The ARCHITECTURE *of* ROMAN TEMPLES

The Republic to the Middle Empire

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I

BUILDING THE TEMPLE OF JUPITER CAPITOLINUS

Temple architecture in early Rome from the sixth to the fifth centuries B.C. was dominated by a combination of Etruscan and Latin influences. By the beginning of the Republic in 509 B.C., however, it had a grandiosity of scale and opulence that set it apart from neighboring Etruscan and Latin cities. This was especially the case with the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus (Fig. 2), built from ca. 525 to 509 B.C. It was more lavish in its decoration and larger in both plan and elevation than any other structure in the region. It was a building constantly cited by ancient writers with admiration and praise. Livy, for instance, called it a temple "so magnificent that it should be worthy of the king of gods and men, the Roman Empire, and the majesty of the site itself."[1]

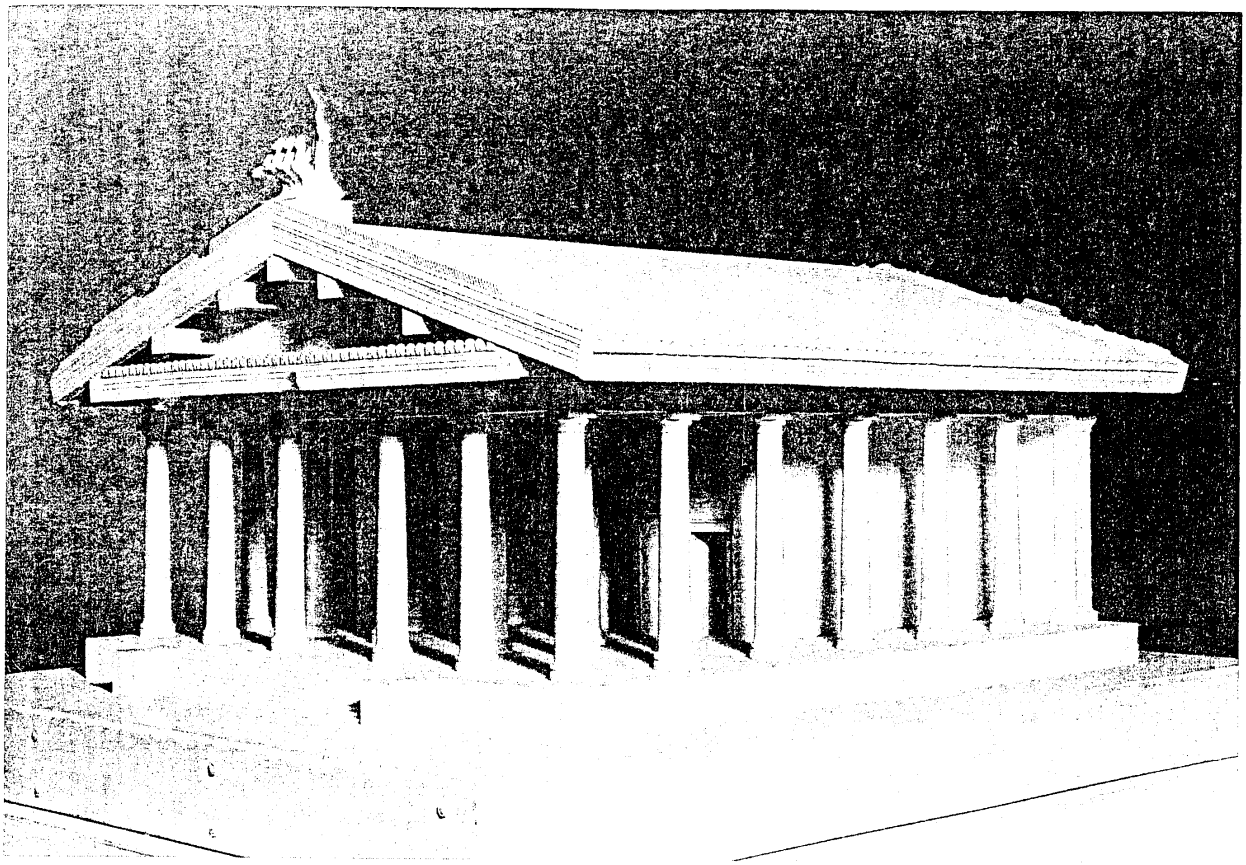
The Capitoline Temple was a unique building in many ways. Commissioned by a succession of Etruscan kings, constructed by a combination of Etruscan and Roman builders, and dedicated by the founders of the Republic, it represented a city that was attempting to distinguish itself militarily, economically, and politically from its neighbors. As the earthly residence of the city's most important deity, located on its most prominent hill, and of an architectural style and form deemed paradigmatic in the Etrusco-Roman world, the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus had a far greater influence on subsequent political, social, and architectural events in Rome than virtually any other building.

The temple stood majestically in a large, walled precinct on the southern summit of the Capitoline Hill and faced southeast across the Tiber valley and the Aventine Hill (Fig. 3). Its south front and east flank could be seen from both the Forum Romanum and the Tiber River, while its north wall was prominently visible from many points in the Campus Martius. Dominating the top of the hill, it stood out as the destination point for those traveling to Rome in much the same way as the Parthenon still does in present-day Athens. Although its style differed substantially from the Parthenon, its image as a temple on an acropolis, an elevated sacred site, or *templum*, represented an important parallel to the Greek world and accounts in large measure for its long-standing role in establishing and maintaining the authority and legitimacy of Roman leadership.

The Capitoline Hill already had religious shrines before the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus was begun. For instance, there was the small shrine dedicated to Jupiter Feretrius, reportedly built by Romulus and used by him to consecrate the spoils of war from his victory over King Acron.[2] There may have been a small shrine dedicated to the triad Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva as early as the late seventh century B.C.[3] There were also some shrines that had been vowed by the Sabine King Tatius, who had temporarily occupied a stronghold on the Capitoline Hill after a battle against Romulus.[4] All of these earlier structures reflect a long and complicated history that extended back over 200 years before the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus was constructed.

The Kings of Early Rome

Rome's early history, including its first temple structures, would form an essential link to the access and maintenance of political power for several centuries. The date of Rome's founding is generally ascribed to the year 753 B.C.[5] Its population from the earliest times



2. Rome, Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, ca. 580–509 B.C., model of reconstruction according to Einar Gjerstad. Photo: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome. 73.1159.

was a combination of Etruscan, Latin, and Sabine. Every Roman citizen shared the belief in the sacral character of the site of Rome. The political culture of the Romans from the very beginning was rooted in the soil, the word *patria,* fatherland, which derived its full meaning from Roman history.[6]

The extent of Roman territory at the time of the city's founding was about 115 square miles, with an estimated 10,000 free inhabitants, mostly farmers, builders, and merchants. The first bridge over the Tiber River, the Pons Sublicius, became the most important link between the regions of Latium on the south and Etruria on the north.[7] Roads leading eastward connected to the Sabine territory, which extended into the Apennine Mountains. The earliest settlement of Rome, perhaps located on the Palatine Hill, was known as *Roma Quadrata* because of its roughly quadrangular form.[8] In the first century B.C., Dionysius of Halicarnassus recorded the legend of its foundation:

> Romulus first offered sacrifice to the gods, then watched for omens, which were favorable. He then commanded fires to be lit in front of the tents, commanded the people to come out and leap over the flames in order to expiate their guilt. He then led the people to a spot on the Palatine Hill, and proceeded to describe a quadrangular plan for the defensive wall by leading a plough drawn by a bull and a cow around the edges of the summit. Afterward, he sacrificed the bull and the cow as a further gesture toward the gods, and then ordered the people to begin work. The day of

the founding, the *parilia,* is still celebrated on April 21st.[9]

Included within the sacred boundary, *pomerium,* of *Roma Quadrata* were primitive houses, a building for religious and assembly purposes, the meeting house of the *Curia Saliorum* in which the sacred shields of Mars were preserved, and the *Lupercal,* or Sanctuary of the Wolves. The southwest corner of the Palatine was also the legendary site of the straw-covered house of Romulus and the sacred fig tree toward which the cradle bearing the twins Romulus and Remus had floated.[10]

The founding of Rome and the creation of its *pomerium* were connected to the legendary story of the tragic death of Romulus's twin brother Remus. Ovid recounts that after Romulus marked out the city's boundary, he instructed a guard, Celer, to stop and kill anyone who stepped over the furrow whether intentionally or by accident. Unaware of the ban, Remus walked across the furrow and was immediately killed by Celer.[11] The festival of the *parilia* and the founding of Rome thus possessed not only a sense of authority but also a tragic aspect that it retained throughout the Republic and Empire.

It was also largely a fiction. The story was derived from two traditions, the first by the accounts of ancient Roman authors who attributed Rome's founding to Romulus in 753 B.C., the second, by Greek authors who attributed it to Aeneas, who arrived in Rome after the fall of Troy in 1184 B.C. When Greek writers confronted the tradition of Romulus and Remus, the twins reared by a she-wolf, they invented the idea that they were descendants of Aeneas. Then, to fill the time gap between the fall of Troy and the time of Romulus and Remus, the Romans invented a succession of thirteen kings who reigned at Alba Longa between the time of Aeneas and that of Romulus.[12] After Romulus, there was a second series of kings, some of them equally legendary, and others, like Numa Pompilius and Ancus Marcius, representing a measure of historical truth.[13]

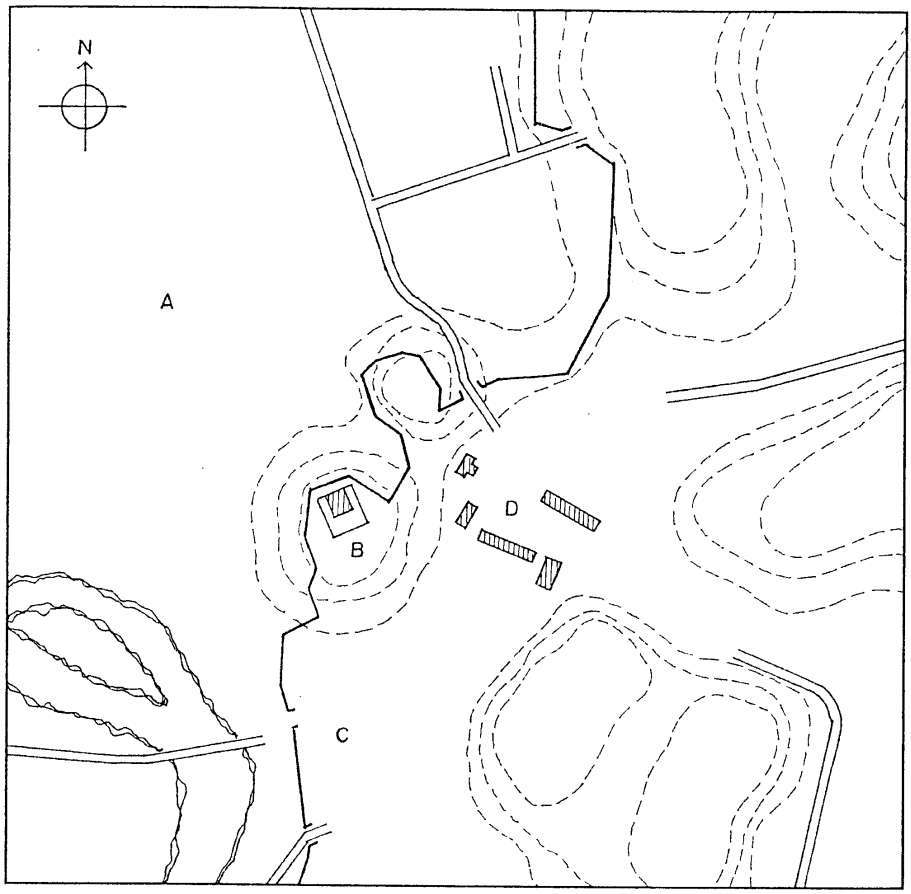
The record becomes more certain by the sixth century B.C., which corresponds to the reign of the city's three Etruscan kings. The first was Tarquinius Priscus, an immigrant to Rome from the Etruscan city of Tarquinii, who ruled from 616 to 579 B.C. The second was his adopted son Servius Tullius, who reigned from 578 to 535 B.C. The third was Tarquinius Superbus, who ruled from 534 to 509 B.C. He was either the son or grandson of Tarquinius Priscus.[14]

The principal structures erected in Rome as it expanded beyond the initial boundary of the *Roma Quadrata* – the city walls, streets, and other public amenities that extended into the lowlands between the Palatine and Capitoline Hills – date primarily from the time of these three kings. The Tarquins carried out the great projects of urban improvement, including the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, the Circus Maximus, the Cloaca Maxima, and the early shops around the Forum Romanum.[15] It was Servius Tullius who enlarged the city and built the first stretches of its expanded defensive wall circuit.[16] He was also responsible for constructing a large shrine dedicated to Diana on the Aventine Hill, which became an important Latin cult center.[17]

The architecture of the three kings embodied Etruscan and Latin building traditions, but they were adapted to suit both Rome's topography and its growing political aspirations. Construction demanded manpower, a need that was met by combining the skills of Etruscan technicians and workmen with the strength and numbers of the Roman labor force.[18] The Etruscans developed the tradition of temples with high, square podia, widely spaced columns, broadly overhanging roofs, strongly emphasized front façades, and elaborate terra-cotta ornamentation and statuary. With many variations in details of plan and elevation, these features became common in Roman temple architecture by the end of the sixth century B.C.

