

# A new Republican temple on the *via Appia*, at the borders of Rome's urban space

Rachele Dubbini

## The excavation of 1970 and the available archival documentation

On May 27, 1970, during construction of the Caffarella sewer system which was to serve new districts in the sprawling suburbs of Rome, the Municipality of Rome alerted the Soprintendenza to the discovery of some ancient structures near the *via Appia*.<sup>1</sup> The area affected by the passage of the sewer system lies just beyond the Almo river, between the *Appia*'s first and second mile, in a place where, at the end of the 19th c., P. Cartoni built a rather large barn for his estate (*vigna*).<sup>2</sup> On the W side of the road, excavators discovered a concrete pedestal reveted with tuff blocks that was interpreted as the foundation of a sepulchral monument, the *ruderatio* of the *via Appia*, and a secondary paved road leading southeast, as published by L. Spera (see fig. 1, trench A).<sup>3</sup> However, the excavations on the E side of the *via Appia* have never been published. The aim of this paper is to describe and interpret the remarkable discovery. My examination of documentation stored in the archives of the Soprintendenza identified photographs and sketches of the 1970 excavation, providing evidence for the existence of a Republican-era monumental architectural complex situated behind the barn of Vigna Cartoni. Since it was impossible unfortunately to locate any written reports, the research was based mostly on illustrations and administrative documents, but a fairly accurate history of the excavation could be reconstructed based on the latter.

Trench A, opened on the W side of the *via Appia*, was to be continued on its E side. Thus Trench B was opened behind the old barn (see figs. 1-2) and during its excavation some archaeological remains caught the excavators' attention. The reports of the Municipality of Rome show that on May 26, 1970, three tombs as well as some blocks and walls in *opus incertum* and *caementicium* were discovered.<sup>4</sup> The tombs are otherwise undocumented, while the blocks may be part of what the excavators called "Structure 1" and the wall in *opus incertum* and *caementicium* may be part of "wall 2". The mechanical digger was then shifted alongside this wall and another trench (C) was opened, probably with the aim of uncovering it. As the digger moved south, it uncovered the main part of wall 2. The

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### \* General abbreviations:

ACap	Archivio Storico Capitolino.
ArchX RZ	Archivio X Ripartizione del Comune di Roma, Rapporti di Zona.
ArchX RT	Archivio X Ripartizione del Comune di Roma, Registro dei Trovamenti.
Arch SBBAR	Archivio Corrente Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Roma.
ArchSt SBBAR	Archivio Storico Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Roma.
Carta	Comune di Roma, X Ripartizione, <i>Carta archeologica monumentale e paesistica del suburbio e dell'agro romano. Parco dell'Appia Antica</i> , foglio 24 (Rome 1988).

1 Arch SBBAR T.XI./401.002.1, prot. 2085 29.05.1970.

2 ACap, t. 54, prot. 45029 anno 1886. See also Carta n. 371.

3 L. Spera, *Il paesaggio suburbano di Roma dall'Antichità al Medioevo. Il comprensorio tra le vie Latina e Ardeatina dalle Mura Aureliane al III miglio* (Rome 1999) 321-22. See also ArchX, RZ, REG 15, p. 376, 16.9.1970; ArchX, RT, vol. XIII, p. 137, 16.9.1970.

4 ArchX, RZ, REG 74, p. 271, 26.5.1970; ArchX, RT, vol. XIII, p. 135, 29.05.1970. The letter was sent immediately after this discovery.

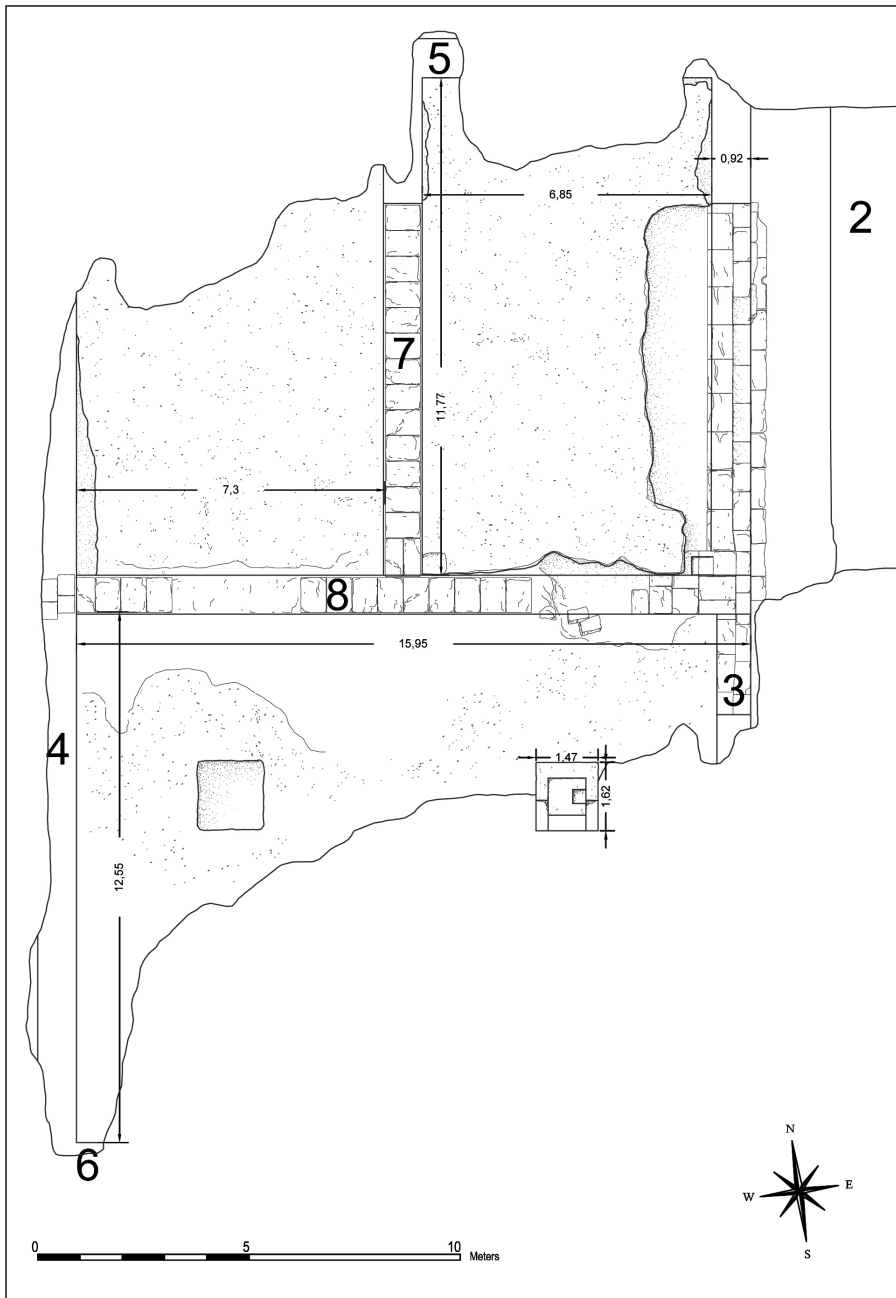


Fig. 2. Reconstruction of the ancient structures as they may have appeared following the excavation, including the probable borders of the excavation, drawn by G. Monastero (ARS S.r.l.s.).

excavations were then extended west, revealing the uppermost part of the structure's E wall (wall 3), part of the inner floor bedding of the E chamber, and the foundations of the wall.<sup>5</sup> On August 5, 1970, sketches were made of the different sections of these remains. On

<sup>5</sup> A brief description of these remains may be found in a letter of June 4, 1970, sent by G. Caretoni to the Municipality of Rome, with the recommendation to proceed carefully (Arch SSBAR T.XI./401.002.1, prot. 2171, 04.06.1970).

