

such monuments, not to mention their external appearance. The testimony of ancient writers attests the importance of this visual medium, which played a central role in enabling the Roman elite to communicate their social values and to win everlasting fame. Yet in the end it seems that not everyone pursued glory through a commemorative monument. Plutarch relates that at the conclusion of Cato the Elder's censorship, the Roman people honoured him with a statue and inscription in the temple of Salus. Prior to this, Cato had mocked those who delighted in such honours, declaring that, although they did not know it, their pride rested purely on the work of sculptors and painters, whereas his own images, of the most exquisite workmanship, were borne in the hearts of his fellow citizens. And to those who expressed amazement that many insignificant men had statues whilst he had none, Cato replied: 'I would much rather have men ask why I have no statue, than to ask why I have one' (Plutarch, *Cato Maior* 19.4).

FURTHER READING

Readers looking for information on specific topics discussed in this chapter should first check the works listed in the notes. In addition, individual entries on many of the monuments can be found in Platner and Ashby 1926, Richardson Jr. 1992, and *LTUR*. Two excellent guides to the archaeological remains of the city are Claridge 2010 and Coarelli 2007. These should be supplemented with Nash 1961–2, who provides photographs of the most important monuments. A brief overview of Roman monuments generally can be found in Coarelli 1972, Stambaugh 1988 and Ramage and Ramage 2008. The topographical surveys by Patterson 1992 and 2010 are also valuable. For collections of primary source materials on the city and its monuments, see Dudley 1967 and Pollitt 1983. Eck 1984 examines the changes in aristocratic display between the late Republic and the early empire. The most in-depth studies on the architectural and propaganda programme of Augustus are Zanker 1988, Favro 1996 and Galinsky 1996. For a comprehensive study of the imperial fora, based on the available textual and archaeological evidence, see Anderson Jr. 1984. Moatti 1993 is useful for the history of the major monuments from the decline of Rome to the present day.

12: (SUB)URBAN SURROUNDINGS

Robert Witcher

Ancient Roman writers such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Antiquitates Romanae* 4.13.4–5) observed the impossibility of locating the point at which Rome ceased and the countryside began. In contrast, modern guidebooks to the remains of the ancient city have less trouble, frequently delimiting their area of interest within the impressive and largely extant Aurelian Wall. However, this wall was not built until the late third century AD and has no relevance to the first millennium of Rome's history. By using it to define the ancient city generally, ten centuries of suburban development are unintentionally re-designated as *intramural* or urban. Such an impression is reinforced by scholarly works on the ancient city, which frequently neglect any consideration of the suburbs or hinterland as distinct spaces; paradoxically, this leaves the impression that Rome was the centre of an empire, but existed in splendid isolation from its immediate surroundings. This chapter aims to demonstrate the need for an integrated approach to city, suburbs and hinterland.

Ancient cities created physical and conceptual unity through the definition of boundaries – classifying those people, places and activities which were part of the city, and those which were not. This chapter draws on textual and archaeological evidence to explore how the boundaries between the city of Rome and its suburbs were defined. It goes on to consider the buildings and everyday activities that characterized the suburbs.

Particular emphasis is placed on the transformation of suburbs over time and space. Many formerly suburban areas were incorporated within the city as it expanded. However, the intention is not to chase the 'leading edge' of the suburbs as it moved out from the city, but to consider the broader zone which encompassed the historical evolution of Rome's suburbs. This will involve consideration of monuments and areas frequently (but mistakenly) regarded as 'urban'. For example, the

Ara Pacis has been incorporated into the fabric of the late antique, medieval and modern city, but was built within an explicitly suburban context.

The study of Rome's suburbs has a long history which has developed in tandem with the expansion of the modern city; major bursts of urban development during the late nineteenth century and after the Second World War led to the rapid excavation of extensive areas within the ancient city's suburbs. Similarly, the renewed expansion of Rome over the past decade has instigated large-scale, well-funded excavations leading to new and unexpected discoveries. Simultaneously, the *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae – Suburbium (LTURS)* has systematically catalogued a wealth of disparate and often unpublished information about key sites in a broad swathe of land c.5–10 km beyond the Aurelian Wall.

This renewed attention to Rome's suburbs coincides with a trend in recent scholarship towards the study of 'peripheral' phenomena – that is, socially marginal activities, often occurring in distinct liminal spaces, such as burial and rubbish dumping. Such studies have sought to shed new light on the ancient city by exploring the unremarkable activities through which societies mark out social norms.

Similarly, there has been a renaissance of interest in Rome's wider hinterland: new archaeological projects reveal ever more complex patterns and densities of towns, villas and farms which were closely integrated with the social and economic life of the metropolis. Again, this coincides with recent developments in the wider study of ancient economies and urban–rural relations, moving away from old debates, such as the 'consumer city', to more sophisticated interpretations informed by archaeological and comparative evidence.

With these new data and concepts to hand, this chapter will question two persistent preconceptions about Rome's suburbs. The first is the widespread and entirely negative perception of suburbs as characterized by a range of undesirable activities, such as burial, which were banished to the urban periphery. The second is a more sophisticated position which recognizes both positive (e.g. leisure, social freedoms, luxury) and negative (e.g. execution, burial, manufacturing and rubbish dumping) associations, but finds these contradictory. In short, the aim is to question the subordinate status of Rome's suburbs in our interpretations and to reinstate them as an integral and complex part of the study of the ancient city.

DEFINING THE SUBURBS

What is a suburb? Both ancient and modern definitions rely heavily on the concept of the city itself, i.e. they are defined as 'not urban'. Geographers of modern suburbs have developed elaborate typologies, but ultimately recognize the theoretical and practical difficulties of unambiguously distinguishing city from suburb in terms of any simple measure of physical form (e.g. building or population density) or type of activities (e.g. manufacturing, commerce, housing). Roman concepts and definitions were equally problematic.