The Etruscans also affected other aspects of Roman culture. Theirs, for instance, was the concept of the *imperium,* the absolute supreme power entrusted to a person approved by the gods who governed in accordance with their wishes.[19] Additionally, the Etruscans influenced the procedures for divination, the organization and equipment of the military, the calendar, the legal system, the alphabet, social relationships between patrons and clients, public games, and religion.[20] In particular, they introduced the cult of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva (Tinia, Uni, and Menerva), which became the focus of the state religion of the early Roman Republic.[21]

The fundamental elements of authority in Etruscan Rome were found in the family, *familia*: father



3. Rome, Capitoline Hill in ca. 509 B.C., plan: (A) Campus Martius, (B) Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, (C) Forum Boarium, (D) Forum Romanum. Drawing: John W. Stamper.

and mother, sons and daughters, home and homestead, servants and chattels. The inherent social structure of the family, with the father as the authority figure, the paterfamilias, had important implications for the structure of Roman society as a whole. The absolute master of his household, the father maintained the strictest discipline, with the right and duty to exercise judicial authority over family members.[22] Clans headed by fathers made up much of Roman society. In this larger association, sons and clients gained a greater legal standing and could themselves participate in worship and rituals. The state was thus made up largely of principals (the *patres*) and their dependents – a patron-client relationship.[23]

As the clans and their constituent families composed the state, so the form of the government was modeled after that of the family. The power of the earliest kings over the community mirrored that of the household father over his family, and like the household father, they ruled for life. The king nominated all priests and priestesses; he concluded treaties; and he controlled the public treasury. The king's authority, or command, was all powerful in both peace and war. When he appeared in public, the guards, or lictors, who carried axes and rods before him symbolized his authority. Like the paterfamilias, he had the right to exercise discipline on those within his jurisdiction and could inflict penalties on those who broke the law.[24]

The king also built temples and carried out religious ceremonies. He communicated with the gods, consulting and appeasing them by observing the auspices, *auspicia,* objects or events (animal entrails or flights of birds) that revealed divine approval or disapproval of an act.[25] Like the founding of Rome, the authority of the auspices traces its origins back to Romulus who, according to legend, refused to accept the title of king until he had received a favorable omen

from heaven. Taking a stand under the open sky in a clear space, a *templum,* he offered a sacrifice and prayed to Jupiter to sanctify his monarchy by a favorable sign.[26] Interpreting the lightning or birds as a positive omen, Romulus established it as a custom – an authoritative observance to be followed by all of his successors – that none should accept the office of king or any other public office until heaven had given its sanction.[27]

The Latin word *templum* did not originally refer to the temple building that sheltered a god's image. The word for that was *aedes,* or house. A *templum* was a space either in the sky or on the earth marked out by an augur for the purpose of taking auspices.[28] On earth, a *templum* was a place set aside and limited by certain formulaic words for the taking of the auspices. Trees often served as boundaries, marking the space to be viewed by the augur's eye. As such, this was a special, permanently inaugurated place, so designated by an *augurium.*[29]

In the sky, following the model of Romulus, the priest marked out a portion of the sky and then watched for omens from the gods. In this sense, wherever the eye gazed was the *templum.*[30] The augur's gaze, the *conspicio,* was the equivalent of contemplation. When the augur defined a *templum,* his *conspicio* delimited a view. Looking attentively, he hoped to perceive and identify an omen.[31]

The Romans distinguished between a *templum* for observing flashes of lightning and a *templum* for observing the flight of the birds, each of which had its own orientation. The celestial *templum* for the observation of flashes of lightning was oriented from the point of view of the gods who sat in their northern abode and gazed southward.[32] Birds, in contrast, were watched in a setting in which the auspicant looked eastward. If a bird appeared in the southeastern part of the *templum,* it was a right-hand sign for the auspicant.[33]

The essential elements of a temple complex were thus the viewing space, the *aedes,* the boundary, and an altar. Such ritualization of space is perhaps the most characteristically Roman feature of temple architecture and urban design in the Roman world. This accounts for the tendency to enclose open spaces, impose human demands on the limitless forces of nature, control earth and sky to practical ends, and bargain with the gods on human terms.[34]

The Romans regarded their divinities as all-powerful beings that dominated everyday activities and set restrictions on daily existence. It was the religious duty of the rulers and their attendant priests to interpret the deity's rules or wishes and to conform to them through adherence to prescribed norms, ceremonies, and sacrifices.[35] As auspices were traced back to the great sign given to Romulus, so all authority in Rome derived from his act of foundation, binding each action to the sacred beginning of Rome and the original divine authority of its first ruler.[36]

Construction and Dedication

The influences and transformations inherent in Rome's early political, social, and religious life – and the authority of its mythological beginnings – were all expressed in the architecture of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. Built during the reigns of Tarquinius Priscus and Tarquinius Superbus, its planning fulfilled a vow Tarquinius Priscus made to the gods during a battle against the Sabines. Preparation of its site was begun in the 580s B.C., but the temple's actual construction was carried out by Tarquinius Superbus from ca. 525 to 509 B.C.[37] There was a political upheaval in 509 B.C. which resulted in the Etruscan king being driven from Rome and the Republic established. The temple was thus dedicated not by the Tarquins but by the first rulers of the Republic.[38]

Just as the Capitoline Temple's size and prominent location were crucial to the efforts of the Etruscans to maintain their authority in Rome, so, too, was it important in the attempts of the Republicans to establish their legitimacy after the Etruscans' defeat. As successive rulers and emperors used the Capitoline Temple on countless occasions as a setting for ritual and sacrifice and as a precedent for the design of other Roman temples, its role in establishing and maintaining political authority continued through the Republic and into the Empire. In every case, these successive generations of rulers recalled its link both to the events and personalities associated with the origins of the city and to the divine presence of Jupiter.

When Tarquinius Priscus selected the Capitoline Hill as the site for his new temple dedicated to Jupiter,

he called the augurs together and ordered them to consult the auspices concerning the site's appropriateness. It was up to them to decide whether a site was suitable to be consecrated and would be acceptable to the gods themselves.[39] After the augurs consented that the Capitoline Hill, which "commands the Forum," was acceptable to the gods, Tarquinius ordered that it be cleared of the existing shrines. He was especially concerned with those built by King Tatius. Livy writes that Tarquinius wanted to

> build a temple of Jupiter on the Tarpeian Mount [the southern half of the Capitoline Hill] to stand as a memorial of his reign and of his name . . . and that the site might be free of all other religious claims, and belong wholly to Jupiter and his temple, which was being built there, he determined to annul the consecration of several fanes and shrines which had been first vowed at the crisis of the battle against Romulus, and had afterwards been consecrated and inaugurated.[40]

Tarquinius Priscus's destruction of the Sabine king's shrines aimed not only to establish his own authority but also to reestablish the authority of Romulus and the city's original founding in the eighth century B.C.

In the end, not all of the older shrines were removed from the site. The Temple of Jupiter Feretrius was kept, and the priests of the cults of Terminus and Juventas steadfastly refused to give up their places. This refusal caused great consternation among the augurs, but finally, Attus Navius, the highest ranking of the augurs, incorporated these god's altars into the temple precinct. With this, they came to be seen as important sacred elements related to the authority of Rome's founding.[41]

Attus Navius may also have been the one who actually marked out the area for the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. He possessed an innate skill of divination and was conceded to have been the most favored by the gods. At one point, he was challenged by Tarquinius, but his abilities turned out to be more powerful than the king's. From that point on, augurs and the augural priesthood were held in such high esteem that almost every official event, from popular assemblies and musterings of the army to acts of supreme importance, was preceded by a consultation of the auspices.[42]

In response to the incident of Attus Navius and the cults of Terminus and Juventas, the augurs concluded that "no occasion would ever cause the removal of the boundaries of the Romans' city or impair its vigor."[43] Livy confirmed that this incident was an omen suggesting Rome's permanence: "the whole kingdom would be firm and steadfast," he wrote, and from this moment on, the authority of Rome's founding and its future greatness could not be challenged.[44]

Given the steeply sloped, rocky outcropping of the Capitoline site, it required a great deal of preparation before the new temple could be built. In the last four years of his reign, from 582 to 579 B.C., Tarquinius Priscus ordered the construction of retaining walls, landfill, and a leveling off of the peak. The work was so extensive, however, that the king died before the temple's foundations could be built.[45] It was left to Tarquinus Superbus some forty years later to build the foundations and erect the greater part of the temple.[46]

A second omen appeared shortly after Tarquinius Superbus resumed construction of the temple. A workman digging on the site found the head of a man, recently slain, the blood still flowing from his veins. Tarquinius ordered the work to be stopped and the auspices consulted. After several attempts, the oldest and wisest of a group of augurs from Tyrrhenia confirmed earlier omens by stating, "It is ordained by fate that the place in which you found the head shall be the head of all Italy."[47] As Livy wrote, "This appearance plainly foreshadowed that here was to be the citadel of the empire and the head of the world."[48] Thus, the site was not only sacred to Rome's survival; it was to be the *caput mundi*, a phrase which gave Jupiter his surname and was applied to the hill itself.[49] Although this is admittedly a fanciful etymology, it nevertheless held sway in Roman imagination throughout the Republic and Empire.

Tarquinius Superbus summoned workmen from every quarter of Etruria to build the new temple. Etruscan designers, master masons, and terra-cotta artisans played the dominant roles of supervision and artistic direction, while the majority of the hard labor was done by the local Roman population.[50] According to

Livy, the work was difficult, but "the plebians felt less abused at having to build with their own hands the temples of the gods [rather than the Cloaca Maxima or the Circus Maximus]."[51]

The funds to pay for the temple's construction came from a tenth part of the spoils from the conquest of Suessa, an Etruscan town Tarquinius conquered in one of Rome's first military exploits in 530 B.C.[52] As construction progressed and more money was needed, Tarquinius added additional funds from spoils taken from the town of Pometia.[53] From the beginning, conquest of rival cities thus went hand in hand with the construction of major buildings in Rome. Devoting a portion of the spoils of war to the erection of a structure like the Capitoline Temple, was, on one hand, to treat it as a sort of trophy, a commemoration of Rome's ability to defeat and subdue its enemies. On the other hand, it was also evidence of the strong desire of the Tarquins to supercede in importance the Latin confederation's center of political and religious life in the Alban Hills and the old Temple of Jupiter Latiaris. Their goal was to make Rome and the new temple on the Capitoline Hill the unrivaled capital of the region.[54]

Although Tarquinius Superbus was the temple's most important sponsor, he did not remain in power long enough to dedicate it.[55] After his monarchy ended in the aristocratic coup of 509 B.C. and he was expelled from Rome, according to Livy,

> The Temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline had not yet been dedicated. Valerius and Horatius the consuls drew lots to determine which should do it. Horatius received the lot. . . . With more bitterness than was reasonable, the friends of Valerius resented that the dedication of so famous a temple should be given to Horatius. They tried in all sorts of ways to hinder it, but their schemes came to naught. Finally, when the consul's hand was on the door-post and he was in the midst of his prayers to the goddess, they broke in upon the ceremony with the evil tidings that his son was dead, assuming that while the shadow of death was over his house he could not dedicate a temple. Whether he did not believe the news to be true, or possessed great fortitude, we are not informed with certainty, nor is it easy to decide. Without permitting himself to be diverted from his purposes by the message, further than to order that the body should be buried, he kept his hand on the door-post, finished his prayer, and dedicated the temple.[56]

The fact that such great significance was attached to the temple's dedication demonstrates the importance of its symbolic role in Roman life from the moment of its construction. Although it was begun by one political regime and finished by another, its purpose remained fundamentally the same. Its dedication survived, and Jupiter, its god, came to embody the Roman Republic.

The Capitoline Temple and Its Deities

The temple's construction was the official acknowledgment of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, along with Juno and Minerva, as Rome's principal cult deities (Fig. 4). The link between Jupiter and the founding of Rome was enshrined in Roman religious doctrine by the *augustum augurium,* the auspices by which Jupiter empowered Romulus to found the city. Ennius reports that Romulus and Remus, both augurs, took auspices that established the pact between Rome and Jupiter.[57] By sending Romulus a positive sign to found the city, Jupiter not only blessed the founding, but also promised to protect it. In return for the security of the Roman state, he was entitled to the sacrifices and offerings of the official cult.[58]

Jupiter was above all a victory god who presided over the expanding Roman world, and as Rome's power grew, so, too, did his importance. He was naturally associated with the mission of power and conquest.[59] He guaranteed that treaties would be honored, and he oversaw international relations through the mediation of the college of priests.[60] He was also associated with light and anything related to the sky: the sun, the full moon, lightning, even rain and snow.[61] He was usually worshipped on the summit of a hill. Here, where nothing could intervene between heaven and earth, his activities could be most easily observed. Associated further with solemn oaths and treaties, he was a deity who invoked moral conscience and a sense of obligation.[62] He played a role as witness,

4. Capitoline Triad, Archaeological Museum, Palestrina. Photo: Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, Soprintendenza Archeologica per il Lazio.

guarantor, and avenger of oaths and pacts in both private and public life.[63]

Although essential to his identity, Juno and Minerva remained subordinate. Jupiter's association with Juno and Minerva was again the result of Etruscan influence. Juno was Rome's most important goddess, representing women and female principles of life. Associated with childbirth, she was the goddess of female slaves, the savior of women in their perils, even a savior of the state.[64] She played an important part in the ritual of marriage. On the Capitoline, she was Juno Regina, Queen Juno, the queen of heaven, the most important of all female deities.[65]

The goddess Minerva presided over handicrafts, inventions, arts, and sciences. In Roman households, she was the patron of women's weaving and spinning. On the other hand, she was also a goddess of war, the bestower of victory, whose feast days often included gladiatorial games.[66] She would later become a principal deity of the emperor Domitian, and additional temples dedicated to her would be built in the imperial fora and on the Aventine and Caelian Hills.