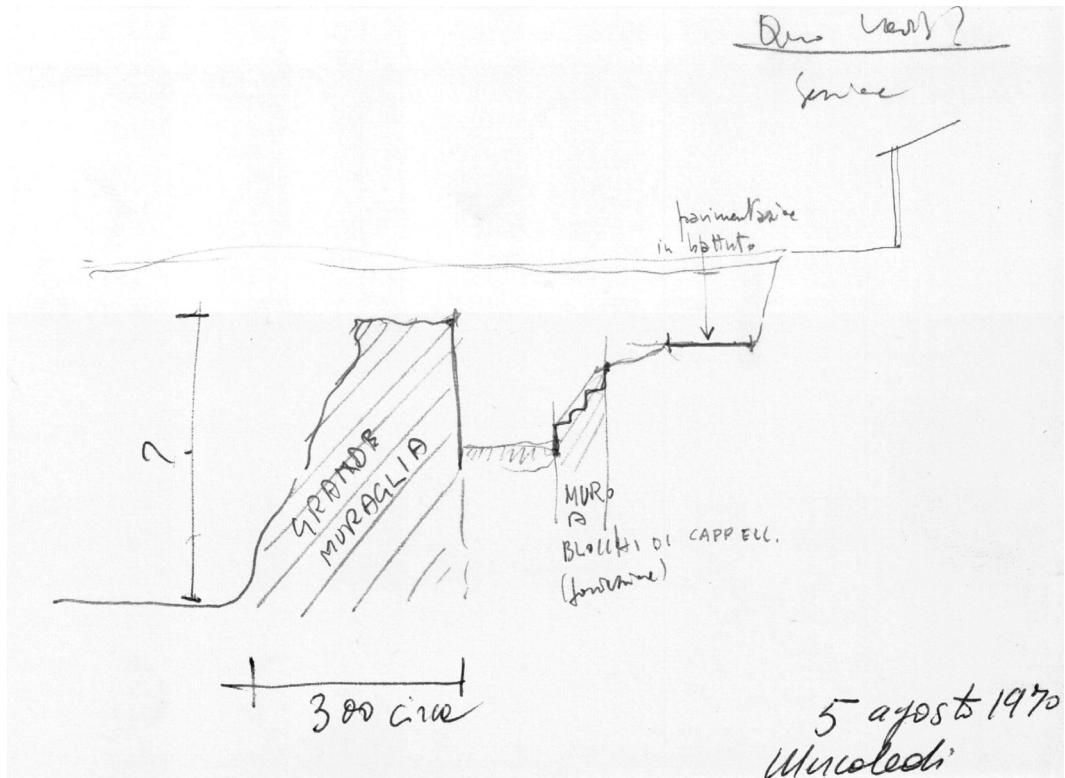


Fig. 3. Sketch of the structures found at the beginning of trench C. “Grande muraglia” = wall 2; “Muro a blocchi di cappellaccio (fondazione)” = wall 3, “pavimentazione in battuto” = inner floor bedding of the E chamber (courtesy Soprintendenza).

August 11, the excavation was temporarily suspended (fig. 3).<sup>6</sup> Over the following weeks, the digger excavated the rest of the central part of the building, probably moving from east to west, destroying walls 7 and 8 and uncovering the paintings on walls 3, 4, 5 and 7. By the end of August, trench C had been emptied and the centre of it was cleared down to the floor bedding (fig. 4 in colour). On August 28, the excavators were able to measure the entire complex, as documented by the many sketches (figs. 5-6). It is not clear what happened over the subsequent weeks, but it is likely that the Superintendency suspended excavations again or was unable to decide how to proceed, even as the local inhabitants complained and asked the authorities to finish the works as soon as possible.<sup>7</sup> In this atmosphere of impatience, the Superintendent G. Caretoni was forced to authorize construction of the sewer, which entailed cutting through the ancient structures.<sup>8</sup> It is difficult to explain the archaeologists’ lukewarm reaction (and especially that of a scholar of Caretoni’s caliber) to the discovery of a monumental Republican building, which, moreover, had frescoed walls. At any rate, the modern sewer system was built, the trenches were filled in again, and for more than 40 years the memory of this discovery was lost beneath the earth and in the archives.

6 Arch SSBAR T.XI./401.002.1, prot. 3125, 11.08.1970.

7 Arch SSBAR T.XI./401.002.1, prot. 3402, 11.09.1970 and prot. 3686, 01.10.1970. See also *Il Messaggero*, September 13, 1970, p. 7.

8 Arch SSBAR T.XI./401.002.1, prot. 3402, 21.09.1970 and prot. 3890, 16.10.1970.

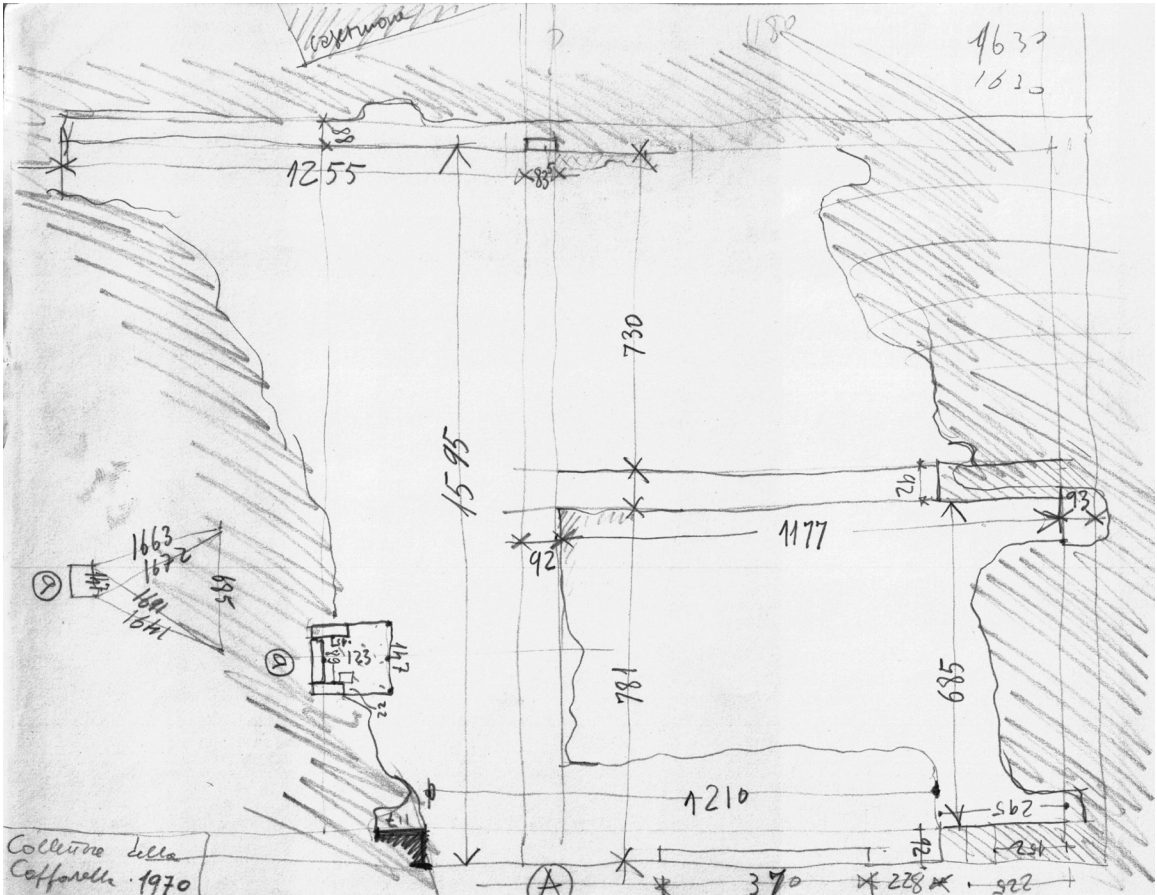


Fig. 5. Sketch of the structures found at the end of August 1970, with measurements (courtesy Soprintendenza).

These introductory remarks underline the limitations imposed upon us. Nevertheless, the numerous sketches and images preserved in the archives are of strategic value.<sup>9</sup> Careful examination of this documentation and a critical assessment of the visible remains allow for a reasonable reconstruction of the structures and a plausible interpretation of the building.

### Description of the structural remains

I focus now on the archaeological evidence relating to the plan of the structure as it emerges from the drawings made in 1970 of the extant remains uncovered then (figs. 3 and 5). These drawings, while not the result of a full mapping of the complex, provide the basis for reconstructing the ground plan as well as the elevation to a certain degree. I will describe the visible structures wall by wall, beginning with the E side (fig. 2).

A stretch c.16.5 m long of the E side (wall 3) is still visible although this wall has only been preserved at the extremities (the central section was demolished by the digger) (fig. 6). Thus the remaining S part of wall 3 is not easily visible, but at least 3 courses (all of roughly the same height of c.40 cm, for a total height c.1.5 m) remain at the N end. The visible blocks were placed as headers. Below the floor level, at least 4 other courses were preserved, forming a kind of staircase. The first two courses below the pavement had a vertical facing; the next course of stretchers projected c.0.4 m. The drawings seem to indicate that at least one more lower course with vertical facings may have existed, but we do not

<sup>9</sup> As it is impossible to establish how reliable this documentation is, we must consider it correct.

