

TRANSFORMATIONEN STADTRÖMISCHER HEILIGTÜMER



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WANDERING THROUGH MODERN ROME, ONE OF THE MOST intriguing and ubiquitous impression is sacred architecture: many of the temples and sanctuaries of Roman Republican and Imperial times are still to be found in various stages of preservation – the sunken area at the Largo di Torre Argentina, the temples below the church of San Omobono, the temples that have been converted into churches, such as the temple of Portunus or the three of the Forum Holitorium. Their architectures have, to a certain extent, outlasted the religious changes through Medieval and Early Modern times and underwent changes induced by socio-political transformations and urban growth; however, many others disappeared completely, such as the temples in the Porticus Octaviae. The transformation into churches was often the most effective preservative measure.

The multifaceted transformations of sanctuaries and temple buildings in the city of Rome between late Roman Republican and Imperial times is the topic of the dissertation by Marlis Arnhold turned to a book in the series of “Contextualising the Sacred”. It deals with complicated excavations, with a times scarce evidence, with manifold categories of sources and the often scattered documentation concerning one of the most dynamic times Rome has seen. A.’s approach to a selection of sacred buildings and precincts of the *urbs Roma* is of great value for understanding the “*Sakraltopographie*” (sacred topography) of the city in a period when a new political system, the Principate, seems to have been the logical choice for a highly competitively acting elite following decades of civil war. The study, which has been conducted under the supervision of renowned experts of Roman architecture and Roman religion, Henner von Hesberg (Cologne) and Jörg Rüpke (Erfurt), where A., as a member of the Research group on “Religious Individualization in Historical Perspective” received her PhD in 2013, succeeds in discussing puzzled evidence and in bringing up differentiated interpretations.

With her approach to the topic, she brings together strands of research on temple buildings in Republican and Imperial times – periods when so many new buildings made their appearance in a new style – and on certain areas of the city of Rome and their building history through time.¹ In the context of recent urbanistic studies, she is able to draw for example on the work of Jon Albers (2016), who analysed the changes between Republican and Imperial times in the *Campus Martius*.² A. is interested in how the urban fabric interplays with temple buildings and their elite donators – either families or the emperor – and in how the newly built or already existing temples and sacred precincts reacted to other buildings and developments in their surroundings, as well as to the major impacts of destruction. She is interested not only in the spatial and architectural solutions, but relates them to purposes of self-representation, staging and orchestration of ritual practices (“*Inszenierung*”, a term which A. uses frequently), and not primarily the religious functions of the buildings and squares.

1. On Republican phases see Ziołkowski, 1986 and 1992; Zevi, 1987; and for Imperial times Zanker, 1997; Palombi, 2014; on certain areas in the city of Rome see Köb, 2000; Marcattili, 2012; Albers, 2016.

2. Arnhold (with Schmölder, 2009, Albers, 2016, or the author of this review: Rieger, 2004) stands in the German tradition of dissertations in Classical Archaeology that restudy evidence, use archival material and revise building and urban history adding new approaches and interpretations. In combination with the high-quality research which mainly the Italian, French and Spanish colleagues in Rome accomplish, such studies still add to the Roman archaeology.

It is important to note A.'s use of the plural "transformations", since how the architecture changes cannot be explained in a one-fits-all model (p. xxvi), but rather, in a way that the kind of changes depends on location, type of building, or sometimes also deities and donors. Moreover, her interest is to differentiate the role of the emperor as builder and commissioner of architectural and urbanistic transformations in the *urbs* (p. xxiii). One of A.'s hypotheses is that architectural forms changed to a concentration on interior rooms because of the increasing density of the urban fabric, while ritual acts had to be kept visible so that temples remained experienceable in the urban environment (p. xxi). The changes in the commissioners and financing agents involved, on the one hand, individuals from magistral officials to members of the imperial court and associations, on the other. These changes had impacts on the buildings, their spatial layouts, inventories, and functions (p. xxvi).

This approach broadens the – in scholarly discourse cemented – view on self-representation of elites in Republican Rome, architectural styles in the early Principate or on religious change to integrating the dynamic urban fabric of the city of Rome, the changing utilisations of buildings and squares and the broader urban public. Following the examples of Filippo Coarelli and, recently, Penelope J.E. Davies, the agents behind the architectures obtain a more prominent role in A.'s argumentation as well as religious practices as acts of communication – not only with the deities, but also with an urban audience.³ Here she is indebted to her background at Cologne and Erfurt, and ideas in von Hesberg's as well as in Rüpke's work,⁴ even though – as a Classical archaeologist dealing with an architectural topic in an urban context where (documented) small finds are not the rule, but the exception – she rightly bases her arguments on evidence of urbanism, religious practices in general, and of donators and commissioners as agents.