Suburbium is a rather rare noun used almost exclusively to describe the area around Rome rather than urban hinterlands in general; much more common is the adjectival form *suburbana* used in conjunction with features such as villa estates. In this specific sense, 'suburban' meant not only physical proximity to the city, but alluded to an elite lifestyle. These villas were integral to the practice and display of aristocratic values such as *amoenitas*. Other terms such as *continentia aedificia* (built-up area) and *extra-urbem* (beyond the walls) were rather less ideologically loaded expressions pertaining to periurban spaces.¹ Each of these terms referred to subtly different aspects of suburban life, but all share a common difficulty regarding precise geographical definition. How then were city and suburbs defined on the ground?

The most obvious method of bounding a city is to build walls. Urban enceintes resolve ambiguities by categorizing those people and activities included and those excluded from the city. Three successive walls encircled Rome, each subject to realignment and rebuilding. Roman authors relate that the 'Romulean Wall' was first constructed during the eighth century BC around the Palatine Hill;² later kings expanded this circuit to include other hills (*LTUR* 3.315–17). The 'Servian' or Republican Wall, possibly established in the late sixth century BC and rebuilt during the early fourth century BC, comprised a 10 m high defensive circuit of large *tuffo* blocks, extending c.11 km and enclosing c.426 hectares (*LTUR* 3.319–24). Finally, the Aurelian Wall, commenced in AD 271, comprised a 6 m high (later raised to 12 m) brick-faced concrete wall with towers and heavily defended gateways,

¹ Champlin 1982; Goodman 2007, 6.

² Excavations beneath the Palatine have revealed a sequence of walls starting in the eighth century BC. This has generated much debate about its possible relation to Romulus' wall; the issue remains open, not least because of the wall's rather undefensive character and location at the foot of the hill.



MAP 12.1 Republican and Aurelian Walls, plus key monuments.

extending c. 19 km and enclosing c. 1350 hectares (*LTUR* 3.290–314). Chronologically, therefore, it is possible to discern a sequence of ever-larger circuits of ever-greater defensive strength. However, for five centuries, during the late Republic and early empire, buildings extended far beyond the Republican Wall – Rome was effectively an ‘open city’.

Walls fix stable urban limits; but as cities grow, such restrictive physical boundaries are overwhelmed and either demolished or absorbed into the urban fabric (e.g. *LTUR* 3.321; Livy 1.44). For example, stretches of the Republican Wall were left deep inside the imperial city, where they remained culturally meaningful in terms of urban rituals³ and stood testament to the impossibility of containing Rome.

However, physical walls are only one means of defining the (sub)urban. The ritually defined *pomerium* was perhaps of even greater

³ Wiseman 1998, 19–21.

TI CLAVDIVS
 DRVSI F CAISAR
 AVGGERMNICVS
 PONT MAX TRIB POT
 VIII IMP XVI COS IIII
 CENSOR PP
 AUCTIS POPULI ROMANI
 FINIBVS POMERIVM
 AMPLIAFIT TERMINA FITQ

FIGURE 12.1 Drawing of Claudian pomerial cippus based on *CIL* 6.40852, pt. 8, fasc. 2 (1996).

importance (*LTUR* 3.96–105). The *pomerium* dates back to the archaic city when a ploughed furrow was used to mark out the boundary of the city (Plutarch, *Romulus* 11.1–4; Varro, *De lingua Latina* 5.143); this line may or may not have coincided with the earliest urban wall (*LTUR* 3.315–17). During the regal period, the area enclosed by the *pomerium* was enlarged several times; the circuit then remained largely unchanged during the republican period, broadly coinciding with the Republican Wall. There was renewed interest in extending the *pomerium* during the early imperial period, when Claudius made an explicit connection between the territorial expansion of the empire and the physical expansion of the city (Tacitus, *Annales* 12.23–4). By erecting inscribed *cippi* (e.g. *CIL* 6.1231a = 31537d) which physically defined the course of the *pomerium* (perhaps for the first time, as no republican equivalents are known), Claudius promulgated this imperial connection, though

Boatwright suggests he 'created' this tradition in line with his antiquarian and political interests. Vespasian and Titus subsequently further extended the *pomerium* within the same tradition (*CIL* 6.31538a–c).⁴

The *pomerium* defined the city by establishing a series of binary oppositions: *urbs* versus *ager*, Roman versus foreign, life versus death, military versus civilian. Laws and traditions accumulated around this symbolic line: for example, the Twelve Tables forbade burial within the *pomerium* (Cicero, *De legibus* 2.23 debates significance) and generals surrendered their *imperium* on crossing the *pomerium* and entering the city.⁵ As a result there was a concentration of funerary and military activity (e.g. *Castra Praetoria*) beyond the *pomerium*. However, the sanctity of this boundary may have been exaggerated. For example, it is often claimed that potentially dangerous foreign cults such as Juno Regina and Isis were kept beyond the *pomerium*. Yet there are multiple exceptions to such a rule (e.g. Venus Erycina on the Capitoline) and there is no clear textual or epigraphic evidence for any universal legal requirement. Rather, concerns around individual deities have been generalized (e.g. Cassius Dio 40.47.3–4 on the demolition of intra-pomerial temples to Isis and Serapis in 52 BC). Orlin argues that the concentration of foreign cults on the Aventine, uniquely beyond the *pomerium* but within the Republican Wall, was not an act of exclusion but of integration. It was a transitional space which allowed foreign gods to make the physical and ideological transition to Rome.⁶

As well as walls and religious circuits, other types of boundary encircled and defined the city. For example, goods entering Rome were taxed at a series of customs stations forming an economic cordon beyond both the Republican Wall and the *pomerium*.⁷ Such multiple and mobile boundaries mean that no single line definitively divided city from suburb/hinterland. Further, all of these boundaries were conceptually and physically permeable. For example, administratively, the legal power of the tribunes extended *passus mille* (one mile) beyond the walls (compare Livy 3.20.6–7 and Cassius Dio 51.19.6; this probably referred generally to the *continentia aedificia*).⁸ In a broader conceptual sense, 'Rome' was never restricted to the physical city itself. Sanctuaries vital to Roman religious identity had long existed at nearby towns such as Lavinium. Finally, in a more mundane sense, people moved back and forth across these boundaries on a daily basis. Perhaps it was precisely

because of such permeability that boundary definition and maintenance held importance.