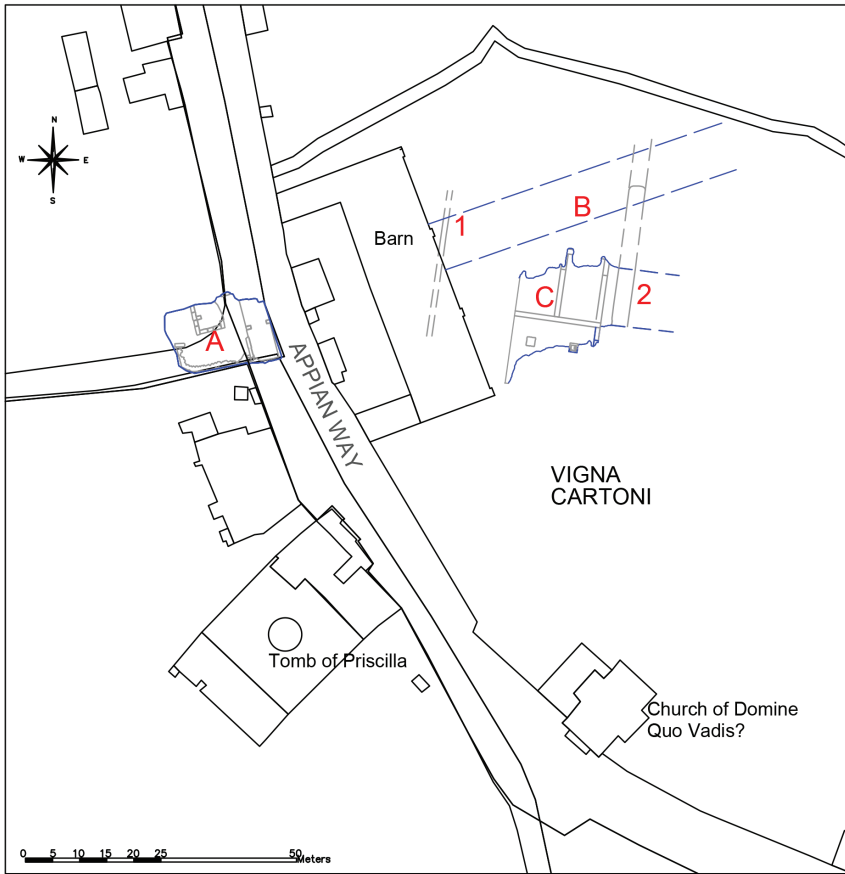


Fig. 1. Vigna Cartoni with location of the trenches dug in 1970, reconstructed by R. Dubbini and L. Braccalenti (ARS S.r.l.s.).

Fig. 4. Perspective reconstruction of the excavation (trench C) seen from the east, drawn by V. Malakuczi (ARS S.r.l.s.).



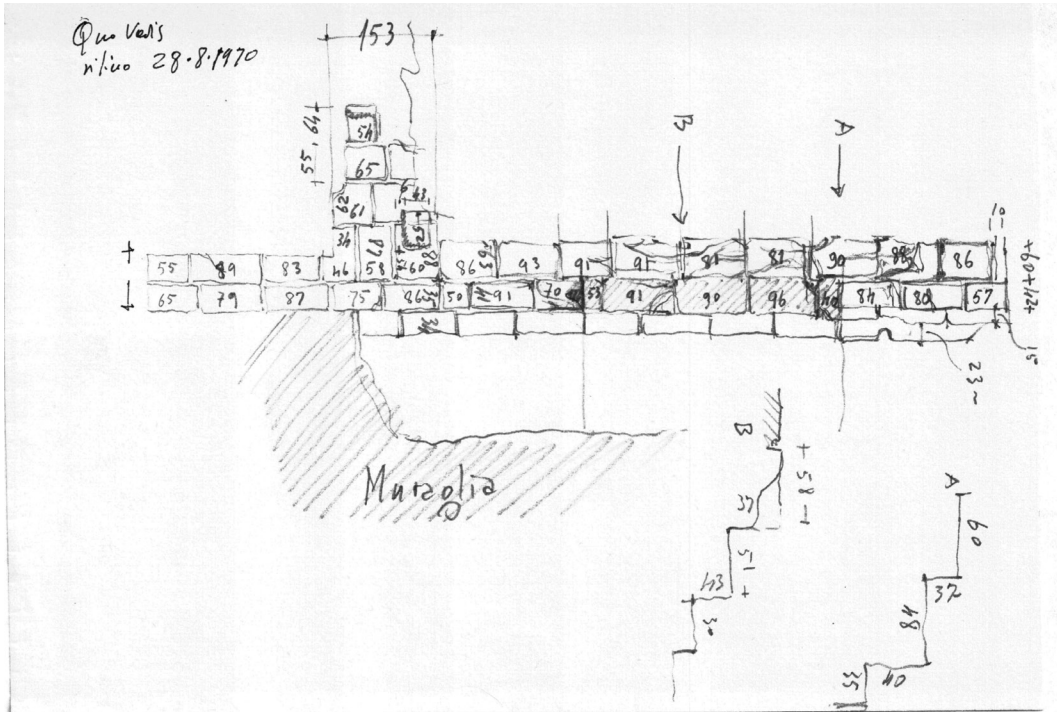


Fig. 6. Sketch of the core of wall 3, with two cross-sections (A and B). “Muraglia” = wall 2 (courtesy Soprintendenza).



Fig. 7. Wall 3 viewed from the north; on the left side is visible part of wall 2; in the background, the eastern stone chest (courtesy Soprintendenza).

know how far it projects (figs. 3 and 6).<sup>10</sup>

The W side (wall 4) was not destroyed by the digger and was preserved to a height varying between 20 and 120 cm. The blocks were placed as headers, as seen in front of the (now disappeared) transverse wall 8 which runs from this point to the E side (fig. 8). From wall 8 stretching south, the W side was visible for a length of 12.55 m. At its S end it intersects (possibly at a right angle) with wall 6, of which at least two blocks are visible (fig. 9). This part was not excavated and no further information is available about the S wall.

On the N side, the E–W wall 5 is visible at the N corner of the complex; at a point c.7 m towards the west it is intersected at a right angle by another N–S wall (wall 7). Three courses of this

<sup>10</sup> It is impossible to reconstruct the exact height of this wall since the sketches offer only the measurements of the first three courses (c.1.4 m).



Fig. 8. Wall 4 viewed from the north, showing floor beddings of the atrium and W chamber (courtesy Soprintendenza).

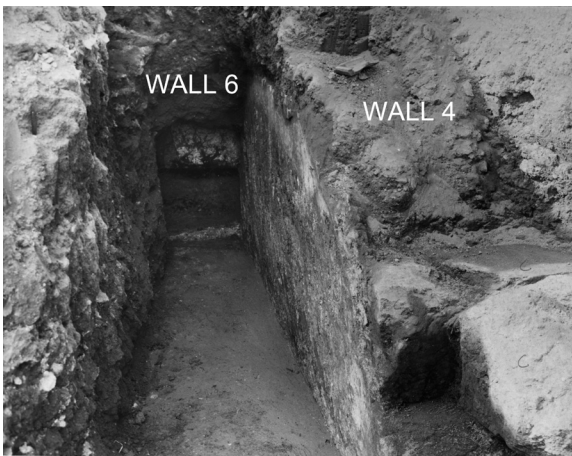


Fig. 9. Intersection between walls 4 and 6, viewed from the north. The letter "C", annotated by the excavators, indicates blocks made of *cappellaccio* tuff (courtesy Soprintendenza).



Fig. 10. The E chamber viewed from the south. The letters "C", annotated by the excavators, indicate blocks made of *cappellaccio* tuff (courtesy Soprintendenza).



Fig. 11. View of the complex from its NE corner (courtesy Soprintendenza).

wall were preserved at the N end, but the digger destroyed the central and S sections (fig. 10 above). Walls 7 and 8 separate the internal space of the building into two rectangular chambers and an atrium (fig. 11).

Substantial parts of the floor bedding have been preserved throughout much of the complex and primarily in the chambers, where small sections of white mosaic were preserved over a thin layer of white plaster (fig. 12). In what we will call the atrium, the surface of the floor bedding seems to have been found at a lower level, perhaps because only an uneven stratum of brownish earth over a layer of white stone chips has been preserved here (fig. 8). As the actual surface of the floor is missing, nothing is known about its original appearance. The uneven elevation of

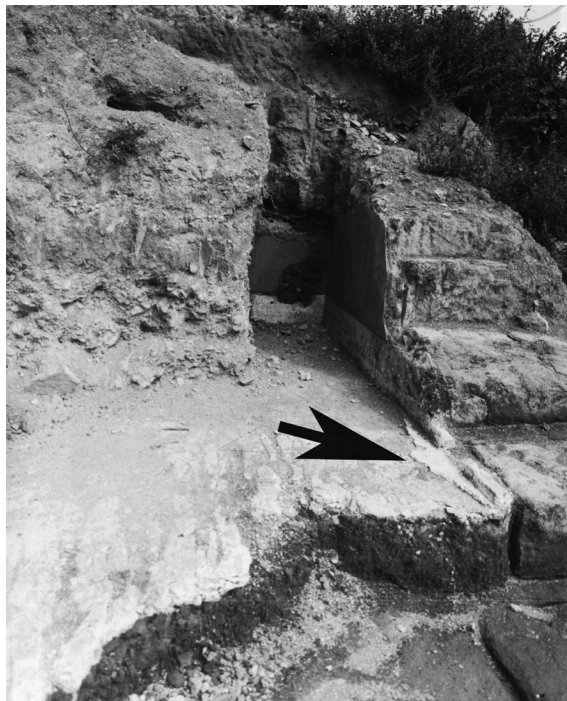


Fig. 12. NW corner of the complex (walls 3 and 5) viewed from the south. The arrow indicates the traces of white mosaic (courtesy Soprintendenza).



the floor surfaces is not remarkable since the different parts of the complex may have been connected by one or more steps.