The book is divided into two parts. In part I, A. describes her eight case studies (pp. 3-307, chapters 1-8), where each example ends with a paragraph on the transformations; in part II, she offers a synopsis of these architectural transformations (pp. 307-369) and comparatively interprets the temple areas under the aspects of "Architekturen" (architectures, pp. 307-316, ch. 9), to continue with "Räumlicher Wandel von Heiligtümern" (spatial changes in sacred objects, pp. 317-324, ch. 10) and end with "Nutzungen und Funktionen" (uses and functions, pp. 325-328, ch. 11) as well as "Kultfragen" (cult issues, pp. 329-352, ch. 12). The length of the

3. See the various publications of Filippo Coarelli in the bibliography of A., and Davies, 2017.

4. *E.g.* Frevel & von Hesberg, 2007; Rüpke, 2015; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018.

second section in part II on architectures with 50 pages attests not only to the focus of the author, but also to certain limitations of the evidence. This structure along the case studies instead of the interpretative topics is rightly explained at p. xxvi because there have been too few studies on the Imperial phases of the sanctuaries, which this book now delivers. An English summary, an index of places, keywords, persons and sources repr. ancient authors accomplishes the book, which is with 167 figures and plans of a high quality very well illustrated.⁵

The following synopses of the case studies differ in terms of scrutiny and details. They can only pick up specific points or phenomena of the sacred areas and temple buildings which do not reflect the depth and details of A.'s arguments as well as some – in Roman archaeology long debated – locations, reconstructions, or labels for buildings, areas, architectural decoration, and statues.

The Area Sacra at the Largo di Torre Argentina (pp. 1-71) in the central *Campus Martius* forms the core piece of the book. The reason for this is its complexity not only of remains but also of later conservation measures as well as its density with four temples surviving into Late Antiquity, which make them a good example of transformations. The first two temples in an individual precinct date from the end of the 4th / beginning of the 3rd cent. BCE (temples A and C), two more (temples B and D) were added in the first half of 1st cent. BCE. At a slightly earlier period changes were made in their squares following on a considerable rise of the terrain, so that the altar platforms finally were given up (p. 8). All four temples faced east, and they formed a part of an even longer series of temple buildings that lined a street or thoroughfare (Abb. 2). Questioning the assumption that the area was planned as a consistent square with temples already in the renovation phase in the first half of the 1st cent. BCE, as a result of the fire of 111 BCE, A. presents the hypothesis that the burnt material found in the area was not adequate to support the theory of a fire, but is more likely to have originated from intentional depositions (pp. 12-13). The changes in the late 2nd and 1st cent. BCE consisted in the limitation of the precinct of Temple C for making space for Temple B and the turn of the altars that now face the temples are interpreted

5. Plans, photographs, and collages of plans are of high quality. Her way of marking the various parts of the sanctuaries (as e.g. in Abb. 72) with letters in the photograph is a very sufficient way to explain the complex contexts ("Befunde"). It is only in the course of reading and coming across the often-mentioned visibility ("Sichtbarkeit"), perceivability ("Erfahrbarkeit"), orchestration ("Inszenierung"), exclusivity or openness of the sacred areas, that the reviewer wished to see a sketch of a reconstructed view e.g. of the situation in the Forum Holitorium. A.'s description show that she has clear images about the urban situation in 3D in her mind, however such sketches would have been far beyond what one can manage in such a dissertation.

by A. as “*einander zugewandte und entgegengesetzte Positionen*” (facing and opposite positions) (p. 15) that still refer to the distancing in the former phases when the altars stood on the large platforms but staged in a different way. Moreover, the common dating of Temple D as erected in the 2nd cent. BCE is questioned by A. proposing the erection in the 1st cent. BCE because of analogies in the crepis of the temple to the temple of Portunus (pp. 3 and 26).

Temples C and B were donations dedicated by two high ranked magistrates (A. Postumius Albinus: p. 11; Q. Lutatius Catulus: p. 20), and these are the agents A. is interested in. Especially with the rather progressive architectural form of the rotunda encircled by columns dedicated to *Fortuna huiusce diei* by Q. Lutatius Catulus and probably a porticus as limitation, the question of how such a building is transformed in later phases and with it the practices of memorizing former phases and uses are at stake (pp. 16-21).⁶ The finds of the colossal statue of Fortuna are a sign of how cults may have come to an end or how the meaning of buildings changed: the statue was buried in the 1st cent. CE – and, despite having stood in the Temple B for some generations, the image could not be adapted to the form and intention of the building in the 1st cent. CE.⁷

The next phase embraces the construction of the Pompey’s Theatre to the changes under the emperor Domitian (55 BCE to 80 CE). In this time – so A.’s claim – changes on the building complex of the four temples, but also changes in the temple surroundings such as the Theatre of Pompey and the Hekatosylon to the west and north, had the result rendering the area as a coherent square. This is a case in point to bear in mind when considering urban sacred locations standing in highly dynamic environments, where changes in the adjacent areas have an inevitable effect on (p. 28). The layout of Temples A and B was changed thoroughly (Abb. 22) when A became a *peripteros*,⁸ and the cella of B was enlarged by closing the intercolumnia.