It is often suggested that boundaries such as the *pomerium* shaped the suburban character through its reception of polluting and undesirable activities (such as burial, execution and rubbish dumping) excluded from the urban core. However, such an approach is inadequate for two reasons. First, it defines the suburbs in purely negative terms – activities were pushed out to the periphery. However, suburban areas could provide positive attractions. For example, artisans such as potters found land, access to resources and transport links.⁹ As places of transit, suburbs provided opportunities for competitive display: roads provided highly visible locations for funerary monuments, whilst gates and arches choreographed movement. In the northern Campus Martius, Augustus found a new space, unencumbered by associations with other leaders, which could be ideologically manipulated for dynastic purposes. Other activities and buildings are likely to have been constructed in suburban areas for more pragmatic reasons; for example, the concentration of theatres and stadia in the Campus Martius probably reflects a simple lack of space with the urban core.

Second, the idea that the suburbs were defined by urban exclusion is inadequate, because the distinction between city and suburb was, in reality, blurred. As the city grew, suburban areas were drawn into the urban core. Such incorporation could comprehensively transform the character of an area. For example, the extensive republican cemeteries on the Esquiline were gradually tidied and regulated and, eventually, levelled and landscaped as part of the *horti* of Maecenas;¹⁰ connotations of death, pollution and poverty were replaced with notions of leisure and refinement (Horace, *Satires* 1.8). In other areas, traces of former suburban identity persisted. For example, Claudius' extension of the *pomerium* left the Tomb of Bibulus well within the city. Such traces of 'suburban' activities may have been conceptually problematic, but their frequency must have normalized the situation; tombs and anomalous architectural forms were part of the *bricolage* of the city's fabric.

There was also the difficulty of actually perceiving the urban boundary and therefore potential ambiguity in the experience of these

⁴ Boatwright 1986. ⁵ Drogula 2007 for revisionist interpretation.

⁶ Orlin 2002. ⁷ Palmer 1980. ⁸ Goodman 2007, 15.

⁹ Evidence for pottery production at Rome is rather limited; however, activity appears to have focused on the clay deposits of the Janiculum on the west bank of the Tiber (Peña 1999, 31–3).

¹⁰ Bodet 1994, 50–3.

spaces. For example, the pre-Claudian arches of the Marcia–Tempula–Julia aqueducts crossing over the Via Praenestina may have *appeared* to those arriving at Rome as the point of transition from *suburbium* to *urbs*, the edge of the city. But passing beneath the aqueducts and continuing along the road, travellers would have encountered tombs on either side of the approach to the actual city gate (Porta Esquilina) and the *pomerium*.¹¹ The exclusion of burial from the city may have been a legal requirement, but the realities of an expanding city and multiple urban boundaries may have blurred the *experience* of this legality. Similarly, there was no sharp division of *continentia aedificia* and green open space. Rather, gardens and groves penetrated the city, whilst urban-style building spilled into the countryside.

This blurred reality between city and suburb also helps to explain some of the perceived paradoxes of the suburban landscape. Both the immediate suburbs and the wider *suburbium* have been characterized as places of extraction and production (e.g. stone, *pozzolana*, fruit, vegetables, pottery, brick) but also as places of consumption (e.g. elaborate villas). The suburbs were slums and shanty towns, but also dotted with villas set within spacious gardens (e.g. *horti* of Maecenas, *LTUR* 3.70–4). They were cramped and dirty, but also green and open (in relation to Campus Martius, *LTUR* 1.220–4). Suburbs were beyond the city, but strictly regulated.¹² They were teeming with life, but places of the dead. In part, such seemingly discordant juxtapositions result from generalization of fragmentary topographical information, in part they also reflect the reality of extreme economic and social pressures on the leading edge of an expanding imperial metropolis. Whilst the rich and powerful dominated the urban core, the suburbs were the place to view the social structure of Rome in action – the achievement of high status (villas, *horti*, mausoleums), the aspiration to higher status (especially the funerary monuments of freedmen) and the utter lack of any status (squatters' huts, *putuculi* or public burial pits).

An excellent example of the apparently contradictory nature of suburban phenomena is the *hortus*. Traditionally, *horti* have been interpreted as large parks and gardens established by the elite during the late Republic and early empire. They were intended for leisurely retreat and the display of culture and status through the conspicuous consumption of expensive land and elaborate architecture and sculpture. However,

this interpretation bears the strong influence of the Renaissance imagination. Purcell stresses the parallel economic significance of *horti* as speculative investments – property to be bought and sold as land prices rose.¹³ In other words, *horti* were both a 'green belt' and the basis for the city's further expansion.

