Roman and Byzantine Architecture

Cities of the Roman Empire

**Miletus ca. 500 BCE**
First example of the Hippodamus grid system after the city was destroyed by the Persians. Residential zones are divided into island lots called "tholoi" and surround the agora and temple.

**Priene ca. 334 BCE**
First city to apply the Hippodamus system to city layout geography. The streets were stepped where necessary instead of breaking the grid and following the contours.

**Beirut ca. 64 BCE**
Knew as Byblos to the Romans, and also came under Roman rule in 64 BCE. The city quickly became embelished by the dynasty of Herod the Great with large public buildings being erected as an indication of its status. Byblos was widely known for its school of laws, which produced two of Rome's most famous jurists, Papinian and Ulpian.

**Damascus ca. 64 BCE**
The oldest known Roman city in the Middle East. The city was originally famed for its Temple of Jupiter, which had its chief shrine there, the Library of Celsus, and its theatre, which was capable of holding 20,000 spectators. The city was rebuilt under Emperor Constantine I.

**Rome ca. 753 BCE**
The origin of Rome has mythological and topographic explanations. The city grew surrounded by seven hills, ruled by seven Etruscan Kings. Mythology states the brothers Romulus and Remus founded the city on top of Palantine Hill. At its height the city had a population of one million, where the typical insulae consisted of ten-story high tenement housing. The city remained the capital of the Roman Empire until Emperor Constantine I, who moved it to Constantinople. The inhabitants of which continued to call themselves Roman until Ottoman rule.

**Augusta Raurica ca. 44 BCE**
First came under western influence by Alexander the Great ca. 330 BCE. In 44 BCE Roman General Pompey took control of the western part of Syria, including Damascus, and incorporated the city into the League of Ten Cities, called the Decapolis. The Decapolis was a collection of the most prominent cities in the middle east, and indicates the importance Damascus had as a centre of the Graeco-Roman culture. The urban plan shows the first use of the Decumanus (the major vertical street) and the Cardo (major horizontal street) in the region.
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**Building Typologies**

**Temple**  
Pantheon, Rome  
ca. 125 CE

**Theatre**  
Bouleuterion, Ephesus  
147-151 CE

**Amphitheatre**  
Colosseum, Rome  
72 - 80 CE

**Baths**  
Baths of Diocletian, Rome  
298-306 CE

**Forum**  
Basilica, Market  
Trajan Forum, Rome  
105 CE  
Architect: Hippodamus of Damascus

**Church**  
St Peters, Rome

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**Systems**

**Structural Innovation**  
The use of concrete allowed the Roman builders to develop the Arch, the Vault and Dome. They achieved this with the use of complex formwork, and coffered domes to reduce weight.

**Wall Articulation**  
With the onset of the arch as a more efficient structural concept to the post-and-beam, the Roman builders continued to articulate the wall combining the arch with the orders of the columns.

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**Details**

**Classical Orders**  
Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Composite

**Eastern Influences**  
Stylistic variations to Roman architecture began to appear in the Eastern cities of the Empire, as an appropriation to the culture and climate of the region. The most prominent of these is the Syrian arch.

**Byzantine Variations of the Composite Capital**

The great covered colonnaded axes where an idea of local eastern inspiration combining prestige with the practical purpose of protecting shoppers and vendors from the sun.

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**Diagram**

- Temple  
- Theatre  
- Amphitheatre  
- Baths  
- Forum  
- Church  
- Classical Orders  
- Eastern Influences  
- Byzantine Variations