At the end of these major changes, another rise of the level in 80 CE implies a stepwise diminution of the height of the temple buildings (Abb. 23).⁹ A harmonisation takes place, with the square receiving a travertine pavement (*CIL* VI 40456, p. 58), which by the way connects these temples to a coherent precinct (also the one

6. A. does not follow the idea that the walls under the Temple B belong to a *sacellum* of Juno Caprotina (as recently repeated by De Stefano, 2017, Tab. 215b).

7. The statue she reconstructs – following the excavator Marchetti-Longhi – with a stick instead of a *cornucopia* in the right arm (pp. 22-23).

8. See recently Zink, Ceci & Pflug, 2021 and their reconstruction as half-column *dipteros*.

9. See also Zink, Ceci & Pflug, 2021, Fig. 2, phase 3a and b.

in Via delle Botteghe Oscure). Finally, in the first half of the 2nd cent. CE the overall appearance of the area sacra was standardised by a porticus of pilasters at the eastern side (pp. 57-60, Abb. 29). It might have included the thoroughfare and did not cut off the precinct. However, the differentiation of temple buildings at the rear of a square, where the cellae and the altars have been squeezed, plays a minor role, while rooms of various functions and additional installations (pp. 40-45) were added between the temples. The spaces and functions are more rigidly allocated.¹⁰ The past of the area and its architectural language are no longer of interest (p. 56), even though A. is reluctant to be more detailed about the analogies to early imperial buildings (p. 57). She rightly admits, however, that we do not know to what extent any traditions related to the Area Sacra at the Largo di Torre Argentina remained alive either orally or in practices.

One of the main points A. makes in this detailed treatise on the area sacra is the homogenisation and the “pressure” exerted by the surrounding urban fabric on this sacred area. A. ascribes to the emperor the large-scale measures during the last quarter of 1st cent. CE in the layout and the square together with the major development of raising the level and paving the square (p. 57). A tension between inside and outside respectively in front of or behind the temples as structuring elements is the means of the early Imperial phase, altered from the tiered spaces of the Republican phase. The implications for religious practices are described by A. as a juxtaposition of audience and the one active in the ritual (p. 71).

The next chapter (ch. 2) is dedicated to the temple in the Via delle Botteghe Oscure at between the Via di San Nicola de’ Cesarin and the Via Celsa, which represents the continuation of the Largo Argentina precinct, since it is located to the east of the area and opposite to the temples A and C in the 1st cent. BCE, even though no uniform pavement – at this period still in tufa – has been found (a possibility which would appear logical, since some form of thoroughfare must be assumed, p. 78). This building is closely related to the question of the location of the *Villa publica*, the *Porticus Minucia Vetus* and the *Porticus Minucia Frumentaria* erected in 80 CE, which is discussed by A. in the last ch. 12 of “Kultfragen” – which are functional questions in this case, related to the *annona* under the surveillance of the *censores* located at the *Villa publica*. It is a fragment of the *Forma Urbis Romae* which helps to allocate findings of columns on a podium (Via Celsa, p.

10. It is not necessarily clear if the closeness of the altars to the *cella* can be interpreted as an attempt (pp. 44-45) to be closer to the deities. This shift could also be the wish of differentiated areas in a denser urban fabric as A. also evokes.

77) as well as in the basements of later houses. This sacred building serves A. to show the heavy impact late Republican donations of temples had on the central *Campus Martius*, in contrast with the Largo Argentina-temples, however, it is an individual podium temple of immense dimensions (p. 80). Situated parallel to the Area Sacra of the Largo Argentina, it was surrounded by a porticus in late Flavian times showing the same changes of the level (p. 87). The extension and organisation of the sacred areas in middle and late Republican times is comparable to the area at the Largo del Torre Argentina: The surrounding walls of the precinct were neither high nor solid, whereas the altar area in front of the temple was very wide. In the interpretation, in contrast to the first case study, the focus lies on the different impacts resulting from different functions – the temple at the Via delle Botteghe Oscure served as the archive of the *censores* and was not the gift of an individual donor. More phases of transformation and adaptations can be seen in its architectural décor (pp. 82-84) in order to adapt *kymata* and columns to a more classicizing style. However, from the 2nd cent. CE onwards, little seems to have changed in the spatial layout and the architecture could still meet situational requirements (p. 89) – in contrast to the buildings at the Largo di Torre Argentina, where new rooms for congregations were provided.