Rather than pollution and waste exported over the urban boundary, the suburbs were integral to the well-being of Rome. Conceptually, the suburbs were perceived and represented as a fundamental component of the city. The marble *Forma Urbis* displayed in the Temple of Peace (*LTUR* 4.67–70) mapped not only the monumental urban core but also represented extensive suburban tracts, though few relevant fragments survive. In a more immediate sense, the suburbs were also vital to the survival of the city as the primary location for the importation and processing of food. Extensive warehouses were built in the suburbs to store imported grain, oil and wine (*LTUR* 4.67–70; 5.285). Large-scale mill complexes (*pistrinae*) at the Porta Maggiore and on the Janiculum (*LTUR* 3.270–2), powered by water from adjacent aqueducts, attest the industrial scale necessary to support the urban population.¹⁴ But the location of these activities in the suburbs was not determined by simple expedience (e.g. cheaper land). The monumentality of aqueducts and warehouses indicates they were more than just functional buildings; production and supply were integral to Rome's expression of power. Nowhere was this more obvious than in suburban areas where boats, mule trains, ox carts and herds of animals congregated in the shadow of monumental aqueducts. Monte Testaccio (*LTUR* 5.28–30), the largest of several artificial hills of discarded amphorae, was as much a highly visible monument to Rome's power to command and consume surplus as it was to the need to manage rubbish dumping in an area of rising land prices.¹⁵

Beyond the inner suburbs lay the wider *suburbium*. Again, it is impossible to delimit its extent or to identify activities unique to this area. The villas of Roman aristocrats were densely clustered along consular roads and around suburban towns such as Tibur and Tusculum, particularly in the hills to the south and east of Rome.¹⁶ This architectural form was hardly unique to the *suburbium*, but their numbers and close integration into the social, political and economic fabric of the city, as revealed for example through Pliny the Younger's letters (e.g. *Epistulae* 9.36), was distinctive. In particular, emperors confiscated

¹¹ Coates-Stephens 2004, 34.

¹² Note the management of cemetery areas on the Esquiline, Bodel 1994, 50–3. On production in the suburban area, see Chapter 18.

¹³ Purcell 2007. ¹⁴ Coates-Stephens 2004, 22–9.

¹⁵ For rubbish dumping, see Dupré Raventós and Remolà 2000. ¹⁶ Marzano 2007.

or constructed elaborate architectural complexes to which they could physically withdraw from the city to hunt, recuperate, receive guests or play the role of a traditional aristocratic landowner. As well as the singular complex of Hadrian at Tivoli, there was a host of others including the villas of Nero at Subiaco, Trajan at Arcinazzo, and that associated with Marcus Aurelius at Villa Magna.

The countryside was also densely occupied with small farms intensively producing food and luxuries for the urban market. The scale of production is amply attested by archaeological evidence for cisterns (to irrigate gardens and orchards), vine trenches, pits for olive trees, oil presses and wine cellars. But it is important to stress that these suburban settlements were not just producers for the urban market; the dense distributions of mass-produced pottery, imported marble and stamped bricks mapped by archaeologists is testament to a 'metropolitan' style of consumption on even the smallest farms.¹⁷ Such closely integrated economic and social networks make it even harder to discern clear differences between urban, suburban and rural.

As well as dispersed 'rural' settlement, there were also many ancient Latin, Sabine and Etruscan cities such as Tusculum, Cures and Veii located in the *suburbium*. These maintained distinct civic identities, but as Rome increasingly monopolized the social and economic functions of these old cities, imperial patronage became an important means of support. Paradoxically, as Rome's immediate suburbs were gradually redefined as urban, these erstwhile independent cities were slowly redefined as *suburban*, forming part of an 'extended metropolis'.¹⁸

Just as delimiting the start of the suburbs is an impossible task, so attempts to define the farthest boundary of the *suburbium* are equally spurious. Inevitably, the density of farms and villas declined with distance from the city, but there is no clear line beyond which the social and economic influence of Rome dissipated. Even if such a line did exist, it would have to have been mobile, shifting ever further from the city as economic pressures inflated the price of goods, and the construction of roads and bridges drew ever more distant areas into the immediate influence of the city.

In sum, Rome's suburbs cannot be defined in simple terms such as location, material form, or specific social and economic activities. Even incontrovertible 'truths', such as burial outside the *pomerium*, emerge as rather less straightforward in reality. In practice, the suburbs are best

characterized by a distinctive *mobility* and *diversity*: that is, mobility of people and goods, but also mobility of the suburbs themselves, as well as a diversity of buildings, activities and ideologies.

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE SUBURBS

If Rome's suburbs defy definition, how else can we 'know' them? Guidebooks and topographical dictionaries often structure visitor itineraries along Rome's consular roads.¹⁹ However, such accounts are composites of many periods, describing a city which no individual could ever have experienced. One approach is to investigate 'lived' spatial encounters at specific chronological moments. Favro (1996) presents two accounts reconstructing the experiences of pedestrians moving through Rome's streets – from the Forum Romanum along the Via Flaminia to the Milvian Bridge in 52 BC (*ibid.*: 24–41) and from the Milvian Bridge back to the Forum in AD 14 (*ibid.*: 252–80).²⁰