A statue of Jupiter was placed inside the middle cella room. Made of terra-cotta by Vulca of Veii, it was clothed with a tunic adorned with palms, an embroidered toga, a crown, and a laurel wreath.[67] A statue of Juno was placed in the room to the left; one of Minerva in the room to the right.[68] A terra-cotta quadriga bearing Jupiter, made in several pieces, was placed on the ridge of the roof. It was replaced by a new one made of bronze in 295 B.C.[69]

Devotion to the Capitoline cult remained strong throughout the history of the Roman state, from its founding by Romulus to the Empire. Generations of rulers and priests would painstakingly observe the rituals associated with Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva to ensure their correct relationship with the deities. When a victory or a good harvest favored Rome, it was proof that Jupiter and the other gods were pleased with the way the Capitoline cult was administered. When the Romans failed, it was assumed that Jupiter was displeased. He then demanded appeasement and modification of some part of the cult ritual.[70]

For the Etruscans, the temple had represented a link between the king and the gods in much the same way as eastern kings were given cult status. Such divinity had long been used to establish the binding authority of the king's power.[71] The Etruscan kings wore the same robe and had the same emblems as those on the statue of Jupiter inside the temple.[72] The kings were identified with Jupiter just as the legendary Greek kings were associated with Zeus.[73]

After the Etruscan king was banished from Rome in 509 B.C., the temple and the accessories of Jupiter it contained were not abandoned. The temple continued to be used; the robe and other emblems were

worn by the consuls and triumphant generals of the Republic.[74] The Romans' uninterrupted embrace of Jupiter is an important manifestation of the sacredness of foundation in Roman politics: once something had been founded, it bound all future generations. The temple transcended the question of rule by monarchy or by representation. Its construction and dedication to Jupiter made it distinctly Roman rather than Etruscan or monarchical.[75]

Jupiter's feast day, September 13, became the day the Republic's consuls took their oaths of office. The great ceremony featured the newly elected consuls, with magistrates, priests, and members of the Senate leading a procession up the east slope of the Capitoline Hill. They made a sacrifice on the altar, then followed it with a great banquet and the first meeting of the Senate (Fig. 5).[76] Whether on the occasion of Jupiter's feast day or in the celebration of a military victory, the manuals of the *pontifices* prescribed that sacrifice to Jupiter had to be made on a stone altar in front of the temple. They also prescribed that a young white steer was required as the sacrificial animal. Male animals were offered to gods, female to goddesses.[77]

The sacrificed animal was dismembered and its internal organs removed for examination. If they proved to be in perfect order – a good omen – they were cut into small pieces and put on the altar for the gods to consume. The rest of the carcass was prepared in a kitchen in the vicinity of the temple, and the banquet was held either in a temporary dining tent or in a dining hall near the temple. As with all other Roman rituals, the procedure for animal sacrifice in front of the Capitoline Temple was detailed and carefully performed. Any mistake was considered a dangerous omen and resulted in repetition of the ritual in its entirety.[78] During the ceremony, the doors of the temple's cella were opened wide so the statues of the deities could be observed and their presence made tangible and immediate.[79]

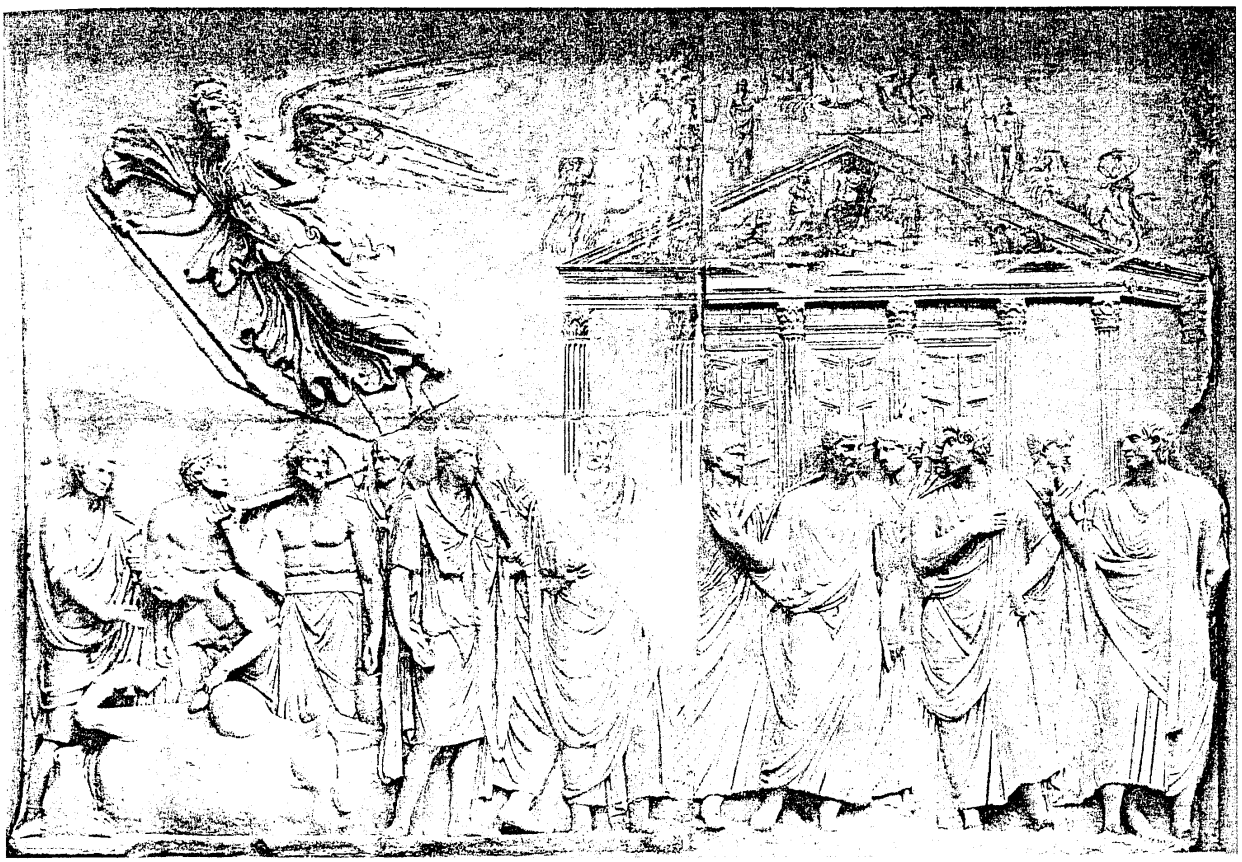
Triumphal processions, led by a victorious general, with official sanction by the Senate, were perhaps the most celebratory and magnificent events to involve the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus and to manifest the relationship between the god and the Roman people. Marching from the Campus Martius, through the Circus Flaminius, up the Via Triumphalis and the Via Sacra, across the Forum Romanum, the procession came to its glorious conclusion in front of the Capitoline Temple. The victors carried their triumphal crown and consecrated their ritual sacrifices.[80] Such ceremonies were in a sense a temporary deification, the triumphant Roman impersonating the god, sometimes even painting his face like that of the Jupiter statue.[81]

The temple had several functions in addition to its role in ritual ceremonies. It was used as a place for advertising state acts, deeds, and documents. This was one of the principal means of informing the public of what was going on in the government, the military, and other official organizations.[82] The temple also housed the city's official records and guarded the bronze tablets of laws and treaties displayed in its precinct. It housed the Sibylline Books, a Greek collection of Cumaean oracles said to have been acquired by the Etruscan kings. These oracles included prophecies regarding the history of Rome, and in some cases, they ordered the introduction of Greek cults and rites into the Roman religion.[83] According to Pliny, these oracles, acquired by Tarquinius Superbus, were kept in a stone chest in the temple's basement guarded by ten men.[84]

In general, priests and high government officials were the only ones to enter the temple's cella rooms. They were sparsely furnished, housing only the cult statues and small altars for burning incense. When a Roman entered one of the rooms to make a vow, he typically attached wax tablets to the statue and then prayed while stretching out his arms toward it.[85]

As a place for personal vows, public ceremony, advertising state acts, and housing official records, the Capitoline Temple was preeminent. It had no rivals, at least until the time of Augustus. The temple stood for more than 400 years before being destroyed by fire in 83 B.C. It was reconstructed by the dictator Sulla and his successor, Quintus Lutatius Catulus. Sulla used marble Corinthian capitals imported from Athens, transforming it in part from the Tuscan Doric to a quasi-Hellenistic style.[86]

The temple was damaged twice more by fire, first in A.D. 69 during a battle between Vitellius and Vespasian, second in a great fire during the reign of Titus in A.D. 80. In each case, according to ancient historians, it was rebuilt on the same foundations, with the same plan, again using Corinthian columns from Athens, but this time in their entirety.[87]



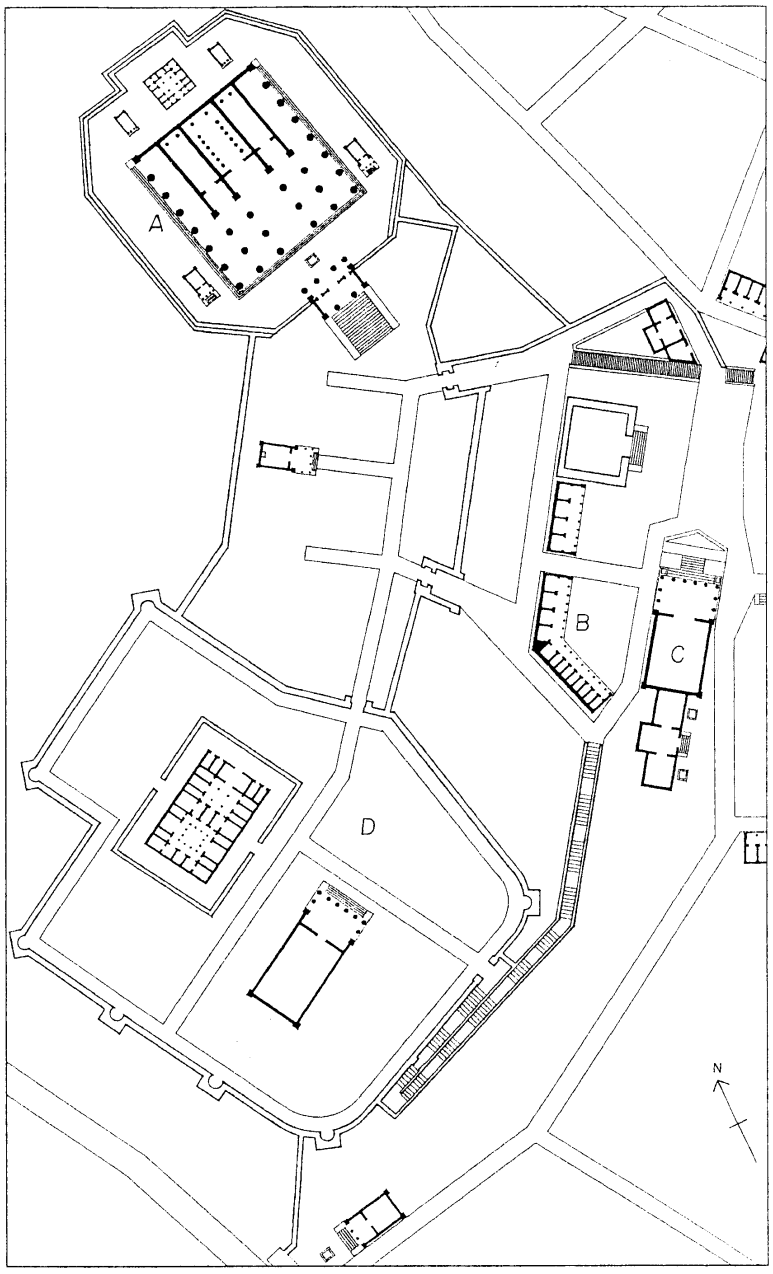
5. Relief depicting sacrifice in front of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in Rome. Photo: Fototeca Unione, American Academy in Rome, FU 13211.