The walls' exterior must have been faced with white or painted plaster, still visible on the W side (fig. 13). Inside, the chamber's walls were covered with paintings and both were decorated with a white dado *c.*30 cm high, above which red paint was still visible in 1970 (figs. 8 and 14). The atrium's walls are covered by at least three different layers of plaster which preserve faint traces of painting (fig. 15): the first, a reddish colour, can still be seen, the second layer shows a red panel(?) above a white dado, while on the third some blue-gray decoration is visible, but this fragment, which seems to belong to the latest painted phase, is too small to interpret. The second layer, which seems to have the same decoration as the chambers, does not resemble any particular style since coloured walls above a simple dado are typical of several styles. Since no traces of stucco decoration (typical of the Pompeian First Style) are present, the second layer may belong to a renovation.<sup>11</sup> The older decoration documented in the atrium possibly belongs to the First Style. It seems unlikely that architectural, figural or floral motifs were originally applied with the second plaster layer as there are no remaining traces of such motifs in the chambers. The decorative system of the second plaster is similar to that of the Second Style but the decoration is simplified. Another possibility is that the paintings belong to the "Zone Style", characterized by the horizontal separation of the wall into a number of generally unembellished zones. This was long the prevailing



Fig. 13. Wall 4 viewed from the southwest (courtesy Soprintendenza).

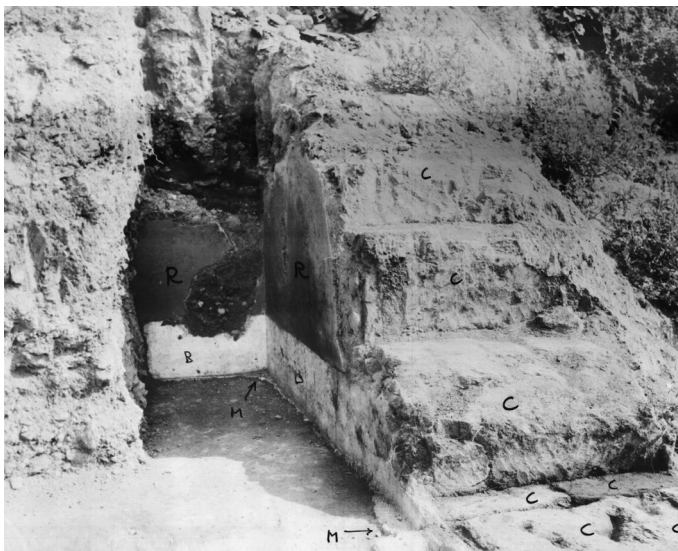


Fig. 14. NW corner of the complex (walls 3 and 5) viewed from the south. The letters "C", annotated by the excavators, indicate blocks made of *cappellaccio* tuff. "M" = presence of white mosaic; "B" and "R" = white and red colours of the plaster (courtesy Soprintendenza).

11 See A. Laidlaw, *The First Style in Pompeii* (Rome 1985) and *infra* n.41.



Fig. 15. Detail of wall 4 showing the different layers of plaster, viewed from the east (courtesy Soprintendenza).

type of wall decoration in the Mediterranean region and throughout the Hellenistic period co-existing with the First Style.<sup>12</sup> The composition of our decoration — a wide unembellished orthostat zone above a narrow plinth — seems very similar to Hellenistic paintings documented in Sicily and S Italy.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, a date for the painting in the Imperial period cannot be ruled out when most of the main zone and the whole of the upper zone are missing.<sup>14</sup>

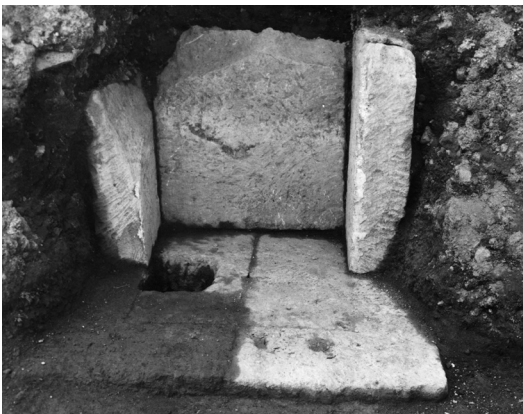


Fig. 16. Stone chest, viewed from the north (courtesy Soprintendenza).

An interesting feature is a square (c.1.47 x 1.62 m) chest of *peperino* tuff slabs set in front of the E chamber (fig. 16). The slabs (0.88 m high, 0.37 m wide) are preserved to a maximum height of 0.95 m; the bottom of the chest is also formed by a stone slab, with a rectangular hole (0.31 x 0.33 m, 0.20 m deep) on its E side. There may have been another stone chest in front of the W chamber (removed by a robber trench in 1970).<sup>15</sup>

Outside the building, located c.1.90 m from and running parallel to its E side, there is a concrete wall with *opus incertum* facing (“wall 2” in figs. 2, 7, 10 and 17-18;

12 P. Guldager Bilde, “The international style: aspects of Pompeian First Style and its eastern equivalents,” *ActaHyp* 5 (1993) 155-57.

13 Ibid. 163, fig. 5; G. F. La Torre, “Origine e sviluppo dei sistemi di decorazione parietale nella Sicilia ellenistica,” in id. and M. Torelli (edd.), *Pittura ellenistica in Italia e in Sicilia: linguaggi e tradizioni* (Rome 2011) 255-77; M. Torelli, “Dalla tradizione ‘nazionale’ al Primo Stile,” *ibid.* 401-13.

14 As in the case of the Sanctuary of Hercules at Alba Fucens, where some painting decoration similar to that of the Second Style remains on the wall of the portico around the *cella* but dates to the first half of the 2nd c. A.D.: L. Reekmans, “Peintures murales du IIe siècle après J.-C. à Alba Fucens,” *Antidoron W. Peremans sexagenario ab alumnis oblatum* (Louvain 1968) 201-18. In the Imperial era, the diminished status of paintings inside public buildings and even houses caused a reduction in the variety of decorative schemes in wall-paintings: E. M. Moormann, *Divine interiors. Mural paintings in Greek and Roman sanctuaries* (Amsterdam 2011) 204.

15 Since this trench is clearly visible in the pictures taken in 1970 (fig. 11), that this second chest was destroyed at that time cannot be ruled out.



Fig. 17. Structures found at the beginning of trench C, viewed from the south. From the right are visible wall 2, wall 3, and the inner floor bedding of the E chamber (courtesy Soprintendenza).



Fig. 18. Trench A, viewed from the east. On the left is visible part of wall 2; in the background are scattered blocks from wall 1; at the right corner are traces of a row of blocks (courtesy Soprintendenza).

“grande muraglia” in fig. 3).<sup>16</sup> The preserved section is a maximum *c.*3 m wide at the base; it seems to become narrower towards the top. The mechanical digger was responsible for cutting the wall to the east, as a result of which it now slopes outwards. A stretch *c.*12 m long was preserved but it originally extended south as well as north, since it appears in views of trench B (fig. 18). Presumably it dates later than 200 B.C. because concrete was used.<sup>17</sup>

16 See *supra* n.4.

17 L. C. Lancaster and R. B. Ulrich, “Materials and techniques,” in R. B. Ulrich and C. K. Quenemoen

Other blocks similar to those of the building complex are seen near the barn. Some blocks are scattered around but others, towards the north, are definitely *in situ* and at least form a row (fig. 18). This seems to be the E facing of a wall running NE–SW (wall 1); presumably it was truncated during construction of the barn at the end of the 19th c., before being further destroyed by the excavations of 1970.

Notes written on the photographs indicate that all the walls of the complex were constructed using *cappellaccio* (i.e., “tufo del Palatino”) blocks (fig. 10). This kind of tuff was typically used in Roman architecture of the Archaic period; above ground level it was normally not much used beyond the start of the 4th c. B.C. After the 4th c., *tufo del Palatino* continued in use mainly for foundations, wells, aqueducts and other damp places, or to build private or small buildings, whereas for public monuments and temples Fidenae or Grotta Oscura tuff were preferred.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, *tufo del Palatino*, an inferior building material that can absorb humidity like no other stone, might have been advantageous for this particular location in the Almo valley. Here, irregular-sized blocks (0.3–0.5 m high, 0.4–0.6 m wide, 0.8–0.9 m long), quite unlike the sizes of most *tufo del Palatino* blocks 6th–5th-c., were used.<sup>19</sup>

The structure’s foundation level is quite deep with respect to the modern ground level (the interior floor bedding lies at a depth of 3 m); it was also deeper than the *via Appia*, here found at a depth of c.1.5 m (fig. 4, trench A).<sup>20</sup> Since the stretch of the *via Appia* in front of the complex in trench A presents a *crepis* of tuff, it is possible that we are dealing with its Republican paving. If we accept such a dating and assume that all the ashlar courses of the complex were meant to sit above ground level, the levels of the building and of the street are significantly mismatched.<sup>21</sup> Yet the first Republican paving could have been deeper, considering the fact that the natural depression must have been subject to floods and alluviation then as now; in other words, periodically it would have been necessary to heighten the street level. Thus it is quite possible that the building was erected in conjunction with the first paving of the *via Appia* (312 B.C.), if not earlier.