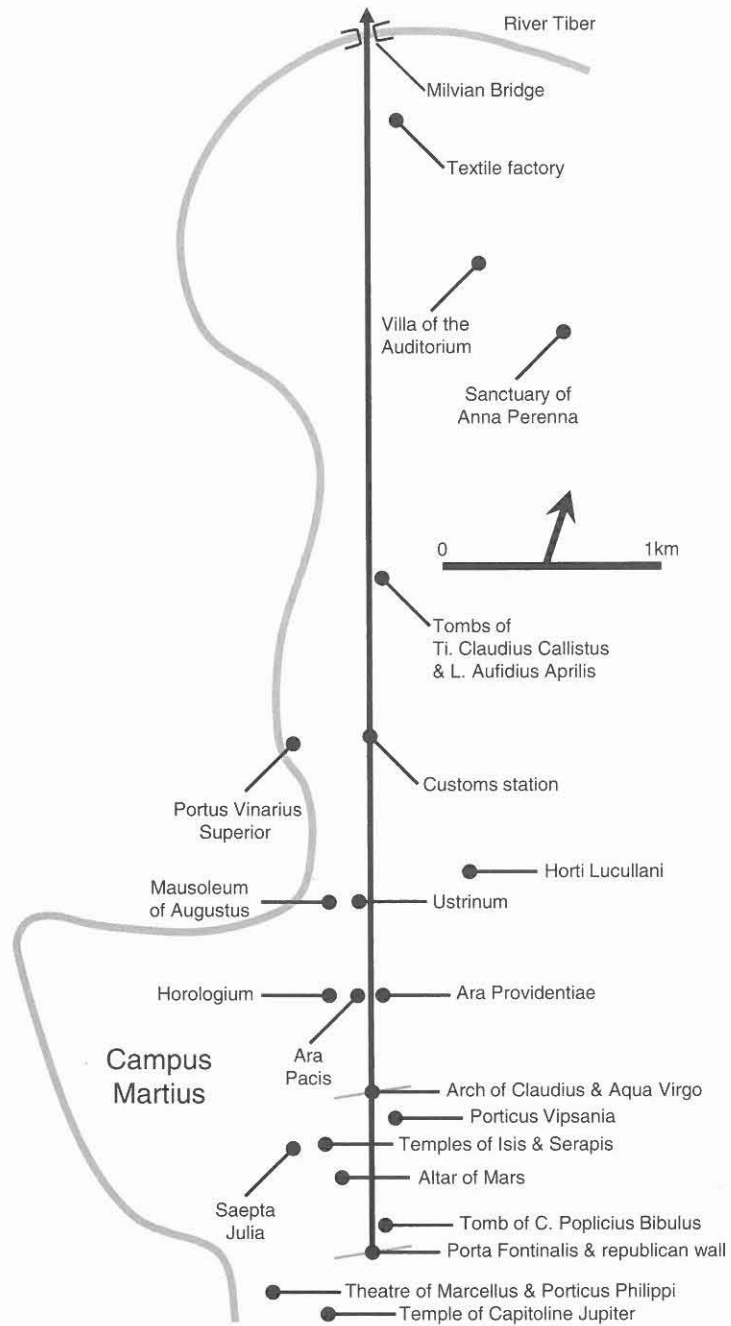
Favro's journeys permit her to consider the profound impact of Augustus' urban programme on the everyday experience of the city. The following section presents a similar journey, with the specific aim of dissolving the stark conventional distinction between urban and rural, and instead exploring a single extended suburban space which encompasses monuments, such as the Ara Pacis, and practices, such as pottery production, which are rarely considered together. To complement Favro's two journeys (52 BC and AD 14), we move forward in time again. Likewise, our journey will also follow the line of the Via Flaminia, but will omit the Forum Romanum, Rome's urban heart, instead starting at the Porta Fontinalis in the Republican Wall. It will then continue via the Milvian Bridge some 20 Roman miles (c. 30 km) deep into the countryside of Etruria.

In contrast to Favro, we will not accompany fictional individuals with their own extensive personal memories of Rome's urban landscape and appreciation of its cultural history. Rather, we will use our own eyes, ears and noses. In more of a hurry, especially on the first stretch, and less well-versed in how to read the monuments encountered, we will be less contemplative of the broader cultural resonance of what we see and hear. Details of topography and debate can be found in the

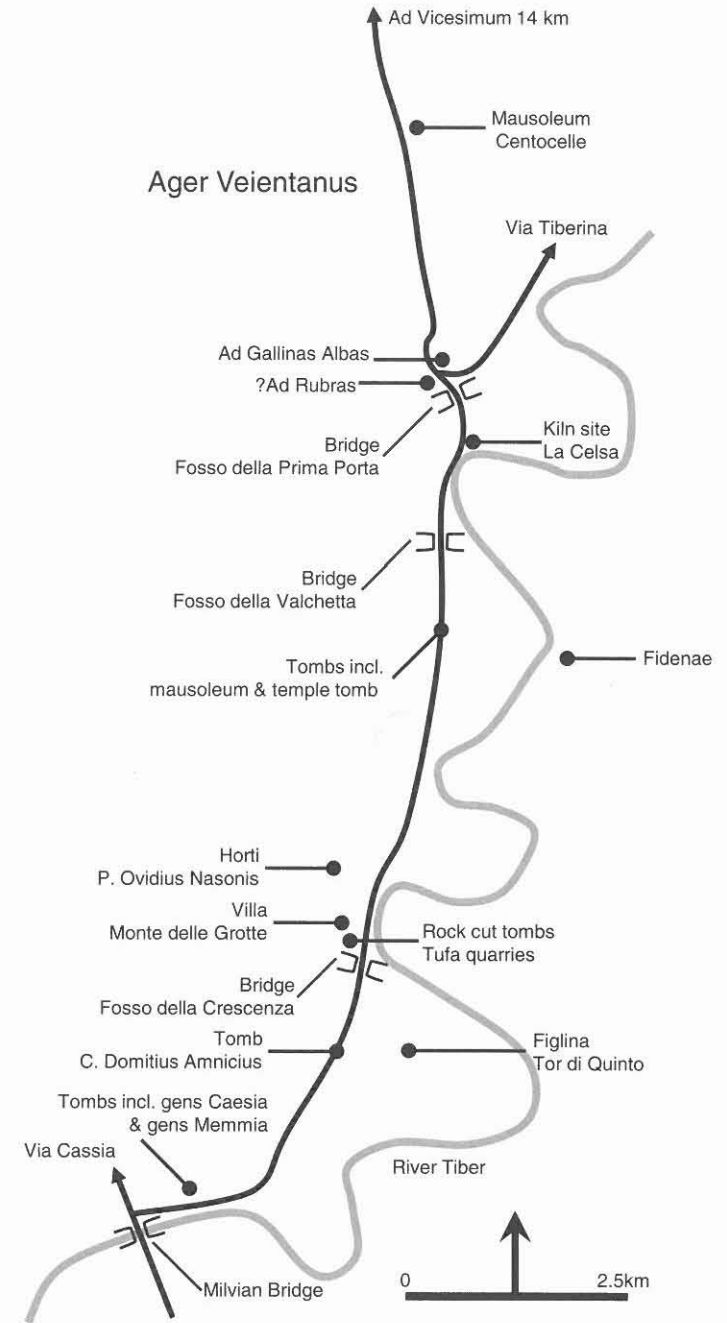
¹⁷ Witcher 2005. ¹⁸ Witcher 2005.