In June of A.D. 455, the temple met its final destruction at the hands of the Vandals under Genseric. They plundered the sanctuary and carried off its statues and gilt bronze roof tiles to adorn Genseric's African residence. From then on, the site was used as a stone quarry and lime-kiln until all but the temple's foundations were destroyed.[88]

The Lost Site and Its Rediscovery

In the years after the Capitoline Temple's destruction by Genseric, numerous structures were built over its foundations, and for that matter, across the entire Capitoline Hill. It was only during the Renaissance that historians and authors of Roman guidebooks exhibited a renewed interest in the building and began to study its archaeological remains. There were some visible foundations of the temple in the gardens of the Palazzo Caffarelli, behind the present-day Capitoline Museum, and there were fragments of several marble columns and capitals that were found in 1545 by Giovanni Pietro Caffarelli.[89]

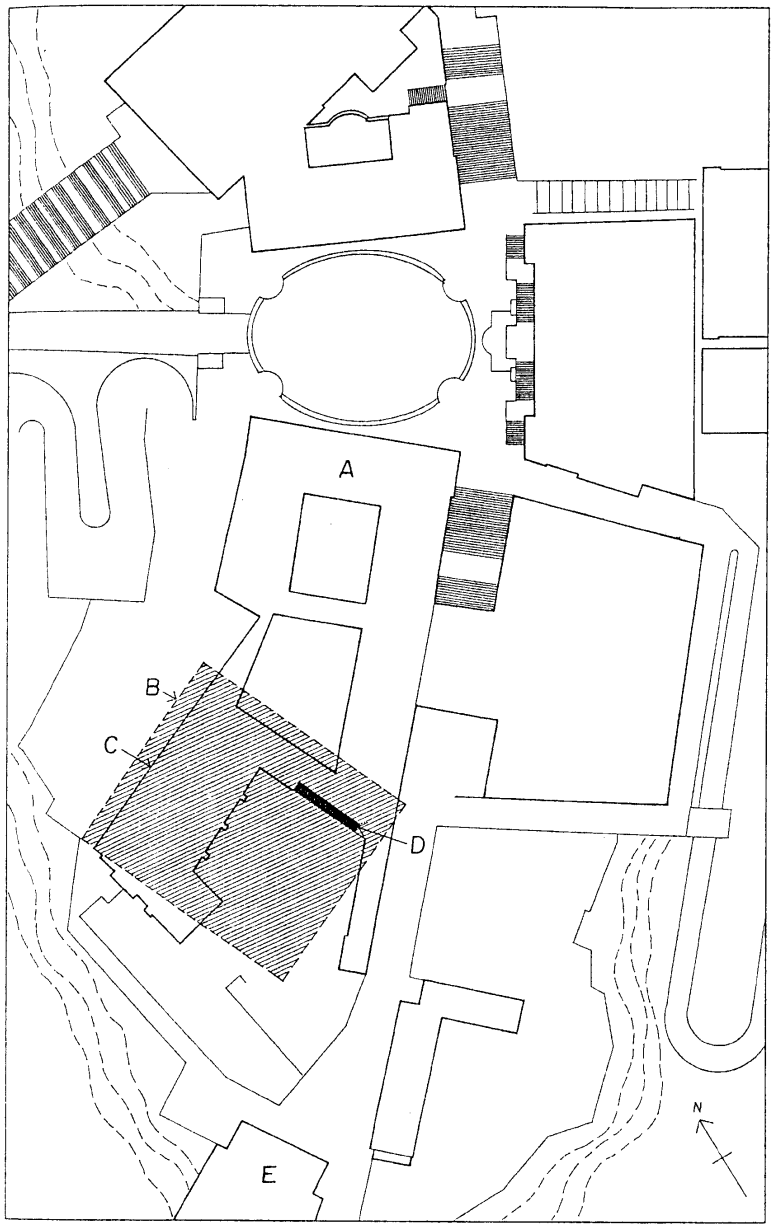
None of the columns or capitals exist today in their original form, although some were reportedly sketched and measured by Antonio da Sangallo the Younger. The sculptor Flaminio Vacca described the capitals as being so large that he was able to carve out a great lion from one of them. The rest of the marbles were used by Vincenzo de Rossi to carve the prophets and other statues for the Chapel of Federico Cesi in Santa Maria della Pace. No terra-cotta fragments of the entablature were found on the site, although some were reportedly discovered during the eighteenth and nineteenth



6. Plan of Capitoline Hill according to Luigi Canina, 1854. The Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus is shown on the north rather than the south summit: (A) Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, (B) Portico Deorem Consentium, (C) Temple of Saturn, (D) Southern summit of the Capitoline Hill. Drawing: Achieng Opondo after Luigi Canina, *Esposizione storica e topografica del Foro Romano e sue adiacenze* (1973), pl. 4.A.

centuries beneath the basements of houses below the Capitoline Hill, suggesting their final resting place after the temple's destruction.[90]

Guidebooks to Rome written in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reveal some confusion about the Capitoline Temple concerning both its location and its appearance. Three sixteenth-century writers, Lucio Fauno, Giovanni Bartolomeo Marliano, and Bernardo Gamucci, accurately described the temple's site, referring to it as the Tarpeian Rock, overlooking the Forum Holitorium and the Piazza Montonara from the hill's southern summit.[91] In *Delle antichità della città di Roma* (1548), Fauno referred to the account of the ancient author Varro, who suggested that the hill had been called the Tarpeian because of the Vestal Virgin Tarpeia, who was killed and buried there by the Sabines.[92] Marliano,



7. Plan of the Capitoline Hill with foundations of Capitoline Temple as discovered by Lanciani in the late 1890s: (A) Palazzo dei Conservatori, (B) Foundations of the Capitoline Temple, (C) Palazzo Caffarelli, (D) Ancient wall in Palazzo dei Conservatori, (E) Residence of the German Ambassador. Drawing: John W. Stamper based on Rodolfo Lanciani, *Pagan and Christian Rome* (1895), p. 86.

although agreeing in *Urbis Romae topographia Italiano* (1548) that the temple was on the southern summit, pointed out that there was, in fact, confusion over the identification of the various parts of the hill: exactly which locations should be referred to as the Capitoline, Tarpeian Rock, Rocca, or Arx.[93]

The issue became more confused about a century later when writers suddenly shifted the argument to suggest that the temple was not located on the southern summit at all, but rather on the northern one, under the Church of the Aracoeli.[94] They suggested that some of the temple's columns were used as *spolia* in the Christian structure. Faminio Nardini, for instance, in *Roma antica* (1666), based this theory on his reading of the life of Romulus provided by the ancient authors. Inverting the previous conception of the site, he insisted that the Tarpeian Rock and the Capitoline Temple were on the northern summit and that the

Rocca was on the southern summit.[95] This argument may, in fact, have been supported by contemporary readings of the ancient authors, or it may have had a political intent aimed at lending more legitimacy to the Church of the Aracoeli and its patrons. It was certainly not based on any new archaeological discoveries. There was nothing more known about the archaeology of the site in the seventeenth century than there had been in the sixteenth. The "evidence" was purely based on a change in the way the ancient authors were read and interpreted.

There was a renewed interest in the Capitoline Temple in the early nineteenth century, although most of the writers at this time again preferred the site of the Church of the Aracoeli on the northern summit. In the Roman guidebook *L'antiquario* (1804), Angelo Dalmazzoni reiterated the arguments for this location and suggested that the approach up the west side of the hill, opposite the Forum Romanum, was the route followed by triumphant Roman generals.[96] A similar line of reasoning was stated by Antonio Nibby in *Del Foro Romano* (1819), Carlo Fea in *Descrizione di Roma e suoi contorni* (1824), and Luigi Canina (Fig. 6) in *Esposizione storica e topografica del Foro Romano e sue adiacenze* (1845).[97] In each case, the author believed the temple was located on the northern summit, even though there was no archaeological evidence to support their claim.

It was not until 1875 that Rodolfo Lanciani rediscovered the true site when he pieced together several disparate elements of the temple's foundations on the Capitoline's southern summit (Fig. 7). An excavation was under way in the garden of the Palazzo dei Conservatori of the Capitoline Museum to prepare for the construction of a residence for the German ambassador. Workers uncovered a previously unknown edge of the podium, which Lanciani attributed to the period of the Tarquins and the Capitoline Temple. Along with the podium, he identified a fragment of a fluted column shaft of Pentelic marble that had also been discovered. He suggested it was from the Capitoline Temple's final version. Borings were systematically made around the site in 1876, which allowed archaeologists to trace out three sides of the podium and estimate its dimensions.[98]

Only now could proposed reconstructions of the temple be based directly on the archaeological evidence of the site. Numerous studies followed by both Italian and German archaeologists, each publishing their own interpretations of the evidence with drawings of their proposed reconstructions.

Because the Capitoline Temple was one of the largest and most influential buildings on the Italian peninsula for more than 900 years, it is unfortunate that it does not figure more prominently in historical surveys of Greek and Roman architecture. Although general surveys include the giant structures at Ephesus, Samos, Akragas, Selinus, and Athens, many studies overlook the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. This is true primarily because so little evidence for it exists. Based on literary descriptions and the fragmentary remains of its foundation buried under the Capitoline Museum, it was without question the largest Etruscan temple on mainland Italy and therefore deserves more study with respect to both its architectural form and to its place in the history of Roman architecture.

There is a question, however, of just how large it really was. It has long been assumed that the dimensions of the temple itself corresponded to the size of the podium, which, according to recent archaeological studies, was 53.50 meters wide by 62 meters long.[99] This would have been a colossal temple indeed, with interaxial dimensions of as much as 12 meters, or 40 Roman feet. It would have been far larger than the Parthenon in Athens and proportionally even more gigantic than any other Etruscan temple of the period. Was it really possible to build and maintain such a temple with the available technology in sixth-century B.C. Rome? Chapter 2 provides a close examination of the archaeological evidence of the building and proposes a new reconstruction, one that is smaller in size and more in keeping with the character of both its contemporaries and with later temples from the Empire.

2

A NEW RECONSTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

Most reconstruction drawings and models of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus have closely corresponded to a proposal made in the 1840s by Luigi Canina in *Esposizione storica e topografica del Foro Romano e sue adiacenze*. Subsequent scholars modified and refined its plan and changed its site as new archaeological evidence came to light during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The temple's size, however, and its basic layout have remained consistent with Canina's plan. The most detailed reconstruction, following the original outline by Canina, is that published by the Swedish archaeologist Einar Gjerstad in *Early Rome* in 1960.[1]

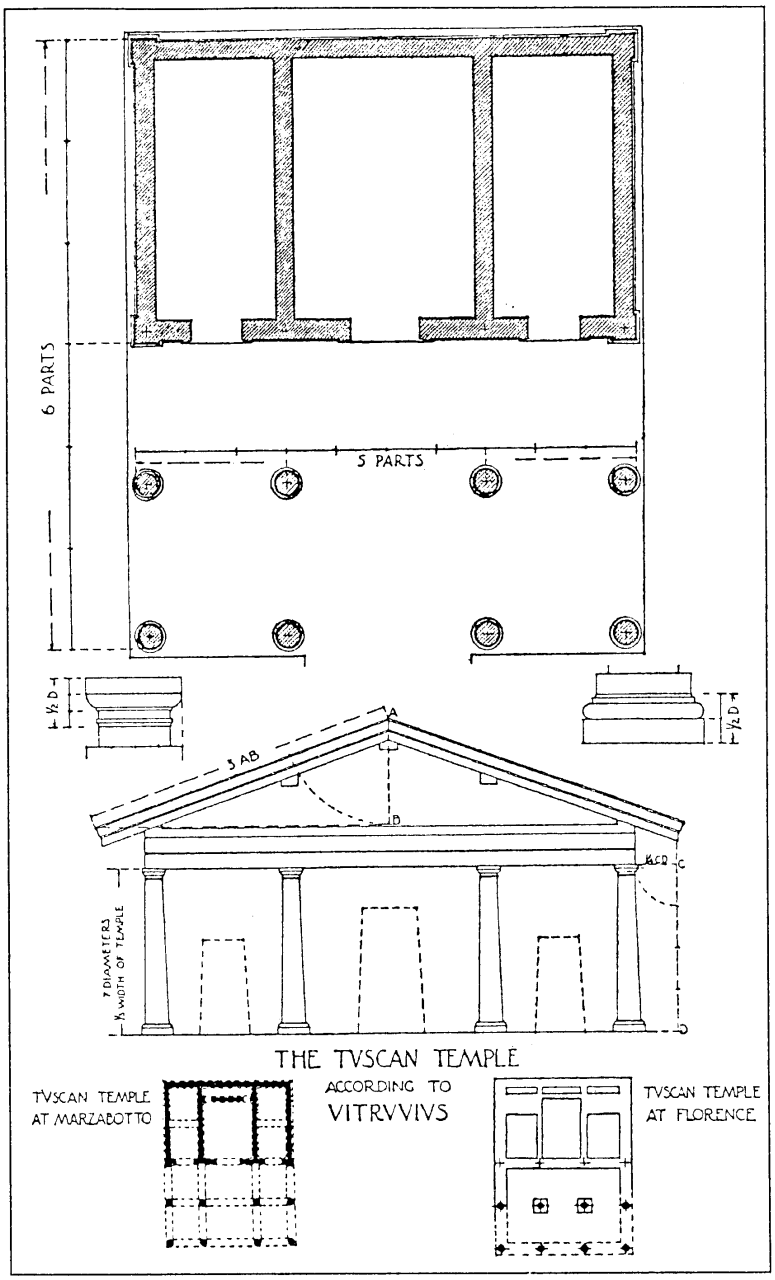
The issue raised in this study is simply stated. The Capitoline Temple, as it has been reconstructed by writers and scholars from Canina to the present day, is too large. The size of the temple structure in these proposals is so grand, the spans of its wooden lintels so wide, that its construction seems hardly possible in Rome in the sixth century B.C.[2] A reinterpretation of the evidence based on the foundation walls, the size of the columns, and on a comparison with contemporary temples, suggests the Capitoline Temple's size was about two-thirds that of the accepted reconstruction. In this proposal, its columns were more closely spaced by at least 4 meters, and its podium was not a large flat cubical block, but a terraced platform with successive flights of stairs connecting each level.[3]

The temple's reduced dimensions as proposed in this book are significant not only because they are more reasonable in terms of the technological means available in ancient Rome but also because they compare closely with those of later structures such as the Temple of Mars Ultor and the Pantheon. The builders of these imperial temples sought to symbolically link them to Jupiter, Romulus, and the founding of Rome. The Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus was consciously emulated and referred to as an architectural precedent by countless rulers, architects, and builders in subsequent centuries. This emulation, in several significant cases, included copying the width of its pronaos as if it was a standard for temple design. As such, the Capitoline Temple was integral to the maintaining of political authority and leadership in Rome throughout the Republic and Empire.