### Reconstructing the plan and interpretation

The plan of the building can be reconstructed based on the documentation described above (figs. 2 and 19a–b). The absence of the continuation of walls 5 and 8, as well as

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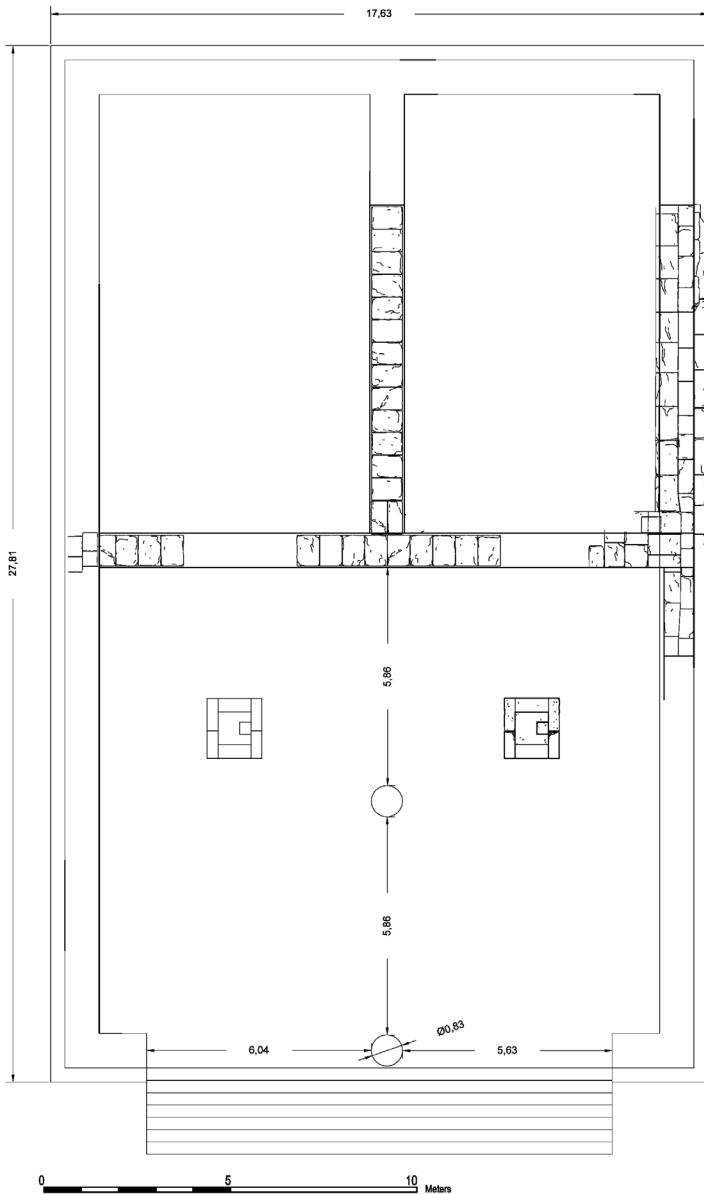
(edd.), *A companion to Roman architecture* (Chichester 2014) 160 and 165.

18 G. Lugli, *La tecnica edilizia romana* (Rome 1957) 184, 194 and 245–53; G. Cifani, *Architettura romana arcaica* (Rome 2008) 221–22; Lancaster and Ulrich *ibid.* 160. The *specus* of the *Aqua Appia* of 312 B.C., for example, was constructed in *tufo del Palatino* (Cifani *ibid.* 222).

19 Lugli *ibid.* 222; Lancaster and Ulrich *ibid.* 164–65.

20 The *ruderatio* of the *Via Appia*, which has been found in front of the barn, emerged from beneath 1.6 m of earth (Spera [supra n.3] 322), while in front of the *Domine Quo Vadis?* church the ancient street reaches a depth of 0.95 m heading north towards the barn: M. Marcelli, “L’*Appia* sparita: testimonianze archeologiche e vicende moderne della Regina Viarum fra porta San Sebastiano e il sepolcro di Cecilia Metella,” *Boll. Unione Storia ed Arte* 8 (2013) 27–28. More generally, see R. Dubbini, *Il paesaggio della via Appia ai confini dell’Urbs. La valle dell’Almone in età antica* (Bari 2015) 46–48.

21 Note also that the ancient ground level reached a depth of at least 5 m (see below and fig. 3). For the dating of the Republican phases of the *Via Appia*, see L. Quilici, “Il rettilineo della *via Appia* tra Roma e Terracina. La tecnica costruttiva,” in S. Quilici Gigli (ed.), *La via Appia: decimo incontro di studio del Comitato per l’Archeologia Laziale* (Rome 1990) 51; for the excavation of trench A, see Spera (supra n.3) 321–22 and n.3.



the presence of the concrete wall 2 on the E side of the complex, indicates that wall 3 was the E limit of the structure (fig. 17). On the opposite side, wall 4 can reasonably be considered its W limit. The irregular borders of the excavation illustrate that the excavators searched deliberately for the N and S limits of the complex, which are walls 5 and 6, respectively.<sup>22</sup> On this basis, the width of the building can be calculated as *c.*16.87 m and the length as *c.*27.1 m.<sup>23</sup>

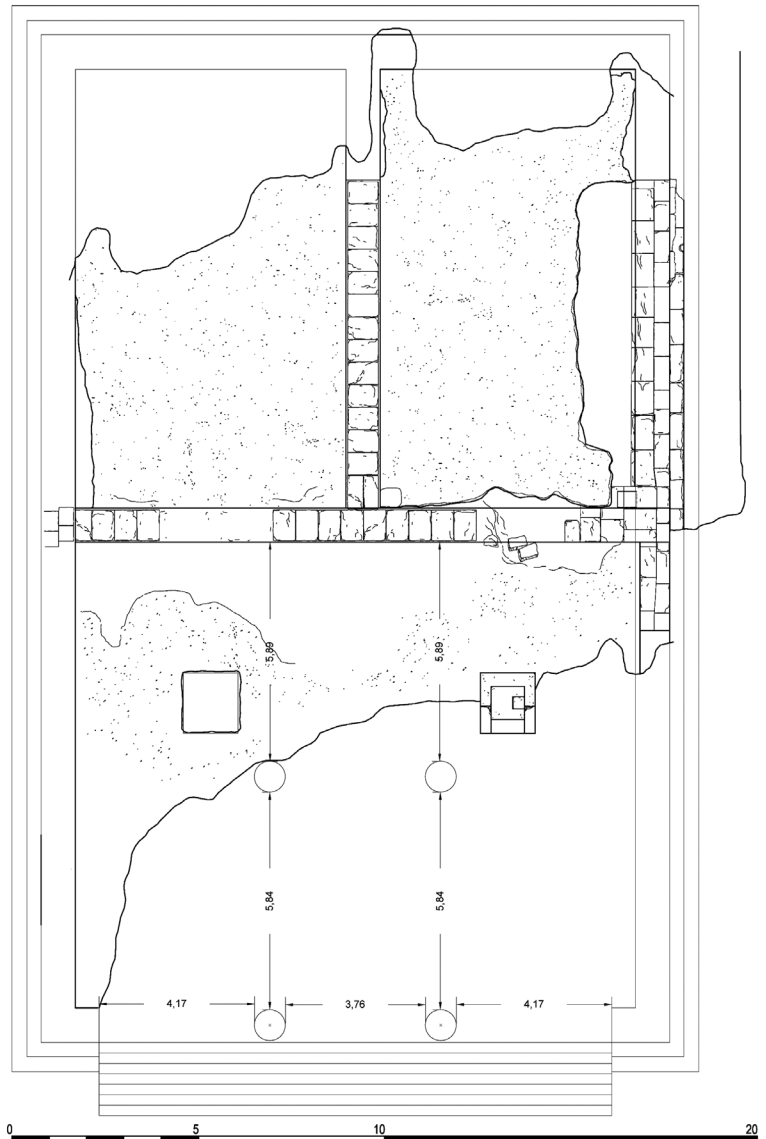
Its significant size as well as the use of massive tuff blocks for the walls above ground indicate that this is a public edifice.<sup>24</sup> In view of the overall planning, with two chambers opening onto an atrium, we can restore a temple with two *cellae*, the width of the E one being *c.*45 cm shorter than the W one.<sup>25</sup> After all, the presence of a kind of staircase at foundation level on the E side could hardly be explained if

Figs. 19a-b. Hypothetical reconstructions of the groundplan of the complex, drawn by G. Monastero (ARS S.r.l.s.).

- 22 This impression is confirmed by the words of Carettoni, who requested investigation of the extent of the building (Arch SSBAR T.XI./401.002.1, prot. 3402, 21.09.1970, and prot. 3890, 16.10.1970).
- 23 Considering the length of the building and the width of the walls (*c.*83 cm without plaster), one may presume that the foot used was the more ancient Oscan/Italic of 27.2 or 27.5 cm (Lugli [supra n.18] 189; Cifani [supra n.18] 239-40). The walls of temple C at Marzabotto have the same width of 3 Oscan/Italic feet: D. Vitali, "L'acropoli di Marzabotto," in G. Colonna (ed.), *Santuari d'Etruria* (exh. cat.; Arezzo 1985) 91.
- 24 Cifani (supra n.18) 245.
- 25 Such a small disparity should not strike us as unusual, considering also that during measurement of the W *cella* the thickness of the missing plaster was probably not allowed for, so the actual difference between the two chambers may be *c.*35 cm. In any case, the two *cellae* of shrine *beta* at Pyrgi also have different sizes, probably for cultic reasons: B. Beelli Marchesini, "Le linee di sviluppo topografico del santuario meridionale," in M. P. Baglione and M. D. Gentili (edd.), *Riflessioni su Pyrgi. Scavi e ricerche nelle aree del santuario* (Rome 2013) 18.

the foundation was serving merely as a substructure. It seems that it is a podium with its outermost courses staggered in a kind of *crepidoma*. Its steps could have supported moulded blocks presumably in a more precious stone than *tufo del Palatino*.