In chapters 3 and 4, A. moves on to the *Forum Holitorium* and the *Forum Boarium*, where a certain density of sacred buildings can be noted already from Republican times onwards, which continued into Late Antiquity. The temple of Portunus close to the Tiber is the second oldest in this area. A. underpins with this case study the impact of the densifying urban fabric around the temple building as well as shift in the agents who initiated or were beneficiaries of renovations.¹¹ The (well preserved, but also reconstructed) prostyle *pseudoperipteros* visible today represents the newly erected building of the 1st cent. CE of a Republican predecessor. It experienced level rises, especially in course of measures against Tiber floods. Even though the materials used – tufa and travertine – reflect an Italic tradition, the Ionic order, and other details (e.g., the *geison*) demonstrate the will of the commissioners – who remain a little vague – to build something modern (pp. 96 and 105). Structures, especially to the left and right of the podium (Abb. 63-65), enclose the temple in not clearly dated phases, whereas at its back a room was equipped in early Imperial times (p. 100). The renovation in the 1st-2nd cent. CE, with the use of marble stucco and an enrichment of

11. To reconstruct activities of a *collegium* of the wreath binders which she reads from the passage of Fronto, *Ep.* I 7, 2 (p. 101) seems far-fetched. Those selling wreaths at the temple do not have to be a *collegium*.

the architectural elements (pp. 101-105), is another example of an “update” a temple building receives, which A. explains as the intention to satisfy the requirements of a more local audience. Whether the limited space was perceived as a loss of exclusivity (p. 99) might be discussed. Yet, it shows that the embedding of religious rituals in the urban fabric changed and took place in a denser environment.

The so-called Area Sacra di San Omobono is dealt with in ch. 4 and is another complicated find spots of Roman temple buildings with a long history, but also some deep stratigraphies.¹² In this case A. goes back to the archaic phases of the twin temples and discusses the terracotta decoration and its allocation to building remains (pp. 117-123, which is not of high relevance for the question of later urban transformation). The main point is that until the 3rd cent. BCE this area has not changed very much, with “only” honorific monuments having been added (for M. Flavius Flaccus and Camillus). In the 3rd to the 1st cent. BCE the temples underwent alterations but no limitations on and of the podium, as is the case with the Largo-Argentina temples (pp. 133-137). The high podia are not only intended as protection against flooding¹³, but for increasing the exclusivity and access, respectively the visibility provided for the rituals taking place at the altars. Moreover, the presence of various members of the senatorial elite is more readily understood because of some literary sources. Like the Largo Argentina, this very old sanctuary was a site of regular competition among various noblemen (e.g., L. Stertinius, Ti. Sempronius Gracchus), but in contrast to the area in the *Campus Martius* it remained unaltered down to the time of Hadrian. A. argues against Coarelli’s reconstruction of the buildings in this phase with *cellae* without *pronaoi* but instead with a quadrifrons arch between them which allows for *cellae* in the same size as in Republican times on a platform with the altars probably at the same positions (pp. 141-142).¹⁴ The “commodification” of the sacred area in the 2nd cent. CE, comparable to the temple of Portunus, can be seen in the *tabernae* in the platform (pp. 143-144), that were in use until the 4th cent. CE. However, A. is able to show that this does not apply to the ones at the northern and eastern sides, which were only added in the 3rd cent. CE (p. 145). Different dynamics for the utilisation

12. Footnote 143 (pp. 127-128) shows how little we know about personal and cultic rituals even though we have sacrificial remains from the archaic period (pp. 123-124).

13. Brocato, Ceci & Terrenato, 2018.

14. The reviewer is in favour of a solution with a corridor-like hall in front of the temples and a marked passage in the middle because of similarities with the Quattro Tempietti at Ostia (see Rieger, 2004, fig. 57, taken up by Pensabene, 2007, fig. 36 and 90 with n. 326 with columns instead of more closed façades), even though at San Omobono it was not meant as a daily passage (see pp. 143-144, with Abb. 91).

of space in and around the temple platform are active. What she can neatly demonstrate is that this old sacred place remained frequented as the centre of the triangle between the *Forum Romanum*, *Forum Holitorium* and *Forum Boarium*, rather than as an extraordinary place of self-representation (pp. 145-148 and 152), whereas the “*gesamtrömische Identität*” (the overall Roman identity) that A. claims to be established through the architectural design and the products that one could buy nearby seems to go too far in the opinion of the reviewer.