¹⁹ E.g. Messineo 1991.

²⁰ For other briefer examples, see Patterson 2000, 97–101; Purcell 1987b, 187–9.



MAP 12.2 Via Flaminia (Republican Wall to Centocelle).



MAP 12.2 (cont.)

relevant *LTUR(S)* entries. The more ephemeral structures and activities seen, heard and smelt are inevitably imaginary, but draw on textual, epigraphic and comparative evidence. Particular emphasis is placed on archaeological information, especially as we move further from Rome and textual evidence becomes disproportionately rarer. The results of recent archaeological discoveries in the suburbs of the modern city are also incorporated.

It is AD 79. Setting off from the Forum, we pass through the old Republican Wall via the Porta Fontinalis (*LTUR* 3.319–24, 328–9) and skirt the base of the Capitoline Hill. High above is the new Temple of Capitoline Jupiter recently rebuilt by Vespasian following its destruction during the Civil War (*LTUR* 1.226–33; Tacitus, *Hist.* 3.71); to our left is the curving facade of the Theatre of Marcellus (*LTUR* 5.31–5) and the Porticus Philippi (*LTUR* 4.146–8). The road turns north and runs straight into the distance (*LTUR* 5.135–7; 5.139–41). We pass a number of imposing republican tombs including that of C. Poplicius Bibulus (*LTUR* 4.295; generally Juvenal 1.170). The inscriptions on these buildings narrate the lives of the rich and influential individuals and families of the city.

As we walk north, we keep the Campus Martius to our left (*LTUR* 1.220–4); as the name suggests, we pass monuments associated with the military such as the Altar of Mars (*LTUR* 1.223–6). Many date back to when citizens gathered here for the census, to vote or to complete their military obligations. Further along is the Saepta Julia, an enormous colonnaded space; originally a voting precinct, it is now used for shows and gymnastic contests (*LTUR* 4.228–9; Suetonius, *Augustus* 43; *Nero* 12). Like so many grand buildings hereabouts, the Saepta is full of sculptures and artworks, many from the eastern kingdoms. We also pass the Temples of Isis and Serapis (*LTUR* 3.107–10), a splendid complex of buildings, porticos and exedra decorated with Egyptian obelisks and sphinxes. Beyond, towards the Tiber, lie theatres, baths, porticos and temples, as well as grand old houses and open spaces.

To our right is the Porticus Vipsania, a large colonnaded space which houses a map of the world (*LTUR* 4.151–3; Pliny the Elder, *Historia Naturalis* 3.16–17). We continue towards a triumphal arch; the inscription announces that it was built by Claudius to commemorate his conquest of Britain (*LTUR* 1.85–6; *CIL* 6.920; Cassius Dio 60.22). Until recently, the arch also marked the line of the *pomerium*. The inscription states that Claudius was entitled to move this ritual urban boundary following his successful foreign wars, which had extended

the territory subject to Rome (*CIL* 6.40852). However, just four years ago Vespasian and Titus extended the *pomerium* still further north; the old pomerial *cippi* were buried and new ones set up by the roadside ahead.²¹ Claudius' arch also carries the Aqua Virgo over the road; an inscription on an arcade further to our right recalls that the emperor rebuilt the aqueduct and restored the water supply to the Campus Martius (*LTUR* 1.72–3; Frontinus, *De aquaeductu* 1.10; *CIL* 6.1252).

Beyond the arch, the landscape opens out; looking back, the Aqua Virgo appears like a wall enclosing the city (see *LTUR* 1.223); beneath its arcades are the 'lean-tos' of squatters.²² To our left is a spacious complex of monuments erected by Augustus to commemorate his family and the city's imperial destiny. Next to the road is the *Ara Pacis* (*LTUR* 4.70–4; 5.285–6), an altar within a precinct of richly carved marble celebrating Rome's past, present and future. It is matched on the opposite side of the road by Tiberius' *Ara Providentiae* (*LTUR* 4.165–6). Behind the *Ara Pacis* is the *horologium* (sundial, *LTUR* 3.35–7), a towering Egyptian obelisk covered with illegible hieroglyphs, which casts a shadow across a huge marble and bronze pavement. It is an impressive sight, but from the position of the sun in the sky, the monument's timekeeping seems to have become inaccurate (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 36.73)!

Just beyond, we pass the imperial funerary complex. Here, emperors and members of the imperial family are cremated within a large travertine enclosure (*ustrinum*, *LTUR* 5.97) and their ashes interred in the huge mausoleum by the river (*LTUR* 3.234–9). The latter is adorned with tall trees, Egyptian obelisks and long inscriptions detailing Augustus' achievements (*res gestae*).

On the hillslopes to our right are *horti* – amongst the trees and open areas, we glimpse the buildings and terraces of the Horti Lucullani, the most beautiful in Rome (*LTUR* 3.67–70; Plutarch, *Lucullus* 39.3). Many of these properties were owned by famous men of the Republic such as Lucullus whose names they preserve. Most now belong to the emperor, though those closest to the road have been sold for development. Indeed, labourers are building large brick-faced concrete *insulae* on the Campus Agrippae to our right (1.217).²³

²¹ *CIL* 6.31538a records Vespasian's northern pomerial expansion, but its original location is unknown.

²² Scobie 1986, 402.

²³ Archaeological evidence for domestic architecture at Rome is comparatively poor and dominated by large, second-century AD *insulae*. There is limited evidence

Soon the Pincian Hill comes down towards the Tiber.²⁴ We pass a customs station for the collection of tolls on goods imported into the city; officials count carts of amphorae and flocks of animals on their way to market.²⁵ Down to our left are the docks and warehouses of the Portus Vinarius Superior (*LTUR* 4.156), where wine and other goods brought downriver from Umbria and Sabina are unloaded.