The building's sacred character is assured by the stone chests in front of the *cellae*. Their position on axis with the entrances can be explained according to the logic of ritual. Similar structures made of tuff stone and constructed above ground were used as containers for votive offerings in Bolsena's sanctuary of Pozzarello; they have also been documented at the *Lapis Niger*.<sup>26</sup> We cannot rule out the possibility that the chests were used as *thesauri*, intended to be accessible from above but only able to be opened with varying degrees of difficulty, even if known Italian examples consist mainly of hollow stone blocks rather than chests made of stone slabs,<sup>27</sup> but



Figs. 19b. Hypothetical reconstruction of the groundplan of the complex, drawn by G. Monastero (ARS S.r.l.s.).

26 One of the chests from Pozzarello was filled with coins, votive offerings and the remains of the stone covering: V. Acconcia, *Il santuario del Pozzarello a Bolsena (scavi Gabrici 1904)* (Rome 2000) 30-31 and 131, figs. 3 and 6-7). The chests erected next to the *Lapis Niger* are identified by F. Coarelli as "wells" (in double quotes), because he was also not sure what they really were: *Il Foro Romano: periodo arcaico* (3rd edn., Rome 1992) 126-27. The axonometric picture of G. Cirilli, in A. Capodiferro and P. Fortini (edd.), *Gli scavi di Giacomo Boni al Foro Romano* (Rome 2003) 105, fig. 11, shows that they might not have been underground. They were probably filled with votive offerings like those found above and next to the archaic altar: *ibid.* 150 pl. 43; P. Fortini, "L'area sacra del *Niger Lapis*. Nuove prospettive di ricerca," in S. Fortunelli and C. Masseria (edd.), *Ceramica attica da santuari della Grecia, della Ionia e dell'Italia* (Venosa 2009) 163-87.

27 See M. H. Crawford, "Thesauri, hoards and votive deposits," in O. de Cazanove and J. Scheid (edd.), *Sanctuaires et sources dans l'Antiquité. Les sources documentaires et leurs limites dans la*

it is probably best to interpret them as stone receptacles for votive offerings, serving the ritual purposes of their respective *cellae*.<sup>28</sup>

For the moment we can propose only a conservative reconstruction of the plan, one based on the available archaeological documentation and comparisons with two-*cella* temples. The position of the front walls is known, making the *cellae* c.11.87 m deep and the *pronaos* c.12.55 m deep. Wall 6 is evidence that the two outer walls (3 and 4) run the length of the podium. This allows the reconstruction of a deep *pronaos*, enclosed by side walls with *antae* framing a central column. Comparison to temple B at *Lucus Angitiaie*, along with an axial view of the inner part of the *cellae*, permits a reconstruction of the original façade, with one column located on the axis of wall 7 and a second one bay behind the front<sup>29</sup> (fig. 19a). The columns should have a lower diameter of 0.83 m (0.92 m including the plaster); the intercolumniation would be 5.86 m.<sup>30</sup> A single column in correspondence with the inner wall, along with the wide intercolumniations of the façade, were all formal elements necessary to allow the viewer's gaze to penetrate the temple and participate in the ritual actions.<sup>31</sup> It is also possible, however, that two columns were positioned *in antis*. This solution does not match well with the principle of the axial view, but it does find a close parallel in temple A at Sant'Omobono<sup>32</sup> (fig. 19b). Unfortunately, no fragments of columns have been found or documented. They could have been of stone, like those of other Republican temples, and able to support a wooden entablature revetted with terracottas.<sup>33</sup> The columns could have been c.5.7 m high, while the entire temple, excluding the podium, could have been c.10 m high at its apex.<sup>34</sup>

As for the podium, its top course was found at a depth of c.3.6 m, while its bottom course achieved a depth of more than 5 m, evidence that the foundation consisted of at least 4 courses (figs. 3 and 7). The top of the podium may thus be reconstructed at c.2 m above ancient ground level. This leads us to presume that a staircase existed in front of the temple, but there is no information to confirm this. There is also the question of what sort of connection existed with the *via Appia*. Traces of the *temenos* may be identified on the

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*description des lieux de culte* (Naples 2003) 69-84. Moreover, the *thesaurus* normally does not lie on the podium but in front of it.

28 See Dubbini (supra n.20) 57-59, with discussion.

29 According to Vitr. 4.7.2. See A. Campanelli, "Topografia del sacro: spazi e pratiche religiose in alcuni santuari dell'Abruzzo ellenistico," in X. Dupré Raventós, S. Ribichini and S. Verger (edd.), *Saturnia Tellus. Definizioni dello spazio consacrato in ambiente etrusco, italico, fenicio-punico, iberico e celtico* (Rome 2008) 75-86.

30 This measurement refers to the internal intercolumniation, which can be reconstructed with a high degree of certitude.

31 P. G. Warden, "Monumental embodiment. Somatic symbolism and the Tuscan temple," in M. L. Thomas and G. E. Meyers (edd.), *Monumentality in Etruscan and early Roman architecture* (Austin, TX 2012) 88-93.

32 However, temple A is larger than our building, measuring about 21 m in width, with an interaxial dimension in the central bay of c.7.5 m. The reconstruction of the façade of the double-*cella* temple under Saint Peter's church in Alba Fucens (J. Mertens, "Deux temples italiques à Alba Fucens," in id. [ed.], *Alba Fucens 2. Rapport et études* [Wetteren 1969] 7-22, fig. 10) is totally hypothetical.

33 The entablature was probably made of wood with terracotta revetments, as was normal at this period: Cifani (supra n.18) 252. Indeed, a stone entablature seems to be precluded by the deep *pronaos* with a single inner column.

34 Cf. Vitr. 4.7. This is only one hypothesis for the reconstruction: the archaeological evidence does not always fit Vitruvius's formulas.

W side in wall 1, while on the S side the façade probably opened onto a small square or a widening of the street.

Our presumed temple was based on Etrusco-Italic models, as shown by its deep *pro-naos*, high podium and evidently widely-spaced columns.<sup>35</sup> The double-*cella*, somewhat unusual in the Roman world, was inspired by Etrusco-Italic models. Examples can mainly be found in territories characterized by Mid-Italic culture;<sup>36</sup> around Rome, only the shrine at the Villa dell’ Auditorium is known.<sup>37</sup> Apart from the double-*cella* temple of Lanuvium, dating to the Archaic period, they can be dated to between the 4th and the 1st c. B.C.<sup>38</sup> The double-*cella* model also resembles the concept of twin temples, found at Rome in the sanctuary of Sant’ Omobono; in both cases two different closed sacred spaces are set on a single podium. The similarity of our building to the rebuilding of Temple A just after 396 B.C. is remarkable.<sup>39</sup> This similarity concerns not only its S-facing orientation, use of *cappellaccio* tuff, and its size (Temple A measures c.21 x 30 m), but especially its proportions (10 : 7, compared to 10 : 6 for our building) and plan with *alae* and columns *in antis*. These features usually characterize more ancient temples but they can still be found in examples of the 4th c. B.C., such as the temple at Fiesole or the “Ara della Regina” at Tarquinia.<sup>40</sup> These broad analogies suggest that both temples were erected at about the same time, as was already suggested by the depth of our structure.

Later renovations can be detected at various points. On the E side, after c.200 B.C. (to judge by its masonry), a foundation wall (2) was installed c.1.9 m in front of the podium. It is unclear whether this was merely a retaining wall or whether it marks the addition of

35 J. W. Stamper, *The architecture of Roman temples: the Republic to the Middle Empire* (Cambridge 2005) 34-48; Warden (supra n.31).

36 Mertens (supra n.32); Campanelli (supra n.29); F. R. Plebani, “Il tempio a doppia cella,” in F. Dionoso (ed.), *I templi e il forum di Villa San Silvestro. La Sabina dalla conquista romana a Vespasiano* (Rome 2009); F. Santi, “Vecchi scavi del tempio di Iuno Sospita a Lanuvio. Considerazioni sulla pianta del tempio tardo-archaico,” *ArchCl* 65 (2014) 103-38. It is uncertain whether the temple at Montorio al Vomano also really had a double *cella*: M. P. Guidobaldi, *La romanizzazione dell’ Ager Praetutianus (secoli III-I a.C.)* (Naples 1995) 250-53.

37 A. Carandini, M. T. D’Alessio and H. Di Giuseppe (edd.), *La fattoria e la villa dell’ Auditorium nel quartiere Flaminio di Roma* (Rome 2006).

