In order that a population scattered and uncivilised, and proportionately ready for war, might be habituated by comfort to peace and quiet, he [the Roman General Gnaeus Julius Agricola] would exhort individuals, assist communities, to erect temples, market-places, houses: he praised the energetic, rebuked the indolent, and the rivalry for his compliments took the place of coercion. Moreover he began to train the sons of the chieftains in a liberal education, and to give a preference to the native talents of the Briton… As a result, the nation which used to reject the Latin language began to aspire to rhetoric: further, the wearing of our [Roman] dress became a distinction, and the toga came into fashion, and little by little the Britons went astray into alluring vices: to the promenade, the bath, the well-appointed dinner table. The simple natives gave the name of ‘culture’ to this factor of their slavery (Tacitus, Agricola, 21, 1–2, translated in Henderson, 1914:1970, p. 67)

In his monumental work *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Edward Gibbon sketches out the reasons for the success of Imperial Rome in the first and second centuries CE, so that he can then show better the way in which the Empire declined in power (Gibbon, 1776–1788:2005). One of the key ways in which the Roman Empire accrued power, according to Gibbon, was the spread of *Romanitas*: the essence of Roman cultural norms and values, its civilization. In every corner of the Mediterranean world, people adopted Roman fashions, Roman games, Roman literature, Roman food and Roman political systems – whether they were conquered by Rome’s soldiers or just
living in parts of the world in Rome’s sphere of influence. Rome, of course, stole much of its cultural heritage from the places conquered by the Republic and the Empire. The Hellenistic world, in particular, was a strong influence on the Romans, and preserved a sense of Greekness throughout the centuries of Roman hegemony, to the point where the only part of the Roman Empire surviving was the Greek-speaking Empire of Byzantium in the East (which survived until its destruction by the Ottoman Empire in 1453). But Byzantium proves the power of Romanitas: even hundreds of years after the fall of the Empire in the West of the Mediterranean, the Emperors of Byzantium maintained Roman political structures and dreamed of reconquering the West (Gregory, 2005). In the world known to contemporary Roman writers, Romanitas was something that transcended fixed notions of culture and belonging, something that imposed civilization and order in the boundaries of the Empire and in the satellite kingdoms surrounding it (Potter, 2004). Although there were rules limiting political rights of Roman citizenship, inhabitants of the first and second century Roman Empire were Roman by their acceptance of and participation in Roman culture. By the third century, all free inhabitants of the Empire were Roman citizens, and the Roman Empire had already seen Emperors born in Syria, Africa and Arabia. What united the Roman world was Romanitas. Beyond Romanitas was only a confusing world of barbarians who, to a greater or lesser degree, adopted various facets of the Roman world into their lives (Heather, 1998). To be Roman was to be part of a global civilization, sharing an understanding of Cicero, worshipping Jupiter and Mars, speaking and writing in Latin, watching games in stadia that have left so many standing remains in Europe, North Africa, Syria and Turkey. It is just a coincidence that the single arch of Roman architecture was the symbol of Rome’s power and hegemony and globalization, in the same way that the double arches are a symbol of America’s cultural colonization of the globe. It is because of this globalizing trend in Roman history that so much physical evidence of Rome survives for us to consider today. Romanization spread Roman literature, and literacy, so that when the Empire collapsed in the West there was enough of a culture of literacy and learning to ensure the transmission of primary sources like the work of Tacitus.

In Agricola, Tacitus writes of his father-in-law’s exploits in Britannia, and suggests that the British were Romanized under Agricola’s rule. Historians have argued that the Romanization of Britain was incomplete; and that conversely the south-east of the island had been Romanized before the invasion of Claudius in 43CE (Salway, 2001). But whatever the