All previous historical accounts of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus have portrayed it as an isolated monument in the development of Roman temple architecture. Its presumed size was thought to be so great that it could not be compared with anything else in the city (with the possible exception of the much later Temple of Sol begun by Aurelian on the Quirinal Hill).[4] Because the authority of precedent was so strong in the history of ancient Roman architecture – as it was in politics, religion, and social relations – it should be obvious that the Capitoline Temple, dedicated to the city's most important deity, arguably had a significant influence on what followed.

The Reconstructions

Much of our knowledge of the design of Etruscan temples is derived from Vitruvius's *Ten Books on Architecture* (Fig. 8). Although the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus did not match Vitruvius's description in all of its details, his book has been essential to archaeologists and architectural historians in interpreting the temple's



8. Etruscan Temple according to Vitruvius: plan, elevation, and details. Drawing: Herbert Langford Warren, reproduced from Vitruvius, *Ten Books of Architecture*, Ed. Morris Hickey Morgan (1960), p. 121, courtesy of Dover Publications.

remaining physical evidence and literary descriptions. Vitruvius suggested that the plan of an Etruscan temple should be slightly longer than it is wide, a ratio of 6 to 5, and that the length should be divided in half, the front being occupied by an open pronaos, the rear by an enclosed cella. He divided the cella itself into three separate rooms, the center one being wider than the flanking two.[5] He aligned the columns of the pronaos with the walls of the cella, thus creating a spatial and structural correspondence between the two.[6]

For the columns themselves, the Tuscan-Doric Order, Vitruvius suggested that the height, including the capital and base, should be seven times the lower

9. View of Capitoline Temple foundation wall located inside the Capitoline Museum. Photo: Fototeca Unione, American Academy in Rome, FU 960.

diameter, and that this height should in turn be equal to one-third of the temple's overall width. The columns were spaced far apart, their intercolumnial dimensions being over three times their diameter, a composition Vitruvius called *araeostyle* and which he criticized as being "clumsy-roofed, low, broad."[7] Finally, the roof structure was usually composed of wooden beams and posts fastened together by dowels and tenons, with the pitch of the gable having a ratio of 1 to 3.[8] The fasciae were decorated with terra-cotta revetments painted in elaborate foliate, meander, and figurative patterns, and the rooftops were decorated with standing figures and acroteria.[9]

Vitruvius's description of the Etruscan temple as a building type was essential to the reconstruction of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, although in this case, we are dealing with a larger structure than he described, one that had six rather than the usual four columns on the front. Besides Vitruvius's model, the known archaeological evidence, as it was uncovered in the late nineteenth century by Lanciani and others, included a few pieces of terra-cotta frieze, portions of fluted marble columns, and the large sections of the foundation walls under the Palazzo dei Conservatori of the Capitoline Museum.[10] One of the best-preserved parts of the foundation is a wall of large squared blocks located near the platform's southeast corner. It is visible today in the corridor connecting the Palazzo dei Conservatori with the Museo Nuovo (Fig. 9) and also from the enclosed garden behind the museum. Other portions of the foundation, along its north and northwest sides, have recently been excavated and are visible in the courtyard and in the basement of the southwest wing of the Palazzo dei Conservatori.[11]

In addition to the physical evidence, there is a written account by Dionysius of Halicarnassus that provides

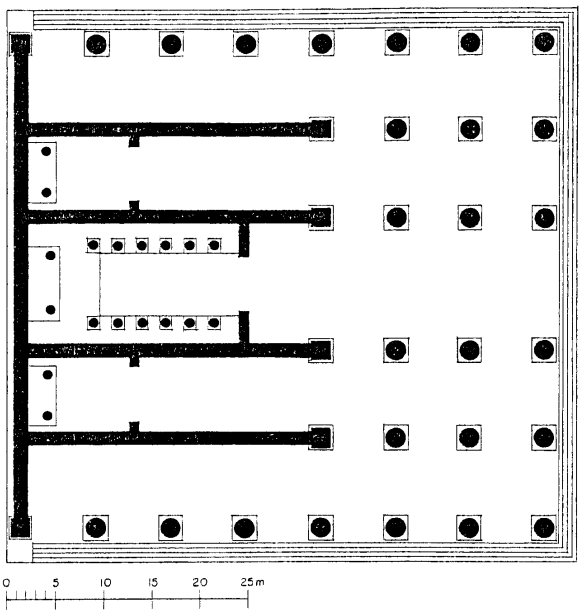
significant information about the temple's podium and the plan of its pronaos and cella:

> It stood upon a high base and was 800 [Roman] feet in circuit, each side measuring close to two hundred feet; indeed, one would find the excess of the length over the width to be but slight, in fact, not a full fifteen feet . . . [and it had] three rows of columns on the front, facing the south, and a single row on each side. The temple consists of three parallel shrines, separated by party walls; the middle shrine is dedicated to Jupiter, while on one side stands that of Juno and on the other that of Minerva, all three being under one pediment and one roof.[12]

Studies and measurements by archaeologists show that the dimensions of the huge substructure were 53.50 meters wide by 62 meters long.[13] This corresponds to the base described by Dionysius, whose dimensions were given in a measurement equivalent to the Roman foot (.296 meters), which in this case would be 180 by 210 Roman feet.[14]

As with early theories about the temple's site, there have been numerous reconstructions of the temple proposed since the sixteenth century. Some of them followed closely the description by Dionysius of Halicarnassus; others were way off the mark. It is clear that most early authors and illustrators worked from little more than pure speculation. An illustration in Nardini's *Roma antica*, for instance, shows a plan of the temple with eight columns across the front, three rows deep, and a double peristyle down the sides with thirteen columns each.[15] It was something of a cross between the Etruscan temple type and the Ionic temple of Artemis at Ephesus. Another common representation is found in the 1689 version of Marliano's *Ritratto di Roma antica*, which shows in elevation an enclosed church-like structure with engaged columns and a dome, a building that looks more like Palladio's San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice than any known Etruscan temple.[16]

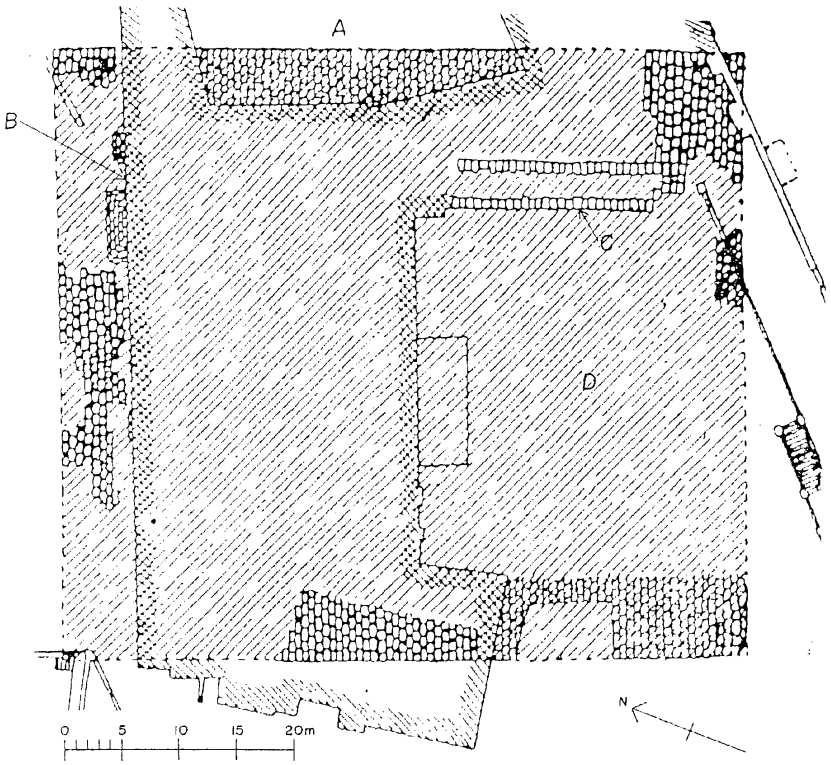
The 1845 plan by Canina, as published in *Esposizione storica e topografica del Foro Romano e sue adiacenze*, was the first to effectively combine the Etruscan temple



10. Plan of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus by Canina that formed the basis for later plan reconstructions. Drawing: John W. Stamper after Luigi Canina, *Esposizione storica e topografica del Foro Romano e sue adiacenze* (1973), pl. 4.A.

description of Vitruvius with the information provided by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (Fig. 10). Even though Canina placed the temple in the wrong location, much of the rest of his reconstruction has been accepted up to the present day: a flat, cubical podium; six columns across the front and three rows deep; a single row down each side; three cella rooms; and a continuous back wall closing off the side aisles (*peripteros sine postico*).[17]

It was only after the excavation of the temple's foundation in the 1870s that proposed reconstructions could be correlated with tangible archaeological evidence. As more sections of the foundations were excavated and measured, archaeologists from different countries pieced together the various parts of the podium. Because some of its northern boundaries were as yet unidentified, there was still disagreement about the podium's exact dimensions. In 1875, Lanciani published an article suggesting its width was 56.40 meters and its length 58.60 meters. He proposed that its interaxial dimensions would have been 9 meters and the column diameters 2 meters. He compared the column diameters with those of the Temple of Mars Ultor and the Pantheon.[18]



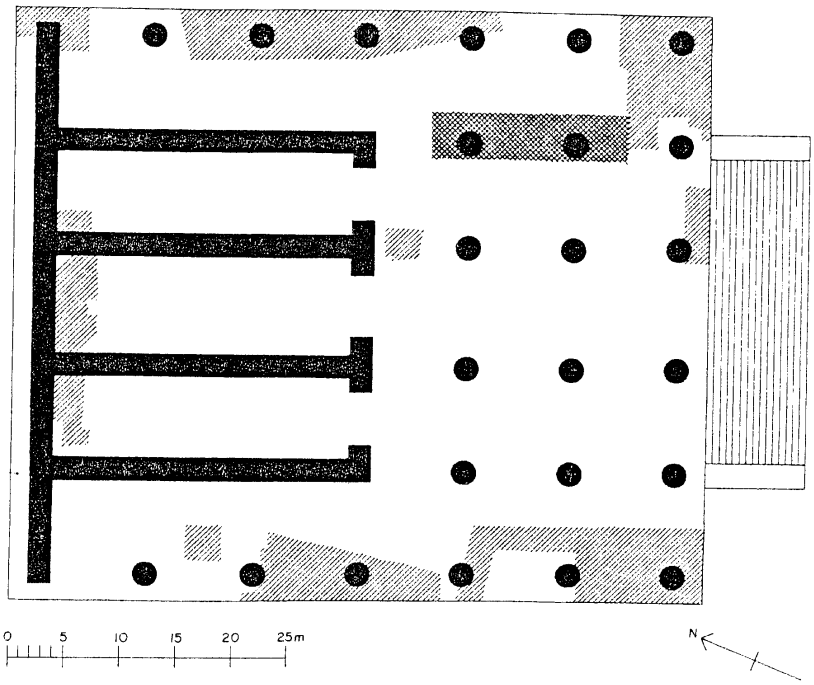
11. Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, plan of archaeological remains discovered as of 1921 showing stones of perimeter foundation and (A) garden of the Palazzo dei Conservatori, (B) Palazzo Caffarelli, (C) wall near the temple's southeast corner visible in the Palazzo dei Conservatori, (D) garden of the Palazzo Caffarelli. Illustration: Roberto Paribeni and E. Gatti in *NSc* (1921), p. 45.

