The Archaeology of Rome and the Roman provinces

Lecture 1. Roman provinces
Archaeology of Rome and the Roman provinces

• You can download the lectures:

http://www.novae.uw.edu.pl/english/lecturerome.htm
Roman provinces

• In Ancient Rome, a province was the basic and, until the Tetrarchy (from 293 AD), the largest territorial and administrative unit of the empire's territorial possessions outside Italy.

• Provinces were generally governed by politicians of senatorial rank, usually former consuls or former praetors.

• The Latin term provincia also had a more general meaning of "jurisdiction".
Roman provinces

- The Latin word provincia originally meant any task or set of responsibilities assigned by the Roman senate to an individual who held imperium ("right of command"), which was often a military command within a specified theater of operations.
- Under the Roman Republic, the magistrates were elected to office for a period of one year, and those serving outside the city of Rome, such as consuls acting as generals on a military campaign, were assigned a particular provincia, the scope of authority within which they exercised their command.
- The territory of a people who were defeated in war might be brought under various forms of treaty, in some cases entailing complete subjection (deditio). The formal annexation of a territory created a province, in the modern sense of an administrative unit that is geographically defined.
- Republican-period provinces were administered in one-year terms by the consuls and praetors who had held office the previous year and who were invested with imperium.
- Rome started expanding beyond Italy during the First Punic War. The first permanent provinces to be annexed were Sicily (Sicilia) in 241 BC and Sardinia (Corsica et Sardinia) in 237 BC.
Roman provinces

- Under Augustus, Roman provinces were classified as either public or imperial, meaning that their governors were appointed by either the Senate or by the emperor. Generally, the older provinces that existed under the Republic were public.
- Public provinces were, as before under the Republic, governed by a proconsul, who was chosen by lot among the ranks of senators who were ex-consuls or ex-praetors, depending on the province assigned.
- The major imperial provinces were under a legatus Augusti pro praetore, also a senator of consular or praetorian rank.
- The status of a province could change from time to time. In AD 68, of a total 36 provinces, 11 were public and 25 imperial.
- During the Principate, the number and size of provinces also changed, either through conquest or through the division of existing provinces. The larger or more heavily garrisoned provinces (for example Syria and Moesia) were subdivided into smaller provinces to prevent any single governor from holding too much power.
Many-Front War

- Gallic Wars
  - 229, 219

- Illyrian Wars

- Macedonian Wars
  - 215-148

- Carthage
  - 218-201
Punic Wars

- The term Punic comes from the Latin word Punicus (or Poenicus), meaning "Carthaginian", with reference to the Carthaginians' Phoenician ancestry.
- The main cause of the Punic Wars was the conflicts of interest between the existing Carthaginian Empire and the expanding Roman Republic. The Romans were interested in expansion via Sicily (which at that time was a cultural melting pot), part of which lay under Carthaginian control.
- At the start of the first Punic War, Carthage was the dominant power of the Western Mediterranean, with an extensive maritime empire. Rome was a rapidly ascending power in Italy, but it lacked the naval power of Carthage.
- During the mid-3rd century BC, Carthage was a large city located on the coast of modern Tunisia. Founded by the Phoenicians in the mid-9th century BC, it was a powerful thalassocratic city-state with a vast commercial network. Of the great city-states in the western Mediterranean, only Rome rivaled it in power, wealth, and population.
- While Carthage's navy was the largest in the ancient world at the time, it did not maintain a large, permanent, standing army. Instead, Carthage relied mostly on mercenaries, especially the indigenous Numidians, to fight its wars.
Punic Wars

- War ended in a peace treaty, which caused Carthage to lose Sicily
Rome Expands
Imperial Roman Road System

Roman Roads in A.D. 14

Roman Empire

- Atlantic Ocean
- Mediterranean Sea
- Caspian Sea
- Black Sea

Major Cities:
- London
- Massilia
- Milan
- Rome
- Byzantium
- Athens
- Carthage
- Alexandria
- Jerusalem
- Damascus
- Memphis
Treatment of Conquered Peoples

- Conquered peoples were treated well
  - Some received full Roman citizenship, including suffrage
  - Some controlled their own affairs but paid tribute and gave soldiers to the Roman army
- Colonies
  - Rome established colonies in conquered areas, each protected by a garrison of Roman soldiers
  - Republic encouraged intermarriage
    - Led to the spread of Roman culture and language (Latin)
    - "Romanization"
Why didn’t conquered peoples rebel?

