

THE LAYERS OF ROME: TOPOGRAPHY AND URBAN HISTORY OF ROME IN ANTIQUITY AND THE MIDDLE AGES and its relation to the present city.

Meeting time: Tuesdays, 9-12.30

Meeting place: see syllabus.

Dr. Jan GADEYNE, PhD (e-mail address: jg385@cornell.edu)

When walking around Rome, you can't but become aware of its past, of the impact that history has had upon the city: everywhere are remains of ancient buildings, medieval houses and churches, renaissance and baroque *palazzi* and more. Centuries of construction and destruction, reconstruction and restoration, use and reuse, have created one of the most intricate layered city centers of the world.

This course intends to peel off the layers one by one to reconstruct the history of Rome within the Aurelian walls from its origins to the late Middle Ages, when a cityscape was created that became the base for the development of the city from the Renaissance until the modern age. During this almost surgical removal of the layers of the city, we will pay attention to the development, use and continuity of the urban infrastructure (the streets, bridges, aqueducts and walls), building typologies (both public and private), building materials and techniques.



The concept of continuity through a process of transformation of the urban fabric from antiquity until the present day will be a central theme in this course. At the base of this concept is the way a historical city continuously recycles itself. It does that in its infrastructure, its public and private spaces, and in the materials and methods of construction. For a better understanding of this process we will look at the remains of the ancient and medieval city and combine them with the latest results in urban archaeology in order to gain insight in the dynamics of the city as an everchanging living organism. Therefore, the course will also dedicate some time to the most important urban interventions in Rome after it was proclaimed Capital of Italy in 1870 and their impact on the historical urban fabric of the city within the walls.

Every week one or two different "regions" will be studied, that cover a specific moment of the urban history of Rome. Each time the urban and architectural elements of the ancient and medieval phase will be analyzed, contextualized and interpreted in the light of what has been said before.