In 1895, Lanciani provided an in-depth summary of the archaeological findings and further descriptions of the temple in the book *Pagan and Christian Rome*. He described the structure as having a high platform built of squared blocks of *capellaccio*, which he compared with those found in portions of the Servian walls. In this case, he suggested its overall dimensions were 53.90 meters wide by 61 meters long, a revision of his 1875 article but still slightly wider and shorter than the actual figures would prove to be. As in Canina's reconstruction, Lanciani's had an Etruscan-style pronaos with columns three rows deep, aisles down the sides, and with interaxial spans of at least 9 meters. He made a point of stating that "the intercolumniations were so wide as to require architraves of timber," stressing the fact that marble or travertine lintels would not have worked. He also pointed out that the area and height of the podium were reduced by about one-third when the Caffarelli's built their palace in 1680.[19]

Henri Jordan, Christian Hülsen, and Ludwig Otto Richter all published articles in response to the findings of Lanciani in which they reviewed their own archaeological studies of the site, their measurements, and their speculations about the temple's form. They each had their own interpretation of the podium's overall size, their proposals differing by as much as 2 or 3 meters, and each with a different suggestion for the interaxial spacing of the columns.[20] Richter proposed the most inventive plan in which the column spacing alternated between wider and narrower interaxial dimensions.[21]

A later and more accurate archaeological study was published by Roberto Paribeni in 1921 (Fig. 11). Stating that the podium was 53.50 meters wide by 62 meters long (182 by 210 Roman feet), he was the first to properly identify its north boundary and thus confirm the description given by Dionysius of Halicarnassus that the overall perimeter was about 800 Roman feet and that the excess of the length over the width was about 15 Roman feet.[22] In the 1950s, Einar Gjerstad followed Paribeni's findings, proposing the most detailed reconstruction yet.[23]

Although Gjerstad did not invent the accepted reconstruction as we know it, he is responsible for making the most convincing proposal for its dimensions and

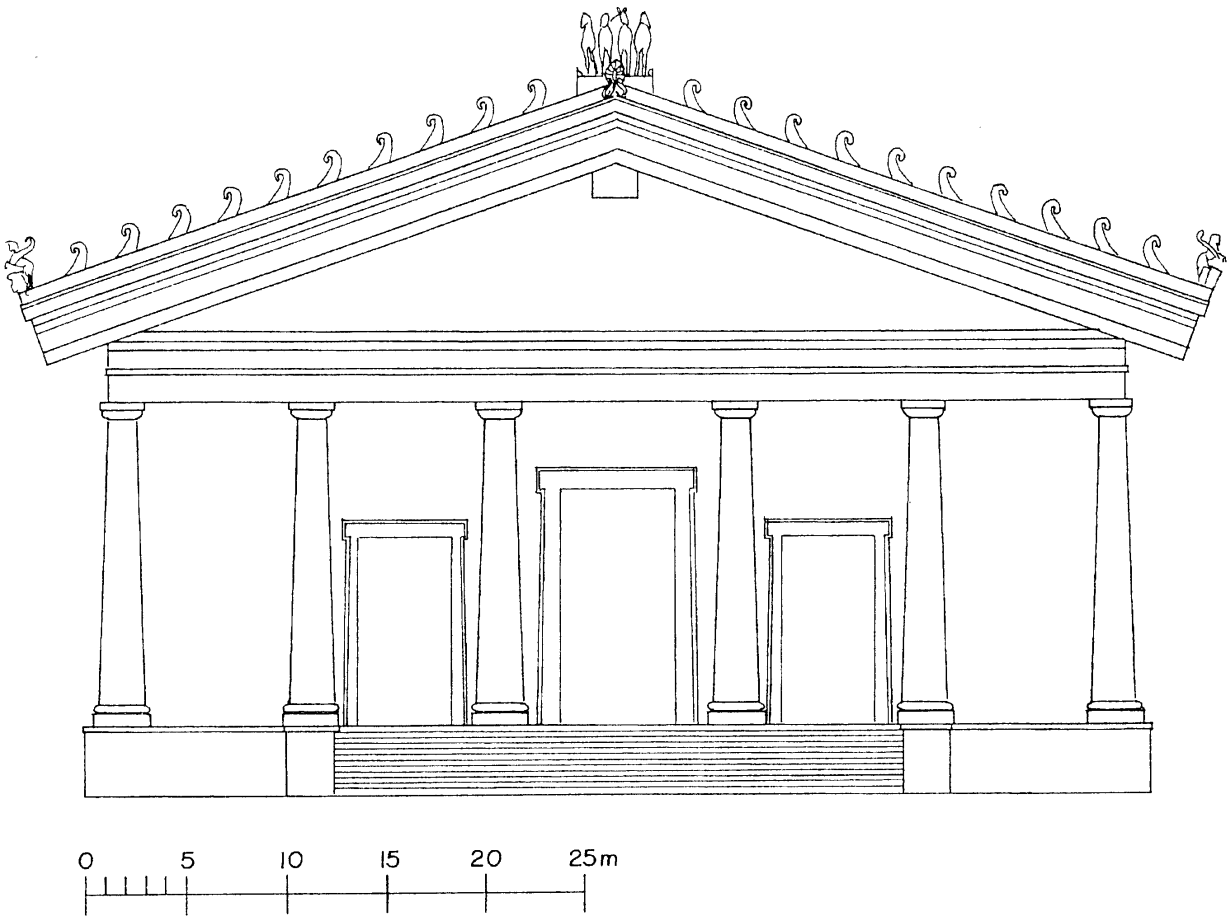


12. Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus according to Gjerstad. Drawing: John W. Stamper after Einar Gjerstad and Roberto Paribeni, in *Etruscan Culture: Land and People* (1962), pl. 12.

form (Fig. 12). Like Canina and Lanciani, he divided the podium's width into five bays, with three cella rooms, an outer aisle on each side, and a pronaos three bays deep, all contained under one roof and pediment (Fig. 13).[24] He suggested that the columns had a diameter of 2.35 meters (8 Roman feet) and a height of 16.6 meters (56 Roman feet).[25] The aisles and the lateral cella rooms were 9.5 meters wide and the central one 12 meters (32 and 40 Roman feet, respectively). These dimensions would have been the same for the interaxial spacing of the pronaos columns, one row of which would have aligned with the well-preserved wall visible in the corridor of the Palazzo dei Conservatori.[26] Every aspect of Gjerstad's reconstruction was given with precision and apparent logic, all of it based on a careful synthesis of the archaeological evidence, previous reconstructions, and the written descriptions of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Vitruvius.

It is curious that Gjerstad and nearly every other expert who has worked on the subject of the Capitoline Temple has left unchallenged the assumption on which all previous reconstructions were based – namely, that Dionysius of Halicarnassus was referring to the dimensions of the temple structure itself rather than its base or podium. It is possible that the temple structure was smaller than the podium. It is also possible that the podium was not a single rectangular block as suggested by Gjerstad, but rather, a stepped or terraced platform like that found in many later temples from both the Republic and the Empire.[27] On close examination, it is difficult to believe that the temple's outer columns were actually aligned with the platform's outer walls, 180 Roman feet from side to side and 210 feet deep. It is even more difficult to believe that its interaxial spans were 32 and 40 Roman feet. The ability of builders in sixth-century Rome to construct such spans with wooden lintels is highly unlikely. A span of 40 Roman feet is not just large; it is unfathomable when contemplating the post and lintel structure necessary to make it stand.

If the dimensions of the accepted version are compared with those of other contemporary temples, as indicated in Tables 2.1 and 3.1, we find that the dimensions of the Capitoline Temple's facade would have been wider than the colossal Temple G in Selinus or the Temple of Zeus in Akragas, over 21 meters wider and 9 meters taller than the much more famous Parthenon in Athens (Fig. 14), and at least twice as large as any other known temple in Italy from the Etruscan period.



13. Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, elevation according to Gjerstad. Drawing: John W. Stamper after Einar Gjerstad, in *Etruscan Culture: Land and People* (1962), pl. 13.

More telling is the fact that the temple's interaxial spans of 12 meters for the central bay and 9.50 meters for the rest (even with wooden lintels) is inconceivable if we compare them to 6.50 meters in Temple G, 4.30 meters in the Parthenon, and 4.50 to 6 meters as an average for most other known Etruscan temples. A central bay 12 meters wide by 16.6 meters high, spanned by timber beams that also carried several tons of roof structure, fictile revetments, and clay roofing tiles, would not have been possible without substantial instability and deflection in the center, especially because the original temple stood for 426 years. There were no elaborately formed roof trusses used by the Etruscans, only post-and-lintel construction, with maximum spans of about 7.50 to 8 meters.[28] Even then, the timber members had to be hewn from extremely large trees of a very hard and durable nature and would have been difficult to supply.[29] The assumption that the Capitoline Temple measured 180 by 210 Roman feet with spans as great as 40 Roman feet lacks essential elements of technical practicality, spatial believability, and functional efficacy. There must be an alternative.

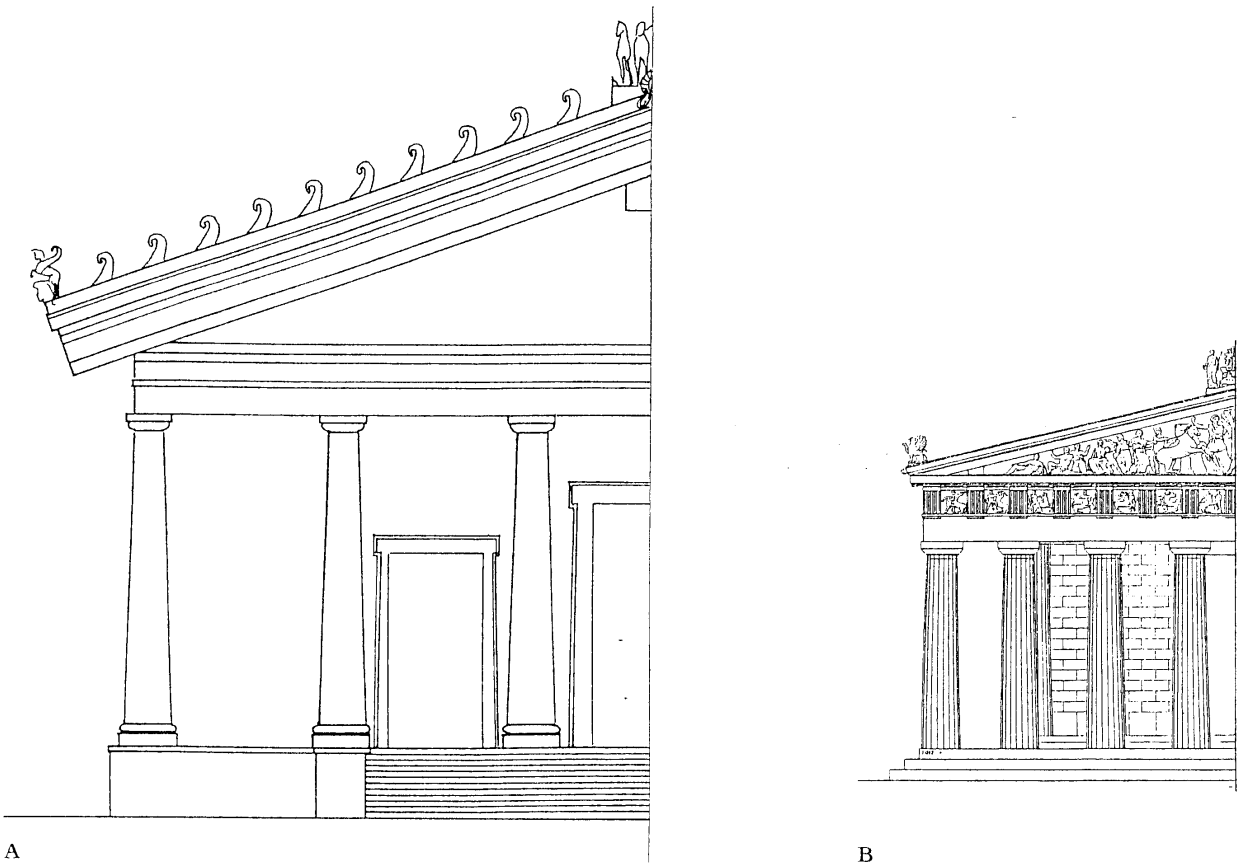
The Evidence Reconsidered

The reconstruction as Gjerstad defined it has been accepted as fact by most authors on the subject of Etruscan and Roman temples, all of whom reproduce his plan in one form or another in their publications.[30] In every case, these authors concur with Gjerstad's plan

Table 2.1. Comparative Sizes of Colossal Temples of the Sixth to the Fifth Centuries B.C. (Podium Size, Column Diameter, and Interaxial Dimension)

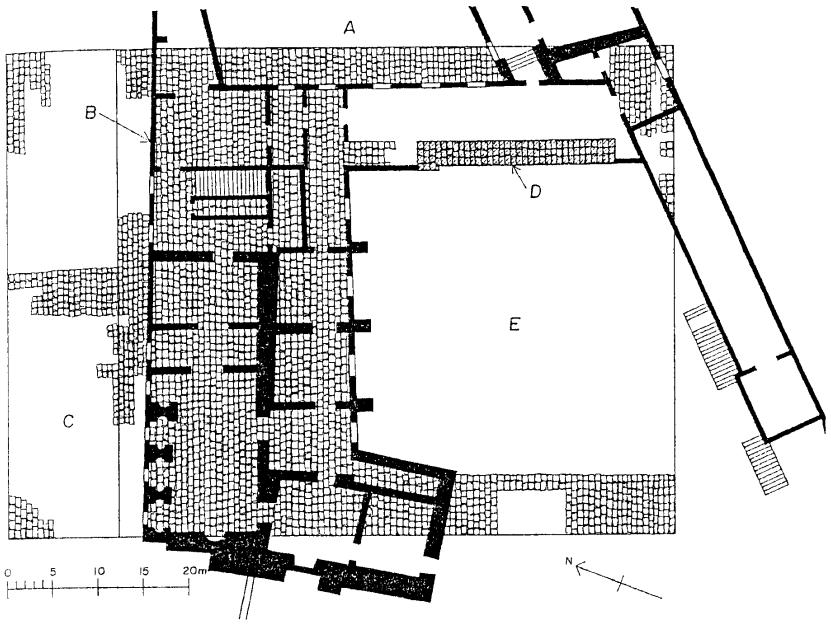
		Podium		*Columns*	
City	*Temple*	*Width (m)*	*Length (m)*	*Diameter (m)*	*Interaxial (m)*
Ephesus	Temple of Artemis	55.10	115.14	1.51	8.62
Samos	Temple of Hera	59.70	115.80	1.86	8.40
Selinus	Temple G	50.07	110.12	2.97	6.50
Akragus	Temple of Zeus	52.74	110.09	4.05	8.04
Athens	Parthenon	30.88	69.50	1.90	4.30
Athens	Temple Olympian Zeus	41.11	107.89	1.90	5.49
Rome	Cap. Jup. (Gjerstad)	53.50	62.20	2.35	9.50
					12.00 center
	" (Stamper)	34.0	38.30	1.47	5.90
					7.40 center

Source: William Bell Dinsmoor, *The Architecture of Ancient Greece* (New York: Norton, 1975), tables, 337–340.