- Effective governance
  - Protection/Peace
  - Citizenship
- Romanization
  - Roman culture
  - Latin language
  - Roman laws
- Trade benefits
  - Standardized money
  - Safe trade
- Cities
  - Roads
  - Aqueducts
Another civil war!
- Antony against Brutus and Cassius
- Antony and Octavian against Brutus and Cassius
- Octavian against Antony and Cleopatra
- Octavian declared Emperor 27 BCE as Caesar Augustus
Geography

- The Empire reached its largest expanse under Trajan (reigned 98–117), encompassing an area of 5 million square kilometers. That is forty different modern countries as of today.
Geography

- The population estimate of 55–60 million inhabitants accounted for between one-sixth and one-fourth of the world's total population and made it the largest population of any unified political entity in the West until the mid-19th century.

- Each of the three largest cities in the Empire—Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch—was almost twice the size of any European city at the beginning of the 17th century.
Roman economy & trade

- Rome lived off its imports, and importers were among the wealthiest citizens of the Empire.
- Many still traded goods for goods in a barter system, while others used the coins minted by each emperor.
- The trade network became so vast that Roman coins could be found as far east as China.
- Far behind agriculture and trade in importance to Ancient Rome was its industry. The largest was mining.
- Greece and northern Italy provided marble for the grand building projects commissioned by the emperors.
- From Spain and Africa came the gold and silver to mint coins and create jewelry, while mines in Britain produced lead and tin. Within Italian communities, small-scale manufacturing plants turned out pottery, glassware, weapons, tools, and textiles.
Roman economy & trade

- Roman citizens depended upon the large volume of trade throughout the Roman Empire. Providing enough grain for all its people was a constant challenge that the emperor took very seriously.

- The leading imports were grains, because they formed the backbone of the Roman diet. Wheat, barley, and corn were needed by civilians and the thousands of soldiers stationed throughout the Empire.

- Grains were imported mainly from Egypt, Sicily, Tunisia and other areas around the Mediterranean. Shippers were required to take the grain directly to Ostia, the official port of Rome.

- Although foods dominated the trading industry, there was also a vast exchange of other goods from all parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa.

- As the young Roman Empire prospered, so grew the demand for luxury items only obtainable from distant lands. Items such as silks from China, cotton and spices from India and ivory from Africa found their way to Rome via a vast network of trade routes.
Mining and metallurgy

- The main mining regions of the Empire were Spain (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead); Gaul (gold, silver, iron); Britain (mainly iron, lead, tin), the Danubian provinces (gold, iron); Macedonia and Thrace (gold, silver); Asia Minor (gold, silver, iron, tin).
- Intensive large-scale mining—of alluvial deposits, and by means of open-cast mining and underground mining—took place from the reign of Augustus up to the early 3rd century AD, when the instability of the Empire disrupted production.
Labour and occupations

- Inscriptions record 268 different occupations in the city of Rome, and 85 in Pompeii.

- Professional associations or trade guilds (collegia) are attested for a wide range of occupations, including fishermen (piscatores), salt merchants (salinatores), olive oil dealers (olivarii), entertainers (scaenici), cattle dealers (pecuarii), goldsmiths (aurifices), teamsters (asinarii or muliones), stonemasons (lapidarii).

- These are sometimes quite specialized: one collegium at Rome was strictly limited to craftsmen who worked in ivory and citrus wood.
Modern „Roman countries“
Moesia inferior – a Roman province
Vespasian (69-79 CE)

- Built the Colosseum in Rome
  - Place where gladiatorial combats were held
- First Jewish Revolt (66-70 CE)
- Systematic strengthening of the frontiers, especially on the Danube
  - Destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, in the Roman province of Judea
- Succeeded by son Titus, then son Domitian
Evolution of the province

c. AD 70

c. AD 150

c. AD 212
Legionary fortresses in Lower Moesia

Oescus

Durostorum

Novae

Troesmis
Investigated areas at Novae

- *scamnum tribunorum*, (E. Gencheva, BAN)
- *principia* (T. Sarnowski, IA UW)
- *thermae* (A. Biernacki, UAM)
- *valetudinaria* (P. Dyczek, OBA UW)
- *canabae* (A. Tomas, IA UW)

Moreover: some barracks, the gates, streets, towers, etc.

And still there are more white than black spots on the map!