libations, ritual cakes, burning of incense and the killing of an animal, usually a bull (cf. Price 1984:208–9 for further bibliography). The communal focus is underlined by processions (e.g., SEG 9 923; Price 1984:210–1), but more importantly through feasting: for example, a feast alone is mentioned for an imperial birthday celebration. We can expect feasts for the whole local population after sacrifices, so that sacrifice 'was integrated into the life of the city' (Price 1984:230). This is a form of conspicuous consumption, a display of power of the emperor and his supporters who could invest in monumental architecture, in luxury goods, as well as sacrificial goods (cf. Trigger 1990).

In this way, not just symbolically *sharing* but, for many, *profiting* in a form of reciprocity of the spoils of empire made it into a festival of integrative and legitimising nature. Is it possible that the linkage between the state and the local populace heavily relied on ceremonial aspects – ceremonies in which large numbers of people were brought together in rites of legitimisation? Especially in a society where bureaucratic activities hardly exist, the relationship between 'centre' and regional centre can expect to be shaped by ritual activities. In the Inca empire, for

example, it was suggested that the distribution and consumption of food and other goods by the state are an essential aspect of these legitimisation rituals and that *generosity* forges a relationship between Inca leaders and locals (cf. Moore 1996). It is common for rulers to sponsor elaborate ceremonies that often require special equipment and large quantities of foodstuff (cf. Murra 1962). At this stage, one should bear in mind the importance of élite generosity and *euergetism* in societies other than the Roman empire such as the Vijayanagara Empire in Southern India (Sinopoli & Morrison 1995). *Euergetism* was heavily supported by Roman emperors who increasingly had to coerce local élites, i.e. for the cohesion / coercion of the empire, it was seen necessary to avoid any de-stablilising factors, such as internal strife between rich and poor, by promoting forms of reciprocity and redistribution.

Is it therefore possible to lodge the administrative function of larger provincial centres mainly in traditional forms of reciprocity? Empires face similar problems of coercion. Within this system of political and economic control, artificially created regional centres, such as the Inca city of Huánuco Pampa, provided the ceremonial context and physical layout which was designed to articulate various local units in their relationship to each other and their relationship to the centre (Moore 1996). From their layout and facilities, the cities of the Roman empire are not that dissimilar. One could attribute a central role to the forum. While temple and basilica physically materialise the link with Rome, the forum also provides the setting for Roman rituals and Roman activities, such as large scale ceremonies in honour of the emperor and the Capitoline Triad. The existence of storage space under the forum (*cryptoporticus*), for example at Aosta and Arles, might reflect the forum's role in redistributive rites. Within this setting, local magistrates were visibly integrated and subordinated into the civic and religious role of maintaining the ties with the (deified) emperor. Power structures are thus represented on the basis of a cult that interpreted the local communities' place in the Roman world, although we should not ignore the increasing bureaucratic control, for example by the *curatores*.

Theatre and Amphitheatre

In this respect, theatre and amphitheatre reflect a more specialised venue, though of increasing importance over time. For the sake of the plebs, Augustus would not miss any theatre performance, which became a rite of legitimisation. Indeed, the theatre audience increasingly reflected the social order. This was also the venue for pro-Augustan poetry, Horace, Virgil, etc., to be read out loud (cf. Yavetz 1969, 1983). *Ludi* and *munera* 'functioned as institutions in Roman life' (Edmondson 1996: 71), so that theatres seem increasingly to take over some of the functions of the forum. It is not surprising that monumental theatres and amphitheatres often dominate the urban landscape, for example at Orange where the theatre is clearly the central focus of the urban landscape. But there was no clear division between entertainment, politics, jurisdiction and ritual: plays and games had a religious context, since festivals took place in honour of deities, while the gathering allowed for political participation. For the Roman State it was necessary to involve the public – a public who took a lively interest in capital trials and executions (Potter 1996: 151-2).

The functions of theatres and amphitheatres are largely analogous with those of the forum: to include large parts of the population in common rituals, i.e. performances which were staged by the local élite and often had a focus on the emperor or the empire as a whole (e.g., the emperor's birthday) (in general, cf. Geertz 1980; Edmondson 1996; Potter 1996). There was an increasing level of specialisation. During the second century AD, *fora* acquired more commercial functions; often, permanent stalls were built within the forum square, or specialist *merkatos* were constructed. Theatres and amphitheatres allowed the public display of society as inserted in an imperial hierarchy, with imperial magistrates taking the best seats, with public executions under imperial auspices. The theatre also allowed the inclusion of an even larger part of the urban and rural population than the forum.