We pass a succession of funerary monuments – extravagant and humble, in old styles and new, commemorating young and old, individuals and families, rich and poor. There are inscriptions in Latin, Greek and unfamiliar languages proclaiming names, birthplaces, occupations, ages and the relatives left behind. On our right, we pass a couple of grand cylindrical mausolea of travertine, one perhaps a century old, and a complex of ornate funerary altars commemorating Ti. Claudius Callistus and the recently deceased L. Aufidius Aprilis and his freedmen (*LTURS* 1.167–9; 2.111). On the higher ground beyond are wealthy villas and *horti*. All along our route, boundary stones announce the owners of *praedia* (estates) bordering the road; here, between the Via Flaminia and the Tiber, is an estate belonging to Calpurnia (*LTURS* 2.54–5; *CIL* 6.29782).

Further along, on the high wooded hill to our right is the sanctuary of Anna Perenna (*LTURS* 1.59–63). On the Ides of March, people walk from the city to celebrate New Year and the coming spring (Ovid, *Fasti* 3.523–696). They drink much wine with the hope of living long lives (understandable after passing all those tombs!); they sing, dance and make magical offerings of coins, lamps, curse tablets and tiny figurines into a sacred pool. It is a far cry from the formal processions and sacrifices conducted on the Capitoline.

We catch up with some carts carrying night-soil out of the city to the market gardens.²⁶ Many of these plots are small patches of land worked by urban folk, but some are larger estates. We pass a grand but old-fashioned villa on our right; with its *tuffo* block construction it is more like a public building than a private house. Despite the risk

for smaller-scale domestic architecture of earlier periods and especially the more ephemeral structures to be expected in the suburbs.

²⁴ Later, this was the site of the Porta Flaminia in the Aurelian Wall which enclosed the first c.2 km of the Via Flaminia – and the monuments along it – within the city limits. This newly urban stretch was renamed Via Lata (*LTUR* 5.139).

²⁵ Palmer 1980, 221–3 for the *ansarium* and *foricarium* as taxes on oil/wine and animals respectively. See Peña 1999, 39 n. 27 for alternative interpretation.

²⁶ Scobie 1986, 414.

of flooding, the villa sits on the plain surrounded by verdant gardens exploiting the rich soil and abundant water.²⁷

As we continue, the road is lined with funerary monuments jostling for prime position. On our left is a large necropolis; the tombs are closely packed with dozens of inscriptions marking plots and commemorating the deceased, both individuals and families (modern Via Calderini). Beyond, the graves of the less well-off are marked by upturned amphorae.²⁸ Nearby, funerary pyres of the recently deceased burn and the bereaved mourn. On anniversaries and festivals such as *Parentalia*, relatives will return to make offerings and to share a meal. Some larger tomb plots are used as vegetable gardens (*cepotaphion* tombs), whilst some of the grander old tombs provide shelter for the destitute and privacy for prostitutes and their clients. Though places of the dead, these cemeteries are busy with the living.²⁹

Next we pass a textile factory, an old building alongside the road. The smell of the urine and dyes used to treat the newly woven woollen cloth hangs in the air. We walk up the ramp onto the Milvian Bridge (*LTURS* 4.76–7) to cross the Tiber, passing beneath an arch erected by Augustus to commemorate his restoration of the Via Flaminia as far as Ariminum (see *CIL* 11.365). Below, are warehouses with boats and rafts unloading cargoes of bricks and timber from upriver. On the far bank is a road junction, surrounded by funerary monuments (e.g. to the *gens Caesia* and *gens Memmia*, *LTURS* 2.27–9). Here, the Via Cassia strikes north, whilst the Flaminia turns east along the Tiber. Many of the funerary monuments hereabouts commemorate military men – soldiers of the Praetorian Guard, the urban cohorts and the recently disbanded *Germani corporis custodes* (the private Batavian guard of the Julio-Claudian emperors; *LTURS* 2.254). On the higher ground above are more *horti* and villas (e.g. *Horti* of P. Ovidius Nasonis, *LTURS* 4.151–2). The succession of funerary monuments displays a bewildering mix of shapes, sizes and materials; here, on our left are some *columbaria*

²⁷ The Villa of the Auditorium, Carandini 2006b. The earliest structures date to c.550–500 BC with six subsequent phases of rebuilding/extension extending into the early third century AD; the substantial *tuffo* block construction of the third-century BC phase remained the core of the villa until its abandonment. Flood deposits separated phases of occupation. Generally, this area had been assumed to be thinly occupied, apart from tombs, because of the flood risk. However, discoveries such as this villa indicate an intensively used landscape (Ricci 2002, 90).

²⁸ Amphorae burials are not attested at this particular location, but are documented at the better-preserved necropolis at Isola Sacra, north of Ostia (Graham 2006, 92–4).

²⁹ Graham 2006, 36–9; Scobie 1986, 402–3.

and mausolea and, on our right, a striking complex with an elaborate funerary altar and portraits of C. Domitius Amnicius (Tor di Quinto).

Out on the floodplain is a *figlina* or brickyard (Tor di Quinto). Artisans prepare clay, mould bricks and lay them out to dry. Thick smoke billows from the large kilns. By the river, workers load bricks onto rafts for transportation downstream.

We cross a stone bridge (across the Fosso della Crescenza) and red cliffs now rise up to our left. They are pock-marked with ancient rock-cut tombs and quarries used to supply stone blocks for the monuments of Rome. The fashion for brick-faced concrete has led to a recent decline in quarrying and the rise of *figlinae* instead. High above we glimpse another grand old villa (Monte delle Grotte); up there it must be fresher with splendid views back to the city. Below, the funerary monuments continue: mausoleums of marble, a highly ornate terracotta tomb in the form of a little temple, and so on.