Chapter 5 revolves around the three podium temples in the *Forum Holitorium* opposite the temple of Portunus. They were originally four and are, like the ones at the Largo Argentina, erected as donations by triumphators to Juno *Sospita*, to Janus, to Spes and to Pietas between the 3rd and 2nd cent. BCE, with the northern and central in Ionic order and the southern in Tuscan order. With this case, A. presents temples where members of the Julio-Claudian dynasty were active in the renovations during the early Principate.¹⁵ It is not by chance that the first pages deal with passageways, porticus and connections in this spatially extremely interlaced area of valleys, hills, the river and urban buildings, which hosted so many different people and activities (pp. 157-161, continuing at p. 167 to Trajan’s times). Her observations offer a very useful and profound analysis of this very specific urban space, which had an impact on the architecture and activities at the temples. The chronology of the three visible temples is discussed, in which she sees some minor problems in the differentiation between the early Augustan and late Augustan periods as the time for their re-erection (pp. 167-168). Apart from the block-like appearance against the porticus behind them, they emerge distinctly because of the high podia on which they are erected. *Tabernae* were implemented in the middle temple of Juno *Sospita* (pp. 169-170) as was done in the northern temple, which was the highest and the “slimmest” of them. Any action taking place in front of the temples on the podia was thus “elevated” above the pedestrians and spectators, when they were not able to watch from the surrounding porticus.

The adaptation to the less compressed architectural style of the early Augustan period is described very elegantly by A. in the case of the central temple of Juno (pp. 180-181). The southern temple dedicated to Spes refers in its sober architectural style to Republican predecessors.¹⁶ A play with orders, stucco, and material as in the case of the temple of Portunus can also be observed here. Whoever was in charge of planning

15. The reference to the very useful Abb. 71 which shows the situation of the temples on the *Fora Boarium et Holitorium* could have mentioned earlier, not only at p. 158.

16. See also Maschek, 2012, pp. 196 and 221, with n. 1028.

and commissioning the renovations of the three temples, they demonstrated a high sophistication in alteration, change, and also in maintaining tradition. Republican appearance was also preserved, *e.g.*, in the northern temple. One can easily follow A. in assuming the Imperial court was the user of these buildings to demonstrate continuity in times of change, a suggestion attested to especially in the case of the Temple of Spes. From an urbanistic point of view, these temples in the centre of the dense conglomerations of the *Forum Holitorium* represented a fix point in the daily rushes. In how far they were only recognisable if action took place, might remain open (p. 183).

With the *Porticus Octaviae* and *Porticus Philippi* at the *Circus Flaminius* A. moves back north and deals with, those off-set sanctuaries which retained their isolated position even in the densifying city, comparable to the temple in the *Via delle Botteghe Oscure*. As in the previous chapters, A. offers a very good description of the urban situation of the two porticus at the *Circus Flaminius*, where she argues for the correlation of all the buildings in the area starting from the 3rd cent. BCE, which are connected to the various assemblies (*concilium plebis*, *contiones*) and *ludi*. The temple buildings as such are here less important than their porticus around, the exhibited works of art, and their functions for *collegia* and donators. The temples at the northern end of the *Circus* were erected progressively from the beginning of the 2nd cent. BCE, first the one of the *Hercules Musarum*, followed by *Juno Regina* (by M. Aemilius Lepidus) and in the second half of the century by *Jupiter Stator*. Together with this temple, the donator Q. Caecilius Metellus also builds the *Porticus Metelli* (replaced later by the Augustan *Porticus Octaviae*) around it and the temple to *Juno Regina*. The *Porticus Philippi* was added in the 1st cent. BCE around the rotunda (or open precinct – see Albers, 2015) of *Hercules*. The architectural predecessor to the quadriporticus in this area was the *Porticus Octavia* (by Cn. Octavius) built in the first half of the 2nd cent. BCE. The entire neighbourhood was characterised by mercantile functions – in addition to the socio-political role and the *ludi* on the large open area of the *Circus*.

The statues and imagery of the sanctuaries are dealt with along the discussion of the literary sources where A. delineates in a very good style (pp. 190-192) of how to read these, how “urban legends” about Greek art in Roman contexts could have come into existence, and how they may have been perceived in mid- and late Republican and early Imperial times.¹⁷ A. argues that the northern part of the *Porticus Octaviae* was used as a closed room for assemblies, whereas a focus lies on the reconstruction of the historizising aspects of the Imperial phase of the building

17. Pp. 336-337 is another passage, where A. shows a good sense of interpreting literary sources.

as a gallery and knowledge basis re-appropriated by the emperor (pp. 205-207). A. follows Viscogliosi's reconstruction of the southern part of the porticus without *exedrae* (different to Lauter who assumes *exedrae*) and reconstructs the hall as open and permeable to the *Circus Flaminius*.¹⁸ In Severan times the closure of the southern part of the porticus (which was a relatively common phenomenon) has the effect of establishing an architecture focused on the interior (p. 210). However, with the probable exhibition of paintings of the Parthian successes of Septimius Severus, characterizing the notion of great deeds (p. 211), the temples and their cults or rituals play a minor role, and their intention is the the creation of a collective reference point and identity.