A B

14. Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus (A) compared with the Parthenon, Athens (B). Both drawings are done at the same scale. Drawing of Capitoline Temple: John W. Stamper after Einar Gjerstad, in *Etruscan Culture: Land and People* (1962), pl. 13; Parthenon drawing: Georges Gromort, *Choix d'éléments empruntés à l'architecture classique*, vol. 1 (1927), pl. 2.



15. Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, plan of archaeological remains discovered as of 2000 showing foundation platform and (A) garden of the Palazzo dei Conservatori, (B) Palazzo Caffarelli, (C) platform behind temple, (D) wall near the temple's southeast corner visible in the Palazzo dei Conservatori, (E) garden of the Palazzo Caffarelli. Drawing: John W. Stamper.

reconstruction and dimensions. Apparently none of them have taken a critical look at the way he or his predecessors interpreted the evidence, nor have they done a comparative study to analyze it in relation to other temples of the period.

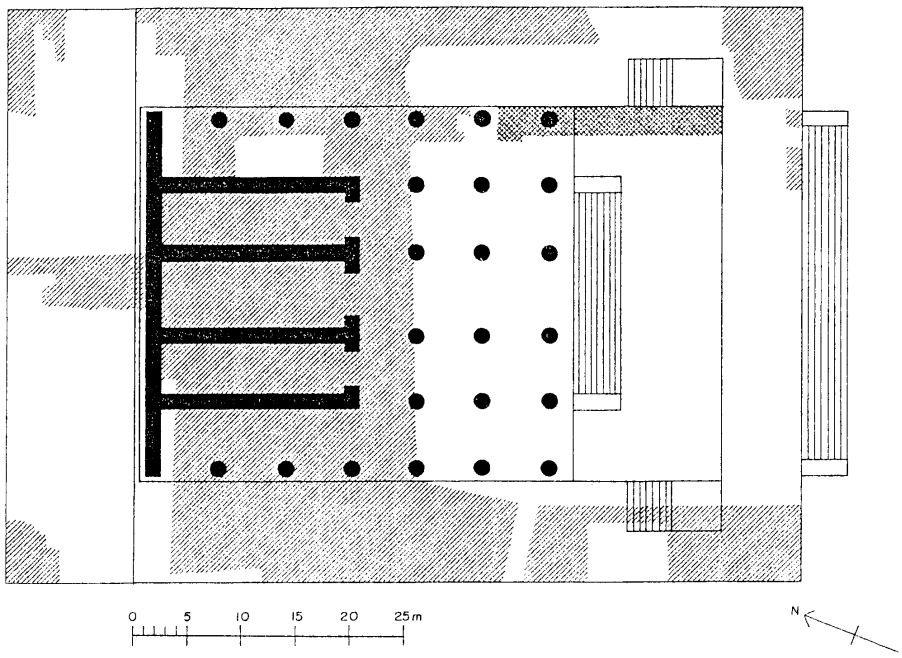
Those archaeologists who have questioned the temple's size have been concerned primarily with the dimensions of the columns. Wooden columns 16.6 meters high and 2.35 meters in diameter would have been impossible, unless several trunks were bound together.[31] Even if they were composed of stone blocks, the erection of such tall structural supports would have been unmanageable in Rome in the 520s B.C.

The reconstruction presented here suggests that the temple's dimensions were, in fact, less than those stated by Gjerstad, his predecessors, and his followers. This alternative reconstruction continues to depend on the evidence of the foundation walls and on the written accounts of ancient authors, but it interprets them in a different way. Most notably, it suggests that the temple structure was not placed on a level, cubical podium, but on top of a series of terraced platforms.

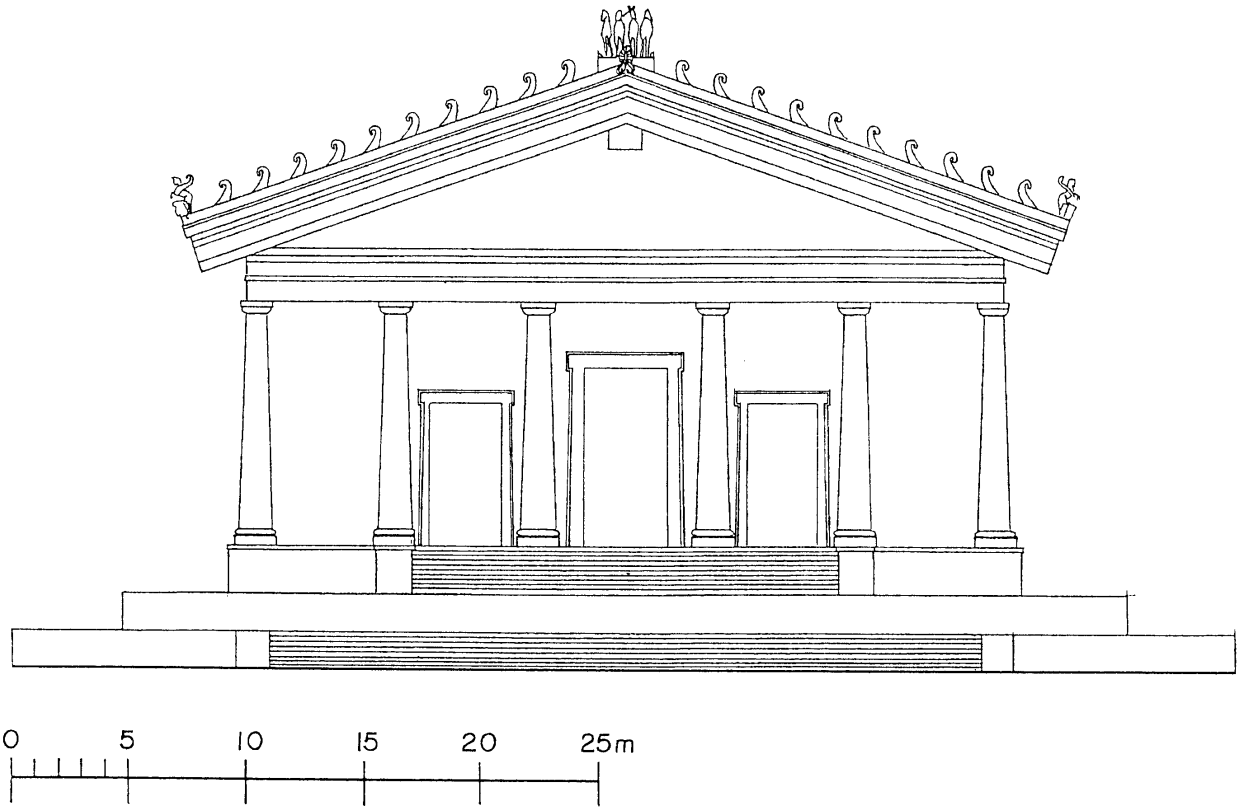
Excavations on the site, begun in the 1990s in the basement level of the Palazzo dei Conservatori and in its garden have brought to light an enormous area of the blocks of *cappellaccio* that once formed the lower portion of the temple's platform structure (Fig. 15). They have also revealed a northward extension of the foundation walls that were part of a retaining wall at the edge of the Capitoline Hill and may have been part of the temple itself.[32]

The exact configuration of the terraced platform in this proposed reconstruction cannot be fully determined from the existing archaeological evidence. A hypothetical reconstruction can be made, however, based on the location of the wall visible in the hallway and garden of the Palazzo dei Conservatori and on a comparison with other ancient temples that are known to have had terraced platforms (Figs. 16 and 17).

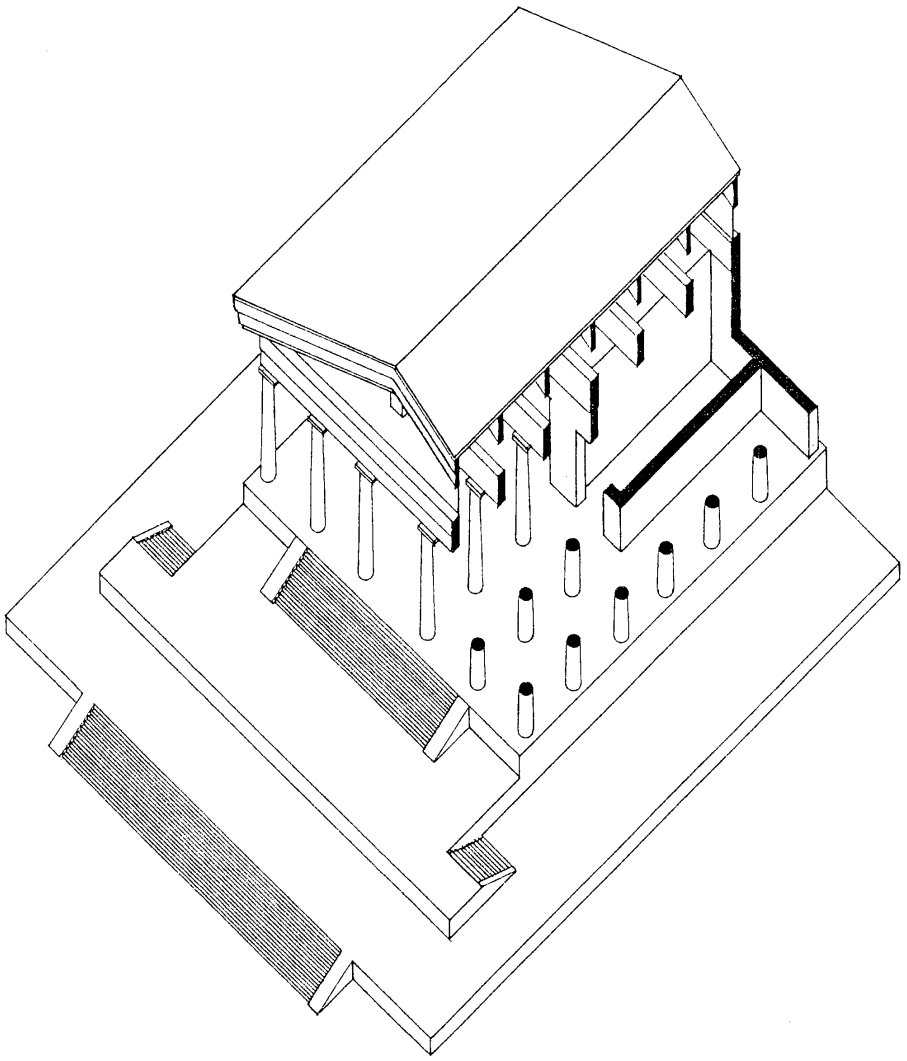
In this reconstruction, the width of the uppermost terrace and the temple structure itself are based on the position of the wall visible in the Palazzo dei Conservatori hallway and the garden. This wall, about 5 meters taller than any of the surrounding foundation blocks, was part of a large gridded foundation structure that stood on the lowest platform and supported the temple proper. There was a similar wall on the platform's opposite side, symmetrically placed about the central axis. The podium floor supported by this gridded foundation would have measured about 34 meters wide by 38.30 meters long, or 115 by 130 Roman feet.[33] The podium width of 115 Roman feet was an important dimension that links this building to later temples,



16. Proposed new plan of Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus with indication of excavated foundations and wall at southeast corner. Drawing: John W. Stamper.



17. Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, elevation of proposed reconstruction. Drawing: John W. Stamper.



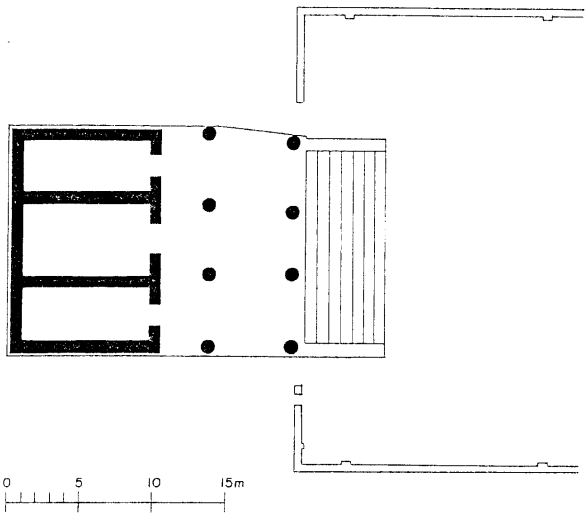
18. Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, axonometric view of proposed reconstruction. Drawing: John W. Stamper.

including the Temple of Mars Ultor, the Templum Pacis, and the Pantheon, for instance, all of which were approximately 115 Roman feet wide.[34]

A broad flight of axially aligned stairs would have led from the podium floor down to an intermediate level, which would have served as a speakers' platform. From there, an arrangement of lateral stairs, perhaps like those of the later Temple of Venus Genetrix or the Temple of Divus Julius, would have led to the lowermost level, which alone would have corresponded to the 180 by 210 Roman feet described by Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Finally, there would have been a third flight of steps in the center of the lower platform leading to the ground level (Fig. 18).

The concept of a temple built on a large, terraced platform has many known examples from the Republic and Empire. It is enough to suggest a comparison to the Temple of Jupiter Anxur at Terracina from the first century B.C., the Temple of Hercules Victor at Tivoli (89–82 B.C.), or in Rome, the Temple of Claudius on the Caelian Hill (ca. 40–60 A.D.).[35] The overall platform in these cases would have corresponded to the *templum*, the sacred area for observing the auspices.[36] The temple itself was smaller and located at the rear of the sacred area.

The interaxial dimensions of the Capitoline Temple according to this reconstruction would have been 5.90 meters for the side bays and 7.40 meters for the



19. Orvieto, Belvedere Temple, 400s B.C., plan. Drawing: John W. Stamper after Sheila Gibson in Axel Boëthius, *Etruscan and Early Roman Architecture* (1978), p. 45, pl. 33.