On the opposite bank of the Tiber we see the small town of Fidenae. Five centuries ago, Rome fought the city of Veii for control of this river port. Today it is a sleepy place. Although the countryside around is full of farms, the owners sell their produce directly at Rome and few people now need to pay a visit to the old town.

Passing a continuous facade of funerary monuments, we cross a stone bridge (across the Fosso della Valchetta). Immediately beyond is a large manufacturing complex producing pottery (La Celsa). Men load kilns with delicate cups and plates for sale at market; a pile of misfired pots is dumped by the side of the road in the shadow of a towering mausoleum (*LTURS* 4.148–9).

We cross another stone bridge (across the Fosso della Prima Porta) and arrive at the small settlement of Ad Rubras.³⁰ Here, we pause for a rest and some food. Inns and a few houses jostle alongside yet more mausolea and rock-cut tombs. To our right, the Via Tiberina strikes off towards the sanctuary town of Lucus Feroniae; the *compitium* (crossroads) is marked by a fountain.³¹

On the cliffs above us – and projecting out on enormous buttressed terraces – is a grand villa known as *ad Gallinas Albas*. Augustus' wife

Livia had inherited the estate from her first husband; it then became imperial property (*LTURS* 3.17–24). The story goes that an eagle dropped a white hen bearing a laurel twig into Livia's lap. She planted the twig at this villa and a grove grew from it; the emperors used these laurels for their crowns (Cassius Dio 48.52.3–4; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 15.137). Ominously, the trees suddenly died on the eve of the recent Civil War (Cassius Dio 63.29.3; Suetonius, *Galba* 1).

The Flaminia now climbs onto higher ground with extensive views across the *ager Veientanus*. The countryside is thickly settled. There are large, wealthy villas to which the senators and knights come to escape the noise and heat of the city. Most are working estates surrounded by fields and orchards. Many have large cisterns, prominently located on high ground, to provide water for baths and to irrigate gardens of vegetables and flowers for market. Some estates are connected to the Via Flaminia by private paved *diverticula*, down which mule trains laden with goods make their way to Rome. Dispersed around the villas are many small farms.

Gradually the funerary monuments become intermittent, but no less grand (e.g. Centocelle). Most are the tombs of wealthy villa owners commemorated on the roadside-edge of their estates. Even though the villas regularly change hands, the inscriptions on these monuments form lasting reminders of past owners. There are also large cemeteries for the everyday folk and slaves who live and work in the surrounding countryside. The workers in the fields are prematurely old; indeed, the further from Rome we travel, the fewer old people we see.³² The city may be hot and dangerous but these rural folk have hard lives – no wonder so many migrate to Rome given half a chance!

As the sun sets to our left, we arrive at Ad Vicesimum (Madonna della Guardia), a road station 20 miles from Rome. The Via Flaminia is a former military road designed to move troops to distant places, hence it does not pass through any of the ancient towns in this area. However, a number of small roadside settlements have developed along the consular roads providing food and accommodation for travellers and services for surrounding farms. Hopefully, we can find a bed for the night.

³⁰ The precise location of this settlement is unclear; the Peutinger Table locates it at the ninth mile of the Via Flaminia, i.e. near modern Prima Porta. However, some scholars have argued for a position further back along the road near Grottarossa (see Messineo 1991, 83).

³¹ Messineo 1991.

³² Skeletal evidence indicates that suburban populations had more pathological and chronic conditions and died significantly younger than urban populations, e.g. Cucina et al. 2006.

CONCLUSIONS

By engaging with the suburbs as a 'lived' space, our journey emphasizes that no clear line divided city from suburb from hinterland. Legal, religious and administrative boundaries ringed the city, but these were mobile, overlapping and permeable. Instead, the suburbs were defined *in practice*: agriculture, extraction, manufacturing, burial, entertainment, soldiering and the worship of foreign cults. Individually, none of these was exclusively 'suburban', but they found particular concentration in these areas. Some were excluded from the city; others were drawn to the opportunities on offer. It was the juxtapositions between rich and poor, production and consumption, leisure and death, military and civilian, enforced exile and voluntary escape which defined a distinctive suburban space. Indeed, Goodman argues that the urban periphery both created *and* resolved the tension between elite ideologies of the ancient city (walls, *pomerium*) and socio-economic realities (land prices, social competition).³³ But if the suburbs were a product of the city, they were also a microcosm of the wider world: triumphal arches, obelisks, works of Hellenistic art, and funerary monuments commemorating people from three continents. These evoked not so much the *city* as the empire beyond.

Further, by locating our journey at one specific moment in time, it is clear that the suburbs were always changing in terms of form, use and ownership; the memories of earlier people and landscapes were all around. Economic pressures, social opportunities, political expedience and serendipitous events – such as the great fire of AD 80 which would destroy much of the Campus Martius just traversed (Cassius Dio 66.24; Suetonius, *Titus* 8) – created the circumstances through which suburban areas were drawn into the urban core. Material traces of former suburbs created anomalies in the urban fabric which walls, laws and customs tried but failed to resolve. It is precisely such tensions and ambiguities around *suburbanity* which inform us about what really mattered in ancient Rome.

FURTHER READING

Goodman 2007 provides a wide-ranging treatment of suburbs in the Roman west, including Rome; Patterson 2000 discusses Rome specifically. For burial, Graham 2006; for *horti*, Cima and La Rocca 1998;

³³ Goodman 2007, 233–4.

for rubbish dumping, Dupré Raventós and Remolà 2000; for villas, Marzano 2007. Definitions: *suburbium* etc., Champlin 1982; *pomerium*, *LTUR* 4.96–105.

The *LTURS* volumes catalogue (named) monuments in the immediate suburbs. Perhaps the most important of recent suburban excavations is the Villa of the Auditorium (Carandini 2006b). Morley 1996 draws on texts and archaeology to consider the relationship between Rome and its wider hinterland; also see Witcher 2005, 2006. Messineo 1991 provides a comprehensive and richly illustrated guide to the Via Flaminia.