

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Tarpeia in Livy and the Roman Forum

Worksheet using the *Online Companion to The Worlds of Roman Women and VRoma*

GOALS:

1. ability to discuss the portrayal of a legendary woman in a Latin historical text
2. understanding of the close interrelationship between Latin literature and the ancient city of Rome

Part I. Textual Representation: Using the *Online Companion's* World of State, read/translate Livy *AUC* 1.11.5-9: Tarpeia (http://www.cnr.edu/home/sas/araia/Livy_Tarpeia.html). After translating this excerpt, put it into context by reading in English all of chapter 11 and chapters 12-13, for example on the e-text site at the University of Virginia <http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/Liv1His.html>. Then answer the following questions on these sheets:

1. What are the three possible motivations for Tarpeia's action presented by Livy? Explain what textual devices he uses to lead the reader to choose one over the other two. Does Livy ever give the reader a glimpse into Tarpeia's own mind?

2. How do you think your reaction to this story might change if you considered the motivation that Propertius presents in Elegy 4.4, namely that the Vestal Virgin Tarpeia fell desperately in love with the Sabine king Tattius and fantasized that she could marry him and unite the Romans and the Sabines?

Part II. Tarpeia in the Roman Forum: Visit the Basilica Aemilia/Basilica Paulli in Region VIII of VRoma's virtual city of Rome. Connect by going to <http://www.vroma.org:7878/> and entering your username and password, or as a guest simply by clicking "Login as a guest." Proceed to the basilica by clicking on the exit to *Rome* at the bottom of the Web window on the right of the screen, then clicking on *Region VIII* in the map, and then clicking on *Basilica Aemilia* in the map of Region VIII.

1. Explore the basilica, reading about its history, and then click on *Basilica Aemilia frieze* to view the sculptural decoration. How does the story of Tarpeia figure in this frieze? Look closely at the depiction of Tarpeia (with the red lines outlining missing sections). Why do you think she is portrayed as slightly foreign, like an Amazon with one breast bared? Note the context of this panel, preceded by a panel depicting the Sabine women and followed by a wedding scene? Is this context similar or different to that supplied by Livy? What message about women would this convey to the Romans who would frequently see this frieze? Why do you think Julius Caesar and Augustus would want this frieze to be so prominently displayed in an important public building in the Forum, when so much other public art depicted only men?

2. Then visit the **Tarpeian Rock** by clicking on the exit to *Region 8*; on the map click the long staircase called *Gradus Monetae*. Read about the role these stairs played in Roman public life, and then climb them by clicking the exit to the *Tarpeian Rock*. How did the function of this precipitous cliff relate to that of the Gemonian Stairs? Why do you think it was named after Tarpeia, and why would a late Republican and an early Augustan moneyer feature Tarpeia on their coins?

3. Since the Tarpeian Rock clearly predated Livy's history and the Basilica Aemilia frieze most likely did (and since these public monuments would have reached many more Romans than Livy's work ever did), how do you think they might have affected his version of the Tarpeia story? What contribution does the information about coins and architecture—indeed the whole physical and spatial context provided by VRoma—make to your understanding of Livy and of the role of the city of Rome in Roman culture and life?