A. briefly touches on the question of the decades in which the temple of Hercules *Musarum* could have been dedicated by M. Fulvius Nobilior, following Coarelli (1997), in order to dwell more on its form, function and the quadriporticus around it. This was built in Augustan times by L. Marcius Philippus (based on a precinct surrounded by walls, p. 254) including a reconstruction of the temple on the podium and the rather particular postaments filling the square of the quadriporticus (as visible on the FUR 31 hh).¹⁹ The postaments were intended to provide bases for the statues that were already present on the site, while all paintings that have already been mentioned, could have been exhibited in the porticus, whereas the enclosure in its entirety became the seat of the *collegium poetarum*. It was explicitly designed as a kind of "center of the arts", including the calendar controlling of time, since *fasti* were put on display there. Despite Marcius Philippus not having been related to the Imperial house, he controlled the processes in the functions of architecture and its "Innenleben" (inner parts) – instigated in Augustan times – that included control of history (the myths of Troy, Alexander, *elogia* works of poets), and also the scheduling and recording control of time (*fasti*, calendar). It is less the architectural decoration or materials as in the cases before but the concept and the imagery that attest to the "programmatic" changes.²⁰

Protected from the impacts of the urban processes taking place around them, the temples remained untouched in their spatial layout over the centuries; only the décor

18. See Viscogliosi, 1999 and Lauter, 1980-1981.

19. This reconstruction is different from that proposed by Albers, 2015, p. 41, n. 14 who assumes no adjacent buildings at all.

20. In Abb. 117, A. could have marked the short piece of curved wall that is preserved of the circular cella of the temple. In this case she does not provide a plan of the reconstruction of the porticus with the temple, since so very little has been preserved of this structure. One only wonders why she did not refer to the reconstruction of Albers, 2015 as a hypaethral area made in 2015, since he referred to her dissertation.

was renovated and the porticus changed. Cultic practices and their effects are only mentioned marginally (p. 123), since they are less prominent and could only have been understood when one had entered the porticus. However, because of spatial settings and the furnishing with statues and works of art representing socio-political values, they both possessed and continuously maintained a conservational, historicizing function. Whether we can go as far as A. does in describing this as an attempt to create a “stadtrömische kollektive Identität” (collective identity of the *urbs Roma*) or even “*gesamtrömische kollektive(n) Identität*” (pan-Roman collective identity) (p. 226) must be left to her readers. The intense mercantile utilisation of the vicinity outside the porticus in Imperial times certainly had a strong impact on the establishment of a collective identity for the neighbourhood.

The temples of Apollo and Bellona *in circo* are both the last examples from the *urbs Roma* and also the example par excellence that present the grandeur of certain magistrates in Republican times and of the subsequent Imperial impact on their donated temple buildings. The temple of Apollo is one of the oldest presented in this study together with the temples of San Omobono. It was erected on a comparably high podium to that of San Omobono. The temple of Bellona is later, since it was donated by Ap. Claudius Caecus at the beginning of 3rd cent. BCE. The first was for long the only temple dedicated to Apollo in Rome with significant implications for the cult activities (p. 236) and used for the assemblies of the Senate. The second of the two – the temple of Bellona – was the point where every *imperator* left or returned to Rome before and after a campaign, and it was used for *comitia* at least down to Sullan times (p. 240). Spatially and functionally, they are closely intertwined, although A. does not describe the intervening spaces in detail but refers to a recent study of the area.²¹

The temple and the veneration of Apollo in a *cultus graecus* but in a temple with Tuscan order, is representative for the Roman way of adapting religion (p. 241). C. Sosius rebuilt it at the end of the 1st cent. BCE, and henceforth the temple became the example *par excellence* of early Augustan style in architectural design and décor. In its Augustan phase white and coloured marbles are employed in the architectural decoration (pp. 244-248) comparable to the temple of Mars *Uitor* on the *Forum Augustum*, which clearly indicates that the renovation had a close relationship to the Imperial court.