The importance of the forum as a symbol of an independent city state within the empire declined and there was a shift away from politics during the first and second centuries AD. Inscriptions reflect this change with *duoviri* and *quattuorviri* becoming less prominent in the epigraphic record than *flamines* and *seviri*, i.e. the relationship with the princeps became more important than political *libertas*. The general socio-political climate had changed and local decision-making increasingly became unpoliticized. Instead, the emphasis shifted to other communal institutions, hence the increasing importance of *collegia*, of theatres and amphitheatres during the first and second century AD, largely stimulated by fashion at Rome. Eventually, with difficulties in maintaining supply and communication with the centre, urban life style increasingly turned to forms of personal bondage ('colonate'), as mirrored in the decline of many theatres, amphitheatres and even fora.

Conclusions

Self-representation, for example by means of architecture, and consolidation of group identities and group interests through common activities (rituals, festivals) are essential to consolidate and maintain social order (cf. Quaritsch 1993:1070). This is especially the case for an economically, historically and ethnically diverse society, such as the Roman empire. Through art and architecture, state and society are represented by concrete representations, both *intentional* and *unintentional* (Krüger 1977). This also implies that as architecture reflects the *Selbstverständnis* of architecture and/or patron (cf. Goffman 1959), the architecture and layout of a city reflects changing societal and political order.

The city of Rome herself appears like a macrocosm of the whole empire. Deities from all the provinces were worshipped; artefacts and products were imported from around the Mediterranean; Roman culture increasingly incorporated elements from all over her empire. Rome's superior role is convincingly communicated by its symbolic architecture of the Principate. On a basic level, the numerous provincial centres employed a similar visual language; every provincial city looked onto Rome (Dion. Hal. *Orat. Vet.* 3). They encompass important aspects of Roman ideology. Location and street-grid are generally composed of a 'disassociated' architecture that neglects natural bearings, while the forum, temple, basilica, theatre are the key settings for Roman rituals, as well as being representative of the Roman state. Meier-Dallach had shown how, on the background of what he describes as political culture, architecture imprints images of state and society and hence an element to legitimise the existing order (cf. Meier-Dallach, quoted in Gottschall 1987:42–3) and not just at the centre.

But Roman architects have not just created exclusive monuments, but places that were incorporated into everyday life, whether they were arches to pass through or bustling market squares. These places were meant to be *experienced* and different peoples in the empire experienced them in a different ways, thus, explaining the variations in typologies and the chronologies of their use. Most importantly, for the Roman State, these places were designed as venues for certain social activities. While colonnades and pavements made it possible to wear the Roman *toga*, the theatre/amphitheatre made social divisions public. Above all, festivals and rituals created both regional gatherings and focus points and helped to form a 'Roman' identity, which was essential to keep the empire together. In previously non-urbanised territories, Roman architecture had the twofold aim of stabilising newly created regional centres, whose population could then be integrated into an imperial network.

It can be assumed that aspects of reciprocity and redistribution are essential, not only to maintain social order, but to create empire-wide structures. *Euergetism* and *annonae* helped to redistribute wealth, mostly from people of imperial rank, i.e. senators and knights, who spent most money in a local community (Frézouls 1990). The importance of the Imperial cult should not be underestimated. Ceremonies and festivals in the honour of the deified emperor created moments of 'national' integration and sharing in the spoils of the sacrifices. The concept of the

emperor as semi-god is one way to create superiority and to communicate it in a way that could be understood throughout Rome's provinces.

There are of course, certain concerns which Roman ideology convincingly communicated as being beneficial. Imperial coinage frequently refers to peace, concord, prosperity, and victory; whose major agent was the *princeps*. It is hardly surprising that the deities of Fortuna or Victoria, so typical for Roman society of the first and second century AD, dominate provincial inscriptions. Aspects of unity and the focus on the *princeps* become important issues with the coming of the monarchy that facilitated and stimulated cultural and political 'homogeneity'.

All this underlines that urbanism, as promoted in the first century BC/AD was considered essential for the integration process. Imperial ideologies and hierarchy aimed at undermining local authority. This is characteristic for any 'new' state, because the ties with the centre need to be increased, automatically disturbing existing social geographies.

With the emergence of the Principate, urbanisation, imperial ideologies and state/political architecture are promoted on an unprecedented scale. Throughout history, in periods of significant socio-cultural change the new social order has to be publicised, maintained and consolidated. This phase of intensive promotion is most visible in architectural terms. In regard to Augustus, this is not to deny that many developments and architectural forms had Republican predecessors, but the political will reflects an autocratic regime that wanted to indoctrinate its power all over the empire. Architecture is a tool that enabled the new regime to create a physical presence of the Roman State, while creating the stage for legitimating rituals. One can only speculate on the overwhelming effect of Roman architecture, especially in the Roman West where monumental architecture of this scale was previously unknown – there, Roman architecture must have been considered intimidating and mirroring Rome's claim to eternal rule. But because Roman architecture had practical purposes, which intruded everyday life, as well as representing Rome, it was essential as a means to legitimise Roman rule.

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