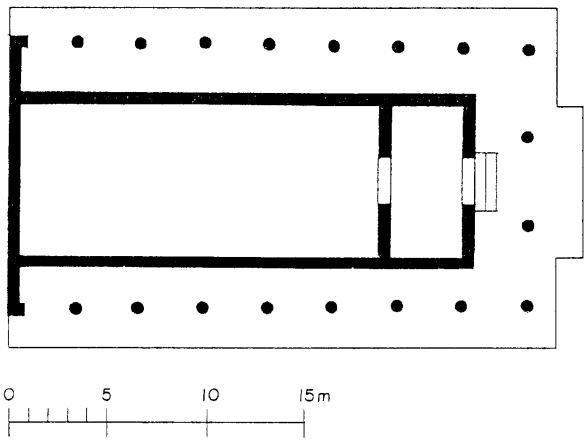
center bay (20 and 25 Roman feet, respectively). Following Vitruvius's prescription, the columns would have been 1.47 meters (5 Roman feet) in diameter and 11.30 meters (38 Roman feet) high.

In this reconstruction, the Capitoline Temple still would have been the largest such building in the Etruscan world, and certainly the most important in political and religious terms. It would have been more within the realm of possibility at the time, however, for stone and post-and-lintel timber construction. It would have been in keeping with later Roman temples from the Republican period, and it would have corresponded almost exactly to several important temples from the imperial period, whose builders had ample reason to emulate it.

This reconstruction does not suggest a significant change to Gjerstad's temple plan itself. As he pointed out, the plan's exact details will never be known.[37] As such, there is no reason to suggest that his basic derivation of the plan is incorrect, only that it was smaller than he suggested. It represents well the influence of both Etruscan and Latin sources and traditions, especially the deep pronaos, three-room cella, lateral extensions of the rear wall, and terra-cotta decoration, all of which became highly influential for later temples in the Roman world.

The deep pronaos was a typical feature of most Etruscan temples, as seen, for instance, in the Belvedere Temple in Orvieto (Fig. 19), built in the early fifth century B.C. and rebuilt in the early fourth. Its podium, which is still visible, was divided evenly between a deep pronaos and three cella rooms and measured 16.93 meters wide by 21.91 meters deep, almost exactly half the size of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus as reconstructed here.[38] Axial symmetry was implied by the arrangement of a *templum* enclosed by walls in front of the building, a layout foreshadowing the imperial Roman fora.[39] Such a building represented the standard shape and size of most temples in the Etruscan world and is the type on which Vitruvius based his description.

The rear wall of the Capitoline Temple, which extended laterally beyond the corners of the cella in a *peripteros sine postico* fashion, was imitated by Roman builders until well into the Republic, as seen in Temple C in Largo Argentina and the Temple of Peace in Paestum, to name just two.[40] Variations of it are found in the Temples of Venus Genetrix and Mars Ultor. It is often assumed to have been common in Etruscan building practice; however, it is an arrangement that was found more predominantly in Latin temple structures like those in Ariccia, Satricum, Cascia, and Gabii.[41] Its earliest use was in the Temple of Mater Matuta I at Satricum (Fig. 20), which dates from around



20. Satricum, Temple of Mater Matuta I, ca. 550 B.C., plan. Drawing: John W. Stamper based on Jos. A. DeWaele in *ArchLaz* 4 (1981), p. 313, fig. 3.

21. Figural frieze with processional scene, measuring about 1 Roman foot in length, sixth century B.C., terra-cotta, Palazzo Conservatori, Rome. Photo: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, 10.993.

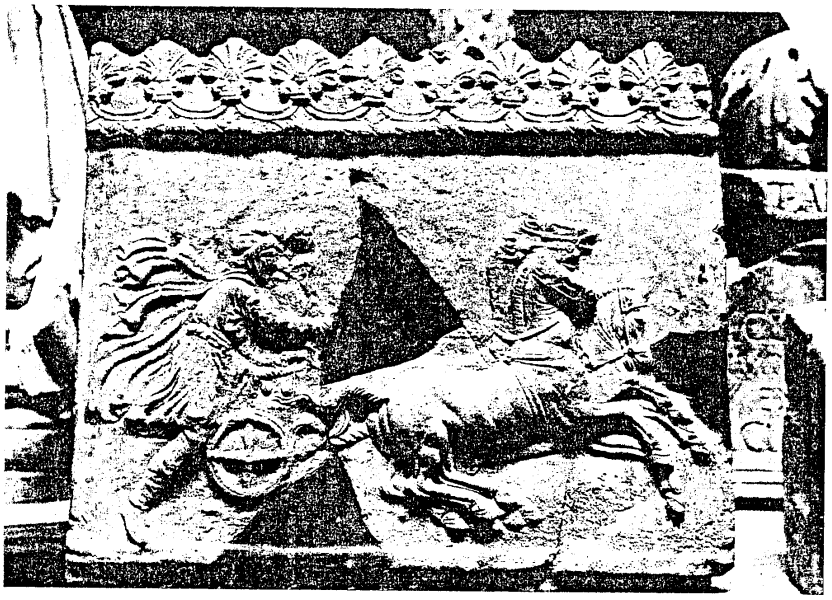
550 B.C., and may have been a model for the Capitoline Temple.[42]

A recent reconstruction of the Capitoline Temple, based on the excavations of the 1990s, suggests the temple's podium extended about 12 meters further to the northwest than previously believed and that there were two rooms immediately behind the cella. They would have been entered by access doors at the end of each side aisle.[43] Such an extension of the temple toward the northwest would have placed it precariously over the edge of the hill, however, and its dimensions would not have corresponded at all to the description provided by Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Also, there are no precedents or subsequent examples in Roman architecture of a temple plan type with five cella rooms.

The roof of the Capitoline Temple is typically represented in drawings and models as a gable roof with a pediment at the front and rear. Some scholars suggest it may have had a pediment only on the front, with a hipped roof at the back.[44] Some argue such a system was more appropriate to a *peripteros sine postico* plan.[45] It could have been either in the original building, although it no doubt had gables at both ends in its final reconstruction in the first century A.D.

The decoration of the Capitoline Temple included fictile revetments on the pediment, standing figures and acroteria on the roof, and a four-horse chariot at the peak of the gable. Gjerstad's reconstruction suggested that figural friezes on the horizontal and raking cornices were composed of repetitive scenes of soldiers and horse-drawn chariots.[46] Those in the horizontal cornices were shown walking, and those in the raking cornices were shown running (Figs. 21 and 22). An analysis of Gjerstad's reconstruction of this decoration reveals a further problem with his dimensions of the overall plan, however. He suggested that the individual panels of these revetments measured 6 to 7 Roman feet wide, but this is again something that was technologically impossible at the time. In fact, all of the existing fragments that can be used as comparative examples measure only 1 to 1.5 Roman feet (Fig. 23). There is no evidence whatsoever of terra-cotta panels 6 Roman feet long on this or any other Etruscan temple.[47] We have to consider also the size of the four-horse chariot on top of the temple, which in Gjerstad's reconstruction would have been about 3.6 meters high, a size virtually inconceivable in terra-cotta. At most, it would have been about half this size.

In summary, the reconstruction of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus proposed here differs from the previously accepted version in two important ways: its size and the character of its podium. The dimensions of the temple structure – which should be understood



22. Figural frieze with racing chariots as on the raking cornices of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, sixth century B.C., terra-cotta, Antiquarium, Rome. Photo: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome, 941.

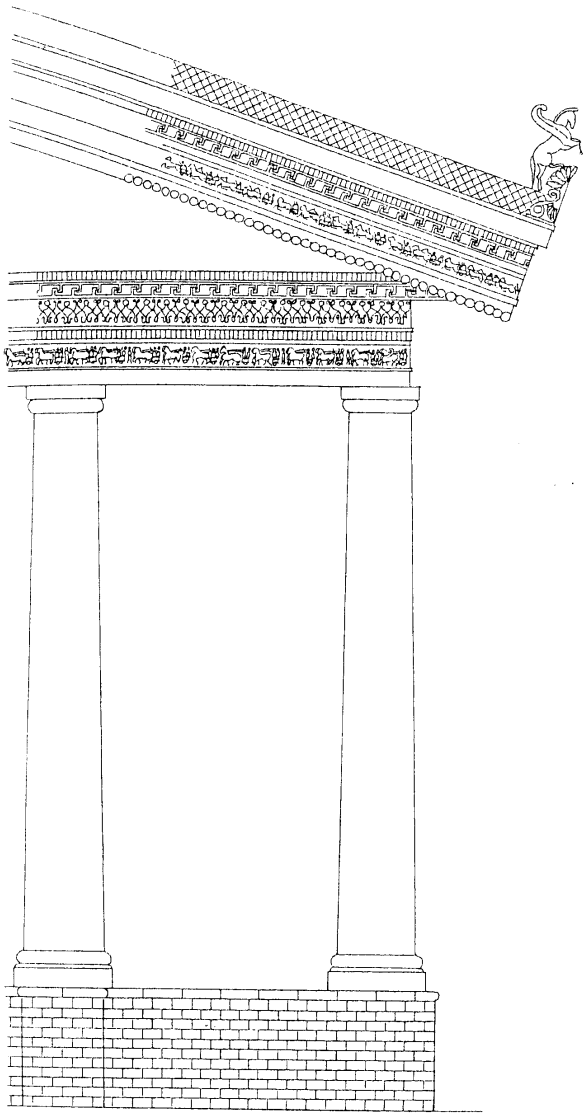
as a shrine on top of a terraced podium – were about 34 meters wide by 38.30 meters long. The dimensions of 53.50 by 62 meters, identified by Lanciani and Paribeni, were those of the lowest terrace level alone. Although the overall form of the temple in this reconstruction is similar to Gjerstad's, it is about one-third smaller in size, with interaxial dimensions of 5.90 and 7.40 meters rather than 9.50 and 12 meters. The module of its ornamental revetments was 1 to 1.5 Roman feet compared with Gjerstad's 6 to 7 Roman feet. Most importantly, the configuration of the platform is different, this one proposing a three-stepped composition with several sets of connecting stairs, a strong contrast to Gjerstad's single-level, quadrangular form.

Architecture, Politics, and Precedent

This proposed reconstruction, although diminishing the size of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, is not intended to lessen its importance in the history of Rome's architectural development or social and religious life. Rather, it is to make it more apparent. A temple of smaller dimensions, comparable to the tradition of temple architecture that developed in the following centuries, makes it a far more convincing precedent or source of influence for that tradition. The authority of its deities was paralleled by the authority of the temple structure as a source for later architectural design.

Its importance was also derived from the superb nature of its setting. As the principal focus of a significant urban ensemble, the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus was in many ways equal to the Parthenon in Athens. Like the Greek temple, the final version of which was built more than fifty years later, the Capitoline Temple was prominently placed on a rocky plateau in the center of the city; it loomed over its main commercial spaces – the Forum Romanum, Forum Holitorium, and Forum Boarium – and it served as the final destination of triumphal processions that wound their way along the Via Sacra, Rome's equivalent of the Panathenaic Way.

Power and its association with religious and mythic symbols permeate virtually every society.[48] Visual symbols, whether on currency, art, or architecture, often combine religion and the historical and mythic past to bolster the power and prestige of a given regime and to elicit powerful responses within the community it rules. The power of a symbol becomes especially significant when its normal status or traditional connotation is threatened with change, something that was especially true in republican and imperial Rome when regimes changed or religious belief was transformed.[49]



23. Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, partial reconstruction of elevation with terra-cotta revetments shown in 18-inch modules. Drawing: John W. Stamper adapted from Einar Gjerstad, *Early Rome: Fortification, Domestic Architecture, Sanctuaries, Stratigraphic Excavations*, vol. 3 (1960), fig. 118.

As such, the power of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus as a symbol became especially significant in periods of change in Rome's political scene.

A society is held together by its internal agreement about the sacredness of certain fundamental symbols, of which the Capitoline Temple was among the most important. In an inchoate, dimly perceived manner, the central authority of a society is acknowledged to be the avenue of communication with the realm of sacred values.[50] Within Roman society, in its transition from an Etruscan monarchy to a republic, the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus enjoyed almost universal recognition as the embodiment of cultural values, religious ceremony, and political authority. It heightened the moral and civic sensibility of Roman society, providing it with a symbol permeated with those values, ceremony, and authority. Successive rituals and ceremonies would repeatedly bring Roman society or sectors of it into contact with this sacred vessel of cultural and religious values, and its recalling of the city's founding.[51]

Because of its size, prominent location, political symbolism, and dedication to the important deities Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, it is clear that the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus had a significant influence on the design of subsequent temples in Rome and its surroundings during both the republican and imperial periods.[52] This fact lends to the study of Roman architecture a certain degree of unity that it has never before possessed. Rather than the city's earliest and most important temple being thought of as an isolated giant with no direct formal relationship to what came after, it should instead be considered in relation to the design of subsequent temples. Rather than being three times as large as all other known Etruscan temples, the reconstruction presented here suggests it was only twice as large; rather than being almost twice the size of the Temple of Mars Ultor or the Pantheon, it was virtually the same size. It was a building later architects directly emulated, transforming it from six columns across to eight, from *araeostyle* to *pycnostyle*, and from three cella rooms to one. It was the temple that possessed the most authority, the one most directly related to the city's founding. Its importance cannot be underestimated as a symbol of Rome's political and religious aspirations, its vision of grandeur and power.