The less detailed, more sober elements of the temple of Bellona belong to the mid-Augustan period and represent the less overwhelming phase of the Principate

21. Vitti, 2010.

(p. 252) characterised by the “*gesetztere und gefestigere Erscheinungsbild*” (more settled and solid presentation), evoking “*Beständigkeit und Kontinuität*” (persistence and continuity). In the triad with the theatre of Marcellus at a time of dynastic consolidation, this area was rendered a hot spot of the new architectural style imposed on century-old buildings. Thus, the transformations are rather architecturally intelligible than self-explicable in religious terms at this place, where rituals, especially those for military purposes, were still taking place. One only wonders whether the frieze with triumphal scenes and sacrifices in the cella could have added to its religious character.²²

The eighth chapter (pp. 255-304) is dedicated to the Area Sacra dei Templi Republicanani at the city of Ostia.²³ With this very detailed chapter, A. closes the circle referring back to the area of the Largo di Torre Argentina. The precinct at a crossroads, situated outside the Ostian *castrum*, is a good example for the transformations from the 3rd cent. BCE through to those of Late Antiquity: A. traces the growth of the harbour city, urbanistic requirements, as well as adapted religious practices and changing agents. The kind of evidence at hand is distinct from the Roman examples, since she can also draw on inscriptions, reliefs, and sculpture. However, differences, which A. could have mentioned in more depth, were also to be found in the character of the city itself, which is not that of a center of political power which Rome was, but a community having a very direct and close relationship to it.²⁴ The way in which alterations and densifications took place in the triangular area comprising the temple of Hercules, the temple of the Ara Rotonda and the temple of the Republican Altars is clearly explained. From the Republican area where notables of the city had been active (*e.g.*, C. Cartilius Poplicola with an honorific statue) to the sanctuary in Imperial times, not only did the street level increase considerably, but also many buildings were added. The area literally sinks below the Flavian and Severan street level; spatial claims shift and space is obtained by the addition of new functional units such as *thermae*, which might have been part of a reorganisation and financing of the sacred place (pp. 257-297). The 3rd cent. CE is characterised as, in some of the Roman examples, by the concentration to the inner spaces. More obvious than *e.g.*, at the Largo di Torre Argentina is the activity of associations or *collegia* and the spaces

22. See Huet, 2011.

23. The precinct was studied by Bolder-Boos, 2017 as spin-off of her dissertation. A. has also dealt with the various sacred space of Ostia where her knowledge of Ostia and her interpretation of sacred architecture have already brought to bear on the evidence.

24. There is strong tension at Ostia between independence of and extreme closeness to Rome, especially in the field of religion, see Rieger, 2004.

they might have used, since they can be better distinguished architectonically (Abb. 155, F). The engagement of *collegia* in the cults of the temple(s) might be related to the presence of the emperor's cult of some kind (p. 298).²⁵ However, the urban, social, and religious dynamics at work in Ostia might have called for different adaptations. A sign for this, that could have been stated more clearly, are the living quarters, which close the eastern side of the sacred area in the times of Trajan.

Despite leaving the ground of the *urbs Roma*, A. offers with this fine-grained analysis of the changes in spatial settings and active people in the Area Sacra dei Templi Republicanici at Ostia a good and comparable example to her case studies from the *urbs Roma* regarding the interrelations of religious architecture, meaning, society and urbanism. Her command of the history and pitfalls of the research and excavation on Ostia is as profound as her knowledge of the archaeology of Rome.

After the exposition of the temple areas the author dives into comparative interpretation firstly on the "Architekturen" (architectures) (ch. 9, pp. 307-316, where the plural embraces the layouts as well as the architectural décor), then into a synopsis of the spatial transformation of sanctuaries ("Räumlicher Wandel von Heiligtümern", ch. 10, pp. 317-324), which focuses on surrounding areas, summarizes then utilisation and functions ("Nutzungen und Funktionen, ch. 11, pp. 325-328) to end with questions of the religious practices ("Kultfragen", ch. 12, pp. 329-352).

A.'s inclusion of the "*Umfeld der Kultbauten*" (environment of the cult buildings) (p. 311), which have long been overlooked in research, that aims at clean reconstructions and labels on (often idealising) phases offers a new perspective on politics, urbanism, and religion in Rome. Her distinction between the visible borders of sanctuaries such as porticus which visitors or urban dwellers could experience and real *temene* is a welcome consequence of her approach and makes the temporal aspects of sacralizing demarcations when rituals or anything else happened at or in the temples in her argument stronger.

She points to the economization of the building work for renovations (pp. 307-309) or to the gradual disappearance of sacred areas as a result of increasing street levels, to which alterations in the décor, the layout, and the areas around were the answers of the agents and commissioners (p. 308). Architectural elements as well as materials can add a "*Gegenwartsbezug*" (reference to the present) (p. 308) to old religious buildings as answers to the new socio-political order of the Principate but also to the growing urban environment. Proportions, appearance, closedness or openness

25. Only at p. 315 she discusses the role of *collegia* and *corpora* more detailed. I would make a distinction between the *collegium poetarum* and one at Ostia, since they differ in their official status.

as well as visibility are the architectural instruments with which architects, craftsmen and commissioners worked and which the urban dwellers could experience. She phrases these strategies as medialisation and hierarchisation of spaces accompanied by a hierarchisation of the activities that take place (p. 310) as it could be seen at the Largo Argentina-temples and the twin temple of San Omobono in late Republican times; her observations on the position of the altars, also in the Ostian examples are insightful for understanding ritual, participants and the change from an exclusivity that was maintained during Republican times to a visible (even not accessible) presentation of religious practices in Imperial times (pp. 318-319). Her claim is that the urban fabric calls for individual architectural solutions.