38 Temple B at *Lucus Angitia* may be dated to the 4th c. B.C. (Campanelli [supra n.29] 75-86); to the 3rd c., the cases of Saint Peter’s church at Alba Fucens (Mertens [supra n.32] 13-22) and of the Villa dell’ Auditorium (Carandini, D’Alessio and Di Giuseppe *ibid.* 191-221); to the 2nd c., the case of Villa San Silvestro (Plebani [supra n.36]); to the 1st c., the temple on the Pettorino at Alba Fucens (Mertens *ibid.* 8-13) and temple A at *Lucus Angitia* (Campanelli *ibid.* 75-86). On the other hand, the double-*cella* temple at Ostia dates to the Early Imperial period, presumably in the second quarter of the 1st c. A.D. (M. Heinzelmann and A. Martin, “River port, *navalia* and harbour temple at Ostia: new results of a DAI-AAR Project,” *JRA* 15 [2002] 5-19). At the sanctuary of Pyrgi, building *beta* may be also interpreted as a double-*cella* temple (Belelli Marchesini [supra n.25]); if this is the case, we would have another instance dating back to the Archaic era (Santi [supra n.36]).

39 F. Coarelli, *Il Foro Boario: dalle origini alla fine della Repubblica* (Rome 1988) 210-19. G. Pisani Sartorio (“Fortuna et Mater Matuta, Aedes,” *LTUR* vol. 2 [Rome 1995] 283) maintains, however, that they were built at the very beginning of the Republic. See also Stamper (supra n.35) 40-44.

40 G. Colonna, “Il tempio detto Ara della Regina a Tarquinia,” in *id.* (supra n.23) 70-73; R. Sabelli, “Conservazione e valorizzazione,” in *id.* (ed.), *L’area archeologica di Fiesole. Conservazione della memoria e innovazioni per la fruizione* (Florence 2014) 129-54. Another example is the Portonaccio Temple at Veii, built originally in c.530 B.C., then rebuilt after the Roman takeover by M. Furius Camillus (Stamper *ibid.* 42).



a new monumental building, perhaps a substitute for the older one. In the first phase, the wall decoration probably belongs to the Zone Style, the restoration of which is attested by a second plaster layer still visible in the *cellae*.<sup>41</sup> The mosaic floors may also belong to this second phase, which should be later than the end of the 2nd c. B.C.;<sup>42</sup> it probably had an ornamental band of white tesserae around an *emblema*.<sup>43</sup> If one imagines that the third layer of plaster dates to the Imperial period, it would seem that this monument was not considered important enough to warrant the use of marble, as may possibly also be suggested by the simplified decoration of the *cellae*. Yet figural motifs might be located in public rooms while more austere decoration was reserved for the *cellae*, where cult statues and gifts would have attracted the main attention.<sup>44</sup> Thus it may be that this temple did not survive beyond the end of the Republic. It seems that the building was neither abandoned nor dismantled. Ancient fill layers may be identified in the sections at a general height of c.1.2 m, which coincides with the preserved height of the walls and suggests that this block of earth contains material from the building (figs. 8 and 10-11),<sup>45</sup> but we have no idea if the layers excavated in 1970 contained architectural elements from the building.<sup>46</sup> The bright colour of the painted decoration shows no traces of weathering or exposure to the elements, which may suggest that at a certain point the temple was dismantled, following which the area was raised by a massive fill, possibly because a new monumental sanctuary (attested by wall 2?) was constructed.<sup>47</sup> At any event, there is no clear evidence of renovation of the structure in the Imperial era, and its disuse by that point is likely.

### On the identification

Various indications suggest that the original complex dates back to the Middle Republican period, presumably to the 4th c. B.C. In view of the effort and resources required to quarry, transport and lay the large amount of tuff stone for the podium, walls and presumably columns, to assemble the timber used in the roofing system, and to prepare tiles,

41 It cannot be ruled out that the wall-decoration belongs to the First or early Second Style, as is quite common in sacred buildings of the Middle Republican era: Moormann (supra n.14) 49.

42 Moormann *ibid.* 47-84.

43 Similar floor decoration can be found, for example, at Cori in the temple dedicated to Castor and Pollux (F. Altenhöfer, "Die Cella des Dioskurentempels in Cori," *RömMitt* 113 [2007] 382-88, figs. 9-12 and 16), or at Rome in the 2nd-c. B.C. restoration of the Temple of Apollo in Circo (A. Viscogliosi, *Il tempio di Apollo in Circo e la formazione del linguaggio architettonico augusteo* [Rome 1996] 21-22 and 26, fig. 26).

44 Moormann (supra n.14) 71-85. See also *id.* 206: "the wall decoration of the *naos* or *cella* normally rarely contained figural motifs and when present they played a secondary role. This was the living room of the divinity who was materialized by means of the cultic image. A plain decoration fitted the austere atmosphere"; or, more generally, 204: "figural elements in the classical temple consisted of mobile works of art like statues, tripods and — hung on the walls — weapons reliefs and wooden painted panels ... During the Republican period, the wall paintings formed part of that decoration next to reliefs and architectural adornments".

45 Since in the photographs there is no visible trace of collapsed temple architectural elements in the fill, the building looks as if it was dismantled before being abandoned.

46 I searched the depots of the Superintendency in Rome for the finds from this excavation, but did not succeed in finding anything. Also keep in mind that the debris from old temples is not always left *in situ* but could be deposited in pits dug for that purpose or buried in trenches: see F. Glinister, "Sacred rubbish," in E. Bispham and C. Smith (edd.), *Religion in Archaic and Republican Rome and Italy: evidence and experience* (Edinburgh 2000) 54-70.

47 Further discussion in Dubbini (supra n.20) 57.

revetments and other decorative elements, this must have been an expensive undertaking, presumably a public initiative, in the city's suburban area.<sup>48</sup> The question of its identification is closely related to its dating. In light of the known public temples founded in Rome during the 4th c. B.C., a possible candidate is the sanctuary of Mars *in Clivo*, dedicated by T. Quinctius in 388 and vowed during the Gallic siege. Probably ordered by the *libri fatales* at the time of the Gallic invasion, it was thus a communal foundation paid for by the state.<sup>49</sup> It was located between the first and the second mile of the *via Appia*, on the left side of the road leaving Rome, c.15 stadia (c.2600-2700 m) from the city.<sup>50</sup> According to the Regionary Catalogues, the sanctuary was situated inside the first Augustan Region, that is, inside the urban space, like the Almo river which scholars suggest marked the limits of that region, basing their claim on the mention of that river almost at the end of the catalogues.<sup>51</sup> For this reason, the temple of Mars *in Clivo* has generally been sought between Porta S. Sebastiano and the river itself, an area where various architectural elements and inscriptions have been found.<sup>52</sup> In particular, next to the *via Cilicia*, on the E side of the road, monumental foundations in concrete reveted with tuff blocks have been interpreted as the remains of the original temple of Mars, even if the use of concrete contradicts an early dating for this complex.<sup>53</sup> According to these ideas, the *clivus* was identified in the same district, either in an ascending street connecting the *via Appia* to the Aventine hill or in the first suburban stretch of the *Appia* itself.<sup>54</sup>

48 A. Ziolkowski, *The temples of mid-Republican Rome and their historical and topographical context* (Rome 1992); R. Volpe, "Dalle cave della Via Tiberina alle mura repubblicane di Roma," in J. Bonetto, S. Camporeale and A. Pizzo (edd.), *Arqueología de la construcción, IV. Las canteras en el mundo antiguo* (Madrid/Mérida 2014) 61-73.

49 Ziolkowski *ibid.* 101-4 and 238; Dubbini (*supra* n.20) 37-40, with further literature. Even if we do not agree that the dedication of 388 refers to the temple of Mars *in Clivo*, its foundation took place in the first half of the 4th c., since in 350 the Roman army was convened there (Liv. 7.23.3).

50 According to *CIL* VI 10234 and Appian, *B Civ.* 3.41. See F. Coarelli, "Martis Aedes, Templum, Lucus," *LTUR Suppl.* vol. 4 (Rome 2006) 44-45; D. Manacorda, "Il clivo di Marte," in *id.* and R. Santangeli Valenzani (edd.), *Il primo miglio della via Appia a Roma* (Rome 2010) 167-77; Dubbini *ibid.* 42-43, with further literature.

51 See R. Valentini and G. Zucchetti (edd.), *Codice topografico della città di Roma*, vol. 1 (Rome 1940) 89-92; Dubbini *ibid.* 27-28, with further literature.

52 Coarelli (*supra* n.50); Manacorda (*supra* n.50); Dubbini *ibid.* 50-52, with further literature. Inscriptions with dedications to Mars do not necessarily come from this area as mentioned by Valentini and Zucchetti *ibid.* 91. The inscription *CIL* VI 478, for example, had been found in an estate next to the church of S. Sebastiano, while *CIL* VI 10549 comes from the catacombs of Pretextatus.

