Sanctuary and society in central-southern Italy (3rd to 1st centuries BC) : a study into cult places and cultural change after the Roman conquest of Italy
Stek, T.D.

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Preface

The remains of monumental sanctuaries catch the eye in Central-Southern Italy, both in the areas inhabited by the various ‘Italic’ peoples and in the city of Rome itself. Especially in the third and second centuries BC, many cult places were transformed into Hellenistic-style temples. Interestingly, this floruit coincides with the Roman conquest and incorporation of the entire Italian peninsula. In this study, I have aimed to answer questions on both the role of sanctuaries and rituals for the ‘indigenous’ Italic peoples in Central-Southern Italy and the Roman impact on religious life in these areas. In order to do this, I have drawn upon various kinds of evidence and research methods, including architecture, survey archaeology, and historical, epigraphical and modern historiographical analysis.

I would not have been able to pursue this challenge without the support of many people. First of all I wish to thank my promotor prof. Marijke Gnade and co-promotor prof. Eric Moormann for their encouragement and continuous confidence. They have both been, in their different – and complementary – ways, my principal tutors and sources of inspiration from the moment I started studying archaeology onwards. While giving me the freedom to develop my own line of research, their knowledge, advice and most of all their enthusiasm have been invaluable. I wish to especially thank them for their readiness to comment upon various parts of this thesis even within urgent deadlines – I could always count on them. I also want to express my gratitude to prof. Herman Brijder, who supervised my project in the initial phase, for the confidence shown and careful reading of parts of the text – and perhaps most of all for enabling me to work with him on another ‘sacred landscape’; that of South-Eastern Turkey, at the Nemrud Dağ, which has been a marvelous experience. I am moreover very grateful for his invaluable editorial help in the final stage. The many stimulating discussions with prof. Emmanuele Curti, especially on the debate on ‘romanisation’, and the role of different European traditions within it, were profoundly inspiring, as was the opportunity to join in his fieldwork project on the temple of Venus at Pompeii. Prof. Peter Attema helped me in an early stage of my project to get insight into different field survey strategies that could be suitable for enquiring the ‘sacred landscape’, by enabling me to participate in his Pontine project. In the final stage of my research, prof. Harm Pinkster has generously shared his linguistic knowledge with me, and I wish to thank him warmly for his comments on linguistic and epigraphical issues. Prof. Douwe Yntema not only shared his forthcoming work, but gave me also a beautiful first edition of Salmon’s Samnium and the Samnites.

The encounter with Jeremia Pelgrom at the Royal Dutch Institute in Rome in 2003 has been pivotal for me: we planned and directed the field survey campaigns around the sanctuary of S. Giovanni in Galdo together and we spent a lot of time studying,
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working, traveling and discussing archaeology and life. He has been an important intellectual sparring partner throughout my research. Our innumerable, often intense discussions greatly stimulated the theses put forward in this study. Leading people from the ‘SLP crew’ moreover include Ellen Thiermann and Jitte Waagen. Ellen has not only been invaluable for the project; I thank her for her support during many years of my research. I thank Jitte Waagen for his steady cooperation and perfect company throughout all field campaigns, especially for the GIS part – but also much more. Antonella Lepone’s help has been crucial on various occasions and in various ways; I especially enjoyed the endless discussions on ‘alcuni culti’. Jeltsje Stobbe has, from the moment I got to know her in Satricum as my trench leader, always remained a reference point for me, and I wish to thank her especially for her help with the study of the ceramics.

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