The chapter on “Kultfragen” discusses the arguments pro and contra certain attributions of temples to gods or gods to temples, where A. demonstrates her command of sources, archaeological contexts, and opinions. For the reader it might be difficult to correlate the descriptions of the architectural remains *e.g.*, of the temples at the Largo Argentina, with this discussion. However, A.’s structure has the advantage that one does not get lost from the start in complex treatises on ascriptions, but one can follow her focus on the urbanistic transformation.

The conclusion (pp. 353-354) underpins the problem of how to deal with old religious buildings in a growing city with a new political system and elite, which in Republican times was the magistral elite looking for prestige, influence, and distinction from their peers. Alterations that were added to the religious buildings in the Republican phases, so A.’s claim, were meant to enable the correct performance of cult practices as answers to crisis situations. In imperial times this attitude shifted to buildings, or respectively to restorations as a continuous disguise of authority through the use of a new architectural language and by establishing continuity through the historicizing of old sacred places. Now *splendor* and expensive decoration – so the argument of A. – are to be seen as symbols for the ability of the emperor to cope with, or even to bring about real improvements to difficult or new situations. On the other hand, such changes could have been strategies in order not to overlook places, such as the temples at the *Forum Holitorium*, which had been encroached upon by the urban growth.²⁶

26. It is a huge task for a young researcher to discuss the views of doyens of urban history of Rome and public religious architecture (P. Carafa, A. Carandini, F. Coarelli, P. Gros, E. La Rocca, G. Marchetti Longhi, N. Terrenato, F. Zevi) and all recent studies, and it is one in which A. succeeds. Solely for the reason of completeness I point to publications that only appeared in the course of copy-editing the manuscript – the study of Zink, Cenci & Pflug on the Temple A at the Largo di Torre Argentina (2021) which they reconstruct as halfcolumn-*dipteros*, van Haepelen on the *fana et delubra* (2019), or Moser on altars in Republican Rome and Latium (2019).

A. offers a profound study of sanctuaries in Republican and Imperial Rome and their transformations and relates this to religious practices for which they served as their primary function. Some musing about future trajectories of research on religion in the *urbs Roma* might be added that open out from this study: A recurring theme is the “*Inszenierung*” (orchestration) and the perceivability of the sacred places. The question of what people walking and working in Rome perceived as a cult area is of course crucial and A. offers many points where this can be made comprehensible. However, at some points the stage character of cult practices degrades the visitors as well as every-day idlers to passive consumers or mere spectators, whereas the magistrates performing rituals are conceived as actors on these stages, which are the temples. A shift to the spaces constructed by practices, following the claims of the spatial turn, could be the next step in looking at the various, now well-defined phases of transformations in the sanctuaries and urban spaces.

Beyond the buildings and their architectural design and decoration research could proceed to a differentiated view on religion and urbanity in Rome by integrating a different material category – the small finds, made from pottery, glass, metal, or bone. Deposits of such material found at the temple of Apollo *in circo* are not yet published (p. 236) as it is the case with early layers of ritual remains at San Omobono (p. 123). Their potential for being deciphered as reflections of religious practices could on the one hand add to the urbanistic transformations, but could on the other hand reveal more about what A. calls “*alltägliches Kultgeschehen*” (everyday cult activities) (pp. 318-319, see also pp. 325-326): This material as remains of religious practices could offer insights into agents beyond the noble families, the emperor or organised associations or *collegia*.

Related to the issue of associations, which became a socio-political and religious player in Imperial times, is the question concerning the imperial cult, in which they play a fundamental role. A. does not explicitly touch on that, which is motivated in the choice of sacred places that do not offer many hints of any veneration for *Divi* and *Divae* (*Porticus Octaviae*, Apollo *in circo*, Republican temples at Ostia). One wonders how a study on the transformation of the city’s landscape might appear, where many and various grades of intrusion of the Imperial house can be imagined between the negative evidence and the prominent examples of individual temples for the *Divi* or institutions such as the *Lares Augusti* in the neighbourhoods (see e.g., Palombi, 2014; Rieger, 2020).

Yet, these are only additional ideas instigated by the intriguing study offered by A. In the first place, scholars of Rome’s sacred topography, of urbanism and architecture are contended with a thorough and comprehensive study of sanctuaries with the focus on their transformations. A. offers a fresh perspective on the dynamics of the

city as well as urban and political powers as reflected in religious buildings and succeeds in bringing complex contexts of Roman archaeology of religion to the readers.

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