53 M. G. Cecchini, N. Pagliardi and L. Petrassi, "Via Appia. Cavalcavia tra via Cilicia e via Marco Polo (circ. I/IX)," *BullCom* 91 (1986) 595-601. The excavators say that they found many votives in the stratigraphy of this building, but an exhaustive description has never been published. Concerning the finding of architectural elements and monumental structures, recall that the temples of the Tempestates and Minerva (Ziolkowski [*supra* n.49] 162-64) may also have been situated here. The indication at Ovid, *Fast.* 6, 191-92, confirms that the temple should have been quite far from the Porta Capena, on the basis of the verb *prospicere* (Coarelli [*supra* n.50] 45). But it might still have been impossible to see the temple of Mars from the Porta Capena, even though we agree that it was situated before the Almo river: L. Ferrea, "Ipotesi sul tempio," in L. Ferrea (ed.), *Gli dei di terracotta. La ricomposizione del frontone da via di S. Gregorio* (exh. cat., Rome 2002) 64. For the use of concrete from the 2nd c. B.C., see *supra* n.17.

54 See, respectively, L. Spera, "Martis Clivus," in *LTUR Suppl.* vol. 4 (Rome 2006) 45-47, and Manacorda (*supra* n.50); Dubbini (*supra* n.20) 48-49, with further literature. The inscription *CIL* VI 1270 (*add.* 31576 = *ILS* 5386), which documents the levelling of the *clivus* by the senate, was

At this point we should recall the relationship of the *templum Martis* to the cult of Mars Gradivus. At least in the Republican period, as a result of the warlike nature of the god, his cult place might not overstep the edge of the settled area, at the border of the more ancient *ager Romanus* whose limits arguably coincided with the first mile ring from the city's walls.<sup>55</sup> In this area, the boundary of the settlement was defined naturally by the deep valley formed by the river Almo since the Archaic period.<sup>56</sup> It is thus possible that our Republican double-*cella* temple in the Almo valley on the opposite side of the river could be related to the cult of Mars Gradivus, situated at the limits of the inhabited space and facing out toward potential enemies. The liminal character of this area may also be indicated by the different times at which the *via Appia* was paved in the area before and just after the sanctuary of Mars, as if it marked a transition between the urban and extra-urban stretches of that road.<sup>57</sup> According to Statius (*Silv.* 5.222), the *via Appia* changed its status from the tomb of Priscilla (i.e., from the site of our temple) onwards, becoming an important extra-urban highway.<sup>58</sup>

The temple's architecture may also be significant for its identification: since the double *cella* was not a prominent type in Roman religious architecture, the decisive factor in its adoption here might have been the cult associated. The notion that the double *cella* is an adaptation of the traditional design brought about by cultic necessity is based on the story of M. Claudius Marcellus, who in 208 B.C. wished to rededicate the ancient temple of *Honos* to both *Honos* and *Virtus*, but was forced by the pontiffs to build a separate *aedes* for *Virtus*.<sup>59</sup> On this perspective, all double-*cella* temples would have housed a double cult; indeed, the temple at Alba Fucens is believed to have been dedicated to Apollo and Diana, and the one at *lucus Angitiaie* to Ceres and Venus.<sup>60</sup> Concerns regarding correct religious behavior could possibly have led to the use of a different design for certain extraordinary cults or religious matters, but the circumstances for such a situation remain unclear. In any event, if we accept the identification with the more ancient shrine of Mars *Gradivus*, a possible double cult would not be problematic since in the Regia we find a bipartition of the sacred spaces into two *sacraria* dedicated respectively to Mars and Ops Consiva.<sup>61</sup> The cult of Gradivus was probably combined with that of Nerio or Venus, a more mild-mannered presence and an alluring companion who could sway the god from his warlike aims to bring peace inside the boundaries.<sup>62</sup> The possibility that Mars was instead paired with an agrarian deity here would not be surprising, not only because the building faced the countryside, but also in light of the agrarian nature of Mars himself, a god invoked by the *Fratres Arvales* for the fertility of the fields.<sup>63</sup>

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re-founded in the 19th c. inside the Naro estate at the first mile, but it is impossible to establish whether the inscription was really *in situ*.

55 Dubbini *ibid.*

56 Dubbini *ibid.* 83-88, with further literature.

57 Liv. 10.23.12 and 10.47.4; Dubbini *ibid.* 36 with further references.

58 If we look at the plans of the *Via Appia*, it is precisely in front of Priscilla's tomb and the double-*cella* temple that the street, commonly known as the *via recta*, begins.

59 Plut., *Marc.* 28.1; Liv. 27.25.7-9; Val. Max. 1.1.8. See also Ziolkowski (supra n.49) 58-60, who interprets the word *aedes* as "cella".

60 Mertens (supra n.32); Campanelli (supra n.29) 84. See also Plebani (supra n.36) 107; Belelli Marchesini (supra n.25) 17-19; and Santi (supra n.36) 130-31.

61 Coarelli 1992 (supra n.26) 56-79. Also G. Colonna, "Acqua Acetosa Laurentina, l' *Ager Romanus Antiquus* e i santuari del I miglio," *ScAnt* 5 (1991) 216-18.

62 Dubbini (supra n.20) 74.

63 Cato, *Agr.* 141; *Carm. Arv.*

Our temporary hypothesis is that early in the 4th c. B.C. an *aedes* was located just beyond the boundary marked by the Almo river. The extraordinary flood of 54 B.C. could have brought changes to the valley, with the abandonment of the Republican temple on the riverbed and perhaps a transfer to a part of the sanctuary located slightly higher up, as those slopes between Porta San Sebastiano and the Almo river are where archaeological evidence of a later temple (the monumental foundations in concrete revetted with tuff blocks) are documented.<sup>64</sup> It is also possible, however, that the sanctuary was related to one or more funerary cults which characterized the whole area, such as Rediculus, the god of “return” (*redire*), referring not only to the “return home” of Roman soldiers but probably to the “return” of the souls of the dead.<sup>65</sup> The marshy environment of the Almo valley alongside the fertility of the surrounding fields could hint at the presence of chthonic deities. And since the building faced the countryside and presented two *cellae*, candidates could be the agrarian couples described by Varro as *maxime agricolarum duces*: Iuppiter *pater* with Tellus *terra mater*, Sol with Luna, Ceres with Liber, Robigus with Flora, Minerva with Venus and Lympha with Bonus Eventus.<sup>66</sup> For the moment, the identification with the temple of Mars is hardly certain.

### Interim conclusions

The demonstration of the existence of a temple on the river Almo adds an important element to our knowledge not only of the religious architecture of the Republican period but also of the topography of the *suburbium*, enriching discussion of the religious value of Rome’s urban boundaries.<sup>67</sup> The complex adds to the list of double-*cella* temples, a design that was quite unusual in the Roman world and one inspired by Etrusco-Italic models. The early date of the original installation, perhaps going back to the 4th c. B.C., makes the discovery that much more important. Indeed, it seems to be one of the more significant projects carried out at Rome in the Middle Republican era, whether belonging to the series of public infrastructure built at the time of Appius Claudius (including the *via Appia*) or as one of the temples dedicated after the Gallic invasion. If so, it could possibly be the temple of Mars *in Clivo*, located between the first and second mile of the *via Appia*, on the left side of the street leaving Rome. Since the sanctuary of Mars marked a liminal zone between the urban and extra-urban stretches of that road, the double-*cella* temple may have been the visually defining element of a boundary sanctuary set at the junction of two geographical areas — the Almo valley, defining the city’s limits, and the volcanic plateau of the *Colli Albani*, on which the extra-urban stretch of the road was built.<sup>68</sup> The orienta-

64 Dubbini (supra n.20) 80 and see supra n.52.

65 R. Santangeli Valenzani, “La tradizione agiografica di Pietro sull’Appia,” in Manacorda and Santangeli Valenzani (supra n.50) 99-102. The *campus* or *fanum Rediculi* was indeed located at the second mile of the *Via Appia* and, in light of the study by Santangeli Valenzani, is now considered strictly related to the succeeding cult of the *Domine Quo Vadis?*. Its orientation to the south should not exclude this possibility, since the temple seems rather to face southeast.

66 Varro, *RR* 1.1.4.

67 See A. Ziolkowski, “Frontier sanctuaries of the *Ager Romanus antiquus*: did they exist?,” *Palamedes* 4 (2009) 91-130; F. Carlà, “*Pomerium, fines* and *ager romanus*: understanding Rome’s first boundary,” *Latomus* 74 (2015) 599-630.

68 Also Ziolkowski *ibid.*; even though he raises many doubts about the existence of sacred boundaries at about the 5th mile from Rome, he acknowledges that if another sacred boundary had ever existed at Rome in addition to the *pomerium*, this “was probably the one mile belt

tion of the temple suggests that it was designed to face outwards, with the result that its façade was the first feature to be seen by those entering Rome along the *via Appia* or its predecessor.<sup>69</sup> Yet we admit that, at this point in our research, it is impossible to be certain to which divinity (or divinities) the building was dedicated. The considerations discussed above are not presumed to be exhaustive; they aim rather to formulate questions for further research. Further archaeological investigation in the form of *sondages* on the S and N sides of the structure is now necessary to document the structures in detail and supplement our knowledge.

rchldubbini@yahoo.it

Rome

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<sup>69</sup> around the city walls" (ibid. 125). See also Dubbini (supra n.20) 83-88, with further literature.  
See Vitr. 4.5.2: when temples are placed on public roads, they should be sited so that passers-by can see the image in the temple and salute the divinity. In this case the passers-by are clearly those entering Rome.